CHALLENGES OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
IN HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS
IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

Vukile Shadrack Tshazibana

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Promoter: Prof Paul Webb
Co-Promoter: Prof Sylvan Blignaut
DECLARATION

I declare that:

Challenges of instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa

is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references, and that it has not been previously presented by me for a degree at another university.

.................. ..................
VS Tshazibana Date
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Last, but not least, a final word of appreciation goes to my siblings for their moral support and to my parents, Vububi and Nozipho Tshazibana, for moulding me, bringing me up and encouraging me to value education.
The research presented in this thesis investigates challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies. The study consists of two parts. The first study sampled 25 school principals, 80 teachers and 11 department of education officials from the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth education districts in the Eastern Cape. Data obtained in the first study were generated by administering a pen-and-paper questionnaire and individual interviews to selected participants. The second study employed an online questionnaire that was open to principals, teachers and departmental officials in all provinces of South Africa in order to generate data over as wide a geographic range as possible. Mixed methods were used to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data from the two studies. Thematic analysis techniques were employed to categorise qualitative data and the quantitative data were subjected to analytical techniques to provide descriptive and inferential statistics.

The data revealed that school principals view themselves as change agents who should be in the forefront of change and curriculum implementation, and that they believe that they know what is expected of them in this regard. However, they recognise that they are not adequately prepared for the task of instructional leadership. The data also suggest that teachers have expectations that principals should be trained in instructional leadership and work closely with departmental officials in order to provide guidance and leadership at school level to address their professional needs. Problems related to capacity and skills of subject advisors and other district officials were revealed by the study. These issues are generally and informally recognised, but have not been formally raised within the Department of Education. The findings of the study also highlight the fact that, after nearly two decades in the new political dispensation, there are still vast differences within the South African schooling system between school types. These differences are most evident between ex-Model C schools and historically disadvantaged ex-DET schools, and it is recognised that principals in ex-DET schools need support tailored to their particular circumstances and context.
The findings in this study support the notion that much needs to be done in South Africa in terms of empowering school principals; especially those from historically disadvantaged schools. The data provide insights into some of the constraints of local context, which enables better understandings of the challenges of instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools. These understandings should be of value when considering strategies to support principals in their role of instructional leaders.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum transformation process in South Africa that was initiated after the 1994 elections has been in the process of implementation ever since, with more and more structures, processes and policies to promote and implement the policy being introduced (Mohamed, 2004). Specifically, the South African National Department of Education’s new vision of a national curriculum opened a new chapter in the country’s educational development (Rogan, 2007; Department of Education, 2009).

The intention of ushering in a new era via curriculum reform has not been realised and many challenges have arisen. Issues of clarity, gaps, resource constraints, pace of implementation, et cetera, have emerged during the implementation of Curriculum 2005 (C2005), the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and, more recently, the National Curriculum Statements (Department of Education, 2009; Mohamed, 2004; Rogan, 2007). A number of shortcomings associated with implementation have been identified. For example, there has been no clear and detailed implementation plan, the assessment guidance plan was not clear enough, curriculum supporting documents were not helpful enough, teacher training was superficial, and the language policy was never properly communicated and implemented (Department of Education, 2009).

The above shortcomings have had a negative impact in the implementation of curriculum and are a matter of concern, especially to school principals who have a responsibility to guide
teachers in terms of instructional leadership at school level who should also act as catalysts and motivators of continuous staff development (Mathibe, 2007). The principal as instructional leader is recognised as being in the forefront of curriculum implementation and is required to lead learning to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place (Edwards, 2006; Kruger, 2003). Despite the recognition of the importance of instructional leadership, many teachers and researchers believe that the training and support for principals provided by the Department of Education is insufficient and ineffective (Mulaudzi, 2009). It is from this point of departure that this study seeks to investigate challenges principals of schools face in curriculum implementation in terms of their role as instructional leaders. In order to do this, the extent to which they are prepared and supported to assume this role, the expectations of teachers and departmental officials, and structural barriers to effective instructional leadership, particularly in previously disadvantaged South African schools, are investigated.

2. BACKGROUND

In the past decade public educators, both teachers and administrators, have had to face increasing pressure from parents, the private sector, and politicians, to be accountable for the ‘bottom line’. This bottom line, both internationally and locally, is student learning. More than ever, they are expected to create schools in which all children achieve excellent outcomes in the face of shrinking budgets, dwindling resources, and rapid social change (Marlow & Minehira, 1996). This expectation highlights a compelling need for principals and other school administrators to find ways to encourage collegiality and to significantly improve instructional supervision in today’s changing schools (Blasé & Blasé, 2004). In order to be able to do this, school principals would have to possess a wide array of competences in order to lead schools effectively toward the accomplishment of educational goals, and it would be expected that
effective support mechanisms be in place to help them achieve these competences (Blasé & Blasé, 2004).

There are however, constraints in this regard as there are few published comprehensive descriptions of how instructional supervision is actually practised especially in South African in schools and how teachers are affected by such supervision. What exists mainly internationally, are usually exploratory studies of the supervisory conference and published research on the micro-politics of supervisor-teacher interaction in public schools (Blasé and Blasé, 2004; Duncan, 1993; Roberts, 1991).

Marlow and Minehira (1996), drawing on a comprehensive body of research on instructional leadership, found that while most principals believe they should spend more time attending to the ‘technical core’ of the schools (curriculum and instruction), they spent the majority of time attending to other issues related to operations, management, and public relations. Issues which impact on principals carrying out their role include curriculum change, implementation and support, as well as teacher expectations.

2.1 Curriculum change and implementation

Since the inception of the democratic government in April 1994, South Africa has focused on addressing the country’s educational legacy (Naidu, et al, 2008). As noted earlier, the Department of Education (2009) has since introduced a number of educational policies aimed at transforming education. These policies included a number of curriculum reforms. The evolutionary sequence of these reforms progress from the introduction of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), to Curriculum 2005 (C2005) to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), and the recent National Curriculum
Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), gives evidence of the considerable changes which the South African education system underwent to fill in the gaps identified in the implementation process of OBE (Mulaudzi, 2009).

With the principals being directly in charge of curriculum implementation at school level, it is imperative that they have full knowledge and understanding of the new curriculum and their role in the implementation process. But, according to both Kobola (2007) and the Department of Education (2009), prior training initiatives for C2005 and the NCS neglected school principals and other stakeholders, and often led to confusion around their role in relation to implementing the curriculum. As such, there was little guidance for teachers from their principals and members of the School Management Teams (SMTs), which explains why educators at school level found it difficult to implement the curriculum.

This above situation has resulted in poor implementation of curriculum, especially in many historically disadvantaged schools that have resource constraints such as lack of books and other learning materials, large class sizes, and the general poor conditions of the schools which, in certain cases may lack furniture, doors, and even roofs (Moloi, 2002). In addition to these constraints the schools are faced with resource constraints in the form of limited professional capacity and accumulated experience; many teachers do not have a clear understanding of how to implement the new changes. In many cases principals do not have the necessary management and leadership skills (Moloi, 2002). The inability of historically disadvantaged schools to implement curriculum effectively leads to factors such as poor academic performance by learners, which has prompted a number of parents to move their children to suburban schools in their quest for perceived better education. When such movement becomes a migration, it leaves historically disadvantaged schools striving for survival (Naidu, et. al. 2008)
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For these reasons, the Task Team (2009) for the Implementation of the NCS in its final report recommended that all relevant stakeholders, including the school principals, should receive targeted training in any future revisions of curriculum (Department of Education, 2009). The undertaking acknowledgement was recognition of the need to ensure the preparedness of all relevant stakeholders in the implementation of curriculum changes.

2.2 Problems associated with curriculum implementation

The curriculum implementation literature emphasises the central role that teachers play in how a curriculum is realised in practise (Mulaudzi, 2009). Central to this are teachers’ understandings of policy. The recent curriculum history has been characterised by radical change within a relatively short period and the result thereof has been a high level of confusion amongst teachers around what they are expected to do (Department of Education, 2009). Teachers have complained of inadequate and haphazard training with no follow up to ensure that their curriculum training was translated into classroom practices. This has prompted Mulaudzi (2009) to recommend that retraining and re-skilling programmes in curriculum implementation should be intensified to enhance the professional competence of educators in South Africa.

Principals, who are also not trained in curriculum implementation, find it difficult to make meaningful interventions to assist teachers to cope with curriculum change. This, according to Rogan (2007), is due to policy directives lacking detail on how the ideals might be realized. He points out that large-scale programmes tend to emphasize adoption and neglect implementation. He further adds that, in nearly all instances low outcomes resulted from poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea.
2.3 Principals as instructional leaders

The changing education environment in South Africa has brought to the fore the need for management and leadership development in directing the complex new policy environment and realising transformational goals through teaching and learning. Bush, (2007) and Blasé & Blasé, (2004) assert that the increasing emphasis on managing teaching and learning as the core activities of educational institutions has led to instructional leadership being endorsed as the principal’s most important function. The South African Standard for School for School Leadership, for example, in setting out the core purpose of principalship, focuses strongly on the need to manage teaching and learning (Bush et al., 2010).

Schools exist primarily to facilitate teaching and learning and the principal is in the forefront of this process. The role of the principal in relation to teaching and learning is encompassed in the term instructional leadership (Department of Education, 2007). This understanding and recent focus has intensified the need for principals to excel at competencies related to curriculum and instruction (Fidler & Bowles, 1990). The implications of this intensified need are that principals must understand the various aspects of curriculum development and implementation and know how to provide appropriate staff development to support teachers in implementing curriculum and instructional change.

As noted, despite this expectation, most principals in South Africa have not been trained in implementing the curriculum, nor are they trained in guiding teachers; their training is usually limited to a specific subject area and not on how to support teachers. In general, principal training is fragmented and is undertaken in an ad hoc way (Naidu et al., 2008). This forces them to rely mainly on heads of departments (HOD’s), or School Management Team (SMT) members who are better situated in terms of curriculum implementation, for guidance (Department of
Education, 2009). However, subsequent local research has led to the introduction of the ACE: School Leadership by the Department of Education in South Africa to replace all other management training courses (Hoadley, 2007).

Duties and responsibilities of educators outlined in the Education Labour Relations Council (2003) document also do not clearly reveal the role of the principal in curriculum implementation. A generalised account of these roles is given. The expressed duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- To provide professional leadership within the schools
- To guide, supervise and offer professional advice on the work performance of all staff
- To be responsible for the development of staff training programmes
- To participate in agreed school/educator appraisal processes in order to regularly review their professional practice with the aim of improving teaching, learning and management
- To assess and to record the attainment of learners taught

Naidu et al. (2008) are of the view that the question is no longer whether the principal has a management or leadership task, but rather how the principal should be trained or be prepared for the task of principalship, and in this case, the task of instructional leadership. This, if provided should enable the principal to make interventions for the successful implementation of curriculum at school level. On the other hand, in the absence of such training, principals will find it difficult to guide and support teachers in the implementation. Clearly, improved education for learners requires improved instructional leadership, often described as the principal’s connection to the classroom (Department of Education, 2007; Naidu et al., 2008). However, there is an increasing number of historically disadvantaged schools being labelled ‘dysfunctional’, which
raises concerns whether principals have the required skills, knowledge and expertise to lead schools effectively in a complex and challenging environment as well as curriculum implementation (Naidu et. al., 2008).

2.4 Expectations of teachers

The new curricula were developed by a committee appointed by the Ministry of Education and delivered to schools for implementation by teachers who, according to Bantwini (2010), hardly took part in the development process. In this regard, McLaughlin, (2006) and Cross et al. (2002), argue that policy makers and researchers generally overlook questions of salience on the ground implementers such as teachers. They often impose their own parameters around policy issues and fail to consider how relevant they are to the contexts in which teachers as street level bureaucrats, operate. Such limited teacher participation in the conceptualization and design of curriculum, de-skills teachers by leaving little space for their discretion and creativity. The feelings of uncertainty and a lack of profound understanding resulting from such exclusions, is aggravated by a lack of ongoing professional development that would ensure that teachers know what is required of them (Bantwini, 2010).

Teachers often complain about their infrequent meetings with the subject advisors responsible for their professional development (Bantwini, 2009). According to the teachers, they meet with them for orientation on the curriculum reforms and hardly see them afterwards. Added to this lack of support, is the fact that teachers do not have time to meet with their colleagues and discuss critical classroom issues to devise ways that would ensure effective implementation of the new curriculum reform in all the classrooms (Bantwini, 2010).
In the absence of follow up support by subject advisors, the principal’s role as a mentor becomes crucial, because teachers need ongoing professional support on-site. Kam, Greenberg and Karla (2003) indicate that obtaining principal support is essential because the principal’s leadership will determine whether teacher’s efforts in programme implementation are effective. Secondly, teachers need to be provided with staff development opportunities that will address their emergent instructional needs and help them to be more effective and confident in their teaching. Lastly, ongoing technical support and mentoring to teachers dramatically changes the nature of implementation (Kam, Greenberg & Karla, 2003).

However, Murphy (1990) suggests that part of the reason principals have not been able to act effectively as curriculum leaders is because of teachers’ perceptions of their role in this capacity. Teachers do not view instructional leadership as the primary responsibility of principals and, as a result, they are reluctant to accept their instructional leadership.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The dawn of the new non-racial democratic South Africa in 1994 saw the overhaul and transformation of the education system including the adoption and the implementation of a new curriculum. These changes are reflected in the evolutionary sequence of this curriculum from the introduction of outcomes-based education (OBE), Curriculum 2005 (C2005), the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) to the recent Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS).

Following the problems encountered by teachers and principals in implementing the new curriculum the Ministry of Education commissioned a review of C2005 in 2000 (Department of Education, 2007; Kobola, 2007). This review was followed by the development of the RNCS for
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grades R – 9, which was approved as policy in 2002 (Department of Education, 2010). The reform process was extended to the Further Education and Training Band (FET) in 2005 with the development of subject statements for Grades 10–12 known as the National Curriculum Statement (Department of Education, 2007). More recently a Ministerial Project Committee was appointed with the aim of developing Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements for each subject listed in the National Curriculum Statements for Grades R-12. The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements are a comprehensive and concise set of policy documents which replaced the Subject and Learning Area Statements (SLAS), Learning Programme Guidelines (LPG) and Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG) of the National Curriculum Statements (Department of Education, 2010). In as far as general policy is concerned enormous progress has since been made in the provision of education in South Africa, particularly to the disenfranchised segment of the population (Cross et al, 2002; Pillay, 2005).

Furthermore, with respect to the development of progressive policies, South Africa has emerged as a leader among developing countries in the degree of innovation displayed in the formation of broad policy. Within the schooling system, from OBE through to CAPS, this development has been a radical departure from the previous education system. However, much remains to be done in the schooling system as, particularly in disadvantaged schools, efficiency remains very low. Poorer schools continue to be plagued by high dropout, repetition and failure rates, and these inefficiencies impact negatively at district and school level (Moloi, 2002; Cross et al., 2002; Department of Education, 2010).

The challenges referred to earlier indicate instability in the curriculum change process and there are challenges facing schools in how to implement the plan at school level. This is more evident in under- resourced schools. Jansen (1999) and Moloi (2002) point out that when
OBE was introduced and implemented the change favoured well-resourced schools and well-qualified teachers, and further disadvantaged under-resourced schools where there is a crisis in schooling precipitated by a breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning, as is the case in many township and rural schools. It is common knowledge that most of these schools operate in environments that are regarded as disabling, and only the most advantaged schools seemed to be able to reap some of the hoped-for benefits of C2005 (Rogan, 2007). As a result most public schools in townships seem unable to assist learners to learn and many of them show clear signs of a breakdown in structures. There is loss of authority between teachers and principals, a lack of motivation and many other challenges (Moloi, 2002). Some of the undesirable consequences of these factors are the declining grade 12 results, the unacceptable physical conditions in which some schools operate, and increased uncertainty about educators’ and learners’ safety on school premises. Sporadic and ongoing labour strikes by educators also impact negatively on township schools causing disruptions on tuition in schools which are already dysfunctional (Moloi, 2002).

The crucial question is whether schools are ready in terms of teacher competence and resources and, more importantly, whether principals understand their role of instructional leadership. If principals are to successfully guide teachers, they need to understand their role in the development and interpretation of all curricula areas and have the expert knowledge required to successfully support teachers’ professional development in terms of curriculum and teaching.

This study therefore seeks to investigate the role of principals of township schools in the implementation of curriculum, and the challenges they are confronted with during implementation. It will also attempt to explore the extent to which principals themselves have been prepared by the Department of Education to guide curriculum implementation by teachers in their schools, and what interventions they need to make to facilitate improved curriculum
implementation and improved learning. The study also seeks to determine expectations of teachers in their instructionally oriented interactions with principals, in respect of support they expect to be given in order to enable them to successfully implement curriculum in their schools. Finally, the perceptions of departmental officials are also elicited in order to provide a perspective of those who are expected to assist principals to execute their roles effectively.

4. **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study focuses on curriculum implementation challenges faced by school principals in terms of their role as instructional leaders, teachers’ expectations of principals relating to curriculum implementation, as well as departmental officials’ perceptions of their and principals roles in executing instructional leadership.

The principal question in this study is therefore:

> What are the challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies?

The subsidiary questions that need to be answered to interrogate the principal question are:

- Do principals know what is expected of them in terms of the expectations of the Department of Education’s policy documents on curriculum implementation?
- How do principals understand their role as curriculum leaders in terms of facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies in their schools?
- What support does the Department of Education provide principals in terms of instructional leadership?
• What do teachers expect of their school principals in terms of instructional leadership on curriculum policy implementation?

• Is there a difference in teachers and principals perceptions of instructional leadership within different types of South African schools?

5. METHODOLOGY

This study seeks to investigate challenges faced by principals of historically disadvantaged schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders. A pragmatic approach is used and both qualitative and quantitative data are generated in order to throw light onto the issue under investigation.

Quantitative data will be generated via both pen-and-paper and online questionnaires to provide statistics on the responses made and provide insights into the demographics of the respondents. These data are treated statistically to provide both descriptive and inferential statistics. Likert scale questions are used, i.e. questions or statements followed by a scale of responses where respondents indicate degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement, in order to allow for more subtle comparisons than those simply based on a yes or no response (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

A qualitative approach is used as a means to explore and understand the meanings of individuals and groups which they ascribe to a social or human programme in order to determine the participants’ perceptions of curriculum implementation in schools. This process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, collecting data in the participants’ settings, analyzing the data inductively, building from particulars to general themes and making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009). As pointed out by Merriam (1988),
qualitative research is descriptive and largely inductive; it builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories, rather than testing existing theory. Its main aim according to De Vos (1998) in Nconco (2007) is to understand social meaning that people attach to everyday life.

In this study, questionnaires and interviews are used as data collecting instruments on the challenges principals face with curriculum implementation in terms of their role as instructional leaders. The study will also explore the teachers’ expectations in this regard. The qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to conduct face-to-face discussions with six principals and four DoE officials. These interviews used unstructured and generally open-ended questions to elicit views and opinions from the participants (Creswell, 2009). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), focus group interviews enable the researcher to listen to people and learn from them and also allows access to research participants who may find one-on-one, face-to-face interaction ‘scary’ or ‘intimidating’.

The study was designed to take place in two parts. Firstly, a convenience sample of principals and teachers who were engaged in the Integrated Schools Improvement Project sponsored by the DG Murray Trust and run by the Centre for Educational Research, Technology and Innovation at the NMMU answered pen-and-paper questionnaires and were interviewed. Departmental officials in the Port Elizabeth educational district who volunteered also completed questionnaires and were interviewed. Their responses informed a modified on-line questionnaire which was open to all principals, teachers and departmental officials in South African schools who had access to online facilities and who could be made aware that the questionnaire existed. This form of sampling may be described as ‘opportunistic’ and the many limitations and biases of this type of sampling have been considered and taken into account when offering
interpretations and explanations. A fuller explanation of the research design and methods used is discussed in more detail in chapter three of this manuscript.

6. **ETHICAL ISSUES**

The choice to participate in this study was based on informed consent. The participants in the study who were interviewed and who filled in the pen-and-paper questionnaire were informed as to the nature of the project, what the data would be used for (a PhD study and possible academic publications), that they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that their contributions would remain confidential (the forms were filled in anonymously, but they were also assured that if there was any recognition of the source it would remain confidential). The participants in the second study were invited to participate in an anonymous online questionnaire via a ‘postcard’. When the opportunity arose to directly invite participation verbally or via email, the potential participants were briefed about the study and either physically handed a postcard or had it emailed to them. As they were then left to decide whether to participate and, as the survey was anonymous, the decision to take part rested entirely on them. Ethical clearance was sought and obtained as part of the larger D G Murray sponsored Integrated Schools Improvement Project from the NMMU Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethical issues are discussed in more detail in chapter three of this manuscript.

7. **OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

An overview of the study is presented in chapter one. A brief overview of the literature pertaining to instructional leadership in the context of this study is provided. These include issues of curriculum change and implementation, including the problems associated with curriculum implementation, the roles of principals, as well as expectation of teachers of their
principals. The core issues are formulated into a problem statement. The research methodology is briefly discussed, and the core ethical issues of the research project are sketched.

Chapter two reviews existing literature relevant to the topic in more detail, particularly the challenges faced by principals in the implementation of curriculum in terms of their role as instructional leaders. Issues of policy formulation and change, implementing policy change, factors required for successful implementation, educational change in the South African context, change and instructional leadership, and the school system in South Africa are considered. These issues provide the framework within which the findings of this study are interrogated.

Chapter three provides an account of the research design and methodology, as well as the data collection techniques and analysis procedures. In chapter four and chapter five the results of the study are presented. These findings are discussed in chapter six. Finally, the major conclusions are highlighted and recommendations are made in chapter seven.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines national and international literature which is pertinent to the study in terms of underpinning and motivating the research and providing a framework within which to draw inferences and support arguments. Issues of policy and change are examined and the separation between policy formulation and implementation is highlighted. Lack of political commitment and effective government, as well as a tendency towards centralisation are noted as possible barriers to successful implementation of policies, both generally and in terms of education.

Notions of educational change are explored including belief in the power of change, the complexity of change, and resistance to change. Factors required for successfully implementing change are examined, viz. resources, training and professional development, as well as coaching and mentoring. Educational change in the South African context is briefly and selectively reviewed in terms of Spreen and Vally’s (2010) notion of democratic exuberance, global pressure and curricular change in order to provide background to the study. Thereafter, issues of change and instructional leadership are considered in more depth. Dimensions of the instructional leadership construct are interrogated and the pivotal role of the principal in instructional leadership is highlighted. Possibilities for support for principals are noted which include district support, learning communities and support to help deal with changing
conceptions of curriculum. Finally, the way in which the above mentioned concepts and ideas are used to frame the study is examined.

2. POLICY FORMULATION AND CHANGE

Since the advent of democracy in South Africa a whole host of policies proliferated to address the inequalities of the past. During the period 1995 to 1997 a number of policy White Papers appeared (dubbed the White Paper era) promulgating ambitious targets which ultimately fall short of their desired outcomes (Brynard, 2007; Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008). The inability to meet targets in service delivery eventually brought about a well-known 1997 White Paper on Transforming Public Service delivery (Brynard, 2007). In the case of legislation of educational curricula, little of the well-meant classroom intentions have materialised in practice and the lack of reliable data has often hampered policy maker’s ability to devise clear policy goals with well-defined implementation plans and evaluation mechanisms (Brynard, 2007; Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008).

South African literature on policy formulation and policy implementation suggests that it needs to be acknowledged that these are two different things (policy formulation and policy implementation), and that both are complex processes of formal and informal, legal and illegal, open and hidden interaction and negotiation of different groups and individuals with competing interests (Christie, 2008). The implementation of policies can be a highly conflictual process that may work out quite differently in practise from the imagined result (Nuijten, 2004) and, for this reason, we should remain critical about the relation between planning and reality. These understandings are motivation factors for this research study which seeks insights into policy intervention in schools in order to provide data which may assist in moving towards theory generation in a specific policy environment.
2.1 **Issues of policy implementation**

Policy implementation encompasses those actions by public or private individuals or groups which are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions (van Meter & van Horn, 1975). Brynard (2007) makes a clear distinction between the interrelated concepts of implementation, performance, impact and stress. The mere existence of good policy does not automatically result in successful implementation. Shortcomings regarding policy implementation are, in fact, not so much the fault of the brains trusts that create them, but the result of deficiencies within the bureaucracy. Currently scholars in policy implementation cannot claim that implementation research has reached an intellectual dead end (Brynard, 2007) and more needs to be done to investigate where the policy implementation gaps lie, the problems experienced, and new ways to invigorate implementation in order to move policy goals into practice (McLaughlin, 2006; Brynard, 2007).

2.2 **The policy-implementation gap**

Many scholars throughout the world mention the disjuncture or gap between policy and implementation (Young 1993; Ball 1994; Apple & Beane, 1999; Dale 1999; Blignaut, 2007). The policy gap we refer to is what transpires in the implementation process between policy expectations and perceived policy results. For example, the challenges of service delivery in South Africa since the advent of democracy can be seen as the products of flawed policy implementation. Brynard (2007) suggests that one source of failure is that both political and bureaucratic players excluded calculations about possible failure of programmes from formal policy considerations, i.e. they assumed that the existence of good policies automatically result in successful implementation. Elmore (1999) concurs when he claims that part of this answer can be traced to the mistaken belief held by curriculum reformers that good curriculum models
would create their own demand. Elmore comments further on this dilemma when he states, “We can produce many examples of how educational practice could look different but we can produce few, if any examples of large numbers of teachers engaging in these practices in large scale institutions designed to deliver education to most children” (1999, p. 263).

The following definition reveals that the policy gap can entail a number of aspects that vary loosely between compliance issues and the desired results of the implementation.

Implementation is the carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute but which can also take the form of important executive orders of court decisions. Ideally, that decision identifies the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued, and, in a variety of ways, ‘structures’ the implementation process. The process normally runs through a number of stages beginning with passage of the basic statute, followed by the policy outputs (decisions) of the implementation agencies, the compliance of target groups with those decisions, the actual impacts of agency, and finally important revisions (or attempted revisions) in the basic structure.

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983, p. 359)

The focus is invariably on issues dealing with the implementation or institutions at hand, and is rarely concerned with generalisations and reflects a top-down approach to policy implementation which, in many instances, is where the South African policy gaps currently occur (Spreen & Vally, 2010).
2.3 Barriers to policy implementation

Policy research conducted in South Africa to date has primarily identified financial constraints as the greatest barrier to policy implementation and reform, without fundamentally challenging or questioning the original policy assumptions (Spreen & Vally, 2010). Other barriers to policy implementation problems relate to political commitment by states, effective government, orientation towards centralisation, training, and coaching and mentoring. Each of these factors is dealt with in detail in the sections that follow.

Political commitment

According to McCourt (2003) leadership and political commitment are critical for the success of policy implementation. In this regard, Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) noted that the majority of sub-Saharan countries are signatories to a number of conventions on education, including the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), the World Declaration on Education for All (1990), the Dakar Accord and Millenium Development Goals (2000). These spell out collective commitments by nation states and international agencies on the achievement of education development goals and bind sub-Saharan African countries to changing educational policy and practice in order to realise them. In contrast, in Swaziland there has been a lack of political commitment, which is attributed as the main reason for failure of reform in that country (McCourt, 2003).

Effective government

Ineffective government and corruption have also been described as major obstacles to proper policy implementation. The lack of co-ordination among political representatives and officials and among government departments could also be a problem with implementation especially in developing countries where there is a high level of corruption (Sajid & Khan,
Whether or not implementation occurs will depend on the congruence between the reforms and the local needs and how the changes are introduced and followed through (Fullan, 2001). In South Africa the main conduits for reform consist of the District Education offices, Provincial Education offices and the National Department of Education.

**Orientation towards centralisation**

Sajid and Khan (2006) identified orientation towards centralisation as another barrier to policy implementation. This means that policies and plans are developed in the national sphere with little consultation with the final implementers. For this reason, policy often fails to capture the subtleties of initiatives at grassroots level and therefore appears to be alien to the managers and the very implementers of the policy. The distance of policy makers from practice not only causes problems for the managers of the policy, but also creates a lack of harmony among the different elements of the same policy and among the different units of machinery of government. In contrast to this kind of centralization, Marishane and Botha (2011) suggest ‘deconcentration’, a form of decentralisation that takes place when the central authority establishes units at provincial or district level and staffs them with its personnel. This implies that decision-making and responsibility are assigned to these personnel with the belief that they will be responsive to the needs of the local schools.

### 3. IMPLEMENTING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Fullan (2001) reminds us that in the implementation process, we should keep in mind that we are interested in factors to the extent that they causally influence implementation (or more specifically, the extent to which teachers and students change their practices, beliefs, use of new materials, and corresponding learning outcomes) in the direction of some sought after change. If one or more factors are working against implementation, the process will be less effective. To
put it positively, the more factors supporting implementation, the more change in practice will be accomplished. We should avoid thinking of factors in isolation from each other as they form a system of variables that interact to determine success or failure. Change is a dynamic process involving interacting variables over time regardless of the mode of analysis.

Focus on educational change emerged in the 1960’s when educational reforms in most Western countries were based on externally mandated large-scale changes that focused on renewed curricula and instruction. This phase was followed in the 1970’s by a period of increasing dissatisfaction by the public and government officials with public education and the performance of schools, decreasing financing of change initiatives, and shrinking attention to fundamental reforms. In the 1980’s (a third phase) there was a shift towards granting decision making power to, and emphasising the accountability of, local systems and schools. However, in the nineties it became evident that accountability and self-management of school authorities, local communities and schools, in and of themselves, were insufficient to make successful changes in education (Sharan, 1999).

Furthermore, educational change began to place more emphasis on organizational learning, systemic reforms and large scale reform initiatives rather than restructuring isolated fields of education. Sharan (1999) argues that educators’ understanding of educational change has developed from linear approaches to non-linear systems approaches that emphasise the complexity of reform processes. Similarly the focus of change has shifted from restructuring single components of educational systems towards transforming the organizational cultures that prevail in given schools or school systems as well as towards transforming large sections of a given school or system rather than distinct components of schooling.
The consensus among theorists and practitioners working in the latter half of the 20th century is that models of thinking about educational change no longer provide sufficient conceptual tools for responding to multidimensional needs and politically contested environments (Sharan, 1999). It is also generally acknowledged that significant educational change cannot be achieved by a linear-like process. The major challenge of educational change is how to understand and cope with rapid change in an unpredictably turbulent world. Emerging new theories of educational change are beginning to employ concepts and ideas derived from the sciences of chaos and complexity. The main characteristics of these new theories are nonlinearity of processes, thinking about education as an open system, the interdependency of the various components of the system, and the influence of context on the change process itself (Hargreaves, 1997).

3.1 Belief in change

The international literature acknowledges that change is a common educational theme and, as it is believed that the change process has the power to promote social, economic and cultural transformation, it is often highlighted in plans for the development of schools (Sharan, 1999). This belief becomes particularly widespread during times of fundamental changes, which South Africa has experienced on a grand scale since the dawn of democracy in 1994, and which have impacted on all aspects of life. During this time the notion of change has underpinned most of the core debates within the South African education system as it is seen by politicians and governments as an instrument for social engineering and the creation of social growth (Swanepoel, 2009). However, Fullan and Miles (1999) note that after years of failed education reform it has become evident that few people really understand what the term ‘change’ means. They believe that while many use the phrase “knowledge of the change process is crucial, it is
usually used superficially and glibly and seldom leads to appropriate action” (Fullan & Miles, 1999, p. 74). Nevertheless, it is a belief in the potency that well managed change provides which underpins the fact that many researchers have been investigating the change process over many years in an attempt to bring together evidence and insights on educational change issues across the world (Sarason, 1996), and which motivated this study on the challenges that instructional leaders in South African schools are faced with in a new policy climate.

3.2 The complexity of change

Fullan (2001) observed that effective approaches to managing change call for combining and balancing factors that do not apparently go together, viz. simultaneous simplicity–complexity; looseness-tightness; fidelity-adaptivity; evaluation-non evaluation; as well as strong leadership and participation. He believes that, more than anything else, effective strategies for improvement require an understanding of the process in a way of thinking that goes beyond any list of steps or phases to be followed.

Fullan (2001) identified nine critical factors which he organised into three main categories relating to the characteristics of the innovation or change, local roles and external factors. Each of these factors can be unpacked into several sub-variables as indicated below:

- Characteristics of innovation or change: need, clarity, complexity and quality or practicality

- Local roles: district, community, principal and teacher.

- External factors: government and other agencies
However, research suggests that change does not come easily and has revealed that as far as implementation of educational change is concerned, change initiatives have frequently failed (Swanepoel, 2009). Real change involves loss, anxiety and struggle and, whether change is sought or resisted, happens by chance or design, whether we look at it from the standpoint of reformers or those they manipulate, of individuals or institutions, the response is characteristically ambivalent (Marris, 1999). New experiences are always initially reacted to in the context of familiar and reliable constructs of reality in which individuals attach personal meaning to the experiences regardless of how meaningful it might be to others. In this context Smith (2001), argues that for attempts at educational change to be successful, cognisance must be taken of what education policy change looks like from the point of view of the individual and their actions, reactions and responses.

3.3 Resistance to change

Resistance to change is viewed by many as a natural human phenomenon due to a concern for an expected loss experienced by those affected by the change (Swanepoel, 2009). This belief is supported by Briars and Resnick (2000) who observed that the turbulence of educational exchanges in the public domain has caused numbers of educators to react negatively about changing their ideas and practices. In turn, Carl (2007) notes that the apparent negativity of teachers towards change is not necessarily that they resist change but rather that they are uncertain about what is expected from them. Fullan (2001, p. 31) present this idea in a more nuanced way when they state that “All real change involves passing through the zones of uncertainty … the situation of being at sea, of being lost, of confronting more information than you can handle”.
As major change is painful and requires different ways of behaving, thinking and perceiving, change management cannot be done in isolation and requires that experts who understand processes be invited to assist the school to deal with change (Mathibe, 2007). It is also significant to note that significant change is line management and leadership driven, and change management and leadership cannot be delegated. It would be expected then that principals should create a climate and culture for success in schools by ensuring that there is room for self-expression, creativity, communication and motivation in all structures.

Other studies reveal that teachers do not wish to be mere recipients who are expected to implement the changes, but that they expect to be included in the processes of meaningful decision-making. They want their voices to be heard and believe that the more they participate in initiating school change, the more positive they will feel about the change and the more willing they will be to seriously engage in future change (Carl, 2005; Poppleton & Williamson, 2004). As long as teachers perceive themselves as mere recipients who have to implement changes decided upon elsewhere, they will feel that their professional status is challenged and might jeopardise the actualisation of well-meant school changes (Swanepoel, 2009). However, change may come about either because it is imposed by natural events or deliberate reform or because we voluntarily participate in or even initiate change when we find dissatisfaction, inconsistency, or intolerability in our current situation. In either case, the meaning of change will rarely be clear at the outset, and ambivalence will pervade the transition. Nevertheless, any innovation cannot be assimilated unless its meaning is shared (Fullan, 2001). In addition, Chikoko (2007) argues that people desire involvement in the making of decisions on matters that affect them, even when they sometimes have no capacity to effectively make decisions, which suggests that decentralization should be accompanied by sustainable capacity-building among stakeholders.
Intervention to differing but sufficient extents in each of these areas is necessary to shift a prevailing ethos in education (Mason, 2009). In other words, change and sustainable development in education, at whatever level, are not so much a consequence of effecting change in one particular factor or variable, no matter how powerful the influence of the factor, but are more a case of generating momentum in a new direction by attention to as many factors as possible (Mason, 2009). For example, in the case of a school where the prevailing ethos is one of failure, the agency structure debate invites us to consider whether change can be effected through human agency, or whether deeper and more powerful structural forces are at work. Structuralists, who find in economic factors what in this perspective might appropriately be termed the primary levels of history, might suggest that there is little we know about this as human agents because the despair that pervades the school and system is primarily a consequence of the jobless future that awaits school leavers, whether certificated or not. The ethos of the school will not change until the structure and the nature of the economy change in such a way as to provide a meaningful and worthwhile employment for certificated school leavers (Mason, 2009). In turn, complexity theorists would include in their understanding of change both structural factors and the influence of human agents – each in turn part of a wider agglomeration of mutually and inter-dependent networks and netted relationships (Mason, 2009).

4. FACTORS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

According to Carl (2009), factors which may inhibit development must constantly be borne in mind during the implementation phase as resistance manifests itself in different forms. The challenge is therefore to identify the sources of this resistance on a continuous basis. The real measure of success during the implementation phase is determined largely by the quality of the planning design and dissemination done beforehand (Carl, 2009). It comprises not only
aspects such as involvement of all consumers, credibility, acceptable learner responses and completeness but also the accentuation of the following factors:

- Continuous contact with consumers to give advice and help, to encourage mutual contact between consumers and to effect contact with learners and parents

- Clear communication to effect roles, to explain terminology, to illustrate possible means of evaluation and to supply the well-known queries of Who? What? When? Where? How? and Why?

- Provision of support service through for example, spelling out time scheduling, supplying material, setting one’s own example creating a climate within which trust and security figure, and encouragement of teachers.

- Compensation through for example extrinsic rewards, e.g., financial gain, praise, acknowledgement and, also, intrinsic aspects of compensation. The intrinsic aspect is realised when persons regard the successful application as sufficient compensation in itself. A further advantage of intrinsic compensation is that it is the true development which is rewarded and not its symptoms.

  Carl (2009)

Development opportunities and the creation of a climate conducive for active involvement are also important factors for successful implementation. Problems must be addressed continuously, practice-oriented in-service training must be given, and support by the education department and school must be available continuously to offer material assistance and
encouragement. Participation through active involvement in the classroom is essential, as it builds a relationship of confidence between initiators and implementers (Carl, 2009).

4.1 Resources

According to Brynard (2007) financial and technical resources, along with the quality of human resources, are key factors that contribute to successful policy implementation. Besides the lack of resources, there might also be a problem with the management of resources. The over or under spending of the budget for example, might be a good indicator of such mismanagement. De Clercq (2002) also believes that poor policy implementation and service delivery in schools is as a result of a lack of departmental capacity and resources which severely limit the national, provincial, district and school performance. This lack of capacity is further exacerbated by the education department’s policy overload, unfunded mandates, lack of policy prioritization and strategic planning as well as severe inherited backlogs, inadequate provincial resources and managerial capacity (de Clercq, 2002).

A study by Hoffman and Steenbergen (2004) indicates that when educators, policy makers, and school teams work together, their outcomes tend to be more successful than in other schools. This study also showed the importance of the allocation to schools by the education authorities of ample finances adequate for the provision of resources necessary for the implementation of national policy. However, other studies indicate that it is not the presence of resources but how these are used to which contribute to learning differentials (Hoadley et al, 2009).
4.2 Professional development

McGee et al. (2004) suggest that professional development focus on the curriculum needs of teachers. In this study, teachers emphasised that professional development was crucial to teachers’ learning about a new curriculum statement and the methods to implement it. Mathibe (2007) pointed out that in South Africa, unlike in the UK and USA, any educator can be appointed to the office of principalship irrespective of the fact that he/she had a school management or leadership qualification. Such openness to appoint to the highest office does not only defeat Frederick Taylor’s view of getting the right man for the job (van der Westhuizen & Mosoge, 1999), but it also places school administration, management, leadership and governance in the hands of technically unqualified personnel.

Ad hoc attempts have been made to provide skills and professional development programmes for principals in South African schools (ETDP SETA, 2002). For example an advisory body consisting of former principals, union representatives and members of the Education Department, was established to give direction to the Delta Foundation’s programme for developing capacity in school management and leadership (ETDP SETA, 2000). Key features of this programme were:

- Ensuring that training programmes conform to the ETDP SETA-SAQA standards
- Ensuring that all training has a long-term strategic objective
- Ensuring that all principals’ training should be a mixture of face-to-face contact and group work
• Rigorous impact evaluation and cost benefit analysis; and the department of education to support the initiative as full partner by providing financial assistance to the programme

The ETDP SETA (2002) notes that in South Africa some management development programmes are provided by universities, as well as via workshop based training offered by the Department of Education (Mathibe, 2007). A study conducted by Joint Education Trust (JET) on training offered by 12 non-government organizations (NGOs), established that all programmes offered by the NGOs provided some form of training to principals (ETDP SETA, 2002). The content of some of the training programmes included:

• Personnel management: developing a personal vision and mission, leadership skills, stress management, change management and

• Management of curriculum delivery: managing the classroom and quality assurance procedures

The diversity and range of professional development programmes noted above suggests that professional development programmes for principals in South Africa are:

• Fragmented as there are a number of agencies engaged in professional development with different points of emphasis

• Not co-ordinated and may be irrelevant: University qualifications on school management and leadership differ in depth, quality and emphasis since there is no directive from the National Education Ministry on what service providers should
offer in relation to what schools need. In other words, universities provide qualifications which may not be responsive to school needs.

Mathibe (2007) suggests that there should be control over programmes that are provided to both practising and prospective principals as detailed in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Subsequently, the Department of Education introduced a new threshold qualification for aspiring principals as part of its wider strategy to improve educational standards. The course is an Advanced Certificate: School Leadership aimed at empowering school leaders to lead and manage schools effectively in a time of great change, challenge and opportunity (Bush et al., 2009; Department of Education, 2008). The course, which began in 2007, was tested nationally with candidates, including serving principals as well as members of the School Management Teams (SMTs). The research team that conducted an evaluation of the programme during its testing phase recommended in its report that this national programme at Advanced Diploma level becomes an entry-level qualification for new principals as soon as there are sufficient qualified candidates, directly or following the conversion process, to meet the demand for new principals (Bush et al., 2009). It is within this context that I have conducted this study, i.e. to investigate some of the practices in schools that necessitate professional development of school principals in relation to their role as instructional leaders facilitating the implementation of curriculum policy.

4.3 Coaching and mentoring

Just as it is necessary for principals to have requisite qualifications before they are appointed to headship positions, there is a great need for systematic professional development programmes for practicing principals. Smit (2001) noted that workplace learning is a major contributor to competitiveness both on the school and the nation. It is therefore noted that on-
site-learning augments flexible delivery mechanisms since on-site-learning processes are characterised by:

- Acquisition of skills and knowledge in the midst of action;
- Collective action; and
- An outstanding experience of the learning process itself.

On-site learning processes include joint work that entail shared responsibility for tasks such as teaching, curriculum writing, assessment development, as well as creating interdependence and co-operation among educators (Mathibe, 2009). In addition, through mentoring programmes, experienced principals guide activities of other principals. For example mentoring and coaching are often used to match novices with veterans, enabling veterans to share their knowledge and expertise with the initiates (Mathibe, 2009).

Joyce and Showers (1982) found that in effective schools there is a coaching environment where teachers work as one another’s coaches in implementing change. In this way they have a real reason to work collaboratively. And because all teachers are learners as well as coaches, they are freer to take the necessary trial and error that can lead to improved practise. As more teachers work together in implementing the change, there is a rise in comfort level and spread of acceptance. This is confirmed by Marlow and Minehira (1996) who believe that once these stages have occurred, the new curriculum reaches a point of full implementation.

5. EDUCATIONAL CHANGE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

In reviewing the curriculum process in South Africa, Spreen & Vally (2010) reflect more broadly on the evolution of the policy process since 1994. They provide a historical overview of
the policy process and debates that framed the last decade of policy-making in South Africa. They begin by examining the political framework within which policies were negotiated and they assert that many scholars throughout the world mention a disjuncture between policy and implementation (as noted earlier in this chapter).

5.1 Democratic exuberance

Spreen & Vally (2010) argue that there was a period of democratic exuberance during which many post-apartheid education policies were formulated under the prevailing assumption that after the 1994 elections the new political dispensation would automatically translate into a better educational system for all. These assumptions and expectations were bolstered by gleaming rhetoric that suggested all efforts would be focused on equity, redress and redistribution. Furthermore, they believe that the eloquent language reflected in South Africa’s ‘new Rainbow Nation’ painted idealised versions of equitable classrooms, schools and communities suggesting to the public that everyone would now have access to the same (exemplary) educational provisioning and support as the formerly all-white schools as the government instigated wide-ranging initiatives to transform education from its apartheid past including improved access to education.

This was evident in the government’s investment in education that tripled between 1994 and 2006 from R31.8 billion to R92.1 billion (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010). Thus the public’s eagerness to overcome the legacy of apartheid, coupled with overwhelming enthusiasm and support for the ruling party, shielded the policy process from public scrutiny (Spreen & Vally, 2010).
5.2 **Global pressures**

A review of national literature reveals that South Africa’s education system, like those in other national contexts, has been forced to respond to the needs of a global economy. The intention was to usher in a new era but the crucial question frequently asked is “Will the ‘harvest’ be as bountiful as anticipated?” (Rogan, 2007, p. 98). Forced responses to the needs of a global economy has resulted in the integration of the historically separate worlds of work and learning through the creation of a new framework for qualifications, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), as provided by the 1995 South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act. The consequence has been the emergence of a new discourse that included the notion of skills, re-skilling, outcomes, competence, accountability, quality assurance, life-long learning, and the adoption of an outcomes-based education (OBE) orientation to education and training (Wilmot, 2005).

5.3 **Curricular change in South Africa**

Rogan and Grayson (2003) point out that, whilst policy documents contain visionary and sound ideas, implementing these ideas often proves to be slower and more difficult than anticipated. In their view much work needs to be done on implementation issues in South Africa if the promises of new curricula are to make an impact in schools. In order to address such challenges, the South African Department of Education launched programmes to help teachers understand the new curricula and change teaching practices. However, limited changes have been seen, and this raises the question as to why the difficulties actually occur (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

The first attempt to implement Curriculum 2005 (an outcomes based learner-centred approach) encountered so many problems that it was considered to be ‘not implemented’
(Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) of South Africa was criticized for not fulfilling its mandate. The curriculum was revised (Department of Education, 2002) with some scaling back of some ambition, if not the intended goals (McGrath, 2005).

In his study of how teachers perceive the new curriculum reform, Bantwini (2009) suggests that the lack of implementation success of the curriculum in South Africa was due to the fact that the Revised National Curriculum Statement (Department of Education, 2002) required teachers to change from some of their routine classroom practises to teaching approaches and methods they were unfamiliar with which included promoting learners’ creative critical thinking and learning abilities. Bantwini’s (2009) study revealed that teachers were still using traditional teaching approaches where they wrote notes on the chalkboard and then require learners to copy and memorize them. This observation has been confirmed by Macdonald (1990, 1991) in Webb (2009) who found that rote learning appeared to have built a self-sustaining momentum. In this regard, teachers explained that drilling was an effective way of teaching since children had difficulty in reading. Furthermore, Macdonald’s diagnosis was that teacher’s own lack of conceptual knowledge and reading skills were the foundations on which these practises rested.

The new teaching approaches encouraged the use of inquiry-based learning and a constructivist approach (Moll, 2002). The teachers felt that these approaches required excessive work as they had to assist learners to understand and apply them. Since most of the learners were from rural backgrounds where resources such as libraries were scarce and were not familiar with carrying out research projects, teachers were required to put in a great deal of extra effort to teach learners the basics of research, something with which they themselves were not familiar (Bantwini, 2009). Similarly, a study conducted by McGee et al. (2004) revealed common
challenges in curriculum implementation, such as teacher overwork, an overcrowded curriculum, and the need to use new assessment results efficiently and effectively.

6. CHANGE AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Goodson (2001) defines a number of different segments in educational change processes – the internal, the external and the personal. Internal change agents work within school settings to initiate and promote change within an external framework of support and sponsorship. Lieberman (2000) argues that changing schools is a long term process which involves an understanding of the policy problem and the local culture of individual schools and their teachers. Research data suggest that each school shapes its own culture and exerts pressure on all of its members to conform to the culture to accomplish its goals (Sirotnik, 1999). External change on the other hand is mandated in a top-down manner, as with the introduction of national curriculum guidelines or new state testing regimes. The next change process, personal change, refers to the personal beliefs and missions that individuals bring to the change process. Goodson (2001) has argued that the embrace of change only happens with an inner change in people’s beliefs and plans. Their belief is that the more these segments are integrated and harmonized, the more it is likely that the social movement underpinning educational change will gather momentum.

6.1 Instructional leadership

The role of instructional leadership by principals is a relatively new concept that emerged in the 1980’s and called for a shift of emphasis from principals being administrators to instructional or academic leaders. This shift was influenced largely by research which found that effective schools usually had principals who stressed the importance of instructional leadership Brookover and Lezotte as cited by Marishane and Botha (2011). After a brief waver in the 1990s,
when it was displaced by discussions of school-based management and facilitative leadership, the notion of instructional leadership has recently made a comeback, with increasing importance placed on academic standards and the need for schools to be accountable to all stakeholders (Marishane & Botha, 2011).

Southworth (2000) points out that instructional leadership is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth. Meanwhile Bush’s (2007) definition stresses the direction of the influence process:

Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students. Leaders’ influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself.

Bush (2007, p. 360)

So what is instructional leadership? According to Marishane and Botha (2011) instructional leadership are those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning including the professional learning of teachers (Southworth, 2000). Instructional leadership clearly describes the primary role of the principal in the quest for excellence in education and, according to Richardson (1989), he or she must lead toward educational achievement, must be a person who makes instructional quality the top priority of the school, and must be able to bring that vision to realization. In addition, Kamper (2008) pointed out that the principal as instructional leader must monitor learner progress meticulously, constructively and individually and in close consultation with teachers and should provide high quality teaching.
Principals as instructional leaders

According to Hallinger (2003) instructional leadership focuses on the role of the school principal in coordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction in the school. Principals as curricular leaders are responsible for the overall operation of their schools and they are expected to provide direction and support to teachers and help them identify, select, and develop programmes and materials that meet student needs within the context of the school’s vision and mission. Principals also need to ensure that teachers have the time, resources and professional development opportunities to implement curricular programmes (Marlow & Minehira, 1996). In addition, instructional leaders focus building and maintaining a spirit of collegiality in the school environment where teachers work closely as colleagues in order to let teaching practices be open to scrutiny, discussion and refinement (Matter, 2012). In particular, the principal’s duty to monitor instruction increased along with their responsibility to help teachers improve their teaching. Perhaps the most important role the principal plays in instructional leadership is facilitating teachers in the implementation process, because even the best official curriculum is worthless unless it can be successfully put into operation by the teachers (Marlow & Minehira, 1996).

Blasé and Blasé (2004) asserted that although school principals have long believed that instructional leadership facilitates school improvement there has been, until recently, little knowledge of what behaviours comprise good instructional leadership has been available in the literature (Smith & Andrews, 1989). Despite the fact that knowledge of behaviour comprising good instructional leadership is a recent phenomenon, principals have always been required to lead and manage their schools whether they have been prepared for the challenge or not. They are expected to work alongside teachers and participate in regular, collaborative, professional
learning experiences to improve teaching and learning, and are expected to make the activities surrounding the process of teaching and learning their highest priority (Edwards, 2006).

Such expectations are confirmed by Kruger (2003) who asserts that school effectiveness studies emphasise the principal’s instructional leadership role which concerns the principal’s responsibility to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place. Teaching and learning in the classroom involving all the beliefs, decisions, strategies and tactics which principals utilise to ensure instructional effectiveness in every classroom are core activities of the school. Instructional leadership occurs when the principal provides direction, resources and support to both educators and learners with the aim of improving teaching and learning at a school. It can also be described as the principal’s connection to the classroom (Department of Education, 2007; Kruger, 2003).

Meanwhile Bush and Glover (2009) in Bush et al., (2010) referring to the South African context, claim that a principal focused strongly on managing teaching and learning would undertake the following activities:

- Oversee the curriculum across the school
- Ensure that lessons take place
- Evaluate learner performance through scrutiny of examination results and internal assessments
- Monitor the work of HODs, through scrutiny of their work plans and portfolios
- Ensure that HODs monitor the work of educators (teachers) within their learning areas
- Arrange a programme of class visits followed up by feedback to educators (teachers)
- Ensure the availability of appropriate learning and teaching support materials (LTSM).
While good instructional leadership is believed to be the path to good teaching and learning and a sound culture of learning and teaching in their schools, it must be noted that research on instructional leadership qualities reveal that there is no single leadership skill or set of skills which are presumed to be appropriate for all schools or instructional situations (Chell, 1995).

There is an increasing international body of research on how principals influence school effectiveness, but less is known about how to help principals develop the capacities that make a difference in how schools function and what students learn. In this regard, Davis et al. (2005) argue that many aspiring principals are too easily admitted into and passed through the system on the basis of their performance on academic coursework rather than on a comprehensive assessment of the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to successfully lead schools. Although these principals are certified, they may not be equipped for the shifting role of the principal from manager to effective instructional leader. This lacuna has necessitated research to inform policy makers and programme administrators on the design of principal preparation and on-going development programmes (Davis et al., 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2010).

In the South African context for example, Bush et al. (2010) note that principals have very little experience of instructional leadership. However, the recent introduction of the ACE: School Leadership programme for practising and aspiring principals includes management of teaching and learning as one of its core modules, recognising that this is perceived as a crucial role for principals, deputies and HODs. Currently, this function of teaching and learning is undertaken by HODs and they play a critical function in school improvement initiatives who according to Ali and Botha, (2006) are among other things responsible for carrying out classroom teaching, planning the curriculum, mentoring newly appointed teachers, implementing
the strategic objectives of the school at departmental level and provide reports on the performance of teachers and learners to the school principal as and when required.

6.2 Dimensions of the instructional leadership construct

The most frequently used conceptualisation of instructional leadership was developed by Hallinger (2003). This model proposes three dimensions of the instructional leadership construct viz. defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive learning climate. Each of these dimensions contains specific job functions and a variety of principal practices and behaviour (Marishane & Botha, 2011). These dimensions are further delineated into ten instructional leadership functions. Hallinger, (2003) outlines the dimensions and functions as follows:

Defining the school’s mission

Two functions, framing the school’s goals and communicating the school’s goals, comprise the dimension ‘defining the school’s mission’. These functions concern the principal’s role in working with staff to ensure that these goals are focused on the academic progress of its students. While this role does not assume that the principal defines the school’s mission alone, it does assume that the principal’s responsibility is to ensure that the school has a clear academic focus and to communicate it to staff.

Managing the instructional programme

Managing the instructional programme focuses on the co-ordination and control of instruction and curriculum. This dimension incorporates three leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, co-ordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress. These functions require the leader to be deeply engaged in the school’s instructional programme. This
framework assumes that development of the academic core of the school is a key leadership responsibility of the principal.

Promoting a positive school learning climate

The third dimension, promoting a positive school climate, includes several functions: protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and learning. This dimension conforms to the notion that effective schools create an academic press through the development of high standards and expectations and a culture of continuous improvement. It is therefore the responsibility of the instructional leader to align the school’s standards and practices with its mission and to create a climate that supports teaching and learning.

6.3 Democracy and the pivotal role of principals

As far as South Africa is concerned, with the new dispensation that was established in 1994, new legislation was promulgated which stipulates that government is committed to the development of a democratic system that provides for the participation of all stakeholders with a vested interest in education (Swanepoel, 2009). However, Singh and Manser (2008) point out that the school principal plays a pivotal role in a school-based management dispensation and the impact he/she has on the tone and ethos of a school is even more crucial than before in the process of building a culture conducive to change. It is also true that with school-based management, the responsibilities and workload of school principals are assuming even larger proportions than previously (Botha, 2004). These aspects include managing change whilst raising the achievement of learners and being part of a team of teachers who channel all their energies towards teaching learners to realise their full potential (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010, Marishane & Botha, 2011). The burden for implementation of these measures has fallen squarely
on the principals of schools. As one principal in school declared “I feel like I am responsible for the whole world” (Fink & Brayman, 2004, p. 432). As such school principals are crucial figures in the change processes taking place in South African schools and they have significant roles to play when new policies are introduced and implemented, which is a focus of this particular research study.

6.4 On-going support for principals

As mentioned earlier, support for principals in South Africa is often limited to workshops and short courses (only in recent years was a qualification developed (ACE: School Leadership) to equip practising and aspiring principals to improve their practise) (Bush et al., 2009). According to Marishane and Botha (2011) principals have been offered few incentives and have encountered many hazards for venturing into the school leadership domain. They identified that a weak knowledge base in curriculum and instruction, fragmented district expectations, territorial treaties negotiated with teachers, and the diverse roles played by the principal keep many administrators from carving this role effectively. They further assert that school districts can strengthen principal’s hands in becoming strong instructional leaders by

- addressing the barriers noted above through policies and teacher development training
- defining the instructional leadership role so that administrators clearly understand what is expected of them
- using an assessment system that provides data on a principal instructional leadership that are both reliable and valid for accountability and useful professional improvement.
The importance of on-going support is evident in Darling-Hammond et al.’s. (2010) study, conducted at Bank Street College, New York in the US, where principals participate in a year long programme that includes an intensive summer institute, bimonthly half day seminars, and a principal mentor and coach who guides first year-principals through their new operational responsibilities while grounding them in school improvement. Their design reflects an assumption that given the difficulty of maintaining an instructional focus in the complex rush of practice, principals benefit from meeting regularly with colleagues to reinforce their vision and develop and carry out a strong school improvement plan.

Similarly, in an international study conducted by the Cross city Campaign for Urban School Reform, principals received considerable targeted support including working with relationships district officials. All principals in the districts engaged in walk-throughs with district officials, monthly principal conference where instruction was the only topic, mentorship, support groups and visits to other schools to observe exemplary practice (Fullan, 2007).

Interventions such as these suggest the critical importance of on-going support to practising principals to enable them to improve their practice, cultivate continuous learning and reflection, and enable them to help their leaders to learn and try out new ideas, reflect on their findings, problem solve and accept peer support from colleagues (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010).

**District support and learning communities**

South African and international literature research suggests that strong district support positively impacts on reform implementation and the lack thereof, especially when the actual policy directives lack detail on how the ideals might be realized in practice, negatively impacts
implementation (Rogan, 2007; Fullan, 2001). This suggestion is evident in schools that sustained reforms through district and state allies which protected their reform efforts during periods of transition or crisis and secured resources (money, time, staff and space) essential to reforms. Those schools that failed to sustain reforms were sometimes located in districts that were infamous for experimenting with new kinds of programmes and were not provided with any ongoing support (Fullan, 2001). Huberman and Miles (1984, p. 273) emphasizing the central role that support plays put it thus, “… large scale change bearing innovations lived or died by the amount and quality of assistance that their users received once the change was underway.”

Fullan (2001) further asserts that professional learning communities or collaborative work cultures at the school and ideally at the district level are critical for the implementation of attempted reforms and that school learning that produces desirable outcomes, is a function of several in-school variables, i.e. school leadership, vision, culture, structure, strategy and policy resources, interacting with out of-school variables such as district, community, and government. Success is generated by a combination of external stimulus, external support, and internal school mobilization involving teachers, principals, students and community members.

*Changing conceptions of curriculum*

With regard to curriculum, Marishane and Botha (2011) maintain that principals need to know about the changing conceptions of curriculum, educational philosophies and beliefs, knowledge and specialization and fragmentation, curricular sources and conflict, and curriculum evaluation and improvement. With regard to instruction, principals need to know about different models of teaching, the theoretical reasons for adopting a particular model, the pedagogy of the internet and the theories underlying the technology-based learning environment. In terms of assessment, principals need to know about the principles of learner assessment and assessment
procedures, with emphasis on alternative assessment methods that aim to improve rather than prove student learning.

The instructional leader is thus responsible for the implementation of the core curriculum in the school, therefore there is much the principal must know and do in order to become an effective instructional leader. Leading the instructional programme of a school means a commitment to living and breathing a vision of success in teaching and learning which includes focusing on learning objectives, modelling behaviour of learning and designing programmes and activities on instruction (Marishane & Botha, 2011).

7. SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

As this study interrogates instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa, it is useful to place them within the overall context of schooling in the country. Fleisch (2008) and the SA Human Rights Commission (2006) assert that South Africa appears to have not one, but two unofficial education systems mirroring the problems of two economies. These two systems do not produce equitable academic achievements. One, which caters for the elite and the White and Black middle class (about 20% of the population), provides an education comparable to that offered to middle class children worldwide (Taylor, 2006). Christie (2008) argues that these middle class learners come to school with cultural resources of all sorts that give them advantages at school. These include what she calls crude privileges: having the right contacts, help with studies, extra teaching, and information on the education system and job outlets. Furthermore, middle class learners possess, from their home backgrounds, a particular cultural capital, particular values, attitude and tastes and a range of artefacts such as books and musical instruments (Christie, 2008). These resources enable the schools to draw heavily on the cultural capital and ethos of the middle classes, so that for these learners there are continuities
between home and school. As a result, learners from the middle classes are able to turn their social advantage into educational advantage, as their social heritage becomes scholastic achievement (Christie, 2008).

In contrast, the majority of schools are not equipped for success and are barely functioning. These institutions fall within a system that serves the majority (over 80%) of the South African working class and poor children. According to Mbokodi (2008), these schools are characterised by poor staff provisioning and physical resources and are located in rural areas that do not attract qualified personnel and have to make do with under-qualified staff. In describing this situation, van der Berg (2005) estimates the scale of the problem as follows:

Educational quality in historically black schools – which constitute 80% of enrolment and are thus central to educational progress – has not improved significantly since political transition

(van der Berg, 2005, p. 1)

His research (van der Berg, 2005, p. 2) shows that school results in South Africa are “…‘bimodal’, namely, there are two patterns of scores on the graph, one for ‘affluent schools’ and one for ‘the resource-scarce black schooling system’.

Historically disadvantaged schools are essentially dysfunctional schools with children achieving at unacceptable low levels due to poverty, health nutrition and educational systems. Fleisch (2008) notes that schools such as the above, that enrol working class and poor children, provide a much more restricted set of knowledge and skills and are less than adequate. According to Moloi (2002) these schools are characterised by school management and leadership that is undertaken by unskilled, poorly qualified principals, who do not have necessary
management skills which resulted in this widespread dysfunction in schools. One of the possible outcomes of poor management and instructional leadership is reflected in the results of the Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SAQMEC) whose assessments covered reading and mathematics for representative samples of sixth grade students. The results showed that of the 163 randomly selected children in the sixth grade; just over half were not able to demonstrate the ability to read and make meaning of a simple comprehension task (Webb, 2009). In addition, more than half of the children had not even reached what is considered to be a basic numeracy level, that is, a two-step addition or subtraction operation involving carrying of integers (Webb, 2009). According to Hoadley et al. (2009), a matter of growing concern is the persistent poor performance of South African students on national tests where about 80% of the schools are not functioning adequately. They have further noted that the management of curriculum under these general conditions of system change has proved to be a continuing challenge for historically disadvantaged schools as is outlined below.

Historically, the plight of historically disadvantaged schools began in 1953 when Bantu Education was introduced with the aim of stabilising the proletariat, producing a semi-skilled workforce, and the prevention of juvenile delinquency and political militancy among working class youth (Cross & Chisholm, 1990). Black education in South Africa continued to deteriorate into the late 1980s, and was exacerbated by increased politicization of teachers, formation of militant teacher organizations, and the rejection of educational authorities (Morphet, Schaffer & Millar, 1986; Reeves, 1994). This situation resulted in, amongst others, the cessation of school inspections as teachers threatened anyone who tried to evaluate their performance (World Bank, 1995). A culture of little or no accountability to education authorities developed and continued
in schools after the election of a new government in 1994 (World Bank, 1995; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999), something which appears to have residual effects to date.

The differences mentioned earlier as to the kinds of unofficial school systems that still exist in South Africa have been confirmed by Christie (2008), who also noted that schooling in South Africa provides vastly different experiences for learners. Most obviously, they show that the deep inequalities carved by apartheid as well as the effects of history, politics, language, and sub-standard teaching, are still present (Christie, 2008; Webb, 2009). Even the redistribution of funds from rich to poor provinces and schools does not seem to have worked powerfully enough to make up for initial differences and poor schools remain ‘exposed sites’ in relation to the academic demands of schooling.

As such, this study focuses on instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools. However, to better understand the current situation within the South African context in terms of issues and perceptions of instructional leadership, schools outside of this category (system), i.e. those considered to not be historically disadvantaged, are also considered. This approach was taken in order to be able to make comparisons between the two schools systems as described by Fleisch (2008). These comparisons should make possible judgements as to the current situation in terms of instructional leadership, i.e. do differences still exist between these types of schools (principals and teachers), if so, what are the main differences, how do they contribute to their success or dysfunctionality in terms of instructional leadership and curriculum implementation, and how can the situation be improved.
8. FRAMING THE STUDY

The literature on educational change, viz. policy formulation, policy-implementation gap, barriers to policy implementation, factors required for successful implementation, resources, professional development that was reviewed in this chapter will serve as a broad theoretical framework against which to view this study and which will guide the investigation of the research questions. In addition, the political framework within which policies are negotiated forms part of this framework. More specifically, the literature on the principal as instructional leader, and particularly Hallinger’s (2003) model of instructional leadership as well as the constructs of coaching and mentoring and support for principals form a major focus of this study. Finally, the notion of two unofficial schooling systems in South Africa is also taken into consideration as an explanatory framework.

9. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the literature in order to examine issues of policy and change and the separation between policy formulation and implementation were highlighted. Lack of political commitment and effective government as well as a tendency towards centralisation were noted as possible barriers to successful implementation of policies. Literature was also reviewed in order to frame issues of change and instructional leadership. Dimensions of the instructional leadership construct and the role of the principal as instructional leader was highlighted. Possibilities for support for principals were noted, which will be used to provide warrants, backings, and rebuttals for the findings of this study.

Thereafter notions of educational change were explored including the complexity of change and resistance to change. Factors required for successfully implementing change were examined and educational change in the South African context was briefly reviewed. The current
situation of two unofficial schooling systems in South Africa is examined and an explanation given as to why the situation in schools that are not historically disadvantaged is also considered in this study.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description of the research design for the empirical investigation employed in this study. It includes an explanation why a pragmatic research approach using mixed methods was used. The research design is presented and explained, the study sample described, and the factors which motivated the study are elucidated. Distinction is made as to qualitative and quantitative research approaches and their relationship within mixed method research is clarified. Issues of qualitative and quantitative notions of validity, reliability and generalizability are examined and considered, as are ethical issues related to the research process. Overall the purpose of this chapter is to explain and provide a detailed and clear description of how the research problem has been investigated.

2. RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Research is a systematic investigation whereby data are collected, analyzed and interpreted in some way in an effort to understand, describe and predict a phenomenon. However, it is influenced by the researchers’ mental framework or sets of beliefs, referred to as paradigms (Mertens, 2005; Morgan, 2007). These sets of beliefs are defined by metaphysical considerations, including how knowledge is generated, a patterned set of assumptions concerning reality and the particular ways of knowing that reality (Guba, 1990; Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska and Creswell, 2005). As such they represent a world view that guides the inquiry and determines research methods and research techniques that will be adopted (Guba and
Lincoln, 1994; Morgan, 2007). The definitions mentioned above thus suggest that the paradigms in which the researcher operates set motivation for and expectation of the research. In order to give insight into how this study was conceived and conducted three paradigms are briefly alluded to below, namely the interpretative/constructivist, positivist, and pragmatic paradigms.

2.1 **The interpretive paradigm**

Interpretivist philosophies promote the notion that human action can be distinguished from physical objects by virtue of the fact that they are inherently meaningful. Crotty (1998, p. 42) notes that in this paradigm all knowledge, and by implication, the meaning of all reality as such, is “contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world”. The social context is the sphere in which this meaning is developed and transmitted or constructed.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) interpretive/constructivist researchers use systematic procedures but maintain that there are multiple socially constructed realities. Rather than trying to be objective, researchers’ professional judgments and perspective are considered in the interpretation of data. Researchers in this paradigm believe that each individual constructs their own view of the world based on their experiences and perceptions. Creswell (2003, p. 8) thus notes that in this form of research “the researcher tends to rely upon the participant’s views of the situation being studied and recognizes the impact of the research of their own background and experiences”. Krauss (2005) refers to the constructivist researcher as most likely to rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis or a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods.
Interpretivism emphasizes understanding of people in their own terms and own settings with intent to better understand views of participants on a specific phenomenon. It involves understanding context and meaning in its full complexity and evaluates whether knowledge provides useful solutions to some problem or brings us closer to desirable outcomes with less emphasis on numbers and more emphasis on values and context. Interpretative research involves double hermeneutic-seeking, i.e. making sense of how participants make sense of their experiences and involves understanding context and meaning in its full complexity (Forrester, 2010).

Qualitative research paradigm has its roots in cultural anthropology and has relatively recently been enthusiastically adopted by educational researchers (Creswell, 2009). The intent of qualitative research is to understand a particular social situation, event, role, group or interaction. It is largely an investigative process where the researcher gradually makes sense of a social phenomenon by contrasting, comparing, replicating, cataloguing and classifying the object of study (Creswell, 2009). While Marshall and Rossman (1989) suggest that this entails immersion in the everyday life of the setting chosen for the study where the researcher enters the informant’s world through on-going interaction, it may take a simpler form where the researcher simply seeks the informant’s perspectives and meanings (Creswell, 2009, p. 194).

Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants’ setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. Those who engage in this form of enquiry support
away of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matters. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions surround the term qualitative research. There are separate and detailed literatures on the many methods and approaches that fall under the category of qualitative research, such as case study, politics and ethics, participatory inquiry, interviewing, participant observation, visual methods and interpretive analysis (Denzin & Lincoln: 2003).

This methodology is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It is a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear, and understand. Their interpretations cannot be separated from their backgrounds, history, contexts and prior understandings (Creswell, 2009). According to Denzin & Lincoln (2003), these practises transform the world and turn it into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. After a research report is issued, the readers make an interpretation as well as the participants, offering yet other interpretations of the study. With the readers, the participants, and the researchers all making interpretations, it is apparent how multiple views of the problem can emerge (Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative research usually involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study; personal experience; introspection; life story; interview;
artefacts; cultural texts and productions; observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practises, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

In this study selected aspects of qualitative research are used to explore and describe the experiences of school leaders, i.e. principals, teachers and DoE officials in terms of the implementation of curriculum policies and explores some of the challenges educational leaders face in the process. As the object of this study is to engage principals, teachers and departmental officials as stakeholders in the quality of instruction in schools, and to provide room for their voices to be heard, epistemologically the study appears to be best located in the interpretative paradigm. This paradigm appears to provide an appropriate framework within which the intent and expectations of this study can be developed. However, there are other aspects of the study, such as the collection and analysis of quantitative data, which do not fall neatly and easily in this paradigm. As such, we need to consider where such collection of quantitative data may be placed paradigmatically.

2.2 The positivist paradigm

The term positivism was developed in the 19th century by Auguste Comte, a French philosopher, to describe the philosophical position which focuses efforts to verify or falsify a prior hypothesis (Howe, 2009; Moring, 2001) and uses scientific evidence to explain phenomena or situations (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Positivists aim to test a theory or describe an experience through observation and measurement in order to predict and control forces that surround us (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).
According to McFarlane (2000), when used in the social sciences, the positivistic paradigm seeks to emulate the objectiveness in the natural sciences and aims to find certainty through observable patterns. This method often makes use of quantitative methods to prescribe, predict and control situations, and generally identifies variables as the causal factors for specific types of behavior. In turn, Neuman (2003) states that when social science research attempts to use a structured method which combines deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behavior in order to confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity, it can be defined as operating in the positivistic paradigm.

Quantitative approaches that follow a positivist view that science quantitatively measures independent facts about a single reality and holds that reality is constituted by observable, measurable and quantifiable facts that can only be observed objectively (Golafshani, 2003; Healy & Perry, 2000; Seers & Critelton, 2001; Walker, 2005). Such methods allow for deductive thinking, use of hypotheses, and standardized data collection usually from a large number of respondents which are amenable to statistical analysis (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

According to Maxwell (1992) and Schrag (1992), social observations should be treated as entities in much the same way that physical scientists treat physical phenomena (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). It is further suggested that the observer is separate from the entities that are subject to observation and maintain that social science inquiry should be objective. As such, when researchers appropriately address the issues of design validity, reflexivity and extension of findings, their work is regarded as credible by other researchers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This school of thought asserts that educational researchers should negate their biases, remain emotionally detached and uninvolved with the objects of study, and test or empirically
justify their stated hypotheses (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). According to Golafshani (2003), quantitative research emphasizes facts and the causes of behaviour and its major focus is on populations and thus it seeks to discover general patterns for a population rather than for a particular individual (Seers & Critelton, 2001).

In contrast, the insights generated from qualitative inquiry depend more on the information richness of the cases and the analytical capabilities of the researcher than on the sample size (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) and the object of the quantitative aspects in this study is to provide data for triangulation with the qualitative data generated in order to attempt to answer questions related to instructional leadership in schools. These aspects of this study might be considered to fall within the notion of positivism but, while quantitative data are generated, the findings are not used in the senses described by McFarlane (2000) or Neuman (2003). They are simply used to provide a framework within which the questions asked can be answered, subject to interpretation.

2.3 **The pragmatic paradigm**

As paradigms influence ‘how we know’, our interpretation of reality, and our values and methodology in research, traditional methodologists believe that as interpretivist and positivist paradigms offer philosophically incompatible assumptions about human nature and the world, it is not possible to combine them (Howe, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). They ask how a researcher is able to adopt an objective position of distance and neutrality (positivist) from the process and the participants, while promoting a subjective level of closeness and reciprocity when attempting to understand or make sense of the participant’s social realities from an interpretivist point of view (Patton, 1990). Paradigmatic purists state that the integrity of positions must be maintained and knowledge claims cannot be mixed (Smith, 1983; Smith &
Heshusius, 1986). Less pedantic researchers simply remind others to be careful to use different research methods in such a way that the resulting combination has complementary strengths rather than overlapping weaknesses (Brewer & Hunter, 1989; Johnson & Turner, 2003; Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, Sechrest Grove, 1981).

**Mixed methods**

Mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms and which falls within the pragmatic worldview (Creswell, 2009). It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches and the mixing of both approaches in a study in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research. The rationale for mixing both kinds of data within one study is grounded in the belief that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient by themselves to capture the trends and details of a particular situation (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). Qualitative and quantitative methods are thus merged into one large database or the results used side by side to reinforce each other. The rationale for this strategy is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies (Merriam, 1988).

Creswell (2009) further notes that the researcher using the mixed methods approach bases the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides an understanding of a research problem. The study begins with a broad survey in order to generalise results to a population and then, in a second phase, focuses on qualitative, open-ended interviews to collect detailed views from participants.
Pragmatic researchers do not believe that truth about the real world can be accessed solely by a single scientific method, for example using quantitative data in a positivistic fashion (Mertens, 2005). They focus on the “what and how” of the research problem (Creswell, 2003, p11) and pragmatism is generally regarded as the philosophical underpinnings for mixed method research. It is based on the notion that research questions should guide the researcher in choosing the most suitable methodological approaches to addressing the enquiry (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Researchers within the pragmatist tradition abide by what they term ‘the dictatorship of the research question’, meaning that they place more importance on the research question than the method or paradigm that underlies the investigation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In addition, pragmatist researchers believe that a practical combination of methods offers greater insights, or the best chance of answering specific research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Advantages of using mixed methods

Social researchers use mixed methods research in many ways. Mostly they use both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods throughout the process of collecting and analysing the data, integrating the findings and drawing inferences within a single study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). Although there are many reasons for using mixed methods, Bryman (2006) believes the most important one is that it helps the explanation of findings better, offsetting weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research and allows for stronger inferences by strengthening triangulation. In other words, the reasons for using methodological pluralism include improving the accuracy of ‘mutually illuminating’ data (Bryman, 2007) and producing a more holistic picture of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Descombe, 2008).
In summary, mixed-methods research allows convergence, corroboration and correspondence of results from different methods, as well as elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the results from one method with the results from the other method. It also enables the recasting of questions or results from one method with questions or results from the other method, while seeking to extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for varying inquiry components (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989).

**History of mixed-method use in South African studies**

While the approach to using mixed method has evolved over past decades internationally the use of the pragmatic approach is seen to be in its “adolescence” in South Africa (du Plessis & Majam, 2010, p. 456). Although not widespread, the approach has been used successfully in South African science and mathematics education research studies, for example Webb (2003), Mayaba, (2009), Villanueva, (2010), Webb (2010), Sepeng (2011) and Leonard (2012). Based on these successes, a pragmatic approach was taken in this study and data were generated by open and closed ended questionnaire questions and by interviews. The interviews enabled the researcher to probe and make sense of the data at his disposal and allowed triangulation of findings from different epistemological positions. By doing so, an attempt was made to produce mutually illuminating data and a holistic picture of issues of instructional leadership in a sample of South African schools.

**Mixed-method or mixed-model**

A qualitative phase and a quantitative phase are usually included in mixed method research and may even be presented as two different studies within an overall research project (du Plessis & Majam, 2010). Mixed method research designs are often classified in terms of time order (concurrent versus sequential) and paradigm emphasis (equal status versus dominant
status). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) note issues of timing, weighting, mixing decisions of qualitative and quantitative methods, and the typology of mixed method designs. He notes three designs, viz. i) embedded design, ii) explanatory design and iii) exploratory design. Caracelli and Green (1997) state that an embedded design has one dominant method, with the other data set playing a supportive role. Within the embedded design are the embedded experimental design with a quantitative emphasis and secondary qualitative data and the embedded correlational design with qualitative data embedded within a qualitative design data set.

Creswell (2003) describes the explanatory design as consisting of two phases. The initial phase is qualitative and the final is quantitative. Both phases are then used to explain or enhance the qualitative results. Two variants of the explanatory design include the follow-up model (specific quantitative findings which require further exploration using qualitative methods) and participant selection model (the quantitative phase used to identify and purposefully select participants). Finally, the exploratory design (Creswell, 2003) also uses two phases, but begins with the qualitative phase that assists in the development of the quantitative phase. In contrast, in mixed-model research, quantitative and qualitative approaches are mixed within or across the stages of the research process, i.e. they have within-stage and across-stage aspects (du Plessis & Majam, 2010).

This study, which seeks to investigate factors which contribute to instructional leadership, used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to add equally valuable and diverse perspectives. The data were generated sequentially using instruments which had both within and across-stage aspects, i.e. there was mixing during the collection and interpretation of the data. As such, the study may most probably be described as using a mixed-model design while the typology of triangulation supports the mixed-methods exploratory, sequential, design of Creswell
(2003). However, more importantly than entering a pedantic debate on nomenclature is the notion that mixed methods can be applied at any stage of the research design, implementation or analysis of a research project. For example they can be applied as methods of data collection, data analysis and data interpretation in a way that the quantitative and the qualitative findings are not only complementary, but also mutually informative (du Plessis & Majam, 2010) and “talk to each other” to construct a negotiated account of meaning (Bryman, 2007, p. 21).

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) a research design describes the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom and under which conditions the data will be obtained. In other words, the research design indicates the general plan, how the research is set up, what happens to the subjects, and what methods of data collection are used. Creswell (2009) describes research designs as plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The plan involves several decisions, and they need to be taken in the order in which they make sense and the order of their presentation. The overall decision involves which design should be used to study a topic.Informing this decision should be the worldview assumptions the researcher brings to the study, the procedures of inquiry and the specific methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

3.1 Factors motivating the study design

Factors that affect a choice of one approach over another are, according to Creswell (2009), the research problem, personal experiences of the researcher, and the audience(s) for whom the report will be written. Creswell (2009) defines a research problem as an issue or concern that needs to be addressed or a concept or phenomenon that needs to be understood.
because little research has been done on it. He also notes that the problem may be because the topic is new, the topic has never been addressed with a certain sample or group of people, or existing theories do not apply with the particular sample or group under study. In the case of this study it is the challenges and barriers to instructional leadership in a particular population that is under investigation. The population under investigation is that of historically disadvantaged schools in the context of the diversity of schools in South Africa. In order to interrogate issues and place the problem within the perspective of a particular set of schools in the country a pragmatic mixed methods approach was adopted.

The researcher’s own personal training and experiences also influenced the choice of approach. Creswell (2009) asserts that individuals who enjoy writing in a literary way or conducting personal interviews, or making up-close observations may gravitate to a qualitative approach. Qualitative approaches allow room to work more within researcher-designed frameworks, be innovative and allow more creative, literary-style writing. For participatory writers, there is a strong stimulus to pursue topics that are of personal interest, often issues that relate to marginalized people and are aimed at creating a better society. In the case of this study the latter two issues motivated the research. Finally, researchers write for audiences that will accept their research. These audiences may be journal editors, journal readers, graduate committees, conference attendees, or colleagues in the field. The type of audience can shape the decision made about the choice of methods (Creswell, 2009).

As this study is aimed at an audience of local (national) educators and policy makers, the methods adopted are those that have been used in a number of educational research studies in South Africa. These studies have been judged to have audience appeal by the fact that they have been published in local and regional journals such as the South African Journal of Education,
Education as Change, the African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education, etc. Overall the study is aimed at contributing to the debate on instructional leadership by testing existing theories and seeing whether they apply to educators in the current South African context. It is a topic which is new in the context of historically disadvantaged schools, and which is of personal interest to the researcher as it relates to what can be considered a marginalized group of people and aims at generating findings which can be used to create a better society.

### 3.2 Overview of the design

An assumption that there is a problem in terms of instructional leadership, i.e. that the poor results in historically disadvantaged schools are a result of, at least in part, ineffective instructional leadership, provided the rationale for the study. This assumption was tested (as reflected by the initial questionnaire questions) within a framework of international literature on instructional design (and the factors which support or hinder its implementation). The empirical aspects of the research were designed to take place in the form of two studies, both of which used quantitative and qualitative research methods.

In the first study a questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions was given to principals and teachers selected as an opportunistic or convenience sample which consisted of a controlled number of schools that formed part of DG Murray project offered by Centre for Educational Research, Technology and Innovation (CERTI) at NMMU as well as the Department of Education district offices servicing the schools and who were part of the project as advisory committee members. All were practising practitioners and therefore considered suitable to provide possible answers to the research questions. The sample was 25 school principals, 80 teachers and 11 Department of Education officials, a sample size more than
adequate for qualitative analysis (McMillan & Schumacher 2010). The findings of the first study were used to refine the questionnaire for a larger online survey and informed the questions on the open ended interview protocol that was used.

The second study used an online questionnaire and aimed at collecting sufficient data on principals’, teachers’ and departmental officials’ perceptions for statistical analysis across type of school, gender, age, qualifications, province, etc., and generate a more generalizable picture of the issue of instructional leadership in the context of South African schools.

In this study an online survey was developed and distributed to teachers, principals and Department of Education (DoE) officials around the country in all nine provinces with the help of colleagues, local teachers, principals, DoE officials and faculty administrative staff. Hard copies of the survey were also provided to those participants who had a problem with internet access (Emery, 2012). The results of these surveys were loaded into the system by the researcher with the assistance of a research assistant administrator.

Questions for teachers and principals were mostly of a fixed response nature while the questions for the DoE officials’ were mixed. For example, DoE officials were asked questions such as ‘Does the DoE have explicit standards for what principals should be able to do?’ If a respondent answered ‘yes’ a follow-up question asked them to state what they saw those standards as being.

3.3 Study sample

A population is a group of elements or cases whether individuals, objects or events that conform to specific criteria to which we want to generalise the results of the research. This group is also referred to as the target population or universe (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In the
case of this study the population is all South African principals, teachers and departmental officials, but with special interest in those serving historically disadvantaged schools.

*Sampling method*

The aim of sampling in this study is, among others, to select possible research participants because they possess characteristics, roles, opinions, knowledge, ideas or experiences that may be particularly relevant to this research (Gibson & Brown, 2009). According to Gibson and Brown (2009), sampling refers, in broad terms, to the points of data collection or cases to be included within a research project. Sampling denotes a certain part of the population that has been chosen for the research (Maree, 2007). According to Howell, (2004) a sample is a subset of population which is the entire collection of events or objects in which the researcher is interested and also refers to a certain part or category of the population that has been selected for a specific purpose. Brown and Dowling (1998) noted that the selection of an empirical study is very often a matter of seizing an opportunity.

In this study, the sampling method used could be considered to be opportunity or convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is useful as it enables the researcher to get an inexpensive approximation of the truth (but with limitations in terms of generalizability because it is non-random). The sample in the first study consisted of participants who were selected based on their suitability to provide possible answers to the research questions, viz. principals and teachers who are practising practitioners in a controlled number of schools that formed part of the DG Murray project offered by Centre for Educational Research, Technology and Innovation at NMMU as well as officials in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage Department of Education district offices servicing the schools. In the second study the participants were principals, teachers and departmental officials who could be contacted, who had access to online computer technology,
and who independently and voluntarily consented to completing the online questionnaire anywhere in South Africa.

The sample and setting

The first study sample consisted of 25 school principals, 80 teachers and 11 Department of Education officials. All the participating schools and all participants come from the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth education districts. The setting was that of the DG Murray Trust sponsored Integrated Schools Improvement Project, which was a three year intervention which aimed at both open-ended and close-ended aspects of school improvement. The closed ended aspects were pre-developed science, mathematics and language teacher development programmes, while the open ended aspects of the project were action research projects identified by school leadership teams. Outputs from the open ended aspects of the project resulted in meeting articulated areas of concern through school driven action research activities, strategic planning in schools and which included department of education officials, and identification of sponsors to realise strategic objectives. The participants who generated data were at a very early stage of participation of the project when the first study component questionnaires were completed and, as such, the wider project could not have had any meaningful influence on their perceptions.

The first study sample aimed mainly at obtaining qualitative data as qualitative sampling generally aims at selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalise to all such cases. Qualitative sampling is done to increase the utility of information from small samples. It requires that information be obtained about variations among the sub-units before the sample is chosen. The researcher then searches for information-rich key informants, groups, places or events to study. In other words the samples are chosen because they are likely to be
knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

As noted earlier, the second study online questionnaire was open to any principal, teacher, or departmental official in any province of South Africa who knew about the research, who had access to online computer technology, and who independently and who wanted to complete the online questionnaire. The second study sample aimed at gathering as much data as possible over a geographic range in order to allow descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Nevertheless, the open ended questions (most evident in the principal and departmental official questionnaires) provided qualitative data for analysis. The size of the online sample could not be determined beforehand, but was aimed at producing a number of responses in each category, e.g. school type, province, gender, etc. to allow for meaningful statistical analyses to be made.

3.4 Data generating instruments

The data generating instruments used in this study were questionnaires (with both open ended and closed questions) and an interview protocol. Individual interviews were undertaken and the questionnaires were administered as both paper-and-pencil based questionnaires (first study) and an online survey (second study). These questionnaires are presented in appendices D, E and F (paper and pen questionnaires); and G, H and I (online survey). Lankshear and Knobel (2004) refer to the principle of ‘elegance’ and ‘economy’ that is concerned with getting the greatest amount of high-quality data from the minimum use of resources, and with the least possible complexity in operation. In an attempt to maximise these principles the data in this study were firstly collected using a pencil-and-paper questionnaire with both quantitative and qualitative aspects and interviews with the participants on the DG Murray project (which provided elegance in that the quantitative and qualitative data were generated in a relatively short
questionnaire and which were cost effective in terms of printing and collecting the data from a group that regularly attended project contact sessions).

Fricker and Schonlau (2002) consider evidence found in the literature regarding response rates, timeliness, data quality and cost of online surveys and evaluate popular claims that Internet-based surveys can be conducted faster, better, cheaper, and/or easier than surveys conducted via conventional modes. They found that the reality often does not live up to the hype but concluded, nevertheless, that it is possible to implement Internet-based surveys in ways that are effective and cost-efficient. In this study, as a further attempt at attaining economy, scale and geographical distribution, an anonymous online survey was used to contact as many teachers, principals and departmental officials who were able to participate in the survey.

The main issues that were investigated using these instruments were, amongst others, information as follows:

- Do principals know what is expected of them in terms of the expectations of the Department of Education’s policy documents on curriculum implementation?
- How do principals understand their role as curriculum leaders in terms of facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies in their schools?
- What support does the DoE provide principals with in order to promote a focus on teaching and learning?
- What do teachers expect of their school principals in terms of instructional leadership on curriculum policy implementation?
- Are there differences pertaining to these issues between different kinds of schools in South Africa?

**Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are widely used in educational research because they are economical, can be standardised and can be designed to ensure anonymity (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993). In this study the questionnaires were anonymous and were tested with a small group of teachers prior to distribution for language clarity and meaning. As noted earlier the questionnaires provided both quantitative and qualitative data for the study with the open-ended question extending the qualitative process of the study. The language used in the questionnaire was designed to be simple and easily understandable since English is not the mother tongue of many of the participants. Language issues were resolved between an isiXhosa home language speaker and an English home language speaker via translating and back translating the questions to determine understanding of meaning. In the second study, the survey questionnaire used was based on Darling-Hammond et al.’s (2010) instrument with only relevant aspects adapted for use in this research.

**Interviews**

As stated earlier, in qualitative interviews the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, by telephone, or engages focus group interviews. The interviews involve unstructured and open-ended questions intended to elicit views and opinions from the participant (Creswell, 2009). Unstructured interviews are particularly useful when the researcher does not know enough about a phenomenon to ask relevant questions. Thus there is no predetermined set of questions and the interview is essentially exploratory (Merriam, 1988).
Interviews are flexible and generally have a high response rate because of the personalised nature of the invitation to participate (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Interviews also allow the researcher to probe and clarify responses, which would have not been possible with written questionnaires. As such, a semi-structured interview, consisting of open-ended questions as well as closed ended questions was used in this study. The interview provided respondents with opportunities to expand on issues raised and clarify their responses.

The group interview is essentially a qualitative data gathering technique that relies upon the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting. Merton, Fiske, and Kendall in Denzin and Lincoln (2003) coined the term focus group to apply to a situation in which a researcher asks very specific questions about a topic after already having completed considerable research. Today, all group interviews are often generically designated focus group interviews, even though there are considerable variations in the nature and types of interviews.

In a group interview, the interviewer directs the inquiry and the interaction among respondents in a very structured fashion or in a much unstructured manner, depending on the interviewer’s purpose. The purpose may be exploratory, for example, the researcher may bring several persons together to test a methodological technique, to try out a definition of a research problem, or to identify key informants. Group interviews can also be used successfully to help respondents’ recall specific events or to stimulate embellished descriptions of events or experiences shared by members of a group (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

However, in this study in-depth personal interviews were carried out with school principals using semi-structured and open-ended questions. The researcher selected this kind of
interview because it offers the interviewees the opportunity to expand their answers and give complex accounts of their experiences without the distraction of the ideas of others. These questions have no choices from which the respondent selects an answer but allow for individual responses. The open-ended questions are fairly specific in intent, but allow for respondent interpretation within their experiences (Forrester, 2010; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Such less structured interviews often have distinct theoretical frameworks underpinning them. This means they have a theory-informed view of the person and the experiences they are trying to understand, and they typically imply the use of a specific approach to data analysis (Forrester, 2010). The researcher prepared the interview questions in advance but allowed freedom for the interviewee to raise aspects not necessarily anticipated. In so doing the researcher showed a commitment to understanding what is important to the interviewee rather than driving the interview along a pre-determined route. Thus, the interviewers have freedom to be flexible in their questioning and to respond in natural ways in the interaction as long as they broadly address the research question they set themselves (Forrester, 2010).

The sample of principals interviewed in this study was referred to the relevant questions in the interview schedule to generate discussion and provide a context for the questions asked. The interviews were recorded on tape with the permission of all participants and the researcher took field notes in order to compare with the transcripts to maintain an acceptable level of accuracy. The interviews were conducted until the researcher could not get ideas that would add anything new to the understanding already developed or information received. This prompted the researcher to heed the suggestion made by Terre Blanche and Durkheim (1999) that an interpretive research should draw to a conclusion when the account has reached a point of saturation. This understanding also applied in terms of determining the number of interviews
conducted. The researcher came to this decision after interviewing six participants. The recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed and analysed using a conversation analysis method (Emery, 2012).

Limitations and weaknesses

The limitations of the first study is that the participants were a small selected group which cannot be said to represent the principals of historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa in general, and the overall weaknesses of questionnaire and interview techniques apply. In the second study, while attempting to overcome the localised nature of the first study by opening the process to any principal, teacher or departmental official in South Africa, issues of bias are clearly evident in that online access was required to be able to respond to the questionnaire. This bias towards teachers and/or schools that are equipped and skilled technologically was ameliorated to a degree by offering hard-copies of the online questionnaires on request, and then entering their data into the system. However, this further assisted in the comparative location of previously disadvantaged schools as a special case.

The post-card and invitation process of soliciting data has a number of weaknesses in terms of control. As the responses are anonymous there is no way of knowing whether someone has responded more than once, or if they have responded accurately according to their status (teacher, principal or official) or even if they are actually a practicing educationist. However, there seems little chance that anyone would complete the questionnaire if they were not a teacher (it sometimes required reminders, pleading, etc. to get those who did respond to do so), the postcards were only given to educators or DoE officials, and the process has produced results judged to be valid in the past (Emery, 2012). Judging the data against the relevant literature and experience of the field also helps gain a perception of validity.
Contacts were based on personal connections, meeting delegates at conferences, emailing acquaintances, online social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook, etc. As such the geographical distribution of postcards and emails was skewed in terms of forwarding requests. However, as the main point of the study was to consider the instructional leadership challenges of principals in historically disadvantaged schools, and to compare data with those from other types of schools, the process served its purpose. Similarly, sufficient data were generated in order to compare certain provinces, types of schools, etc.

3.5 Data analysis and interpretation

Although the qualitative data were coded via an inductive process to a certain extent, it was the categories based on those identified in the literature review and the experience of the researcher that drove the data analysis process. During the inductive aspects of the analysis the steps of Tesch were used (Creswell, 2005). Briefly, these steps involved reading all the transcripts several times and making notes of themes that emerged; grouping similar themes together and breaking up themes into main theme, categories and sub-categories; assigning codes to the themes and noting these next to the appropriate text to provide verbatim quotes; and, grouping together the data belonging to each category and individually analysing them.

The quantitative data generated in the first study were manually analysed to provide descriptive statistics which enabled visual presentations in the form of tables, graphs, etc. The data from the online questionnaire in the second study was exported from the NMMU web survey format into excel. Once in excel descriptive statistics could be easily generated. The excel tables could also be easily sorted according to columns (category) such as school type, province, etc. for examining qualitative responses. Inferential statistics were obtained by the use of commonly used statistical techniques such as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and calculation of
reliability via the use of Cronbach α. These findings were juxtaposed with the qualitative findings to provide an overall picture of the situation. In other words, the interpretation process included both qualitative and quantitative techniques which allowed for triangulation to increase the validity of the findings.

4. RELIABILITY, VALIDITY, AND GENERALIZABILITY

Springer (2010) has argued that both validity and reliability are relevant to the design and interpretation of qualitative studies and both are as desirable in a qualitative study as they are in a quantitative research. According to Ary and Jacob (1990, p. 256), “the validity question is concerned with the extent to which an instrument measures what one thinks it is measuring and the reliability of a measuring instrument is the degree of consistency with which it measures whatever it is measuring”. Creswell (2005, p. 292) define threats as the “problems that threaten our ability to draw correct cause and effect inferences that arise because of the experimental procedures or the experiences of participants”.

The validity of quantitative results refers to the extent with which the statistical results reflects the real meaning of constructs that are under observation. Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures. This validity refers to the congruence between the explanations of the phenomenon and the realities of the world (Creswell, 2003; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The differences between quantitative and qualitative views of validity that are highlighted by Babbie and Mouton (2008) and are depicted in Table 1.

Internal and external validity in terms of quantitative data refer to whether the questions asked are actually asking what the researcher wants to know. The reliability of quantitative
results can be gauged according to whether a test returns the same results repeatedly. The reliability of the results of a study is revealed by statistical treatment of the numerical survey results (Cronbach $\alpha$ scores). Quantitative measurements will have good test-retest reliability if repeated administration of measurement yields the same results (Creswell, 2003; Springer, 2010).

Table 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
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<td>Internal validity</td>
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<td>External validity</td>
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<td>Reliability</td>
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<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Confirmability</td>
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In terms of qualitative research validity, truthvalue, or enhancing the credibility of the research, is attained by the triangulation of data and checking the findings against the literature (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Applicability refers to how transferable the findings are to other contexts or settings (Krefting, 1991). For this aspect broad sampling is required to achieve a degree of applicability; that is, the participants should be carefully selected to reflect the diversity of people to achieve what may be considered a qualitative (not quantitative) representative sample of the population from which to draw general conclusions. Qualitative generalization is a term that is only used in a limited way in qualitative research, since the intent of this form of inquiry is not to generalize findings to individuals, sites, or places outside of those under study. The value of qualitative research lies in the particular description and themes developed in context of a specific site. Particularity rather than generalizability (Creswell, 2003)
is the hallmark of qualitative research. However, Yin, (2003) argues that qualitative case study results can be generalized to some broader theory. The generalization occurs when qualitative researchers study additional cases and generalize findings to new cases (Creswell, 2009).

Transferability relies on the data and comparisons with other research in the literature. Consistency refers to the question of how much of the findings could be replicated if the study were repeated in the same context and with the same participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability is the criterion used for determining consistency and is usually achieved by the triangulation of data and the interpretations made (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Neutrality refers to the extent to which the research findings and the perspectives of the researcher appear to be free from bias and is determined by the criterion of confirmability (Krefting, 1991). Steps taken to increase the degree of confirmability are comparing findings to other research literature and post-interview discussions between researcher and observer to check for consensus on perceptions (Groenewald, 2004).

All of the above interpretations of validity were kept in mind when undertaking this study, as well as the ethical considerations required in order to maintain the human dignity of the participants in the research process (Cohen, et al., 2000).

5. **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

As noted above, ethical issues are concerned with human dignity during research. Hopf (2004, p. 334) states that “Under the keyword ‘research ethics’ it is usual in social sciences to group together all those ethical principles and rules in which it is determined – in a more or less binding and more or less consensual way – how the relationships between researchers on the one hand and those involved in sociological research on the other hand are to be handled”. As
researchers anticipate data collection, they need to respect the participants and the sites for research because many ethical issues arise during the process (Creswell, 2009). Because the subjects of enquiry in interviewing are human beings, researchers must take extreme care to avoid any harm to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The researcher thus needs to consider the special needs of vulnerable populations, such as minors, mentally incompetent participants, victims, persons with neurological impairments, pregnant women or foetuses, prisoners and individuals with HIV. Researchers need to file research proposals containing the procedures and information about the participants to the Ethic Committee so that they can review the extent to which the research being proposed subject individuals to risk (Creswell, 2009).

When the researcher analyses and interprets qualitative data, issues emerge that call for good ethical decisions. In anticipating a research study the researcher must consider the following:

- How will the study protect the anonymity of individuals, roles, and incidents in the project? In qualitative research for example, inquirers use aliases, or pseudonyms for individuals and places to protect identities
- Data, once analysed, need to be kept for a reasonable period of time (5-10 years). Investigators should then discard the data so that it does not fall into the hands of other researchers who might misappropriate it.
- The question of who owns the data once it is collected and analysed, can be an issue that splits research teams and divides individuals against each other. A proposal might mention this issue of ownership and mention how it will be resolved, such as through the development of a clear understanding, between the researcher, the participants and possibly the faculty advisors.
In the interpretation of data, researchers need to provide an accurate account of the information. In qualitative research, this accuracy may include using one or more of the strategies to check the accuracy of the data with participants or across different data sources. (Creswell:2009)

Ethical principles may include the following:

- Approval from an Ethics Committee (Zuber-Skerrit, 1996; Denscombe, 2003) and the related departments
- Principle of informed consent (Hopf, 2004, Heaton, 2004; Mason, 2002) and voluntary participation (Henn et al., 2006)
- Termination of participation at any point in time (Henn et al., 2006)
- Truthful reporting without harming the participants or betraying their confidentiality (Creswell, 2003; Hopf, 2004), results for the “good of society” (Henn, et al., 2006, p. 71)
- Secure and safe keeping of data (Denscombe, 2003; Heaton, 2004)
- Restrict access and distribution of data (Denscombe, 2003)
- Anonymity during reporting (Cohen, et al., 2000) and using and reporting of the data as originally specified (Denscombe, 2003)

Ethical issues do not stop with data collection and analysis; issues apply as well to the actual writing and dissemination of the final research report. For example:

- Reports should not use language or words that are biased to persons because of gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic group, disability or age.
- Issues including the potential suppressing, falsifying or inventing findings to meet a researcher’s or audience’s needs need to be considered and counteracted.
In planning a study it is important to anticipate the repercussions of conducting a research on certain audiences and not to misuse the results to the advantage of a group or another. The researcher needs to provide those at the research site with a preliminary copy of any publications from the research.

An important issue in writing a scholarly manuscript is to not exploit the labour of and to provide authorship to individuals who substantially contribute to publications.

It is also important to release the details of the research with the study design so that readers can determine for themselves the credibility of the study (Creswell, 2009).

In this study informed consent was requested from participants after prior permission to conduct this research as part of the DG Murray project offered by the Centre for Educational Research, Technology and Innovation at the NMMU. After obtaining ethics clearance, the researcher approached Department of Education officials, principals and teachers of the participating schools. Their roles as participants, right to choose to be participants and to participate or not in this study were explained to them. They were assured of confidentiality that participation was voluntary and were given a guarantee that they could withdraw from the study at any time and that no personal details would be disclosed. Confidentiality of the information collected in the schools was also ensured and that no portion of the data collected would be used for any purpose other than this research.
6. **SUMMARY**

This chapter describes the research design and methodology that was followed to address the research problem. The choice of working within a pragmatic paradigmatic framework is explained and the advantages of using both qualitative and quantitative data are motivated. The data collecting methods that were used, i.e. questionnaires (both pencil-and-paper and online) and interviews are also described. The method of data analysis is explained and limitations and weaknesses in the design are made explicit. Issues of validity, reliability, and the generalizability of the research findings are discussed and ethical issues are considered.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS - FIRST STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on data generated in this first study using the methodology and research instruments that have been described in detail in the previous chapter (Chapter three). The instruments consist of open-ended questionnaires and interviews about challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged schools in the implementation of curriculum policies in terms of their role as instructional leaders.

As indicated in chapter three, this study has used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to add value and diverse perspectives. Data were generated from questionnaires administered to principals and teachers in selected schools in the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth districts as well as Department of Education (DoE) officials. Data were also generated from interviews conducted with selected principals and DoE officials in these districts. These data are presented in this chapter.

Findings were allocated into themes deductively from those identified in the literature review and new themes were developed inductively from the data using thematic analysis processes. The data obtained from principals, teachers and DoE officials are presented in the following sequence as:

- Principals’ responses
- Teachers’ responses and
- Department of Education officials’ responses
Each of the above categories of participants was given a different set of questions to determine their respective perceptions regarding the principal’s role in curriculum implementation and instructional leadership. The first part of the questionnaires required that each participant indicate their designation, age in years, gender, formal qualifications and teaching experience to develop a profile of leadership in schools. These data are presented in the demographics section below.

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

Principals of 25 secondary schools (all public schools), 108 teachers and 11 DoE officials participated in this (first) study. As mentioned in chapter three, all participating schools and participants were selected from the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth education districts. These participants were selected based on their availability as part of the Integrated Schools Improvement Project sponsored by the DG Murray Trust, the fact that they were historically disadvantaged schools (which form the focus of this study), and the assumed suitability of the participants to provide answers to the research questions. The DG Murray Trust sponsored Integrated Schools Improvement Project is a three-year intervention aimed at both open-ended and close-ended aspects of school improvement (see chapter two). As mentioned above, data generated from these participants are presented in the following sequence: principals, teachers and Department of Education officials. The demographics of the participants are presented together in tabular form below.

Overall, 26 principals were presented with questionnaires to complete and 25 were returned; 130 questionnaires were issued to teachers and 108 were returned; and 15 questionnaires were issued to Department of Education officials and 11 were completed and returned.
The principals’ and departmental officials’ ages ranged between 35 to 60 years, while the teachers ages ranged between 24 to 60 years (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1
Ages of respondents in years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in years</th>
<th>20-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender ratios of the three sets of respondents are tabled in Table 4.2, while their formal qualifications and their teaching experience are presented in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 respectively.

Table 4.2
Gender ratios of the three sets of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The formal qualifications of the respondents ranged from three-year diplomas to postgraduate degrees, with a number of other qualifications such as Further Education Diplomas and ACE qualifications (Table 4.3).
Table 4.3
*Formal qualifications of the respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>3 year diploma</th>
<th>Degree &amp; diploma</th>
<th>Postgraduate degree</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teaching experiences of the participants are depicted in the table 4.4

Table 4.4
*Experience in years of the respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in years</th>
<th>≤5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>20+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. PRINCIPALS

As already noted, questionnaires and interviews were used to generate data from a sample of 25 school principals who were participating in the DG Murray Integrated Schools project. The data are presented deductively in themes identified in the literature review, viz. resources, professional development, coaching and mentoring and teacher resistance. Other themes that emerged inductively are also presented, e.g. the impact of change on delivery and implications for principals.
3.1 Resources

In general principals appeared to agree that as leaders they should be in the forefront of facilitating the implementation process of policies and instructional leadership. However, they felt that without the necessary resources, leadership is doomed to fail, especially in schools that they viewed as being under-resourced. The principals said that their role is to provide direction in helping teachers identify, select and develop programmes and materials that meet student needs within the context of the school vision and mission. Many stated in both the questionnaires and interviews that, with the help of the School Management Team (SMT), they are able to support teachers by providing books and other resources, and that these efforts enable them to change teacher attitudes. This belief is illustrated by a comment made by a principal when asked whether she had any problems with resources. She reported that her school received R800 per learner a year, which was not a fortune but was enough to supply resources. She said instead of complaining about resources teachers needed to be trained more in the effective use of resources because some schools have computers and other equipment that were collecting dust, but teachers did not know how to use these. Another principal who shared this view said:

“I don’t see any reason why teachers can’t be a bit creative when they teach. I encourage them to phone suppliers to order books and to explore what other resources there are; if they are not expensive we will buy them”.

What is of interest is that both of these principals headed a quintile three school which are non-fee paying schools according to the governments’ classification system for schools which rank schools from 1-5 with quintile 1 schools serving the poorest communities and quintile 5 schools serving the least poor communities. Quintile 1-3 schools are not allowed to levy fees from parents.
However, despite their efforts and commitment, some of the principals felt that there were challenges they were confronted with that made the process difficult, such as staff shortages and shortages of suitably qualified teachers in certain learning areas. They believed that this issue creates a ‘content gap’ and a lack of confidence in teachers who have to grapple with subjects for which they were not adequately trained. One principal cited the current curriculum change from National Curriculum Statements (NCS) to Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) as an example of a challenge that impacted directly on resources and teacher competence in a negative way. He had this to say:

“Textbooks are very expensive and the money allocated is always insufficient as a result we buy very few textbooks per year. We do not always cover the number of learners that need textbooks. We had already planned to top up the textbooks for the next two years, then curriculum changes were introduced just when we were beginning to address the textbook backlog. The competence of the teachers has also been pretentious because they already had a grip of NCS but are now trying to grapple with the nitty-gritties of CAPS”.

Principals also reported that there were often delays in the delivery of textbooks for learners and this impacted very negatively on teaching and learning, especially at the beginning of the year. However, to fix this problem is not in the power of principals but they also felt that it is their role to ensure that teaching and learning takes place, and that teachers have the time, resources and professional development opportunities to implement curricular programmes successfully. As one principal put it when there were delays in the delivery of textbooks early this year (2012):
“We’ve also got duplicators; we can make copies while we’re waiting for our books; we don’t have to sit and do nothing while we are waiting for the books”.

Resources are vital in the running of schools and without them; principals will not be able to effectively execute their duties and this can have a negative impact on teaching and learning. Another important factor mentioned by principals in terms of running their schools effectively is their level of professional development, which is the topic of the next paragraph.

3.2 Professional development

When principals were asked about the extent of their professional development, most acknowledged that there was a need for them to have a strong understanding of curriculum issues and processes of teaching and learning. Reasons given for this recognition were that this will enable them to assume leadership in helping overcome factors that may inhibit successful implementation of the curriculum. They expressed the view that the DoE should involve principals more in curriculum development and design, so that they (principals) would be better equipped to deal with challenges of curriculum implementation. They were of the view that such involvement would ensure smooth, efficient and effective curriculum implementation because it is part of their duty (job description) and as chief curriculum leaders to be in the forefront of change and curriculum implementation.

Most principals felt that this need for training was necessary because the interpretation of policy documents at times created problems; hence it is important that they be taken through the policy documents before implementation. In general most, of the principals who were interviewed reported that they were never given professional support by the DoE when they assumed their roles as principals. Some said that they were ‘thrown in the deep end’ and left to
do their own thing, with one saying he had to learn everything the hard way. One principal, who was sponsored by the GM Foundation to do a course in management and later registered for the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) at NMMU, said,

“If they had told me about those things when I had started as principal, then I would not have had to hit my head against the wall so many times”.

However, currently new principals are taken for a one-day induction programme by the DoE. This concept (induction), according to principals, is new and has only been introduced over the past five years. However, most principals felt that this was not adequate to develop a principal professionally. One principal put it thus:

“If I as a principal, I cannot lead educators in curriculum aspects, then I am failing as principal”.

The above quote succinctly captures the dilemma principals often experience. Closely related to the above are challenges faced by principals.

*Training teachers and the role of subject advisors*

Challenges identified by most of the principals regarding the interpretation and implementation of new curriculum related to the training of teachers and the role subject advisors should play. Many principals felt that teachers were often not sure of what was expected of them in the interpretation and implementation of the new curriculum and, equally so, they (principals) were also not in a position to help them since they were also not prepared for this task. Principals said that there was confusion on the part of the teachers who often complained of poor and inadequate training and support on implementation. There were no formal well planned
workshops or courses to prepare the educators adequately and their training was very short, normally for a day, a week or two weeks and sometimes just for an afternoon. The principals complained that the training provided for the teachers lacked clear guidelines and vision on implementation.

They also raised a concern about subject advisors who failed to visit schools to support teachers in the implementation processes. They said subject advisors were too office bound and expected teachers to visit their offices instead of them going to schools to provide individual support to teachers. One principal described the relationship with subject advisors as the weakest link in the department because other than not visiting schools, they never provided reports to schools about developmental and challenges encountered in cluster meetings with teachers whenever these were held. The principals thus felt that the subject advisory section could use its human resources far more effectively by having a more hands-on approach and not only focus on cluster moderation, which one principal described as follows:

“Cluster moderation is to my mind window dressing because the subject advisor never picks up a pen and moderates and reads and sees what is going on and then makes a study of what are the needs of a school, where are the weaknesses: because if I was a subject advisor, I would be looking at what’s going on in detail and draw up an action plan to write some of the wrongs. They are just monitoring, that’s all they do, they are not supporting, they are not developing. They are not getting their hands dirty.”

Principals did though acknowledge that there were a few subject advisors who were good at their work and did little courses for teachers on specific skills that were required. So other
subject advisors were encouraged to watch what they do and to do the same in order to improve their practice. The challenges alluded to above are not always easy for principals to overcome but it appears that they try their best to come to terms with them as the following section indicates.

**Self-training**

Since they believe that every educational leader has to be conversant with all policies and how to implement them, principals reported that they have embarked on self-training and self-development because they were not expected to deviate from DoE polices. Some noted that the DoE explains very clearly how curriculum policy should be implemented and, as such, they read documents such as the principals’ manual for school management, circulars and memo’s provided by the DoE to empower themselves, and attend meetings where they will be told what to do in order to comply with uMalusi standards.

Some principals said they also attend training with teachers in their specialization subjects only to get to know what the flavour is and to apply it across the board when monitoring. In addition, one principal reported that she also liaised with her heads of departments (HODs) to empower herself. She put it thus:

> “But I also meet my HODs; I consult with them. So we have bi-weekly meetings and there we discuss the implementation of the curriculum. My HODs must keep me informed and I do read the documents and I know the generics; but they must teach me, they must show me the specifics; we then draw up assessment plans and programmes”. 
This principal reported that she makes it her business to know what is required hence she reads the documents from the department, which she also described as being very clear and self-explanatory.

One of the principals who claimed to have read the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) document was very critical of this document saying it leaves much to be desired. According to this principal this document did not see classroom activities as being the centre of all activities and that is where ‘we are measured’ in terms of success or failure. These concerns were raised by other principals as well who saw these documents as being accompanied by too much paper work and administration, and they felt they needed more curriculum support in the form of training.

**Lack of systemic training**

There were a few principals who were lucky to be trained in the NCS and had all the necessary policy documents, as well as being happy that the DoE was providing circulars and other related documents from time to time. However, they did acknowledge though that it was a struggle at first but that both they and their teachers became more familiarised with the NCS and its implementation as time went by it became easier and that educators, in particular, became more confident in delivering what is expected of them. In one interview, a principal who felt that there was a need for principals to be formally trained put it thus:

“I have a special interest in curriculum, so I make sure that I am up to date. But generally speaking, principals are bogged down with it. They forget that their bread and butter is the curriculum. I think that principals are not 100% totally
aware of all the things that must be done and I think they need more in-depth training on how to manage to do monitoring and maintaining the standards”.

There was a general feeling amongst principals who were interviewed that there was need for a formal training programme for all principals in curriculum implementation policies and instructional leadership. Principals viewed their preparation in professional development as inadequate. They reported that their training was in the form of circulars, memoranda, and assessment instructions. Through these, the DoE gives guidance to principals as to what should be done, when and how, in as far as curriculum implementation and teaching and learning, are concerned. In addition, principals attend ad hoc workshops and training organised by the department and, as mentioned earlier, new principals are currently taken for induction.

The principal is the one who has to ensure that the prescribed curriculum is implemented in schools. However, all educators including the principal are not yet trained in the new Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS); therefore they are not fully sure how it will unfold. Because of their previous experience with the poor preparation and delivery of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) through to the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS), and the massive change it envisaged, some principals were pessimistic with the new curriculum (CAPS). One principal said:

“My teachers have a grip of NCS and my school was able to go up to 86% pass rate in matric, then comes CAPS. I don’t know how we shall perform in 2014 because teachers are still grappling with CAPS”.

Principals reported that all relevant documents are handed out to school principals, usually in principals’ meetings. It is then expected that they ensure that such documents are
handed over to respective subject teachers for implementation. Assessment committees together with the School Management Team (SMT) and principals must ensure adherence and, in spite of the limited training provided to principals, the DoE expects them to implement policy on curriculum. The problem however, remains, as indicated earlier, that the principals were not work-shopped properly on how to do this and this state of affairs prevents successful implementation of curriculum policy. Closely related to training are coaching and mentoring, and it is to the examination of these constructs that I now turn.

3.3 Coaching and mentoring

When interviewed about coaching and mentoring one principal reported that when he was appointed as principal, training was minimal and was in the form of workshops and meetings. There was no coaching or mentoring for newly appointed principals. He developed himself more through ‘self-coaching’, reading the Manual for School Management, internet searches on best practices in principalship and doing research on what other principals do in order to attain success. Another principal who has held the reigns since 1997 said, at the time of his appointment the DoE did not have induction programmes for new principals as the case is currently, only short training workshops were held. He put it thus,

“There was no coaching or induction. So only short workshops were held to brief us about certain aspects of leadership. There was no coaching or training, not even mentoring.”

Most of the principals viewed mentoring and coaching as an essential component of the development and preparation process of principals. They felt that mentors should provide workshops directed at helping principals in curriculum implementation. In addition, principals
felt that conferences must be organised where curriculum experts would be invited to present papers. Such information, according to them, could be documented and should be made available to all principals.

In addition, the principals felt that during mentoring and coaching it would be useful if short manuals or workbooks could be developed on relevant topics related to mentoring and coaching. This mentoring and coaching process could include engagement with proper guidance provided to the schools involved and mentoring with workshops directed at achieving this objective. In this regard one principal suggested that principals themselves, within their clusters, could also identify an experienced principal who can provide mentoring services to other principals in the clusters and in that way principals will be supporting each other. Principals who have been taken through this process will in turn be in better position to support their SMTs.

3.4 Teacher resistance

A few school principals reported that in general educators do not like change, especially if it comes with added responsibilities. As a result it has often been difficult to implement new policies where there was resistance. They reported that some teachers still cling to the old way of doing things and need a mind-set change. Many principals said that teachers complain about everything from limited training, lack of confidence in the delivery of the curriculum to work overload. This uncertainty on the part of teachers, has led to some level of resistance to change and teachers failed to embrace the new policies which resulted in poor learner performance. These principals reported that the teachers were frustrated with the changes, especially in the last decade and a half. Principals attributed this situation to the ill preparedness exhibited by facilitators who conducted training resulting in a lack of teacher motivation and staff not confident and competent enough to implement the new curriculum. However, these principals
felt that they had a task to develop strategies to convince these educators that a paradigm shift in their way of thinking was necessary and that it was not only important but crucial.

Despite the above, teacher resistance was not an issue for some principals. One principal said that teachers were not resistant, but rather concerned about being inadequately prepared to deliver on the new curriculum because their training was short, haphazard and lacked guidance. But once they get a grip of the newly introduced curriculum, the teachers run with it as if they never had any challenges. Another principal who was of the same view, reported that at the beginning, when OBE was introduced, teachers in her school were dismayed by the administration it came with, not by OBE as an approach; and then they were stressed by that but that did not stop them from doing the best they could with curriculum policy implementation. This principal said:

“Once we put systems in place to manage the curriculum, then we were okay; we got our little routines, we’re a highly structured school, our assessment programme is firmly in place and the teachers are not resistant at all and they are actually quite keen and they are quite creative and now if you get a new curriculum, they are getting used to it because every 2, 3 years it changes; they are very adaptive; in fact, the strength of this school is a curriculum; we are proud of ourselves”.

In spite of the above statement, principals reported that in some cases teachers have complained about changes from OBE through to CAPS and the negative impact these changes have had on curriculum delivery and teaching and learning.
In addition to the deductively derived issues reported above, themes of coping, the impact of change, and generalizable comments were derived inductively.

3.5  Coping

There are a number of coping mechanisms used by principals when running their schools in challenging circumstances. Principals generally struggled with their role as instructional leaders in schools. One principal said that his position forces him to cope in the situation even though he was left without proper preparation. In another instance, the principal said without the maximum support he gets from his staff, he would not cope the way he does. He reported that as a school they do not just fold their arms when there are challenges; they always devise means to overcome the challenges. This may be attributed to the fact that he relied heavily on subject specialists and individual subject advisors whom they invited when the need arose, to render assistance when confronted with a situation or matter. Some principals reported that HODs also play an important role as they are the ones who regularly make sure that work is being covered, check the books of the teachers and write reports to the principals.

In one school the principal said he introduced team teaching where one teacher would teach a certain section of a subject complementing another teacher who taught the other section of the same subject. Another principal reported that he managed to influence and motivate teachers to realize that teaching requires one to go the extra mile. As a result, some teachers in his school have fixed programmes for teaching on weekends and some school holidays. This principal felt that it was imperative for him to go to these lengths because as a person responsible for the provision of instructional leadership, his role was to see to it that the business of the school, i.e. teaching and learning, takes place smoothly and effectively. The question of limited training is explored in the next section.
3.6 Limited training

Curriculum changes have impacted in different ways on learners’ performance because circumstances vary from school to school and from learner to learner. Most principals were of the view that OBE in particular did not prepare learners well, and the NCS was difficult because they believe it draws on language, numeracy and reasoning skills that their learners do not have. The principals also felt that a lack of on-going support, opportunities to practise change, evaluation and the modification of the implementation process, had a negative impact on quality and delivery. According to them, quality was compromised and this has been evident especially in mathematics, science and language proficiency. One principal felt strongly that some of these policies do not take into consideration the circumstances of disadvantaged schools. The policy documents are not specific enough and are not addressing the basics. According to the principals these policies would work better in well-resourced schools thereby creating a large learning gap for the learners in under-resourced schools and compromising the quality of teaching. All factors mentioned above have implications for principals in their role as instructional leaders and facilitators of curriculum implementation. In the next section I explore these implications.

3.7 Impact of change on delivery and implications for principals

The respondents noted that an important implication for principals is that they need to be acutely aware of the expectations of the DoE by virtue of the position they hold. According to one principal, successful implementation of curriculum has been very difficult to achieve because in the past many changes were introduced whilst ‘we familiarise ourselves’ with the current ones. The principal in question said,

“Training for e.g. CAPS, has not started as yet, but we are expected to implement in the beginning of 2012”.
So both the principals and the teachers were not fully sure at this stage (September 2011) of how CAPS will unfold in the ensuing years. Clearly, then, principals need on-going support in their role as instructional leaders and the involvement of subject advisors to support teachers. The appointment of suitable candidates with related experience is also crucial in this position. These issues are dealt with in the next section.

3.8 Generalizable comments

Many principals made several suggestions as to what can assist them in their role as instructional leaders in their facilitation of curriculum implementation. One principal felt that the success of a principal starts in the selection process. He felt that candidates who are selected and appointed to be principals must be qualified to do the job and must have a proven track record in management as deputy principals or as HOD. The principal said that once a new principal has been appointed the district which should have monitoring and support systems in place, must provide step by step guidance to the new school principal. One principal was of the view that mentoring and coaching should also be used to assist a new principal where the services of an experienced principal could be utilized at least for the first two years. In addition, a formal course like the ACE: School Leadership should be provided to school principals to strengthen their leadership abilities and to divulge the various aspects of leadership such as how to manage teaching and learning, how to manage people and the management of school resources.

The principals also felt that the principals’ manual should be more explicit and should indicate what needs to be done in each term or from time to time. This principal felt that the manual should go hand in hand with a well-structured year plan that will guide schools of envisaged activities by the districts and provincial office. This according to principals will assist them to draw theirs schools’ year plans and that will avoid unnecessary clashes and disruptions.
during the course of the year. It was also felt that the districts must provide strong leadership especially in dysfunctional schools. Educational Development Officers (EDOs) and subject advisors must visit such schools regularly and provide step by step guidance to principals and teachers. Such support could go a long way in changing schools for the better.

The next section in this chapter deals with data generated from the second category of participants, namely teachers.

4. TEACHERS

In this section, I present data generated from the two districts where this research was conducted namely Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth districts where participating teachers were provided with questionnaires to complete. Overall 130 questionnaires were handed out to the teachers and 108 were returned, as indicated in the demographics section earlier. Data generated from the teachers are presented in themes that were deductively identified in the literate review namely resources, professional development, coaching and mentoring and teacher resistance. The new themes that emerged inductively are also presented in this section namely teacher expectations of principals as curriculum leaders, challenges with curriculum implementation and teacher views for the successful implementation of curriculum.

4.1 Resources

That notion that resources play a very critical role in the implementation of curriculum and teaching and learning was confirmed by the majority of teachers when they reported about the state of affairs in their schools. The teachers were of the view that providing the required resources for teachers and learners such as text books and other learning material, laboratories and functional libraries could enable and encourage learners to conduct their own research and
pass. Teachers believed that it is the duty of the principal and the SMT to see to it that teachers have the necessary resources and that they know how these can be accessed and used in the process of curriculum implementation and teaching and learning. They acknowledged that, for these reasons, principals allowed teachers to attend training when new materials and resources were acquired by the school for the new curriculum. Teachers also expressed the importance of providing the resources on time for teachers to be able to do their work efficiently.

Nearly all teachers mentioned extra study guides and updated reference textbooks and DVDs as important resources that needed to be accessed to make their teaching effective and beneficial to the students. Most teachers reported that their principals tried to provide most of the relevant material required to facilitate effective teaching and learning and examination guides for learners where it was necessary, something that was not always possible. Most of the teachers reported that their principals were trying their level best to get information and resources from various quarters. Some principals approached neighbouring schools that offered similar subjects, looked for sponsorships, applied for funding and engaged parents and community organisations in raising funds. For some schools these efforts have worked but for others the results were not positive. For example one teacher reported that their principal succeeded in courting the private sector trust to invest in their school infrastructure. This initiative has led to their school being sponsored with a fully resourced computer lab and the ability to offer an examination subject in this learning area, a first among black schools in the district to reach this milestone.

Most teachers made general claims that their schools lacked resources such as laboratories, media centres, computer facilities, up to date reference textbooks and some basic material. They expressed that a lack of these resources can be a serious de-motivating factor for them and can sometimes hinder the ability of the principal to carry out his duties in facilitating
teaching and learning and curriculum implementation. In the absence of science laboratories, as the case is in many schools, teachers suggested that their principals approach the local university or other schools to be allowed to use their facilities from time to time for Physical Science and related subjects that are practical in nature.

Most teachers were of the view that the success of curriculum implementation rests with the DoE’s timely provision of materials and training of the principals and educators before the actual implementation. However, teachers felt that principals are constrained by the DoE’s slow progress in providing materials and providing the necessary training. In this regard one teacher suggested that the DoE, the local tertiary institution and other relevant agencies be engaged by schools in the empowerment and support of principals whose schools are under a lot of strain as far as resources are concerned.

The teachers felt that material development and textbook selection should be the responsibility of a collective, i.e. the principal, the SMT and teachers and that all curriculum policy implementation documents must be dispersed to all educators for reference purposes. Teachers were also of the view that the appointment of teachers with the relevant qualifications and competencies would ensure effective teaching and learning. Resources on their own though, are not enough and should intelligently be linked to other initiatives such as professional development.

4.2 Professional development

Teachers view professional development as an important mechanism to empower them in their practice. This, they said was achieved through workshops and other training sessions they attended on the new curriculum. They reported that in these workshops they were provided with
new policy documents and lesson plans to assist with curriculum implementation. They were of the view that principals and HODs should always take it upon themselves to support all teachers especially the newly appointed staff members. This could be realised by encouraging all teachers to attend DoE-organized workshops where they will meet with curriculum specialists and colleagues teaching the same subject and will be afforded with the opportunity to discuss changes and compare the ‘old’ and ‘new’ curriculum. Where this has occurred, teachers reported that they always made sure that they do not miss any workshops and cluster and district moderation meetings. One teacher who was a product of these workshops reported that this training enabled him to be “recognised and be appointed as an examiner” and that he was very confident in what he was doing. This has led to him being identified and selected to attend a national workshop on the new curriculum concepts and subsequently conducted similar workshops for other teachers in his own district.

Some teachers who have participated in programmes such as the Mlambo Foundation, Dinaledi Programme and SAASTE programmes aimed at empowering teachers to understand the curriculum, reported that through these programmes they gathered some knowledge of the curriculum which enabled them to focus on teaching and learning which is of utmost importance. They said that they always check pace setters (guide specifying work to be covered at a particular time) together with work schedules so that they can be sure of what to do at a certain point in time. They also said they knew how their learning areas relate to the learners’ daily lives. One teacher who regularly attended workshops and cluster and moderation meetings described how he benefited as follows:

“Now I know that curriculum must constantly change in order to adapt to the ever changing needs of society. Just knowing that fact has changed my attitude”
According to some teachers, support from principals and HODs is sometimes limited and only given when asked for and that new teachers were often neglected. They felt that teachers should empower and develop themselves and must not depend on their principals. Even if they attend workshops, which are very short – sometimes just a week or two weeks, they need to go an extra mile by familiarising themselves with current changes so that they can be well-informed. Some reported that they registered privately at universities for further qualifications in order to improve their professional capacity. These qualifications, namely ACE (MST) B.Ed. (Maths) ACE: SL, etc. all have a focus on curriculum. Some teachers familiarised themselves with recent curriculum changes by empowering themselves using internet links and websites of other provinces. They have read the new CAPS documents and are aware of all the changes from NCS to CAPS.

Teachers also reported that their professional capacity was enhanced within their schools through staff development programmes organised by their principals. These activities were carried out from time to time as planned by school development teams (SDTs). One teacher reported that his principal keeps himself informed by attending workshops and then shares any information with staff during their in-house training sessions. It was also reported by some teachers that some principals communicate any new changes in time which makes implementation easier for educators as it gives them time to go through documentations before implementation. Some principals were reported to be using staff meetings to train staff at the beginning of the year as well as having yearly team building exercises while also ensuring that the process of curriculum implementation is understood by all.

Some teachers reported that their principals were always upfront and kept abreast with all changes in order to see to it that curriculum is correctly implemented. These principals trained
their educators in OBE and RNCS and always encouraged SMT members to have consultation sessions with individual teachers to render support whenever such a need arose. In one school it was also reported that each HOD is required to submit a quarterly operational plan spelling out the kind of monitoring and support they intend giving to each teacher under their supervision. For this reason teachers felt that their professional development was taken care of by their schools. Some teachers said that curriculum committees were established in their schools with the aim of ensuring that they operated within the curriculum framework and monitoring teaching and learning. For these reasons, the teachers felt that they were adapting to the new curriculum through the assistance of the principal, SMTs and in some cases, subject advisors.

However, in-house training and support, according to some teachers, does not take place in all schools. One teacher who strongly held this view had this to say about his principal:

“My principal does not provide on-going-support as he does not display a sense of direction and vision for the school”.

Closely related to professional development are coaching and mentoring which I depict in the next section.

4.3 Coaching and mentoring

It is always necessary to provide opportunities for practising teachers to learn from each other or enable their superiors to share knowledge and expertise with them. Most teachers are of the view that this process starts by attending training sessions and acquiring the necessary skills and competencies to perform their duties. Teachers believe that internal workshops within schools, to empower teachers in the various subjects are crucial in this regard. According to the teachers, there should be more support structures for new staff members and novice teachers as
well as more learning area meetings within the school. For these reasons teachers viewed curriculum support and implementation inside the school as mainly the area of the HODs who are tasked with specialized training in the specific fields, i.e. the different learning areas. In view of the above one teacher reported that in his school, the principal holds regular meetings with HODs who in return meet with teachers to plan for the year and assist them with moderation. Then the HODs, sometimes with the help of subject advisors, support teachers with implementation in the classroom. Where this process was followed teachers reported that their planned tasks were moderated by their HODs before being presented in class. During this process, less experienced teachers in the various subjects were often guided and mentored by the experienced teachers in their departmental meetings.

In other instances teachers reported that their principals encouraged team teaching so that teachers can assist and coach each other. Furthermore, they provided the necessary support and made sure that the school ran smoothly. They always encourage teachers to do their best and also make them aware of the underlying social demands of the learners.

However, in a few instances, teachers reported that such support (coaching and mentoring) was not provided by their principals and that they had to fend for themselves. This was exacerbated by a lack of resources and in-house support systems such as staff development. These factors, according to the teachers were very demoralising thereby impeding creative and innovative actions on the part of the teachers. The situation described above thus has the potential to fuel teacher resistance which is reported on in the next section.
4.4 Teacher resistance

Very few teachers viewed resistance to change as a major issue. Those who did pointed out that some older teachers were not always willing to adapt to new changes and viewed change as a threat. The few who resisted would fail to make submissions on time thereby retarding school progress. They would not attend school regularly and would resist attending workshops and meetings related to curriculum change. However, most teachers raised concerns that could lead to resistance. They claimed that the facilitators who ran workshops did not always have all the information required. The training they provided was short and always done in a rush as a result many teachers lacked the confidence to implement even after attending these workshops. Teachers complained that they struggled to get to grips with curriculum implementation because there were sometimes no clear guidelines and the changes involved too much paper work. For these reasons, teachers expect their principals to guide them and provide all the necessary support they need in the implementation of curriculum policies as described in the section that follows.

4.5 Teacher expectation of principals in curriculum implementation

Teachers have certain expectations of roles principals should play during the implementation of the curriculum. Most of them believe that principals must ensure that they are well prepared for the task and that they attend all relevant workshops and in-service training sessions to improve their knowledge and skills related to any new developments. They believe that principals must be thoroughly trained as they need to have a sound knowledge of policies and thus keep abreast with new developments and be experts that can monitor and oversee curriculum implementation This will enable them to possess a wide array of competencies and
expertise that will enable them to lead their schools effectively and also to create a safe and secure environment where all learners can achieve excellent outcomes.

They were of the view that principals must visit teachers’ classrooms with the aim of giving them support if they have shortcomings with curriculum implementation. During this process they also need to guide and mentor the entire teaching staff and at the same time adhere to constitutional measures when implementing policy. In this way the principal will be a source of support to the entire staff and a leader in every sphere of curriculum implementation. Teachers also felt that principals should regularly do check-ups on HODs who in turn should monitor Post Level 1 teachers to ensure that implementation takes place. The teachers also expect principals to ensure that HODs check on teachers’ portfolios and that they must have regular follow-up meetings with HOD’s in this regard.

One teacher said that a principal as a leader must always give curriculum policy implementation first priority so that all educators are on par with curriculum policy implementation expectations from provincial to national level. Teachers believe that principals must provide capacity for teachers and must be able to manage change of curriculum effectively while providing support and guidance in the delivery of teaching and curriculum implementation. In addition, the principal must use his experience and expertise to improve school results and for school improvement in general.

Other teachers felt that principals as heads of institutions must know exactly what the DoE expects teachers to do and for this reason must always liaise with the DoE to have an idea of training sessions that are run for educators and what they entail. This will inform them about the changes that are introduced in the various grades and learning areas and an understanding of
classroom dynamics. Teachers felt that this could help principals develop policies that will establish an ethos of effective learning and teaching and effective instructional strategies at school level.

Some of the teachers have reported that the expectations they have for their principals, have been fulfilled to a certain extent. One of those teachers said that his principal always makes sure that critical information on curriculum matters gets to the teachers and that teachers who need to attend training sessions and workshops are always encouraged and supported to do so. Another teacher reported that the school improvement plan which was developed by her school under the guidance of the principal, gives her direction to effectively teach lessons according to curriculum requirements. In addition, internal moderations take place and meetings are called to address issues that need to be clarified. Despite the above factors, there are challenges teachers face in the implementation of curriculum which I present in the next section.

4.6 Challenges with implementation

A number of teachers reported that there were challenges in policy implementation that they were confronted with. They claimed that those challenges were as a result of uncertainty with the new curriculum and insufficient resources which made it difficult to deliver quality education. Teachers also cited the numerous curriculum changes as another challenge that impacted negatively on the quality of teaching and learning which according to one of the teachers, is evident in the reading and mathematical ability of their learners. Some teachers reported that monitoring and guidance is often compromised because not only are principals, who are supposed to oversee curriculum implementation, overloaded with administrative work, they are also not formally trained to guide and support teachers in its implementation. There is however, a general consensus among many teachers that there has not been enough support or
clear direction from the DoE in terms of curriculum support and implementation for teachers. This prompted them to express their views for the successful implementation of the curriculum, which I report on in the next section.

4.7 Views on successful implementation of curriculum

Most teachers suggested that principals must ensure that they (principals) are more knowledgeable in curriculum implementation if they are to guide teachers in its implementation. Teachers are in agreement that principals should play a coordinating role since they are responsible for the effective functioning of the schools. The principal must therefore facilitate the process of teaching and learning to the benefit of all learners in all phases. Teachers felt that it would benefit individual schools if principals form networks with other schools or clusters and form support groups that share resources and information. The teachers were also of the view that principals should also be responsible for creating healthy relations with EDOs and subject advisors who need to support their schools.

Teachers also felt that it was the responsibility of principals to unpack circulars, policies, memos and all other documentation related to curriculum implementation to make sure that these were fully understood by all. Some teachers suggested that principals should also inform parents about curriculum changes and how these impact on the learners’ learning. It was also suggested by the teachers that principals must put systems in place which will be used to constantly check lessons and teaching progress to determine whether requirements of the current curriculum were being met. The next section is an exposition of the views of departmental officials.
5. DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS

In this section I present data generated from DoE officials from the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth Districts. As in the previous sections for principals and teachers, the DoE officials were provided with questionnaires to complete. Out of 15 questionnaires that were handed out for completion, 11 were returned. Again, data generated from these officials through these questionnaires are presented in themes that were deductively identified in the literature review namely resources, professional development, coaching and mentoring and teacher resistance. Themes that emerged inductively are also presented, namely performance evaluation criteria, instructional policies and the general accessibility of policies.

5.1 Resources

In chapter two it was mentioned that financial, technical as well as human resources are key factors that contribute to successful policy implementation. This was confirmed by all DoE officials who reported that the department was obliged to provide the necessary resources for schools to function effectively. This position was further supported by one official who said:

“The first point that I want to make is that one has to bear in mind that for schools to discharge their core businesses, the discharge of educational services curriculum is at the centre of such activities and therefore, I’m talking here about curriculum delivery and there, the resourcing of schools in this respect is a critical factor”.

They also reported that other than the budget for Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSM) provided to schools there was also a budget for maintaining school buildings and provision of other physical resources. According to them (DoE officials) principals were
provided with manuals and books for school management as a guide for accessing and managing all the necessary resources. Some of the programmes they needed were obtainable on CD’s which were simplified and user-friendly. In addition, principals were kept abreast of the latest developments with regard to resources and their management via meetings and circulars.

Some of the DoE officials acknowledged that there were sometimes systemic failures on the part of the DoE, with resources not provided timeously or adequately. This impacted negatively on schools causing the delivery of the curriculum to be very poor and leading to underperformance by schools. In this respect principals had to grapple with teacher shortages for lengthy periods because they would be prevented from recruiting teachers to fill in vacancies that existed, due to departmental logistics such as the pending teacher redeployment and the failure to advertise teaching posts where there were existing vacancies. This shortfall had implications for principals, as pointed out by one official in the following quote:

“Principals as instructional leaders, in the first place, have got themselves to be equipped in terms of the teaching; and if you look at our schools now with the given situation, eh, I’m saying to you the schools are short supplied in terms of their human resources which means the principal has to teach as well – more than they would be doing and then that means they do not have the opportunity to develop themselves as well as their own staff because now the time to put for development is limited. They are always in class.

One official acknowledged that currently the DoE was having problems regarding the budget and the proper funding of schools. As a result they were falling short in providing
principals and their schools with the necessary tools to execute their duties due to these budgetary constraints.

5.2 Professional development

Professional development is often seen to be key in ensuring that school administration, management and leadership, are placed in the hands of technically qualified personnel. As could be expected, the DoE officials were in agreement with the notion that principals should be provided with skills and professional development aimed at empowering them to be able to manage their schools effectively. They were of the view that the DoE should provide principals with curriculum related policies and encourage them to make sure that their staff attended regular workshops on curriculum policy and its implementation. This would ensure that principals and the educators know what to do and to gain more confidence in their work.

In this respect, the DoE officials also reported that principals are provided with a manual for school managers and a resource file which they use as a guide. The manual for school managers clearly states what is expected of principals and comes with supporting documents on topics ranging from the allocation of workloads, management of resources, setting up school timetables and understanding the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder at school level. This also forms part of the principals’ job description which they go through when inducted into principalship.

There were however, contradicting views to the above from some officials who said professional development of principals was one area where the DoE was lagging behind. This was the case in spite of the existence of the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) as a tool for development. One official who was outspoken about this view said:
“We do not develop principals to the extent that one would expect.... there will be very short courses like one day or two days; if it is long it will never be longer than two weeks ... but the content could be good but the fact that it is dealt with in a very, very short space of time, it is simply touched on and principals are required to read the depth on the how; they can hardly do so; ... so it is an area in which we are currently weak as the department.”

However, it was reported by one official that in the absence of a professional development service from the DoE, some principals who want to improve their practise join other organisations for their own growth.

**Evaluation of performance**

Some of the officials felt that the DoE is committed to develop principals as instructional leaders. In this regard certain bench marks were in place to measure the level of professional development of principals. According to the officials, this took place in circuit meetings and workshops where best practices and challenges were shared. The school readiness programme usually conducted at the beginning of the year, was also seen as a mechanism to develop school principals and to measure the extent of their professional development. The officials were also of the view that SASA implementation is accommodating such development of principals and the SMTs are encouraged to manage and implement curriculum implementation guided by these documents.

**Challenges with standards**

While some DoE officials expressed that there were benchmarks to measure the level of professional development of principals, some were opposed to this view. They felt that the job
description referred to in this regard is only contained in the labour chambers and in policy documents such as the personnel admin measures (‘PAM’) document, and no concerted effort is made to translate policy into action in meaningful ways. Furthermore, monitoring is done by circuit managers using their own initiatives at their level. One DoE official also felt that there was a high challenge for principals and SMT members to do standardization through moderation within the schools. Another issue that surfaced clearly relates to training which I explore in the next section.

Training

Most of the officials agreed that the DoE conducts principals’ preparation programmes related to curriculum implementation. These were in the form of workshops, assessor moderation and SMT training as well as principals’ meetings where the head of curriculum always has a slot. Principals were also taken through the relevant curriculum documents through cluster meetings conducted by the curriculum section where sharing of best practices took place. Some officials claimed that before any implementation or the introduction of a new concept, principals are sensitised about the changes. Circulars, memos and continuous updates were used to inform principals about new developments but a feeling was expressed that these needed to be more regular.

According to one official, there were also new programmes that were provided recently. These were only for training teachers in the new content in order to obtain better results (turnaround) mostly for grades 3, 6, 9 and 12 who write common papers. The perception is that this happens because the DoE is results-driven as it can be seen in some of their programmes where they regularly visit and support schools that do not perform well in matric. On the other
hand, other officials reported that they were not involved in any curriculum related programmes with principals and that there was no focus of this nature for them (principals).

Some DoE officials alleged that most principals tend to shift the responsibility of curricula implementation to the Department of Education but they (officials) fully agreed that continuous training was critical for principals. Some reported that available programmes were in the form of workshops that were conducted whenever there were new changes in the curriculum, regular visits to schools (classes) and principals’ offices by DoE officials and that principals were furnished with references and lesson plans. Some of the programmes were in the form of cluster meetings, content gap meetings, school visits to monitor work done and syllabus coverage. In addition, the programmes included assessment training, promotion and progression sessions, CASS moderation, on-site support and curriculum management training.

It was felt by some officials that sometimes these programmes were limited to advocacy and were not centrally designed. There were no formal or structured programmes for curriculum implementation in place for principals and therefore circuit managers designed their own programmes if they so decide. One official described this situation as follows:

“To my knowledge the programmes are not well-structured and this results in principals doing as they wish”.

One official claimed that he was only aware of one formal programme (qualification) that addressed this focus, namely the ACE: School Leadership that dealt, among other things, with teaching and learning, coaching and mentoring. However, there were other interventions that were also reported where some principals obtained support from private agencies such as the GM Foundation, Imbewu Foundation and the Mlambo Foundation.
As far as training in curriculum implementation is concerned, officials said that principals were not trained as a component of their own; training was the same for everyone who attended including principals. This was because principals attended these training sessions in their capacity as subject teachers and not as principals. For a principal, such an undertaking becomes more valuable because one gets first hand training in curriculum implementation and this enables one to get a flavour of the implementation process which can help them as instructional leaders.

When asked about the extent to which the DoE supports principals’ efforts to improve teaching and learning most of the officials reported that there are workshops on instructional leadership and curriculum management that take place but these are not on a regular basis. Only SMT members receive regular training so that they are able to assist principals. The officials also felt that there was a continuous analysis of results in schools and various interactions and interventions to deal with challenges principals faced. These included discussing the results with the principals.

It was further reported by the DoE officials that curriculum personnel, subject advisors and EDOs were there to provide this support and that they visited schools regularly. During these visits principals were encouraged to evaluate, understand and embrace the concept of being effective leaders of instruction and curriculum implementation.

Furthermore, the officials felt that principals must have a close relationship with the EDO allocated to them who is knowledgeable and a guide to the principal. Not all officials agreed that this kind of support was available to principals. One official who was also not in agreement with this view put it thus:
“The DoE does not always ensure that newly appointed principals are oriented. They are rather thrown in the deep end in most cases. Furthermore, there is little training and development given to the few who are lucky to be trained”.

Coaching and mentoring are related to the above and are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

5.3 Coaching and mentoring

It was mentioned earlier that there is a great need in schools for systemic professional development programmes for practising principals in order to acquire workplace learning. For example, coaching and mentoring are often used to enable veterans to share their knowledge and expertise with the initiates. DoE officials were of the view that this practice was necessary for principals in order to enable them to effectively implement new curricula and to facilitate effective teaching and learning and bring about change in schools.

The DoE officials reported that there was determined support for ‘underperforming’ schools because some principals were regularly assisted in monitoring instruction; the focus was mainly on schools who achieve less that 60% in matric results and their feeder schools. These schools were visited regularly and reports about their progress given to the district manager for their consideration. In some cases extra classes, Saturday classes, winter classes and continuous training for educators, were provided to the respective schools. This targeted support supports the view by other officials that coaching and mentoring were done to a limited extent and were only provided whenever a need arose or when principals asked for help. It is not a constant intervention which will guide a principal right through. Although this was the case, the DoE officials felt that not enough was done, and more could still be done.
This contradicted with what was reported by some officials who said that they have never ‘noticed’ coaching and mentoring (in relation to curriculum implementation and instructional leadership) undertaken by the DoE and strongly felt that no effort was directed towards this outcome. They emphasised that there were not even structures and programmes in place for this purpose. One official reported that all the DoE did was to run induction workshops for new principals in management and governance issues and that curriculum workshops were only run for teachers.

To promote a focus on teaching and learning one DoE official reported that common papers were introduced for grades 3, 6 and 9, i.e. Annual National Assessment (ANA) and common examination papers for the exit grades in June and December. In addition, monitoring takes place every term to check the progress of learners, i.e. the quality and quantity of work covered. The officials reported that principals also need to submit quarterly mark schedules and analysis of learners’ performance per quarter. This is coupled with continuous training of SMT’s on assessment tasks, implementation of subject guidelines, subject meetings and workshops as well as moderation. Some officials felt that there was a need to encourage principals to at least be able to monitor teaching and learning during this process.

**On-site support**

It was reported that curriculum specialists often visit schools to check curriculum delivery through learners’ books and results analysis on a quarterly basis. After each school readiness visit (once a year), on-site support visits were conducted at the beginning of every term to try and address the issue of curriculum effectiveness. Subject advisors and EDOs visited schools and Provincial Curriculum Guidelines (PCG 05/2006) (used for on-site school support) were provided to school principals to be used as guides for effective curriculum implementation.
Content gap workshops would then be conducted and during these visits, principals have to show evidence of how they monitor teaching and learning as well as their programmes for class visits.

Some officials reported that, during these visits, subject advisors use checklists and that’s where support stops and nothing more in-depth takes place. They (subject advisors) would also organise winter and spring schools to improve teaching and learning. During this process DoE officials had to ensure that principals implemented the tools to monitor teaching and learning. In view of this, one official reported that principals have to sign a declaration form in which they commit to check all the necessary work. It was pointed out by one official that these visits were not necessarily for principals but for the entire school (teachers).

According to one official, on-site support (for schools) is the responsibility of EDOs. Principals are expected to submit their programmes to their supervisors (EDOs) and the supervisors must visit them at least once in two weeks to detect whether there are any problems on site so that they can work out solutions to those problems together. One EDO describes this interaction with schools as follows:

“What we do as the Eastern Cape is to send circuit managers, people like me and the curriculum unit, the subject advisors to give on-site support to teachers and principals; the curriculum advisors focus more on the subject teaching in this case the principal being a teacher gets the support in that kind of fashion on site. The circuit manager will focus on the managerial aspects of the principal’s work and you will hardly get support which is directed at the principal as an instructional leader which is specifically given to that; but it does come to a limited extent”
However, one official, who strongly felt that there were no follow-up support visits for principals related to effective curriculum implementation and instructional leadership, confirmed what has been said above, but said:

“There is no support specific to curriculum delivery. If a circuit manager does not give specific support, they are not called to account”.

In contrast to the above, it was reported in one of the districts that a monitoring tool for on-site support has been developed (late in 2011) for EDOs to use when visiting schools. The tool requires that they (EDOs) indicate the purpose of the visit, what the findings were during the visit, recommendations made during the visit and a date for the next visit. Explaining how the monitoring tool works, the official interviewed said:

“You have a monitoring tool and in your monitoring tool you will highlight the support you have given; you also indicate the date you will come back again for a follow up and then we monitor our frequency of assisting the school and what the visit was for”.

In that way, according to the official, the principal knows what the last visit was all about, they know when the EDO will come back for a follow up visit, they know what will be discussed and will be able to monitor their own progress. He stated that subject advisors do visit schools when invited to demonstrate how lessons should be taught and provide invaluable insight into the subject. However, it is his belief that there are not enough subject advisors to provide the general support expected of them.
5.4 Teacher resistance

No significant data obtained from most of the DoE officials indicated that there was teacher resistance. However, it was reported that some principals indicated some form of resistance from their teachers which was due to inadequate training and a lack of resources which made it difficult for them to implement the new curriculum. It was also pointed out that there were challenges for some DoE officials to visit schools because in some instances subject advisors and officials were not allowed in class, this being a position taken by one or some of the teacher labour movements.

The only form of direct resistance identified by one official was directed towards the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) instrument. According to this official the reason why the instrument was not properly implemented, is basically resistance. Teachers refuse to be assessed in terms of this instrument and want to be rated highly when they in fact are performing poorly. As a result they resist its application. The official further stated that there is general resistance in terms of any quality assessment and teachers come up with all sorts of theories to justify their resistance. Some of the theories raised to justify the resistance, relate to the fact that they (teachers) believe that certain teachers will be favoured and be given incentives by the officials or principals whereas “all the teachers are equal”.

5.5 Performance evaluation criteria and instructional policies

In this section I present themes that emerged inductively namely performance evaluation criteria, the role of instructional policies and the accessibility of policies in general.
Criteria to evaluate performance

Regarding the above some participants were of the view that these criteria used by the DoE to measure performance were results based and did not take contextual factors into account such as resources, socio-economic factors and where the school is located. Some felt that IQMS and Performance Management and Development Systems (PMDS; to be introduced later) are generally used to evaluate principals’ general performance but not necessarily in teaching and learning and curriculum implementation. One participant raised concerns that, although the IQMS instrument was available for this purpose, it was not taken seriously and was not implemented to the letter.

Other criteria mentioned by the officials to measure performance were the school readiness process, matric results for high schools and recently the results of the common tests written by grades 3, 6 and 9. On-site visits by subject advisors to moderate examination papers and schedules were also used for this purpose. Clearly, if the DoE can apply all available performance criteria when dealing with schools, the performance of the schools will improve and confidence levels of principals will rise.

Role of instructional policies

DoE officials in general viewed instructional policies as being about compliance rather than development. According to some officials everything was done in a “rush” and there was no time for development because of information overload and short timeframes which resulted in the implementation of policies not happening as expected. This has been echoed by other officials who strongly felt that there exists a dichotomy between policy and “praxis”. One official described this state of affairs as very disconcerting as it did not allow principals enough time to familiarise themselves with new policies before implementation. Some officials felt that
these policies should merely be viewed as guidelines that support curriculum delivery and which can be used to streamline administration.

On the contrary, one official strongly felt that there were no instructional policies that he knew of that were meant to develop principals for effective curriculum implementation. Other officials who supported this view felt that if such policies were in place they would influence and guide curriculum implementation and instructional leadership by principals and there would be less problems in this regard than is currently the case. They felt that with the support of these policies; principals will be encouraged and motivated to put concerted efforts into the implementation of curricula. According to these officials, good policies that are well-formulated, implementable, with set objectives and responsibilities, clearly spelt out, could work and would enable principals to make informed decisions.

Some officials noted that policies play a significant role in the professional development of principals because they serve as guidelines and set standards that assist to ensure uniformity across schools country-wide. They keep principals informed, provide them with perimeters wherein they must operate and give guidance on what is expected in each subject. One official felt that if these policies were timeously read and implemented by school principals and staff, they would create a turnaround towards more effective schools and would lead the improvement of results.

Accessibility of policies

All officials reported that instructional policies are easily accessed via EDOs, the internet and the curriculum section. All principals are thus timeously provided with assessment instructions, circulars and memos from the provincial and national office. They also reported that
even during quarterly meetings with the District Director and Circuit Managers it is ensured that the policies are distributed to all schools. Officials suggested that schools must keep the policies in a curriculum subject master file that must be accessible to all educators. The question raised by one official was whether principals do read them. A concern was raised by some officials that in spite of these policies being available, no effort was made to conduct training and empower principals to ensure that there was a clear understanding by all and that there was uniformity in their application.

6. **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter reports on the first study data while the second study is reported on in chapter five. Data generated via questionnaires and interviews with three groups of participants, namely principals, teachers and DoE officials in the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth districts are presented. Interviews were conducted to supplement data generated through the questionnaires. The demographics of all participants are presented followed by the principals’, teachers’ and DoE officials’ responses. The principals’ responses shed light on challenges they face as instructional leaders and facilitators of curriculum implementation as well as how they cope. Teachers’ responses assist in understanding their views and expectations of the role of the principal as facilitators of curriculum implementation and as instructional leaders. Lastly, data obtained from DoE officials’ questionnaires show the kinds of support they know (believe) is provided by the DoE to principals in their leadership roles. The data also identify gaps in the system and some suggestions from the participants of how these can be overcome.

In chapter five I present the results of the second study generated from data obtained mostly quantitatively through an online survey that was undertaken to extend the data collection
process beyond the two districts in which the first study was conducted and to allow some comparisons to be made in terms of different school types and contexts.
CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS - SECOND STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

The data generated in the second study of this research study are reported in this chapter. The methodology and research instruments deployed are described in chapter three. The study design employed an online survey that was distributed to teachers, principals and Department of Education officials in district offices. The process of gathering the data is described and the demographics of the participants are presented. The results of quantitative analyses are presented, namely descriptive statistics and inferential statistical results from the employment of t-tests and ANOVA which reveal probabilities. The practical significance of statistically significant differences is calculated using Cohen’s d for effect size. Qualitative data generated via the online survey by principals are then presented as deductively derived themes that were identified in the literature review or as new themes that were developed inductively from the data are also considered and presented in this chapter. Few qualitative data were generated by the teacher survey, but the departmental official survey provided richer qualitative data which is also presented.

2. GATHERING THE DATA

Two thousand postcards (Appendix L) requesting teachers, principals and departmental officials to participate in an online questionnaire on instructional leadership in South African schools were printed and distributed. These postcards were distributed opportunistically via colleagues, local teachers and principals, Department of Education officials, NGOs who work
with teachers, other universities such as the University of the Western Cape and the Schools Unit at the University of Cape Town, at teacher conferences such as the ‘Inspiring Teachers Conference’ at the NMMU, FRF/NRF Mathematics Education Chair report back sessions in Johannesburg, a meeting of Departmental Officials in Port Elizabeth, ‘Linked-In’ members (professional online social media), via NMMU Faculty of Education administrative staff, etc.

A number of requests for hard copies of the survey were received from participants who had a problem with internet access, as also reported by Emery (2012). The results of these surveys were loaded into the system by the researcher with the assistance of a research assistant administrator. A total of 578 responses were received. The response rate was not linear and spikes in response rates were dependent on opportunities such as conferences, meetings, etc. (Figure 5.1). In a similar survey conducted at Michigan State University (MSU) it was suggested that a mixed mode strategy (mail surveys and web surveys) be used to minimise non-response. In this study, respondents were divided into 5 groups differentiated by distribution mode. The groups received contacts (up to four - not the same for each group): a preliminary postcard, a hard copy survey with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, a follow-up/reminder post card, and a replacement copy survey with cover letter to non-respondents. The returned surveys were scored as responses if they were completed or partially completed (Kaplowitz, Hadlock & Levin, 2004). Similarly, in this study, while the responses cannot be directly related to the postcards distributed (there were a number of personal requests made with follow up conversations or phone calls), the response rate based on the number of cards distributed and the responses received was 29%, which is a similar rate to those found in other postcard surveys.
The cumulative number of responses received over the period that the survey was live online for respondent use is presented in Figure 5.1. A linear regression line is provided simply to give an indication of the spikes and lulls in responses given in time over the period.

![Cumulative number of responses received over period that the survey was live online for respondent use. (Linear regression line provided to provide an indication of the spikes and lulls in responses given in time over the period).](image)

**Figure 5.1:** Cumulative number of responses received over period that the survey was live online for respondent use. (Linear regression line provided to provide an indication of the spikes and lulls in responses given in time over the period).

### 3. OVERALL DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 578 responses were recorded of which 393 were from teachers, 130 from school principals, and 55 from departmental officials (Figure 5.2). These statistics represent the maximum response level but, as not every question was filled in in all cases, these numbers are lower on occasion, but never below a 90% response. As such, comparative representations are made as percentages where necessary.
Figure 5.2: Distribution by number and percentage of teachers, principals and departmental officials who responded to the survey on instructional leadership.

The teachers and principals were drawn mainly from the Eastern and Western Cape provinces (Table 5.1). Each of the other of the nine South African provinces contributed less than 5% to the survey and 98% of the departmental officials were from the Eastern Cape. As such, sufficient data was generated from these two provinces to allow statistical analysis.

Table 5.1
Percentage of teachers, principals and departmental officials who responded from the Eastern Cape and Western Cape provinces of South Africa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Eastern Cape</th>
<th>Western Cape</th>
<th>Combined %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers (393)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals (n=130)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials (n=55)</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the officials polled were from the Eastern Cape and Westerns Cape, and 96% of each of the teacher and principal groupings were from these two provinces.
Overall nearly 60% of the respondents were female, but this figure is skewed mainly by the higher percentage of females in the larger teacher sample (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2
*Gender ratio of respondents per grouping expressed as percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers (n=393)</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals (n=130)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials (n=55)</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A small majority of the principals who responded manage primary schools (53%). This majority was reversed with 53% of the teachers teaching in secondary schools. Overall 51% of the combined teacher/principal sample was placed in secondary schools.

Over 70% of the school principals and departmental officials were over the age of 50 years while two-thirds of the teachers were younger than fifty years of age (Table 5.3). The age distribution of the principals and departmental officials was almost identical when converted to percentages.
Table 5.3
Age distribution of teachers, principals and departmental officials who participated in the survey expressed as percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in years</th>
<th>1≤24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>30-34</th>
<th>35-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The years of experience of the respondents in their current positions is presented in Table 5.4. Respondents seem to have misunderstood the question on experience in current position and instead reported experience in teaching in general. This is evident where most principals and DoE officials have indicated their experience (in the current position) as being more than 21 years (54% and 56% respectively).

Table 5.4
Years of experience of the respondents in their current positions expressed as percentages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>0-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>≥21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of qualifications of the respondents is shown in Table 5.5. A notable feature is that 70% of the departmental officials and over 40% of the principals have postgraduate degrees. However, there are quite a number of respondents in all categories who are under-qualified with three year diplomas (teachers, 17%, principals, 7% and DoE officials, 13%). In addition, 1% of teachers have a two year diploma (REQV 12 or lower) which indicates that we still have under-qualified teachers in our system. However, there are qualifications in
place such as the NPDE whose purpose is the upgrading of under-qualified teachers to provide them with the opportunity of becoming fully qualified professionals (REQV 13). In this way the backlog of under-qualified teachers from the old system is being addressed.

Table 5.5

*Distribution of qualifications of the respondents expressed as percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>2yr Dipl</th>
<th>3yr Dipl</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Degree&amp; Dip</th>
<th>Post-grad</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the distribution as per ‘schools of origin’, that is the political designation of the schools as per the pre-1994 Apartheid classification and thereby the degree of government support (or lack of), are presented in Table 5.6. In chapter two, I distinguished between two unofficial ‘educational systems’ that South Africa appears to have which do not produce equitable academic achievements. One caters for the elite and White and Black middle class (20% of the population) while the other serves the majority (80%) of the South African working class and poor children (Fleisch, 2008). These ‘systems’ are best represented in the table below by ex- Model C and ex-DET schools respectively. According to Christie (2008), ex-Model C schools are the more affluent schools with resources that are able to draw on the cultural capital and ethos of the middle class and able to turn their social advantage into educational advantage. Ex-DET schools on the other hand are historically disadvantaged schools, the poorest of the poor, essentially dysfunctional with children achieving at low levels due to poverty and health nutrition (van der Berg, 2005; Fleisch, 2008).
Table 5.6  
*Distribution of the respondents by school origin based on the pre-1994 Apartheid classification system*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Ex-DET</th>
<th>Ex-Model C</th>
<th>Ex-HoR</th>
<th>Ex-HoD</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By far the largest group of respondents to the online survey are ex-Model C teachers and principals (40% and 46% respectively) compared to all other groups, namely, Ex-DET (25% and 25%), ex-HoR (14% and 17%), ex-HoD (3% and 5%) and private schools (5% and 7%). The high response by ex-Model C schools can be attributed to the fact that these schools are well-resourced and have computer and internet facilities that other schools such as ex-DET and ex-HoR do not (adequately) have, making survey response more difficult for them. As noted earlier a similar resource constraint in Emery’s (2012) study required hard copies of the survey to be distributed to rural schools that did not have access to internet facilities. Another observation is a low percentage of respondents from the ex-HoR schools which, can be attributed to the low number of schools from this group with teachers making up only 2.9% of teachers in the country as presented in the Human Sciences Research Council report (Carnoy & Chisholm, 2008).

4. **PRINCIPALS**

The data generated via the online survey were analysed by comparing factors such as the principals’ designation (principal or deputy), age, their gender, formal qualifications, years’ experience in the position, the province in which they work, whether they worked in a primary or secondary school, and the historic type of school in which they operated against three grouped factors, viz. their views on their role (F1), their perceptions of their teachers and schools (F2),
and how they viewed their relationship with their District Offices of the Department of Education (F3).

The qualitative data that were generated were treated similarly as to what was done in chapter four, i.e. categorised according to deductively derived themes from the literature and other themes derived inductively from the data.

4.1 **Statistical analyses**

Descriptive and inferential statistics were generated using a Statistica package and statistical analyses were undertaken using Students t-test where appropriate and analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques with Scheffé’ post hoc tests done to distinguish between multivariates when significant differences were detected. Where significant differences were found calculations of practical significance (effect size) were made using Cohen’s d when appropriate.

Statistical analyses of the data revealed no statistically significant differences (p≤0.5) in terms of the three main factors, i.e. their views of the principal’s roles (F1), their views on their teachers and schools (F2), and their relations with their district offices (F3) in terms of whether they were a principal, deputy principal or ‘other’, in terms of whether they were male or female; what their qualifications were; or whether they served in secondary or primary schools. Statistically significant differences (p≤0.5) were found in terms of years of service in the post of principal, whether the schools were in the Eastern or Western Cape, and the historical type of school. A full description of the statistical analyses is contained in appendices M and N.
Differences between years of experience in years in the post

The mean scores revealed that principals in the 0-5 year experience grouping, i.e. those who had the least experience in the position, viewed their relationship with the district office in a more favourable light than principals who had served for longer periods (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7
Mean scores, numbers and standard deviations of Principals’ views on their relationship with the District Office (Factor 3; N=122)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1.7</th>
<th>F3 Means</th>
<th>F3 N</th>
<th>F3 σ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;20 years</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the Scheffe’ post-hoc test was not powerful to distinguish pair wise differences, the difference was statistically significant at greater than the 95% level of confidence (p=0.03).

Differences between principals in the Eastern and Western Cape

While there were no statistically significant differences (p=0.01; df=114) between principals from the Eastern or Western Cape in terms of factors F1 or F2, i.e. their views of their roles and their views of their teachers and schools, respectively, there was a difference at the p≤0.05 level with a medium practical significance for factor F3 with Western Cape principals rating their relationship with the department more highly than those in the Eastern Cape.
Differences between principals in historically different types of schools

There were no statistically significant differences between principals in historically different types of schools in terms of how they viewed their roles. Application of ANOVA revealed that there were, however, statistically significant differences between principals in different types of schools and how they viewed their teachers and their schools and how they related with their district offices.

Principals in ex Model C schools differed significantly from principals in ex DET schools (p=0.0007; Cohen's d=0.96) and principals from ex HoR schools (p=0.00; Cohen's d=1.51), in both cases with a large practical significance, in terms of how they viewed their teachers and their schools (Table 5.8). In the case of relationships with the district office only ex Model C and ex DET principals differed significantly with a large practical significance (p=0.0013; Cohen's d=0.87) with ex-DET principals viewing their relationship with the district office statistically significantly more favourably than their counterparts (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8
Differences between principals in historically different types of schools in terms of their views of their teachers and schools (F2) and their relationship with the district office (F3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1.10</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F3</th>
<th>F3</th>
<th>F3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>σ</td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex DET - previously for Africans</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex Model C - previously for Whites</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex HoR - previously for 'coloureds'</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of statistically significant differences

Differences between principals’ view of their roles (F1), their views on their teachers and schools (F2), and their relationship with their district offices (F3) are presented in Table 5.9

Table 5.9
Summary of differences in principals’ perceptions with regard to the three main factors that were analysed statistically

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals’ views of their roles (F1)</td>
<td>• There were no statistically significant differences between principals’ perceptions of their roles across age, gender, years of service in the role, the province in which they work, whether they headed a primary or a secondary school, or historic background of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals’ views on their teachers and school (F2)</td>
<td>• Principals in ex-Model C schools viewed their teachers and schools statistically significantly more positively (with strong practical significance) than principals in ex-DET schools (p=0.0007; Cohen's d=0.96) and principals from ex HoR schools (p=0.00; Cohen's d=1.51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Principals’ view of their relationship with the District Office of the Department of Education | • Principals in ex-Model C and ex-HoR schools differed statistically significantly with ex-DET school principals (p=0.0013; Cohen's d=0.87) in that they viewed their relationship with the District Office statistically significantly more negatively than their counterparts in ex-DET schools.  
  • Principals in the Western Cape view their relationship with the District Office statistically significantly differently (p≤0.05) more positively than their counterparts in the Eastern Cape at a medium level of practical significance (d=0.50). |

The qualitative data that could be gleaned from the on-line survey are reported below in a similar manner to how they were presented in chapter four, viz. as the deductively derived
themes from the literature and other new themes derived inductively from the data generated. There were no data generated on resources and teacher resistance but some pertaining to professional development and coaching and mentoring is presented below.

4.2 Professional development

Data obtained through the online survey indicate that principals view professional development as an important empowerment mechanism. They reported on how they were professionally developed over the years. According to some, they attended workshops and training where certain topics were presented and discussed. These sessions were accompanied by group interaction where, as peers they shared experiences (peer lecture learning) related to the management of schools.

Some principals reported that they registered at universities to improve their qualifications and, with the guidance of their lecturers and tutors, grew personally. One principal said that he was “extremely inspired” by his lecturer and thesis supervisor who always availed himself for consultation. Together they had fruitful engagements and discussions about school leadership in general. Another principal reported that he spent weeks in schools all over the US shadowing principals and that this experience contributed towards his professional growth.

In general most principals believe that their professional development is enhanced by attending relevant training sessions and by interacting with other principals where they can share their own experiences about their practice. According to them this interaction evokes confidence and is a great source of encouragement to them and enables them to advise each other on issues related to the management and leadership of schools. The professional growth of principals can
further be enhanced if it is accompanied by coaching and mentoring and data generated in this study on this topic is presented in the following section.

### 4.3 Coaching and mentoring

Several principals reported that mentoring and coaching was necessary, especially for inexperienced principals. They were of the view that Education Development Officers (EDOs) must provide this service when they visit schools, i.e. they need to give guidance to principals on work related issues and must assist them (principals) to reflect on their practice when necessary. They also need to ensure that theory is translated into practice by the principals.

Some principals said they were mentored by their previous principals and mentors from private institutions. They reported that their principals guided and offered them mentorship and provided examples of good practice. One principal said her husband, who was a principal of long standing, mentored and coached her when she was appointed principal. She believes that this support contributed significantly to her personal growth. A similar view was expressed by other principals who were mentored by their principals when they were still deputy principal under their leadership.

Some principals reported that they were mentored and coached when they registered for the ACE: School Leadership programme, a process that was linked to the qualification on which they were registered. Mentors were sent to their schools to assist and guide them as individuals and sometimes as a group. When in groups they received advice from their mentors, were helped to prepare their portfolios of evidence, and were supported in terms of the learning process in general. The group discussions were for feedback on personal growth as leaders and provided further guidance in terms of certain leadership skills.
Where it was reported by some principals that in rare cases (despite DoE officials’ reports that they provided ‘mentoring and coaching’ to school principals) attempts at mentoring were provided by the department, it was not functional and was out of touch with the real situation prevalent in schools. In some cases this ‘mentoring and coaching’ process was only limited to site meetings with little or no business related to this purpose.

4.4 Principal support groups for mentoring

In the absence of formal mentoring and coaching processes in schools, it was reported that a group of principals (5-7) came together informally to form a support group for this purpose and to share their experiences. They met every second week to discuss common problems and tried to work out solutions as a collective. According to one of the principals, this initiative brought the theory alive and was used by the group as a sounding board and guided them in their practice.

5. TEACHERS

The data generated via the online survey were analysed in a similar manner as to what was done with the data generated by the principals by comparing factors such as the teachers’ level (entry or Head of Department), age, their gender, formal qualifications, teaching experience in years, the province in which they work, whether they work in a primary or secondary school, and the historic type of school in which they operate against grouped factors. However, in this case there were six grouped factors as compared to the three used in the analysis of the principals’ perceptions. These factors are the perceptions of their principal’s communication and support (F1), professional support by the principal (F2), principal’s leadership in terms of staff co-operation (F3), principal’s overall leadership qualities (F4), evidence of leadership (F5) and
the perceived effect of the school’s approach (F6). A full description of the statistical analyses are contained in appendix N.

As with the case with the principals, the qualitative data that were generated were treated similarly as to what was done in chapter four, i.e. categorised according to deductively derived themes from the literature and other themes derived inductively from the data.

5.1 Statistical analyses

As was done with the data generated by the principals, descriptive and inferential statistics were generated using a Statistica package and statistical analyses were undertaken using Students t-test where appropriate and analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques with Scheffe’ post hoc tests done to distinguish between multivariates when significant differences were detected. Where significant differences were found calculations of practical significance (effect size) were made using Cohen’s d when appropriate.

Overall, statistical analyses of the data revealed no statistically significant differences (p≤0.5) in terms of the grouped factors when considering gender, teaching experience in years, or the province in which the teachers worked. Statistically significant differences (p≤0.5) were found in terms of years of teacher level, age, qualifications, whether teaching in a primary or a secondary school, and the historical type of the school.

Teacher level

The entry level teachers consistently rated their principals lower than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers over all six factors (see appendix N). These differences were not statistically significant (p≥0.5) for factors F3 and F6 (leadership in terms of staff cooperation and effect of the school approach). The differences were, however, statistically
different (p≤0.5) for the other factors, viz. communication (F1), professional support (F2), overall leadership qualities (F4), and evidence of leadership (F6).

Only the entry level and the ‘other’ teachers differ significantly (p=0.00) with a medium practical significance (Cohen’s d=0.54 - medium) for F1 (communication), F2 (professional support, p=0.00; Cohen's d=0.57 - medium), and F5 (evidence of leadership, p=0.02; Cohen's d=0.34 - small) as was the case in terms of the principal’s overall leadership (F4, p=0.0007; Cohen's d=0.68 - medium).

The category of ‘other’ comprised teachers who were art teachers (2), museum school teachers (2), a temporary teacher, lecturer, senior teacher, public relations practitioner, retiree, academic support person, grade head and librarian. There were also four subject heads who ticked the ‘other’ radio button (misread the instructions?) and 17 deputy principals. As noted above, this grouping of 35 respondents consistently rated their principals more highly than the entry level teachers, which may be a factor their seniority indicated in many cases (deputy principals, grade head) and suggested in others (e.g. retiree, grade head).

**Age**

Age difference data reveal that the teachers under the age of 30 only differed with the other age groups on one factor, F5 (evidence of leadership). They rated their principal’s performance statistically significantly lower than the Heads of Departments did in their schools (p=0.0426; Cohen's d=0.63 - medium).

**Qualifications**

Statistically significant differences between qualifications were found for F1 (communication), F5 (evidence of leadership), and F6 (effect of the school approach). The
teachers with post-graduate qualifications rated their principals’ communication abilities (F1) the lowest of all groups and the Scheffe’ post-hoc test revealed a statistically significant difference between their mean score and that of the qualifications classified as other which was highest (p=0.0373; Cohen's $d=0.59$ - medium).

Analysis also revealed that the post-graduate group’s mean score also differed significantly (was lower) from groups 1 (p=0.02; Cohen's $d=0.55$ - medium), group 3 (p=0.05; Cohen's $d=0.4$ - small) and group 5 (p=0.0348; Cohen's $d=0.58$ - medium) in their perception of evidence of leadership (F5). The teachers with degrees and post-graduate degrees rated the effect of the school’s approach (F6) lowest but, while a statistically significant difference between the groups was recorded, the post hoc test was not powerful enough to detect any pair-wise differences.

*Primary and secondary school teachers*

Statistically significant differences were found at the 99% level of confidence (p≤0.01) and at medium to small practical significances between the primary and high school teachers’ rating of their principals across all six categories (F1-F6), with the primary school teachers rating their principals more highly (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10
*Primary and high school teachers rating of their principals across all six categories*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.47 (Medium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.45 (Medium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.35 (Small)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.39 (Small)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F5</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.45 (Medium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F6</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.43 (Medium)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historical type of school

Statistically significant differences were found between the types of schools for factors F1 (communication, p=0.01; Cohen's d=0.45 - medium), F2 (professional support, p=0.05; Cohen's d=0.37 - small), and F4 (overall leadership, p=0.00; Cohen's d=0.62 - medium), with the Scheffe’ post-tests revealing that the differences were significant between the teachers in ex-model C and ex-DET schools. Direct comparison of these two groups using Student’s t-test revealed statistically significant differences across the same three factors but also revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of ex-model C and ex-DET schools respondents’ perceptions of their principal’s overall leadership qualities (F4). The ex-model C teachers rated their principals more highly in terms of communication and support (F1), professional support (F2), and overall leadership qualities (F4), but rated their leadership in terms of promoting staff cooperation lower than their ex-DET counterparts did. These data are presented in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11
Differences between ex-model C and ex-DET school teachers’ perceptions of their principals in terms of factors F1-F4, viz. communication, professional support, leadership in terms of promoting staff cooperation, and overall leadership qualities, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean ex-DET</th>
<th>Mean ex-Model C</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.45 (Medium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.0020</td>
<td>0.36 (Small)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>0.0321</td>
<td>0.25 (Small)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.61 (Medium)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of statistically significant differences

Differences between teachers’ views of their principal’s communication (F1), the professional support provided (F2), leadership skills in terms of staff cooperation (F3), overall
leadership qualities (F4), evidence of leadership (F5) and effect of the school’s approach (F6), are summarised in Table 5.12

Table 5.12  
*Summary of main differences in teachers’ perceptions with regard to the six factors that were analysed statistically*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communication and support by principal (F1) | • Entry level teachers rated their principals lower than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers did  
• Teachers with post-graduate qualifications rated their principals lower than their counterparts with lower qualifications  
• Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers  
• Ex-model C teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-DET teachers did |
| Professional support by principals (F2)     | • Entry level teachers rated their principals lower than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers did  
• Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers  
• Ex-model C teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-DET teachers did |
| Principal’s leadership in terms of staff cooperation (F3) | • Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers  
• Ex-DET teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-model C teachers did |
| Overall leadership by principal (F4)        | • Entry level teachers rated their principals lower than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers did  
• Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers  
• Ex-model C teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-DET teachers did |
| Evidence of leadership (F5)                 | • Teachers under 30 years of age rated their principals lower than their older counterparts  
• Teachers with post-graduate qualifications rated their principals lower than their counterparts with lower qualifications  
• Entry level teachers rated their principals lower than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers did  
• Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers |
| Effect of school approach (F6)              | • Teachers with post-graduate qualifications rated the effect of the school’s approach lower than their counterparts with lower qualifications  
• Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers |
As the structure of the teacher online questionnaire did not provide much in terms of qualitative data apart from qualifications which allows a short description of their formal qualifications which they classified as ‘other’, only the qualifications of the teachers can be reported.

5.2 Teacher qualifications

There were a range of qualifications on the online survey that teachers indicated as ‘other’. The qualifications in question here included the following; 4 year Higher Diploma in Education; Degree plus PGCE; Mathematics and Computer literacy certificate, B Tech in Public Relations, ACE Special Education, Higher Conservative Diploma and UTLM Piano, Early Childhood Development and Current Sports Management. These were over and above the formal qualifications the teachers claimed to possess.

6. DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS

The online questionnaire for departmental officials in district offices provided mainly demographic statistics (reported in section 3 of this chapter) and some statistical data on departmental officials’ perceptions on the need for formal leadership qualifications in order to be appointed as a principal, the effective provision of professional development of principals, support for principals, whether the Department of Education has explicit standards for what principals are expected to do, the role the department plays in the selection of competent principals, the professional development of principals, and the promotion, nurturing of a focus on teaching and learning.

Only one official felt that there was no need for formal leadership qualifications in order to be appointed as a principal, while 12 of the 55 respondents (more than 20%) believed that the
DoE did not provide the necessary professional development of principals for them to do their job properly. Ten officials believed that the Department of Education does not have explicit standards for what principals are expected to do. The officials were ambivalent in terms of whether the department plays a role in the selection of competent principals, with responses ranging from ‘always’ to ‘never’, but with most responses somewhere in between. Responses revealed an equally ambivalent mean score of 3.4 in terms of the department supporting schools to improve, 3.5 in terms of promoting the development of principals, and a slightly lower 3.3 in terms of promoting and nurturing of a focus on teaching and learning.

The open ended responses which allowed the officials to explain their responses provided fairly extensive qualitative data on these issues. Each of these issues is reported on below, including a new theme that revealed the perception that officials believe there is a lack of capacity in the Department of Education district offices.

6.1 Need for formal qualifications

In the survey, several DoE officials pointed out that there was a ‘dire need’ to send principals to professional development courses to acquire formal qualifications and that there was a need for leave to be granted for a number of months or even a year. They believed that in-service training is the preferred option; it should be acquired by an accumulation of short courses that lead to a formal qualification. Currently, principals are subjected to informal training workshops which the officials view as adequate.

As far as support for the acquisition of formal qualifications are concerned, the DoE officials reported that principals are catered for in the skills programmes and bursaries are provided for them to further their studies. In a few instances some principals are/were enrolled
for formal training and qualifications such as the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) - but some officials reported that this is very rare because most principals do not know how to access the bursary. This function is usually left to the provincial office. As such, most DoE officials support the notion of formal qualifications for principals but note that this aim can only be realised if the necessary funding is provided for such a venture. This highlighting of the need for financial resources points the way to the next section where data is presented in terms of resources which officials recognise as being crucial for schools to function effectively.

6.2 Resources

As mentioned earlier, the availability and provision of resources to schools enables the DoE to promote and nurture a focus on teaching and learning. In this regard the DoE provides the necessary physical resources and personnel wherever it is able to. For example, it has been reported that there are officials who go out to assist school principals and educators by giving them teaching and learning material to help them in class. In most cases this support depends on the availability of resources and specialist personnel to undertake this role. One official described the above process as follows:

“Staffing of schools as per declared post provisioning is adhered to by all possible means. Provisioning of books and furniture becomes a priority in order to promote teaching and learning in the schools. Those schools declared Section 21 schools are provided with a school budget which is determined by the enrolment of the school. They are then expected to requisite equipment for effective teaching and learning in the school.”
However, some noted that resources are always a challenge for the DoE and there is always a shortfall of finances and personnel when it comes to delivery. One DoE official from the Eastern Cape reported that personnel at the district offices are often stretched and the tendency is to concentrate on Grade 12 performance only. He went on to say:

“In quite a number of primary schools officials can only deal with management issues and very little is devoted to academic work. Schools are often left to fend for themselves at primary school level - monitoring of CASS (including moderation of school-based assessment), syllabus coverage, and the availability of qualified teachers for the various subjects such as science and maths are in most instances neglected. This is a personal view that I experience in conducting Whole-School Evaluation to sampled schools throughout the province.”

According to this official, the number of schools evaluated so far (September 2012) is approximately 100, a far outcry from the total number of schools in the province (approximately 5600). In addition, in this province, unlike in others, a subject advisor is responsible for two phases such as Intermediate and Senior Phases, and is accountable for not less than 200 schools on the average, with this figure doubling in certain districts.

It was reported that schools experience this burden of staff shortages and are sometimes without substitutes to fill in vacant or temporary posts for months, and sometimes for up to a year. Some schools operate in dilapidated buildings because there is a lack of sufficient funding from the DoE to provide maintenance. These challenges, according to the DoE officials, exert a great deal of pressure on school principals, who have to ensure that schools run smoothly and are effective.
The provision of physical, finance and other resources to schools must always go hand in hand with the professional development of principals to ensure that they (principals) are well prepared to undertake their role of instructional leadership and curriculum implementation. In the next section I present the professional development of school principals.

6.3 Professional development of principals

Circuit managers or EDOs are deployed to support and develop principals to improve their schools through programmes such as whole school development and professional development of school principals. In this regard, most of the DoE officials felt that EDOs are appointed to assist principals in the management of schools with the help of school governing bodies (SGBs) which also assist with school governance.

Most DoE officials expressed that, in principle, professional development was provided to principals. For example, newly appointed principals go for orientation and induction where they are exposed to professional development, leadership skills and “quality supervision”. Although they recognised that this is a once off happening, it is geared towards preparing principals for their leadership role. In addition, workshops are conducted for principals and some awarded bursaries to further their studies in school leadership. Nearly all DoE officials felt that workshops for principals were not enough and too short (usually 1-2 days and sometimes up to a week). They were also of the view that the workshops needed to be longer, more frequent, well-structured and needed to be informed by the needs of principals and the identification of their strengths and weaknesses after such an analysis was made. The DoE officials acknowledged though that there were no proper and coherent training programmes in place for this purpose except for the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) which is often used to measure the performance of principals and to develop them according to gaps that have been identified.
However, one official expressed that while the IQMS is an instrument for this purpose, it has often not been taken seriously and as a result is not implemented to its full potential.

In some cases the DoE officials reported that support for principals was not provided as it should be by the districts because some EDOs were not “hands on” with regard to the professional development of their principals. According to these officials some principals needed more development in the management of human, finance and physical resources as well as instructional leadership. They believe that some also needed to improve their human relations. The officials were of the view that if these services could not be provided internally, they should be outsourced in order to be more effective in terms of the focus of professional development.

DoE officials view professional development as a necessary mechanism to empower principals in their practice. However they feel that more still needs to be done in this regard as principals have a tendency of concentrating on other aspects more than on curriculum and instructional issues, which are the core-business of schooling. They cited other competing items such as music, sport and other issues not related to direct academic aspects of schooling. The DoE officials strongly felt that principals need to prioritise teaching and learning.

However, it has also been reported by some officials that the human resource development section of the DoE, in collaboration with the EDOs should ensure that training programmes to develop principals and school management teams (SMTs) take place on a continuous basis. For example, each EDO is charged with the responsibility of 20-30 schools and is expected to conduct monthly meetings with principals to provide support. The challenge noted in this regard is that there is “no consistency” and that this role is sometimes left to the provincial office because there are no coherent programmes that are offered by the districts.
In conclusion, the general feeling of the officials is that the DoE must ensure that enough is done in terms of providing resources for the professional development of principals and that activities directed to this focus must be more frequent and be tailored to the needs of the principals. Once those needs have been identified they believe it will be easier for the DoE to provide the principals with support through coaching and mentoring. Data on this topic are presented in the next section.

6.4 Support for principals

Mentoring and coaching is viewed by many officials as an important component for assisting principals to be better practitioners. Officials have reported that informal mentoring, coaching, and on-going professional support is provided by EDOs and that, in many cases, it is provided in the form of informal workshops that are conducted from time to time and one on one meetings between EDOs and principals. Individual support visits to school principals also take place on a regular basis. During these visits, DoE officials also say, constant monitoring takes place and principals are assisted with improving and developing reporting systems to the district office.

According to the DoE officials, the on-site school visits conducted by EDOs and subject advisors is an indication of a commitment of the districts and other sections such as supply chain to support school principals. Furthermore, principals are guided and mentored by their respective EDOs and other district officials through training, mentoring, short courses and workshops. Several DoE officials reported that coaching and mentoring has been made a priority especially for underperforming schools. Where these schools have been identified, principals are assisted and their schools are put in development programmes such as winter schools and other intervention programmes in order to improve their pass rate.
When district officials visit schools to provide guidance, monitor activities and to provide on-going support to principals, they sometimes face many challenges such as a lack of resources in the district. These include transport, photocopying resources, vast distances that have to be covered within the districts, a shortage of relevant staff such as subject advisors and other specialists. All these challenges make it difficult and sometimes impossible for districts to assist school principals.

The role of subject advisors, who they noted frequently visit schools, is to assist the principals by giving them guidance and to support teachers on curriculum related matters or issues. In contrast they noted that the EDOs focused more on school governance, management strategies to monitor teaching and learning. The officials also worked with teachers and School Governing Body (SGBs) members when required to do so, particularly in terms of governance matters such as, amongst others, school finances.

Although EDOs are also charged to support principals and teachers in curriculum related issues, they sometimes find themselves having to compete with subject advisors who believe they are ‘in charge’ of this function, instead of complementing one another in their quest to provide on-going support. Related to support for principals are explicit standards principals need to uphold when they discharge their duties, which are discussed in the next section.

6.5 Explicit standards for principals

According to the South African School Act, principals are appointed as accounting officers on behalf of the head of department, and their roles and responsibilities are clearly articulated in this regard. The personnel administration measures (‘PAM’) document also outlines the job description of principals clearly. When appointed, principals are provided with
school management and resource files to guide them when performing their duties. These they must be able to read and interpret. As far as work performance is concerned, principals are accountable to the DoE and benchmarks used are usually the quality of teaching and learning that is provided and learner performance. Closely related to what principals are expected to know is the selection process of principals presented in the next section.

6.6 Selection of principals

Most of the DoE officials raised concerns about how principals were selected and appointed in schools. They reported that the DoE has given power to appoint both principals and educators to the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) by making recommendations to the DoE. The officials believe the recommendations made by SGBs are, in most cases, “far from objective”, and are rarely challenged or changed. According to the officials some principals are selected because of their political affiliation regardless of competency. They are of the view that some SGB members are in some cases ignorant of school needs and are then manipulated to make flawed decisions that will not benefit the schools.

Sometimes the local community members determine who they want and influence results through the SGBs. In other cases teacher union members interfere with the process to ensure that their members are appointed irrespective of their level of competence or readiness to become a principal. The officials also believe that, in certain instances, unsupportable decisions are made such as a high school teacher being appointed a foundation phase school principal without an appropriate level of understanding of what is required in terms of teaching and learning at this level. According to one official the DoE is supposed to have a human resource selection committee at district level (composed of all education stakeholders - having a stake in education) to scrutinize the SGBs recommendation to check whether the SGB has done the correct choice,
something which currently “does not happen”. Some officials noted that it has thus become possible for a post level 1 teacher to jump all other levels and become post level 4 without any prior preparation for the position.

It was noted that DoE officials serve as resource persons during interviews and merely observe whether the process of selection is fair and whether it is conducted according to the prescripts of the law, but the decisions are vested in the SGBs. The DoE officials are therefore of the view that the district office needs to make the principal appointments themselves and not the SGBs because they have an idea of what is expected from a principal. They believe that the EDOs themselves can play a crucial role in the process of selecting and placement of principal candidates because of their experience and their knowledge of school needs and the suitability of the candidates.

DoE officials also believe that the appointment of principals should be based on qualifications, experience, skills and expertise related to the position. They are also of the view that only teachers who have been involved in the school management should be allowed to apply and go through the interview processes. However, they concede that, in isolated cases, SGBs are competent to a certain degree. The SGBs go out of their way to head hunt suitable candidates because they know that central to the appointment of principals is the issue of quality. They believe that the competency to recommend rests with them and that, to ensure that schools select and appoint suitable candidates they must consult with their respective EDOs and other stakeholders in order to achieve their objective. As noted above, currently the District Office is only involved to ensure procedural correctness of the process.
Another interesting view that was expressed by some officials was that there are no criteria determined for the appointment and selection of principals. According to their view, appointments tend to be based on a flawless completion of the application form rather than management oriented criteria and thus suggest that the appointment should be taken away from SGBs as the process is “always manipulated by teachers and unions” who have “a bigger say in the appointment of principals”.

6.7 Focus on teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is the core business of any schooling system and therefore all partners in education must always work towards realising this focus. According to most DoE officials, this notion compels all officials concerned to provide on-going support to principals in this regard. They noted that the DoE provides enough policies as well as other guidelines such as work schedules and pace setters to school principals to use in order to promote teaching and learning and to ensure that this was done effectively. The DoE also provides content gap workshops for teachers in their respective subjects. The officials also pointed out that principals are also invited on curriculum implementation workshops conducted for educators so that as managers of educators and the curriculum they are empowered to perform their tasks as instructional leaders effectively.

There are however other views that have been expressed by the DoE officials that EDOs are less concerned with the ‘correct’ implementation of the curriculum and see this as a task of the curriculum section (subject advisors) as “they always deal with subject specifics”. This view creates a gap between the EDOs and subject advisors in many schools and often affects the focus of teaching and learning because, instead of complementing one another, the EDOs and subject advisors may ‘compete’ against each other.
However, one official strongly opposed the view that the DoE promoted the notion of teaching and learning. According to him, the DoE had no plan to ensure the success of teaching and learning and that this was only a theoretical viewpoint, and has little capacity for the process. The next section deals with further perceptions of capacity within the DoE.

6.8 Lack of capacity (EDOs)

In a startling revelation some DoE officials reported that there were some cases within the department where officials could not provide the necessary support and guidance to principals because they themselves did not have the necessary capacity. This they blamed on wrong appointments that were made similarly to the ones that are normally made with principals who were not suitable candidates for the positions in which they were appointed.

The officials in question felt that such personnel needed to be empowered before they could be sent out to support principals. This they could take upon themselves by reading extensively on what was expected of them as officials tasked to support principals. One official who was a strong critic of this state of affairs had this to say:

“If one was an incompetent teacher who is appointed as an EDO how on earth can that person support principals?”

7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reports on data generated in the second study conducted as part of the research process. The data were generated using an online survey that was distributed to principals, teachers and DoE officials in all nine provinces of the country, whereas the first study was conducted only in the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth districts in the Eastern Cape. The
timelines of the data gathering process is described in this chapter and the demographics of the participants have been presented. The results of quantitative analyses are presented as descriptive statistics and inferential statistical results from the employment of t-tests and ANOVA which reveal probabilities. The practical significance of statistically significant differences was calculated using Cohen’s d for effect size. Qualitative data generated via the online survey by principals are then presented as deductively derived themes that were identified in the literature review or as new themes that were developed inductively from the data. The data describes mechanisms that are normally used for principals’ professional growth. Few qualitative data were generated by the teacher survey and mainly related to qualifications, but the departmental official survey provided richer qualitative data which is presented and which describes support systems provided by the department of education for principals.

In the next chapter, the results of this study and the first study are discussed and considered in the light of the literature reviewed in chapter two of this report.
CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on discussing and answering the main question and the subordinate questions posed in chapter one by examining the qualitative and quantitative data generated by the various data collecting instruments as reported in chapters four and five which specifically relates to the data generated from historically disadvantaged schools in the first and second studies. The data appear sufficiently similar to be discussed together in order to answer the research sub-questions that have to be answered in order to answer the principal research question, namely:

*What are the challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies?*

The sub-questions issues are related to the principals’ knowledge of curriculum implementation expectations and their roles as instructional leaders, the support given by the Department of Education, their teachers’ expectations, and whether there are different perceptions in different types of schools. These issues are drawn together in consideration of the main research question around the challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged secondary schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders. These findings inform the main conclusions and recommendations which are presented in chapter seven of this research report.
2. PRINCIPALS KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION EXPECTATIONS

The research sub-question that is under consideration in this section “Do principals know what is expected of them in terms of the expectations of the Department of Education’s policy documents of curriculum policies? Phrased slightly differently, the question is to what extent are school principals conversant with the Department of Education (DoE) expectations of them with respect to their knowledge of general policy documents and curriculum policies in the changing school climate, as well as how principals view their role in the development and the implementation of new curricula. In relation to this question, participants, i.e. principals, expressed that they were in the “forefront of change and curriculum implementation” in their schools, and expressed an understanding that they needed more development in this area as part of their professional development strategy in order to be better equipped to deal with challenges during implementation. The situation described by these principals resonates with the views espoused by researchers such as Blasé & Blasé (2004) who have maintained that principals need to possess a wide array of competencies (in this case an understanding of the curriculum and its implementation) in order to lead their schools effectively because they are directly in charge of policy implementation at school level.

However, the principals’ comments suggest that this is not the case in many South African schools and highlight factors that are required for successfully implementing change in general. Many principals believed that preparation for curriculum policy implementation is lacking and, in some cases, inadequate. As a result they felt they were not able to guide teachers because they were not prepared for this task. Such feelings are reflected in the work of Brynard (2007) and Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008), who claim that, in the case of legislation of
educational curricula, little of well-meant classroom intentions have materialised in practice. Furthermore, Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) note that there is a lack of reliable data which often hampers policy makers’ ability to devise clear policy goals with well-defined implementation plans and evaluation mechanisms. Principals in this study concur with the above view as they asserted that there were no formal well-planned workshops or courses to prepare teachers adequately and the training provided lacked clear guidelines and vision implementation. The principals in this study noted that subject advisors failed to visit their schools leaving principals with the burden of guiding teachers in areas they were not trained themselves, which often led to confusion on the part of the teachers who were often not sure of what was expected of them.

Nevertheless, the data suggest that circumstances forced principals to assume the role of guiding their teachers under challenging circumstances. Principals attributed this situation to the ill-preparedness exhibited by Department of Education facilitators who were responsible for training sessions, their failure to take into account contextual factors such as lack of resources, and the general lack of competent trainers. This observation by principals is in accord with earlier findings by Fullan (2001) that whether or not implementation occurs, will depend on the congruence between the reforms and the local needs and how the changes are introduced and followed through. In support of this view, Carl (2009) noted that the real measure of success during implementation is determined largely by the quality of the planning design and dissemination done beforehand. Clearly the process described above is not evident in the situations described by principals, which explains why they view the training provided as lacking guidelines and vision for implementation.
Teachers and DoE officials also expressed their views in this regard. Teachers, for example, complained that they struggled to get to grips with curriculum implementation because there was a lack of clear guidelines and departmental facilitators did not always have all the information required in this regard. For these reasons they turned to their principals for guidance and support. Some DoE officials, who also held this view, said there were no policies specifically meant to develop principals for effective curriculum implementation. Other officials admitted that where such policies existed, little or no effort was made to conduct training and empower principals to ensure that a clear understanding existed on how such policies should be implemented. This appears to have been a common feature in South Africa since the advent of democracy and many scholars refer to it as a disjuncture or gap between policy and implementation (Blignaut, 2007, Dale 1999; Young 1993, Ball 1994, Apple & Beane, 1999). According to Brynard (2007) this (policy and implementation gap) exists because political and bureaucratic players excluded calculations about possible failure of programmes from formal policy considerations and assumed that the existence of good policies automatically result in successful policy implementation. Elmore (1999) traces part of this answer to the mistaken belief held by curriculum reformers that good curriculum models would create their own demand. The situation described by the principals, and supported by teachers and some departmental officials, confirms the view articulated by these researchers. Such findings suggest that there are policy implementation gaps in our education system that need to be investigated and interrogated and that principals, as leaders of curriculum implementation at school level, need to be adequately prepared for this task as advocated by Blasé and Blasé (2004).

The data generated in this study suggest that principals did not sit and fold their arms, and wait for the DoE to do something about this focus. Many reported that they embarked on self-
training and self-development because despite not being trained there is an expectation that they be conversant with all school related policies and how to implement them without deviating from DoE expectations. This appears to have prompted such principals to take their empowerment upon themselves by liaising and consulting with their school’s heads of departments to enrich themselves in this regard. Other strategies they reported employing were reading all available policy documents to get to know the generics while relying on their heads of departments for the specifics. In addition they held regular meetings with them and discussed the implementation of the curriculum and together drew up assessment plans and programmes.

Some principals also reported that in the absence of a well-structured mentoring support process from the DoE, they came together and formed support groups for this purpose. In these groups they shared common problems including curriculum implementation and ways to support teachers in this regard. They also used their group as a sounding board that guided their practice.

McGee et al. (2004) suggest that the professional development of principals should focus on the curriculum needs of teachers. The responses in this study suggest that the respondents agree that professional development is crucial to teachers’ learning about a new curriculum statement and the methods to implement it, something which possibly explains the motivation for many principals to initiate processes inside and outside their schools in order to empower themselves. As one principal who was concerned with the existence of policy implementation gaps, noted:

“If I as a principal, I cannot lead educators in curriculum aspects, then I am failing as principal.”
As noted in chapter five, there were no statistically significant differences between principals’ perceptions of their roles across age, gender, years of service in the role, the province in which they work, whether they headed a primary or a secondary school, or the historic background of the school. While their ratings of their knowledge of their roles was not strong (midway on the five-point Likert scale used), they do appear to be generally aware of what is expected of them (which does not necessarily imply that they know what to do to be effective).

3. KNOWLEDGE OF ROLE AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

The second sub-question in this study is “How do principals understand their role as curriculum leaders in terms of facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies in their schools?” In addressing this question regarding instructional leadership, and whether principals understand their role in terms of curriculum implementation, it will probably be helpful if we first remind ourselves of one view on instructional leadership. Marishane and Botha (2011) describe instructional leadership as those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning including the professional learning of teachers, as well as student growth. Bush’s (2007) definition stresses the direction of the influence process captured in this quote:

In Bush’s (2007, p. 360) words:

Instructional leadership focuses of teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students. Leader’s influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself.
These definitions help explain the primary role of the principal in the quest for excellence in education and highlight that it is imperative for a principal to make instructional quality a top priority of the school. The responses in this study suggest that the principals have similar understandings of what their role of instructional leadership is despite contextual issues and challenges they face in assuming this role. Many principals asserted that by virtue of their position they are compelled to be instructional leaders and they see themselves as important figures who are responsible for the provision of instructional leadership and whose role is to see to it that the business of school, i.e. teaching and learning takes place smoothly and effectively.

Edwards (2006) asserts that principals have always been required to lead and manage schools, whether they have been prepared for the challenge or not. In the process they are expected to work alongside teachers and participate in professional learning experiences to improve teaching and learning. It is also expected of them to make the activities surrounding teaching and learning their highest priority (Edwards, 2006). Data generated by DoE officials indicates that they are in agreement with Edwards that teaching and learning is the core business of the schooling system and that all partners must always work towards realising this focus. According to them (DoE officials) this should compel the DoE office to provide on-going support to school principals in order to promote teaching and learning and to ensure that this was done effectively. In this regard they reported that the DoE “often invites” principals to curriculum implementation workshops conducted for teachers so that as managers of schools and instructional leaders they are empowered to perform their tasks effectively.

Marlow & Minehira (1996) who maintain that principals must provide direction and support to teachers and help them select and develop programmes and materials that meet the student needs within the context of the school’s vision and mission, and that such expectations
and insinuations about instructional leadership put tremendous pressure on principals, who often have to deliver to their realization under difficult circumstances. They also note that principals need to ensure that teachers have time, resources and professional development opportunities to implement curricular activities. According to the principals who participated in this study, the situation highlighted above is often difficult to achieve in their schools, as indicated in the paragraphs that follow.

Although principals are provided with training when they assume duties as newly appointed principals (one day to a week induction programme), most feel that this is not adequate. Principals said that they would like to be ‘trained’ on an on-going basis especially in the current climate of curriculum policy change. Under the current circumstances, some feel they are thrown in the deep end and left to fend for themselves and learn everything the hard way. One principal who attended a non-formal school management course offered by a non-government organisation (NGO) and a formal school leadership diploma from a local university said,

“If they had told me about those things when I had started as principal, then I would not have had to hit my head against the wall so many times”

Principals generally felt that there was a need for a formal training programme for all principals specifically related to instructional leadership as part of their professional development. They reported that currently the training they received in this regard was in the form of policy documents, circulars, memoranda and assessment instructions. These serve as a guide as to what should be done in terms of curriculum implementation and instructional leadership (teaching and learning). A number of principals expressed though, that they
understood that the duty to monitor instruction would increase along with the responsibility to help teachers improve their teaching as pointed out by Marlow and Minehira (1996), a challenge many said they are ready to undertake should it emerge. According to the principals, the inability of the DoE to provide a cohesive and structured training programme for principals in instructional leadership particularly, prevents them (principals) from giving clear directions in schools and thus has a potential to hamper student growth and teacher competence.

However, it is probably important that principals be made aware of Marlow and Minehira’s (1996) caution that training principals in instructional leadership and curriculum implementation processes does not guarantee successful implementation thereof because even the best official curriculum is worthless unless it can be successfully put into operation by the teachers. As such, issues related to the ‘policy gap’ referred to earlier will always threaten policy expectations and perceived policy results. Therefore principals need to be aware of such possibilities and take them into account when planning instructional support for policy implementation.

While many teachers recognised the support given to them by their principals, entry level teachers rated their principals less highly in terms of professional support than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers did. Whether this finding is a reflection of the greater need for support by entry level teachers, or a more critical cohort of young teachers developed within a new and freer political dispensation, needs further investigation. Also, ex-model C teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-DET teachers did which could be a reflection of what is generally believed to be better preparation, support and financing for the role of principals under the old dispensation or a reflection of the general performance of these schools which generally fall into the select and functional tier of schools in Fleisch’s (2008) systemic differentiation of
schools in South Africa. The quantitative data also reveal that primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers, which may possibly be a reflection of what may be perceived as greater curricular demands (in terms of content) in high schools and therefore a greater need for content specific support which is more difficult for high school principals to supply.

4. SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT

This section addresses the third sub-section in this study namely, “What support does the Department of Education provide principals in terms of instructional leadership?” The role played by the DoE in supporting principals and developing principals as instructional leaders is explored in light of the data generated and published literature. The perspectives of the departmental officials who participated in this study are considered firstly after which they are juxtaposed against the perceptions of the principals. The underpinning belief is that the provision of resources to schools is of critical importance as it ensures that principals run their schools smoothly and are able to provide teachers and learners with the necessary teaching and learning resources to achieve this purpose. Any shortfall in this regard will impact negatively on the smooth running of the school.

Overall, the Department of Education (DoE) officials who participated in this study saw resources as a necessary factor to enable school principals to discharge their duties effectively. However, they claimed that necessary resources were provided in the form of Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM), a budget for maintaining school facilities, and provision of other physical resources. At the same time these officials acknowledged that, sometimes due to systemic failures within the department, resources were not provided timeously or even adequately. The officials also reported teacher shortages because of principals being prevented
from recruiting staff for existing vacancies due to departmental logistics such as the failure of the department to advertise those vacancies and the pending redeployment process (in the Eastern Cape), which has often led to poor delivery of the curriculum and underperformance by schools.

The situation described by the officials above resonates with the views of Brynard (2007) that financial and technical resources, along with the quality of human resources, are key factors that contribute to successful policy implementation. Furthermore, besides the lack of resources, there may be problems with the management of resources; over or under spending of the budget for example, is often a good indicator of such mismanagement. Similarly, de Clerq (2002) believes that poor policy implementation and service delivery in schools is as a result of a lack of departmental capacity and resources which severely limit the national, provincial, district and school performance. For these reasons principals need to be competent in managing all kinds of school resources at their disposal and the DoE, on the other hand, should ensure that principals are provided with the skills necessary for this task.

The departmental officials also reported on professional development, mentoring and coaching as other mechanisms used by the DoE to support principals. They appear to be in agreement with the notion that principals should be provided with skills and professional development aimed at empowering them to manage their schools effectively. In this respect, they reported that principals attended regular workshops on curriculum policy and its implementation and are provided with a manual and a resource file which they use as a guide. The manual for school managers, which clearly states what is expected of principals, comes with documents ranging from the guide for the allocation of workloads, management of resources, and setting up school timetables and understanding the responsibilities of each stakeholder at school level. According to the officials, this also forms part of the principals’ job description which they go
through when inducted into principalship. It appears that these activities are considered to be the core of the DoE’s strategy to develop the principals professionally.

However, there were contradicting views as to the effectiveness of the above where some officials said professional development of principals was one area where the DoE was lagging behind in spite of the existence of the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS), a tool for development. One official who supported this view said:

“*We do not develop principals to the extent that one would expect ... there will be very short courses like one day or two days; if it is long it will never be longer than two weeks ...but the content could be good but the fact that it is dealt with in a very, very short space of time, it is simply touched on and principals are expected to read on the how; they can hardly do so; ... so it is an area in which we are weak as the department*”

The officials reported that on-site support for principals was also provided. This according to them (the officials) was the responsibility of the Education Development Officers (EDOs) who were tasked to support principals by ensuring that they implemented tools for monitoring teaching and learning. This was disputed by one official who maintained that there were no follow-up visits for principals that were related to effective curriculum implementation and instructional leadership who said:

“*There is no support specific to curriculum delivery. If a circuit manager does not give specific support, they are not called to account.*”
Chapter Six: Discussion

The above statement appears to be in direct contrast with what one district official said (from a different district). This official reported that a monitoring tool has been developed (late 2011 - own initiative) by the district for EDOs to use when visiting school principals where they need to indicate the purpose of the visit, findings during the visit, recommendations made and the date for the next visit. In the interview the official explained how the monitoring tool works as follows:

“You have a monitoring tool and in your monitoring tool you will highlight the support you have given; you also indicate the date you will come back again for a follow up and then we monitor our frequency of assisting the school”.

The above situation resonates with views espoused by Fullan (2007) who noted that principals received targeted support including working with relationships district officials. In his study principals in the districts engaged in walk-throughs with district officials, monthly principal conference where instruction was the only topic, mentorship, support groups and visits to other schools to observe exemplary practice. Darling-Hammond et al., (2010) support this view when they maintain that principals benefit from meeting regularly with colleagues to reinforce their vision and develop and carry out a strong school improvement plan.

However, the differences in the views of officials who happen to be from different districts is an indication that there is no universal strategy or a strong and coherent support system from the department itself to monitor school principals’ performance to ensure school effectiveness. This confirms what some principals reported, i.e. that they are “thrown in the deep end”. Rogan (2007) and Fullan (2001) maintain that strong district support positively impacts on
reform implementation but the lack thereof, especially when the actual policy directives lack detail on how the ideals might be realized in practise, negatively impacts implementation.

Some DoE officials raised concerns about lack of departmental capacity (as reported earlier) of some officials in spite of being responsible for supporting and guiding school principals. They lay the blame for this ‘lack of capacity’ on wrong appointments where candidates are selected because of their political affiliation rather than competency. This situation puts tremendous pressure on principals who have to operate without the necessary guidance and support from the DoE office. The officials said this situation (wrong appointments) also occurs in schools with the appointment of principals where the task of school leadership ends up in the hands of ‘incompetent’ people. One official who was strongly critical about such appointments said:

“If one was an incompetent teacher who is appointed as an EDO how on earth can that person support principals?”

The importance of preparing principals to perform their tasks effectively has been noted by Mathibe (2007) when he pointed out that in South Africa, unlike in the UK and USA, any educator can be appointed to as principal irrespective of whether he/she has a leadership qualification. Mathibe (2007) believes this approach is open to defeating the aim of getting the ‘right man for the job’ and placing school leadership and governance in the hands of technically unqualified personnel (van der Westhuizen & Mosoge, 1999). However, some interventions have been made to ensure that practising and aspiring principals are prepared for their positions. For example the DoE in partnership with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and other education institutes have recently developed a formal qualification, the Advanced Certificate in Education:
School Leadership (ACE:SL). This certificate is intended to be an entry level qualification for new principals and is aimed at enabling them to manage schools effectively and to contribute to improving the delivery of education across the school system. This qualification includes management of teaching and learning as one of its core modules thus recognizing that this is perceived as a crucial role for principals (Bush et al., 2010).

However, even when there are qualification requirements, researchers such as Davis et al. (2005) believe that many aspiring principals are too easily admitted into and passed through the system on the basis of their performance on academic coursework rather than on comprehensive assessment of the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to successfully lead schools. Although principals may be ‘certified’, they may not be equipped for shifting the role of the principals from manager to effective instructional leader. This shortfall has necessitated research to inform policy makers and programme administrators on the design of principal preparation and on-going development programmes (Darling-Hammond et al.; 2010; Davis et al., 2005).

At this stage it should be noted that the majority (98%) of the officials who participated in this study serve in district offices in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, and that principals in the Western Cape view their relationship with the District Office statistically and practically significantly more positively than their counterparts in the Eastern Cape. Also, principals in ex-Model C and ex-HoR schools differed statistically and practically significantly with ex-DET school principals in that they viewed their relationship with their District Office statistically significantly more negatively than their counterparts in ex-DET schools.

Principals who have served in their position the longest rated their relationship with the Department of Education least highly. These differences raise the question of differentiation of
perspectives, expectations and ability to respond in terms of central role support plays that has been described as:

“… large scale change bearing innovations lived or died by the amount and quality of assistance that their users received once the change was underway”.

Huberman and Miles (1984, p.273)

5. TEACHERS EXPECTATIONS OF PRINCIPALS AS CURRICULUM LEADERS

This section explores teachers’ expectations of their principals as instructional leaders and facilitators of curriculum implementation and addresses the fourth sub-section of this study namely: “What do teachers expect of their school principals in terms of instructional leadership on curriculum policy implementation?”

Research on teachers’ perceptions of curriculum reform suggest that the lack of implementation successes of the curriculum in South Africa was due to the fact that the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) required teachers to change from some of their routine classroom practices to teaching approaches and methods with which they were unfamiliar, including promoting learners’ creative thinking and learning abilities (Department of Education, 2002; Bantwini, 2009). These changes brought new challenges to teachers who had to adapt to the new demands even though they viewed their training and preparation for the change as inadequate. With the challenges teachers face, principals are expected by many teachers to rise up to the task and provide them with support and guidance. This expectation resonates well with Bush et al.’s (2010) claim that in the South African context a principal focused strongly on managing teaching and learning would among other things undertake the following activities; oversee the curriculum across the school, ensure that lessons take place, monitor the work of
HODs, through scrutiny of examination results and internal assessment and arrange a programme of class visits followed up by feedback to teachers.

**Communication and professional support**

Overall, teachers who participated in this study felt that a principal must give curriculum policy implementation first priority so that all teachers under his\her leadership are on par with curriculum policy expectations from provincial to national level. The teachers felt that in order for principals to achieve this they need to know exactly what the DoE expects teachers to do, and for this reason they must always liaise with the DoE to have an idea of training sessions that are run for teachers and what they entail. Teachers believed that the process described above would help principals develop policies that will establish an ethos of effective teaching and learning and effective instructional strategies at school level. The teachers’ views resonate with Edwards’ (2006) belief that principals are expected to work alongside teachers and participate in regular, collaborative, professional learning experiences to improve teaching and learning. They are also expected to make activities surrounding the process of teaching and learning their highest priority. In addition, teachers were of the view that principals must be more knowledgeable in curriculum implementation if they are to guide teachers in the implementation process and that they must play a coordinating role in this regard to ensure the effective functioning of the school. They believe that these expectations will help principals unpack circulars, policies and memos and other documents related to curriculum implementation to ensure that they are fully understood by teachers. Carl (2009) highlights a number of factors required for successful policy implementation to be considered by principals such as clear communication to effect roles, to explain terminology, to illustrate possible means of evaluation to supply the well-known queries of Who?, When? Where? How? and Why? In addition, the provision of support service through
for example, spelling out time scheduling, supplying material, setting one’s own example, creating a climate within which trust and security figure, and encouragement of teachers.

Entry level teachers rated their principals less highly than the departmental heads and ‘other’ grouping of teachers did in terms of communication (F1), while teachers with post-graduate qualifications rated their principals less highly than their counterparts with lower qualifications. This may be a reflection of entry level teachers expecting a higher level of support than teachers who had been in the system for a longer time or who understood the challenges of responsibility in the school. The fact that the more highly qualified teachers also rated their principals less highly could possibly be attributed to better understandings of education and thus higher expectations of their principals’ vision, but this aspect requires deeper investigation before any more definitive explanation can be offered. Primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than secondary school teachers and ex-model C teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-DET teachers did. These findings may be a reflection of the fact that primary schools are less specialised than secondary schools and therefore principals should have a better chance of being able to help most teachers, no matter what their specialisation. In the case of ex-model C schools the higher ranking of the principals may be due to the fact that ex-model C schools are generally recognised as being better managed than ex-DET schools are. These perceptions were echoed when teachers, perceptions of their principal’s professional support (F2) role was polled. Primary school teachers once again rated their principals more highly than their counterparts in terms of their principal’s leadership in terms of cooperation (F3), which suggests that primary schools might be more collaborative in social structure than secondary schools are. A notable finding, however, in terms of factor 3 is that ex-DET teachers rated their principals more highly in terms of leadership for collaboration than the
ex-Model C teachers did. As these types of schools still reflect, to a degree, the racial composition of pre-1994 schools in South Africa, these findings may well be a reflection of differences in ‘Western’ and ‘African’ cultures, viz. competition versus Ubuntu.

Training

Teachers often complained about the poor training they received from curriculum workshops conducted by the DoE and thus expected their principals, with the assistance of their heads of departments (HODs), to be able make up for the void created by the shortfall (poor training) through in-house training and staff development programmes. They felt that principals should regularly do check-ups on HODs, who in turn should monitor Post Level 1 teachers to ensure that curriculum policy implementation takes place. The importance of the HODs’ role was highlighted by Ali and Botha, (2006) who viewed them (HODs) as being responsible for carrying out classroom teaching, planning the curriculum, mentoring newly appointed teachers and providing reports on the performance of teachers and learners to the principal as and when required, among other things. In this way principals would be a source of support to the entire staff during curriculum implementation. The teachers also expected principals to attend training and workshops related to instructional leadership which will enable them to keep abreast with all changes and be able to provide them (teachers) with information about what is expected of them in the classrooms. Teachers also expected principals to organise and conduct staff development programmes that will enhance their professional capacity that could enable them to adapt to the new curriculum, as one principal reported that his teachers (at his school) have become adaptive to the new curriculum because it changes every 2-3 years. Some teachers exhibited confidence, good human relations and a sense of trust amongst staff, HODs and the principals in their schools. This was evident in their openness and willingness to be visited in their classrooms by
HODs and the principal whilst teaching with the aim of giving them support where there were shortcomings with curriculum delivery. These were teachers, who regularly attended workshops and cluster moderation meetings, claimed that they were well prepared for their work and that they knew how their learning areas related to the learners’ daily lives. One of these teachers who also regularly attended these workshops described his experiences as follows:

“Now I know that curriculum must constantly change in order to adapt to the ever changing needs of society. Just knowing that fact has changed my attitude”.

It appears that these teachers are positive about the changes occurring around them simply because they feel that they are part of the process. It seems that not only have they been involved in their development, they have also embraced the change. This situation resonates with other studies that reveal that teachers do not wish to be mere recipients who are expected to implement changes, but they expect to be included in the processes of meaningful decision-making. They want their voices to be heard and believe that the more they participate in initiating school change, the more positive they will feel about the change and the more willing they will be to seriously engage in future change (Carl, 2005; Poppleton & Williamson, 2004). Swanepoel (2009) concurs with this view when he cautions that, if principals fail to take these factors into consideration, teachers will feel that their professional status is challenged and might jeopardise the actualisation of well-meant school changes.

**Curriculum leadership**

Most of the teachers reported that their expectations of their principals as curriculum leaders were met because they (principals) provided them, to the best of their ability, with physical and other resources that are major factors which influence their capacity. These
resources include professional development, referred to as ‘non-material support’, as well as a way in which agencies attempt to bring about changes in schools (Rogan and Grayson, 2003). Contrary to the above, in a few instances, some teachers reported that their expectations were not met by their principals, citing an absence of support and training within the school as well as a lack of resources necessary for teaching and learning. One teacher who strongly held this view said:

“My principal does not provide on-going support as he does not display a sense of direction and vision for the school”.

As was the case for communication and professional support, entry level teachers rated their principal’s overall leadership (F4) less highly than more experienced teachers and departmental heads, and ex-Model C teachers rated their principals more highly than the ex-DET school teachers. In terms of overall evidence of leadership (F5) teachers under 30 years of age, entry level teachers and teachers with post-graduate qualifications rated their principals lower than their counterparts. The effect of the principal on the school approach (F6) was rated least highly by teachers with post-graduate degrees. In all cases primary school teachers rated their principals more highly than their secondary school counterparts did. Explanations for each of these factors are probably the same as have been given for these results earlier in this section.

Overall perceptions

Despite these differences in perceptions, it appears from the above discussion that the general expectations teachers have for principals as curriculum leaders is that principals must be knowledgeable about the curriculum and its delivery so that they can provide support, guidance and leadership to teachers and the entire school community in order to provide effective teaching
and learning and to realize the school’s vision and mission. Overall, the perceptions that the teachers in ex-DET schools have of their principals is possibly higher than might be expected considering the recorded dysfunctional nature of many South African schools, both primary and secondary. However, because most of the respondents who provided the quantitative data had access to computers which were online, suggests a bias towards teachers, principals and schools which are better served than the majority of schools in the country.

6. **DIFFERENT SCHOOLS, DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS?**

The fifth sub-question in this study is: “Is there a difference in teachers and principals perceptions of instructional leadership within different types of South African schools? This section addresses the South African school system by exploring teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of instructional leadership in what appears to be two different education systems (Fleisch, 2008). As noted above, there were statistically significant differences between principals in ex-Model C schools and principals in ex-DET schools and ex-HoR schools, in both cases with a large practical significance, in terms of how they viewed their teachers and their schools. In the case of relationships with the district office only the ex-Model C and ex DET principals differed significantly with a large practical significance with ex DET principals viewing their relationship with the district significantly more favourably than their counterparts.

These differences are also evident in Fleisch’s (2008) and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) (2006) research, which maintain that these two unofficial education systems in South Africa mirror the problems of two economies that do not produce equitable social, economic and academic achievements. They assert that one system caters for the elite Black and White middle class (about 20% of the population) whilst the other serves the majority (over 80%) of the South African working class and poor children. In this study, these
systems are represented by the ex-Model C schools, represented by the elite middle class, and the ex-DET schools, represented by the majority of the working class.

Other differences identified between these types of schools relate to resources, something which can be traced back to the years of apartheid. Generally, ex-Model C schools are well resourced and provide an education comparable to that offered to middle class children worldwide (Taylor, 2006), while ex-DET schools are not equipped for success and are often barely functioning. While this difference is historical, the quality of education does not appear to have improved significantly since political transition in South Africa in 1994 (van der Berg, 2005). Hoadley et al. (2009) have further noted that the management of curriculum under these general conditions of system change has proved to be a continuing challenge for historically disadvantaged schools. These differences are also indicated in research that shows that school results in South Africa are two patterns of scores (two modalities on a distribution curve), one for affluent schools and one for the resource-scarce black schooling system (van der Berg, 2005).

The high response (40% teachers and 46 % principals) by ex-Model C schools to the online survey compared to ex-DET schools (25% teachers and 25% principals) is probably an expression of the inequity between teachers and schools in the two unofficial systems. In other words it is probable that the higher response to the online survey by ex-Model C schools is influenced by the fact that these schools are well/better resourced with teachers having greater access to computers which are connected to the Internet, which is usually not the case in ex-DET schools and which makes responding to an electronic survey response more difficult for teachers and principals. This assertion is backed up by the request for pen-and-paper surveys by a number of teachers and principals who heard of the survey but who could not respond as they did not have access to the required connectivity to do so.
As noted earlier, data gathered in this study also show differences related to teachers’ rating of their principals. For example, the ex-Model C teachers rated their principals more highly in terms of communication and support, professional support and overall leadership qualities, but rated their leadership in terms of promoting staff cooperation lower than their ex-DET counterparts. The reasons for these responses are entirely not clear and need to be interrogated further to see whether these ratings have any influence on how these types of schools perform or are managed.

Teachers and principals who participated in this study were drawn mainly from the Eastern and Western Cape provinces and all other provinces contributed less than 5% to the survey and 98% of the departmental officials were from the Eastern Cape. All of the officials polled were from the Eastern Cape (98%) and Western Cape (2%) and 96% of each of the teacher and principal groupings were from these two provinces. These two provinces are widely spaced on the schooling ranking based on achievement and the data generated enable statistical analysis and well-motivated inferential conclusions to be made in terms of these two provinces enables, which to a degree represent a caricature of differences in Fleisch’s two school systems in terms of learner and school achievement. What is notable is that the principals in the Western Cape rated their relationship with the Department of Education more highly than their counterparts in the Eastern Cape. This must be considered against the position that the ex-DET school principals rated their relationship with the department more highly than ex-Model C principals did, and that more than two thirds of the principals who responded came from the Eastern Cape, but were constituted overall by 46% serving in ex-Model C schools. These interrelationships require further unraveling, but what is evident from the data is that ex-DET respondents report better relationships with their District Offices than ex-Model C principals do,
as can be deduced from both the qualitative data generated in the first study and the data generated by the online survey. This is despite the fact that the principals who responded in this way in the first study all came from the Easter Cape province, which is consistently ranked the second-worst (and sometimes the worst) province in the country in terms of educational administration and has even been placed under administration by the National Department of Education recently.

The differences referred to earlier about the unofficial schooling systems that still exist in South Africa, and the comparison made between them, make some judgments possible as to the current situation in terms of instructional leadership. The questions that are begged are why these differences persist in the new political dispensation in terms of instructional leadership, how these differences contribute to the functionality of schools, as well as how the situation can be improved. These issues are discussed in the section below.

7. IMPLICATIONS

This section addresses the main research question in that it explores challenges principals face in historically disadvantaged schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies. In doing so it interrogates how these challenges can possibly be overcome. According to de Clercq (2002) poor policy implementation and service delivery in schools is as a result of a lack of departmental capacity and resources, issues which severely limit national, provincial, and district and school performance. At school level it is the principal who is the one who has to grapple with the impact of such failures, which makes the context in which principals enact their roles as instructional leaders very difficult.
Curriculum changes, adoption and implementation

One of the priorities of the new government which took power in South Africa after the 1994 elections was to reform the educational system by combining fragmented and racially defined educational departments into unified, non-racial departments – one in each of the nine newly delineated provinces. A second ambition was to develop a new curriculum modelled on outcomes-based educational principles, and which incorporates many practices that have gained favour world-wide such as child-centred learning and continuous performance-based assessment (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). Subsequent to the introduction of OBE, the Department of Education has over the years introduced a number of other educational policies that included a number of educational reforms aimed at transforming education. The evolutionary sequence of these reforms reveals what to some is considered progression from Outcomes-based Education, to Curriculum 2005, to the Revised National Curriculum Statements, to the National Curriculum Statements and the recent national Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). This ‘journey’ gives evidence of the considerable changes which the South African education system underwent to fill in the gaps identified in the implementation process of these policies (Mulaudzi, 2009) and to find the most appropriate policy to address the needs of the country.

According to Rogan and Grayson (2003), the implementation of these policies during in-service training assumed a ‘one size fits all’ approach and failed to take into account contextual factors related to the types of schools that existed before the political changes of 1994. An example of such contextual changes are the differences in school types, which are clear enough to be categorised as two systems of education, as espoused by Fleisch (2008). In this regard Rogan and Grayson (2003) suggest that any theory of implementation will need to take into consideration the diversity of schools. Rogan and Grayson (2003) also note that policy makers
and politicians tend to focus their attention on the ‘what’ of a desired educational change, but often neglect the ‘how’, an assertion which is supported by the findings in this study.

Verspoor (1989) pointed out that, in developing countries in the eighties, large scale programmes tended to emphasize adoption aspects of change while neglecting the more practical issues of implementation. Verspoor (1989) also stated that nearly in all instances low outcomes resulted from poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea. It appears that this is still the case in South Africa in the twenty first century as it is common knowledge that there are a number of shortcomings associated with curriculum implementation which warranted a review of the implementation process, one of which being the facilitation of curriculum leadership by principals. These shortcomings have motivated the plethora of changes of curriculum over nearly three decades from OBE through to CAPS. It appears that the numerous changes in curriculum were meant to bridge the gaps that were identified during the implementation process. Unfortunately, it appears from the literature and the findings in this study that principals were not part of the plan in terms of training and support.

**Context**

Jansen (1999) has argued that large-scale changes in the South African context without discriminatory measures are more likely to benefit advantaged schools and thus advocates a strategy that discriminates positively towards the most disadvantaged schools. At this stage the ‘quintile system’ adopted by the government is a move towards accommodating South Africa’s different schools types, albeit only in provision of finances. The poorest quintile schools are supported the most financially, but these schools continue to be plagued by high dropout rates, repetition and failure rates, inadequate resources and, in a number of cases, poor management (Moloi, 2002).
In respect of the management of physical and financial resources and the acquisition thereof principals in historically disadvantaged schools reported that finances were provided by the DoE, albeit that the amounts are not adequate. Some principals cited the quintile system noted above (a mechanism of classifying schools from the poorest to the least poor which is used by the DoE to fund poor schools categorised as no fee schools) as a mechanism to provide sufficient funds. Some even said that they had sufficient resources and this did not constitute a problem, with one principal noting that “all schools are getting ‘enough’ funding for their operations”. What was evident, however, was that the problem regarding resources is how they are managed and that this is an area that needs to be strengthened with most principals. As such it appears that principals must be assisted to put systems in place for managing school resources as efficient systems have a significant impact on the smooth functioning of a school.

*Training and support*

As this study focuses on the role of principals as instructional leaders and facilitators of curriculum implementation it explored whether principals understand this role and the extent to which they are supported by the Department of Education (DoE) to deal with the challenges they are faced with in the process. The data suggests that the DoE does not effectively provide specific training targeted at principals in curriculum implementation and instructional leadership. Data generated in this study indicates that although the DoE claims to provide support to principals in terms of resources, professional development and on-site support, there are no structured principal preparation and on-going development programmes to ensure that principals were equipped as instructional leaders. What is clear from the literature is that, for principals to cope they need support related to professional development, resources, and they need skills to
deal with resistance and manage whatever resources are available, especially when operating in dysfunctional contexts.

There is a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities within school management teams for the mediation and implementation of the curriculum (Department of Education, 2009). These assertions were confirmed by both principals and DoE officials who maintained that there was no specific support or training for principals related to curriculum delivery. In spite of this situation, there is an expectation from teachers (as reported in chapter four) that principals need to have vast knowledge of the curriculum and its implementation in order to be able to provide support and guidance to them (teachers) during the implementation process. DoE officials also had similar expectations and maintained that a principal is in charge of the smooth running of the school and is the accounting officer representing the DoE at school level, despite admitting that the DoE sometimes fell short in providing all the support necessary to school principals because of departmental glitches and lack of capacity. All of the above impact negatively on the schools and put principals under tremendous pressure in terms of ensuring that their schools run smoothly. These factors also exacerbate the difficulties that principals have when attempting to support teachers and other stakeholders in whatever ways they can, despite the fact that sometimes they operate without the most basic of facilities.

According to Marlow and Minehira (1996), instructional leadership is the most important role the principal plays in facilitating teachers in the implementation process, because even the best curriculum is worthless unless it can be successfully put into operation by teachers. However, in this study, DoE officials and principals both stated that there is no focus of this nature (instructional leadership) and, where support and training were provided, they were not well-structured, resulting in principals having to fend for themselves in order to fulfil this role.
These expectations (roles as instructional leader) are confirmed by Kruger (2003) who asserts that school effectiveness studies emphasize the principal’s instructional leadership role in terms of their responsibility to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place; something which is also described as the principal’s ‘connection to the classroom’.

*Types of schools*

What is clear is that the vast differences between South African schools described by Fleisch (2008), where you still find schools occupying broken down buildings lacking doors and windows, electricity and sanitation and with a few books, no resources, lack of professional capacity and accumulated experience, and where many teachers do not have a clear understanding of how to implement the new changes still exist. They are the schools that serve the majority of the poor and working class. These conditions affect teaching and learning and learners’ schooling and performance negatively. In contrast there are those schools that are more affluent serving the middle class and provide education comparable to that offered to middle class children worldwide. These are schools that benefited from the discriminatory policies of the previous government and the continued socio-economic gulf between racial groups that persist to this day (Fleisch, 2008, Rogan & Grayson, 2008; Taylor, 2006). A possible approach to Jansen’s (1999) call for, ‘positive discrimination’ is for support to be extended to instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools. Similarly Hopkins and MacGilchrist (1998) in Rogan and Grayson (2003) suggest a differentiated approach to implementation and professional development to help lower performing schools to achieve some measure of success in order to be put on the road to becoming functional.
Ways forward

As was reported in chapters four and five, the Department of Education (DoE) is results oriented and, most of the time, focuses on supporting underperforming schools through winter schools and other support mechanisms directed at helping schools improve academic achievement. Although this is important, it firstly does not appear to be sustainable as schools move in and out of this category over the years, and therefore what is more important is that the DoE needs a strategy to support schools across the performance spectrum in the same manner as they do for the underperforming schools. Secondly, this type of an intervention does not help schools build capacity and lay foundations for good governance, or put in place systems to ensure that the school operates effectively. If such systems can be put in place it is possible that school performance will improve. These views resonate well with those of Darling-Hammond, et al. (2010), who assert that on-going support to practising principals is vital if they are to improve their practice, cultivate continuous learning and reflection, and enable them to help their leaders to learn, try out new ideas and problem solve. Thus, it appears that the main question principals in historically disadvantaged schools should be concerned about is whether they have the capacity to manage resources and whether they have systems and structures in place that can be continuously monitored to ensure that they are functioning effectively and efficiently to serve the purpose for which they were established. The question is important as processes related to the general smooth running of schools correlate intimately with enhanced teaching and learning.

However, the above may be easier said than done as this study has highlighted and supports previous research which indicate the complex and crucially important interplay of school level of readiness to deliver as signified by perceptions of principals by their teachers and vice versa, perceptions of the school and how it is managed, levels of preparedness, availability
and ability to manage resources, relationships with the Department of Education, the ability and capacity of District Office personnel to carry out their expected roles, etc. All of these issues are a reflection of, and an enabler or barrier to, the principal playing his/her role as an instructional leader effectively. If positive relationships are in place and support which includes, mentorship, training, finances, etc. is provided in the context of the particular needs of a school, an environment can be developed to enable principals to become the type of instructional leaders that teachers and the Department of Education expect them to be. If not, it is probable that they will continue to be unable to meet the needs of their particular context and not be able to help teachers implement the current curriculum effectively. They will not be able to facilitate efficient and meaningful teaching and learning in their schools and, under the circumstances and broad contexts described above, they will remain principals of schools that are not equipped for success and are barely functioning and the much heralded process of change will remain in the quagmire of democratic exuberance with a prevailing assumption that the new political dispensation will automatically translate into a better educational system for all.

8. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The discussion in this chapter focused on answering the main question posed in chapter one by examining the qualitative and quantitative data generated by the various data collecting instruments as reported in chapters four and five, also referred to as the first and the second study, respectively. These data were discussed together to answer the research sub-questions in order to answer the main research question of this study. The data were examined within the literature review in chapter two and used to support the qualitative and quantitative data gathered from principals, teachers and DoE officials on challenges faced by principals as instructional leaders and facilitators of curriculum implementation. The sub-questions were related to the
principals’ knowledge of curriculum implementation and their roles as instructional leaders, the support given by the Department of Education officials, their teachers’ expectation and whether there are different perceptions in different types of schools in South Africa.

While the data suggest that principals understand the demands of their instructional leadership role, they need more development in the area of curriculum implementation. Also, while Department of Education officials do provide some support to principals, sometimes under severe constraints and limited resources, more needs to be done in this area, particularly in terms of DoE officials’ skills and capacity. The results also suggest that teachers expect principals to be a source of support to the entire staff during curriculum implementation to ensure effective teaching and learning. Also, Fleisch’s (2008) perceptions of different types of schools forming two unofficial systems of education in South Africa that do not produce equitable academic achievements and provide vastly different experiences for learners (Christie, 2008), are supported. These differences are issues that have to be considered when planning for greater support of principals in terms of instructional leadership.

These overall findings are drawn together in consideration of the main research question around the challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged secondary schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders. It appears that principals in historically disadvantaged schools need what Rogan and Grayson (2003) refer to as capacity and innovation support, i.e. an attempt to understand and elaborate on the factors that are able to support, or hinder the implementation of new ideas and practices in a school system. However, it should be borne in mind that not all schools have the capacity to implement a given innovation to the same extent. Indicators of the capacity for innovation to fall into four groups, namely, physical resources, teacher factors, learner factors and the school ecology and management (Rogan & Grayson,
2003). When planning an intervention these issues must be borne in mind if the process is to empower principals and enable them to put systems and structures in place to ensure a smooth running of their schools. These findings inform the main conclusions and recommendations which are presented in chapter seven of this research report.
1. INTRODUCTION

As noted in chapter two, since the advent of democracy in South Africa a number of policies with ambitious targets have been promulgated, but have often fallen short of their desired outcomes. In the case of legislation of educational curricula, little of the well-meant classroom intentions have materialised in practice (Brynard, 2007; Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008). This study is framed within the framework of disjuncture or gap between policy and implementation; specifically on the principal as instructional leader and support for principals within the notion of two unofficial schooling systems in South Africa (Fleisch, 2008). It investigates the challenges faced by school principals of historically disadvantaged schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders facilitating curriculum implementation. The data generated and reported on in chapters four and five were interrogated in the previous chapter and the main conclusions drawn from them, the significance of the study, its limitations, and the recommendations made for further research, are presented in the sections below.

2. MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions drawn can be categorised as principals’ recognition of their role as instructional leaders, teachers’ expectations and the training of principals as instructional leaders, capacity in district offices, and differences between different types of schools. These conclusions are elaborated on below.
Recognition of role

The first finding of this study is that principals, in general, do view themselves as change agents who should be in the ‘forefront of change and curriculum implementation’ in their schools. However, they expressed an understanding that they needed more training in this area as part of their professional development strategy in order to be equipped to deal with challenges during implementation. This understanding resonates with that of Blasé and Blasé (2004) who maintain that principals are directly in charge of policy implementation at school and therefore need to possess a wide array of competencies in order to lead their schools effectively. This finding suggests that principals know what is expected of them by the Department of Education in terms of general policy documents and curriculum policies, as well as their role in the development and implementation of curriculum. However, currently principals are only subjected to informal training workshops, which were usually not related to this focus and which were viewed as being inadequate.

Teachers’ expectations and training of principals as instructional leaders

The study identified that teachers believe principals must work hand in hand with subject advisors to guide teachers in curriculum implementation for the enhancement of teaching and learning. This expectation of teachers of their principals as instructional leaders supports the notions that principals must be trained in curriculum implementation and the demands of this role, including guidance and leadership at school level that will address their professional needs. School level implementation is a means of attaining the construct ‘Profile of Implementation’ advocated by Rogan and Grayson (2003), i.e. an attempt to understand and express the extent to which the ideas of a set curriculum proposals are being put in to practice, in an authentic setting.
This approach should enable practitioners at school level to determine where they are and to identify their current strengths, taking into account the context and capacity of their school.

The study found that although resources, professional support and training were provided to principals they did not address curriculum delivery, something that is captured in the following quote that was made by a teacher regarding on-site support for the principals;

“...the circuit manager will focus on the managerial aspects of the principal’s work and you will hardly get support which is directed at the principal as an instructional leader which is specifically given to that; but it does come to a limited extent.”

Since the existing training programmes for principals are not well–structured or *ad hoc* in nature (this excludes the one-off induction programme for new principals), there are variations in how the Department of Education (DoE) supports principals and if support is unsatisfactory there is no easy route to call officials to account. Some officials, on the other hand, were recognised as being creative and having developed their own monitoring tools for measuring performance and guidance whilst giving on-site support to principals. These discrepancies suggest that there is no specific formal support strategy related to curriculum delivery for principals. In order to cope, many principals attended related workshops meant for teachers, enrolled in private institutions and agencies for relevant qualifications, and some liaised with school management teams within their schools to develop themselves professionally in regard to curriculum related aspects of their work. In addition, there is a tendency to concentrate on Grade 12 performance only and in quite a number of primary schools, officials deal mainly with management issues and very little time is devoted to academic work.
**Capacity in District Offices**

The study also identified problems related to capacity in the districts where personnel are often stretched. For example, primary school subject advisors (in the Eastern Cape) are responsible for two phases at a time, for example the intermediate and senior phases. Shortages of staff are also evident in schools where temporary and permanent vacancies cannot be filled and the availability of qualified teachers for subjects such as maths and science are neglected, issues which put schools under tremendous pressure to produce desired results is something which is fairly well known, it seems that the lack of capacity in District offices is not something which is formally raised, recognised and dealt with within the Department of Education.

**Differences between schools**

This study highlights that there are still vast differences within the South African schooling system between school types, i.e. ex-Model C schools and historically disadvantaged schools after nearly two decades in the ‘new’ dispensation. This situation, i.e. Fleisch’s (2008) belief that two unofficial school systems in South Africa exist, prevails despite a funding model that is biased towards poor schools that have been classified as no fee schools. Section 21 schools, for example, that fall within the category of no fee school, are provided with a budget that is determined by the school enrolment and expected to requisite equipment for effective teaching and learning. This according to Hoadley (2007), gives some credence to the growing consensus that it is not the presence of resources, but rather their management and use that contributes to better school outcomes. A clear finding of this study is that principals of such schools (Section 21) need support in terms of financial management and the best use of resources to enable effective instructional leadership in these schools.
3. **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

As noted in chapter two, this study is embedded within the theoretical framework of educational change, particularly the political framework within which policies are negotiated, literature on the principal as an instructional leader and the notion of two unofficial schooling systems in South Africa. The findings in this study support the general notion that much needs to be done in South Africa in terms of empowering school principals, especially those from historically disadvantaged schools. Principals in such schools often serve in conditions where there is a lack of the most basic resources such as sanitation, running water and electricity. This situation impacts negatively on how these schools perform. The perceptions of principals and teachers in these schools reveal certain insights such as the fact that principals and teachers recognise the importance of the role of the head of school as an instructional leader, recognition that much more support is needed for principals, but a less critical view of the relationship they have with departmental district office officials, despite recognition of lack of capacity and support from this quarter.

There is evidence of little consistency in how district officials operate within their circuits, especially in how they provide support for principals in curriculum delivery. Various, and sometimes conflicting, views are expressed about the support role of the DoE to the principals. Another finding was that some officials from the district lacked capacity, which made it difficult for them to provide the required support to principals and teachers. This may explain why some principals opt to ‘train themselves’ by reading and forming support groups with other colleagues in order to interpret departmental policies.

In contrast, there are well-resourced schools that provide better education, and these differences between these school types raise questions that seek explanations. Questions that may
be raised in this regard include whether it is a question of resources, leadership capacity, and lack of departmental support, teacher qualifications or a combination of some or all of these factors? The findings of this study should make some contribution to such a debate, and provide data as a starting point for better provision of support for better instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa.

4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As mentioned earlier in this report, limitations in this study are two-fold in that they can be based on the first and second studies reported in chapter four and five respectively. In the first study participants were a small group which cannot be said to represent principals of historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa in general, and the general and overall weaknesses of questionnaires and interview techniques apply. In addition, the selection of participants was on the basis of opportunity or convenience sampling rather than other considerations.

In the second study, where the online survey was employed, issues of bias are clearly evident in that online access was required in order to be able to respond to the questionnaire. This bias towards schools equipped technologically was ameliorated by offering hard copies of the online questionnaires on request, and then entering their data into the system. The post-card and invitation process of soliciting data has a number of weaknesses in terms of control since the responses are anonymous. There is no way of knowing whether one has answered more than once and if they responded accurately according to their status (principal, teacher or official) or even if they are practising. However, as noted earlier, it seems there is little chance that anyone would complete the questionnaire as the postcards were only given to educators or DoE officials and the process produced results judged to be valid in the past (Emery, 2012).
Nevertheless, the data generated was reasonably consistent and triangulation of the different sources suggest that the study is sufficiently valid and reliable to make comments about the situation that many principals, teachers and departmental officials believe to be the situation within which they operate and therefore, while not generalizable, the findings provide a point of departure that is authentic enough to deserve serious consideration.

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study is an attempt to contribute to the discipline of School Management and Leadership and focuses on the core business of transforming schools, i.e. that of curriculum implementation and instructional leadership. It explores challenges principals face in executing their role in curriculum delivery. However, further exploration is required to identify mechanisms for supporting principals in historically disadvantaged schools in this regard that have been successful in the past, and which will put them on par with principals of other school types which function smoothly and effectively. As most of the principals reported that there was no support related to instructional leadership, something that was confirmed by Department of Education (DoE) officials, a topic for further investigation may be a study into the mechanisms for supporting principals of historically disadvantaged schools in instructional leadership and curriculum implementation, and the reasons why they work and do not work in varying contexts.

Another possible area for investigation relates to the funding model of poor schools and its impact on curriculum delivery. Some principals had reported that funding for (no fee) schools was sufficient but a concern was raised whether this funding and other resources were managed well by principals, and whether control and monitoring systems are in place in schools for managing these resources. Questions that may be asked for further research may relate to whether funding of schools on its own is a guarantee that schools will perform. If not, what should be
done to ensure that principals manage their school within a financially sound and effective accounting system to reach the required levels of performance and maintain good governance at school?

Another suggestion for further research is the impact of an intervention strategy such as that suggested by Jansen (1999) of positive discrimination to address the plight of historically disadvantaged schools. Current approaches appear to not bring the desired results to change the situation, even after nearly twenty years of the existence of the South African democratic government, and programmes dealing with instruction probably need to take into account the teachers’ level of knowledge and school context. This strategy, while appearing to be an appropriate approach that can turn things around, requires empirical investigation.

Another area of fruitful research could be on the selection and appointment process of school principals in historically disadvantaged schools and other schools in general. The data generated in this study suggest that the current process needs to be reviewed to identify its weaknesses with the aim of strengthening it so that it can help identify and appoint capable candidates. Insights gained from this further research should help inform policy makers to put enabling systems in place to deal with selections and appointments. Longitudinal studies on practising principals in their schools who have been channeled through the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) qualification offered by a number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and which has been recommended to be an entry level qualification for principals (Bush et al., 2009), should provide insights into what aspects are most applicable and successful, and which are not. Other related programmes can also be utilised for this purpose. Such research could investigate whether the interventions provide principals with new knowledge and expertise they need and whether they instill a sense of direction and
confidence. Evidence from such studies should provide a firmer base for creating a pool of aspirant principal candidates identified in advance via a principal preparation programme run by and supported by the DoE in collaboration with other providers which enjoys the confidence of all stakeholders.

Finally, the Department of Education evaluates principals’ general performance by employing the Performance Management and Development Systems (PDMS), but not on their ability to monitor teaching and learning and curriculum implementation, which are the core business of schooling. Investigations into the extension of this tool to include the latter could be very beneficial for the school and the quality of teaching and learning. This further necessitates the exploration of the alignment between policy and practice to assist principals during curriculum implementation. This resonates well with Brynard’s (2007) argument that practice of policy implementation should receive attention in South Africa to ensure successful delivery of policy goods and services.

6. CONCLUSION

An overview of the findings of this study suggests that principals of historically disadvantaged schools require more professional support, resources (physical and financial) and other related competencies than they currently do if they are to be able to discharge their core business, i.e. curriculum delivery. Rogan and Grayson (2003) pointed out that all involved with schools should be aware of factors that support or hinder the implementation of new ideas and practices. They cited physical resources as one major factor that influences capacity to support innovation. While some principals try to overcome the burden they are subjected to as a result of this situation by operating within their means, all involved with the management of schools as an entirety should be aware of Rogan and Grayson’s (2003) views that not all schools have the
capacity to implement a given innovation to the same extent at the same time, given their context. The findings of this study should help all concerned understand some of these constraints of local context, and ‘self-recognition’ within their situation should help schools shape the way they prioritise and help principals meet the challenge of instructional leadership in historically disadvantaged schools.
REFERENCES


Appendix A: Letter requesting permission to do research

03 August 2010

The District Director
PE District
Department of Education
Port Elizabeth
6000

Dear Sir

Request for permission to do research.

I am a student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University studying towards a PhD in school management and leadership. I am conducting research on challenges faced by school principals as instructional leaders. My topic is:

Challenges faced by school principals of historically disadvantaged schools

In their role as instructional leaders facilitating curriculum implementation

I need to conduct interviews and administer questionnaires with teachers, principals (in selected schools) and DoE officials in your district. I have applied for clearance with the university ethics committee as well.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly

VS Tshazibana
Appendix B: Letter granting permission to do research

Mr V.S. Tshazibana  
Researcher  
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University  
Fax: 0415041622

Dear Mr Tshazibana

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PORT ELIZABETH SCHOOLS

I refer to your letter dated 03 August 2010.

Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct your research on the following conditions:

1. your research must be conducted on a voluntary basis;
2. all ethical issues relating to research must be honoured;
3. your research is subject to the internal rules of the school, including its curricular programme and its code of conduct and must not interfere in the day-to-day routine of the school.

Kindly present a copy of this letter to the principal as proof of permission.

I wish you good luck in your research.

Yours faithfully

DR N. NTSIKO  
DISTRICT DIRECTOR: PORT ELIZABETH

04 August 2010
Appendix C: Informed consent form

Informed Consent Form

Research Topic: Challenges faced by principals in historically disadvantaged schools in the Nelson Mandela Metro in terms of their role as instructional leaders facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies

Name of Researcher: Vukile Shadrack Tshazibana

Contact details: Email: vuksinha@nmmu.ac.za ; 041 504 1194; 084 245 4344

Dear Participant

Your willingness and cooperation to be involved in this research project is greatly appreciated.

Kindly note that your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

Please note the following:

- All information shared during the study will be treated as confidential. Your name and your school/ institution including the interview transcripts will not be disclosed in the research report.
- Every effort will be made to minimize all possible risks.
- Research findings will be made available to you when requested and for any queries you have now or in future, feel free to contact me at the above address.

To indicate you have voluntarily decided to participate in this research study and you have understood the information provided above. Please sign below in the space provided.

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 14/09/11
Appendix D: Questionnaire for principals

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

Dear Participant

My name is Vukile Tshazibana, and I am a PhD student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I am conducting research on challenges faced in terms of the role of instructional leaders facilitating curriculum implementation in historically disadvantaged schools. Please take time to complete the questionnaire below.

The information you provide will be used to develop a profile of leadership in schools and will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Please fill in or cross (X) the appropriate option

1. Designation

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<th>Deputy Principal (PL3)</th>
<th>Principal (PL4)</th>
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3. Gender

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4. Formal Qualifications

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<th>2 year diploma</th>
<th>3 year diploma</th>
<th>Degree only</th>
<th>Degree and diploma</th>
<th>Post grad degree</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
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</table>

5. Teaching Experience in years (Principalship)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - 5</th>
<th>6 - 10</th>
<th>11 - 15</th>
<th>16 - 20</th>
<th>More than 20</th>
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</table>

1
In terms of the expectations of the Department of Education’s policy documents on curriculum implementation:

6. I know what the Department expects of me in terms of the curriculum implementation policy documents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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Please explain why you feel this way?

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7. I have a copy of the curriculum implementation policy documents,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have them and have read them</th>
<th>I have them but have not read them</th>
<th>I am not sure if I got them</th>
<th>I have never received them</th>
<th>I have never heard of these documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

8. I have specifically familiarised myself with the following curriculum policy document(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBE</th>
<th>NCS</th>
<th>RNCS</th>
<th>CAPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

Comment on the impact these policy documents have had on delivery and quality of education

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In terms of how principals understand their role as curriculum leaders in terms of facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies in their schools:

9. I know my role as curriculum leader facilitating the implementation of curriculum policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
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Please explain why you feel this way?

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10. What would you like to learn more about your role as curriculum leader? Explain briefly.

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11. How would this be possible? Explain briefly.

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3
12. I have been successful in guiding teachers in curriculum policy implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Please explain why you feel this way?

13. Comment on successes and or challenges you have experienced in guiding the curriculum implementation process.

14. What would you like to learn about in guiding the curriculum implementation process?

   Explain and state reasons.
Appendix E: Questionnaire for teachers

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Participant

My name is Vukile Tshazibana, and I am a PhD student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I am conducting research on challenges faced in terms of the role of instructional leaders facilitating curriculum implementation in historically disadvantaged schools. Please take time to complete the questionnaire below.

The information you provide will be used to develop a profile of leadership in schools and will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Please fill in or cross [X] the appropriate option

1. Designation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Level 1 (PL1)</th>
<th>Head of Department (PL2)</th>
<th>Deputy Principal (PL3)</th>
<th>Principal (PL4)</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

2. Age in years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 25</th>
<th>25 - 29</th>
<th>30 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 40</th>
<th>41 - 49</th>
<th>50 - 60</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Formal Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 year diploma</th>
<th>3 year diploma</th>
<th>Degree only</th>
<th>Degree and diploma</th>
<th>Post grad degree</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
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<td></td>
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</table>

5. Teaching Experience in years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - 5</th>
<th>6 - 10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16 - 20</th>
<th>More than 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Teacher expectations of principals:

6. My principal fulfills my expectations regarding the process of curriculum implementation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
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Please explain why you feel this way?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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7. State the extent to which these expectations are met/not met. Explain briefly.

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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8. Comment on what you expect the principal's role to be in curriculum policy implementation.

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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9. What are other suggestions do you have regarding the principal's role in curriculum policy implementation

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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Training and curriculum changes

10. I have familiarized myself with the recent curriculum changes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please explain why you feel this way:

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11. State the extent to which you have been capacitated to implement recent curricula.

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12. What challenges (if any) have you experienced with the implementation of recent curricula? Explain briefly.

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13. My principal provides ongoing support\guidance to ensure effective curriculum implementation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please explain why you feel like this:

_________________________________________________________________________________
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14. What extent and nature of ongoing support\guidance is provided by your principal to ensure effective curriculum policy implementation? Explain briefly.

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

15. Suggest other support mechanisms you think may facilitate successful curriculum implementation.

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix F: Questionnaire for DoE officials

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DOE OFFICIALS

Dear Participant

My name is Vukile Tshazibana, and I am a PhD student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I am conducting research on challenges faced in terms of the role of instructional leaders facilitating curriculum implementation in historically disadvantaged schools. Please take time to complete the questionnaire below.

The information you provide will be used to develop a profile of leadership in schools and will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Please fill in or cross (X) the appropriate option

1. Designation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Level 1 (PL1)</th>
<th>Head of Department (PL2)</th>
<th>Deputy Principal (PL3)</th>
<th>Principal (PL4)</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

2. Age in years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 25</th>
<th>25 - 29</th>
<th>30 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 40</th>
<th>41 - 49</th>
<th>50 - 60</th>
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3. Gender

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<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

4. Formal Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 year diploma</th>
<th>3 year diploma</th>
<th>Degree only</th>
<th>Degree and diploma</th>
<th>Post grad degree</th>
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</table>

5. Experience in years (as a DoE official)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - 5</th>
<th>6 - 10</th>
<th>11 - 15</th>
<th>16 - 20</th>
<th>More than 20</th>
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</table>
**Expectations of principals as instructional leaders and DoE standards**

6. The DoE ensures that principals know what to do in order to be effective leaders of instruction and curriculum implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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Please explain why you feel this way?

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7. Does the DoE have explicit standards for what principals should know and be able to do? Explain briefly.

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8. Comment on criteria used by the DoE to evaluate principal performance in curriculum implementation.

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Commitment to develop principals to transform schools as instructional leaders

9. The DoE is committed to develop principals who can successfully transform schools and lead instructional leadership through curriculum implementation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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Please explain why you feel this way?
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10. Comment on how the DoE helps principals promote a focus on teaching and Learning.
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Principal preparation programmes

11. The DoE conducts principal preparation programmes related to curriculum implementation on a regular basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please explain why you feel this way?
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12. Comment on the extent to which principal preparation programmes for curriculum implementation are conducted.

13. What is the nature of the programmes? Explain briefly.

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**Follow-up support**

14. The DoE provides follow-up support visits to principals to ensure that effective curriculum implementation takes place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Explain why you feel this way?

---

15. What mechanisms are in place for the DoE to provide follow-up support in curriculum implementation? Explain briefly.
Appendix G: Online survey for principals

Dear Participant. My name is Vukile Tshazibana, a PhD student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I am conducting research on the challenges of instructional leadership in South African schools. Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous questionnaire. The information you provide will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

1. SECTION A
Please fill in the appropriate option

1.1 Designation
- Deputy Principal (PL3)
- Principal (PL4)
- Other (specify)

1.2 Other (specify)

1.3 Age (in years)
- Under 25
- 25 - 29
- 30 - 34
- 35 - 40
- 41 - 49
- 50 - 60

1.4 Gender
- Male
- Female

1.5 Formal Qualifications
- 2 year Diploma
- 3 year Diploma
- Degree only
- Degree and Diploma
- Post Graduate Degree
- Other (specify)

1.6 Other (specify)

1.7 Teaching experience in years (Principalship)
- 0 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16 - 20
- > 20

1.8 Province in which you work
- Eastern Cape
- Western Cape
- KZN

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Our Web Survey - Principals

1.9 School
- Primary School
- High School

1.10 Type of school in which you work
- ex-DET school previously for African learners
- ex-Model C school previously for White learners
- ex-HoR school previously for 'Coloured' learners
- ex-HoD previously for Indian learners
- Private school

2. SECTION B
Type in the boxes provided and fill in the circle that corresponds with your answer for each question on the survey.

If you attended a formal leadership preparation programme (the programme you completed leading to a credit for the principalship) was it offered by?

2.1 University (Name of Institution)?

2.2 University/District partnership (name of programme)

2.3 District only (Name of district or programme)

2.4 A non-university organization (specify)

2.5 More than one institution

2.6 Were you referred by your school or district to participate in this programme?
- Yes, I was formerly nominated or recommended to attend the programme.
- Yes, informally someone in my school or district suggested that I should go.
- No, I initiated participation

2.7 How did you pay for your preparation programme participation costs (tuition, books and instructional materials)?
- I incurred no costs related to my professional development activities
- I paid for all of it myself
- I paid part of the costs, but another party paid part (through reimbursement, subsidy or direct payment)

2.8 If the programme costs were sponsored, who contributed to covering the costs?

3. SECTION C

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=468&k=wkbybrkwde

8/17/2012
3.1 The programme content emphasized instructional leadership

3.2 The programme content emphasized leadership for school improvement

3.3 The programme content emphasized managing school operations efficiently.

3.4 The programme content emphasized working with the school community stakeholders

3.5 Practicing school or district administrators taught in the programme

3.6 The presenters were very knowledgeable about their subject matter

3.7 The programme gave me a strong orientation to the principalship as a career

4. SECTION D

Select one answer for each item

To what extent were the following learning practices/instructional strategies part of your coursework?

4.1 Field-based projects in which you applied ideas in the field

4.2 Linkages between coursework and field-based experience

4.3 Action research or inquiry projects

4.4 Journal writing of your experiences

4.5 Analysis and discussion of case studies

4.6 Lectures

4.7 Participation in small group work

4.8 A portfolio demonstrating my learning and accomplishments

4.9 Did you have a supervised

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8/17/2012

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5. SECTION E

Select one answer for each item

How effectively did your formal leadership programme prepare you to do the following?

5.1 Evaluate curricula for their usefulness in supporting learning
   - Not at all
   - Poorly
   - To some extent
   - Well
   - Very well

5.2 Evaluate teachers and provide instructional feedback to support their improvement
   - Not at all
   - Poorly
   - To some extent
   - Well
   - Very well

5.3 Find and allocate resources to pursue important school goals
   - Not at all
   - Poorly
   - To some extent
   - Well
   - Very well

5.4 Create and maintain an orderly, purposeful learning environment
   - Not at all
   - Poorly
   - To some extent
   - Well
   - Very well

5.5 Engage staff in a decision

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=468&k=wkbybrkwdc
8/17/2012
### Appendixes

#### Our Web Survey - Principals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>making process about school curriculum and policies</td>
<td>Not at all, Poorly, To some extent, Well, Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6 Lead well-informed, planned change process for a school</td>
<td>Not at all, Poorly, To some extent, Well, Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7 Engage in comprehensive planning for school improvement</td>
<td>Not at all, Poorly, To some extent, Well, Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8 Collaborate with others outside the school for assistance and partnership</td>
<td>Not at all, Poorly, Not at all, Well, Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9 Engage in self-improvement and continuous learning</td>
<td>Not at all, Poorly, To some extent, Well, Very well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6. SECTION F

Select one answer for each item

I believe that being a principal can (or does)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Provide opportunities for professional growth</td>
<td>disagree strongly, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 agree strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Enable me to influence school change</td>
<td>disagree strongly, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 agree strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Has too many responsibilities</td>
<td>disagree strongly, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 agree strongly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7. SECTION G

How often do you engage in the following activities in your role as principal of this school?

Select one answer for each item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Facilitate student learning (e.g. eliminate barriers to</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=468&k=wkbybrkwdc

8/17/2012
Our Web Survey - Principals

7.2 Guide the development and evaluation of curriculum and instruction

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice a week
- Daily

7.3 Build a professional learning community among staff

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice a week
- Daily

7.4 Foster teacher professional development for instructional knowledge and skills

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice a week
- Daily

7.5 Evaluate and provide instructional feedback to teachers

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice a week
- Daily

7.6 Work with teachers to change teaching methods where students are not succeeding

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice a week
- Daily

7.7 Work with outside agencies and individuals for school assistance and partnership

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice a week
- Daily

8. SECTION H

Indicate the extent to which you feel each statement describes your school

Select one answer for each item

8.1 Teachers in this school are continually learning and seeking new ideas

- strongly disagree
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- strongly agree

8.2 Teachers take an active role in school wide decision-making

- strongly disagree
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- strongly agree

8.3 In this school we take steps to solve problems, we don't just talk about them

- strongly disagree
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- strongly agree

8.4 Assessments of student

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=468&k=wkbybrkwde

8/17/2012
Our Web Survey - Principals

Appendices

9. SECTION I

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your district

9.1 Often I find it difficult to agree with the district's policies on important matters relating to teachers

9.2 The district's expectations are too high for our school

9.3 The district supports my schools efforts to improve

9.4 The district promotes my professional development

9.5 The district encourages principals to take risks in order to make change

9.6 The district helps me promote and nurture a focus on teaching and learning

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8/17/2012
Thank you for your time and attention to this work.

Submit Questionnaire

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=468&k=wkbybrkwde

8/17/2012
Appendix H: Online survey for teachers

Dear Participant. My name is Vukile Tshazibana, a PhD student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I am conducting research on the challenges of instructional leadership in South African schools. Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous questionnaire. The information you provide will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

1. SECTION A

Please fill in the appropriate option

1.1 Designation
- Teacher level 1 (PL1)
- Head of Department (PL2)
- Other (specify)

1.2 Other (specify)
- Under 25
- 25 - 29
- 30 - 34
- 35 - 40
- 41 - 49
- 50 - 60

1.4 Gender
- Male
- Female

1.5 Formal Qualifications
- 2 year Diploma
- 3 year Diploma
- Degree only
- Degree and Diploma
- Post Graduate Degree
- Other (specify)

1.6 Other (specify)

1.7 Teaching experience in years
- 0 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16 - 20
- > 20

1.8 School
- Primary School
- High School

1.9 Province in which you work
- Eastern Cape

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=467&k=parawvoyvg

9/8/2012
2. SECTION B

Fill in the circle that corresponds with your answer for each question on the survey.

Have you participated in the following activities related to your teaching?

2.1 University courses for recertification or advanced certification in your field of teaching.
   - Yes
   - No

2.2 Observational visits to other schools
   - Yes
   - No

2.3 Individual or collaborative research on a topic of interest to your profession
   - Yes
   - No

2.4 Regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction
   - Yes
   - No

2.5 Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching as part of a formal arrangement that is recognized or supported by the school or district
   - Yes
   - No

2.6 Attending workshops, conferences or training
   - Yes
   - No

3. SECTION C

How much actual influence do you think principals have over school policy in your school in each of the following areas?

Mark one for each item

3.1 Setting performance standards for students of this school
   - Little influence
   - A great deal of influence

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=467&k=psrawvoyvg

9/8/2012
Appendices

Our Web Survey - Teachers

3.2 Establishing curriculum

- Little influence
- A great deal of influence

3.3 Determining the content of In-service professional development programmes

- Little influence
- A great deal of influence

4. SECTION D

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Mark one answer for each item

4.1 The principal lets the staff know what is expected of them

- Strongly disagree
- Agree

4.2 The principal talks to me frequently about my instructional practices

- Strongly disagree
- Agree

4.3 The principal knows what kind of school s/he wants and has communicated it to the staff

- Strongly disagree
- Agree

4.4 In this school staff members are recognized for a job well done.

- Strongly disagree
- Agree

4.5 The principal expects teachers to provide a high quality of instruction.

- Strongly disagree
- Agree

4.6 The principal gives me the support I need to teach students with special needs

- Strongly disagree
- Agree

5. SECTION E

Using the following scale, indicate how effectively the school principal performs each of the following at your current school.

Mark one answer for each item

5.1 Encourages teachers to change teaching methods if students are not doing well

- Not at all effectively
- Slightly effectively
- Somewhat effectively
- Very effectively
- Extremely effectively

5.2 Works with staff to develop and attain curriculum standards

- Not at all effectively
- Slightly effectively
- Somewhat effectively
- Very effectively
- Extremely effectively

5.3 Encourages professional

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=467&k=pstrawvoyg

9/8/2012

251
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendixes</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Our Web Survey - Teachers

**5.4** Encourages the teaching staff to use student evaluation results in planning curriculum and instruction  
- Not at all effectively  
- Slightly effectively  
- Somewhat effectively  
- Very effectively  
- Extremely effectively

**5.5** Facilitates and encourages professional development activities of teachers  
- Not at all effectively  
- Slightly effectively  
- Somewhat effectively  
- Very effectively  
- Extremely effectively

**5.6** Takes my opinion into consideration when initiating actions that affect my work  
- Not at all effectively  
- Slightly effectively  
- Somewhat effectively  
- Very effectively  
- Extremely effectively

**5.7** Stimulates me to think about what I am doing for my students  
- Not at all effectively  
- Slightly effectively  
- Somewhat effectively  
- Very effectively  
- Extremely effectively

**5.8** Helps to clarify the practical implications of the school’s mission  
- Not at all effectively  
- Slightly effectively  
- Somewhat effectively  
- Very effectively  
- Extremely effectively

### 6. SECTION F

Please indicate the frequency with which principals do each of the following in your school.

Mark one answer for each item.

**6.1** Share ideas on teaching with other teachers  
- almost never/never 0  
- 1  
- 2  
- 3  
- 4  
- 5 almost always

**6.2** Observe another teacher teaching  
- almost never/never 0  
- 1  
- 2  
- 3  
- 4  
- 5 almost always

**6.3** Be observed by another teacher  
- almost never/never 0  
- 1  
- 2  
- 3  
- 4  
- 5 almost always

**6.4** Teach with a colleague  
- almost never/never 0  
- 1  
- 2  
- 3  
- 4  
- 5 almost always

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=467&k=psrawvoyvg  
9/8/2012
Our Web Survey - Teachers

6.5 Discuss with other teachers what you/they learned at a workshop or conference
almost never/never 0 1 2 3 4 5 almost always

6.6 Discuss particular lessons that were not very successful
almost never/never 0 1 2 3 4 5 almost always

6.7 Work together to develop teaching materials or activities for particular classes
almost never/never 0 1 2 3 4 5 almost always

7. SECTION G
To what degree are the following true in your school?
Mark one answer for each item

7.1 Curriculum, instruction and learning materials are well coordinated across the different grade levels at this school
Not true at all Slightly true Somewhat true Very true Extremely true

7.2 Most changes introduced at this school have little relation to teachers’ and students’ real needs and interest
Not true at all Slightly true Somewhat true Very true Extremely true

7.3 My principal heightens my desire to succeed
Not true at all Slightly true Somewhat true Very true Extremely true

7.4 My school supports staff who take calculated risks
Not true at all Slightly true Somewhat true Very true Extremely true

7.5 In my school, people give open and honest feedback to each other
Not true at all Slightly true Somewhat true Very true Extremely true

8. SECTION H
Over the last year, to what extent do you believe that there has been an increase or

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=467&k=psrawvoyvg

9/8/2012
decrease in the following in your school?
Mark one answer for each item

8.1 Collaboration among teachers in making curriculum and instructional decisions

8.2 Focus by teachers on improving and expanding their instructional strategies

8.3 Opportunities for teachers' professional growth

8.4 Use of student performance data for instructional improvement

8.5 Coordination of curricular and instructional materials among regular and special programmes\classrooms

9. SECTION I
Within the last year, what impact, if any, has the school's approach to school improvement had on each of the following?
Mark one answer for each item

9.1 The effectiveness of your teaching

9.2 The quality of the curriculum

9.3 Your opportunities for professional growth

9.4 Your workload

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=467&k=psrawvooyvg  
9/8/2012
Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.
Appendix I: Online survey for DoE officials

Dear Participant. My name is Vukile Tshazibene, a PhD student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I am conducting research on the challenges of instructional leadership in South African schools. Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous questionnaire. The information you provide will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

1. SECTION A
   Please fill in the appropriate option

1.1 Designation
   - District Manager
   - Chief Education Specialist
   - Senior Education Specialist
   - Senior Administration Officer
   - Subject Advisor
   - Other

1.2 Other (specify) __________________________

1.3 Age (in years)
   - Under 25
   - 25 - 29
   - 30 - 34
   - 35 - 40
   - 41 - 49
   - 50 - 60

1.4 Gender
   - Male
   - Female

1.5 Formal Qualifications
   - 2 year Diploma
   - 3 year Diploma
   - Degree only
   - Degree and Diploma
   - Post Graduate Degree
   - Other (specify) __________________________

1.6 Other (specify) __________________________

1.7 Experience in years (as a DoE official)
   - 0 - 5
   - 6 - 10
   - 11 - 15
   - 16 - 20
   - > 20

1.8 Province __________________________

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=469&k=zzlidxolsw

2012/09/06
2. SECTION B

Please fill in the option that corresponds with your answer for each question on the survey.

2.1 Do you believe that principals require a formal leadership qualification in order to be appointed as principals?
   □ Yes □ No

2.2 Does the DoE provide professional development for school principals to do their job effectively?
   □ Yes □ No

2.3 If NO, state how the DoE ensures that principals perform their duties successfully.

2.4 If YES, indicate whether you provide principals with the following support services:
   □ Coaching □ Mentoring □ On-going professional support

2.5 If none of the above, indicate what you provide or what you have in place.

2.6 Does the DoE have explicit standards for what principals should be able to do?
   □ Yes □ No

2.7 If YES, state what they are.

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=469&k=xzlidxolsw

2012/09/06
3. SECTION C

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding principals and schools

3.1 The district plays a role in the selection and placement of competent principal candidates. Never ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 Always

3.2 Please elaborate

3.3 The district supports efforts to improve schools Never ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 Always

3.4 Please explain why you feel this way

3.5 The district promotes the professional development of principals Never ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 Always

3.6 Please elaborate

3.7 The district helps principals promote and nurture a focus on teaching and learning Never ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 Always

3.8 Please explain why you feel this way?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Submit Questionnaire

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=469&k=zzldxolsw

2012/09/06
Appendix J: Interview protocol for principals

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PRINCIPALS

1. In what areas of your practice as principal do you think you need coaching and mentoring? Comment on the extent to which you were coached/mentored as a principal in preparation for your role as an instructional leader?

.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................

2. Briefly state how you understand your role as an instructional leader responsible for the implementation of curriculum policies. Also indicate how you have been prepared to undertake this role?

.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................

3. Explain how the DoE provides you with on-going support to enable you to promote a focus on teaching and learning? Comment on the extent to which this support fulfils your expectations as an instructional leader?

.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................

4. Comment on the provision of resources by the DoE to your school and indicate the impact they (resources) have on teaching and learning/your role as an instructional leader:

.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
.................................................................
5. How effectively do the DoEs programmes for professional development prepare you as an instructional leader responsible for the implementation of curriculum policies?

6. How would you describe the attitude of teachers (from your school) towards the current curriculum changes and implementation? Comment on the extent to which teachers embrace or resist the changes?

7. Do you think have you been successful as an instructional leader in guiding teachers with in curriculum implementation? If so, what would you attribute that success to/ if not what do you think are the reasons?

8. What support mechanisms would you suggest to the DoE to put in place to ensure that you as an instructional leader, are adequately prepared for this role?

Thank you for your participation
Appendix K: Interview protocol for DoE Officials

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR DOE OFFICIALS

1. Comment on the allocation of resources to schools by the DoE and how their availability \ lack thereof, can enhance or inhibit teaching and learning?

2. Explain in detail how the DoE ensures that principals are adequately prepared for their role as instructional leaders in terms of their professional development?

3. For principals to perform their duties successfully, they require coaching and mentoring\ onsite support from the DoE. Comment on how the DoE provides this support to principals.

4. How does the DoE provide on-going and follow-up support to principals to ensure that there is a focus on teaching and learning in schools?
5. Explain how does the DoE evaluate the performance of principals of schools in terms of their role as instructional leaders?

6. What suggestions would you make to the DoE to ensure that principals are adequately prepared as instructional leaders and principalship in general?

Thank you for your participation
Appendix L: Survey Postcard

Instructional Leadership in Schools

Online survey for principals, teachers and departmental officials

Teachers, principals and departmental officials!

Please take part in this online anonymous survey being carried out by Vuks Tshazibana of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University on perceptions of instructional leadership in South African Schools.

The survey only takes about 10 minutes and is easy to do!

You can find it at http://www.nmmu.ac.za/instruct

Please pass this information to other teachers, principals and departmental officials and encourage them to take part.

Thank you for your help!
Appendix M: Inferential statistics – Principals

### Breakdown Table of Descriptive Statistics

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<th>F1 N</th>
<th>F1 Std.Dev.</th>
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<th>F2 Std.Dev.</th>
<th>F3 Means</th>
<th>F3 N</th>
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### Analysis of Variance

Marked effects are significant at p < .05000

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(No significant differences)

### Breakdown Table of Descriptive Statistics

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Analysis of Variance
Marked effects are significant at p < .05000

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### Analysis of Variance

Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$

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### Analysis of Variance

Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$

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*Post hoc test not powerful enough to detect any pair-wise differences*
Appendices

T-tests; Grouping: Q1_8

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<th>Std.Dev. WC</th>
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T-tests; Grouping: Q1_9

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(No significant differences)

Breakdown Table of Descriptive Statistics

|        | F1 Means N | F1 Std.Dev | F1 Means N | F1 Std.Dev | F2 Means N | F2 Std.Dev | F2 Means N | F2 Std.Dev | F3 Means N | F3 Std.Dev | F3 Std.Dev |
|--------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| ex DET - previously for Afr | 2.71 29   | 0.53       | 3.71 29    | 0.59       | 3.07 29    | 0.73       |
| ex Model C - previously for | 2.77 55   | 0.48       | 4.20 55    | 0.47       | 2.31 55    | 0.95       |
| ex HoR - previously for | 2.79 20   | 0.72       | 3.42 20    | 0.65       | 2.86 20    | 0.88       |
| All Grps | 2.76 104 | 0.54       | 3.92 104   | 0.63       | 2.63 104   | 0.94       |

Analysis of Variance

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<th>p</th>
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</table>

ex Model C differs significantly from ex DET (p=0.0007; Cohen's d=0.96 (Large)) and from ex HoR (p=0.0000; Cohen's d=1.51 (Large))

Only ex Model C and ex DET differ significantly (p=0.0013; Cohen's d=0.87 (Large))
## Appendix N: Inferential statistics - Teachers

### Breakdown Table of Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Q1</th>
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<th>F1 S.D.</th>
<th>F1 Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F2 Mean</th>
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<th>F2 Std. Dev.</th>
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<th>F3 S.D.</th>
<th>F3 Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F4 Mean</th>
<th>F4 S.D.</th>
<th>F4 Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F5 Mean</th>
<th>F5 S.D.</th>
<th>F5 Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F6 Mean</th>
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### Analysis of Variance

**Marked effects are significant at p < .00000**

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<th>Effect</th>
<th>SS</th>
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<th>Error</th>
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<td>0.0032 Only the first and the third groups differ significantly (p=0.023), Cohen's $\eta^2=0.54$ (Medium)</td>
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<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.0032 Only the first and the third groups differ significantly (p=0.023), Cohen's $\eta^2=0.64$ (Medium)</td>
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### Breakdown Table of Descriptive Statistics

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### Analysis of Variance

**Marked effects are significant at p < .00000**

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### T-tests

**Grouping: Q2-4**

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<th>Valid N</th>
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<th>S.D.</th>
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*No significant differences*
### Appendices

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#### Analysis of Variance

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#### Analysis of Variance

**Marked effects are significant at p < .05**

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#### Analysis of Variance

**Marked effects are significant at p < .05**

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#### Analysis of Variance

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## Appendices

### Q1.10 (Only the First Two "Bad" Groups)

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