

**THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS IN TWO  
UNDERPERFORMING SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE KING  
WILLIAM'S TOWN EDUCATION DISTRICT**

**BY**

**BANTU SIJAKO**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION**

**AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

**SUPERVISOR: DR M.P. MAVUSO**

**JANUARY 2017**

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Bantu Sijako, hereby declare that this dissertation has never been forwarded to any institution of higher learning for the purposes of awarding any degree or qualification. I have also acknowledged the authors in the text and reference list where I have used either their published or unpublished works.

Signed: .....

Date:.....

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### I wish to convey my sincerest gratitude to:

- My Creator and my inspiration. Thank you Lord for granting me the strength to believe in myself and to bring this dissertation to completion.
- My loving wife and daughters who have been a constant pillar of strength and encouragement.
- My parents and extended family for being tremendously understanding, especially during times that I was not able to spend much time with them.
- My supervisor and mentor, Dr Mzuyanda Percival Mavuso. A special word of gratitude and appreciation goes to you, sir, for all your assistance and loving support. Your guidance and motivation made it possible to complete this work.
- All participants who participated in my research.
- A special word of thanks goes to Prof G. Moyo, the Dean of the Faculty of Education and GMRDC for having facilitated financial support for my study.

## DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this study to Almighty God and to all those who had faith in my ability to bring this work to completion. To my twin daughters, Lihle and Vuyokazi, my sister, Neliswa Qwabe, my parents and my friends, thank you for your words of exhortation and prayers. This is dedicated to my late grandparents too. I know you would have been proud of me.

## ABSTRACT

School principals are expected to play a pivotal role in enhancing quality teaching and learning in their schools. As leaders of organisations called schools, where teaching and learning take place, they need to possess particular skills to enable them to effectively deliver on their responsibilities of supporting teaching and learning. This means that a school principal is at the centre of any change that must occur at school level. He/she is expected to create a positive learning space by providing a healthy climate for teaching and learning in the school. However, some secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District are performing far below the national average when it comes to the Grade 12 results. For this reason, this study sought to explore the views of the school management team members in two such schools on the role of principals as instructional leaders. The case study was premised within the qualitative research approach and the interpretivist paradigm was used as an epistemological base to investigate the views of the school management teams on the role of principals as instructional leaders. Eight school management team members were selected from both schools and the data was collected by means of face-to-face semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. The data showed that participants had divergent views on how principals play the instructional leadership role. It appeared that principals employed different strategies in supporting teaching and learning in their schools and the focus was on control rather than support. It also emerged from the data that there was a lack of professional support at all levels in the selected schools, and parents were not involved in their children's academic work. The researcher concludes that there seemed to be no systemic and coherent support strategy focusing on teaching and learning, as there were divergent views on how principals perform their instructional leadership roles. The study therefore recommends that principals be trained on instructional leadership to give them a deeper insight into supporting curriculum implementation in their schools.

**Key words:** Instructional leadership, principal, underperformance, school improvement, effective leadership

## ACRONYMS

DBE	: Department of Basic Education
DoE	: Department of Education
ECDoE	: Eastern Cape of Education
HOD	: Head of Department
IQMS	: Integrated Quality Management System
NASP	: National Association of School Principals
NEP	: National Education Policy
PLC	: Professional learning communities
RCL	: Representative Council of Learners
RSA	: Republic of South Africa
SASA	: South African School Act
SGB	: School Governing Body
SMT	: School Management Team
SWOT	: Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats
UNESCO	: United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
US	: United States

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACRONYMS.....	iv
<b>CHAPTER 1.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.5 THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.6 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.2.1 School improvement theory.....	10
2.2.2. CHANGE THEORY.....	19
2.2.2.1Types of change.....	20
2.2.2.2 Radical change.....	21
2.2.2.3 Democratic change and people centred instructional leadership.....	22
<b>2.3 UNDERSTANDING PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS.....</b>	<b>23</b>
2.3.1 The role of school principals as mentors.....	23
2.3.2. Principals as motivational officials.....	28
2.3.3 Building and promoting the culture of teaching and learning.....	30
2.3.4 Building community and parental participation.....	31
2.3.5 Time management.....	33
2.3.6 Inculcating a sense of partnership and collaboration.....	34

2.3.7 Teaching principals.....	37
2.3.8 Focusing on the mission and vision .....	38
2.3.9 Focus on planning .....	41
2.4 EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT.....	44
<b>2.5 THE ROLE OF APPRAISAL .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>2.6 CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS ..</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>2.7 SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>52</b>
CHAPTER 3.....	53
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN.....	53
<b>3.1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>3.2 EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>3.3 THE RELEVANCE OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH TO THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN - CASE STUDY .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.5 SAMPLING .....</b>	<b>59</b>
3.5.1 Defining sampling.....	59
3.5.2 Purposive sampling .....	60
<b>3.6 DATA COLLECTION .....</b>	<b>60</b>
3.6.1 Face-to face interviews .....	61
3.6.2 Document analysis .....	62
<b>3.7 DATA ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>63</b>
3.7.1 Analysis of data from the semi-structured interviews.....	64
3.7.2 Analysing data from the documentary analysis.....	64
<b>3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....</b>	<b>64</b>
3.8.1 Access to research sites .....	64
3.8.2 Informed consent.....	65
3.8.3 Confidentiality and anonymity.....	65
<b>3.9 DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>3.10 TRIANGULATION.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>3.11 SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>69</b>
CHAPTER 4.....	70
ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA.....	70
<b>4.1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>4.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>70</b>
4.2.1 Distribution of participants by gender.....	70
4.2.2 Distribution of participants by experience .....	71

<b>4.3 VIEWS OF SCHOOL MANAGERS ON THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS .....</b>	<b>72</b>
4.3.1 Understanding principals' instructional leadership roles .....	72
4.3.2 Supporting quality teaching and learning in schools .....	81
4.3.3 Parental involvement.....	85
<b>4.4 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS .....</b>	<b>86</b>
4.4.1 Lack of commitment from the Department of Education to support school principals .....	86
4.4.2 Overwork of school principals .....	87
4.4.3 Lack of parental involvement in their children's education .....	89
4.4.4 Absenteeism and lack of punctuality by teachers and learners .....	89
<b>4.5 STATEGIES THAT CAN BE EMPLOYED BY PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS .....</b>	<b>89</b>
4.5.1 Promoting team work in the school.....	90
4.5.2 Supporting teachers in their work .....	90
4.5.3 Provision of resources.....	92
4.5.4 Maintaining discipline among learners.....	93
<b>4.6 Summarising of main findings .....</b>	<b>93</b>
4.6.1 Conflicting ideas with regards to supporting teaching and learning in schools by school principals .....	93
4.6.2 Lack of professional training for school teachers .....	95
4.6.3 Viewing supporting teaching and learning as control rather than support .....	97
4.6.4 Lack of support by the Department of Education.....	98
4.6.5 Accountability .....	99
4.6.6 Involving parents in their children's education .....	100
4.6.7 Low levels of commitment and dedication amongst teachers.....	100
4.6.8 Viewing motivation as a tool to enhance quality teaching and learning.....	101
4.6.9 A need to promote partnership .....	102
<b>4.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER .....</b>	<b>102</b>
CHAPTER 5 .....	104
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	104
<b>5.1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.2 MAIN IDEAS OF THE STUDY CHAPTER BY CHAPTER .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.3 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>105</b>
5.3.1 The conflicting views.....	105
5.3.2 Lack of professional support.....	105
5.3.3 Focusing control rather than support.....	106

5.3.4 Unsystematic accountability versus curriculum implementation .....	106
5.3.5 Community involvement.....	106
5.3.6 Lack of commitment and dedication amongst teachers .....	107
5.3.7 Enhancing quality teaching and learning through motivation .....	107
5.3.8 Lack of sense of partnership .....	107
<b>5.4 CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>108</b>
5.5.1 For policy implementation.....	108
5.5.2 For future research .....	109
<b>REFERENCE LIST .....</b>	<b>111</b>
APPENDIX A.....	126
APPENDIX B.....	127
APPENDIX C.....	128
APPENDIX D.....	130
APPENDIX E.....	132
APPENDIX F.....	133
APPENDIX G .....	135



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

School principals are expected to play a pivotal role in enhancing quality teaching and learning in their schools. Principals, as leaders of organisations called schools, where teaching and learning take place, need to possess particular skills to enable them to effectively deliver on their responsibilities of supporting teaching and learning. This means that a school principal is at the centre of any change that must occur at school level (Maponya, 2015). He/she is expected to promote a positive learning space by creating a healthy climate for teaching and learning in the school (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003; Valentine & Prater, 2011; Zepeda, 2013; Maponya, 2015). These include but are not limited to assuring that instruction is aligned to state academic content standards, maintaining continuous improvement in the building and designing of instruction for student success, developing partnerships with parents and the community, and nurturing a culture where each individual feels valued (Habegger, 2008).

However, some secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District are performing far below the national average when it comes to Grade 12 results. This study therefore sought to explore the views of school management team members (SMT) on the role of principals as instructional leaders. As the school principal is defined as a person who should facilitate the shaping of a vision for academic success for all students based on high standards and who should create a climate conducive to the promotion of education, safety, a cooperative spirit, as well as other foundations of fruitful interaction, they need to have effective instructional leadership skills (Mendels, 2012). Principals need to cultivate leadership in others so that teachers and school community members perform their part in realizing the school's vision. They should strive for the incremental improvement of instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn the best of their (Ibid). This means that principals are instructional leaders in their respective schools, hence this study sought to investigate how principals execute their instructional leadership roles in two selected underperforming secondary schools in the King William's Town

Education District. Under performing schools are schools whose Grade 12 results are below 50 percent of the national average (Department of Education, 2011).

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The instructional leadership paradigm is increasingly gaining significant momentum in the education arena worldwide. Instructional leadership is the dynamic management delivery of the curriculum in the classroom through strategies based on reflection, assessment and evaluation to ensure optimum learning. The idea that principals serve as instructional leaders is seen as an alternative to attaining learners' outcome within the education fraternity (Noonan & Hellsten, 2013). Their main responsibility is to focus on learners' academic achievement. This new change in principals' responsibilities requires that they put learner performance at the forefront and are being tasked to develop new competences largely centred around data, curriculum, pedagogy and human capital development in order to meet required learner achievement (Alvoid & Black, 2014). This means that there is increased emphasis on instructional leadership. Principals, as school leaders, need to help teachers shift their focus from what they are teaching to what students are learning (Lunenburg, 2010).

In the context of the United States, it is argued that effective school leadership today must combine the traditional school leadership duties such as teacher evaluation, budgeting, scheduling, and facilities maintenance with a deep involvement with specific aspects of teaching and learning (US Department of Education, 2005). Effective instructional leaders have their focus on teaching and learning that occur at classroom level. They are mainly concerned with curricular and instructional issues that directly affect student achievement (Cotton, 2003). Although new demands on the work of principals require that they focus more on instructional leadership, they still have to perform other traditional principals' responsibilities such as management, administration and discipline (The Newsletter for the Reading First Program, 2005). Instructional leaders have insight into "how teachers understand knowledge, and students' role in learning, and how these ideas about knowledge and learning are manifested in teaching and classwork" (Elmore, 1993, p. 2). Although principals are instructional leaders in their respective schools, even in the United States (US) there

are alarming levels of failure in some schools. This is the reason why this study chose to explore how principals serve as instructional leaders.

Some school principals in the United States of America are no longer comfortable with their jobs. They feel that they are not sufficiently prepared by their pre-service training to successfully meet the demands and challenges of school leadership (Alvoid & Black, 2014). They further claim that they are not fully supported in their roles by their school districts. As of 2011, about seventy percent of school principals reported that their job responsibilities are very different from what they were just five years before and that their jobs are now too complex and cause high level of stress and job dissatisfaction (Alvoid & Black, 2014).

In developing African countries such as Kenya, teachers work under very difficult conditions. In Kenya, and even Ghana and Botswana, there is low staff morale and principals as instructional leaders have to employ innovative strategies to deal with these conditions. In Kenya, principals' instructional leadership role includes checking lesson books, schemes of work, and records of work covered, attendance, class attendance records and clock in clock out books (Nzambi, 2012). This means that in that country instructional leadership is seen as checking and control. The principal's role includes supervision of the approved curriculum, staff personnel, student personnel, supervision and promotion of school community relations and supervision of physical and material resources (Nzambi, 2012).

The Department of Education in Kenya requires that the principal of a school be responsible for all matters pertaining to the smooth running of the school. This includes timetable organization to ensure that timetables are child-centred and are providing maximum learning opportunities. This means that timetables should provide a variety of activities with subjects spaced in a way that sustains the interest and motivation of learners. Furthermore, instructional supervision is about making sure that there is availability of textbooks, facilities, qualified and motivated teachers, as well as teacher and learner punctuality (Nzambi, 2012).

In South Africa, principals are compelled by law to account for their academic activities. Section 58 of the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 (SASA)

stipulates that principals account for the underperformance in their students' results (SASA, 1996). This means that the demand for greater accountability requires principals to use more outcome-based measures, and to be instruction oriented. It is argued that the focus on results, student achievement and the focus on students' intense learning can happen only if teaching and learning become the central focus of the school and the preoccupation of the principal (Blankstein, 2010& Lunenburg, 2010).

Instructional leadership involves prioritizing teaching and learning on a constant basis. This means that instructional leaders' scheduled time plan should be dominated by activities directed at teaching and learning (US DoE, 2005). Furthermore, instructional leadership is about willingness to be well versed and read in teaching instruction in order to be able to select teaching materials and monitor teaching thereof. Instructional leaders should be able to align curriculum, instruction assessment and standards (Ibid). They should also be able to assess performance. Mendels (2012) noted that instructional leadership is about school principals assuming their role as principal teachers. Mendels (2012) further argued that instructional leadership is the monitoring of teaching and learning activities, giving feedback to teachers and guiding them. Although principals are expected to guide teaching and learning in their schools, there are a significant number of secondary schools in the King William's Town District that perform below fifty percent in their Grade 12 results. It is for this reason that this study focused on the King William's Town Education District as there are still a significant number of underperforming schools in the Eastern Cape Province.

In spite of the existence of instructional leadership measures, learners' literacy levels and Grade 12 results are not improving significantly in the Eastern Cape (DBE, 2014; BDE, 2015 and BDE, 2016). In 2013 Grade 12 results in the Eastern Cape have shown a greater number of districts (seven) that have achieved less than a fifty percent pass rate. Although, on the whole, the 2016 matric results in the Eastern Cape have improved, the province is still lagging behind other provinces (DBE, 2016), with the King William's Town Education District at number fifteen of the twenty three districts in the Eastern Cape.

There are several studies about instructional leadership (Mendels, 2012; Whitehead; Boschee & Decker, 2013). However, there is dearth in literature that deals with how principals perform their instructional leadership roles, particularly in underperforming secondary schools. Most writers just define instructional leadership (Pansiri, 2008; Hallinger, 2008). They do not examine how principals can perform their role as instructional leaders. Furthermore, though Hoadly & Ward (2009) noted that principals in South Africa have little experience regarding instructional leadership, there is not much literature that discusses the relationship between instructional leadership and the under performance of learners, hence this study will focus on the under-performing schools.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Principals are expected to be instructional leaders in their schools by focusing most of their time and energy on ensuring quality teaching and learning (Mendels, 2012). However, there is continuous underperformance in specific schools in the Eastern Cape, especially in the King William's Town Education District (DBE, 2016). This is despite joint efforts by various stakeholders to change the situation for the better. These schools, to the disappointment of the stakeholders, have failed to achieve at least a fifty percent pass rate. Some of the schools in the 2013 Grade 12 cohort had no learners who had passed at a level that is required to be admitted in the university and this was disappointing to the King William's Town Education District (DBE, 2014). Learners' performance as manifested by low literacy levels and a high Grade 12 failure rate seem to be escalating. Most principals seem not to be spending time in classrooms and analysing instruction with teachers. They appear not to focus on arranging time for teachers' meetings and professional development, and rarely provide intellectual leadership for growth in teaching skills. This study, therefore, aims to explore the role of principals as instructional leaders in the two selected underperforming secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District.

## **1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION**

How do school principals perform their instructional leadership roles in the under-performing schools?

### **Sub-questions**

- How do school management team members view the role of principals as instructional leaders?
- What instructional roles do principals play in their schools?
- What challenges do the principals encounter in carrying out their instructional roles in their schools?
- What strategies can be used to improve principals' instructional leadership roles?

## **1.5 THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim this study was to investigate the role played by school principals as instructional leaders in the two selected underperforming schools in the King William's Town Education District. This was done by investigating the views of school management teams on the role of principals as instructional leaders. In line with the sub research questions, the specific objectives were:

- To investigate the views of school management team members on the role of principals as instructional leaders;
- To unearth the instructional roles played by principals in their schools;
- To investigate the challenges encountered by school principals in carrying out their instructional roles;
- To explore strategies that can be used to improve principals' instructional leadership roles.

## **1.6 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

The DBE has put in place a number of programmes that seek to improve Grade 12 learner results. However, there is no significant improvement in most of the Eastern Cape schools. Continuous underperformance in certain secondary schools in this district in Grade 12 has, in the researcher's observation, caused a large number of school leaders to feel demotivated. Anecdotally, many seem to have lost their zeal

for the profession. Some feel that their efforts to turn the situation around have been unappreciated by the stakeholders, even though a variety of strategies have been employed to improve learner performance. Some seem to have developed a negative attitude towards teaching. Other principals feel that very little or no credit is given to their educators for their effort. Hoadly and Ward (2009) also drew the attention of the researcher as they argued that the major factor which contributes to underperformance in some schools is the issue of instructional leadership. These writers claim that most principals in South Africa have a narrow understanding of their instructional leadership roles.

### **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is hoped that the findings of this study may be of great value to principals of the poor performing schools because this phenomenon of continuous underperformance also compromises the quality of learners' lives when they fail to achieve the expected results. This study may also benefit the Department of Education in designing policies on how to support principals to perform their instructional leadership responsibilities better. It is also hoped that this study will contribute to the acknowledgement of what goes on at 'ground level' in schools in terms of focusing on the unique contexts and circumstances of these institutions. It will also assist the principals in improving the quality of teaching and learning and assist other principals in addressing the challenges they encounter when performing instructional leadership duties. Finally, it will help the researcher to bring new knowledge into the field of study. If the recommendations are implemented, they will also help other struggling schools in this district to improve their performance as well as their learner achievement.

### **1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was carried out in two selected rural underperforming secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District. Only the views of the school management team (SMT) members, which included school principals, were investigated and the phenomenon under study was the role played by school principals as instructional leaders.

## 1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations of the study were that it was not always easy to find time for the interviews as in most cases participants were busy. As the researcher is a teacher himself, it was difficult for him to visit school during school hours as he was also expected to teach learners in his own school.

## 1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Instructional leadership:** For the purpose of this study instructional leadership is the mentoring of teaching and learning activities, giving feedback to teachers and guidance (Mendels, 2012).

**Principal:** For the purpose of this study a principal is an official charged with cultivating leadership in schools so that teachers and school community members perform their part in realizing the vision of the school. It is an official who strives for incremental improvement of instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn to the best of their ability (Mendels, 2012).

**Underperformance:** Is used to refer to schools whose performance is low, i.e. schools that achieve less than a 50% pass rate in the final examinations in Grade 12 and, as such, are viewed as dysfunctional and need internal as well as external interventions to improve learner attainment (Mohlala, 2010; US Department of Education, 2012).

**School improvement:** For the purposes of this study, school improvement is a distinct approach to educational change that aims to enhance student outcomes as well as strengthen the school's capacity for managing change (Hopkins, Ainscow, & West, 1994).

**Effective leadership:** In line with Fullhan (2005), this study defines effective leadership as employing data skilfully, gathering information that determines how well a school organisation is meeting its goals and using such information to refine strategies to meet extended goals.

## **1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

Chapter one: Introduction and background

Chapter two: Theoretical framework and literature review

Chapter three: Research methodology

Chapter four: Presentation, analysis and discussion of data

Chapter five: Conclusions, summary and recommendations

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reviews the relevant literature and relates the relevant theories and concepts to the study. This means that this chapter will consist of two sections: the theoretical framework and the review of literature related to the research questions in Chapter one. This study is underpinned by two theories, namely, school improvement and change theories which have recently been reviewed as dominant paradigms of educational research (Hallinger, 2003). After linking the theoretical framework to the study, the researcher discusses the literature relating to this study that was produced by other scholars.

#### **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The rationale behind the use of school improvement and change theories is to use them as guiding suppositions and as lenses in investigating how principals of the underperforming schools carry out their instructional leadership roles. This means that these theories complement each other and, in that way, sharpen awareness of the multitude of rich ways through which the issue of instructional leadership is practiced in such schools.

##### **2.2.1 School improvement theory**

Hopkins (1994) defines school improvement as a distinct approach to educational change that aims to enhance student outcomes as well as strengthen the school's capacity for managing change. School improvement starts with an analysis of the situation on the ground by the school management team. This is also known as a school review (DBE, 2012), or sometimes it is known as a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. An instructional leader is one who does things at the right time and enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things (Charlton & Guy, 2004). This theory is relevant in this study because an instructional leader, according to Charlton & Guy (2004), knows that improvement

must under all circumstances be preceded by an honest assessment of the situation and that this task of analysis is a joint venture with the school management team.

The researcher sought to investigate if principals, as instructional leaders who support teaching and learning, were in line with the school improvement theory. Effective principals employ data skilfully, gather information that determines how well a school organisation is meeting its goals and use that information to refine strategies to meet extended goals (Fullan, 2005) as this is in line with school improvement theory. Instructional leadership always prioritises teaching and learning while other things revolve around such activities (Du Four, 2002). Instructional leadership points to the principal's provision of support for teachers so that there is improvement in education (van der Venter & Kruger, 2003). Teacher support is essential for school improvement so that the school can achieve its goals more effectively by replacing some structures with better ones (Fullan, 1991). This issue of priority fits well in rural schools, as the financial allocation to these schools does not fulfil most of the needs of the school, let alone its maintenance. However, instructional leadership functions are relatively rare in schools in developing countries, and principals are likely to adopt a stance in favour of management and administration. Instructional effectiveness is directly related to student achievement, such that the higher the effectiveness levels, the higher the student achievement levels (Nzambi, 2012).

Barth (1990, p. 45) defines school improvement as, "an effort to determine and provide, from within and without, conditions which the adults and youngsters who inhabit the school know will promote and sustain learning among them". What is conspicuous about this definition is that school improvement is a deliberate and sequential action which changes learning conditions and other related internal conditions by those who are within the educational setting. The implication is that changes in school improvement are initiated by those who work in the school and are managed and led by them. To achieve this requires the school to work hand-in-hand with the Department of Education (DoE) and other agencies. Glatter (1979) argues that school leaders have to engage both an internal as well as an external

audience in leading their schools. The external factors include the community at large, government, department officials and other agencies.

Hargreaves & Hopkins (1991) argued that the success of school improvement depends on the integration of these two factors but the external factors intervene to assist what has been initiated by those inside. These two factors complement each other. It is evident that those that are outside are eager to help those that are on the inside. A major responsibility of those on the outside is to provide help for those that are on the inside.

This theory of school improvement is relevant as it highlights the processes that contribute or assist the performance of underperforming schools in the Grade 12 examinations but the processes the study will dwell on are accountability, staff development, collaboration, recognition and celebration, time management, and effective leadership. In discussing the above processes the focus will be on the principal because the study is about his/her practice and also because, above all, the principal plays a key role in school improvement (Hopkins, 2001).

#### *2.2.1.1 Accountability*

Accountability is one major aspect of the school improvement theory. In South Africa, principals are compelled by law to account for their academic activities. Section 58 of the South African School Act no. 84 of 1996 stipulates that principals account for the academic performance of their learners (South African Schools Act no 84, 1996). Instructional leadership always operates within a legislative framework and principals are supposed to handle their schools in line with the principles of school improvement. MacBeath & Turner (1990) argued that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there has been a continuing demand for greater accountability by educators to increase student performance at their schools. It is proper that the line of accountability be stretched to the teachers as well, who have to account for performance in their learning areas. The Constitution demands that the principals be accountable but such accountability should also be extended to teachers who handle their learning areas. This will help them to exercise and internalise this principle and help them when they become principals. This means that the demand for greater accountability requires principals to use outcome based measures and to be instruction orientated.

In this regard Jenkins & Jensen (2010) argue that instructional leadership places greater emphasis on academic standards. It is associated with concepts such as responsibility, answerability and blameworthiness (Heim, 1995). In many cases people relinquish accountability by blaming others for their lack of ability to overcome challenges. Instructional leadership leads communities to take responsibility for what students achieve. They accept responsibility when things go right and do not shift blame to others when things go wrong. They accept responsibility when things go right, as well as when they go wrong. Effective principals accept no excuses for the lack of success in improving student learning (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). They know that principals have to account to the Department of Education, parents and to the outside world about the performance of their learners under all circumstances.

#### *.2.2.1.2 Staff development*

Another principle of school improvement is staff development. Elmore (2005) and Elmore, Ablemann, & Fuhrman, (1996) agree with Heim (1995) that the practice of accountability and capacity building are intertwined. That is, one should follow the other. Staff development should precede accountability rather than follow it because this would not lead to school improvement in accordance with the theory under discussion. Hopkins (2001) argued that principals are key actors in school improvement and that they need to be taught how to become instructional leaders. They need to be prepared for the task because of the changing environment in which their schools operate (Bush, 2003). Schools as organisations need to change in response to the change in their environment so that they become competitive. It is assumed that once principals are taught they would know that staff development always precedes accountability. Learning needs to occur throughout the organisation and principals need to become participants in the learning process in order to shape and encourage the implementation of effective learning models.

Principals need to be capacitated through staff development so that they can assist with the capacity building programmes of other teachers as well. Such development may not be the task of the principal per se, but that of the school management team. In that case, the principals can act as facilitators of such programmes. Since there has been a shift in the role of principal from the so-called 'inspector of teachers' to a 'facilitator', it provides assistance for the professional growth of the staff. That is, the

principals have to be developed so that they can help develop other staff members successfully. This is in line with the main aim of the Constitution of this country which justifies skills development of workers in the workplace. (Constitution of South Africa Act 108 of 1996). There was nothing like staff development in the past (Asmal, 2002).

In this regard Salazaar (2007) insists that principals and teachers need to be professionally developed so that they are capable of improving student performance. School improvement can be brought about by the successful training of principals as instructional leaders as well as educators. Their development can assist or boost learner performance. There is interdependence of staff development and school improvement. As Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994, p. 1) put it, “there is little teacher development and --- school leaders are increasingly searching for practical ways of bringing teacher and school development together”. It is important that principals do not rely only on capacity building that comes from the district office as they can also register for higher qualifications. Thus, staff development becomes the responsibility of the principal. The instructional leadership framework consists of a definition of school mission as well as managing instructional programmes (Hallinger and Murphy, 1986). Therefore, staff development should be programmed into the school’s year plan. The more people are trained the better the outcome (DBE, 2012).

Salazar (2007) argued that school improvement makes teacher development an obvious priority. For innovations, there must be priorities in the same manner as instructional leadership prioritises teaching and learning. The staff development process creates a judgement free process to improve instructional practices in a non-threatening manner (Van der Venter, 2003). Staff development is crucial to assist teachers as some teach learning areas in which they have not specialised. This is evident in rural schools where a teacher shortage is common. Staff development is critical to the advancement of learning and service delivery in specific fields so that better results are achieved (Parajes, 1996). Some schools under-perform because some of their teachers are under-qualified. Bush, Bell & Middlewood (2010) argue that school principals need to understand that their own development is equally significant in raising students’ performance. Instructional

leadership is concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth (Southworth, 2008).

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (1994) viewed staff development as a strategy that should be carried out in schools since it guarantees the quality and the relevance of education in a changing world. Its development assists in school improvement in many ways. It helps principals to develop their pedagogical outlook (Glatter, 1977). Without this development the teaching profession would be seen as foolish, reckless as well as unfair for new incumbents (Watson, 2003). This kind of a situation assists the incumbents - old and new - to cope with their new roles as education is in need of wise and responsible leaders (Pansiri, 2008). The organisation that supports its staff members can better achieve its goals (Senge, 1990) and learning on the job is an excellent method for the development of leadership capacity which may be conducted at the organisation's own educational facilities (Hielgerel , Jackson, Slocum, Staude, Amos & Klopper, 2010). This assists newly appointed principals to cope with their new roles as few of them enter the principalship fully skilled in all elements of instructional leadership.

Even those who enter with substantially developed capacity also need support and can benefit from the staff development exercise (Fink & Resnick, 2010). This means that this development is a key to school improvement. The lack of training of teachers causes them to give less emphasis to instructional practices in their teaching practice (Bush, Bell, & Middlewood, 2010). This does not help school improvement. This is exactly what motivated the researcher to undertake this study of instructional leadership to explore the extent to which this practice is practised by the principals of under-performing schools. Adequate training augurs well for school heads in the smooth running of their schools (Boschee & Decker, 2013). It is essential that principals should be adequately trained. This is because some theories are weak on capacity building and they fall short of such capacity (Elmore, 2004). This training which is a part of instructional leadership assists in school improvement.

The more people are trained the better the outcomes (DBE, 2012). Teachers are exposed to ever changing global technology and the cultural diversity in society as well as in the education sector (Ding, 2001). Further training helps the principals to deal effectively with the complexities of instructional leadership and helps teachers to move away from working in isolation to working together, resulting in self-improvement and growth (Hielgerel et al., 2010). Teachers' skills and abilities to grow and develop are boosted, which in turn helps the teachers to be ready for promotion (ibid, 2010). There is a strong link between learner achievement and staff development (Bell, Bush & Middlewood, 2010). It is important to note that the staff training does not refer to teachers alone; this includes the principal as well since the principal is key to school improvement (Hopkins, 2001).

Staff training should not be a one off activity but should be continuous. This assists the principals to have up-to-date knowledge since the professional world changes rapidly. Instructional leaders take responsibility for the in-service training of teachers within the school through regular observation of teachers and organisational workshops to foster communication between teachers on professional matters and to address weaknesses (Pansiri, 2005).

#### *2.2.1.3 Promoting collaboration within and among schools*

Another element of school improvement is collaboration. Collaboration is defined as a purposeful relationship in which all parties strategically choose to cooperate in order to accomplish a shared outcome (Robinson, 2006 and Arnstein, 1996). Collaborative cultures do not come along by themselves. They are deliberately created in the school by those who are within it. This is evidenced when heads of departments liaise with key individuals when introducing new subjects in the school curriculum (Jansen, 2004). The key players in this regard include subject teachers, HODs and the school management team which includes the principal. They have to ensure that all necessary resources are available for the new learning area, including the number of learners interested in it.

Collaboration can also be exercised when the principal accommodates teachers in making decisions through voting in committees so that the decisions made in the school are not from the principal alone (Glanz, 2006). This requires principals to

have not only leadership skills but also collaboration skills. Instructional leaders make sure that teachers do not work in isolation from one another but they collaborate giving each other help and guidance (Louis et al., 2010). Instructional leaders support collaboration and provide professional development opportunities (Blasé & Blasé, 2002). It is also evident where good relationships exist in a school because it is necessary for the instructional leadership role to be performed (Duke, 2004; Glanz, 2006). In essence collaboration has something in common with instructional leadership which is the development part of teachers of the same school. This shows the relevance of this aspect to the overall study of instructional leadership.

The issue of collaboration serves as a response to individualism or teacher isolation which results in exclusion and less commitment from the teachers who are excluded. Instructional leaders who implement collaborative approaches in their schools are reported to be capable of building trust and rapport with their subordinates (Honig, 2009). It is also evident that where good relationships exist in a school they help in the performance of instructional leadership roles (Duke, 2004; Glanz, 2006).

The DoE (1996) argues that:

- Collaboration drives school improvement.
- The entire team gains insight into what is working and what is not.
- Team members discuss new strategies they can implement in their classrooms to raise student achievements.
- Team members identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning and begin to discuss new strategies.

To the above list Blasé & Blasé (2002) add that this provides an opportunity for teachers' skills and abilities to grow because teachers learn from one another. Team collaboration within the school allows for the sharing of knowledge with regard to the management of resources and how to deal with challenges in this regard (West-Burnham, 2009). Collaboration helps to deal with the complexities of instructional leadership practices (Hielgerel et al., 2010).

Collaboration cannot be an issue that is confined only to teachers of the same school but may also be extended to teachers of nearby schools. This could be part of the solution to problems that are continuously experienced by rural schools which frequently underperform as a result of a shortage of resources. Collaboration can be between the school and nearby tertiary schools. For example, in the context of England there is a strong sense of partnership among schools and tertiary institutions. This network is key to successful teaching and learning (Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2010). Though the issue of collaboration may be easy with teachers of the same school, it may not be so easy with teachers of different schools because of the financial implications involved in moving from one school to another. For example, a highly resourced school may be unwilling to share resources with an under-resourced school.

The coming together of different schools in the same environment does not happen by chance, but is initiated by one of the affected schools. This inter-school collaboration is better than intra-school collaboration given the fact that rural schools are frequently subjected to criticism (Bell & Sigsworth, 1987) for:

- Being unable to provide an adequate curriculum for their pupils,
- Being socially disadvantageous for their children,
- Limiting their opportunities for peer-grouping and social interactions
- Being inefficient.

The coming together of different schools would benefit those schools with fewer resources, such as rural schools, and this would serve well to address the real criticisms about rural schools as indicated in the preceding paragraph. The schools would also add other strategies for school improvement. Bush & Oduro (2006) argue that in many countries in Africa principals manage schools with poor buildings, little or no equipment, untrained teachers, lack of basic facilities, lack of water, power and sanitation, and with learners who are often hungry. These conditions are not conducive to school improvement. Instructional leadership is effective in that it creates opportunities for growth and improvement through sharing of concerns and pooling of ideas in problem resolution (Harris & Spillane, 2008). The common problems of the affected schools would be minimised. Instructional leadership collaborates to solve problems and to give people the opportunity to reflect on their

jobs (The National Association of School Principals, 2001). The schools involved in this cross collaboration would meet on a regular basis to discuss their work and collaborate to solve common problems.

The coming together of the management teams of different schools would result in a positive outcome in the future (Van Niekerk, 2006). This means that there would be a greater improvement. If principals are to take instructional leadership seriously, they have to free themselves of bureaucratic tendencies and move away from isolation to collaboration. This is a constitutional matter. The second theory on which this study is premised is change theory.

### **2.2.2. CHANGE THEORY**

Change is the substitution of one situation for another with the expectation that the new will be different and bring about substantial improvement on the previous one (Fullhan,1991). Educational reforms aim to help schools achieve their goals more effectively by replacing some structures and practices with better ones (Fullhan, 1991). This theory of change focuses mainly on education, especially on the practices of principals as instructional leaders in this era of change in the setting of education. Change is not just about how people act but also how people think (Austin & Currie, 2003). Change is also about a change of mind-set and a change in the ways things have been done in the past. Education operates in the framework of the Constitution and the principals, as government employees, have to toe the line. It is for this reason the change theory is relevant in this study. Principals as instructional leaders are supposed to be innovative and to bring about improvements that aim to enhance learners' academic achievement. In the new dispensation in South Africa principals, as instructional leaders, should not act like their predecessors in the apartheid system.

Traditionally, school principals have been the main decision makers at school level, not only in South Africa but throughout the world. This situation has been evident in a number of countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, (Imber et al., 1990; Griffin, 1995; Johnston, 1995). In the context of South Africa, this is well demonstrated in many ways. The education system in South Africa was structured in a way that meant the school principals were single-handedly

responsible for managing the schools. They took their lead from the Department which made the managerial decisions for schools (DBE, 2013). The running of the schools was vested in the principal alone. There was a top-down relationship between principals and teachers and the principals were taken as supervisors of the curriculum (Gordard et al., 2007).

This view was a reflection of the wider authoritarian ethos of apartheid. Little was known of the developmental approach (Asmal, 2002). The teachers were deprived of the chance to contribute the full range of their talent to the matters that affected their schools (Williams, Harber & Muthuknoshna, 2010). This approach was also unpopular as it was identified as one of the factors which led to underperformance for number of reasons. Collaboration was with structures that were undemocratically elected such as school committees and prefects as well as school inspectors, now called Education Development Officers. The principal alone could decide school policies (DBE, 2012). The expertise of different teachers was not recognised and they were not encouraged to work as a team (Nash & Sproule 2012).

Many of the school heads were not in touch with what was going on in the classroom (Blasé & Blasé, 2002). The principal alone could make the school rules, and was singularly responsible for collection of school fees. The principals were operating under the Bantu Education Act which was based on segregation and male dominance (Lubbe, 1978). Females were not considered for principal positions. Teaching was teacher centred (DuFour, 2002). There was no participation of teachers in decision making processes (Rosenholtz, 1985). Teachers worked in isolation and there was no collaboration. Principals worked in a system that justified the use of corporal punishment. Education is always political (Freire, 1976). It is never neutral and the principals always operate within the framework of the ruling party whether it is authoritarian or democratic.

### **2.2.2.1 Types of change**

Van de Ven & Poole (2005) have noted that in South Africa, like other countries in the world, change has come about either radically or democratically. Thankfully, in South Africa, change came about democratically. That means change anywhere in the world comes in different ways and affects people in different ways. Like school

improvement which is driven by the people in the school, change is also people-driven and affects people in different ways (DBE, 2012). That is, it may bring bitterness to some but sweetness to others. In the ensuing paragraphs differences are drawn between the two types of change. In reality, even in schools, there are two types. Some are high performing schools while others are non-performing ones but the focus of the study will be on the latter.

### **2.2.2.2 Radical change**

Radical change is described as turbulent, upheaval, disturbing, not linear (Greiner, 1998), and affects people like any change. It demands a more innovative responsiveness. It favours an overhaul of the whole system. At some point it uses force (Buhanist, 2011). Despite the destructive nature of radical change, Buhanist (2011) is of the view that radical change is much needed in any organisation. Indeed, it is needed in certain schools which continue to under-perform despite interventions on all fronts, some of which go to the extent of getting a zero percent pass rate at the end of the year. Such schools should rather be closed or merged with other schools or change all of their staff members. However, this should be done as a last resort after thorough consultation which involves people's participation in the decision making process (SASA, 1996). A school can benefit from such representation and high level of participation (Gultig & Butler, 1999; Mabaso & Themane, 2002).

Any forms of interventions that do not invite stakeholder participation are doomed to fail the change process and are not popular as they are destructive in nature (Buhanist, 2011). Furthermore, they do not take into consideration a multitude of stakeholders as they should to be accepted (Goodwin, 2005). A school can benefit from such representation and high level of participation of all stakeholders (Gultig & Butler, 1999; Mabaso and Themane, 2002). Van Tonder (2004) argued that organisations are always looking for better ways of doing things but the researcher thinks radicalism is not one of the better ways of doing things unless all other avenues have been explored and failed. Under radicalism instructional leadership has no role to play because for one to be an instructional leader one has to be free

from bureaucratic principles. Instructional leadership favours consultation, suggestion and feedback (Blasé & Blasé, 2002).

### **2.2.2.3 Democratic change and people centred instructional leadership**

Democratic change is about change that occurs over time, continuously, in a much longer time frame, and is incremental in nature. It is viewed as a long march where gradual modification occurs throughout the organisation (UNESCO, 2005). Levin, (2001) advises that a consultative decision making approach can be useful in moving an organisation forward as it is a useful way to gather information and to promote learning or a simple way of trying to defuse opposition and conflict. This approach is people-centred, strategic and more important than radicalism. It is consultatively planned and systematic. It is a response to a system that was unconstitutional, undemocratic and discriminatory (Van Tonder, 2004). A people centred development approach is embraced as a way to defuse opposition and conflict. This is because the history of public participation in this country was characterised by the poor involvement of the public, especially blacks. In the context of instructional leadership principals should involve all teachers on issues of teaching and learning and teachers themselves must own the programmes that seek to improve quality teaching and learning in schools. Democracy is a system that dispels the notion of hierarchical structures and values. Democracy and bureaucracy are incompatible. Although principals as heads of schools occupy bureaucratic positions in schools they still need to apply democratic principles which allow participation by their subordinate teachers. Democracy requires the principal to be an agent of change. Operating within the confines of democracy instructional leadership is defined as a collegial of the working together of all staff members to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Hopkins, 2001). This affects the manner in which principals work and do things in schools under their charge which is contrary to the traditional approach. The concept of instructional leadership is embedded in a spirit of democracy. It has a positive impact on the process of teaching and learning (Southworth, 2008). It also has its roots embedded in democracy and assisting education. Bureaucracy has been found not to help in education improvement (Blasé, 1990).

Angel (2008) argues that there is a shift in the role of the principal from a so-called inspector of the teacher to a facilitator who provides for the professional growth of his/her staff. Asmal (2002) argues that there is nothing developmental under the old dispensation. Under the new arrangements teachers and principals also play a facilitating role. Attention also shifted from teaching to learning. Teaching is no longer teacher centred but learner centred (Du Four, 2002). This is a change.

This change involves people from the outset (Goodwin, Cummingham & Childrens, 2003). The involvement of people in any decision making became a constitutional imperative. It includes all groups of people including those responsible for the implementation because decisions have to be implemented which needs a group of people. Dimmock (1993) argues that teachers are unlikely to implement decisions that do not serve the interests of those people responsible for putting them into action. He further argues that if they implement the decisions, they do so with less enthusiasm.

The next focus in this theory is on leadership and management and the role of the principal in this regard.

## **2.3 UNDERSTANDING PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

Instructional leadership involves a number of activities by school principals that are aimed at improving teaching and learning in a school.

### **2.3.1 The role of school principals as mentors**

The principal as a leader needs to move beyond the office and to penetrate the walls of classrooms to teach and support teachers through monitoring (Whiteheads Borschee, & Decker, 2013). This is because teaching heads get attuned to student and teacher problems that contribute to school ineffectiveness and lack of direction in student improvement. In that way he/she demonstrates a genuine concern for the profession of teaching and various challenges that are part of it. This also creates an opportunity to demonstrate how things should be done in the classroom. Teaching gives the head the opportunity to articulate the vision of the school, to lead by example, to be more visible both to teachers and the pupils. This contributes strongly

to the culture of collaboration as it enables the head to exercise two functions that have been shown to be important: being a leader of the staff, and at the same time being a member of the staff group (Holly & Southworth, 1989; Southworth, 2008). That impacts on student performance. Instructional leadership creates room for principals to oversee the process of teaching and learning. To achieve this, they have to penetrate the walls of the classrooms and monitor in order to give support. They must also attend departmental meetings and other matters relating to instructional issues which facilitate the provision of quality instruction (Ovando & Ramirez Jr, 2007).

There is also a need for principals to monitor closely all activities in the school (Liethwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). Monitoring is a crucial component of the principal's responsibility. This needs to be done in a non-threatening way. It should not come to teachers as a surprise, so it needs to be programmed in the school year programme. It will ensure that the school's programmes and instructions are implemented with fidelity. Instructional leaders spend most of their time in classrooms to evaluate instructions. They observe what works and what does not (Louis, 2010). This is crucial, especially in this time of change of teaching practice. This helps principals to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher so that development can be focused in the areas of weaknesses. A visible presence of the principal in the school through carrying out class visits provides greater support for teachers and learners. Such an approach would result in the improvement of learner performance. The instructional leader supervises, monitors progress and supports a learning culture through visibility (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

Flath (1989) further suggests that principals who are instructional leaders involve themselves in monitoring lesson plans and evaluating teachers. Instructional leaders also monitor and evaluate teaching and learning to check that high standards are being met (Bush & Glover, 2003). This assists school improvement. The role of a principal as an instructional leader includes assuring that instruction is aligned to state academic content standards, maintaining continuous improvement in the building, designing of instruction for student success, developing partnerships with parents and the community and nurturing a culture where each individual feels valued.

Lunenburg (2010) further noted that principals as instructional leaders should shift their focus of instruction from teaching to learning by encouraging the formation of collaborative structures and processes for teachers to work together to improve instruction, thereby ensuring that professional development is ongoing and focused toward school goals. In so doing principals will be carrying out effectively their tasks of being instructional leaders.

This exercise is a big challenge for rural school principals to implement, as some principals have an equal number of teaching periods as their staff members because of a shortage of staff and have no administrators to assist them with administrative duties. This is highlighted because this situation is also viewed as one of the challenges that are faced by rural principals in carrying out their instructional responsibilities. Some view ignorance as one of causes of instructional challenges. That means some principals fall short of instructional leadership practice due to a lack of knowledge as to what it really entails.

The principals need to monitor learner attendance by regularly checking the attendance registers. This is done to determine which learners are often absent. A learner who is always absent is not only hindering his/her own progress but also that of his/her class and a child cannot hope to progress properly if he/she does not attend school regularly (Mendell, 2012). This does not assist in school improvement. In such a situation, the principal should invite the parent of the affected child to school to account for the regular absence of the learner. The instructional leader monitors continual aggregation as well as disaggregation of student performance data to ensure that they are linked to the school's missions and goals (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003).

Volume number 433 of SASA of 1996 demands all teachers do self-assessment and award points which do not exceed five in terms of the Integrated Quality Measurement System (IQMS) (SASA, 1996). It is then the duty of the principal to monitor and verify points for the self-assessment of all educators in a classroom situation so that any form of weaknesses can be identified and addressed in terms of the school's development plan and to recognise teacher strengths. Effective

instructional leaders need to be resource providers. It is not enough for principals to know the strengths and weaknesses of their staff; they must also recognise teachers' desires to be acknowledged and appreciated for a job well done (Whitaker, 1997). This serves to motivate educators.

Instructional leadership is defined as the ability to employ a range of strategies including encouraging and motivating the educators (Pansiri, 2005 and Pansiri, 2008 ). It serves to improve the performance of every educator. In the case of IQMS teachers have a tendency of awarding each other undeserved points, which the principals become reluctant to change. Therefore, by awarding themselves undeserved points they automatically deny themselves a developmental opportunity which would boost the learner performance.

Also important is monitoring of IQMS evaluation forms by teachers. The principals should not just endorse and sign those evaluation and assessment forms but also ensure first that the scores educators award themselves are deserved. This will create space for the district office to provide support for those educators who have been scored at two or below.

The instructional leader monitors classrooms to verify results (Portin et al., 2009). These results that are verified may be those of self-evaluation to check if the educator deserves them because in many cases the educators give themselves maximum points just for the sake of getting a salary progression while they deserve minimum points. Du Four (2002) argues that the instructional leader needs to have up-to-date knowledge on three areas of education one of which is assessment or self-evaluation. Therefore going to the classroom for verification demonstrates knowledge of self-evaluation on the part of principal. The principals need to know about all forms of assessment because they help to improve student learning (Du Four, 2002). This also includes self-evaluation.

That verification of self-evaluation implies that principals need to have content knowledge of all subjects in order to make them able to judge the teaching they observe as well as the scores they evaluate. Du Four (2002) further argues that some proposed the term "learning leader" over instructional leader. The researcher

concur with Du Four that the instructional leader must have up-to-date knowledge of curriculum, as well as enough content knowledge of all subjects under verification. Instructional leadership focuses on the core activity of the school, that is, teaching and learning. It is about the decisions, strategies and tactics which principals employ to ensure instructional effectiveness in the classroom (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003; Valentine & Prater, 2011; Zepeda, 2013 and Maponya, 2015).

High scoring principals make frequent, short and spontaneous class visits which quickly provide feedback to teachers (Louis et al., 2010). This helps the teacher to know about the strengths as well as weaknesses of the presentation from the perspective of the principal. Instructional leaders need to know what is taking place in the classroom and without this they would be unable to appreciate some of the problems teachers and learners encounter (Whitaker, 1997). This is followed by a dialogue in the office between the teacher and the principal. Mc Quarrie and Wood (1991) suggest that feedback, like class visits, should be given in an objective and non-threatening manner. There is no need for fear because feedback is a form of support to the teacher. That means in the absence of class visits by the principal there is no feedback, no support and no professional growth of the educator.

Instructional leadership demands that the instructional leader spends time in the classroom to observe the process of teaching and learning (Portin et al., 2003). After such observation feedback is given to the teacher in a professional manner in a way that it would be fruitful to both parties. Fullan (1991) argues that if one takes the issue of instructional leadership seriously, one has to free oneself of bureaucracy that favours dominance and weakness in education (Bush, 2003) and, therefore, does not contribute to school improvement. The principal also monitors and evaluates the teaching and learning to check that high standards are being achieved (Leithwood, 1999).

The dialogue describes and analyses what works in the classroom and what does not work and what strategies are needed to achieve success (Hopkins, 2001; Day 2007). This feedback is essential to the educator as all employees want to know what their superiors think about their performance (Greiner, 1972). An effective instructional leader is one who makes suggestions and provides support (Blasé &

Blasé, 2000). The aim of feedback is to support the teacher. Feedback is developmental.

Leadership requires effective diagnosis of problems, followed by the most appropriate response to the issue or situation (Morgan 1997). The principal recognises the strengths of the teacher and in doing so he starts with the strengths and proceeds to the weaknesses and never forgets to acknowledge the strengths that the educator displayed. Given the turbulent environment that schools operate in, leaders need to learn to read the situation and adopt the most appropriate responses (Leithwood, 1999). That means the principal should employ the approach which will best suit him/ her.

Conversely, Leithwood (2002) has come up with another form of feedback that is given to the parents by the principal. This is about the progress of the learner. The instructional leader monitors learner progress and reports to the parents. The principal needs to ensure that the parents receive the progress report of their children at least once per quarter. This would serve to increase the support of the parents to the education of their children (Blasé and Blasé, 2000).

### **2.3.2. Principals as motivational officials**

With the need to ensure that educators are constantly enthusiastic about their work, motivation is an important part of being an instructional leader. All the points raised above have been used as strategies to motivate the educators and learners as well. It is argued that motivated teachers will in turn benefit the organisation and raise the standard of education since they become more productive (Hielgerel et al., 2010). Motivation augurs well for the smooth and effective functioning of the school (Hopkins, 2001). Motivation channels workers' behaviour. Cronje (1990) defines motivation as an inner state of mind that channels a worker's behaviour and energy towards the attainment of aims. Leaders seek to achieve a good outcome by influencing the motivation, the commitment and capabilities of others (Bush & Glover, 2003). One does not motivate only by giving something tangible, but also by words and by walking the talk. The words of Benjamin and Mabey (1993) are true as they argue that the primary motivator for improvement resides with people within the organisation. Changes like school improvement are internally driven (Hielgerell et

al., 2010). The fact that it is internally driven is more motivational than the strategies that are imposed. Imposed strategies are counter-productive and damage motivation. The instructional leader always motivates, collaborates and knows that imposed strategies are bureaucratic (Cotton, 2003).

Principals, teachers, and students who excel in their various learning and teaching activities ought to be awarded prizes in recognition of the good work achieved so that they remain motivated and focused on achieving school goals (Cotton, 2003; Botha, 2004; Gamage et al., 2009; Leithwood, 2009). This is crucial for teachers in rural schools who work under trying conditions such as lack of resources, staff shortage, and lack of infrastructure. An effective instructional leader uses a wide range of strategies to encourage and motivate educators so that quality education is achieved (Pansiri, 2008). This strategy is not only meaningful to educators but also to learners, as it would also make them enthusiastic about their work which serves to improve school performance. This should be planned in advance by the members of the school management team and advanced to the community for adoption. An instructional leader works collaboratively with members of management and educators to devise strategies that will result in a positive outcome in the future. This also shows that in order for one to be an instructional leader one has to be visionary. An instructional leader is one who does things at the right time and knows that to achieve such a goal needs a joint venture by all stakeholders (Charleton, 1990).

An effective leader communicates important events to the parents (DBE, 2012), for example, a prize-giving day when prizes are given to all who have excelled in all learning areas. This should be done in a manner that is fair with no favouritism. The instructional leader is expected to be free of bureaucracy if he/she is serious about instructional leadership (Blasé, 1990). This is because bureaucracy has been shown to weaken education (Bush, 2002). If an element of favouritism should creep into such an occasion it would not achieve its intended outcomes. This would hinder improvement and should be avoided.

Finally, leadership is always associated with the concept of values (Glover, 2003). Southwood (2002) argues that an instructional leader should at all time display

effective instructional leadership behaviour. Such behaviour would produce higher levels of commitment to achieving the goals of the organisation.

### **2.3.3 Building and promoting the culture of teaching and learning**

It is part of the role of a principal to create a school culture that is conducive to teaching and learning (DBE, 2012). In the past the culture of teaching and learning was not conducive to teaching as it favoured isolation and individualism as well as bureaucracy. The role of creating a conducive culture is new and needs to be practiced by all school principals. School culture differs from school to school. For example, in a school where centralisation is practised, the result usually is tension and conflict, which does not contribute to effective teaching and learning. The instructional leader should oppose the top-down authoritative mode of punishment (Hallinger, 2003).

School culture is defined as a set of beliefs and expectations shared by the members of a school who produce norms that powerfully shape the behaviour of individuals in the group (Schwartz & David, 1982). It is a situation where there is peace and tranquillity in the school, everything runs smoothly, everybody arrives on time at school does not leave the school before closing time. Instructional leadership is strongly associated with the concept of values (Glover, 2003). That also includes their behaviours not only in the school but also out of the school. Hallinger & Leithwood (1998) note that the culture and climate shape the attitudes and the behaviour of staff and students towards instruction and learning.

The culture of the school cannot be changed without changing the behaviour of those inside it; that is, the way things are done at school. Hallinger & Murphy (1985) emphasize that the instructional leadership framework consists of three main frameworks, one of which is the creation of a positive school climate. This is part of the role of leadership and management. An instructional leader is also defined as one who defines the school's mission and promotes a positive learning environment (Venter & Kruger, 2003). This role of culture building used to belong to the principals but now it has become a joint venture of the school management team of which the principal is an integral part.

Schools with an accommodating culture share the following features as identified by the DBE (2012) as the following:

- Staff members are encouraged to be creative and innovative
- Individuals are given the responsibility, freedom and independence to take initiatives
- Such schools have clear objectives and performance expectations
- Different structures within the school are encouraged to work together
- Staff and learner behaviour is controlled through direct supervision
- Everybody in the school community is identified with the school as a whole
- Rewards are given fairly, consistently and in line with performance rather than through favouritism.

Hamilton (1987) argues that schools are places where democratic values are advanced and practised. Such values are practised by the instructional leader.

#### **2.3.4 Building community and parental participation**

The vision of the Eastern Cape Department of Education according to the Strategic Plan 2005-2010 upholds the view which reveals that the Department of Education is to transform schools into centres of community life. This means that working together to improve student achievement becomes the routine work of everyone in the school and out of the school. According to the new Constitution the parents are given constitutional responsibility to play a role, even in the appointment of teachers as well as principals. According to Leithwood (2004) a positive culture is one in which teaching and learning pervades the social life and interpersonal relations of those working in the school. The parents take an active part in the creation of the school governing body and in the crafting of the vision and mission statement of the school. That is a new responsibility, but in the process of participating they learn. The instructional leadership framework consists of three main functions one of which is the definition of school mission, managing the instructional programmes and creating a positive school climate. The new dispensation has impacted on the nature and character of public policy implementation where citizens have a right to public participation (SASA, 1996).

Bush & Heystek (2003) defined the stakeholder as comprising of all those people who have a legitimate interest in the effectiveness and success of an institution. All members of the community are expected to love, defend and develop the school.

In 1996 the national government enacted SASA which allows parents to serve on school governing bodies and in activities such as the crafting of the vision and mission of the school, school policies, and in financial structures. They also participate in the appointment of staff members. They need to be kept informed of the progress of their learners as well as school finances. They communicate directly and indirectly with all stakeholders by means of newsletters and meetings that learning is the school's most important mission (Cotton, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005). Supporting the importance of parents in educational programmes are Abdellah and Glory (2010) who assert that getting parents' involvement is one of the qualities of an inspired instructional leader. Parents should support learner performance by ensuring that learners attend the school regularly, that they read their books and assist them with school homework (NASP, 2012).

Though this practice of parent involvement is in place in schools, Smyle (1995) argued that the practice has taken time to filter down to some schools in terms of higher levels of parental involvement and support, and collaborative planning. The reason is that public participation became a constitutional matter post-1994 as opposed to pre-1994 which was characterised by negligible involvement of the public, especially blacks, in all forms of public participation including in structures like SGBs (SASA, 1996).

Because of the above, Government policy dictates that all stakeholders be involved in educational programmes, most of which have been mentioned above. The most important is that of crafting the vision and mission of the school. It is a way of encouraging public participation. A stipulated period is in place for members to serve on the SGB. Membership involves parents with children at that particular school, and is a way of promoting parent involvement in the running of their school. Parents as well as non-governmental organisations are urged by principals and government to support education projects like Saturday classes, appointment of teachers and non-teaching staff members of the school, spring schools, winter schools and many other

school activities. These promote a good relationship between the school and the community, as well as the school and the Department of Education. This working relationship helps to implement departmental circulars and policies within the school because implementation of a policy requires participation of multitudes (SASA, 1996).

The principals should establish and maintain sound interpersonal relations with members of the SGB and community members in working towards achieving common goals for the school.

### **2.3.5 Time management**

Time management in the school context is conceptualised as a set of principles, practices, skills, tools and systems working together to help obtain more value out of time with the aim of improving the quality of the school (Farrar, 2006). Schools have to ensure the optimum use of time and be accountable for the way it is used (Anderson, 2008). For example, in the appointment of new educators principals should conduct an induction for the new appointees as quickly as possible. This helps the newcomers to adjust as soon as possible to the new social and working environment in order to maximise working efficiency in the shortest time (Whitetaker, 2008).

The principal must programme all his activities such as meetings with all stakeholders but most of them should be after school because in those meetings are teachers and learners who have to attend classes and a lot of instructional time can be wasted which may lead to the non-completion of the syllabus which subsequently contributes to the underperformance of learners. It is one of the duties of instructional leadership to support a learning culture through visibility and protecting instructional time (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). Consequently, it becomes crucial for school principals to ensure the maximum utilisation of teaching time and ensure that stakeholder meetings take place after school or on weekends. The principal also has to put in place measures to curb teacher and learner absenteeism, late coming by both teachers and learners, attending meetings during tuition times, attending

memorial services during teaching times, early leaving of educators on pay days, and Fridays as well as on rainy days. This may lead to non-completion of the syllabus which increases the chances of learner underperformance. The principals should ensure that teachers are punctual in attending their teaching periods. This increases the chance for teachers to complete the syllabus in time and that gives learners enough time to do revision work.

### **2.3.6 Inculcating a sense of partnership and collaboration**

An instructional leader is able to promote a sense of partnership between staff in the school and collaboration among schools and other organisations. This partnership can occur for instance between one school and another or between a school and an institution of higher learning. Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2010) highlighted the context of England where such partnerships between schools and institutions of higher learning do occur and work very well. The instructional leader models behaviours of learning and designing programmes of instruction. If this works well for schools in the context of England, it could work for other schools as well. This would assist learners to access information that is not available in their schools.

One of the principles of democracy is designed to transform the country and seeks to improve access to information to improve service delivery. This could benefit rural schools which are always under resourced. Such partnerships may influence teachers to register for higher degrees and diplomas in order to improve their standard of service delivery. Improved qualifications would benefit the school as Brophy and Good (1986) state that students tend to learn more when their teachers have strong formal qualifications and when they use appropriately high quality pedagogical techniques. These high qualifications plus experience of these teachers would contribute to higher levels of delivery of quality education. This is highlighted because it is one of the strategies that can be employed by underperforming schools though it may be a costly exercise for schools in rural areas to visit those institutions of higher learning.

Du Four (2002) argued that one of the reason schools underperform is that many principals do not belong to professional learning communities (PLC). This is defined as a community in which members of different cultural groups come together with the common goal of enhancing the teaching and learning process. These learning communities are comprised of principals, teachers, and the Department of Education as well as non-governmental organisations (Fink, 2010). Cultural differences do not matter among group members but what matters more is the common goal of enhancing teaching and learning. Cultural differences were an issue in the past when there were schools for whites only, blacks only and coloureds only but now this is not an issue since there are multicultural schools and societies. It is true that all education systems function under a constitutional framework, whether it is new or old. This issue also features in this study since it highlights changes from the past as well as those of the present. Therefore professional learning communities are a reflection of the new dispensation.

The communities are led by a Superintendent who leads them in the same way that principals are expected to do in the continuing development of teachers in their schools (Finks, 2010). This serves as in-service training for principals as they are in a position to model all the actions of the Superintendent and apply that experience for the benefit of their schools. Leadership is about modelling best practices and important educational values (Leithwood, 1994). Blasé & Blase (2000) echo the same view when they argue that it is the responsibility of the instructional leader to model effective instructions. It is evident that principals in professional learning communities become learners for improvement of their schools. In this regard, Du Four's view (2002) that an instructional leader is always a learning leader appears to be true. Earley (2004) echoes the same sentiment, as he also argues that instructional leadership is a learning centre leadership which focuses on good teaching and learning.

According to Mendells (2012), Louis et al. (2010), Williams (2008), Portin et al. (2009), Louis, Marks and Kruse (1996) and Darling-Hammond & Youngs (2002), schools with PLCs operate in the following way: they take into consideration a multitude of different stakeholders, they stimulate growth in teachers' instructional skills, support instructional programme coherence and enhance teachers' sense of

responsibility and control over student learning. Attention is also given to individual teacher development. They create support for structural conditions and human and social resources that support the community. These structural conditions include school size and staffing arrangements that facilitate collaboration, additional time for the teacher to plan and opportunities for teacher decision-making. These human and social resources include supportive leadership, policies and practices that create an atmosphere of openness to innovation, feedback on instructional performance and professional development opportunities. Principals respect all the members of the learning organisation without considering their status or position and ensure that teachers do not work in isolation from one another, but collaborate and give each other help and guidance to improve the structural practices.

Networking is also a powerful development for self-managing schools that have received strong endorsement in the international literature (Bush, 2005). Networking is defined as a means to connect, communicate or to form common bonds with people with the same interests (Adler & Kwon, (2002). Networking and coaching are among strategies used in several countries and there is a growing evidence of their effectiveness (Manus, 1990).

Continuous improvement as well as change requires an examination of data (Fullan, 2005). Data gathering is as important as schools' analysis of the results. The idea of networking is best described for self-managing schools as keeping continuous contact with people, reaching out to new people who have skills and knowledge that is in need and recruiting their services so that the organisation can continue to develop in effective ways. Cadwell (1995) and Ndhlovu et al. (2005) identified the following aspects of networking as important bases for practice in self-managing schools:

- Sharing of both human and material resource;
- Enhancing mutual learning;
- Access to variety of support; and
- Relationships with other schools and the community.

Bush and Glover (2002), advocate networking as one of leadership development approaches. It is a favoured mode of leadership learning. It is worthy of note that the

principal is also a part of this leadership structure. Its main advantage is its live learning and strong potential for cross pollination of ideas. It also places a lot of emphasis on cluster learning. An example of networking are home schooling networks which provide feedback to parents on children's progress, regular parent information sessions, school newsletters, class newsletters and reports to parents. Insight into this concept is captured by Potgieter (2007) who articulates that increasing networking is a means to encourage and sustain development, as it provides a catalyst for additional support to the school.

### **2.3.7 Teaching principals**

Many a time principals are not in touch with what is going on at the classroom level and are unable to appreciate some of the problems teachers and students encounter (Harden, 1988). To have credibility as instructional leader, the principal should be a practising teacher. For example, an average of 20% of their time in a week should be spent on teaching (Weidling, 1990). In reality most principals were office based and were non-teaching principals (Coulson, 1986). Now things have changed; the new policy requires principals to be teaching principals (Weidling, 1990). According to Holly and Southwoth (1989), Southworth (1988) and Yeomans (1986), teaching heads benefit in a number of ways, which include articulation of school vision, leading by example, visibility to both teachers and learners, enhanced insights into monitoring or evaluation in the school.

Teaching heads are not a new phenomenon in rural schools, as they are used to being forced to teach. Their situation is different from those in urban schools, which means that the instructional leadership practice that requires a teaching head was already in practice in some rural schools.

In support of above views, Weindling (1990), based on the study carried out in the United Kingdom, advised that the most important thing contributing to improved instructional leadership was the need for all heads to teach for an average of about 20% of their time per week. The schools operate within a legislative framework set down by the national government, provincial government or parliament. This works in line with the new legislative framework to bring about change in the system. This

enables them to keep abreast with current teaching practices in order to effectively guide other teachers accordingly.

Instructional leaders need to work closely with students and develop teaching techniques and methods as a means for understanding teacher perspectives and for establishing a base on which to make curricular decisions (Whitaker, 1997).

### **2.3.8 Focusing on the mission and vision**

It is government's imperative that all schools have their own vision and mission statements. What makes them relevant is that they are expected not to depart from government's (Bush, 2003). They have to relate to the national and provincial aims of the organisation as organisations have to be responsive to the environment in which they operate. School improvement as well as changes are about implementing government imposed strategies (Teddy & Reynold, 2003). An instructional leader is one who defines the school's mission as well as aims, and manages instructional programmes. The instructional programmes are managed by the school management under the auspices of the principal.

The instructional leader frames school goals, and supervises and monitors progress (Hallinger and Murphy, 1984). A vision helps clarify the direction in which an organisation needs to move (Kotter, 2002; 2007). The vision is about the destination of the organisation. A vision is essential to establish the nature as well as direction of change (Bush, 1998). It is proper to know the direction one has to take before the journey is undertaken and at the same time know how to get there. A mission statement defines ways in which the organisation has to achieve the envisaged vision (Manus, 1991). This involves strategies that schools will employ to achieve the aims of the organisation. That is how change proceeds.

These strategies may differ from school to school because the contexts in which the schools operate also differ. It is important that the aims of the organisation be achievable. Change management is defined as the process of continually renewing an organisation's direction (Moran and Humberman, 1994). Nothing is permanent in

this world except change, and it is important that an organisation renews its own vision and mission statement. In reality, school aims which are often encapsulated in a vision or mission statement are inevitably influenced by pressures emanating from the wider educational environment. Therefore, the centrality of a vision is a normative issue for effective leadership.

To fulfil multiple responsibilities requires possessing an inner compass that consistently points towards the future interest of the school, never losing sight of their school's vision, mission and goals. The goals and aims are encapsulated in the vision and mission statements (DBE, 2012). It is important that, in deciding on mission and vision of the school, consultation be held at various levels with all interest groups in order to create a sense of ownership and to secure the sustainability of such a mission. This is not a matter of political principle but rather a matter of best practice in the process of policy making and implementation. An instructional leader consults others and an instructional leader accounts for his/her direction (SASA, 1996; Mendells, 2012).

The mission of a school is decided upon by the principal, deputy principal, heads of department and the school management team comprising educators, learners and the school governing body. A successful principal must have a clear vision that shows how all the components will operate at some point in the future. Successful leaders are expected to engage with staff and other stakeholders to produce higher levels of commitment to achieve the goals of the organisation which in turn are linked to the vision (Leithwood, 2002).

The development of a clear vision and goals for learning is emphasised by principals of high achieving schools (Leithwood & Reich, 2003). The principals of high achieving schools serve as role models for staff and students (Cotton, 2003). These may serve as role models for principals of struggling schools as well. An instructional leader models effective instruction and practices (Blasé & Blasé, 2003). The vision and mission statement is one of the school practices that has been successful in helping all students achieve at a high level. Instructional leadership is critical in the realisation of effective schools (Lashway, 2002).

Once it is right, profound changes begin to take place. It should not be taken literally. It should be viewed as a pledge to ensure the success of each learner (National Review Policy, 2004). The relevance of a vision to a school is well defined by Kotter (2006) who argues that without a sensible vision a transformation effort can easily become a list of confusing and incompatible projects that can take the organisation in the wrong direction. This means that, without a vision, a school will not know the direction in which it is moving. A vision is essential to establish the nature as well as direction of a change (Bush, 1998). A vision needs to have a time frame. As a strategy it needs to be evaluated from time to time.

Central to the vision as a normative issue for effective leadership is the requirement that its meaning be communicated in a way which secures commitment among members of the organisation (Beare et al., 1992). It should not be taken literally as has been suggested in the previous paragraphs. The principals have to use all existing communicating channels to broadcast the vision. These include the school flag, school main entrance, noticeboards, staff functions, school governing body meetings, community meetings, and the front page of the newsletter. Bush & Clover (2003) view it as a dream that is expressed in written form. Kotter (2007) argues that communication is the key factor for successful change as it must come in both words and deeds, especially by those within the school. It is very annoying to find someone who says one thing and does something different altogether. Deeds are more powerful than words.

Communication paves the way for motivation and reflection (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007). An instructional leader motivates and reflects. Various ways should be found to advertise and disseminate the school's vision (DBE, 2012). In formal and informal gatherings, principals should broadcast the vision of their schools once it has been approved by all stakeholders and community members. This paves the way for motivation and reflection (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2006). It is a dream that is expressed in written form (Bush & Clover, 2003). Kotter, (2006) argues that communication is the key factor for a successful change as it comes in both words and deeds. It plays a key role in bringing change (Milis & Mercken, 2002). So, the articulation of a clear vision has the potential to develop schools.

The principals, heads of departments, teaching as well as non-teaching staff members need to learn to “walk the talk”. Instructional leadership calls for authority that is devoid of formality, as it can be practiced by any individual in the institution, such as educators, heads of department, and even learners on the student representative council (Bell, Bush & Middlewood, 2010). This researcher further states that nothing undermines change more than behaviour by individuals who do things that are inconsistent with their words. Principals support instructional activities and programmes by modelling expected behaviours, and participating in staff development (Marzano et al., 2005). Successful transformation involves a large number of people as the process unfolds. The more people are involved, the better the outcome.

Before the mission statement is decided, the principal needs to have a vision for the school (van Deventer & Kruger, 2003) and this vision needs to have a time frame. The vision can be defined as the goals regarding what the principals wants the schools to achieve. A vision is imperative in that it keeps the principals focused on the direction in which they wish to steer the organisation (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007). This helps to guide people through major changes. The principal helps to spell out the vision and get all others on board with it (Louis, 2010). Others refer to the structures already mentioned in the opening line of 2.3.5. School staff should not take it literally. It should be viewed as a pledge to ensure the success of each student (National Review Policy, 2004). If vision and mission were not taken literally there would be no school that underperforms because all the multitude of role players as identified in PLC would have played their roles meaningfully. All schools, even rural ones, could easily achieve a better pass rate.

### **2.3.9 Focus on planning**

For organisations to remain in business they have to change, so that they keep in balance with the environment (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). Planning is an important part of the change process (DBE, 2012). It is a way of responding to accelerated change. Harper (2004: p. 327) argues that “organisations without the ability to respond successfully to the accelerating changes would have no future”. In order to be meaningful, the changes should be controlled, directed and managed. Change is most likely to be chaotic when unplanned but most likely to be orderly when planned

(Hielgerell et al., 2010). A primary objective at this stage is to convince members of the organisation of the need for change as well as the purpose of change (Dawson, 2003). Since an instructional leader consults, he/she would start with what is known as a School Review (DBE, 2012). This review is also referred to as a SWOT analysis which is an acronym for Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the organisation. These affect teachers in a positive or negative manner. The review process becomes a collective effort of the School Management Team (SMT). Hielgerell et al. (2010) highlight eight basic components of a planned change process. These are:

First, planning is about scanning the environment for information that may signal the need for change (DBE, 2012), because change needs to be focused on the present day-to-day situation and improve the future. It is not enough for principals to know the strengths as well as the weaknesses of their staff members. They must also recognise teachers' desires to be acknowledged for a job well done. This has already been discussed under the school improvement plan. It is the function of the principal and staff to make this form of assessment and to be as honest as possible, as the purpose is to bring about improvement.

Planning also includes identifying the performance gap, which is the difference between what the organisation wants to do and what it actually does (Hiegerell et al., 2010). By determining the performance gap, managers provide clear answers to questions such as: "What is wrong?" That is self-criticism which serves to address the needs of internal and external customers (Moran & Humberman, 1994). Useful and properly used data can inform staff about the gap between the desired outcomes and the reality of results (Fullhan, 2005). Instructional leaders make use of data to assess the situation (Bush, 2002). Successful change requires an inner shift in people's values, attitudes and behaviours, which means basic ways of thinking (Gavin, 1993; Stark, 1999). Managing people in change includes working with attitudes, beliefs and thoughts (Austin & Currie, 2003). Principals must monitor how the curriculum is taught and participate in how it is developed.

The duty of a school management team is to work closely with SGB members (DBE, 2012). For example, if in the plan it has been decided that afternoon classes or

weekend classes are needed in order to improve learner performance, then they have to ask themselves if they are doing that or not. If the answer is no, they have to take action. This suggests that the school should have an implementation committee to check implementation of decisions made by the school. Senior (2002) presents change as either discontinuous, or smooth or bumpy. Fulhan (1990) argues that people learn best through doing, reflection, inquiry, evidence more doing, and so on.

Planning also requires leaders to be able to identify organisational problems. This means that leadership requires effective diagnosis of problems, followed by adopting the most appropriate response to the issue or situation (Morgan, 1997). The aim is to identify the nature and extent of problems in order to push for solutions (Hielgerell et al., 2010). A further point is to react as appropriate rather than relying on a standard leadership model (Morgan, 1997). Change should be a problem solving process (agents in the organisation). Change agents are groups of individuals who act as catalysts (Jick Lewin, 1951). It is a matter of moving from one state to another; from the problem state to the solved state (ibid). For change to be effective, it requires the presence of change, 1993). Change requires gathering and assessing data to determine needs and to monitor instruction (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003).

The researchers claim that resistance to change will not completely disappear whether the change is radical or incremental. Change management includes results of the change process as well as the management of resistance to change. It is often a natural reaction to change (Stark, 1999) as it affects people personally. Kotter and Schlesinger (2008), Fernandez (1988), and Margolis and McCabe (1988) all underline the importance of managing resistance. It can affect the organisation in a negative manner. The instructional leader should collaborate to solve problems which also may affect the organisation in a negative manner (The National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2002). The instructional leader needs to know what is going on in the classroom. It is crucial that the instructional leader know the real causes of their problem so that their change efforts would focus rather than being broad-brush (Milis & Mercken, 2002). Without this knowledge they are unable to appreciate some of the problems teachers and students encounter. It will not only be sufficient for the principal to know the source of resistance or problem encountered by teachers and learners but they must also have capacity to deal with

it effectively not as an individual but as a collective. Management should be aware of the factor of human resistance (Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008).

## **2.4 EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

For too long leadership has remained isolated (Spillane, 2004). This means that means it was not a focus of running an organisation and the concentration was on one aspect, namely, management. With the current arrangement these two concepts were brought together as one. Leadership is when one or two persons engage each with other in such a way that leaders and followers help and elevate each other to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978). Management on the other hand means an attainment of organisational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organising, staffing, directing and controlling organisational resource (Bush, 2007). The current form of leadership covers a wider scope than the traditional one. This is highlighted by this type of leadership which has affected the role of the principal who is also a part of the leadership and management structure. Leadership and management work together on specific skills such as the development and empowerment of stakeholders, the decision making process, and building partnerships with communities. This also includes building collaboration within the school and beyond the school, as well as partnerships with tertiary institutions as is highlighted under school improvement theory. This means that, for change to occur, these two have to be compatible. Such compatibility is well demonstrated below. Leaders set the course for the organisation; managers make sure the course is followed.

- Leaders make strategic plans; managers design operational system for carrying out the plans.
- Leaders stimulate and inspire; managers use their interpersonal influence and authority to translate that energy into productive work (Luois & Miles, 1990).

For leaders and managers to perform their functions efficiently, they need to be trained so that they are able to train other staff members to be instructional leaders as well. In that situation where all teachers are trained as leaders the principal emerges as the master instructional leader. That means they have capacity to share the responsibilities with other staff members. They have a great deal in common

(Kotter, 1990) but differ in their primary functions as has been indicated in the preceding paragraph by Louis and Miles (1990). Instructional leadership as well as leadership and management have a common goal, namely, the advancement of teaching and learning. Leadership and management are not practiced by the principal alone as it was before the change began or the advent of democracy. It can be practised by any individual within the institution (Pansiri, 2008). It is expected that principals have leadership as well as management skills which help them to be effective leaders and managers which makes a difference to the school and learning outcomes. This also includes learners and, as some are members of Representative Councils, they can share their responsibilities with some of their fellow students.

Principals who are instructional leaders know that they cannot go it alone in implementing instructional practices in schools under their charge (Firestone & Riehl, 2010). There is a need for principals to work collaboratively with members of the management team and educators to devise strategies that will result in positive outcomes in future (Van Niekerk, 2006). School management teams know that, even if they are entrusted with a responsibility by the chief instructional leader, they have a responsibility to account to the person who delegated. The element of accountability weaves through the structures of democracy like a thread. Even those teachers who have been delegated by the SMT have to account to the upper structure and so on. Part of the role of leadership and management is to create a school culture that is conducive to teaching and learning. A change of culture encourages people in the same school to change their mind set, attitudes as well as their behaviour. Therefore, it cannot be a task for one individual. These two are embedded in the principal as instructional leader who is expected to have abilities to deal with leadership as well as management issues in his/her school. Fulhan (1991) argues that today's school leaders seek a balance in their roles as manager and instructional leader. Leadership and management have great things in common such as working with people. This also features in the theory of change, as leadership and management deal with people though they differ in their primary function (Kotter, 1990).

Lubbe (1978) argues that in the past the focus was on management only, but with the new dispensation these two have merged into one which has expanded the role

of the principal. Wise principals know that the goals as well as the roles of principals cannot be played by a single individual but by joint participation with the management team. Bush (2002) showed this link between the two by arguing that leadership links to the values of the organisation while management relates to implementation of those values. Instructional leadership upholds social values and behaviour (Leithwood, 2004).

It is crucial that all the values of the organisation be implemented because in certain instances leadership comes up with sound values which exist only on paper but are hard to implement. Therefore, an implementation committee needs to be established in order to monitor implementation. Leaders also monitor and evaluate the situation to ensure that high standards are achieved. This is the role of the school implementation committee. Such an implementation structure should not be imposed (Dimmock, 1993).

The traditional theories of leadership are premised on one leader with emphasis vested in formal positions that were historically assigned to males (Mujs & Harris, 2003). It became unpopular because it lacked development and became a fault finding mission (Shen & Hsien, 1999). It was a reflection of the past, therefore, it was not effective. It was adopted for all events and was not responsive to changing environments. Effective leadership is totally different from the former. This type of leadership is not restricted to the designated leaders (Northouse, 2010). Bart and Manus (2010) explain this further when they mention that it is not about position or power in the organisational hierarchy but about personal power that enables one to create one's own future as well as the quality of one's life. This means that one does not have to be a designated leader such as head of a division or a deputy principal to be in leadership.

Leadership is a function not a position (Brophy & Good, 1986). For example, in rural schools there are neither heads of departments nor deputy principals but the leaders in these schools are senior teachers. It is a collective that is drawn from a variety of sources within the school (Tucker & Tshannen-Moran, 2002). With instructional leadership the principal or designated leaders do not go alone but work with other staff members. Instructional leadership is defined as the collegial practice of working

together of all staff members to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Hopkins, 2001; Day et al., 2007). This is an important structure in a school because it is often linked with school improvement (Bush, 1999), i.e. the schools that wish to improve their learner performance. For leaders to bring about improvement in their schools they need to be trained. Instructional leaders should take major responsibilities for in-service training of teachers within the school through regular observation of teachers and through organisational workshops to foster communication between teachers on professional matters and to address weaknesses (Pansiri, 2008).

The purpose of leadership development is to produce better, more effective leaders. No single leadership approach can be adopted for all events (Leithwood, 1999). Leadership development is associated with school improvement (Bush, 2002). It is the kind of leadership that would ensure that no staff members work in isolation from one another but they collaborate with each other, giving each other help and guidance to improve instructional practices (Mendells, 2012).

Cotton (2003) views effective leadership as leadership that is visionary which consults other leaders, plans in advance and is confident to accomplish the vision and goals for their organisation. Vision is regarded as an essential component of effective leadership, which is a key to continuous improvement. In this regard Reason and Reason (2007) argue that principals as key instructional leaders share their leadership with teachers to promote reflection and collaborative investigation. Leadership practices influence organisational and structural improvement (Harris & Hallinger, 2008). It is important for principals to employ participative management.

Participative management is a democratic process which relies on individuals or groups with the power of voice in decision making, sharing information, internal control and leadership (Banai & Katsounotos, 1993). This approach was denied in the past, especially to the black community. There was no sharing of power or distribution of power. The new dispensation has impacted on the nature and character of public policy implementation. Participative management implies “sharing” (Jagnnamadham, 1979). An analysis of participative management as a concept is incomplete without reference to Freire (1972, p. 42), who warns that:

“Attempts to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into a pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated”.

People learn best through doing, reflection, inquiry, evidence more doing and so on (Elmore, 2004). The black community was denied that chance. Under the current management system principals as key instructional leaders share their leadership with their teachers to promote reflection to improve teaching and learning (Reason and Reason, 2007).

Imposed imperatives do not serve the interests of the people responsible for putting them in action (Dimmock, 1993). The instructional leadership framework consists of three main frameworks one of which is the creation of a positive school climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Therefore, implementation of imperatives that do not serve the interests of the people does not contribute to effective teaching and learning. The new policy requires school leaders to work in democratic participatory ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery. Therefore it needs at all costs be avoided. At times continues to exist in spite of the reforms undertaken.

This means that principals do not go it alone in making decisions, as they tap the expertise of other stakeholders including teachers and parents (Leithwood et al., 2004). Principals who tap into the expertise of teachers throughout the process of transforming their schools and increasing their focus on learning are more successful. This ensures efficient and effective delivery (DBE, 2012). It may help the principals to focus on other instructional activities that they cannot attend to because of a lack of time and an overload of work. Gultig & Buttler (1999) argue that schools benefit from representation and high levels of participation of all stakeholders. They get to know each other better. This assists the principals because their role is more demanding now than ever before (Goodwin, Cunningham & Childrens, 2003). The instructional leader is time conscious. As Hallinger and Murphy argue, the instructional leader protects instructional time. At least with participative management there are timely submissions to the office as well as earlier completion of the school syllabus, with enough time for revision.

The participative management benefits the school in a number of ways: it increases school effectiveness, bonds the staff together, distributes the burdens and roles of leadership and distributes leadership among staff members (Cadwee & Spinks, 1992).

Cadwell & Spinks (1992) point out that:

- This “synergy of communities” is the key to attainment of educational goals.
- This shift from isolation to participation reflects a change for the better in the way things are done.
- Schools benefit from representation and high levels of participation of all stakeholders.
- It increases the stakeholders’ sense of belonging, motivation, commitment and quality of decision making (Smylie, 1995).
- People are more likely to accept and implement the decisions in which they have participated (Savery et al., 1992).

The participation, especially of teachers, is crucial as van der Westhuizen (1997) found: if teachers are not actually given opportunity to participate in management activities, they do not commit themselves to curriculum and management issues. Schools should be places where democratic values are practiced and advanced (Hamilton, 1987). If teachers do not own innovations but are simply required to implement externally imposed changes, they are likely to do so without enthusiasm, leading to possible failure (Bush, 2003).

With the advent of democracy, Hoadley and Ward (2009) assert that the post-apartheid educational reforms have initiated new roles for principals. Principals work in a societal context that is more dynamic and complex than in the past (Crow, 2006). For a job to be properly done, there is a need for a clear job description which would assist the incumbent to do the job in a proper and efficient manner (Van der Waldt & DuToit, 2005). It can also be used to monitor performance (Langli, 1997).

## **2.5 THE ROLE OF APPRAISAL**

Once educators are evaluated on their performance in the classroom, they will be aware of their strengths and potential weaknesses. This would enable them to take the necessary steps to work on their development in the identified areas of weaknesses. Bush, Bell & Middlewood (2010) argued that principals need to know that their development is important in raising student performance. Therefore it is a well-developed principal that easily identifies weak areas of their educators which could be easily addressed during staff development sessions. “Data obtained is used to reinforce strengths and identify deficiencies” (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007, p. 249). Data management is essential to school improvement (Wallace Perspective Report, 2010).

Principals are encouraged to adopt a developmental approach to the appraisal process as opposed to a judgemental or critical approach which would discourage educators. A further argument is that performance appraisals could be unsuccessful for a number of reasons such as these: a lack of integration, challenges pertaining to the design, failure to efficiently implement such procedures, incompetence on the part of principals or other respective heads, lack of rewards for work that is well done, communication problems and language barriers, lack of proper motivation for staff and either a lack of evaluation or the skills thereof to provide an evaluation that is a true indication of the teacher’s performance ([http://www. Regenesys.com](http://www.Regenesys.com)).

The key to performance appraisal is to develop the educator as a professional. It creates opportunities for growth for teachers. In addition, it promotes improvement in instruction. Teacher appraisal is another means of identifying the in-service needs of teachers and supporting their professional development. It is therefore an inevitable part of the school’s professional development system (Bollington et al., 1990). It also improves learner performance.

## **2.6 CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

Despite the good results from instructional leadership practice as a part of change, various researchers identify certain areas that hinder proper implementation of the

process. These critics include Stronge (1988), Tsudu and Taylor (1995) and Steyn & van Niekerk (2006). Factors identified are:

- It is a kind of leadership which is seldom practised in schools due to ignorance. Whitehead and Decker (2013) claim that there is a growing need for principals to be instructional leaders.
- Implementation problems that arise where the institution fails to formulate or to have a shared vision or clear goals and objectives.
- Poor implementation plans which fail to define tasks and responsibilities of the organisation in the school.
- Inadequate training of instructional leaders and teachers in handling instructional leadership roles.
- Lack of a strong manageable instructional leader to shepherd the development of the whole school as on many occasions, heads are appointed to headship without any preparation before they take charge of their new roles (Tsudu & Taylor, 1995).
- Disruptive student behaviour. This is when students organise strikes or boycotts in order to force authorities to accommodate their views.
- Administrative tasks where heads have several roles to play which include instructional leadership roles.
- Teachers' negative behaviour such as absenteeism or lack of adequate preparation of lessons, refusal of teachers to be class visited or come to school under the influence of liquor or the dissatisfaction of teachers with unfavourable working conditions or poor remuneration.
- Lack of recognition and incentives for teachers to develop their teaching skills and improve their effectiveness.

These factors are mentioned because they help the researcher in answering some research questions about the challenges encountered by the principals in their practices of instructional leadership. In acknowledging the existence of these challenges Whitehead and Decker urge principals to be instructional leaders in the strongest possible terms. That is, they must try despite these barriers as well as those of teacher shortages which prevent them from carrying out their instructional responsibilities.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

The school improvement theories, theory of change as well as instructional leadership theory are interconnected to bring about much needed change and school improvements. That capability of interconnectedness has been clearly demonstrated in this study. None of the theories is superior or inferior to the other. Each theory has been equally distributed throughout the whole study. In all these theories the relevance of instructional leadership has been demonstrated. Though the study is based on theories, practice is based in schools and instructional leadership practices. This study has also shown that the education system is really not a neutral phenomenon; it always aligns itself with the ruling party in a country and its policies. This has been demonstrated in the school improvement theory as well as in the theory of change.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research methodology and design that were used in this study. It discusses the research approach (qualitative approach), its relevance to the study and data collection methods. The discussion also touches on ethical issues, issues of trustworthiness, data analysis and sampling. According to Polit and Hungler (2004) methodology refers to ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data. Methodology decisions depend on the nature of the research questions. Methodology in research can be considered to be the theory of correct scientific decisions (Mourton & Marais, 1996). The research methodology section provides an overview of the research design, the research instruments, participants and procedures that are to be utilised in the investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Mason (2002) described research methodology as referring to the type of data collection, either qualitative or quantitative, the type of sampling, people, choice of setting, and data collection methods that are to be employed such as observation or interview schedules, audio-visual devices and so on.

Research methodology also includes choices regarding validity and ethical considerations. There are numerous research methods that can be used when researching scientific subjects. Among them, McMillan & Schumacher (2010) identify four categories of research design and methodologies. These are qualitative, quantitative, mixed method and the analytic approach. Each is distinct from each other. A multi-method approach is important in establishing confidence in the findings as a coronary validity in the study (Cohen et al., 2000 & Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Despite the above suggestion, Bazeley (2009) is of the view that only elements of qualitative and quantitative methodologies can be combined at all stages of a research project.

In this study only the qualitative approach was utilised because of the attributes it possesses.

### **3.2 EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

Since this study was premised on the qualitative research approach, interpretivism was a relevant paradigm. This paradigm was relevant because it is about epistemology that advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand human roles as social actors and the meaning the humans give these roles. Paradigms are conceptions or beliefs of different individuals about social reality which are motivated by the varied social background of the world around them. These are strategies to search for truth (Cohen, Manison, & Morrison, 2011). They are categorised into three paradigms, namely, the interpretive paradigm, the positivist paradigm and the critical paradigm.

Interpretivists argue that humans have subjective perceptions and subjective realities of their environment that influence human behaviour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This paradigm therefore was relevant as it sought to investigate the views of SMT members on the role of principals as instructional leaders. There are specific characteristics that made interpretivism more relevant to this study. These are that qualitative methodology is dialectic and interpretive and that during the interaction between the researcher and research participants the world is discovered and interpreted by means of the qualitative method (De Vos, 2002 and Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It allows the researcher to use the language that is preferred by the participants so as to enhance their participation. The use of language has a potential to either inhibit or enhance the participation (Arnst, 1996).

This paradigm posits that there are multiple realities. For understanding a particular social reality, people must engage with and actively participate in actions that underpin their individual experiences resulting from their involvement in the object of inquiry (Locke, 2001). This also exhibits concern for individuals or participants. This enables the researcher to comprehend the subjective world of human experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Quantitative research focuses on subjective information such as feelings, experiences or opinions and data that cannot be scientifically quantified (Johnson, 2005). The researcher tries to examine the experiences from the participants' point of view (Holloway, 2005).

Interpretivists are interested in finding out more about the social world and creation of meaning from various societal contexts (Mason, 2002). The main focus of qualitative research is the creation of meaning and a deep sense of understanding from the data that is generated (Ibid). The interpretive paradigm was relevant in this study as this study explored the views of SMT members on the role of principals as instructional leaders. Interpretivists believe that reality is socially constructed as people's experiences occur within social, cultural, historical or personal contexts (Hennink et al., 2011). They believe that what the reader gets is not what the researcher sees or has had direct experience of, but what the reader gets is what the researcher sees or explains and interprets of the subject (May, 2002 and Fick, 2006).

### **3.3 THE RELEVANCE OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH TO THE STUDY**

Qualitative research is an approach in which researchers are concerned with understanding the meaning which people attach to their experiences or phenomena within their society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This study moved within the parameters of qualitative research in that it sought to investigate the views of SMTs on the roles of school principals of the two selected underperforming schools in the King William's Town Education District. Qualitative research is a means to understanding human emotions such as rejections, pain, caring, powerlessness, anger and effort. Since human emotions are difficult to quantify, qualitative research appears to be a more effective method of investigating emotional responses than quantitative research.

In addition, qualitative research focuses on understanding the whole which is consistent with the philosophy of instructional practices. Abstract thinking processes are used to develop research findings from which meaning and theoretical implications can be derived. Qualitative research has commitment to viewing events, actions, norms, values, etc. from the perspectives of the people who are being studied (Bryman, 1988; Holloway & Wheeler, 2010 and White, 2015). The researcher was located outside of the schools that were under the microscope at the time of conducting such a research, that the researcher was able to coordinate data

collection from the variety of sources necessary and still meet the deadline for the study.

This approach allows the participants to talk for themselves. The nature of the study is highly contextualised which means that it deals with events taking place within a specific area in a specific time with specific group of people (Yin, 2003). MacMillan & Schumacher (2010) are of the view that qualitative research makes use of data that use words as opposed to numbers as in the quantitative approach. Qualitative data collection methods are flexible and unstructured, capturing verbatim reports or observable characteristics and yielding data that usually do not take numerical words. Mason (2002) argued that the main focus of the qualitative approach is the creation of meaning and a deep sense of understanding from the data that is generated. The most commonly used sources of data collection are people, organisation, texts, settings and environments, objects, artifacts, media products, events and happenings. Such sources include principals of the affected schools as well as senior teachers of those particular schools. If the research were based in township schools or urban schools, the choice would be deputy principals and head of divisions in the place of senior teachers because in township and urban schools there is always a better enrolment of learners which would make it possible for such schools to have deputy principals or heads of divisions.

It is argued that qualitative research is considered to be an integral contributory factor to theory and practice. It is strongly asserted that qualitative research leads to an accumulation of knowledge and wisdom through examining evidence that has been collected over several years. Furthermore, qualitative studies focus on enhancing the participants' personal understanding of their practice so that they can reflect on and improve that practice which the researcher is interested in (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The areas of interest are practices of principals as instructional leaders in their respective schools. He further states that this approach is the opposite of quantitative research because the latter is in favour of objectivity and statistics as well as quantifiable information. It uses language and observation. It means that in qualitative research the participants are observed by the researcher usually in their

natural setting and the language used is that which is employed by the participant (Johnson, 2005; Holloway & Wheeler, 2010; and White, 2015).

### **3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN - CASE STUDY**

A case study is a research in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon within a specified space of time and using a variety of data collection procedures to gain detailed information about such an entity or phenomenon (Holloway and Wheeler, 2010 and White, 2015). Burns and Grove (2003) define a research design as a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. Research design is a plan that describes how, when and where data will be collected and analysed (Parahoo, 1997). The case study is a strategy in which a researcher investigates a single phenomenon within its real context, restrained by time and activity, and collects detailed information (Stake, 2000; Simsek & Yildirim, 2008). Bassey (2003) defines a case study as the collection of sufficient data which enables the researcher to explore significant features of the case, create plausible interpretations, construct a worthwhile argument or story, relate the argument or story to existing literature and convey the findings to an interested audience (Richie et al., 2013).

The case study was used to collect data on instructional leadership practices in the schools under investigation. A case study sheds the light on the phenomenon of interest to the researcher which may be a process, event or person. Qualitative research implies an emphasis on the process and meaning rather than focusing on quality and frequency (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It produces a detailed description, to develop an explanation and evaluate the phenomenon being studied. The phenomenon being studied is the underperformance of Grade 12 learners in external assessments.

Qualitative research focuses on describing and understanding the phenomenon. The case study provides an in-depth analysis of such a phenomenon (Richie et al., 2013). One cannot provide an in-depth analysis of the problem without understanding and describing it. The case study assists in recognising the why and how of a complex situation. This enables the researcher to answer some research questions as detailed in chapter two. The participants in the research are observed

by the researcher usually in their natural setting (Johnson, 2005). Qualitative researchers observe certain actions and events as they happen without interfering by just becoming participant observers (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2001). It provides a model of inquiry for in-depth examination of a phenomenon. That means the researcher is actively involved in the research.

A case study is useful when the opportunity to learn is of primary importance. Qualitative studies focus on enhancing the participants' personal understanding of their practice so that they can reflect on and improve that practice which the researcher is interested in (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010). A case study emphasises and focuses attention on what can be learned from different cases (Anderson, 2008). In qualitative research information is received from the participants (Thomas, 2011).

The purpose of a case study researcher wanted to have a clearer understanding of the thought process and feelings of the participants with regards to how principals perform their roles as instructional leaders. Since this study sought to dig deeper into the role of principals as instructional leaders a case study research design was relevant. Qualitative research focuses on subjective information such as feelings, experiences or opinions and data that cannot be scientifically quantified (Johnson, 2005 and Richie et al., 2013). A case study enables the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis. This improves the quality of the data and research findings (Paton, 1990). A case study assists in recognising the why and how of a complex situation. This aids in answering research questions as stated in chapter two. Case studies are descriptive in nature and provide rich longitudinal information about individuals or particular situations and are capable of generating a hypothesis which can be tested by other research methods (Terreblache & Durrheim, 1999; de Vos et al., 2002 and de Vos et al., 2005). A case study investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context (Yin, 2003 and Marsh, 2002 ).

## **3.5 SAMPLING**

### **3.5.1 Defining sampling**

Gray (2004) defines a sample as a set of individuals selected from a parent population for a research study. The sample is a subset of the population selected to participate in a research study. Sampling defines the selected groups of elements that are individuals, groups or organisations. In qualitative research, the sample size is typically small and can still provide in-depth information (Gall et al., 2007; Patton, 2002). Repetition from here Polit et al. (2001) define a sample as a proportion of a population. The sample is chosen from the study of population that is commonly referred to as the “target population or accessible population” (Burns & groove, 2003 p. 233; Polit & Hungler, 2004, p. 290). This means that it allows easy contact of the researcher with the participants. Babble (2001) suggests that one has to work with a sample rather than the full population.

Polit et al. (2001) define a sample as a proportion of a population. A sample allows easy contact of the researcher with the participants. The target population in this study were the principals of underperforming rural secondary schools located in the King William’s Education District as well as senior SMT members and senior teachers in the SMT. Sampling enables one to identify, choose, and gain access to relevant data resources from which data will be generated using the chosen method (Mason, 2002). A sample is always taken from a population for examination. The sampling procedure is that it has the least bias and offers the most general ability (Uma, 2003).

Sampling is about deciding the place or site and the respondent or person from whom the data will be collected (Punch, 2006). The process of selecting a particular sample for particular entities in a study is called sampling (Ormrod & Leedy, 2005). Flick (2002) noted that the issue of sampling is about making a decision on which persons to focus on when a researcher makes an inquiry. In an interview study for instance the researcher should decide which persons to interview. Samples are chosen because researchers want to have findings in a particular situation at a particular time and apply these findings more generally. This study used purposive sampling.

### **3.5.2 Purposive sampling**

#### *3.5.2.1 Defining purposive sampling*

In purposive sampling, participants or other units are selected, as the name implies, for a particular purpose. For instance, we might choose people who we have decided are 'typical' of a group or those who represent diverse perspectives on an issue (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005 and Denscombe, 2015). This research used purposive sampling because the selected schools and the selected participants had a specific purpose regarding the roles of principals as instructional leaders. Furthermore, these schools were selected because they have been reported to be underperforming schools in the district so it was relevant for the research to select these schools as his topic focused on the instructional role of principals in underperforming schools. Schwardt (2001) and Patton (2015) noted that in purposive sampling the units or characters are not chosen for their representativeness but for their relevance to the research question, analytical framework and explanations given in the research. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select the research site and the participants.

#### *3.5.2.2 Sampling the participants and research sites*

Eight participants were purposively selected from two underperforming schools. Apart from their relevance to the study these two are in rural areas and are in close proximity which would assist financially when data was collected.

Of the eight participants four were selected from each school. They were two school principals, (coded as Principal 1 and Principal 2), two SMT members (one from each school coded as SMT1 and SMT2) and two senior teachers serving in the SMT (two from each school, coded ST1, ST2, ST3 and ST4). The participants were of different ages, experiences and gender so as to get various views from the participants.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection is the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research sub-problems, using methods such as interviews, participants' observation, focus group discussion, narrative and case histories (Burns & Grove, 2003).

This empirical phase which involves the actual collection of data is followed by the preparation for data analysis (Polit & Hungler, 2004). Data collection begins with the researcher deciding from where and from whom data will be collected (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). The researcher was the main tool for data collection. The data collection was reflective to give the participants the opportunity to express their experience reflectively. In this study the collection of raw data from participants took place in stages. The researcher used faced-to-face semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

### **3.6.1 Face-to face interviews**

Interviewing refers to structured or unstructured verbal communication between the researcher and the participants. Qualitative research adopts a person-centred and holistic perspective. It develops an understanding of people's opinions about their lives and the lives of others. It also helps the researcher to generate an in-depth account that presents a lively picture of participants' reality (Holloway, 2005). In addition to the above, the qualitative researcher is expected to be a good listener, non-judgemental, friendly, honest and flexible. The topic and interview could open the wounds of the participants' experiences, and thus should be approached with an empath understanding (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996).

In this study, data were gathered by interviewing research participants in a quiet environment, free from disturbances, and where they felt safe. Interviews were held in a specific room within the health services department or at their respective homes. In interviews, the interviewer should strive to establish a cordial atmosphere so that interviewees will feel secure and have the confidence to speak freely (De Vos, 2002). To ensure a cordial atmosphere the interviewees were made comfortable by being given a cup of tea and engaged in a general discussion before the interview. Interviews were conducted individually for about 30 to 40 minutes.

A semi-structured interview refers to a method of engaging participants in a conversation through a series of predetermined questions (Benyard et al, 2000). The researcher prepared a semi-structured interview schedule which was conducted with the principals, SMT members and senior teachers individually. The advantage, suggested by Thomas (2011), of an interview is that the researcher is able rephrase

the question and ask for additional information to clarify the response. The ultimate goal with these interviews was to obtain information on how participants made meaning from their views of instructional leadership in their schools. Qualitative research appears to be a more effective method of investigating emotional responses than quantitative research (Brink & Wood, 1998).

### **3.6.2 Document analysis**

Document analysis involves obtaining data from existing documents without having to question people through interviews, questionnaires or observe their behaviour (Johnson, 2005). Documentary materials are considered a legitimate source of data, provided that they are treated as 'produced', and their context is taken into consideration (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997; Silverman, 1997). Qualitative research is a form of content analysis covering a spectrum of approaches ranging from empirical-phenomenological psychology to hermeneutical-phenomenology psychology, depending on the data source (Van der Waal, 1999). Documents are tangible materials in which facts or ideas have been recorded. It may be a logbook, monitoring time table, staff minutes book, analysis book of Grade 12 year end results, school policies, newspapers, government policy records, leaflets and minutes of meetings. Documents can reveal a great deal about the people or organisations that produced them and the social context in which they emerged. Qualitative research impacts on greater attention to nuances, interdependences, idiosyncrasies, complexities and context (Paton, 1990).

Some documents are part of the public domain and are freely accessible, whereas others may be classified, confidential, or unavailable to public access. The researcher was allowed free access to those documents which may be classified as confidential or unavailable to the public domain. Knowledge recorded and stored in the school in the form of documents is a ready source of information. Document analysis describes the analysis of any written material, whether old or new, in a printed, handwritten or electronic format that contains information about the phenomenon that is being researched (Hemming et al., 2004).

The researcher analysed documentary materials and tried to identify salient issues related to instructional leadership practices within various school documents. A

qualitative researcher may use a document or report review as a source of information (Schumacher, 2010). The researcher used Neuman (2006) as a guide. He directed the researcher to classified examples of documents such as school pictures, school newsletters, policy manuals, strategic plans and official documents. Official documents used in the study included copies of the agenda of meetings, minutes and supervision instruments which were made available to the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Relevant documents were analysed on an on-going basis. Throughout the data collection period, the researcher covered a diverse range of documents. Qualitative research is an inquiry into an identified problem based on testing a theory, measured with numbers, and analysed using statistical techniques (Creswell, 1994). These included the schools' vision and mission statements, staff development policies, minutes of staff meetings, subject meetings, letters that are sent to parents and other partners in the community, the school improvement plans and the school logbooks. This method of data collection is important because it provides valuable information that would not be accessible by any other means.

The researcher found document analysis to be beneficial for the study because it added information that provided a clearer picture of how things were done at the school and the way in which needs were identified and met. Combining document analysis with interviews ensured a more comprehensive picture (Patton, 2002) of underperforming schools in different contexts.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is a process where the researcher engages and interrogates his/her data to select, sort, transform and organise it in an attempt to see patterns, identify themes, develop explanations and critiques in the construction of the phenomenon that will suggest conclusions and support decision-making (Creswell, 2015). The data from semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis were simultaneously analysed.

### **3.7.1 Analysis of data from the semi-structured interviews**

The interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed into a dataset (see Appendix A and Appendix B). The first step as suggested by Hardy and Bryman (2004) was to read through the dataset and categorise it into themes which were in line with research questions. The data that was irrelevant was removed and relevant data arranged into themes.

### **3.7.2 Analysing data from the documentary analysis**

In analysing the data from the document analysis the researcher read through each documentary analysis tool and transcribed the data into themes based on the research questions. The documents that were analysed were the support and monitoring tools, minutes and attendance registers. These data were used to augment the data from the face to face interviews.

## **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

To conform to the ethical requirements of the study the researcher adhered to specific ethical considerations. Kumar (2005) noted that ethics are the accepted principles of the code of conduct for a particular profession to accommodate the ever changing ethos, values, needs and expectations of that particular profession. Leedy & Ormrod (2005) further noted that ethical issues involve looking into the implication of focusing on human beings in the research or investigation. Research, like any other profession, has its principles. The following ethical issues were considered.

### **3.8.1 Access to research sites**

Before the researcher assumed the research work, permission for entry was sought from the schools to be researched. De Vos (2002), argues that the researcher seeks information to conduct a research in a particular community, that is, the community or the place where the research is to be undertaken. This is the opportunity the researcher will use to provide the objectives of the research to the participants and how data will be used. Hennink et al. (2011) argue that seeking local endorsement from local people involves providing information about research objectives. These were obligations the researcher willingly pursued.

In the same vein, after having been granted permission to conduct the research by the Faculty of Education (see Appendix C) permission was sought from the Provincial Department of Education to conduct a study in the selected schools in the in King William's Town District of Education (see Appendix E) which was granted by the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) (see Appendix F). The researcher also sought ethical clearance from the University of Fort Hare and an ethical clearance certificate was issued (see Appendix D).

### **3.8.2 Informed consent**

This was done by writing to individual participants requesting interviews with them. Informed consent involves seeking permission from participants to participate in the study (Kumar, 2005). In all letters written to the participants, the purpose of the research was stated. During the interview stage the researcher took informed consent forms which also explained the purpose of the study. In the consent form the format of the interview was outlined and consent to tape record the interviews was sought from the participants. When they agreed to participate, they signed the consent forms. Although the researcher had in mind to use two schools, the researcher requested permission from principals of three schools. The reason was that if one of the schools declined the request to participate in the study, the researcher would be safe with the other two schools. If all agreed to participate, the third one would be kept as a reserve in case either of the two withdrew during the course of the interviewing process. The principals were not told about these arrangements as well as other participants.

This was done in order to obtain ethical clearance to carry out the intended research. The University Fort Hare requires that all researchers submit a clearance certificate before carrying out intended research.

### **3.8.3 Confidentiality and anonymity**

Confidentiality involves the manner in which the information is safe-guarded and the identity of the people and the institutions involved are protected (Punch, 2006). "Sharing information about a respondent with others for purposes other than research is unethical" (Kumar, 2005 p. 214). This means therefore that the

researcher collects or identifies a person's responses and does not essentially do so publicly.

In this research the interviewees were assured that their names and the names of their districts and schools would not be publicised. Fictitious names were used to prevent anyone from discerning the real person or schools which are referred to in the study.

Confidentiality and anonymity considerations are not only concerned with participants in the research, but also concerned with the responsibility of the researcher with regards to publicising the information. May (2002) noted that, even in those cases where the subjects say they don't care about either, or they request their names be made public in the report, both anonymity and confidentiality must not be compromised. If they are compromised, then there exists the potential for increased feelings of internal conflict about what the proper position of responsibility should be. Such conflict can lead to confusing issues of loyalty to the data themselves. This has been called the problem of invoking one's values into the research process.

In this study issues of confidentiality were carefully considered. Codes or keys were used to ensure maximum confidentiality levels. Coding is a process for both categorizing qualitative data and for describing the implications on details of these categories (William, 2006). For example, instead of naming schools, they were labelled as School A and School B. The participants from the schools were coded as Principal 1, SMT1, ST1 and ST2 and participants from School B were coded as Principal 1, SMT2, ST3 and ST4. This means that the researcher was always careful about disclosing information that might embarrass the participants.

Kumar (2005) states that the dissemination of information must not endanger lives or jobs. This is in keeping with the ethical principle of confidentiality. In a qualitative research the researcher has to do everything possible to protect both humans and animals used in the research. Repetition starts here in qualitative research where anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed and participants should not be deceived in anyway (Mac Millan & Schumacher, 2010).

In addition William (2006) argues that coding is a process for both categorizing qualitative data and for describing the implication and details of these categories. The field researcher typically takes extensive field notes which are subsequently coded and analysed in a variety of ways (ibid). Coolocan (2002 p. 249) argues that “it is easy to think of ethics being important in natural sciences, such as medicine, but even in the social sciences, it is difficult to conduct research without running into ethical arguments”. Given this reality, a number of different ethical issues were considered of critical importance. In this regard, was the promise of confidentiality and anonymity.

### **3.9 DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS**

This section outlines how issues of data trustworthiness and credibility were handled. It considers how other writers consider trustworthiness.

In qualitative research trustworthiness of the study can be regarded as the degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage (Cohen et al., 2001). Thus the issue of trustworthiness was considered from the onset so as to enable the researcher to proceed ethically. To ensure trustworthiness of the study the researcher accurately observed, described, and explained the phenomena in a neutral way without personal interests, prejudices, and emotional preferences having any influence (Cohen et al., 2001). Quality research is trustworthy when it accurately represents the experiences of the study participants. Trustworthiness establishes the validity and reliability of qualitative research (Talbot, 1995). Qualitative research is a means to understand human emotions such as rejection, pain, caring, powerlessness anger and effort.

In qualitative research, a member check - also known as informant feedback - was used where a report was given to participants in order to check the authenticity of the outcome of any data transcription. In my study, member checking followed after the researcher had completed transcribing the interview data collected. This process provided an opportunity to correct errors and challenges that might have been perceived as wrong interpretations.

The researcher undertook also to build a foundation for trustworthiness and quality of the study. This followed Guba (1981) and Lincoln & Guba's (1985) facets of trustworthiness such as the following:

- *Credibility*: Assuring the truth value of the findings and accommodating the need to understand a complex phenomenon in a holistic manner.
- *Transferability*: Addressing the applicability of the findings but acknowledging that the research focus is the idiographic (i.e. the particulars of the case) rather than the nomothetic (i.e. law-like generalizations).
- *Dependability*: Assuring the methods and methodological choices of the emergent research design will be documented for external inspection. This is to ensure that what has been written in the report is a reflection of what transpired during the interview.
- *Confirmability*: Assuring the neutrality of the researcher to establish the degree to which the findings of an inquiry are a function solely of the respondents and conditions of the inquiry and not of biases, motivations, interests, perspectives and so on of the inquirer.

### **3.10 TRIANGULATION**

Triangulation of different data sources is important in case study analysis (Creswell, 1998). Triangulation is defined as “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour” (Cohen & Manion 1994 p. 233). Thus the trustworthiness of information collected is triangulated by taking several measures on the same subject to ensure that the information from various sources is cross-tabulated and yields the same research findings (Paton, 2002).

Triangulation in a qualitative research attempts to map out more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour (Cohen & Manion, 2003) by studying it from more than one standpoint. Triangulation increases the validity of the study (Bell, 1995).

By including more than one standpoint regarding the topic under study, the validity of such a study is enhanced. The researcher, therefore, compared different sources,

situations and methods to see if there were recurring patterns (Mac Millan & Schumacher, 1993). At times it happens that people see things from the same perspective but on certain occasions view them from different perspectives.

Triangulation therefore remained a strategy to ensure trustworthiness in this study and to demonstrate a clear awareness of the ethical issues. Data collected from two was triangulated in order to limit the problems of construct validity within the study (Yin, 2003). The methods used were interviews and document analysis. These methods have already been explained in the preceding paragraphs.

### **3.11 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the research designs, methods of data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations. The research methods and design that were employed in this study were effective in that all of them provided answers to the research questions that were asked in chapter one. These methods also helped the researcher gather the information that was relevant to the title of this study. The use of different methods helped the researcher to have an insight into how school principals performed their roles as instructional leaders.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the data collected from the two selected senior secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District. As indicated in chapter one, this study sought to investigate the role played by school principals in executing their instructional leadership roles. Secondary school principals, members of the School Management Teams as well as senior teachers were interviewed in order to produce a balanced presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. This chapter is divided into two sections, which are biographic information and a section covering the experiences of the participants on the sites with the following themes: biographic information and the perceptions of participants of the role of principals as instructional leaders. The data from different data collection tools are simultaneously presented and analysed.

#### 4.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

As this study involved a number of participants (8) on the role of principals as instructional leaders, it was necessary for their biographic information to be outlined. This sub-section is meant to give an idea of the gender and age cohort of participants. It must be noted that the study did not seek the views of a particular gender and age of teachers, but of school managers regardless of gender and age. However, it was important for the researcher to present the data that categorised the participants according to their gender and age. The aim was to get information from various groups and both genders.

##### 4.2.1 Distribution of participants by gender

**Table 1 Gender distribution**

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
School A	2	2
School B	1	3
Total	3	5

It can be noted from the above table that there was a considerable gender imbalance among participants in the study: three males and five females. However, although School A was small, the gender of officials in management positions was 50-50 whereas in School B there were more females than males. Both principals from School A and School B were female. This was an indication that these schools considered females for school management positions. It is to be noted that the focus of the study was not schools that were managed by the females but it happened that they met the criterion set for the study, which is underperformance of rural schools in King William's Town District of Education. In terms of age all participants were between the ages of 35 and 55. Principal 1 from School A was 55 years old and Principal 2 from School B was 47 years old. This was an indication that in these schools management positions were occupied by officials in their middle-age.

#### 4.2.2 Distribution of participants by experience

The researcher also sought data about the teaching experience of the participants. Table 2 below provides this information.

**Table 2: Participants' teaching experience**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Total teaching experience (years)</b>	<b>Current position(years)</b>
Principal 1	20	6
Principal 2	30	12
ST 1	15	8
ST 2	21	10
ST 3	25	9
ST 4	20	7
SMT 1	18	11
SMT 2	30	17

It can be noted from the above table that all participants had reasonable teaching experience. This means that their input to this study was informed by their vast experience in the teaching profession. All the participants had more than five years' experience in school management positions.

### **4.3 VIEWS OF SCHOOL MANAGERS ON THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

This section focuses on presentation of data about how school managers viewed the role of school principals as instructional leaders. Before enquiring about their views on the role of school principals as instructional leaders, it was necessary to interrogate their understanding of instructional leadership. Different participants gave different views about the roles of the principals as instructional leaders and their understanding of instructional leadership. This section is divided into three sub themes which are: understanding instructional leadership, supporting quality teaching and learning in schools and parental involvement in their children's education.

#### **4.3.1 Understanding principals' instructional leadership roles**

The section presents data about how participants viewed the role of principals as instructional leaders. When asked about her understanding of the principals' leadership roles, Principal 2 from School B commented that:

*“Instructional leadership refers leading the curriculum. You must know what you must do as a leader. It involves giving instructions to teachers as to how teaching and learning should occur effectively. It is therefore about ensuring quality teaching and learning in a school by a school principal. He does not always give instructions he also guide teachers”.*

This principal indicated that instructional leadership is about leading the curriculum implementation by teachers in the classroom. Although she referred to instructional leadership as giving instructions to teachers about what must be taught, she also indicated that instructional leadership involves guiding teachers in their work. This was an indication that this principal understood the role that should be played by a principal in ensuring quality teaching and learning in a school. When asked about how she ensures quality teaching and learning in her school, Principal 1 on the other hand noted that she controls teaching and learning by using the period register which has all the details of lessons, and this helps him/her to know if the teacher does attend the class and teach. She reported that the period register is signed by the teacher. In analysing the period register the researcher found out that teachers really do sign their period registers whenever they attend classes. This may be an

indication that in this school control and management of teaching and learning was practiced.

SMT 1 from School A further commented that:

*“An instructional leader gives instructions as to how teaching and teaching and learning process should occur in a school. An instructional leader must instruct teachers to sign their attendance registers. The principal must remind teachers when they have forgotten to sign the attendance register. He must ensure that teachers instruct learners to be in class during tuition time. He should make sure that learners sign the attendance register”.*

It can be noted from SMT 1's point of view that instructional leadership is about ensuring effective teaching and learning in schools. However, the element of control featured strongly in this participant's point of view. This assertion was contrary to what was noted by SMT 2 from School B who viewed instructional leadership as having to do with general strategic planning by principals in schools. SMT 2's point of view was not really connected to the teaching and learning process that takes place in the school. Although SMT 1's understanding of instructional leadership was based on the notion of ensuring quality teaching and learning, he referred to instructional leadership as mainly concerned with instructions. There was nothing that referred to planning together to foster teaching and learning. This means that according to SMT 1's point of view instructional leadership was just about giving instructions to subordinate teachers about what needs to be done in the school in terms of teaching and learning.

Although the majority of the participants noted that instructional leadership involves giving instructions to teachers about how teaching and learning should occur, there was little that the researcher could find from the documents (instruction books and minute books) he analysed that showed detailed written instructions about teaching and learning. This may suggest that the principal of this school instructed her teachers verbally in most cases and perhaps the details of what needs to be done when it comes to teaching and learning were also verbally communicated.

He also reported that the role of the principal is to maintain order in the school by ensuring that there is no anarchy. However, he did not indicate if the maintenance of the order in his school was the collective effort of all the teachers. He remarked that the principal ensures that learners and teachers are punctual and that all learners stay at school until the end of the school day. This might be an indication that in this school the culture and sense of responsibility among learners and teachers was lacking as according to SMT 1's report the principal was more like policing teachers and learners. This may also be an indication that the principal of this school attributed punctuality to effective teaching and learning.

SMT 1 also reported that in his school teaching and learning is also monitored by SMT members who conduct class visits. Although SMT 1 reported that class visits featured prominently in the instructional leadership roles of his principal, there was no indication that these class visits were planned jointly by the SMT and the teachers to be visited, and also there was no indication that after these class visits there were post-class visit sessions where teachers were given feedback about their performance in their classrooms.

All participants reported that principals are the officials who are delegated by the Department of Education to give instructions in schools. They noted that the DoE expects principals to give instructions which include, among other things, the signing of the attendance register by teachers, that is, their time in and time out, remaining at school for seven hours, avoiding the use of corporal punishment, preparing thoroughly for lessons, avoiding vulgar language, and signing learner attendance registers. They also referred to instructional leadership as mentoring and monitoring teachers in their teaching at classroom level. However, the participants did not explain how mentoring of teachers at classroom level was done other than just mentioning the fact that principals conducted class visits. This may be an indication that even the class visits that were conducted by school principals and SMT members were actually meant to find fault with the teachers.

When asked about his understanding of instructional leadership ST1 from School 1 commented that:

*“Principal should communicate first. A decision should be made jointly. He should delegate duties to the staff members, in other words he or she should be democratic. He should delegate to the staff members”.*

It can be noted from ST 1's point of view that communication is crucial to principals if they want to achieve effective teaching and learning in their schools. This means that ST 1 viewed principals as officials who must delegate duties with the aim to effectively manage teaching and learning. When asked about the instructional role of his principal, he noted that the principal should make sure that punctuality is observed, meetings are scheduled and school committees are functional. This implied that in his school punctuality was a problem, there was poor planning, and committees did not function properly. Although he mentioned the fact that his principal should make sure punctuality is observed, he did not say anything about how his principal should ensure punctuality.

ST2 from School B commented:

*“The principal's instructional leadership role I think it means it is the way the principals or managers delegate duties to their subordinates”.*

From ST2's point of view, instructional leadership was about how school principals delegate their responsibilities. Although this participant mentioned this important aspect (delegation) of instructional leadership, his comment was based on the general leadership of a school principal without specifically referring to teaching and learning. In some cases this delegation was written, as was shown by an instructional book that the researcher analysed in School B. A letter from a principal in School B also to SMT 2 requesting her to be in charge of the school when the principal was away also confirms the fact that some of the delegation instructions were written.

When asked about how she performs her instructional leadership roles as a school principal, Principal 1 from School A reported that:

*“First I delegate tasks to educators and then give guidance to teachers so that the teaching and learning may run smoothly. I monitor teaching and learning, protecting teaching time. If I can't able to monitor, I do delegate monitoring to the SMT or where there is no SMT I delegate to a teacher that I think may be able perform the task”.*

It can be noted from the above excerpt that Principal 1 viewed delegation as something that is needed to assist her in carrying out her roles as instructional leader and that the protection of teaching time was important in achieving good academic results for the school. It can also be noted from her point of view that she regards all teachers in her school as leaders in their own right as she could even delegate tasks to junior teachers in cases where there was no SMT member. Although Principal 1 understood her role as instructional leader as involving delegation of duties to other School Management Team members, she did not mention any involvement of SMT members in planning the management of teaching and learning in her school. Furthermore, she did not explain how she guides her teachers in their work. This might also be an indication that in this school planning for teaching and learning at school management level was lacking.

When asked about her understanding of her role as an instructional leader Principal 2 from School B reported that:

*“Instructional leadership is the function of the principal. The principal is not only an operations leader but also as a strategic leader. The principal works with the staff and leads the group”.*

It can be noted from the above excerpt that Principal 2 understood the role of a principal as being that of an operations and strategic leader. Her understanding of instructional leadership did not include monitoring and mentoring teachers to effectively carry out their teaching and learning responsibilities.

SMT 2 from School B on the other hand was able to at least relate to the teaching and learning process in his understanding of the role of a principal as instructional leader. When asked about the role of a principal as an instructional leader, SMT 2 responded that:

*“I think principal’s instructional leadership role entails all the work which is done by the principal of a school to make sure that the teachers and students work to get good results at the end of the year, the learning and teaching is effectively happening at school because that is what is happening at school and he must also*

*make sure that his relations with the environment or community in which he is in, the departmental people are close to him to be able to help him”.*

From SMT 2's point of view instructional leadership consists of all the efforts by a school principal, teachers and learners to ensure the prevalence of quality teaching and learning in a school. According to him all that is done at school under the leadership of a principal is to the benefit of teaching and learning so that learners get good results at the end of the year.

When asked about what her understanding of instructional leadership is, SMT 2 from School B commented that the principal should deal with strategic issues of the school and with her team drive the school in the right direction. According to SMT 2, instructional leadership is not only a position but also a function of a principal. Although she attributed instructional leadership to a position, there was nothing in her comment that linked instructional leadership with teaching and learning. This means that to her all principals are supposed to be instructional leaders. In her comment there was nothing that indicated that this participant understands instructional leadership as having something to do with leading the teaching and learning process in school. In essence, SMT 2 regarded instructional leadership as the function of the collective with the aim of achieving something greater for the school and the principal is part of such a leadership structure which operates with staff members and plans together with them. The aim is to perform those duties that cannot be performed by the principal alone. This also ensures that the objectives of the school cannot be achieved by the effort of individuals but by joint operation of those in the work place which are the teachers in the context of the study. This also helps in the smooth running of the school.

He further commented:

*“The principal delegates the work to the teachers. Duties like drawing up of time tables, food roster for learners, monitoring of attendance registers etc. She makes sure that every teacher honours his/her period in class, so as to ensure good results at the end of the year”.*

ST2 from School A commented that:

*“The principal monitors all school activities in the school such as teacher attendances, absenteeism, neatness inside the classrooms, that the school starts on time , that the teachers attend their periods in class, that teachers attend to their teaching periods and teach and that the learners come to school and learn”.*

It can be noted from this excerpt that Principal 2 from School B performs her instructional leadership by monitoring and controlling teachers' work. There was no indication that Principal 2 was concerned with the process of teaching and learning other than just levelling the grounds for the effective teaching and learning process. She was actually more concerned with the input and output than focusing much on the process of teaching and learning itself. This means that the core business of teaching and learning which occurs at classroom level was left to be dealt with by teachers in their respective classrooms without any form of support from the principal. In cases where a principal visited a classroom, there were no details of what she did in terms of supporting educators. Even the supervision book that the researcher analysed did not show how the principal assists her teachers in their classrooms.

Although the participants indicated that the principals' role as instructional leaders was about giving instructions to teachers, it emerged that some teachers disobey some of the instructions given by principals. Principal 1 from School A noted that:

*“Some of teachers refuse to obey the instructions and their refusal affects the delivery of the core business which is effective teaching and learning”.*

This excerpt shows that in School A the issue of insubordination by some teachers was a challenge. This might be an indication that the principal of this school does not include teachers in the formulation of procedures of how teaching and learning should be implemented. It can also be an indication that these teachers were actually resisting the top-down approach that seemed to be imposed on them by their school principal.

The data also showed that both in School A and School B instructional leadership involved giving instructions to learners as well. Principal 2 from School B noted that:

*“It is also worthy to note the learners are the recipients of instructions some of which include but not limited to; early arrival at school, attend school regularly, be in class all the time, avoid abusive language and the like”.*

Principal 2’s point of view confirms the point already indicated above that the majority of the participants viewed instructional leadership as principals giving instruction. This means that even this principal does not view instructional leadership as planning, organising, mentoring and monitoring the teaching and learning process in her school.

It is also noteworthy that although there are instructions that are common to teachers and learners, there are also instructions that are applicable to learners only, such as participating in the formation of the student representative council, keeping the time register for the teachers to sign as an indication that they have attended a particular period and so on. Even in cases where instructions were directed to learners, there was no indication that learners are taken on board in terms of what the principal was expecting from them. This may be an indication that in this school instructions were imposed by the school principal with limited inclusion, if any, of learners in the planning of their academic work.

When asked about their views on the role of principals as instructional leaders, some participants reported that the role of a principal as instructional leader also includes communicating with parents about what needs to be done in school by their children. For instance SMT 2 reported that instructions are also given to parents. She noted that the principal of her school communicates with the parents of the learners in situations such as school meetings and school governing body meetings. She also reported that parents are summoned by the school principal to account for the misbehaviour of their children. This was confirmed by ST1 from School A that the role of a principal as an instructional leader is also about communicating with parents about school activities and their children’s behaviour.

SMT1 from School A indicated that:

*“Instructional leader gives guidance to teachers. To me it means that a principal needs to be an experienced person who knows how to impart knowledge to others including teachers so that he may guide others instead of misguiding them”.*

In SMT 1’s view, instructional leadership is about guiding teachers in their work and that for a principal to be able to assist teachers he/she needs to be somebody who has sound experience of teaching.

ST1 commented thus:

*“The duties I can count amongst them is conducting of prayers .That is Principal’s instruction doing the tuition time table, monitoring cleanliness at school but it does not mean that he physically monitors cleanliness but he delegates duties to teachers to monitor the cleanliness, monitoring the duties of the non-teaching staff because we have cleaners at school, we have a care taker at school. He sees to it that their duties are done, conducting of staff and parents meeting, monitoring punctuality, monitoring absenteeism of both teachers and learners and also class registers, the completion of assessment plans also its exam components”.*

It can be noted from ST1’s point of view that the role of a principal as an instructional leader includes other things such as monitoring cleanliness and of non-teaching staff work which are peripheral to the actual teaching and learning process. ST 1 reported that, when there is going to be a meeting in his school, his school principal would write the communication in the instruction book and each teacher is required to sign next to it in the instruction book. However, there was nothing relating to teaching and learning that these instructions carried. This might be an indication that this senior teacher does not clearly understand instructional leadership.

ST 3 from School B commented:

*“Instructional leadership is the way the principal delegates their instructional leadership roles”.*

In ST 3's view instructional leadership was about the ability by a school principal to delegate his responsibilities. SMT 1 on the other hand commented that principals must encourage their teachers to commit to team work and that his principal was trying to instil a sense of team work among her teachers.

ST 4 from School B commented that:

*“I think the principal's instructional leadership role entails all the work which is done by the principal of a school to make sure that the teachers and students work to get good results at the end of the year, the learning and teaching is effectively happening at school because that is what is happening at school and he must also make sure that his relations with the environment or community in which he is in, the departmental people are close to him to be able to help him”.*

This means that ST 4 viewed the instructional leadership role of a principal as all the effort by the school principal aiming to achieve good learner results and that includes keeping the good relations with the school community intact.

#### **4.3.2 Supporting quality teaching and learning in schools**

The section presents an account of the participants on how school principals supported quality teaching and learning in the two selected underperforming secondary schools. The majority of the participants reported that their school principals support teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers and learners are punctual and attend school regularly. They also noted that it is the duty of the school principal to garner teaching resources for efficient teaching and learning.

For instance, SMT 2 from School B when asked about how his principal supports quality teaching and learning replied:

*“He supports teaching and learning by trying to get teaching and learning resources like study guides for teachers”.*

It can be noted that, in SMT 2's view, his school principal ensures quality teaching and learning by organising resources for her teachers. Principal 2 from School B on the other hand reported that:

*“It is also my duty to lead and support all staff members and manage them”.*

Although Principal 2 from School B indicated that she executes her instructional leadership roles by supporting teachers in their work, she did not unpack how she supported her teachers. However, she showed an understanding that instructional leadership involves support. She also noted that she acts as a caretaker of the

Department of Education in the school to support and manage staff members and represents the Department in all respects. Although Principal 2 indicated that her duty is to support teachers in executing their teaching responsibilities, she did not give details of what she did to support her teachers.

SMT 1 from School A indicated that instructional leadership is about a collective effort under the leadership of a principal who would, time and again, issue instructions to the group. He noted that in his school the principal involved other SMT members in mentoring and supporting teachers. ST 2 from School B indicated that an instructional leader is not only a leader; she is also a manager, administrator and accounting officer of the school and she alone indicated that the job of a principal is too broad to be carried out by one person. She further noted that her school principal manages curriculum implementation by seeing to it that teachers attend their classes and learners are in class all the time.

Principal 2 further commented that:

*“I prepare an academic improvement plan and report to the Department of Education about the implementation of this academic improvement plan. I implement and monitor curriculum activities in the school. I lead, manage, and support staff members and manage the use of teaching and learning support material. I work with my staff and we work as a team. I also go to class to individual teachers”.*

It can be noted from the above excerpt that Principal 2 was very passionate about the academic achievement of the learners in her school as according to her there were systems in place to implement and support the implementation of academic activities.

When asked about how she ensures quality teaching and learning in her school, Principal 2 reported that:

*“We start from the previous year’s results. We analyse the results and prepare subject improvement plans which are submitted to The SMT. I collect all these to prepare the school academic plan. It is also my duty to ensure that the teachers implement their plans. I also monitor if educational and curriculum activities are implemented and I do this by using the supervision plan and moderation plans”.*

It can be noted from the above excerpt that in this school the principal was good in planning for the implementation of the school curriculum and that she had a way of monitoring if these plans were implemented by teachers in her school. She also reported that she does this to ensure that a high performance culture and a dedicated team is in place. She noted that a principal should lead by example and show teachers the way by also mastering his/her subject, and be first to submit and honour the due dates. She also noted that if you are a school principal you have to be a talented but flexible person who can deal effectively with different challenges that constantly surface in school.

She further noted that:

*“I am the person who is responsible for efficient operations. I manage time and make sure that the syllabus is completed on time and make sure that each teacher has the necessary subject policy document. I make sure that learner marks are recorded correctly”.*

It can be noted from the above quotation that Principal 2 regarded time management as one aspect of ensuring quality teaching and learning in her school and that the availability of teaching and learning resources can assist teachers in carrying out their teaching responsibilities.

When asked about how her school principal supports quality teaching and learning, ST 2 from School A indicated that:

*“She uses instructions but sometimes she does not do follow ups. Sometimes she does not know even what she wants”.*

It can be noted from ST 2's point of view that the principal in her school executes her instructional responsibilities by just giving instructions to the teachers without even involving them. It can also be noted from this comment that this participant viewed her principal as somebody who does not understand her role in terms of leading and managing teaching and learning. It can be an indication that this participant realises that instructions are an integral part of teaching and learning but that does not mean the end of the game to the instructor as well as the instructed. To ST 2 it means the instructor must make time to follow up when the task is completed. This means the instructor should not be complacent only with carrying out of the task by the trustee

but should see to it that the task is done correctly and efficiently. The view of the ST2 was that this practice should be on a continuous basis rather than sporadic or irregular. However, the supervision book that the researcher analysed showed that the principal made follow ups only when issued instructions. Perhaps the claim referred to by the ST 2 was a single incident, when the principal could not follow up.

When asked about what role does her principal play in ensuring quality teaching and learning, ST2 reported:

*“She looks at the school attendance of teachers and learners and those teachers who do not come to school are made to sign leave forms, and parents of learners who do not attend school regularly are called”.*

This was an indication that in ensuring quality teaching and learning the principal in this school used control measures rather than supporting ways to ensure that teaching and learning occur effectively. She further reported that in ensuring quality teaching and learning her principal makes sure that there is a teacher in every classroom, that is, teachers are always in class teaching. ST 2 on the other hand reported that her principal delegates management responsibilities to the SMT and the entire staff and this is done in a meeting situation. This was an indication that SMT members have different views when it comes to how their principal performed instructional responsibilities. SMT2 reported that her principal delegate tasks to teachers by considering their ability. Principal 1 indicated that she supports teaching and learning by making sure that teachers are doing their work. She commented:

*“I do class visits where I monitor teachers. But class visits are not done to criticise the teachers but to encourage proper teaching and learning. They are meant to measure the quality of work given to learners and to monitor if the teachers are assessing learners. I use lesson attendance registers to check if the teachers are doing their work. These period attendance registers are given to class reps for them to confirm teachers’ attendance by signing these attendance registers”.*

It can be noted from the above quote that Principal 1 viewed supporting teaching and learning as checking the work of teachers. This was actually some form of policing teachers. SMT 1 from the same school confirmed that her school principal did support teaching and learning through class visits. He commented that:

*“This is what my principal is doing to support teaching and learning in our school. She is part of teaching as she also has a class to teach. The supporting of teaching and learning is done through class visits. Learners sign the books when the teacher enters the class during teaching time. Although we are not performing well our pass rate is gradually improving and that on its own is an indication that our principal is doing her part as an instructional leader”.*

#### **4.3.3 Parental involvement**

A significant number of participants reported that parental involvement was crucial in the education of learners. However, none of the participants reported how parents are involved in their children’s academic work. Parents were, according to the reports by the participants, called to these schools only when their children were deviating from any policy or regulation. For instance, Principal 1 from School A reported that:

*“The parent has to come to school to account for the continued absence of his child from school or late coming”.*

It is clear from the above excerpts that although the issue of instructional leadership was understood by most participants as including all management responsibilities by a principal it also included dealing with stakeholders. The fact that parents were called to have a say in their children’s problems was an indication that the principal of this school was aware of the important role which the parents should play in their children’s academic work. Although parents were called to come to school to account for their children, emphasis was only on the behavioural aspects and there was no discussion of the academic achievement of the children and how best they could be supported by parents at home. Principal 2 also confirmed that parents need to know about how their children behave at school. Although Principal 2 was in agreement with what Principal 1 said regarding parental involvement, she indicated that parents should also be informed of their children’s academic achievement. However, she did not indicate the fact that parents themselves are educators of their own children.

Principal 1 reported:

*“I always monitor whether teaching is in line with the pace setters from the Department of Education. I ensure that teachers’ pace of teaching is in line with the pace setters. I advise those teachers who seem to be slower than the pace setters about the strategies that they can use to catch up with the pace setter. I also motivate teachers as they are also overloaded”.*

It can be noted from Principal 1 that she supported quality teaching and learning, checking if the teachers’ pace was according to the requirements of the pace setters determined by the DoE. Although she indicated that she gave some form of advice to educators her concern was about teachers finishing the work in line with the pace setters. This was an indication that what mattered most to her was the completion of work rather than the quality of work given to learners. This means that the emphasis was more on quantity (the amount of work given to learners) than quality (the depth of knowledge and skills learners acquired).

#### **4.4 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

This section presents data about the challenges that are encountered by school principals in performing their duties as instructional leaders. Different participants from both schools gave similar responses about the challenges faced by their school principals. However, there was some divergence in some of their responses. Some of the challenges raised by the participants were systemic, which means they were not the creation of these schools; others were the result of the operations of these schools under the leadership of their respective principals.

##### **4.4.1 Lack of commitment from the Department of Education to support school principals**

The section presents and analyses the data with regard to what was reported as a lack of commitment from the DoE to support school principals in their work, particularly teaching and learning. Principal 1 reported that the work overload that they encounter in their school is acknowledged by the Department of Education. She lamented:

*“Subject Advisors from the Department of Education do not regularly come to support these overworked teachers. Some of the subjects do have teachers but we*

*try all possible means to teach them even if some of us were not trained to teach them”.*

SMT 1 from School A reported that when the principal orders books for learners in good time the Department of Education takes time to deliver the books to the school and according to him this reflects negatively on quality teaching and learning. He also reported that the Department of Education delays to deposit money in his school's account even though his school is a no-fees school. He commented that, *“No school can run without money”*. He also lamented that his school principal is overworked and he attributed this overload to the fact that the Department of Education requires principals to teach as well, and does not provide enough teachers to assist the principal. He noted that his principal is required to teach just like any teacher and yet has other managerial responsibilities. This was an indication that the DoE did not assist the principal of this school, which created a systemic problem beyond the control of the school principal. Principal 1 indicated that the Department of Education is failing them in terms of support. She commented:

*“I went to the Department of Education to ask for more teachers and an administrator. I was told that the number of learners determines the number of teachers provided for a particular school”.*

It can be noted from the above excerpt that the DoE was not concerned about what was happening in schools. This makes one wonder if Grade 12 results in this school will ever improve to the national average.

#### **4.4.2 Overwork of school principals**

When asked about the challenges his principal is facing when supporting teaching and learning in his school, SMT1 lamented:

*“Our principals are overworked, I cannot lie. Our school, for example, has few learners and so there are few teachers. The department maintains the 1:30 teacher-learner ratio and this situation results in our principal teaching a full load and thereby neglecting the supervision and monitoring role that she is supposed to perform”.*

It can be noted from this excerpt that the Department of Education does not adequately support school principals in executing their instructional leadership roles. To SMT 1, the Department of Education should at least relieve school principals of

some teaching duties. He noted that principals are overwhelmed with administrative tasks and cannot fairly focus on supporting teaching in their schools.

Principal 1 of School A where SMT 1 was teaching confirmed the large amount of work. She complained:

*“I am overwhelmed with a lot of work. In fact I am overloaded. I however do not have time to do proper management of curriculum activities. My focus is divided by teaching, administration and school governance. I have hundred percent teaching. I have hundred percent of administration and hundred percent of management”.*

Principal 2 noted that there is a serious shortage of teaching and learning resources and qualified teachers. He also noted that they all deal with orphaned learners and those whose parents work far away from home. She lamented that she is overloaded as she does not have adequate teachers to assist her with teaching and learning. She commented:

*“I am overloaded as school principal. I can say the overload is my daily bread. I teach a lot of subjects too many classes. You find that you do not have any free period and end up getting tired”.*

This means that in this school this principal was unable to carry out her instructional leadership roles as she was overloaded. This is also an indication that the DoE did little to support this school principal in the performance of her leadership and management responsibilities. Principal 1 noted that it was not easy to control the teachers as they are all overloaded. She indicated that they have five classes and five teachers in her school. This means that this school was understaffed as these five teachers were expected to teach all the subjects (about seven in each class) in all the five classes. She also commented that:

*“Teachers in this school are overloaded. Sometimes they get stressed. Sometimes they are reluctant to go to class and refuse to be delegated other duties as they are already tired due to overload. When there is no teacher in a class learners become rowdy and do whatever they want”.*

It can be noted from Principal 1’s comments that the problem of overloading among educators produced a culture which was foreign to the teaching profession, that of

refusing to carry out lawful instructions. One could easily say that overload among teachers was actually creating insubordination and lawlessness in this school.

#### **4.4.3 Lack of parental involvement in their children's education**

When asked about the challenges her principal encounters in performing her instructional leadership responsibilities, SMT 2 from School B noted that:

*“There is a lack of parental involvement in my school and absenteeism by learners for petty reasons. Parental support is vital in the academic achievement of the learners, and the work of the teachers also needs parental participation in their children's work for them to speak the same language with the parents”.*

This means that SMT2 viewed parental involvement in the teaching and learning process as crucial to learners' academic achievement. It can also be noted from the above quote that for teachers to successfully execute their roles they should receive support from the parents of the learners they teach.

#### **4.4.4 Absenteeism and lack of punctuality by teachers and learners**

When asked about the challenges that his principal encounters when executing her instructional leadership role, ST 1 from School A reported that:

*“Learners arrive late at school, absenteeism rate is high late coming and absenteeism by educators is also a problem”.*

This means that in ST 1's view lack of punctuality by both teachers and learners poses a serious challenge for his school principal to execute her instructional leadership roles. On the other hand, ST 2 also from School A reported that the Department of Education calls meetings quite often during school hours and this distracts her principal from effectively supporting teaching and learning in the school. She noted that these meetings make it difficult for the principal to come to school every day. This was an indication that the DoE has an impact on how some school managers perform their role of supporting teaching and learning in schools.

### **4.5 STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE EMPLOYED BY PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

This section presents the data on the strategies that were suggested by the participants in improving schools principals' instructional leadership roles.

#### **4.5.1 Promoting team work in the school**

When asked about the strategies that can be used by principals to improve their instructional leadership, SMT 1 from School A indicated that:

*“SMT must be there to help the principal with the management of school. The principal depends on the Head of Department and entire SMT The question of teaching must be like a team. If one player does not take his responsibility the team cannot be successful”.*

This means that in SMT 1's view for a school to achieve good academic results the principal and his team (SMT members and teachers) must work as a team and collaborate with each other. He reported that his principal is doing enough in ensuring effective teaching and learning as their Grade 12 results were gradually improving. However, these Grade 12 results were still far below the national average. He further suggested that the principal encourages fundraising through events such as Miss Jeans. He also suggested that a punishment book be introduced for misbehaving learners to sign and that such learners be given extra work to do beyond school hours as a way of punishment. SMT 1 also suggested that the principal should delegate some of her work to other teachers and that principals should encourage team work. With regards to some teachers refusing to obey instructions from the principal, SMT1 suggested that the principal should encourage team building and should inculcate a sense of leadership among all staff members.

He commented that:

*“The question of being a leader is not about the principal only. Every person in a school is a leader in his or her own right. A principal must encourage every teacher to know that everyone is a leader in a school and that every teacher standing in front of his/her learners is a leader”.*

This means that according to SMT 1 principals should employ distributive leadership when it comes to leading teaching and learning in schools.

#### **4.5.2 Supporting teachers in their work**

When asked about the strategies that can be employed by school principals to improve their instructional leadership duties, SMT 1 from School A suggested:

*“A principal should support teaching and learning at school and that he must encourage teachers to attend workshops that develop teachers in their teaching because in their teaching learning is dynamic so it is changing. So if the teachers attend workshops that develop themselves. Also the principal should encourage the teachers to attend cluster meetings so that teachers help one another and also to encourage teaching and learning a principal must also invite motivational speakers to come to school so that they encourage learners on the importance of learning and education as well. So the principal must also organise career exhibitions in his/ her school so that learners know what to follow at the end after they have passed grade 12. The career exhibition will help that. Probe the principal must do this, principal must do this”.*

It can be noted from the above quote that SMT 1 viewed teacher development as key to improvement of the teaching and learning process in school and that school principals as instructional leaders should level the field for teacher development and encourage their teachers to attend in-service training organised by the Department of Education. He further suggested that principals should also encourage team work not only among teachers but also among learners. His advice also included that teachers of neighbouring schools should collaborate with each other and share their expertise in their subjects. ST 1 commented that parents of learners who come late to school and who absent themselves should be called to at least explain why their children constantly come late and absent themselves. He noted that if these learners continue to come late and bunk school, the union and School Governing Body (SGB) should be involved.

When asked about what can be done to deal with the challenges that her principal encounters in performing her duties as an instructional leader, ST 2 suggested that the DoE should stop calling meetings during schools hours and that teaching periods for school principals should be minimised.

When asked about what strategies can be employed to improve principals' instructional leadership roles, SMT 2 commented:

*“I think the principal should hold a meeting with parents and make them sign a document wherein they commit themselves to supporting their children”.*

It can be noted from the above quote that SMT 2 viewed parental participation in their children’s work as vital to achieving quality teaching and learning in schools. With regard to overloading, SMT 1 suggested that principals delegate some of the work to the SMT members who in turn should delegate the work to teachers under them. He noted that this would minimise the workload concentrated on one person. This was an indication that SMT 1 viewed team work as something that could at least solve the problem of overloading among school principals.

#### **4.5.3 Provision of resources**

With regard to the provision of resources, the majority of the participants indicated that schools needed to be resourced to operate effectively. They noted that if schools are under resourced, no quality teaching and learning can be achieved. Participants mentioned a number of resources that their schools needed. For instance, ST 1 remarked that:

*“I think the government, that is the Department of Education, can help the school by providing transport to take the kids from home to school”.*

This means that ST 1 felt that there was a need to intensify scholar transport for children. He further commented that, If possible, children can be sent by their parents to live with a relative close to their school and that social workers could be roped in when it comes to teaching and learning. This was an indication that ST 1 did not view teaching and learning as a burden of principals and teachers at school only, but that it must be handled collectively by other stakeholders and the school community at large.

ST1 viewed instructional leadership as so comprehensive that it entails all the work that is done by the principal at school with the assistance of other stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, community members as well as department officials. Principal 2 on the other hand commented that parents who can afford text books should buy them for their children. ST 1 noted that the DoE should provide adequate teachers to schools and that each school should have an administrator.

#### **4.5.4 Maintaining discipline among learners**

The majority of participants noted that for teaching and learning to occur effectively in their schools there must be strategies that seek to promote learner discipline. As has been indicated earlier, learners in most cases misbehave because of reasons which have been mentioned above such as shortage of teachers. It was clear that the participants were tired of the learners' conduct. For instance, SMT 1 suggested that:

*"I suggest that the principal must have a book that learners sign when they deviate from what is expected of them and they should then be given extra work after school as a form of punishment".*

#### **4.6 Summarising of main findings**

This section discusses the main findings of the study. These are divided into three main themes based on the findings. In these themes the researcher discusses the role of school principals as instructional leaders from the point of view of school management team members and senior teachers in the underperforming secondary schools.

##### **4.6.1 Conflicting ideas with regards to supporting teaching and learning in schools by school principals**

With regard to supporting teaching and learning in schools, the data revealed that principals employed different strategies. There are some principals, as noted by SMT 1 from School A, who did not share instructional leadership responsibilities with their subordinate teachers. This was contrary to what Hopkins et al. (2007) noted as instructional leadership. According to Hopkins et al. (2007) instructional leaders are expected to share responsibilities with all staff members to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This means the principal of this school, according to SMT 1, was expected to plan and involve other teachers if she wanted to achieve quality teaching and learning in her school. It also means that, according to Hopkins et al., that improving quality teaching and learning is not an effort of principals alone but a collective effort of both teachers and principals of the same school. It is one of the responsibilities of the principal to create an environment that is conducive to the joint

working of these two partners. In some cases, principals were acting in silos with a high sense of the lack of collective effort, which is contrary to what is noted by other scholars, i.e. the role of instructional leadership is too wide to be carried out by a single individual. More people need to be involved in improving quality teaching and learning in their schools (Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2010). Furthermore, Bush, Bell & Middlewood (2010) assert that instructional leadership calls for authority that is devoid of formality as opposed to what pertained in the past. Now, each teacher is a leader in his/her own right in his/her own classroom.

Furthermore, the DoE (1996) anticipates instructional leadership as the function of a collective effort under the principal who is defined as an educator appointed as the head of school. Whereas SMT 1 indicated that the principal in his school did not include teachers in the planning of curriculum support, Principal 1 from the same school indicated that in their school they analyse previous years' results and plan for better ways to improve learners' academic work. This was in line with what Guy & Charleton (1990) noted as school improvement.

To Guy and Charleton (1990), improvement must under all circumstances be preceded by honest assessment of the situation. Fullan (2005) further noted that effective principals employ data skilfully, gather information that determines how well a school organisation is meeting goals and uses that information to refine strategies to meet extended goals and what was reported by Principal 1 was congruent with Fullan's assertion.

The fact that participants from the same school had divergent views about the support of teaching and learning by their school principal was an indication that the notion of instructional leadership is understood differently by some school managers. A senior teacher (ST 2) also from School A noted that the principal in her school monitors all school activities in the school such as teacher attendances, absenteeism, and neatness inside the classrooms. She further noted that the principal saw to it that the school started on time and teachers attended their classes.

Principal 2 on the other hand prepared academic improvement, implemented and monitored curriculum activities in her school. She also noted that she worked with her staff as a team in her school. The idea of working as a team was suggested by Blasé & Blasé (2002) and Louis et al. (2010). According to them instructional leaders make sure that teachers do not work in isolation from one another but work collaboratively giving each other help and guidance, support collaboration and provide professional development opportunities for teachers.

The data revealed that principals have grasped the theoretical as well as practical aspects of instructional leadership practice, while teachers have shown understanding of only one aspect of instructional leadership which is a theoretical aspect but not a practical one. This was demonstrated by a number of teachers who would refuse to take instructions from the principal and, by so doing, reflect ignorance of the practical aspects of the same instructional leadership practice. This undermines the environment that must prevail for improving quality teaching and learning. There was no indication that principals were able to deal effectively with teachers refusing to take instructions from them. This may be an indication that some principals were not able to inculcate a sense of collective effort among their subordinate teachers.

#### **4.6.2 Lack of professional training for school teachers**

The data showed that the two school principals were not doing enough to give training to their subordinate teachers more than just conducting class visits which were aimed at guiding the teachers. This is contrary to what Darling-Hammond & Youngs (2002) noted as professional development. They noted that human and social resources include supportive leadership, policies and practices that create an atmosphere of openness to innovation, feedback on instructional performance and professional development opportunities. The data showed that principals were not training their teachers to effectively perform their teaching duties. In chapter two it was argued that instructional leadership requires principals to join forces with other respective heads and senior educators in order to provide suitable training so that quality teaching and training is provided (Pansiri, 2008).

This means that the responsibility of principals and senior teachers is to join forces in the training of educators to effectively perform their teaching roles. The reason is that the schools under investigation do not have heads but senior teachers due to the dwindling number of learners in their schools. This means that principals have the responsibility of training all staff members in their areas of operation so that they can face new challenges that may emanate in the delivery of quality teaching and learning. Information gathered reveals that there is no professional training of staff members on site so that they excel in their areas of operation. This is the result of heavy workload. It also reflects a misunderstanding of instructional leadership practice by principals which, among other things, demands skills development programmes for the workforce as part of their development. It does not mean training in site based skills, as this is conditional on whether the principal is overloaded or not. It must be what is known as a skills development programme.

These programmes are essential in schools where teachers teach learning areas they have not majored in at tertiary institutions. One may conclude that the reason that learners underperform is the lack of school development programmes in the schools under review. Such programmes would be more focused on problematic areas rather than rely on workshops which are sporadic in nature and generalize the challenges without taking into account contexts in which such challenges exist. They would require principals and senior teachers to be well experienced principals and teachers to be able to capacitate other stakeholders such as teachers, class representatives, members of student representative councils and parents. This difference in training is explained best when one considers the situation of countries such as New Zealand and America where principals are appointed without professional certificates but have to rely on in-service training that is provided by the school and the Department of Education.

The training of teachers would assist in the smooth running of schools. However, the findings were that there was minimal training of staff members yet they are held accountable when things go wrong. It was stated in chapter two that training precedes accountability but findings are that some teachers have been called to account without being trained in those areas while other sectors of the stakeholders remain immune to accountability sessions. Even workshops were seldom organised

by the Department to equip teachers and principals to cope with existing challenges that affect delivery of quality education but none were reported, apart from class visits, to have been conducted by school principals in order to train teachers to meet challenges they encounter in handling their learning areas in a classroom situation. This internal training would be more focused than the workshops as this would address the contextual challenges that affect individual teachers in their respective schools.

The findings were that the sporadic workshops that were organised by the department did not assist schools to be self-running, as there was no internal, context based training by the school management teams to capacitate their subordinate teachers. Internal staff development programmes benefit both novice and veteran teachers, thereby enhancing learner performance. It was argued in chapter two that standard school based accountability requires principals and teachers to be professionally developed so that they are capable of resolving student challenges (Salazar, 2007). A skills development programme is part of in-service training that is given to employees by the employer. This means that the principal has a responsibility to train all staff members in terms of the skills development programmes of the national Department of Education. These serve to capacitate the staff and make them competent in their workplace and accountable in the final analysis.

#### **4.6.3 Viewing supporting teaching and learning as control rather than support**

The majority of participants indicated that principals should focus on controlling the implementation of curriculum activities by making sure that attendance registers are signed and pace setters are adhered to. It also emerged from the data that some school principals are still fixated on the use of inspection rather employing strategies that are more supportive. This notion of fixation on control was congruent with that of Bush & Middlewood (2010) and Styen & van Niekerk (2007). To these writers, principals need to know that the development of their teachers is crucial to enhancing learners' performance and good principals should identify the weaknesses of their educators and find ways to address them. According to these writers, the notion of control without looking at ways of supporting teachers in their work was inappropriate for effective teaching and learning. Therefore, it is a well-

developed principal who could easily identify weak areas of their educators which could be easily addressed during staff development sessions. (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007).

#### **4.6.4 Lack of support by the Department of Education**

All participants indicated that school principals are overloaded and can hardly cope with their instructional responsibilities. For instance, in both schools, due to the low number of learners, few teachers were provided by the DoE. The provision of teachers did not consider the number of subjects taught. In both schools, due to a shortage of teachers, some teachers taught subjects that they were not trained to teach and this resulted in principals teaching more subjects and focusing less on their instructional leadership roles.

This may be an indication that the DoE did little to support school the principals in performing their leadership and management responsibilities. For instance, Principal 1 from School A lamented that she could hardly control and supervise all teachers as they were only five teachers in her school responsible for all subjects (about nine) in the school. This was an indication that the DoE was not taking proactive actions to address the issue of understaffing in under-performing schools. This was not in agreement with how Barth (1990) defined school improvement. According to Barth (1990) school improvement involves determining and providing internal and external conditions which will assist teachers promote and sustain an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. Therefore, if the DoE was not providing teachers to under staffed schools, it was not in any way operating from the premise of school improvement.

The data showed that teachers who were supposed to be in the forefront of delivering quality teaching and learning were not coping with work overload that was caused by a decrease in learner enrolment which in turn required the DoE to reduce teachers. This fact can lead one to conclude that the issue of under-performance can not only be attributed to poor leadership by school principals only but also to a lack of adequate support from the DoE.

It also emerged from the data that even the Subject Advisers who are employed by the DoE to support teaching and learning in schools in their districts rarely visited the schools, thus the core function of the DoE, which is teaching and learning, was neglected. According to the data, Subject Advisers seldom visited schools that they were employed to support. This might be an indication that there was a shortage of trained Subject Advisers in the King William's Town Education District office or Subject Advisers neglected their task of supporting schools. It also emerged from the data that when Subject Advisers visited schools they always enquired about syllabus coverage and challenges the teachers encounter in the classroom situation. However, they never visited classroom to demonstrate lessons where there are challenges. This means that they were more concerned with administrative issues than the core business of teaching and learning.

#### **.4.6.5 Accountability**

One major emphasis in the educational arena in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century has been the continuing demand for greater accountability to increase student performance (Macbeath & Turner, 1990). This requires principals to account for the performance of their learners to the stakeholders, especially to the Department of Education which is the main financial provider for schools, as well as the community in which the school is embedded. The data revealed that principals of both schools had been subjected to accountability sessions once per year when their schools underperformed while for the community this was on the first school governing body meeting of the year.

The data showed that the principals of these schools were able to make their teachers account for their work. However, there was no other indication that the accountability that was promoted in these schools was followed by forms of support that were based on the shortcomings identified during the accountability sessions. Furthermore, the documents that the researcher analysed did not show any systematic accountability in the selected schools. They did not bring to light that teachers who did not perform well in their subjects were made to account for the shortcomings. In the researcher's view teachers who seemed to underperform in their subjects deserved to be held accountable for what had gone wrong in their subjects.

#### **4.6.6 Involving parents in their children's education**

In chapter two it was mentioned that the vision of the Eastern Cape Department of Education, according to Strategic Plan 2005-2010, upholds the view that the Department of Education is to transform schools into centres of community life. This means that working together to improve student achievement becomes a task of multitudes inside and outside the school. In order for a school to transform from being underperforming to a well performing one, it is the responsibility of each stakeholder to play its role to the maximum. The parents, teachers, learners and Department of Education all have to play their roles for the school to succeed and perform well. It does not mean that the school is the sole responsibility of parents with learners only but that it belongs to all the stakeholders. In chapter two a stakeholder was defined as anyone who has a legitimate interest in the effectiveness and success of an institution (Bush & Haystack, 2003).

The data showed that parents were not directly involved in their children's education. Their involvement was limited to engaging them in matters pertaining to learner discipline. It was reported that, after misbehaviour by some learners, the parents of such learners would be called to the school to account for the misbehaviour of such learners. Such accountability sessions were not coupled by discussions about learners' academic work.

This is contrary to what Charleton (1990) viewed as stakeholder participation. To Charleton (1990), an instructional leader is one who does things at the right time and understands that stakeholder participation is central to achieving organisational goals. However, though parents did not play a significant role when it came to enhancing teaching and learning in schools, the findings were that they played a positive role in supporting school activities, such as fund raising and they respond positively when summoned to school. This means that their participation was only limited to issues which are peripheral to the core business of teaching and learning.

#### **4.6.7 Low levels of commitment and dedication amongst teachers**

The data also revealed that there was a lack of dedication and commitment from some of the teachers, as in some cases they did not attend school regularly and

failed to come to school on time. This means that these teachers were neglecting their core business of teaching and learning and were in this way not assisting the principals to fulfil the mission and vision of the school. Some teachers were not even willing to be delegated tasks by their principals. Surely, this kind of attitude poses a serious challenge to the school principals in their mandate to support teaching and learning in schools. This kind of relationship was not in line with what Duke (2004) and Glanz (2006), noted as the existence of a good relationship which is necessary for the instructional leadership roles to be performed effectively. The fact that teachers were in some cases refusing to be delegated duties was an indication that the relations which were necessary for effective teaching and learning did not exist.

#### **4.6.8 Viewing motivation as a tool to enhance quality teaching and learning**

The data showed that principals from both schools regarded motivation as a tool to improve quality teaching and learning in schools. This was in line with Spillane's (2012) assertion that an instructional leader is a person who tries to achieve organisational objectives by encouraging his followers. For an instructional leader to achieve the objectives of the organisation he or she has to include other members of the staff and never go alone. An effective instructional leader therefore, amongst other things, should possess motivational as well as communication skills. An instructional leader is also defined as one with ability to employ a wide range of strategies to encourage and motivate educators, such that quality education is achieved (Steyn, & van Niekerk, 2006; Pansiri, 2008; van der Venter, 2006; Williams 2008 & Spilane, 2012).

The data revealed that principals of both schools employ a wide range of strategies to motivate not only learners but also educators. Both of them use prize-giving as a means to motivate learners who excel in various learning areas during the course of the year. Also noted were awards given to learners who excel in non-academic activities such as sport. Some scholars (Cotton, 2003; Botha, 2004; Gamage et al., 2009; Leithwood, 2009) suggest that principals, teachers, and students who excel in their various learning and teaching activities ought to be awarded prizes in recognition of the good work achieved so that they remain motivated and focused on achieving school goals.

An instructional leader is also defined as one who makes suggestions, collaborating and soliciting opinions, giving feedback and modelling effective instructions (Hallinger, 2002). Another finding was that principals have done a lot to get learners motivated by employing a wide range of strategies such as inviting speakers, especially the alumnae, to address the learners on special occasions and organising prize-giving days for all learners that have excelled in specific areas during the course of the year. This helps to keep them motivated.

#### **4.6.9 A need to promote partnership**

The data showed that there was a lack of a culture of promoting partnership in selected schools. The way to improve learner performance and improvement is through partnership of schools with nearby tertiary institutions. This would assist the principals with job-embedded skills which would assist the staff in professional development. This would also influence the teachers to register for higher degrees and diplomas so as to improve the quality of teaching and learning as students learn more when their teachers have strong formal qualifications and use highly quality pedagogical techniques.

Although the findings were that there was collaboration of limited extent that occurs among teachers and among parents, there was no partnership forged beyond school level. For instance, there was no indication that institutions of higher learning were involved in the education of the learners in these underperforming schools. This was an indication that school principals were parochially orientated in their support of teaching and learning. The fact that principals of these schools were not involved in any ventures that sought to promote collaboration between their schools and some other organisations including institutions of higher learning was a manifestation that these principals were not moving from the premise as suggested by Hopkins (2001) that people need to work together for them to achieve a common goal.

#### **4.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter was divided into two sections. The first section dealt with presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. The section provided an in-depth analysis of the important findings that were gathered from the data generation. It entailed an explanation of the main points, including quotations from the interview transcripts in

support of and strengthening what was stated. Data collection involved interaction with participants such as principals, SMT members and senior teachers in the SMT. Data were also solicited from documentary analysis. The analysis of data involved simultaneous analysis of data from the data collection methods and group of data into themes and sub-themes. The second section provided a discussion of the main findings. This section highlights main findings and discussed them in line with the literature reviewed in chapter two. The researcher also highlights his insights on some issues raised by the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the main findings of the study. This chapter presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations. It also gives the main ideas of the study chapter by chapter and presents a summary of the main findings. This is followed by conclusions the researcher draws from the main findings and the recommendations for policy implementation and further research.

#### 5.2 MAIN IDEAS OF THE STUDY CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

**Chapter 1:** This chapter served as introduction to the study. It presented the background to the study, a rationale for the study, the objectives, key questions, a definition of concepts, literature review and associated theoretical frameworks, followed by an outline of the chosen research design and methodology. Finally, the limitations and delimitations of the study were elucidated.

**Chapter 2:** This chapter dealt with a literature review and theoretical frameworks that informed the study. In this section several studies around the topic of instructional leadership and the role of principal in the delivery of quality education in schools were discussed.

**Chapter 3:** Chapter three zoomed in on the research design and methodology, including the research paradigms best suited to this particular study. This chapter ended by outlining ethical considerations in conformity with conventions of all academic research.

**Chapter 4:** In Chapter four the researcher focused on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data that were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This chapter also discussed the main findings and related them to the literature that was discussed in chapter two. The data were divided into a number of

themes, some drawn from the research questions and others emerging from the data.

**Chapter 5:** This chapter entails the summary, conclusions and recommendations for policy makers and future research.

### **5.3 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

#### **5.3.1 The conflicting views**

The data showed that participants had divergent views on how principals perform the instructional leadership role. On the issue of supporting teaching and learning in schools, the data revealed that principals employed different strategies. It was reported that some principals share their instructional responsibilities with their staff while others did not. In some cases principals were, to a limited extent, able to support teachers in their teaching responsibilities whereas others employed the control strategy which was viewed by some participants as policing teachers.

#### **5.3.2 Lack of professional support**

The data showed that there was a lack of professional support at all levels in the selected schools. Regarding professional development by school principals, the data showed that the school principals of the two schools were not doing enough to train their subordinate teachers. Instead, they just conducted class visits which were aimed at guiding the teachers. This is contrary to what Darling-Hammond & Youngs (2002) noted as professional development. They noted that human and social resources include supportive leadership, policies and practices that create an atmosphere of openness to innovation, feedback on instructional performance and professional development opportunities. However, in these schools professional training was lacking.

The DoE did not support the principals of the selected schools to effectively play their roles as instructional leaders. All participants indicated that school principals are overloaded and can hardly cope with their instructional responsibilities, let alone perform other leadership roles. For instance, in both schools, due to the policy on the low number of learners, few teachers were provided by the DoE. The provision of

teachers did not consider the number of subjects taught in each school. As a result, in both schools some teachers taught subjects that they were not trained to teach and this resulted in principals teaching more subjects and focusing less on their instructional leadership roles.

### **5.3.3 Focusing control rather than support**

The majority of participants indicated that principals should focus on controlling the implementation of curriculum activities by making sure that attendance registers are signed and pace setters are adhered to. It also emerged from the data that some school principals are still fixated on the use of inspection rather than employing strategies that are more supportive. This notion of fixation on control was congruent with what Bush & Middlewood (2010) and Styen & van Niekerk (2007) found.

### **5.3.4 Unsystematic accountability versus curriculum implementation**

The data showed that the principals of these schools were able to make their teachers account for their work. However, there was no any indication that the accountability that was promoted in these schools was followed by any form of support that was based on the shortcomings identified during the accountability sessions. This means that accountability was not demanded to improve teaching and learning. It was just done for its own sake. Furthermore, the documents that the researcher analysed did not show any systematic accountability in the selected schools. They did not indicate what happened after teachers who did not perform well in their subjects were held to account. In the researcher's view teachers who seemed to underperform in their subjects deserved to be made to account for what went wrong with their subjects and a plan be developed to assist these teachers.

### **5.3.5 Community involvement**

The data showed that parents were not directly involved in their children's education. Their involvement was limited to engaging them in matters pertaining to learner discipline and fundraising. It was reported that after misbehaviour by some learners the parents of misbehaving learners would be called to school to account for such misbehaviour. Such accountability sessions were not coupled by discussions about learners' academic work. This is contrary to what Charleton (1990) viewed as stakeholder participation.

### **5.3.6 Lack of commitment and dedication amongst teachers**

The data also revealed that there was a lack of dedication and commitment on the part of some of teachers as in some cases they were not attending school regularly and failed to come to school on time. This means that these teachers were neglecting the core business of teaching and learning and were in this way not assisting the principals to fulfil the mission and vision of the school. Some teachers were not even willing to be delegated duties by their principals. This kind of attitude poses a serious challenge for the school principals in fulfilling their responsibilities of supporting teaching and learning in their schools.

### **5.3.7 Enhancing quality teaching and learning through motivation**

The data showed that principals from both schools regarded motivation as a tool to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. This was in line with Spillane's (2012) assertion that an instructional leader is a person who tries to achieve organisational objectives by encouraging his followers. This means that for an instructional leader to achieve the objectives of the organisation he or she has to involve other members of the staff and never go alone.

### **5.3.8 Lack of sense of partnership**

The data showed that there was a lack of culture of promoting partnership in the selected schools. The ways to improve learner performance is through partnership of schools with nearby tertiary institutions. This would assist the principals with job embedded skills which would assist the staff in professional development. This would also influence the teachers to register for higher degrees and diplomas so as to improve the quality of teaching and learning as students learn more when their teachers have strong formal qualifications and use high quality pedagogical techniques. Although the findings were that there was collaboration to a limited extent occurring among teachers and parents, there was no partnership that was forged beyond school level. For instance, there was no indication that institutions of higher learning were involved in the education of the learners in these underperforming schools.

## 5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The researcher concludes that there seemed to be no systemic and coherent support strategy focusing on teaching and learning as there were divergent views on how principals performed their instructional leadership roles. In some instances principals supported their teachers in carrying out their teaching responsibilities. However, the support was dominated by checking and controlling teachers' work. It can also be concluded that the issue of the overloading of teachers and principals with work was affecting negatively how school principals played their role of supporting teaching and learning in schools. Furthermore, community and parental participation in their children's work seemed to be lacking. However, principals of both schools seemed to regard motivation as a crucial element in their role of supporting teaching and learning. Lastly, it can also be noted from the data that some school principals lacked a sense of partnership and collaboration which resulted in low levels of the culture of collaboration in these schools.

## 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the aforementioned conclusions, I recommend the following:

### 5.5.1 For policy implementation

**Professional growth of principals:** Firstly, although the principals displayed a good grasp of what it means to be an instructional leader, opportunities need to be created for other school principals that may need further training in this regard. They need to be trained on instructional leadership for them to have a deeper insight into supporting curriculum implementation in their schools. They also need to attend seminars and workshops to broaden their knowledge pertaining to discipline problems and their effective resolution so that they can take this knowledge back to school resulting in whole school development.

**Staff development:** Principals should make a concerted effort to ensure the maximum development of their staff. They should foster team collaboration and delegation of tasks and explain their importance on a regular basis. Principals need to show educators that they care for them by adopting an active, hands-on approach to assist teachers in their classrooms.

They need to show teachers, learners and the community that they are efficient in the realm of accountability. They need to know what is happening around the school; hence they should not only remain within the confines of their offices. Principals need to enforce discipline of educators and learners and they should not turn a blind eye to transgressions. I believe that if an example is made, then others will opt to follow the correct path.

**Communication:** Regular meetings should be held with the Representative Council for Learners, teachers, parents, subject advisers and Education Development Officers so that the problem areas identified affecting each stakeholder could be communicated and addressed in order to avoid the escalation of such problems.

Principals should take the initiative to grow on a personal level and as professionals and attend workshops and seminars. Everyone should be included in the decision making processes. Principals need to create opportunities that would shed light on educator stress management and encourage teachers, learners and parents to speak out if there is a problem before the problem gets worse.

**Motivation:** I strongly believe that principals should understand the need to motivate themselves and encourage their educators, learners, and parents on a continual basis for them to perform at their best. School principals should familiarise themselves with various motivational techniques such as more praise for a task that is well done, rewards and more empowerment. Naturally, the element of praise would reinforce all stakeholders' efforts to do their utmost. If instructional leaders show their staff that their contributions are valued, then they would be encouraged to keep up the good work.

### **5.5.2 For future research**

This research was a qualitative case study of two schools in the King William's Town District of Education. Since the sample is small, the findings and conclusions cannot be generalised to all schools in the King William's Town District of Education. The reason is that each school is unique to the societal context in which it is embedded. Although the school principals who were interviewed had similar ideas to share regarding their understanding of their role as instructional leaders, there is a

significant gap related to what they actually do in order to support teaching and learning.

There are a number of factors that influence this, such as a lack of skills in how to actually go about supporting teaching and learning. Another shortcoming that could be identified is that the sample constituted school principals who were in the profession for a number of years. Their experiences when compared to younger school principals would be different. It would have been interesting to have a novice principal as a participant to gain an understanding of the degree of uniqueness in their experience as instructional leaders. There is, therefore, room for a larger investigation to be carried out with the use of different methodologies and research methods that would contribute to a broader understanding of the subject.

I fervently believe that the media, circuit meetings, district meetings and workshops should be used in positive ways to get the concerns of school principals across to the unions and the Department of Education. Greater support and funding needs to be provided for schools by the Department, and extremely poverty stricken schools should be given the lion's share when it comes to funding.

The Department needs to provide more training for principals to assist them to enact their roles as instructional leaders efficiently as there is always room for growth.

In the light of the above discussion, future research could be conducted in these areas to find out what the Department is currently doing or plans to do to address these needs or issues.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Adler, P.S & Koon, S. (2002). Social Capital: Prospects for new concepts. *The academy of Management Review*, 27(1) 17-40.
- Alvoid, L and Black, W.L. (2014). *The Changing Role of the Principal*. Center for American Progress, 5-27 United States of America, [www.americanprogress.org](http://www.americanprogress.org).
- Anderson, R.D. (2002). Reforming Science teaching: What research says about inquiry? *Journal of Science teacher education*, 13(1), 1-12.
- Armstrong, M. (2006). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* [www.kogan page](http://www.kogan page).
- Arnstein, R. (1996). *Participation approaches to the research process, in Participatory communication for social change*. California: Sage.
- Asmal, K. (2002). Speech by Professor Asmal, Minister of Education on the release Town, 27 December.
- Austin, J & Currie, B. (2003). Changing organisation for a knowledge economy: The Theory and practice of Change management. *Journal of Facilities Management*, 2(3), 229-243.
- Banai, M. & Katsounotos, P. (1993). Participative Management in Cyprus. *International studies of management and Organisation*, 23 (3), 19–34.
- Banyard, V.L., Plante, E.G., & Moynihan, M.M. (2004). Bystander education: Bringing a broader community perspective to sexual violence prevention. *Journal of community psychology*, 32 (1), 61-79.
- Barns (2005). *The effects of parental trust on perceived collective influence and school involvement*. A paper presented at the annual meeting of The American Educational research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Barth, R. (1990). *Improving schools from within: Teachers, parents, and principals can make a difference*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bell, A., & Sigsworth A. (1987). *The Small Primary School: A matter of Quality*. East Sussex: Falmer Press.
- Beare, H. et al (1992). *Creating an Excellent School*. London: Routledge.
- Beare, H. (2001). *Creating the Future School*. London: Routledge.

- Benjamin, G. & Mabey, C.(1993). *Facilitating Radical Change*. London: Chapman Publishing.
- Best, J.W. (2006). *Research in education*. Illinois: USA.
- Blase, J., Blase, J., Anderson, G. and Dungan, S. (1985), *Democratic Principal in Action.Eight Pioneers*. Thousand Oaks, California, Corwin Press, Inc.
- Blasé J & Blasé J. (2002). *Teacher's perception of principals' instructional leadership and implications*. Online publication 01/09/2002.
- Blankenstein, A. M (2010). *Failure is not Option: Six principles for making Students Success the only Option*. A Joint publication: Crowin Hope Foundation, National Education Association (NEA), Thousand Oaks.
- Bless, C., & Higson-Smith, C. (2000). Social research methods. *An African Perspective*. South Africa: Cape.
- Bollington,R. Hopkins, D. West M. (1990). *Introduction to Teacher Appraisal*. London: Casell Educational.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Department of Education, (2003). *Policy handbook for Educators*. Pretoria: Brutton and associates.
- Boschee, F. Whitehead, B.M. & Decker, R. H. (2013). *The principal: Leadership for a global society*. USA: Sage.
- Buhanist, P. (2011). Tietojärjestelmä oSaamisen Johtmi se ssa Viitattu 16.
- Burns & Groove (2003). *Research and Design and Methodology*.<http://www.uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handel/10500/1962/04>
- Bush T.; & Bell, L., & Middlewood, D. (2010). *The principals of educational leadership and management*. London: SAGE.
- Bush T. (1999). *Crisis or crosswords. The disciple of education management in late 1990s Education School in Action*. London: Falmer Press.
- Bush, T., and G. Oduro. (2006). New principals in Africa: Preparation, induction and practice. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 44(4) 359–75.
- Bush, T., and Glover, D.(2003). *School leadership: concepts and evidence* . National College for School Leadership, the University of Reading.
- Bush, T. & Heystek, J.(2003). School Governance in the new South Africa, Compare.

- A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, Vol.33(2):127-138.
- Bush, T. (1998). The National Professional Qualification for Headship: the key to effective school leadership? *School leadership and Management*, 18, 32-334.
- Bush, T. (2003). *Theories of Educational leadership and Management* (third ed.) London: Sage.
- Cadwell, B & Spinks, J. (1992). *Leading the Self-Managing School*, London: Falmer Press.
- Caldwell, B. J. (1995). *The impact of Self-Management and Self –Government on Professional Cultures of Teaching: A Strategic Analysis for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Roehampton Institute Conference: London
- Caldwell, C., Hayes, L. A., & Long, D. T. (2010). Leadership, trustworthiness, and ethical stewardship. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 96(4), 497-512.
- Candoli, C. (1995). *Site- Management in Education : How to make it work in your school*. Pennsylvania: Technomic.
- Charlton, & Guy, C. (2004). *Introduction to Life Span*: New York: Thomson Reuters
- Department of education (2003). *Integrated Quality Management Systems*, ELRC Collective Agreement.
- Chisolm, L. (1998). *The Restructuring of South African Education and Training in comparative context*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.
- Cobbold, C (2011) Academic Leading: Supporting the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers in Sub-Sahara Africa. *An Integrated teacher Education Model* 9(2), 35-49.
- Cohen, L., Manion L. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education'* London and New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Coolhan, J., (2002). *Teacher education and teaching career in an Era of Lifelong Learning*. OECD > Education Working Paper, (2)
- Cooper P (1993). Teachers and Pupils Strategies for Effective Classroom learning: Similarities and Contrasts. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 163, 381-399.
- Cotton, K. (2003). *Principals and student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Coulson, A. (1986). *The managerial work of Primary Headteachers*. Sheffield papers in Education Management, 48 Sheffield Hallam University
- Cresswell, J.W. (2003) *Research Design, Qualitative & mixed methods Approaches*.

- London: Sage Publishers, Inc.
- Cronje, J.C. (1990). Teaching' Teaching on the internet'. *South African Journal of Higher Education*,13, 213- 226.
- Cross & Chisolm, (1990). The roots of segregation schooling in Twentieth Century South Africa. In M. Nkomo(ed). *Pedagogy of dominion towards a democratic education South Africa*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, pp.43-74.
- Dafur,R.(2002).The learning-Centred Principal. *Educational leadership*. 59(8) 12-15.
- Darling, Hammond & Young(2002). Teacher quality and student achievement. A review of state policy evidence. *Education Policy Archives* 8(1) Retrieved January 9, 2005, from [http:// epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n](http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n)
- Dawson, P. (2003). *Reshaping Change: a processual perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Day, C. Harris, A. & Hadfield , M. (2000). *Leading schools in Times of change*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.
- Denscombe, M. (2014) *Open up study skills. The good research guide for small scale social research projects*. New York: Open University Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2012). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research. The discipline and practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE
- Department of Education (1996). *The National Education Policy Act no 27 of 1996*.
- Department of Basic Education, (2013). Grade 12 final Results: Government Printers
- Department of Basic Education, (2014). Grade 12 final Results: Government Printers
- Department of Basic Education, (2015). Grade 12 final Results: Government Printers
- Department of Basic Education, (2016). Grade 12 final Results: Government Printers
- De Vos, A.S. Ed). (2002). *Research at grassroots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. Van Schaik.
- Dimmock, C. (1993). *School based Management and School Effectiveness*, London: Routledge.
- Ding, G.(2001). The Integration of Pre-Service and In-service Teacher Education: The Case of Shangai and Jiangsu. *Asia pacific Journal of Teacher Education and*

- Development*, 4(2), 61-72.
- District of King William's Town Quarterly Report (2004)
- Du Four, R. (2004). What is a "Professional Learning Community"? *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), pp.6, 8-11.
- Duke, K (2004) The Turnaround Principal: High stakes leadership. *Principal Magazine*, 8(1), 12-23.
- Elmore, R. (1993). Getting to Scale with Good Educational Practice, Harvard Graduate School of Education, *Harvard Educational Review* vol. 66(1) p.1-26.
- Elmore, R. F., Ablemann, C. H., & Fuhrman, S. H. (1996). *The new accountability in state education reform: From process to performance*. In H. F. Ladd (Ed.), *Holding schools accountable: Performance-based reform in education* (pp. 65–98). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Harvard Educational Review* vol. 66(1) p.1-26.
- Elmore, R. (2005). *School reform from inside out: Policy, practices and performance*. Boston, M.A.: Harvard Education Publishing Group.
- Farrar, K.M, Krcmar, M & Nowak, K.L.(2006). Contextual Features of Violent Video Games, Mental Models, and Aggression. *Journal of communication*, 56(2), 387-405.
- Flath, B. (1989). The principal as instructional leader. *ATA Magazine*, 69(3), 19-49
- Fink, E., & Resnick, L.B. (2001). *Developing principals as instructional leaders* (Report No. 82). New York: University of Pittsburgh.
- Finks, D. (2010). *The Succession Challenge: Building and sustaining Leadership Capacity*. USA: Sage.
- Firestone, W. & Riehl, C. (2005). (Eds). *A new agenda for research in educational leadership*. New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Fred C. & Lunenburg, F.C. (2010). The Principal as Instructional Leader. *National forum of educational and supervision journal* 27(4), 1-7.
- Flick, U. (2008). *Designing qualitative research*. Sage Publication
- Frere, P. (1976). *Education, the practice of freedom London: Writers and Readers Publishing Co-operative*.

- Fullan, M. G.(2005). *Change Forces: The sequel*. London: Taylor and Francis-Library, Routledge.
- Fullan, M.(1991). *The New meaning of Educational Change*. London: Cassell.
- Gamange,D. T & Pang, N.S.(2003). *Leadership and management in education* . Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Glanz, J. (2006). *What Every Principal Should Know About Instructional Leadership*. California: Corwin Thousand Oaks Press.
- Glatter, O. (1977). A new method for the evaluation of small-angle scattering data. *J. Appl.Cryst.* 10, 415-421.
- Glatter, O. (1979). The interpretation of real space from small angle scattering experience. *Journal of Applied Crystallography*, 12, 166-175.
- Good, T.L & Brophy, J.E.(1986). *Looking into classroom*. New York. Harper & Row.
- Goodwin, R. H., Cunningham, M. L., & Childress, R. (2003). The changing role of the secondary principal. *NASSP Bulletin*, 87, 26-42.
- Gordard, D.R. Gordard L.Y. & Tschannen-Moran, M (2007). *A Theoretical and Empirical Investigation of teacher Collaboration or School Improvement and Student Achievement in Public Elementary Schools*. *Teacher College Record*, 109(4), 877-896.
- Gray,D.E. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage Publication Limited.
- Greiner, L.E. (1972). Evolution and revolution as organisations grow. *Harvard Business Review*, 50(4), 37-46.
- Greiner, L.E. (1998). Evolution & revolution as organizations grow. *Havard Business Review*, 76(3), 55-68.
- Griffin, L.(1995).*Historic Map Works*. Georgia: City Directory, Inc;
- Gultig, J. & Butler, D. (1999). *Creating people- centred oriented schools*. *Schools Organization and change in South Africa. Learning Guide*. London: Oxford University press.
- Johnston, R. (1995), "The determinants of service quality: satisfiers and dissatisfiers", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 6(5), 53-71.

- Gultig, J., Ndhlovu, T. and Bertram, C. (1999). *Creating People-Centred Schools. School Organisation and Change in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Guba, D. (1990). *Effective Evaluation : Improving the Usefulness of Evaluation Results Through Responses and naturalistic Approaches*. San Fransco: Jossey-bass.
- Habegger, S. (2008). The Principal's Role in Successful Schools: Creating a positive school culture. *Principal, September-October*, 42-47
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading Educational Change : reflections on the practice of institutional and transformation leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33 (3), 329-351.
- Hallinger, P. & Murphy, J. (1986). The social context of effective schools. *American Journal of Education*, 94, 328-355.
- Halloway, I. (2005). *Qualitative Research in Healthcare*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Hamilton, D. (1987). Correlated Variables are not always redundant. *The American Statistician*, 41(2), 129-132.
- Hardy, M. & Bryman, A. (2004). *Handbook of data analysis*, London: SAGE Publications.
- Hargreaves, D.J. & Hopkins D. (1991). *The Empowered School*. London: Cassell
- Harper, J. (1991). *Statistics*. London. Longman group.
- Harvey, L. (2004) *Analytic Quality Glossary, Research International*. Accessed 29.12.2011. [http: www.qualityresearchinternational. Com/glossary](http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary).
- Harris, A & Spillane, J. (2008). Distributed leadership through looking leadership. *Management in Education*, 22(1), 31-34.
- Heikka, J., Wanigayake, M., & Haluja, E. (2012). Contextualizing distributed leadership within early childhood education: Current understandings, research evidence and future challenges. *Educational Management & Leadership*, 41 (1), 30-44.
- Heim, M. (1995). *Accountability in Education* (unpublished) paper submitted to the Hawaii, Department of Education.
- Hennink, A. Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative research methods*. London: SAGE.
- Hielgerel, D. Jackson, S.E., Slocum, J., Staude, D., Amos, T., Klopper, H.B. (2010). *Management*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. South Africa: Oxford University Press.

- Hoadley, U. & Ward C.L (2009). *Managing to learn: Instructional leadership in South Africa secondary schools*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Holly, P. & South Worth, G.W. (1988). *The developing Schools*. London: Falmer Press.
- Honig, M.I.(2009). No Small Thing: School District Central Office Bureacracy and Implementation of New Small Autonomous Schools Initiatives. In *American Educational Research Journal*. Vol. 46(2): 387-422.
- Hopkins, D Ainscow, M. and West, M. (1994). *School improvement in the Era Of change*. London; Cassell.
- Hopkins, D.(2001) *School Improvement for Real*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.  
<http://www.Regenesis.com>.
- Imber, S. D., Pilkonis, P. A., Sotsky, S. M., Elkin, I., Watkins, J. T., Collins, J. F., ... & Glass, D. R. (1990). Mode-specific effects among three treatments for depression. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 58(3), 352.
- Caldwell, C., Hayes, L. A., & Long, D. T. (2010). Leadership, trustworthiness, and ethical stewardship. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 96(4), 497-512.
- Jagnnamadham, V. (1979). 'Development sans Participation', In *Arora, R.K. Peoples Participation in the Development Process*. Jaipur: HCM State Institute of Public Administration.
- Jansen, E., P.,W.,(2004). The influence of the Curriculum Organisation on Study Progress in Higher Education. *Higher Education*. Vol.47(4), 411-435.
- Jenkins, R., & Jensen, B. (2010). How to climb down from top-down leadership. *Academe*,96(3),24-27.Retrieved from  
<http://search.proquest.com/docview/365685226?accountid=35812>
- Jick, T. (1993). *Managing change: Cases and concepts*. London: Richard dlrwin.
- Johnson, S.D. (2005). Will our research hold up under scrunity? *Journal of industrial Teacher Education*, 32(3), 3-6.
- Johnston, R. (1995), "The determinants of service quality: satisfiers and dissatisfiers", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 6 (5), 53-71.
- Kotter, J.P (2002). *Leading The Change. Why Transformation Efforts Fail*. Havard Business Review. United State of America: Boston
- Kotter, J.P. & Schleisinger.L A. (2008). *Choosing Strategies for Change*. Havard

University : Boston.

- Kumar, R. (2005). *Research Methodology*. London: SAGE publishers,
- Langley, R.B. (1997). Glonass: review and update. *GPS world*, 8(7), 46-51
- Lashway, L. (2002, July). *Developing instructional leaders*  
*Clearinghouse on Educational Management*. College of Education, University of Oregon.
- Leedy, P.D & Ormrod, J.E. (2005). *Practical Research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Lee, A. & Williams, C (2009). change 2005 “Forged fire narrative of trauma in PhD Supervision pedagogy. *South Review*, 32(1), 6-26.
- Levin, M.(2001). “Bridging the generation Gap Findout what strategies work to involve young people in leadership roles”. *ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT-WASHINGTON-53.1(2001): 92-97*.
- Lewin, K.(1951). “Group Decision and Social Change” in G.E Swanson, T.M. Newcomb and E.L Hastley (eds): *Reading in Sociology*, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston: New York, USA.
- Liethwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wallstroom(2004). *How leadership influences student learning: A review of research for the Learning from Leadership Project*. New York: The Wallace foundation.
- Leithwood, K and Riehl, C. (2003)' *What do we already know about Successful School Leadership?* Paper prepared for the AERA Division A Task Force on Developing Research in Educational Leadership. March, 2003.
- Lock, K.(2001). *Grounded Theory in Management research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Louis et al (2010). *How does leadership affect student achievement? Results from a national survey*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego.
- Louis, K.S., Marks, H.M., & Kruse, S.(1996). *Teachers’s professional community in restructuring schools*. *American educational research journal*, 33(4) 33, no.4, 757-798.
- Lubbe, B.G.(1978). *Essential School Organisation*: Alberton: Varia Books
- Lunenburg, F. (2010). *Leader-member exchange theory: Another perspective on the Leadership process*. *International Journal of Management, Business and Administration*, 13(1), 1-5. Retrieved from

- Mabaso D & Tembane, P.(2002). A Change Management Model for School Managers, Van derbijlpark: NWU: Vaal Triangle Faculty.
- Macbeath, J., & Turner.(1990). *Learning out of school: Homework, Policy and Practice*. A Research Study Commissioned by Scottish Education Department. Sales and Publications, Jordanhill College, 76 Southbrae Drive, Glasgow G13 1PP, Scotland, United Kingdom(British Pounds).., 1990.
- Mohlala, T. (2011). Revamped assessment . The teacher, pp. 14-15.
- Manus, M.(1991).Role relevance and role engagement in contemporary school psychology. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 22(4), 328.
- Maponya S.H. (2015) *The role of the principal as instructional leader in improving learner achievement in South African primary schools* A thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements for The degree of doctor of education In the subject Education management at the University of South Africa.
- Marzano, R.J. Gaddy, B. B.Foseid, M. C. Foseid, M. P. & Marzano, J. S. (2005). *School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McQuarrie, Jr, F.O. & Wood, F.H.(1991). *Supervision, staff development and 00 Wallacefoundation. Org*
- Mendells. P. (2012): The Wallace Foundation. The Principal as a leader: *Guiding schools to better teaching & learning*.
- Miles, M. B., and & Louis, K.S. (1990). Mastering the will and skill for change. *Education Leadership*, 47(8), 57-61.
- Milis, K., & Mercker, R. (2002). Success factors regarding implementation of ICT investment projects. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 80(1), 105- 117.
- Mills M & Charlton, E.(2008). Being the right kind of male teacher. The disciplining of John. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 16(1), 71-84.
- Minnelle, L. (1995) *History of Education: it is outline, value and research*. Cape Town: Via Africa
- Miles, M.B. & Humberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Resource Book*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Morgan, D.L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Carlifonia: Sage

Publications.

- Moloi, K.(2002). *The school as a learning organisation: reconceptualising school practices in South Africa*. Hatfield, Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Monteith et al, 2007. *Research Study guide*. North – West University: Platinum Press.
- Moloi. (2011). *A concise guide to market research: The Press, data and methods using IBM SPSS statistics*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Mooi,E. & Serstedt, M. (2011), *Understanding Cluster –analysis*. In E. Mooi & Sarstedt (Eds),*A Concise Guide to Market Research. The process, data and method using IBM SP SSS statistics*, Heidelberg Dodrecht: Springer, , 259-283.
- Mourton & Marais (1996). *Basic Concepts in the methodology of the social sciences*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Nash, C. & Sproule, J.(2012). Coaches perceptions of their coach education experiences. *International journal Of sport psychology*, 43(1),33.
- National Association of Elementary School Principals. (2001). *Leading learning Communities: Standards for what principals should know and be able to do*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary school Principals.
- Ndhlovu TN, Bertram C, Mthiyane N & Avery, N. (1999). *Creating people-centred schools: School organization and change in South Africa, Learning guide*. Cape Town: South African Institute of Distance Education and Oxford University Press.
- Neuman, W.L. (2006). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Wisconsin: Pearson
- Prytula, M.Noonan, B.; Hellstein, L.(2013). Towards instructional leadership: Towards instructional leadership: Principal's perception of large-scale Assessment in Schools. *Journal Administration Administration Policy*, 140, 2-30.
- Northhouse,G.(2007) *Leadership and practice*. London: SAGE.
- Nzambi, N.P. (2012). *Role of the head teacher in instructional supervision as perceived by teachers in secondary schools in Kitui district, Kitui county-Kenya*. A research project submitted to the school of education in partial

- fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of master of educational administration of Kenyatta University.
- Ovando, M. N., & Ramirez, A. Jr. (2007). Principals' instructional leadership within a teacher performance appraisal system: Enhancing students' academic success. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 20(1-2), 85-110. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11092-007-9048-1>.
- Pansiri, J. (2005) The influence of managers' characteristics and perceptions in strategic alliance practice, *Management Decision*, 43(9), 1097-1113.
- Pansiri, N.O (2008). *Instructional leadership for quality learning: assessment of the impact of the primary school management development project*.
- Parajes. F. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in academic settings. *Review of Educational Research*, 66, 543-578.
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Newbury, London: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Polit, DF, Beck, CT & Hungler, BP. (2001). *Essentials of nursing research: Methods, appraisal, and utilization*. Philadelphia: Lippincott.
- Polit D.F & Hungler B.P. (2004). *Nursing Research*. Philadelphia: Wilkens.
- Portin, B.S. Knapp. M.S., Dareff, S., Fieldman, S., Russels, F.A., Samuelson, C (2009) *Leading for learning improvement in urban schools*. Wallace Foundation. Retrieved from w.w.w. on 12 January 2016.
- Punch, K.F (2006). *Developing Effective Research proposals*: London: SAGE.
- Reason, C. and Reason,L (2007). Asking the right question. *Educational Leadership*, 65(1) 2007.
- Reynolds, David and Hopkins. (1992). Linking school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement practice: Towards a synergy. *School effectiveness and school improvement* 4(1), 37-58.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M. and Ormston, R. (2013). *Qualitative Research practice: A guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: SAGE
- Robinson, J. (2002). *Real World research*. UK: Blackwell Publishers.
- Rosenholtz S.J. (1985). Political myths about education reform: Lessons from research on teaching. *Phi Delta Kappan* 66(5), 349-55.

- Salazaar, P.S.(2007). The professional Development Needs of Rural High School Principals: A Seven-State Study. *Rural Educator*, 28(3): pp. 20-27.
- Saunders, M, & Lewis K.C. (2005) Building bridges towards excellence: community involvement in high schools. *High school Journal*, 88(3), 1-9.
- Slavery, L.K. Souter, G.N & Dyson, J.D. (1992). Ideal decision-making styles indicated by deputy principals. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 30(2), 225-236.
- Schemer, J.R.Hunt, J.G. & Osborn, R.N. (2003). *Organizational Behaviour*, New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Seder, R.C.(2000). *Balancing accountability and local control: State intervention for financial and academic stability*. Policy study.
- Senge, P.M.(1990). *The fifth discipline: the art and practice of the learning organisation*. New York: Doubleday.
- Silverman,D.(2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. London: Sage.
- Simsek, N & Yieldrim, A.(2008). Spirulina platensis protects against gentamicin-induced nephrotoxicity in rats. *Phytotherapy Research*, 22(11), 1506-1510.
- Smylie, M.A.(1995). New perspectives on teacher leadership. *The elementary school journal*, 96(1), pp.3-7
- Southworth,G.(2008). Primary school leaders today and tomorrow. *School leadership & Management*, 28(5),413-434).
- South African Schools act no 84 of 1996. The Government gazette no. 17579 of 1996
- Spillane, J.P, Halverson, R and B. diamond, J.B. (2004).Towards a theory of leadership practice: a distributed Perspective. *Curriculum studies*, 36(1),3-34.
- Stark, P.B. (1999). *The Manager's Pocket Guide to Leadership Skills*. Human Resource Development,
- Steyn, G.M. & Van Niekerk, E.J. (2006). *Organisational behaviour in education and education law*. Pretoria: UNISA
- Stronge, J.H. (1988). A position in transition?. *Principal*, 67(5), 32-33.
- Talbot, J.M. (1995). Globalization (1995—1996). *Berkley Journal of Sociology*, 40, 113-149.

- Reynold, D. Hopkins T. & Stoll, L. (1993). Linking school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement practice: Towards a synergy. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, 4(1), 37-58.
- Thomas et al, (2011) *Research Methods in Physical activity*, Illinois: USA.
- Taylor, B. (1995). The new strategic leadership-Driving change, getting results. *Long Range Planning*. 28(5),71:81.
- Tucker, P. & Shunen- Moran, M. (2002). *School leadership in an era of accountability*. College of William and Mary Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute. Retrieved March,22,2007.
- Uma, S.(2003). *Research methods for Business: A skill Building Approach*, USA: John Willey & Sons Ltd.
- U.S Department of Education (1998), *Turning Around Low performing Schools: A guide for State and Local Leaders*.
- Unesco, (1994). *Higher education staff development: directions for the 21st century*. place de Fontenoy,23,19-34.
- UNESCO 1994. By United Nation Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation. Paris. 7, place de Fortenoy 75352. Vol. 23 (Fall, 1993), 19-34)
- Valentine, J.W. & Prater, M. (2011). Instructional, transformational and managerial leadership and student achievement: High school principals make a difference. *NASSP Bulletin*, 95(1):5-30.
- Van Deventer, I. & Kruger, A.G. (2003). *An educator's guide to school management skills*. Pretoria: Van Schalk.
- Van der Waldt, G. (2004). *Managing performance in the public sector*. Cape Town: Juta and Company.
- Van de Ven, A.H. & Poole, M. S .(2005). Alternative approaches for studying organizational change. *Organisation studies*, 26(9), 13 77- 89
- Hoyt, C.L. Murphy, S.E. Halverson, S.K. Watson, C.B. (2003). Group leadership: efficacy and effectiveness. *Group Dynamics: Theory Research and Practice*, 7(4), 259-24.
- Van Tonder, C. L. (2004). *Organisational change: theory and practice*. Johannesburg: Van Schaik.
- Weindling, D. (1990). *The secondary school head teacher: New principals in the United Kingdom*. *NASSP Bulletin*, 74(526), 40-45. Wicking accessed 01-11-

2011 [www.thefreelibrary.com](http://www.thefreelibrary.com)

- West-Burnham, J. (2009). *Rethinking educational leadership: From improvement to transformation*. New York: Continuum International.
- White, L. (2015). *An exploration of the value of reflective practice for child care and family support service provision*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. National University of Ireland, Ireland.
- Whitehead, B.M., Boschee, F., & Decker, R.H. (2013). *The principal: leadership for a global society*. USA: SAGE.
- Whitaker, K.S. (1997). Developing teacher leadership and management team concept: A case study. *The teacher Educator*, 33(1), 1-16.
- Wilhelm, W. (2006). Learning Organisation-Sustainability is the result of learning, *Leadership Excellence*, 23(3), 17-22.
- Yeomans, R. (1986). A different way of dancing? An alternative perspective on leading and belonging to a primary school staff. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 16(3), 216-220.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Zepeda, S. J. (2013). *The principal as instructional leader: A practical handbook*. Larchmont, NY: Eye On Education.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS**

1. What do you understand about instructional leadership?
2. What instructional duties do you perform in your school?
3. What do you do to ensure quality teaching and learning is taking place in your school? Probe: Why?
4. How do you support teaching and learning in your school? Probe: Why?
5. What challenges do you encounter in supporting teaching and learning in your school?
6. What strategies can be used to overcome such challenges? Probe: Why?
7. How do you delegate your instructional responsibilities? Probe: Why?
8. Is there anything that you want to share with me about your instructional leadership ?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SMT MEMBERS**

1. What do you understand by a principal's instructional leadership role?
2. What instructional duties are performed by the principal in your school?
3. What does your principal do to ensure quality teaching and learning is taking place in your school? Probe: Why?
4. How does your principal support teaching and learning in your school? Probe: Why?
5. What challenges do you think your principal encounters in supporting teaching and learning in your school?
6. What strategies do you think can be used to overcome such challenges? Probe: Why?
7. What duties are given to you by principals to improve instructional practices?
8. How does your principal delegate his/her instructional responsibilities? Probe: Why?
9. Is there anything that you wish to share with me about the instructional role of your principal?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

## APPENDIX C



### ***Faculty of Education, SFCE***

*School for Further and Continuing Education*

*Private Bag X1314*

*Alice, 5700*

*PABX 2089*

*Email: pmavuso@ufh.ac.za*

15-03-2016

### **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam

#### **PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A RESEARCH STUDY- MASTER OF EDUCATION**

This serves to request you to grant Mr Bantu Henderson Sijako a permission to undertake research study towards his Master of Education degree. Mr Sijako, student number 8602175, is a registered student in the Faculty of Education at the University in the Fort Hare and is now ready to go and collect data for his study. His approved topic is titled: *'The role of principals as instructional leaders in two underperforming senior secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District'*

Your assistance in this matter is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

M.P. Mavuso (PhD)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.P. Mavuso', with a stylized flourish at the end.

SUPERVISOR

## APPENDIX D



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

### ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: MAV031SSIJ01

Project title: **The role of principals as instructional leaders in two underperforming senior secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District.**

Nature of Project: Masters

Principal Researcher: Bantu Sijako  
Sub-Investigator: N/A

Supervisor: Dr M.P Mavuso  
Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

**Special conditions:** Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

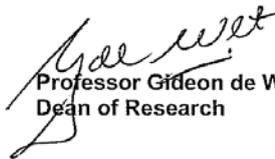
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
  - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
  - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
  - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
  - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely

  
Professor Gideon de Wet  
Dean of Research

03 May 2016

## APPENDIX E

13 Flanagan Court  
Schornville  
King William's Town  
5600  
20 March 2016

The District Director  
King William's Town Education District  
5600

Dear Sir

### Request to conduct a research

I hereby request you to grant me a permission to conduct a research in two secondary school schools (Ntabakandoda and Themebelani high school) in your district. I am a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is "*The role of principals as instructional leaders in two underperforming senior secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District*".

I hope my request will be fairly considered.

Regards

  
B.H. Sijako

## APPENDIX F



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES  
Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape  
Private Bag X0032 • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4773/4035/4537 • Fax: +27 (0)40 608 4574 • Website: [www.ecdoe.gov.za](http://www.ecdoe.gov.za)

Enquiries: NY Kanjana

Email: [nykanjana@live.co.za](mailto:nykanjana@live.co.za)

Date: 14 December 2015

Mr. Bantu Henderson Sijako

P.O. Box 4031

**King William's Town**

**5600**

Dear Mr. Sijako

**PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A MASTERS THESIS: ROLE OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS IN TWO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KING WILLIAM'S TOWN**

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.
2. Your application to conduct the above mentioned research in two selected Secondary Schools under the jurisdiction of King William's Town District of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
  - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
  - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
  - c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
  - d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
  - e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, as educators' programmes should not be interrupted;
  - f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;



- g. the research may not be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where a special well motivated request is received;
  - h. your research will be limited to those schools or institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
  - i. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis.
  - j. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary.
  - k. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research.
  - l. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you.
  - m. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).
  - n. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation.
3. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE.
  4. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
  5. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjāna on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email [nykanjana@live.co.za](mailto:nykanjana@live.co.za) should you need any assistance.



**NY KANJANA**  
**DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH & SECRETARIAT SERVICES**  
**FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION**

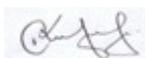
## APPENDIX G

Department of English  
University of Fort hare  
P/Bag X1314  
Alice, 5700  
10 February 2017

### CONFIRMATION OF EDITING

This is to confirm that I, Cynthia Formson, have edited for language use, the thesis entitled *The role of principals as instructional leaders in two underperforming senior secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District*, submitted by Bantu Sijako. This editing involved issues such as spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure and language use.

I am a professional editor with a certificate in editing issued jointly by the University of Cape Town and Get Smarter. I also hold a masters degree in Linguistics as well as one in Teaching English as a second Language. I work as a lecturer in English Linguistics and Academic Literacy. I have vast experience in editing and have edited about 70 Honours, Masters and PhD theses and dissertations as well as several academic papers for publication. I have also done rapporteuring and written workshop reports on several Water Research Commission Workshops.



C.K. Formson (Mrs)



**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

Faculty of Humanities:  
Centre for Film & Media Studies  
in conjunction with  
GetSmarter

This is to certify that

*Cynthia Kafui Formson*

successfully completed a 70 student hour short course (not NQF-rated) in

**COPY-EDITING**

on 13 October 2014

Head of Department

Course Instructor

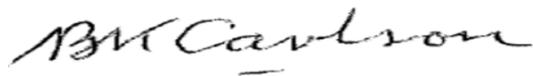
getsmarter

8 Nahoon Valley Place  
Nahoon Valley  
East London  
5241  
7 April 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that I have edited the following master's thesis using the Windows "Tracking" system to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the student to action:

*The role of principals as instructional leaders in two underperforming senior secondary schools in the King William's Town Education District* by BANTU SIJAKO, a dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education at the University of Fort Hare.



Brian Carlson (B.A., M.Ed.)  
Professional Editor

Email: [bcarlson521@gmail.com](mailto:bcarlson521@gmail.com)

Cell: 0834596647

Disclaimer: Although I have made comments and suggested corrections, the responsibility for the quality of the final document lies with the student in the first instance and not with myself as the editor.

BK & AJ Carlson Professional Editing Services