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Principals at three Secondary Schools in the Johannesburg South  
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## ABSTRACT

Instructional leadership has over the years evolved due to influence from other forms of leadership but still remains a primary element in improving student outcomes. However, there are few studies that have looked at how instructional leadership practices are experienced. The main purpose of this study was to explore how instructional leadership was practiced in secondary schools in Gauteng.

Using narrative and phenomenological inquiries, analysed principals' narratives and focus group interviews on the instructional leadership practices in secondary schools. Focus group data that was presented in this report highlights conceptualisations, experiences and views of teachers on instructional leadership. The data was coded and analysed thematically using literature on instructional leadership as well as Hoadley, Christie and Ward (2009)'s six dimensions on instructional leadership as the theoretical framework.

The findings indicate practices that make up instructional leadership practices in the schools studied. Based on the findings, this report suggests that principals must be knowledgeable of the elements of instructional leadership and apply them with an understanding of their schools' contexts. This study concludes by offering an alternative instructional leadership model style of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and communication (SLIC). The (SLIC) model attempts to summarise how instructional leadership practices were experienced in secondary schools.

## DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It has been submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.



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Solomon Chibaya

Date: 4 June, 2018

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## DEDICATION

This Research Report is dedicated to my late father, Tungamirai Chibaya, a true educationist who had a strong belief in the importance of education and deep love for his family.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

HOD	Head of Department
IL	Instructional Leadership
S.A.	South Africa
SANPQP	South African National Professional Qualification for Principalship
SASA	South African Schools Act
SASSL	South African Standards for School Leadership
SASP	South African Standard for Principalship
SMT	School Management Team

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### 1. Introduction

Instructional leadership predominantly focuses on the role of the principal in coordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction in schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The principal, as an instructional leader, is concerned with the instructional programme of the school and moves from being a manager of the school behind a desk to being actively involved in the teaching and learning process. In light of this, the principal should facilitate the creation and support of an environment that provides quality teaching and learning (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2010). Lack of instructional leadership has caused poor quality of teaching and learning in South Africa leading to poor learner achievements (Bush, 2007). The assumption is that, where instructional leadership is implemented, the instructional programme will improve and schools will be more effective. According to Bush (2013, p. 5), “instructional leadership is one of the most important (if not the most important) activities for principals”. Hoadley, Christie and Ward (2009) as well as Bush (2013) highlight that most of the research on instructional leadership in South Africa has been on policy rather than practice. In addition, Bush, Glover, Bischoff, Moloji, Heystek and Joubert (2006, p.1) argue that “there are no accounts of how school principals and school managers, exercise instructional leadership in their schools”. It is against this background that this research explores how principals practice instructional leadership in selected secondary schools in Gauteng, South Africa.

#### 1.1 Problem statement

There is a problematic legacy of apartheid education in South Africa known as “the breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning” (Christie, 2010, p. 283). This breakdown of teaching and learning has led to a number of problems in most schools. Some of these problems include “disputed and disrupted authority relations between principals, teachers and students; sporadic and broken attendance by students and often teachers; poor school results” (Christie, 2010, p. 283). The lack of instructional leadership has affected education negatively and crippled the education

system in South Africa in most cases. However, Bush (2013) suggests that a possible solution to these problems is the use of instructional leadership. This qualitative study seeks to investigate principals and teachers' experiences and conceptualisation of instructional leadership instructional leadership and draw from this leadership theory to enhance school leadership and management.

Annually, principals are called to account for the academic performance of their learners in accordance with the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy. Most schools fail to reach their yearly targets. Grobler (2013) proposes that if principals want to meet the challenges of achieving the yearly targets for academic achievement of learners, they have to practise instructional leadership. Instructional leadership is believed to have a direct causal influence on learning outcomes and therefore the principal's role is pivotal to the instructional programme (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). In this study, narratives from principals and interviews with teacher focus groups will be used as forms for data production in exploring instructional leadership in South African secondary schools.

## **1.2 Purpose and rationale for the study**

In my experience as a teacher in South African secondary schools, principals rarely effectively fulfil their role as instructional leaders to influence the improvement of the instructional programme. Hence, most schools are consistently underperforming. This can be explained by how teachers are often considered as own managers with very little accountability from them and principals having limited knowledge and skills to provide instructional leadership (Blase' & Blase', 1998).

My critical friends (my colleagues in the teaching field) voice their displeasure in the lack of respect for the authority of the principals. They indicate a gap between the principals and teachers that impedes the instructional programme from improving. This gap is even wider when the principal is not knowledgeable of the curriculum programmes in the schools.

Research has shown the direct relationship between instructional leadership and learning outcome (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Zepeda 2004 and Bush. 2013) but, there is need for further exploration of instructional leadership practices in South Africa. Unique results are expected given

the unusual historical circumstances of South Africa. The purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which school principals practice instructional leadership to improve the instructional programme. This research employs a qualitative method of research as it seeks to explore and understand the meaning ascribed to instructional leadership (Creswell, 2009).

Most studies on instructional leadership have been conducted in the context of developed countries (Hoadley, Christie, & Ward, 2009). The applicability of instructional leadership in underdeveloped contexts such as South Africa has been subject to debate. In 2009 Hoadley, Christie and Ward pursued this research agenda in the South African context. Hereafter we refer to this as the Hoadley's model (Hoadley, Christie, & Ward, 2009). Hoadley's model provides six dimensions of instructional leadership which I used as a lens to explore instructional leadership in this study.

### **1.3 Significance of Study**

Following the Coleman (1966) report that attributed the performance of learners to their economic family background, there were a number of academics that refuted this claim. One of the academics was Edmonds (1979) who carried out research in schools with poor majority populations and concluded that some of these schools had good quality educational practices (O'Donnell & White, 2005). The primary element in these well-run schools was the type of leadership which was later to be called instructional leadership.

Literature on the success of school effectiveness emphasises on the importance of school leadership and gave rise to instructional leadership in the 1980 in Anglo American regions. Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) argue that instructional leadership is now an outdated concept which emphasises on the principal's authority to monitor and supervise teachers. However, the bureaucratic systems are geared to support the monitoring role of principals in a drive to ensure accountability and development of teachers (Southworth, 2002; Salo, Nylund & Stjernstrom, 2015) and instructional leadership is evolving (Hallinger, 2009).

Instructional leadership has been criticized by other academics. Its focus on the teacher rather than learner (Elmore, 2008) and its emphasis on teacher learning (Blasé & Blasé, 2004) are some of the

criticisms of instructional leadership. Hallinger (2008) has also highlighted how instructional leadership focuses too much on the principal as the center of power and authority. It must be noted that instructional leadership has now evolved to be undertaken by other people in the school besides the principal. Hallinger (2009) notes that, instructional leadership has been ‘reincarnated’ as ‘leadership for learning’ in the twenty-first century.

In South Africa, Hoadley and Kopanong (2007, p. 1) posits that “there is a consensus around the importance of leadership to improved student outcomes”. This agrees with the international literature (Bush, 2013). Bush (2013, p. S6) goes on to assert that “instructional leadership is the longest established concept linking leadership and learning” and that instructional leadership “is very important because it targets the school’s central activities, teaching and learning.” If improvement is to be achieved in education, focus has to be on research on leadership of teaching and learning.

The six-dimensional model of instructional leadership by Hoadley et al. (2009) underpins my study. Using literature on school leadership in South Africa, Hoadley et al. (2009) postulate that there are six dimensions of instructional leadership namely: the instructional focus of the school, the social relationships within the school, the management of resources, external relations of the school, vision and expectation and dispersed leadership. I adopted six dimensions of instructional leadership as my theoretical framework because it is a South African model hence, it helped inform my study of instructional leadership in South African secondary schools

Most of the research on instructional leadership has been on policy rather than practice (Hoadley et al., 2009; Bush, 2013). Exploring instructional leadership practices by principals in South African secondary schools is expected to contribute in a small but significant way to the enriching of the knowledge base on instructional leadership. This will assist in improving the practice of instructional leadership in South African Secondary Schools. The broad aim of this study is to contribute to the theory, practice and policy on instructional leadership.

## **1.4 Critical research questions**

This study is underpinned by the following research questions:

Key Question: What are the instructional leadership practices of school principals in secondary schools?

Sub-questions

1. How do principals operationalize instructional leadership in secondary schools?
2. How do teachers describe their experiences of the school principal's instructional leadership practices?
3. What are the views of school principals and teachers regarding instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning?

## **1.5 Limitations**

There were a number of limitations that were dealt with and had been planned for after being analysed under the lens of the research approaches applied in this research (Brutus, Aguinis & Wassmer 2013). In their article, Brutus, Aguinis and Wassmer (2013) explain the importance for authors to state the limitations in their studies as these limitations have consequences in the interpretation of the results. The time allowed for a study was one of them limitations for this study which was overcome by planning for each step effectively and sticking to deadlines. To overcome restrictions of length in reporting, assistance from the supervisor was sought and the advice helped overcome this limitation.

## **1.6 Structure of research project**

This research report has five chapters. Chapter 1 defines the problem statement and Chapter 2 looks at the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 covers detailed explanation of the methods that were used to collect and analyse data in this study. Chapter 4 presents and analyses the data. Finally, Chapter 5 covers the conclusions and recommendations.

Issues of trustworthiness and ethics were considered throughout this study and are discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this Research Report.

## **1.7 Summary**

Educational success in South Africa is measured mainly in secondary schools. There is need to look at how instructional leadership is being practiced in secondary schools as effective instructional leadership has the potential to improve learner performance. South Africa must take more interest in and comprehend how instructional leadership is being practiced.

The next chapter is the literature review that locates the study in a body of theory and provides an overview of the literature on instructional leadership and the theoretical framework.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2. Introduction

In this chapter, I give an overview of literature on instructional leadership of school principals. I provide a brief history of instructional leadership, international and local research on instructional leadership in schools while emphasising the influence of principals on teaching and learning. I also examine the roles and responsibilities of principals as well as a discussion on the instructional core which demonstrate instructional practices of principals in their effort to enhance teaching and learning. This chapter also provides the theoretical framework used for this study which justifies the why I chose to use Hoadley's model of instructional leadership as my theoretical framework.

The literature review illustrates the lack of literature on instructional leadership in Africa especially in aspects of instructional leadership practice. According to Hoadley et al. (2009), most of the studies on instructional leadership are not in the African context hence the literature is mostly in contexts that are foreign to the African scholar. It is encouraging though that there is an African theoretical framework that can be used to study instructional leadership in an African context in form of Hoadley et al. (2009)'s model.

##### 2.1.1 History on instructional leadership

From the 1960's to the 1980's the USA made it a policy to institutionalise instructional leadership. However, due to the differences in the school contexts, 'the one size fit all' approach did not work. This led to a movement away from instructional leadership until the 1990's during which educational reform was once again made policy as a result of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) policy by President George Bush in 2000. Instructional leadership returned to the fore. It was 'reincarnated' now modified by other forms of leadership like distributed leadership and transformational leadership and by the demand for accountability (Hallinger, 2009). Academics had now refined it to suit the time.



Over the years, academics have attempted to define instructional leadership. Blase´ and Blase´ (1998) have the idea that instructional leadership has long been viewed by practitioners as a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development. Botha (2004) adds that instructional leadership expects educational leaders to set clear expectations, to maintain discipline and to implement high standards, with the aim of improving teaching and learning. Bush (2007) stresses the importance of instructional leadership stating that it targets the school's central activities, teaching and learning. Jenkins (2009) sees instructional leaders as leaders who are involved in setting clear goals, allocating resources to instruction, managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans and evaluating teachers. Despite the absence of an agreeable definition of instructional leadership, Southworth (2002) posits that instructional leadership is central to successful school leadership. What is clear from the proposed definitions of instructional leadership is the emphasis on different roles plays by the instructional leader.

Literature has identified some roles/behaviours that lead to successful school leadership. Sheppard (1996) identifies some of the behaviours of principals that lead to professional growth which include framing school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, co-ordinating the curriculum, providing incentives for teachers, promoting professional development and providing incentives for learning. In support to this, Blase´ and Blase´ (1998) identify three aspects of effective instructional leadership which are talking with teachers (conferencing), promoting teachers' professional growth and fostering teacher reflection. Sergiovanni (2005) adds that principals as instructional leaders must have relationships with other stakeholders in the school in order to succeed in their vision. A system of relationships with stakeholders will encourage a conducive learning environment (Basom and Basom, 1991). How are these roles of instructional leaders being practised and experienced in schools?

Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaul and Armstrong (2011) note that instructional leadership has moved from the demand of management and control to the staff development. There is very little research on the relationship between instructional leadership and teacher development even though instructional leadership is strongly concerned with the professional learning of teachers (Southworth, 2002; Blase´ & Blase´, 1998). Rigby (2014) points out that the instructional leadership of principals is focused on the teacher. He goes on to say that this is done directly

through observation and feedback or by brokering expertise to improve teacher instruction. The absence of teacher development in most schools in South Africa has led the schools becoming dysfunctional (Christie, 2010). Instructional leadership roles are discussed further in this chapter. What is concerning is that there is very little teacher development and teacher accountability therefore most schools are dysfunctional (Christie, 2010). Next, I take a look at international literature.

### 2.1.2 International literature

International literature on school improvement indicates that the main factors influencing the quality of education are classroom practice and leadership (Hallinger & Heck, 2006; Hallinger, 2009). By being actively involved in teaching and learning, principals become instructional leaders and this involvement entails participation in curriculum planning and co-ordination, teacher learning and professional development (Robinson, 2007). Both the school improvement movement and the school effective movement agree on the importance of leadership in influencing the quality of education and I concur with this.

Instructional leadership has been criticized by some previous researchers. It has been observed that it is undermined by its narrow focus on the teacher rather than learner (Elmore, 2008) and its emphasis on teacher learning (Blasé & Blasé, 2004). Hallinger (2008) also demonstrates how instructional leadership focuses too much on the principal as the center of power and authority. It must be noted that instructional leadership has now evolved to be undertaken by other people in the school besides the principal. This has been promoted by the initiation of distributed leadership (Lambert, 2002). In addition, Hallinger (2009) notes that instructional leadership has been ‘reincarnated’ as ‘leadership for learning’ in the twenty-first century.

A lot of research has been done regarding the relationship between instructional leadership and learning outcome (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Fullan, 1982; Heck et al., 1990; Zepeda 2004), but there is room to look at its impacts and influence on teaching and professional learning of teachers. Neumerski (2013) adds that the knowledge on how the instructional leaders improve teaching remains limited despite the knowledge of what the behaviours that improve teaching are.

This research intends to investigate some of those practices/behaviours as to how the behaviours of principals can improve education.

### 2.1.3 Continental literature

Literature from the African continent has revealed a number of insights on instructional leadership. It is shown by Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2014) that the African continent has limited literature on successful instructional leadership practices at schools in trying contexts. These trying contexts would include rural areas and war-torn areas. A large -scale research project conducted by Wanzare (2012) on instructional leadership in Kenyan secondary schools indicated that instructional leadership was seen as a way of checking on people's work and was shown to be impeded by inconsistency and questionable behavior of supervisors. My study, qualitative in nature, hears from the principals and the teachers on instructional leadership.

Lack of time and adequate competences are indicated as some of the reasons why some principals not participate in teaching practises. According to Wanzare (2011) this is a global problem. This impedes on the teacher's professional growth (Blasé &Blasé, 1989) and teacher accountability. The complexity of the role of being a principal is made worse by there being a huge number of things that the principal has to attend to beside instructional matter. Inadequate competence and misappropriated focus do not help the situation for example when principals focus more on infrastructure or discipline rather than instructional focus.

### 2.1.4 South African literature

It is recorded by Fleisch and Christie (2004) that under apartheid most school principals in South Africa had limited authority. However, the new political dispensation of 1994 gave principals some considerable responsibility. This policy backed responsibility of school leadership comes as a top to bottom change of the system (characterised by autocracy) and has been met with mixed success hence affecting teacher accountability and development (Hoadley et al., 2009). My assumption is that where instructional leadership is implemented, the teachers account to the principal and the

principal directly or indirectly develops the teacher in accordance to what he evaluates to be lacking during the monitoring process and interactions.

New policies have been introduced in the South African educational system since the introduction of the new constitution in 1996. Some of the new policies were the South African Schools Act (SASA, RSA, 1996); Report of the Task Team (1996); the Draft Policy Framework (2004) Education Management and Leadership Development; the South African Standard for Principalship (SASP, 2005) and The South African Standards for School Leadership (SASSL, DoE, 2007). The SASA introduced policy for democratic management and governance of schools and the SASP gave standards for Principalship (Van der Westhuizen & Van Vuuren, 2007). The South African Standards for School Leadership (SASSL, DoE, 2007) states that “the principal working with the School Management Team (SMT) and others has a primary responsibility to promote a successful learning culture within the school.” In light of this, it is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that quality teaching and learning happens with the help of the SMT. However, the problem is that most of these policies are being implemented incorrectly and sometimes not implemented at all (Christie, 2008). According to Christie (2008, p 156), “the policy process may appear rational and sequential, but in practice it is contested and sometimes confused”.

Jansen (2004), in a case study, refers to the contestations by teachers against South African policies on staff surveillance and the autonomous nature of the teaching occupation as having effects on teacher accountability and teacher development. He also reports that there is resistance by teachers to accountability and development. There is therefore room for research on teacher accountability and teacher development locally using a different methodology: finding out from principals’ narratives and focus group interviews application of instructional leadership in a South African context. In my experience as a teacher in South African secondary schools, teachers are rarely called up to account for their actions by the stakeholders in the school. Teachers are often considered as own managers hence the evidence of very little accountability from them (Blase´ & Blase´ 1998).

Hoadley and Kopanong (2007, p. 1) posit that “there is a consensus around the importance of leadership to improved student outcomes”. Bush (2013, p. S6) goes on to assert that “instructional leadership is the longest established concept linking leadership and learning” and that instructional leadership “is very important because it targets the school’s central activities, teaching and learning.” If improvement in teaching and learning is to be achieved in education focus has to be given on research on leadership as leadership can improve student outcomes.

Studies by Sayed (2000) and Mestry and Grobler (2002) show that most principals have not received adequate specialist training, especially in financial management and instructional leadership. This is as a result of principals being promoted from teaching positions into principalship without having any formal training on leadership. Due to lack of training in leadership, most principals lack in important aspects such as accountability and teacher development.

At the core of instructional leadership is teacher accountability (Marishane, 2015), and teacher development (Van der Berg et al., 2011). In South Africa, there is very little research on the relationship between the instructional leadership, accountability and teacher development (Hoadley et al., 2009).

The majority of studies on instructional leadership have been done in contexts that are different from the South African context. Hallinger (2011) encourages that more research be done on instructional leadership strategies to context-specific conditions. He says, “we need to obtain better information not just about “what works” but “what works” in different settings” (Hallinger, 2011, p. 138). My research seeks to find out what works in the South African context. Research studies help us test theories in different contexts. My argument here is that the context-specific African environment adds to the international discourse of instructional leadership as posited by van der Merwe and Schenck (2014).

#### 2.1.5 Instructional leadership roles

The point of departure for understanding and identifying of the roles of the principals is to see the principal as an instructional leader (Hallinger, 2005). According to Motilal (2015), this should be

stipulated and legislated role of the principal. There is therefore a need for the roles of the principal as an instructional leader to be stipulated so that principals do not run schools according to their own notions of what instructional leadership is.

Several researchers have listed characteristic roles of principals as instructional leaders and some of them do converge. The focus of the instructional leader is critically on the behaviour of the teacher (Sheppard, 1996) during interaction with the learners. Southworth (2002) argues that using this as a description of the role of the principal is 'narrow' and he encourages a more 'broader' view to instructional leadership. In light of this, I think that if we are to broaden our views of instructional leadership we should come up with more roles of the instructional leader as suggested by Southworth (2002).

The principal is assisted by the SMT to manage the school as stipulated by the South African Schools Acts (1996) but he/she is accountable for learner achievement. Therefore, the principal and the SMT must lead instruction in schools so as to improve the achievement of learners. According to the SASSL document, the principal must be aware of the following: the National Curriculum Statement, practices of effective teaching and learning, support of curriculum delivery, effective monitoring and evaluation of performance, collecting and analysing data and using research to inform and improve practice (SASSL, DoE, 2007).

There are six key area of principalship identified by SASSL (DoE, 2005) are: leading and managing the learning school, shaping the direction and development of the school, assuring quality and securing accountability, developing and empowering self and others, managing the school as an organisation and working with and for the community.

The difference in the understanding of the identified key areas due to varying backgrounds and contexts makes it difficult for South African principals to have a common understanding. Therefore, even after the identification of the key areas of principalship, the practices of principals vary from place to place. There is no common practice among the principals in running schools. This is exacerbated by difference of contexts in which we find South African schools as Slavin (2005) points out that schools are different.

Bush and Glover (2009) also identify what the principal must do in order to influence teaching and learning as: oversee the curriculum across the school, ensure that the lesson takes place, evaluate the learners' performance through scrutiny of examination results and internal assessment, monitor the work of the HOD's through scrutiny of their work plans and portfolios, ensure that the HODs monitor the work of educators within their learning areas, arrange a programme of class visits followed up by feedback to educators; and ensure the availability of appropriate learning and teaching support material.

Southworth (2002) demonstrates that "modelling", "monitoring" and "professional dialogue and discussion" are strategies that effectively improved teaching and learning. All of these strategies directly relate to the teacher and can be effectively influenced by a principal who practices instructional leadership. When teaching and learning are improved, learner outcome also improves.

These duties make the principal the centre of power in the managing of teaching and learning and agree with some of the roles of the principal as stipulated in the SASSL (DOE 2005/7). The responsibilities of the principal over the curriculum, evaluating performance, managing teaching and learning and monitoring work are common in the literature by Bush and Glover (2009) and SASSL, DOE (2005). However, Bush and Glover (2009)'s list does not include external relationships. These external relationships would include the district and parents who are important stakeholders in democratisation of education (Sergiovanni, 2005).

Research has also shown that what matters is what really happens in the classroom. Elmore (2008) calls this the instructional core and it includes the teacher, the learner and the content that must be focused on in order to see an improvement in educational change. Fleisch (2016) conducted a study in Gauteng Province on how to improve primary school language and mathematics at a large scale. Using over 1000 schools for his study, Fleisch (2016) notes the possibility of large scale educational reform. He recommends the focus of instructional leadership to be on the instructional core which is driven by government leadership. The reason for the existence of schools is that teaching and learning may take place hence the focus of a principal must be on the instructional

core. The principal as the instructional leader must be focus on what really happens in the classroom (instructional core).

Given this background, one has to realize that due to the difference in nature of primary schools and secondary schools, the roles of the principal in secondary schools differ from those in primary schools because primary and secondary schools differ in size, departments and age of their students. In light of this, the secondary school principal's role is to facilitate and develop the instructional leadership of those that can assist in direct instructional leadership (Firestone & Herriott, 1982; Foster, 2004; Kleine-Kracht, 1993). In our South African context these would be the head of department, subject heads and heads of grades.

## **2.2 Theoretical framework**

The development of instructional leadership saw a number of models being developed in order to illustrate this particular form of leadership. Some of the early proponents of instructional leadership are Hallinger and Murphy (1985) with their three dimensional model of instructional leadership; Murphy (1990) with his four dimension iteration; Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe's (2008) five component model and later Hoadley et al. (2009) who all built on the initial effort of Hallinger and Murphy (1985).

The six-dimensional model of instructional leadership by Hoadley et al. (2009) was used to analyze data in this study. Drawing insights from the literature on school leadership in South Africa, Hoadley et al. (2009) postulate that there are six dimensions of instructional leadership namely: the instructional focus of the school, the social relationships within the school, the management of resources, external relations of the school, vision and expectation and dispersed leadership. I adopted the six dimensions of instructional leadership as my theoretical framework because it is a South African model hence, it helped inform my study of instructional leadership in South African secondary schools.

By using Hoadley et al. (2009)'s model of instructional leadership as a lens in my study, I was able to explore instructional leadership practices of principals in the secondary schools in this study.



Below, I explain what each dimension entails.

### **2.2.1 The instructional focus of the school**

In order to explain the first dimension, the instructional focus, emphasis is placed on the importance of the monitoring the school's curriculum coverage. Hoadley et al. (2009) emphasise that an instructional leader has a well-worked out plan to improve the student results and also ensures that the school day is designed for maximum learning. Hoadley et al. (2009) flag evidence to the contrary, indicating that school time is often not used well for maximum teaching and learning purposes (see for example Hoadley (2007)). As this study explores instructional leadership, instructional focus was explored as it is a dimension of instructional leadership.

### **2.2.2 The social relationships within the school**

The second dimension of the Hoadley's model stresses on the social relationships in the school, especially the importance of collaboration between staff and their dependence on leadership support for structured opportunities for collaboration and peer learning opportunities (Hoadley et al. 2009). This study focuses on the practices of instructional leadership hence how instructional leadership influences social relationships was explored.

### **2.2.3 The management of resources**

The third dimension is the management of resources. The South African context is seriously marred by unequal distribution of resources. Even though it is not within the remit of a principal to correct the systemic injustices, within the school context the effective and strategic use of resources for the learning programme could make a difference to learner performance, e.g. the efficient management of available Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM) which is imperative (Hoadley et al., 2009). The instructional leader is responsible for the management of resources hence as instructional leadership was explored in this study; management of resources was also explored.

### **2.2.4 External relations of the school**

External relations of the school are another important dimension for inclusion in the Hoadley model. External relations of the school entail amongst other things parental valuing and support of

education as well as the willingness of the School Governing Body (SGB) to assist in the school (Hoadley et al., 2009). Hoadley et al. (2009) concede that is hard to tell from their research data whether external relations are affected by the principal's practice however; Sergiovanni (2005) highlights the importance of other stakeholders like parents and the community in relation to school effectiveness.

### **2.2.5 Vision and expectation**

Botha (2004) asserts that the instructional leader must set clear expectations. As its fifth dimension the Hoadley model highlights the importance of vision and expectation of performance as part of instructional leadership. This is about setting the bar high, continually motivating and building confidence that high performance levels are achievable.

### **2.2.6 Dispersed leadership**

Dispersed leadership is the sixth and last dimension included in the model. It entails the ability to distribute leadership across the organisation, in the process supplementing the capacity of the principal for exercising instructional leadership. For dispersed leadership to be a success, principals ought to develop positive or collaborative teacher relations within the school (Hoadley et al., 2009).

After applying their model empirically, Hoadley et al. (2009) found that it confirmed what was already known about school management in South Africa. Their findings aligned with much of the research that exists internationally (Hoadley et al., 2009). Some of the key findings were the importance of parental support and engagement, as well as the important role that the instructional focus of the school has on learner achievement. The most significant finding, however, was the importance of the relationship between school and community in assisting the school management with the improvement of overall learner achievement.

The objective of this Research Report is to explore the practices of instructional leadership, the six dimensions of instructional leadership discussed above are a lens for looking at instructional leadership in schools. As the work of Hoadley, Christie and Ward produced six dimensions of

instructional leadership in South African schools, it was reasonable to find similar findings in my study. Each dimension indicates what may be observed as an element of an instructional leader.

### **2.3 Chapter Summary**

After giving a brief history on instructional leadership, this section takes a look at the international and local views with respect to the instructional leadership roles of school principals. The reviewed literature supports the view that leadership influences student achievement and that it is the responsibility of the principal to lead teaching and learning. The literature review also emphasizes the evolution of instructional leadership, instructional leadership roles and the instructional core. It also informs of the inadequate competence of some principal, lack of time for principals to do all they have to do and the need to broaden studies on instructional leadership. A discussion of the Hoadley et al. (2009) model which is the theoretical framework ends the chapter.

Some of the questions that arise from this literature review are: 1. How do the actions of principals influence teaching and learning? 2. What are the principal's school practices? 3. How can principals improve classroom practice? To answer these questions, the appropriate research design and methodology was used. The following chapter discusses the research design and methodology for this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology that was developed for this research. It justifies the research methodology chosen. This section discusses both the methods of data gathering and methods of data analysis that were used in this study. The research design and methodology that I chose for this research are justified through theorizing of the research paradigm and demonstration of the nature of each choice made. This chapter also covers issues of trustworthiness and highlights the importance of ethics and how they were treated in this research.

#### 3.1 Research paradigms

Nieuwenhuis (2007) defines paradigms as a set of assumptions about fundamental aspects of reality which result in a particular world-view. The four research paradigms are: positivism/post-positivism; interpretivism/social constructivism; emancipatory/critical and pragmatism/post-modernism (Creswell, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This study is located within the interpretive paradigm because there are multiple truths since reality is subjective and constructed from a person's life experiences, background and social interactions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit 2008). The principals and teachers that are were in this study will present multiple truths because reality is subjective and was presented from each one's personal experience.

In my qualitative research I used ontology. Ontological issues relate to nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013). There are multiple realities. The principals in this study have different realities and so do I. The intention of this research was to report these multiple realities. The compilation of the phenomenology of each subject was reported on. The epistemology of the research was based on subjective experience and narratives of the principals involved in the research,

Axiology refers to the roles of values and ethics in research. I admit to the value-laden nature of my study and the information gathered in the field. The study represented my interpretation and representation as much as that of the study

### 3.2 Research Methodology

I selected the qualitative method to get deep understanding of the situation of the participants, as well as of the meaning they derived from their situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). A qualitative approach helped in getting an in-depth look at a small number of cases to gain understanding of the principals' and the teachers' own relation to her/his context with the aim of understanding the practices of instructional leadership.

I made use of both phenomenological and narrative studies in this research. By making use of phenomenological study, I described the meanings of lived experience in order to allow reflection and analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Phenomenological study allowed me to find the participants' meanings of instructional leadership and also allowed me to reflect and analyse these experiences. School leadership is a difficult, complicated task, its variables are predefined and is riddled with contextual aspects in quantitative enquiries. The narrative inquiry explored experiences and therefore overcame the complication experienced in quantitative research methods. Principals used their experience to handle an imaginary situation (Salo, Nylund & Stjernstrom, 2015).

#### Data generation methods

Narratives written by principals and focus group interviews were the methods used for data generation. These methods provided gather data on instructional leadership practices from the principals' and the teachers' perspectives respectively. The use of the two methods helped with the triangulation of data.

The data gathered from the narratives and focus group interviews was cited verbatim in order to maintain authenticity. The grammar was therefore not corrected.

### 3.3 Research Design

#### 3.2.1 Narratives

Principals used their experience to handle an imaginary situation (Salo, Nylund & Stjernstrom, 2015). A fictive scenario is presented to each participant in order to write a story which is expected to relate to prerequisites, approaches, activities, interactions and contextual variables that relate to a fictive outcome. This provides “rich” descriptions that cannot be reduced to numbers and nothing escapes scrutiny (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). This approach will provide greater understanding of what it was about the instructional leadership that affected the instructional core. According to Moller and Eggen (2005), the complex practices involved in the leading of schools are better explored using a narrative form. This encapsulates traditions, organizational characteristics and teacher cultures that are often overlooked (Slater, 2011).

Three principals of High Schools in Johannesburg South wrote narratives on their successful and unsuccessful efforts in using instructional leadership IL to improve the school programme. These narratives are conceptualized as empathy-based stories and relate to the principals’ experiences.

The Frame story that was used has two possible outcomes (a) or (b) and read:

In the Johannesburg South in which you work as a principal, a decision has been made to institute instructional leadership, specifically the improvement of the instructional programme. You are given a certain amount of time in your working hours for this purpose. Following an introductory discussion with your staff members you set out to do the task.

A year later you evaluate your undertakings and you are able to observe that (a) the whole project was very successful and you will continue with it and (b) it failed and therefore you will not continue with it. In a short story, write your

experiences in relation to your outcome. Alternatively, make a list of the things that affected your outcome.

### 3.2.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews provide an opportunity for participants to interact and “bounce off” each other’s responses (Cresswell, 2013). Focus groups containing 4 teachers were used in each school to deliberate issues on instructional leadership practices in their schools. Although confidentiality was difficult to assure for those participants who were to be interviewed in focus groups, confidentiality was emphasised by explaining why it was important for all involved to respect confidentiality. I had the participants fill in a confidentiality form as the nature of focus groups does not guarantee anonymity (Cresswell, 2013) but provide opportunity for interaction and for participants to comment on each other’s experiences. I chose focus group interviews because they give more considerable answers than a one on one interview.

### 3.3.3 Selection of research participants

Nieuwenhuis (2007) defines sampling as a process used to select a portion of the study population for study. Convenient selection was used for choosing the three principals in this study. Two of the principals are from the two secondary schools where I taught before and the other one is from secondary schools close to one of the schools. All these schools are located in the Johannesburg South area. Two of the principals are males and one is female.

For anonymity and confidentiality pseudonyms were used:

Principal of High School 1: Mr Adam

Principal of High School 2: Mr Eve

Principal of High School 3: Miss Cain

The selection of teachers for the focus groups was through simple random sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Four teachers were chosen from a hat draw which excluded the principal.

According to Salo, Nylund and Stjernstrom (2015, p.95), the advantage of random sampling is that “it increases the likelihood of representativeness, especially if one’s sample is not very large.”

For anonymity and confidentiality:

<b>Focus group</b>	<b>Participants</b>
High School 1	A: Teacher 1 B: Teacher 2 C: Teacher 3 D: Teacher 4
High School 2	A <sub>2</sub> : Teacher 1 B <sub>2</sub> : Teacher 2 C <sub>2</sub> : Teacher 3 D <sub>2</sub> : Teacher 4
High School 3	A <sub>3</sub> : Teacher 1 B <sub>3</sub> : Teacher 2 C <sub>3</sub> : Teacher 3 D <sub>3</sub> : Teacher 4

### 3.3.4 Sample Size

As this is a qualitative research that is exploratory and is phenomenological in its nature, there is no need for a large sample. Three constituted the sample size. As for the focus groups, they contained randomly selected four teachers per focus group.

### 3.5 Data analysis

This study is qualitative and looks at thick descriptions of how principals and teachers perceive instructional leadership. For this reason, I used the inductive approach to analyse the narratives and focus group interviews. According to Creswell (2013), the inductive approach involves the bottom up approach to analysis of data in which I working back and forth between the themes and the database until I reached a comprehensive set of themes. My analysis was inductive because my codes were informed by the six dimensions of instructional leadership (Hoadley et al. 2009).



The narratives were analysed on the basis of Giorgi's (1975) phenomenological steps:

- (1) Read each story to get the overall sense as a whole.
- (2) Re-read the story and identify transactions in the experience.
- (3) Eliminate redundancies in the units of meaning and begin to relate remaining units to one another.
- (4) Transform the participants' language into the language of science
- (5) Report the insights into a description of the entire experience of leadership practices

The phenomenological analytical framework is used because it involves dwelling on the phenomenon and systematically analysing the narratives through reflection and then describing the prevalent themes (Finlay, 2014).

The interviews were analysed using the coding system. Each interview was transcribed for an immersion into the data for initial segmentation of the data into units of meaning (Rabiee, 2004). I followed this up with open coding by reading and re-reading each interview to achieve an inductive selection of codes determined at sentence level (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). After axial coding, selective coding is used so that themes from the labelled categories are extracted to represent the interpreted and rationalized data as research findings (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004)

### 3.6 Issues of trustworthiness

The key features of trustworthiness in qualitative studies are measured in terms of: credibility, comparability, transferability, dependability, conformability and authenticity (Shenton, 2004, Maree, 2007; Elo, Kaariainen, Kanste, Polkki, Utriainen & Kyngas; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Rule & John, 2011). Credibility will be enhanced through description of my experiences as a researcher and verifying the research findings with the participants. For comparability, theoretical constructs and research procedures are applied in such a way that other researchers can interpret the results in like manner (Cope 2014). To ensure transferability, I will provide sufficient information on the informants and the research context to enable the reader to assess the findings'

capability of being transferable. For dependability, the study would be deemed dependable if the findings were replicated with similar participants in similar conditions (Cope, 2014). Confirmability will be enhanced by describing how conclusions and interpretations were established. Authenticity refers to the ability and extent to which I express the feelings and emotions of the participant's experiences in a faithful manner (Polit & Beck, 2012). Triangulation will be used in this research to ensure trustworthiness. This will be ascertained by concluding from data generated from narratives as well as from the focus group interviews.

### 3.7 Ethics in research

The nature of qualitative research makes it personally intrusive than quantitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Therefore ethics have to be considered. Ethics refer to the questions of right and wrong (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). Due to the importance of ethical issues, they have to be planned for to avoid ethical dilemmas. Ethical considerations are therefore imperative in every area of research. In the proposed methodology of study, ethical issues are going to be addressed in four categories given by Leedy and Ormrod (2014):

#### No harm or risk for participants

Harm may be in form of physical, psychological, emotional harm and embarrassment. According to (Polonsky & Waller, 2011), the research should have minimal, if any potential harm to occur. To avoid harm, participants are informed in advance and counselling can be done if needs be after the participation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014).

#### Communicating results and honesty with professional colleagues

It is the fiduciary duty of the researcher to act with utmost honesty. Research is guided by the principle of honesty. All stakeholders are to be informed regularly on the progress of the research.

Ethical challenges	How to address it
Plagiarism	Properly acknowledging other's work
Academic fraud	Data is not made up or fabricated
Misrepresenting of results	Conclusions must be consistent with findings

### Informed participation

In this research participants will be informed about that well beforehand, so that they make a choice of whether to participate or choose not to.

### Right to privacy

The settings and participants should not be identified in print (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). Leedy and Ormrod (2014), give various techniques that protect the identity of participants. Anonymity will be achieved by use of pseudonyms, where the respondents' names may not need to be necessarily revealed. The raw data will not be posted on the internet to ensure privacy.

### 3.8 Delimiting/Demarcation of the study

The research has delimitations so as to keep the study in focus. Three principles from three different Secondary Schools were given three weeks (two hours per week) to write narratives. From each of the four schools, a focus group comprising on four participants that exclude the principal was interviewed. Each interview was 45 minutes long.

The proposal for this research project was put together from February to April of 2007 and ethical clearance was then granted in May of 2017. Chapters one to six were compiled over a period of seven months and by the time December 2017 came, I was working on the recommendations of this study. The first two months of 2018 were used for editing and correcting the Research Report and submission was done on the 15th of February 2018.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

By making use of the interpretive paradigm, the researcher attempted to find out what the participants understood by the meaning of instructional leadership to be. The paradigm also influenced the decision on which research methodology to use and the instruments for data collection. Throughout the research, consideration of ethical issues was kept in mind. The

qualitative techniques of narratives and focus group interviews conducted with the participants were based on the research questions and provided the data for this research.

To analyse the data collected, comparisons of the participants' responses were made and common codes and themes were identified. The data generated from the interview was analysed by comparing the data of the respective respondents in order to identify common codes, themes and trends. Member checks were conducted giving respondents a chance not only to validate their own interview transcripts and comment on the researcher's codes and emerging themes, but also on the correctness of the inferences. The next chapter represents the data gathered and chapter five will provide analysis and interpretation of the data.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4. Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the data gathered in this study. Data for this research was collected from narratives of the principals and focus group interviews with teachers and is given in Appendix E as raw data. The data was gathered from three secondary schools in the South of Johannesburg. The gathered data was then coded in a two-stage process that involves sifting and selecting information into ‘data bits’ and giving them labels called ‘codes’ (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004).

#### 4.1 Data presentation (Appendix E)

##### High School 1

High School 1 is located in the South of Johannesburg and has 1 100 learners and 52 educators. It is an ex-C model school with a diversity of learner and teacher representation. The school had a matric pass rate of 89% in the previous year.

The principal of this school, Mr Adam, is in his early forties and has been the principal for seven years in the school. He was promoted from within the school to principalship after serving shortly as the deputy principal.

A mixture of races and sexes made up the focus group. They were two females and two males with ages ranging from 23 to 54 years.

##### High School 2

High School 2 has 1000 learners and 48 teachers. It is located in the South of Johannesburg currently has a 76% matric pass rate. High School 2, though multiracial, comprises mainly of black children and a multiracial representation of staff. Most of the learners come from the residential areas that are around the school.

The principal of this school, Mr Eve, is in his early forties and has been the principal for 5 years following his promotion to principalship from another school.

The focus group comprises of four teachers from different subject areas. Their ages ranged from 23 years to 47. These participants were all males of different races.

### **High School 3**

High School 3 is a Johannesburg South School that has 700 learners and 27 teachers. It is located in the suburbs of Johannesburg South and has a 57% matric pass rate. The school is mainly composed of black learners though the teaching staff is of different races

Miss Cain is in her early fifties and has been the principal for twelve years in the school. She was promoted from an HOD position from another school to come and head the school.

The four teachers that made up the focus group were all black teachers and their ages ranged from 37 to 50 years. Their learning areas were English, Maths, Geography and Economics.

## **4.2 Data analysis**

Earlier in this chapter, I provided the story on three high schools as portrayed in the narratives by the principals and the focus group interviews of the teachers (Appendix E). This chapter now goes on to link up the information from the data gathered with that from the literature review and the theoretical framework in a way that produces themes that structure this chapter. In this way the data gathered is analysed under the lens of previous studies hence answering the research question

in a systematic and structured manner (Mouton, 2001). The emerging themes following the categorizing of the codes are discussed in detail below.

#### **4.2.1 How principals operationalize instructional leadership in secondary schools**

The operationalization of instructional leadership as observed by the principals through their narratives as well as by the teachers through the focus group interviews are discussed in this section. From the narratives and focus group interviews, the themes that emerge are styles of leadership, communication, instructional leadership roles and leadership qualities. These themes are discussed separately below.

##### **Styles of leadership**

There are different styles of leadership. Autocratic leadership is one of them. The leadership style that was identified by most participants to be prevalent in their schools was the autocratic leadership also known as dictatorship. Two of the focus groups highlighted the presence of dictatorial style of leadership in their schools. When asked what comes to mind when they hear the term instructional leadership, one of the participants said:

A dictator... Something more of autocratic, something more of one giving instructions ... So, if one is an instructional leader, he will be the one that would point do this, do this but then when you are a leader you have to do a step and let it be followed.

Another participant in the same group agreed saying:

My thoughts are pretty the same only that, I feel that at some point this leader must issue instruction. It is unavoidable. He must give lawful, appropriate, clear instruction so that whatever task has to be carried out or done, the subordinates will know what to do.

These findings are in agreement with Hallinger's (2008) observation that instructional leadership focuses too much on the principal as the center of power and authority. This is given as one of the

disadvantages of instructional leadership and can be noted from the sentiments of the participant above. In my experience, when the principal exercises his power and authority it is often seen as dictatorship or being autocratic hence I agree with Hallinger (2008)'s view of the principal being the center of power.

The style of leadership that accompanies instructional leadership seems to be autocratic because Hoadley's model gives authority to the instructional leader to manage the school resources. As the instructional leader has to account for what he/she does, there is a need to be in control of what happens in the school.

Another teacher in the same group added:

My thoughts are pretty the same only that, I feel that at some point this leader must issue instruction... Even though it carries an element of dictatorship or autocracy, it carries that element in it but it is unavoidable.

In light of this comment, a dictatorial approach seems unavoidable and often causes power struggles in the school. According to the six dimensions of instructional leadership postulated by Hoadley et al. (2009), the instructional leader is responsible for the social relationships within the school which entails getting collaboration between staff. A leadership style that allows for good social relationships is vital however; instructional leadership can be done using different styles of leadership as long as focus is on teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005). Though the participants highlighted the presence of a specific style of leadership as the spoke of their experiences of instructional leadership, Hoadley's model of instructional leadership does not give emphasis on any particular style of leadership.

Studies by Sayed (2000) and Mestry and Grobler (2002) show that most principals have not received adequate specialist training, especially in financial management and instructional leadership. These aspects need to be focused on and considered when appointing principals and when preparing workshops for principals. Teachers must also be developed in these aspects as prospective holders of the principal's post. Even though one style of leadership was common, some leadership qualities were also identified. What follows is a discussion on these leadership qualities.



## **Leadership qualities**

Below I analyze accountability and the ability to delegate.

### **Accountability**

In all the schools, accountability was noted as a vital quality of any instructional leader. In reference to accountability, one of the participants said the following:

... that leader must be accountable or responsible in the daily running of the organization... Though the principal responsibility as the instructional leader he delegates but still remains accountable and responsible.

Still on accountability a teacher from H1 said:

I think that the principal as he has mentioned that a principal has to be an instructional leader at some point. Yes, I agree with that but, I think the principal has to, because he is the one who has to account.

In relation to this, Marishane (2015) indicates that instructional leadership has gained popularity due to pressure on academic standards and also the need for accountability. The schools are expected to account for things like the performance of learners and the school's finances. This accountability should not only be from the principal but also from the teachers as part of the IL (Nuemerski, 2013). According to SASSL (DoE, 2005), it is the principal's responsibility to ensure quality and secure accountability.

According to the theoretical framework, school leadership is responsible for the instructional focus, management of resources, visions and expectations of the school (Hoadley et al., 2009). These dimensions are important in the functioning of the school and they highlight some areas that the school leadership has to account for especially the principal as an instructional leader. Through monitoring school coverage, correcting the system of injustice by fair distribution of resources and

setting realistic, achievable and time bound goals, a principal can successfully account for what is happening in his/her school.

Sometimes the principal has to delegate responsibilities to others. When responsibilities are delegated, the principal still remains accountable.

### Delegation

The aspect of delegation comes out strongly as a role of instructional leadership in all schools and this agrees with my findings in literature on instructional leadership. Hallinger (2009) says that instructional leadership was ‘reincarnated’ and is now modified by other forms of leadership like distributed leadership. Distributed leadership is explained as involving the delegation of duties by the principal. The theoretical framework used in this research report gives dispersed leadership as one of the dimensions of instructional leadership. Dispersed leadership entails the ability to oversee a wide range of functions. For dispersed leadership to be a success, principals ought to develop positive or collaborative teacher relations within the school (Hoadley et al., 2009). In my opinion, delegation is part of distributed leadership and dispersed leadership as responsibilities are shared.

In addition to leadership qualities, the data gathered provides information on instructional leadership roles. I will now look at instructional leadership roles in the operationalization of instructional leadership.

### **Instructional leadership roles**

The instructional leadership roles came out strongly in the conceptualization of instructional leadership by the participants. Participants highlighted roles that include articulation of visions and goals; being an example or model, giving instructions, planning, managing daily proceedings, accountability, and teacher development and assessing and monitoring work. Accountability has been looked at under leadership qualities. The SASSL, DOE, (2005) document states that the principal must be aware of these practices that lead to effective teaching and learning.

## Vision, goals and mission

Referring to vision, goals and mission a participant in the focus group from H1 said:

So, if one is an instructional leader, he will be the one that would point do this, do this but then when you are a leader you have to do a step and let it be followed.

Literature shows that leadership with a strong vision influences the performance of learners positively (Hoadley et al., 2009). The participant above highlights the importance of the leader knowing the vision and goals of the school in order to effectively lead the teachers and the learners. In the focus group interviews, HS1 and HS2 indicate how the principal must have a clear vision and clear goals in order to be effective in his/her role.

Mr Adam in his narrative highlights the value of vision when he says:

Straightaway, I had to review and amend my vision for the school, the learners and community that our school serves

Hoadley et al. (2009) shows the dimensions of instructional leaders that deal with vision, goals and knowledge under the visions and expectation as well as the instructional focus of the school dimensions. Instructional leaders set the bar high and communicate their vision by making use of good social relationships externally and internally. Jenkins (2009) adds that the instructional leader must have clear goals set. Without clear goals, vision and mission, the instructional leader will not know what to achieve, whether he or she has achieved it, the purpose of the institution nor how to be an example to his subordinates. Next, I look at modelling as an instructional leadership role which helps in setting an example.

## Modelling

Modelling is described by Southworth (2002) as one of the strategies that effectively improves teaching and learning. We can conclude that principals that demonstrate good practices to their teachers command respect and a loyal following from their subordinates. Teacher development become easier as teachers follow the example of their principal.

To illustrate how an instructional leader must be an example or a role model, the participants from HS1 and HS4 said the following respectively:

... he will be the one that would point do this, do this but then when you are a leader you have to do a step and let it be followed. We go together, there is a “we”

It is clear that the participants in HS1 conceptualized the operationalization of instructional leadership as being in words and in deed. Although communication is important as will be discussed later, the principal must also act in a manner that is in line with what he/she says. It is noted that some principals in this study say one thing and do the other hence they are not modelling the behavior of teachers and learners. An example of this lack of modelling is illustrated by how Miss Cain emphasises on the importance of communication in her narrative yet her teachers in the focus group complain if very little communication.

What follows is a look at teacher development.

#### Teacher development

Teacher development entails assisting teachers to improve their practices through direct or indirect training. From Hoadley’s model of instructional leadership, teacher development is seen in the dimension of vision and expectation where the instructional leader has high expectations for the teachers. In addition, the model covers management of resources which include human resources and dispersed leadership which requires help from the teachers. Teacher development is one of the leadership roles that were mentioned in all the high schools. One of the participants, D2, said instructional leadership involves:

... trying to bring out the best in people finding the best qualities and letting the people shine with the qualities that they have and that they are good at.

A participant from HS3 said, “...instructional leadership is where the top management is giving you work assessing your work especially the teachers and then developing the teachers.”

In an effort to develop his teachers, Mr Adam said:

I knew I was not very confident of the Science and Math curriculum content, so I looked for help to upgrade myself... This has equipped me and when I get into any classroom, I know very well what to look for, and not to criticise my teachers, but in order to assist them to achieve our common goal.

Mr Adam and Mr Eve share a common problem among principals which is a lack of knowledge and therefore confidence in certain learning areas. This influences the authority of the principals and their ability to monitor and assess teachers. Some solutions to these challenges are brokering services (Rigby, 2014), professional development and dispersed leadership (Hoadley et al., 2009)

Mr Eve makes some salient points with regards to professional development when he said:

As the school principal, I am expected to get fully immersed into the teaching and learning activities of which I also need development especially in the subject content for the FET phase – I did not have the expertise of the curriculum.

The monitoring role of principals ensures the development and accountability of teachers (Southworth, 2002; Salo, Nylund & Stjernstrom, 2015). When teachers are monitored and assessed, areas that require development are identified and the instructional leader facilitates the development. Rigby (2014) highlights teacher development can be done directly or by brokering expertise. However, in order to develop teachers successfully, they must have been assessed and monitored effectively.

#### Assessing and monitoring

Assessing and monitoring were used interchangeably in the data collected. That is why a participant from HS3 mentions that instructional leadership involves assessing of teacher's work. As instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning, it is important that the assessment of what happens in the classroom is done regularly, recorded and communicated.

The role of effective monitoring and evaluation of performance is stated in SASSSL, DoE (2007) as one of the roles for principals in South African schools. Jenkins (2009) also defines instructional leaders as leaders who among other things are involved in monitoring lesson plans and evaluating teachers. This, as mentioned earlier, is to assist with teacher development and also allows room for accountability.

Clear communication should be established in order for I instructional leadership L to be effective. For example, the principal's observations during the monitoring and assessing process must be communicated in a way that brings about teacher development and secures accountability. What follows is a look at communication as an important instructional leadership role.

### **Communication**

The conceptualization of instructional leadership among the participants indicated the critical importance of communication. During the group interview one of the participants mentioned that "He [the instructional leader] must give lawful, appropriate, clear instruction so that whatever task has to be carried out or done, the subordinates will know what to do". Communication is key in the operationalization of instructional leadership. Both the principals and the teachers from the schools under study mentioned the importance of communication in instructional leadership.

Miss Cain mentions that communication as an important aspect of instructional leadership when she says:

As an instructional leader, it is always important to communicate your school programme regularly to parents, learners and teachers through various medium.

In each of the six dimensions of instructional leadership, Hoadley et al. (2009) illustrates the value of communication. For example, there is no way that the instructional focus, external relations of the school, vision and expectation nor dispersed leadership can successfully exist without clear communication by the instructional leader. It is therefore vital that communication is focused on as the principals operationalize instructional leadership.

The next section covers the experiences of teachers of the school principals' instructional leadership practices. These experiences help us in identifying specific themes on instructional leadership from the teachers' interaction with the principal.

#### **4.2.2 The experiences of teachers of the school principal's instructional leadership practices**

The teachers experience the principal's instructional leadership in a way that reveals their principal's styles of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and communication abilities of the principals. These experiences are almost similar to the aspects discussed above concerning the operationalization of instructional leadership in the secondary schools. Similar sentiments to the styles of leadership being mainly autocratic and instructional leadership roles focusing mainly on delegation, accountability and teacher development are observed from the data. Additional thoughts different from the ones already discussed in the first question include instructional focus, management of resources, supervision and evaluation.

##### **Styles of leadership**

One of the emerging issues from my data is that most of the high schools have autocratic leadership. A participant from HS1 observes that:

... autocratic leadership is what we have been experiencing in this school and it seem popular in most secondary school according to statistics. I believe that this power struggle approach leads to the downfall of schools every year. Staff turnover becomes high each year.

Another participant from HS2 laments the presence of autocratic leadership in his school and shared his desired for a democratic school:

...we also need a person that will come back to the people that you are working with, your colleagues to ask before taking a firm decision or final decision on any issue.

The participant from HS2 indicates a democratic style of leadership. This is a style of leadership that asks for the views of others and takes the decision supported by the majority. Sergiovanni (2005) makes a case on how these democratic decisions are deeper and endure more than educational change due to using bureaucratic forces or market forces. My views are in line with

democratic leadership as it allows collaboration. It becomes vital for the instructional leader to apply his mind and be well informed so as to steer the school in the right direction.

The participants highlighted dispersed leadership, distributed leadership and/or delegation as a way through which leadership can meet its goals. This happened according to the theory by Hoadley et al. (2009) in which we expect that dispersed leadership should be observed as one of the dimensions of instructional leadership. In support of this, Hallinger (2009) asserts that instructional leadership has now evolved due to the influence of distributed leadership.

Motilal (2015) explains how South African leadership often defaults to autocratic or dictatorship due to the violent past that the nation has. Christie (2010) notes how teachers through unions and outright rebellion revolt against any form of top down management that reminds them of the oppression of the past. This presents a challenge to the instructional leader who has to set goals, monitor and evaluate educators, allocate resources (Jenkins, 2009), delegate duties (Hallinger, 2009) and manage resources without appearing like a dictator.

There are certain roles that help identify an instructional leader. From the teachers' experiences of the principals' instructional leadership, I noted a number of instructional leadership roles which I go on to cover.

### **Instructional leadership roles**

As an instructional leader, the principal needs to have instructional focus, to supervise and monitor, to communicate policy, to be accountable and manage the schools smoothly. Bush (2007) emphasizes the importance of instructional leadership roles stating that they target the school's central activities, namely, teaching and learning. Some of these roles are mentioned in the focus group interviews and the principals' narratives.

#### **Instructional focus**

In order to have substantial change in learner achievements, Spillane (2001) suggests that there should be a huge change in the way in which classroom instructions are given. Therefore, the focus on what happens inside the classroom becomes a pivotal role in the improvement of teaching and



learning. In light of this, Bush (2013) highlights how instructional leadership is the best way to link leadership and learning in addition, school management structures have to be put in place, monitored and supported by the principal (Salo, Nylund & Stjernstrom, 2015) for improvement in teaching and learning.

Mr. Eve, in his narrative, makes reference to the focus on teaching and learning and says;

My role as a principal has been narrowed by just focusing mainly on the instructional activities, and most probably ignoring some other important areas.

Instructional focus is one of the six dimensions of instructional leadership given by Hoadley et al. (2009). It is clear that principals in South Africa do not consider instructional focus as their most important role. There are a lot of things that are done by the principal in the school which include financial management, meeting with parents and district officials and managing resources. The focus of the principal should be mainly on the instructional core, what happens in the classroom (Elmore, 2008), as teaching and learning are central to the role of the principal as an instructional leader (Bush and Glover, 2009).

Instructional focus is a very important dimension because it targets the school's central activities of teaching and learning. However, this paradigm underestimates other aspects of school life such as sport, socialisation and student welfare (Bush, 2003, pp. 16-17). It is also unfortunate that not all classroom time in South African classrooms is used constructively and thus not all content is covered within the specified time frame (Hoadley, 2003). As a result, it is vital to ensure that the various areas of the curriculum are managed well as well as monitoring, control and evaluating of assessments and plans takes place consistently to inform the decisions made in the school. These decisions must also be guided by the school goals, mission and vision.

#### Goal, mission and vision setting

When asked of the importance of the roles of the instructional leader, D2 said:

So, I think giving instruction or having instructional leadership it will helping teaching and learning by clarifying and setting specific goals for each individual and how they function in the whole like how each part functions to make the sum of the parts work better.

Sheppard (1996) and Jenkins (2009) highlight the setting of goals as a role of an instructional leader and SASSL (DoE, 2005) identifies shaping the direction and development of the school as one of the six key areas of principalship. This links with Hoadley et al.'s (2007) dimension of the instructional leader's role regarding vision and expectations. The principal must be able to articulate the goals, mission and vision of the school.

#### Supervision, monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and supervision of classes and teachers by the principals requires the principal to be an instructional leader, as mentioned by Mr. Eve.

Whilst I have to monitor class activities, I also need to satisfy those external expectations from my district and Department

Due to the large scope of knowledge areas covered in secondary schools, it is impossible for the principal to be knowledgeable of all subject areas. This presents a challenge in monitoring and evaluating teachers in secondary schools. A participant from HS1 observes that:

He (the principal) has never been into my class so he cannot really say this is what you should be doing so, he has never been into my class.

In situations where the principal lacks the knowledge to assist or develop a teacher, Rigby (2014), as mentioned earlier, advises the use of brokering. Words on a plaque representing goals, mission and vision are not on their own enough to improve teaching and learning.

#### Managing of resources

One of the dimensions of instructional leadership is the management of resources (Hoadley et al., 2009). The management of resources has a significant effect on teaching and learning and it is at the service of promoting the core goal of achieving better teaching and learning results (Taylor, Muller, & Vinjevoold, 2003). Management activities should therefore be directed towards the creation of supporting conditions for teachers and learners. Unfortunately, procurement and

management of resources have not been all that smooth (e.g. SGBs overstepping their mandate and dominating decision-making and not all resources are being used effectively) (Taylor and Prinsloo, 2005). This supports the notion by the principal that schools are not suffering from lack of resources but underperforms mostly due to the lack of knowledge regarding resource management as well as technological challenges.

Some of the participants in the focus group lamented about how the principals failed to effectively manage the resources of their schools. For example A3 said,

Availability of resources, even LTSM, availability of basic resources, imagine in this day in age you still write on the chalkboard.

This role is described by Jenkins (2009) as the allocation of resources for instruction. This is presented as a responsibility of an instructional leader that helps to improve teaching and learning. It is the same as the dimension of management of resource (Hoadley et al., 2007). Principals need training and knowledge on how to manage the school resources efficiently and effectively so as to improve teaching and learning. There is insufficient training among principals in aspects of financial management as well as instructional leadership (Sayed, 2000; Mestry & Grobler, 2002). There is need for formal training for principals as well as addition of these aspects to the requirements for the principal's post. Besides allocating resources, the principal has to be accountable.

### Accountability

The role of the principal as an accounting officer is emphasized throughout my study. Hallinger (2011) and Marishane (2015) agree that instructional leadership has once again gained popularity due to a demand for accountability.

Participant C from HS1 said the principal has to be an instructional leader because "he is the one that has to account". Another participant from HS2 said, "The leader must be accountable or responsible in the daily running of the organization." From H3, participant A3 mentions that even after delegating responsibility, the principal must still remain

accountable. Next, I look at the aspect of communication which is key to effective instructional leadership.

### **Communication**

The participants related on how they experience the principal's instructional leadership in how he or she communicates policy.

One of the participants from HS1 said:

... as much as he has to do that, I think he has to ask for suggestions. Yes, you have the rules but then how best can you make these rules work as a team instead of just saying this is what you are expected to do so do that.

A participant from HS2 said:

There are times when we have got staff meetings where we have to share ideas where we have to come up with an agenda and then we deliberate on those ideas or he informs us of what is necessary. We also meet as staff in the morning to prepare for the day ...

Blasé' and Blasé (1998) make it clear that the instructional leadership that is effective has to carry an aspect of talking to teachers. Communication with teachers is vital in achieving instructional leadership roles as it allows the principal and the teachers to improve teaching and learning. Delegation, sharing vision and goals, resource allocation, staff development and accountability are some areas that require effective communication.

The six dimensions of the Hoadley et al. (2009) model for instructional leadership depends heavily on communication. Instructional leadership is shown to be present when the leader has instructional focus, emphasizing on teaching and learning. This requires communication. Communication is also key to other dimensions like social relations, management of resources, vision and expectations as well as dispersed leadership.

Now that we have covered operationalization and experiences of principals and teachers of instructional leadership, I now move on to cover the views of principals and teachers on instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning.

### **4.3.3 The views of school principals and teachers regarding instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning**

The views of principals and teachers on instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning include styles of leadership, communication, instructional leadership roles, leadership qualities, teacher development, emotions and delegation. These views vary from school to school but the most emphasized view that seems to be neglected in most literature and also is scarce in my literature review is that on emotions.

Focusing on South Africa, Hoadley and Kopanong (2007, p. 1) posits that “there is a consensus around the importance of leadership to improved student outcomes”. While Bush (2013, p. S6) goes on to assert that “instructional leadership is the longest established concept linking leadership and learning”. This agrees with my opinion that the application of instructional leadership is a tool that improves teaching and learning.

Two of the principals’ narratives reported a positive effect of instructional leadership to teaching and learning. It was only HS2 that showed a negative result owing to the lack of commitment and teamwork from the educators. The principal of HS2, Mr Eve, indicated that poor attendance for workshops and teachers influencing each other negatively led to difficulty in implementing instructional leadership. The poor response of teachers in HS2 could be attributed to the principal’s inability to motivate and follow-up on teachers with regards to teacher development.

#### **High School 1**

When it comes to how instructional leadership can be a tool to improve teaching and learning, the principal and the teachers in High School 1 were in agreement to the positive effects of instructional leadership. The participants’ views highlighted delegation, instructional focus, teacher development, external relations, policies and management of emotions as ways through which instructional leadership becomes a tool to improve teaching and learning.

The principal of the HS1's narrative indicated successful implementation of instructional leadership. Mr. Adam also related the implementation of instructional leadership with improvement of students' achievements. He highlights the importance of communication, external relations, and teacher development. The comments of the principal are also included in the analysis given below.

#### Delegation (Leadership quality)

As instructional leadership evolves there is an addition of a democratic flare to it and some influence from other forms of leadership like transformational leadership and distributed leadership (Hallinger, 2009). Distributed leadership requires that responsibilities and some power are given to those delegated to do certain duties.

One of the participants, when asked to describe the structures that the principal has in place to promote teaching and learning, said:

... we have committees like the safety committee, the catering committee, there is the disciplinary committee, those are in place and they help us a lot in making sure that the system runs very smoothly and efficiently.

The presence of delegation in the practice of instructional leadership was observed because the theoretical framework of this study points to the importance of dispersed leadership and good social relations. Hoadley et al. (2009) motivates for collaborative relations between teachers and the principal. This, in my view, allows for trust to grow between the teachers and the principal therefore creating a platform onto which duties and responsibilities can be distributed within the school as well as authority.

There is evidence of distributed leadership in schools because teachers are expected to be part of the leadership of the school as they form part of committees and leadership structures in the school. The HoDs, subject committees and class teachers now have opportunities to prove their professionalism (staff development / school projects / curriculum effectiveness). Despite the

evidence of dispersal of leadership in the schools, there is evidence of ‘power hoarding’ in which duties are delegated but the power to make decisions remains with the principal.

There are many things that a principal has to do and they cannot be finished in the school time by one person (Wanzare, 2011). Delegation of roles becomes an important instructional leadership role for the principals as it frees time for more pressing and central issues of the school like instructional focus.

Instructional focus (instructional leadership role)

The principal in High School 1 is said to engage with instructional matters in different ways. Participant A said, “He (the principal) would call you for a meeting whether formal or informal or in some form of newsletter, holding meeting when it becomes general or involving the rest of the staff”. The other participants hinted on how reports and memos were used by the principal to engage teachers in instructional matters. The teachers in this focus group said they did not implement any of the tools suggested by the principal. Participant B said:

He (the principal) has never been into my class so he cannot really say this is what you should be doing, he has never been into my class so it is just me asking other teachers how I do this, how do I deal with such an issue and so on.

Based on the focus group interview conducted, the principal, according to his colleagues, does not have the necessary pedagogical expertise and knowledge to execute the current curriculum efficiently. The teachers do not take heed to his input on instructional matters hence there is very little influence of the principal’s effort on improving teaching and learning. It is understood that instructional leaders’ influence should be targeted at student learning via teachers and the emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself (Bush 2003).

Instructional focus is one of the dimensions of instructional leadership (Hoadley et al., 2009) and is demonstrated by the need for class visits by instructional leaders in order to monitor teaching and learning. To expound on this, Hoadley et al. (2009) emphasizes how an

instructional leader monitors coverage, supervises learning and teaching and designs the school day for effective learning. The instructional leader must communicate their findings after monitoring and provide opportunities for teacher development where there is a need.

In secondary schools, teachers mainly specialize in particular knowledge areas. The principals cannot be acquainted with all the knowledge areas in the school. The instructional focus by principals only becomes insufficient. There is need for principals to delegate heads of department and subject specialists to assist in the monitoring, supervising and advising educators on how best to improve teaching and learning per subject area. The principal must then follow up with those he/she delegates to assist in the instructional focus so as to effectively manage resource and develop teachers.

Teacher development (instructional leadership role)

At the heart of what happens in the classroom is the ability of the teacher to meet the educational needs of the learner. The teacher spends more time with the learners than the principal hence if schools are to improve learner performance teachers must be developed to meet the educational goals. Similarly, Van der Berg et al. (2011) notes that instructional leadership has moved from the demand of management and control to the staff development.

Mr. Adam, in his narrative, touches on professional development and says:

Educators` workshops and networking (both local and external) have also helped our teachers grow professionally - they have engaged themselves into so much activities, for instance, a couple of our Senior phase teachers have registered to study towards Honours degrees.

Rigby (2014) points out that the instructional leadership of principals is focused on the teacher. In focusing on teachers, principals as instructional leaders, are involved in curriculum planning and co-ordination, teacher learning and professional development (Robinson, 2007). In this way, they support and develop themselves and their teachers.



The importance of teacher development is seen in the theoretical framework when Hoadley et al. (2009) place the responsibility to manage resources on the instructional leader. Human resources are often neglected and yet I am convinced that they are the most important resource within the school. The principal must not only to manage the distribution of lifeless things within the school. It is their responsibility as instructional leaders to fairly manage the human resource. This links perfectly with the ability to make good use of both internal and external relations for the improvement teaching and learning.

External relationship (instructional leadership role)

External relations are an important dimension of instructional leadership that can help improve teaching and learning (Hoadley et al., 2009). Principals must ensure that there are good relations between the school and other stakeholders outside the school.

Mr. Adam underscores the importance of parental involvement. He says that:

Parents also quickly bought into the idea as soon as we updated them of the school`s great mandate. The SGB members were very supportive...

A unique dimension of Hoadley et al. (2007) model is that it emphasises the role of external relations in instructional leadership hence the participant`s reference to the parents and SGB. In this study, the importance of external relations is seen in form of the vital role played by the SGB in school governance and the support from the district. The SASSL (DoE, 2005) document indicates that the principal must work with as well as for the community. Educational policies come through the district officials and are passed on to the school management for implementation. A good relationship with district officials leads to helpful support in the formulation and implementation of policies.

Emotions (Leadership quality)

An area that is ignored by most instructional leadership literature is emotions. The emphasis of teaching as a profession and teachers being their own managers often blinds us of the emotional needs and struggles in the profession. People are emotional beings and their emotions should be taken into account (Hargreaves, 2005).

In their response to what they would do if they were principals, participants had this to say:

C: I think the first thing is to make sure that teachers are happy or are emotionally stable in every way possible because I believe their attitude affects the learners...

D: I would definitely start by appreciating my teachers. One small lunch a term

Emotions link loosely to the social relationships within the school (Hoadley et al., 2009). The emphasis here is the importance of creating a positive learning climate through addressing the concerns of all stakeholders involved, compromising when necessary, motivating staff through appraisals and incentives, communicating high expectations and encouraging team work at all times. Nonetheless, tension exists between the various schooling phases because of different demands of their roles and enough time is not always available for collaboration due to the work demands or lack of structure (Fleisch & Christie, 2004). Regardless of the tensions, a positive learning climate is conducive for teachers and learners.

## **High School 2**

In High school 2, the views on instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning include leadership qualities (emotions and delegation), instructional leadership roles (teacher development) and communication. The principal of HS2's narrative indicated some inadequacies on the implementation of instructional leadership. He highlights the unwillingness of teachers to respond to teacher development initiatives, his lack of training, absence of support from teachers and lack of funds as some of the reasons for the failure of instructional leadership in his school. His narrative indicates some important components instructional leadership which are analysed below together with the teachers' responses.

### **Delegation**

Participant A2 explains the structures in place in their school that assist in the delegation of responsibilities by the principal as follows:

A2: There is actually a structure that is coming from the department of education where we have got as he highlighted there are the HODs, there are the deputies and there is the principal in place.

Southworth (2002) posit that instructional leadership is central to successful school leadership. When instructional leadership is spread throughout the schooling structure in the form of delegation or dispersed leadership as advocated in Hoadley et al.'s (2009) model of instructional leadership, the school will succeed in its main goal.

These notions are supported by scholars who refer to an effective school as one that creates a positive culture of teaching and learning through valuing the process, committing to the process and facilitating the availability of resources thereof (Bush et. al., 2006). Delegation or dispersed leadership has the potential of developing educators. The delegation has to be done tactfully not just to tick boxes but to make sure that the responsibilities suit abilities. If there is a deficiency in the teachers' knowledge on how to carry out certain responsibilities, then training for capacity building must be arranged. The role of arranging training (teacher development) falls on the principal as the manager of resources which include human resources.

The ability to delegate is an important quality of an instructional leader that makes instructional leadership an effective tool in improving teaching and learning. I think that if the roles of instructional leadership are also taken into account and known by principals, they will be able to use instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning.

### **Instructional leadership roles**

There are a number of instructional leadership roles identified according to the views of teachers and principals that can help improve teaching and learning. These include interpreting and enacting policy, monitoring, assessing of teachers, management of the school, teacher development and delegation. I discuss these instructional leadership roles below.

## Policy

One of the roles that instructional leaders have, according to the teachers, is the ability to understand, interpret and enact policy. To explain policy, participant C2 says:

Policies as we know these are guidelines that are supposed to be followed and you know when we talk of policies we cannot debated over a policy, we are supposed to implement.

When asked how the policies assist the principal as the instructional leader, the participants from HS2 said:

B2: That is the tool that the principal uses...

C2: It is guideline...

A2: It supports him ...

Participants emphasized the value of policy. The principal, as the instructional leader, must articulate and use the policy to effectively run the school. By using educational policies, principals can monitor, assess and evaluate teaching and learning. As most of the research on instructional leadership has been on policy (Bush 2013), I will not dwell much on this aspect.

## Monitoring, assessment and evaluation

Another role of an instructional leader is monitoring, assessing and evaluation. A2 talks about how the principal in his school does this.

There are times where he also visits the classroom though to certain educators they are not comfortable because they also need to be told that you are visiting.

A2 makes it clear that some educators are intimidated by the presence of an observer in the classroom. The intimidation is greater when the observer is a superior like the principal of the school. There are reports in South Africa (Jansen, 2004) on how unions are against class visits especially without prior notice. But, how can principals effectively develop their staff if they cannot observe them in action in the classroom? Seeing this exercise as teamwork can be a solution.

Monitoring and assessment are part of Hoadley et al. (2009)'s dimension on instructional focus. In order to explain the first dimension, that is the instructional focus, emphasis is placed on the importance of the monitoring the school's curriculum coverage. The authors emphasise that an instructional leader has a well-worked out plan to improve the student results and also ensures that the school day is designed for maximum learning. The plan would have come as a result of monitoring and assessing learning.

#### Team work

Mr. Adam says:

We have worked as a team and by the time we got to mid-year, the entire school structure / systems were looking good

Here, the principal supports the notion of distributed leadership so that teachers can learn and be empowered while assuming their teacher leadership positions. Furthermore, by emphasising the importance of post-observation feedback to teachers, encouraging staff to upgrade on educational qualification, to attend school or cluster-based workshops and to encourage department support among teachers can result insignificant improvements.

Teamwork can be enhanced by collaborative relations within the school and outside the school. Hoadley's model on instructional leadership emphasises the value of both external and internal relationships as dimensions of instructional leadership.

#### Resource management

One of the main duties of a principal is the management of the school. In this regard, one of the participants C2 said,

... most of the principals in schools have management plans and those management plans are forwarded down the hierarchy to the HODs. Those HODs also have their management plans which are forwarded down to the teachers so that the teacher is

aware of when events are supposed to take place like submissions date, setting tests we need to know that through management plan well ahead.

As an instructional leader, the principal has to manage the resources of the school. The resources of the school would in my opinion include human resources and the school's infrastructure which would include the teaching and learning resources. The management of resources would include participation in curriculum planning and co-ordination, teacher learning and professional development (Robinson, 2007). Effective management of school resources, which are often scarce in South African schools, helps save money and avail teaching and learning resources.

#### Teacher development

The development of teachers is one function of the principal as an instructional leader within the school. One of the six key areas of principalship involves developing the self and other (SASSL (DoE, 2005).

Participants from HS2 said:

A2: My approach has to be on professional development of which I am going to encourage them in the areas they are lacking, they must develop themselves.

Mr. Eve gives a contrasting view on workshop when he says:

The school has lost a lot of funds when it paid for staff workshops which were never or rarely attended by teachers due to lame excuses. Teachers have not been developed in this aspect of instructional leadership and on their role as teachers.

It is the role of the principal to promote teaching and learning. Blase' and Blase' (1998) have the idea that instructional leadership has long been viewed by practitioners as a blend which contains staff development among other things. The principal must find ways to motivate, support and encourage teachers in teacher development. Instructional leadership entails participation in teacher learning and professional development (Robinson, 2007). Principals can encourage teacher development by delegation but this cannot succeed without communication.

A tentative claim can be made that successful leadership of curriculum and instruction involves the ability to oversee a wide range of functions, most of which do not relate directly to teaching and learning. These functions would include managing finances, distribution of resources and external relations. This situation highlights the importance of developing positive and collaborative teacher relations within the school, in order for dispersed curriculum leadership to operate effectively (Hoadley et al., 2009).

### Communication

Communication is key to any leadership relationships. There are several ways through which principals engage with the teachers about instructional matters. Mr. Eve indicates that he values communication in his instructional leadership role when he said:

From the onset (after the introductory discussion), the staff did not accept the change, and not only that, but were also a bit confused on the emphasis placed on the instructional part so, we talked about it.

Educational change is a big topic in education (Fullan, 2010). New policies, teaching aids, technology and innovations are some of the areas that rely heavily on clear communication. There is internal communication (within the school) and external communication (between the school and those outside it) which have to be thought through and conducted effectively for teaching and learning to improve.

### **High School 3**

According to HS3, a number of views on how instructional leadership can be a tool to improve teaching and learning were evident. The participants highlighted styles of leadership, instructional leadership roles such as teacher development and communication as being influential in the instructional leader achieving his role. The principal demonstrates a clear understanding of instructional leadership as she mentions that:

My role as an instructional leader is to manage curriculum, monitor lesson plans and syllabus coverage, and allocate resources, evaluating teachers, promoting staff and learner performance and development.

Although the principal has a technical understanding of instructional leadership, she lacks the required experience for effective implementation. This is highlighted in some of the responses from the teachers which are analysed below together with the principal's narrative.

### **Instructional leadership roles**

Providing teaching and learning resources are some of the instructional leadership roles as indicated by the participants in HS3. Legotlo, Maaga and Sebegu (2002) encourage that policy must consider the role of resources in improving teaching and learning. While the distribution of learning resources in South Africa is uneven, the emphasis should be on effective management and not on the quantity of the sources.

#### Management of resources

Participant A3 highlights the importance of the provision of teaching and learning resources as one of the roles of an instructional leader. There is no direct link between learner performance and the availability of teaching and learning resources. However, participant A3 strongly feels that there should be resources that go with the times when he says:

Availability of resources, even LTSM, availability of basic resources, imagine in this day in age you still write on the chalkboard.

The resources for instructions are allocated by the instructional leader (Jenkins, 2009). These resources would include textbooks, chalks, writing boards, apparatus for experiments and teaching aids. The participants indicated that some of these resources are not effectively managed by the principal in their school. This agrees with the findings by Hoadley et al., (2009) that it is not about the sufficiency of the resources but their effective management.

#### Teacher development

Participant A3 underscores the importance of teacher development when she said:



You do a needs analysis, what do I need is different? Because we are at different stages in our teaching career. What I need as a teacher who has been teaching for 30year is different from what teacher who just enter the field needs.

In recent years, literature has emphasised the importance of teacher development over the emphasis on management of the school (Van der Berg et al., 2011; Rigby 2014). Teachers have direct contact with students longer than the principal has; teacher development will improve learner performance.

The dimension on dispersed leadership (Hoadley et al., 2009) shows how teachers can be developed through distributed leadership. Here, the principal supports the notion of distributed leadership so that teachers can learn and be empowered while assuming their teacher leadership positions. Furthermore, by emphasising the importance of post-observation feedback to teachers, encouraging staff to upgrade on educational qualification, to attend school or cluster-based workshops and to encourage department support among teachers can register significant improvements. There is evidence of distributed leadership in this school because teachers are expected to reflect and contribute towards improvement of instruction.

#### Communication

Miss Cain demonstrates the required knowledge of the importance of communication when she says:

Communication skills - excellent communication skills are required to communicate beliefs and values pertaining to education and never under estimate a learner's capabilities.

The principal highlighted that the first and foremost important role of a leader is to clearly define the school's mission which would be drawn up by the School Governing Body (SGB), parents, educators and SMT. Here, the principal provides direction and ensures the missions are attainable. When it comes to vision and expectations, schools have clear visions but these may not be communicated effectively for people to work towards achieving this. In light of this, the dimension of vision and expectations by Hoadley et al., (2009) requires communication.

However, the teachers in Miss Cain's school complained about poor communication in the school.

A3: Only on paper. We often communicate with her through the CCM forms.

B3: Because we do not have staff meetings.

On absence of communication, teachers from HS3 highlight how the absence of communication brings frustration among educators and a defiance against the principal. In their complaints we can deduce how the lack of communication from the instructional leader can cause despondence/frustration among the teachers. The teachers demonstrated a yearning for communication from their principal whether formally or informally, direct or indirectly.

### **4.3 Chapter Summary**

From the data analysis above, it is clear that the practices of instructional leadership in secondary schools are done either by the principal himself or by the principal through other people. This emphasizes the role of communication, internal and external relations, team building, emotions, resource management and articulation of the vision, mission and goals of the school. The operationalization of instructional leadership in secondary schools includes instructional leadership roles like delegation, accountability, teacher development and monitoring which are implemented by the principal and by other members of staff. My findings agree with Bendikson, Robinson and Hattie (2012) that the principal's instructional leadership can be both direct and indirect. This demonstrates the complexity of the principal's instructional leadership role in secondary schools in that their influence to teaching and learning can be direct through their interactions with learners or indirect through other people and other things like the environment or resources.

The data presented in this Research Report suggests that that there are four elements of instructional leadership, namely, styles of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and communication. While the four elements of instructional leadership, to a great extent, agree with literature on instructional leadership, the data suggests other areas that seem neglected

in literature which resonate with some participants such as the emotions of the teachers, team building and appreciating teachers.

# Instructional Leadership

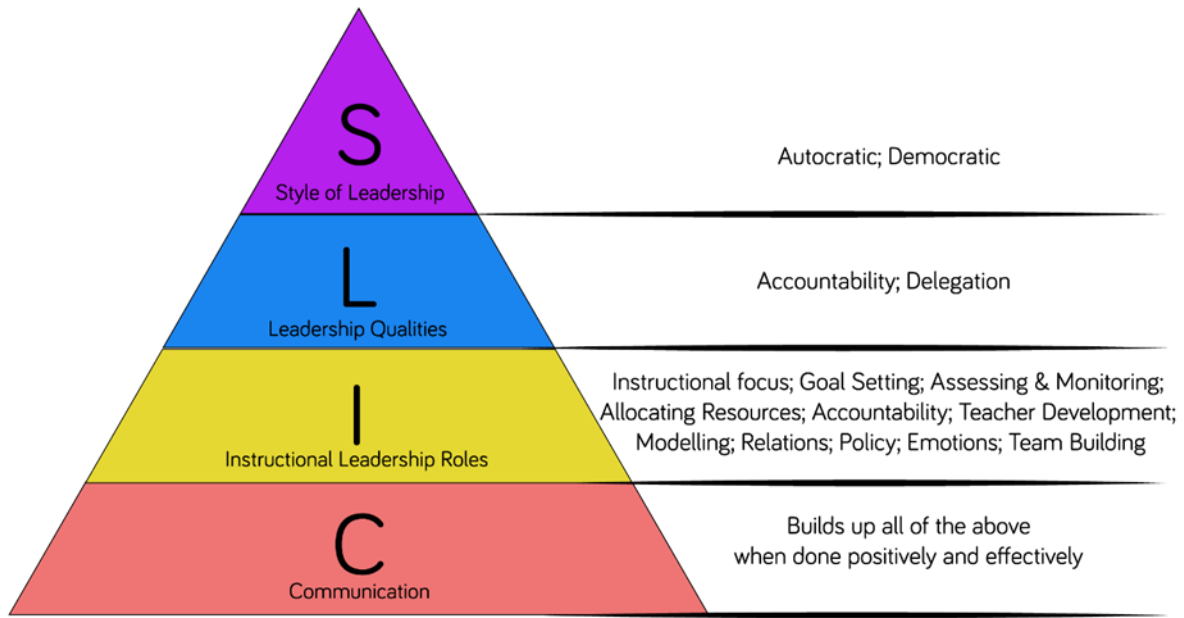


Figure 1: The SLIC Model from Analysis (Own diagram)

Figure 1 gives a summary of the four themes that the data analysis produced. At the apex is the style of leadership of the instructional leader which has very little effect on instructional leadership as it does not have much effect on what happens inside the classroom. As we go down the diagram we see more influential aspects like leadership qualities and instructional leadership roles which are specific to instructional leadership. All the themes are supported by communication which is required at each level.

As the objective of this study was to explore the practices of instructional leadership by principal, Figure 1 summarises the findings. The data shows how the style of leadership is the first thing that comes to mind for most participants when they think about instructional leadership. From my analysis the style of leadership of the principal has the least effect to what happens in the classroom. The findings showed that leadership qualities and instructional leadership roles were also vital indicators of instructional leadership. More emphasis was on the instructional leadership

roles than the instructional leadership qualities. The most important element according to my findings that through my analysis is the strong base of instructional leadership practices is communication hence it is at the bottom of the triangle.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5. Introduction

The main aim of this research was to explore the instructional practices of principals in secondary schools and how instructional leadership can promote effective teaching and learning. This chapter summarises the main findings of this study and provides a global overview of the research report. The summary section will present a global overview of the entire research report. This chapter shows the findings of the relationship between direct and indirect instructional leadership practices of principal and effective teaching and learning. By studying the conclusions that were obtained from this study, this chapter provides recommendations on how to effectively use instructional leadership practices to enhance teaching and learning. In this way, elements that were observed to be part of instructional leadership are identified and discussed further.

#### 5.1 Summary

##### 5.1.2 Findings from Literature review

The literature reviewed in this study demonstrated a strong relationship between the instructional leadership practices and the improvement of teaching and learning. Principals can directly or indirectly influence performance of learner and have to be conscious of their vital role in teaching and learning. Instructional leadership is at the centre of school improvement initiatives and is a direct responsibility of principals and teachers.

Literature is also clear about how instructional leadership has evolved due to the influence of other forms of leadership. As the roles of instructional leadership are discussed we note the inclusion of aspects pertaining to transformational and distributive leadership as part of the roles of the principal. As instructional leadership is shown to be vital in improving what happens in the class (instructional core), the roles of the principals have to be known and understood by principals. However, research on practices of principal is needed.

Emphasis on accountability and teacher development is key to instructional leadership. Aspects such as monitoring, goal setting, resource management, collecting and analysing data and other roles shown in the literature review help toward ensuring accountability and teacher development.

#### 5.1.1 Global view of the research report

Chapter 1 defines the problem statement. It gives the rationale of the study, the significance of the study, the preliminary literature review, a description of the research design and methodology as well as issues of trustworthiness.

Chapter 2 looks at the literature reviewed in an attempt to answer the research questions on the principals' instructional leadership practices in secondary schools. The literature review starts off with a look at history of instructional leadership and presents a summary of international and continental literature. It then goes on to look at South African literature and concludes with the identification of instructional leadership roles of principals that are meant to govern their practices.

Chapter 3 gives a detailed explanation of the methods that were used to collect and analyse data in this study.

Chapter 4 covers the presentation and analysis of data. The data presented is in the form of narratives from the principals and focus group interview transcripts, according to the research questions. This chapter also analyses the data gathered through the principals' narratives and the focus group interviews.

## 5.2 Conclusions

As mentioned earlier, the main aim of this study was to explore the practices of secondary school principals' instructional leadership. This involved how teachers perceived, experienced and interpreted instructional leadership and how principals conceptualised and operationalised instructional leadership. In this way, specific behaviours, attitudes and relationships could be

identified. The sample consisted of three secondary schools in Gauteng, South Africa. The methodology used was focus group interviews of teachers, narratives from principals, observations and documental evidence. The data gathered was coded and analysed in themes.

There is a concern in South Africa about the poor performance of South African learners when compared to learners from other countries as well as the lack of uniformity in South African secondary school performance despite the demand for accountability from the instructional leaders in the schools. This study explores the following three questions: 1. How do secondary school principals operationalize instructional leadership in secondary schools? 2. What are the experiences of teachers of the school principal's instructional leadership practices? 3. What are the views of school principals and teachers regarding instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning? This study shows the practices of instructional leadership by principals.

Question 1 shows that the principal, as an instructional leader is responsible for creating an environment conducive for teaching and learning in the school. The findings show that in their operationalization of instructional leadership, principals are involved in communication, using their personal leadership style (which may change depending on the situation), several instructional roles and some leadership qualities which were different for each principal. In the data collected, some of the principals were reported as lacking some leadership qualities and not carrying out certain roles. These opinions have been used as themes of how principals practice instructional leadership as conceptualisation of instructional leadership by teachers. HS1, HS2 and HS3 mentioned the presence of autocratic leadership in their schools and all schools highlighted teacher development as an instructional leadership role or leadership quality.

The participants identify the 4 main ways of operationalising instructional leadership, namely, style of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and communication (SLIC).

S- style of leadership

L- leadership qualities. The leadership qualities observed were accountability and delegation.

I – instructional leadership roles. The instructional leadership roles were shown to be vision, goals and mission setting, modelling, teacher development and assessing and monitoring.

## C- communication

Although the participants mourned about the autocratic leadership in their schools especially in HS1 and HS3, they mentioned the same experiences of the instructional leadership roles as those identified by the other two schools. This shows that even with an autocratic style of leadership, one can carry out the roles of an instructional leader. Of the four main attributes of instructional leadership identified in question 1, three of them were experienced by teachers in the focus groups, namely, style of leadership, instructional leadership roles and communication. There was no mention of leadership qualities in this section and this may be due to lack of leadership training and ability among the principals. In this question I found responses covering style of leadership, instructional leadership roles and communication (SIC).

## S- style of leadership

I – instructional leadership roles. Instructional leadership roles include: instructional focus, goals, mission and vision, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, allocation resources and accountability.

## C- communication

Question 3 sought to identify the views that the principals and educators had on how instructional leadership improves teaching and learning. In their responses, the participants indicated aspects that form part of the SLIC instructional leaders. They added aspects on emotions, policy, team building and management of resources which had not been mentioned in their responses to the first two questions above. They point out that caring about the emotions of educators, articulating and clarifying policy as well as team building are some of the instructional leadership roles of principal.

From the principals' narrative as well as the teacher's focus group interviews, it has been made clear that there are some ingredients that lead to successful implementation of instructional leadership, hence improving teaching and learning. These aspects of instructional leadership have been identified as style of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and communication. How these aspects of instructional leadership relate can still be studied further.



Figure 2 illustrates how instructional leadership (which focuses on the teaching and learning process) is operationalised by the style of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and supported by the strong base of communication. The model summarises the findings of my research on the practices of instructional leadership in selected secondary schools in Gauteng.

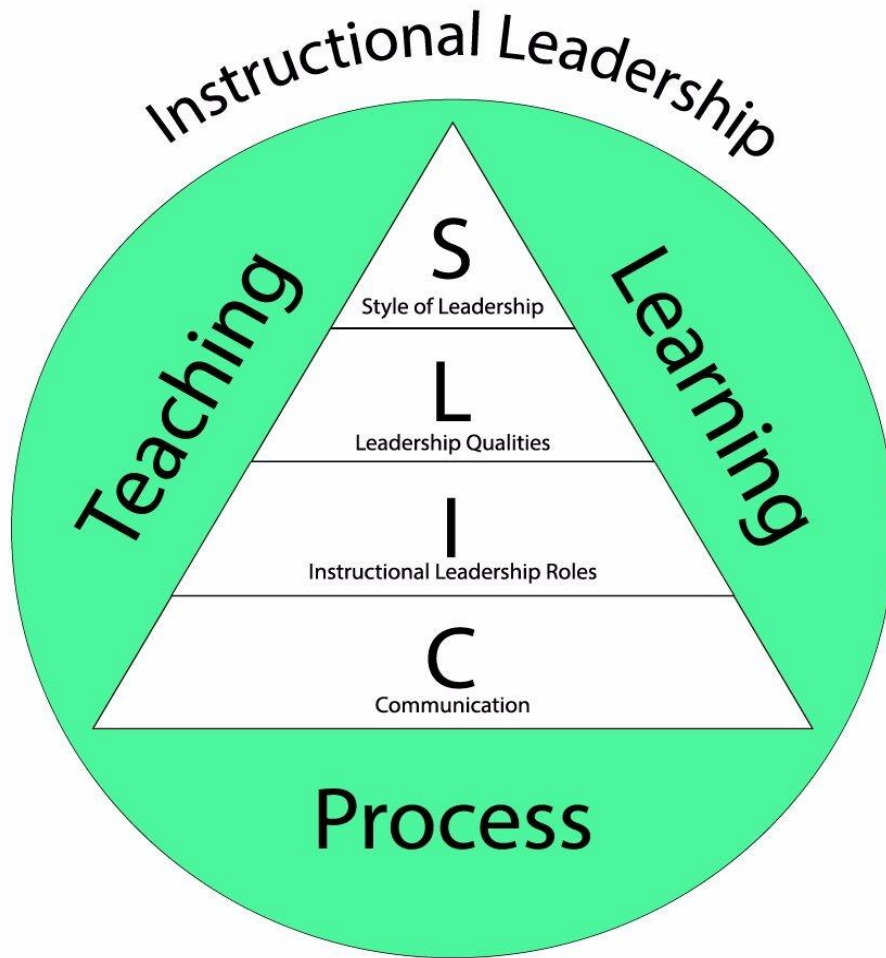


Figure 1: The SLIC Model of instructional leadership (Own diagram)

In conclusion, the main question of this study explored how the practices of the school principals' instructional leadership influences teaching and learning. The findings from the three schools showed that principals play a critical role in influencing teaching and learning. My findings suggest that Hoadley et al.'s model (2009) is an effective model of instructional leadership for principals and school leaders to employ in order to improve learner achievement within the current

South African context. Clearly, most school leaders have to undergo extensive professional development to equip them with the necessary expertise for effective implementation of instructional leadership in schools. This requires tremendous time and capital investment but, should lead to overall learner improvement. As instructional leaders, principals actively involve themselves in the teaching and learning processes through their style of leadership, leadership qualities, instructional leadership roles and communication. These instructional leadership practices of the principal are shown to motivate teachers, and develop teachers and also improve learner performance.

### **5.3 Limitations of the study**

The limitations of this study are that it is relative of small scale; the interviews were in English with some participants being not so fluent in English and that the presence of a tape recorder could have been intimidating to some participants. These factors may have influenced the findings in that the findings are relevant to the four schools under study, my use of English and the interviewees' use of English may have caused misinterpretation and that no matter how much I tried to make my participants free and comfortable there might have been a subconscious effect of the presence of the tape-recorder. In order to address these challenges, I took the data and my themes to the participants to discuss the accuracy of the data collected. I also ensured that the participants were made comfortable during the data collection process by assuring them confidentiality and anonymity.

### **5.4 Implications**

This study suggests themes indicating crucial aspects of instructional leadership that help improve teaching and learning. However, a 'one size fits all' approach is not practical, it is critical for the principals to be aware of how their actions can influence both teachers and learners. It is also clear that each school is different and within the themes identified they may have different needs that the principal must be conscious of in order to be relevant to the context he or she is in.

I therefore suggest the following: There needs to be more study in i) ways of delegating responsibility with a transference of power ii) the relationship between style of leadership and instructional leadership and iii) investigating instructional leadership roles in secondary schools .

## **5.5 Recommendations**

After looking at instructional leadership in the three schools, using Hoadley's model as the theoretical framework, I draw the following conclusions. I appreciate the emerging four themes of instructional leadership from my study which if popularized with school leadership (after incorporating certain recommendations as indicated below), I foresee improvement in school performance. However, given the great variety in contexts and associated challenges schools are facing, it would be unreasonable to expect a single model to be equally applicable to all situations.

### **Recommendation 1**

The instructional focus (instructional leadership role) of the principal as a primary function is important. This is one of the criticisms of the model as it has a narrowing view of the various roles of the principal. Hallinger (2009) believes that the principal's role cannot be confined to just that of instructional leading. However, due to the challenges that some of the principals face (discussed earlier) in their leadership, and thus their instructional focus, is ineffective. I recommend that promotion / selection strategies be amended so that people with the leadership and management qualities are identified and further developed. Those already in leadership positions should be assisted through development programmes and workshops focusing on enhancing their expertise and effectiveness with regard to their specific roles within the school.

### **Recommendation 2**

The importance of social relations both internally and externally to the school must be emphasised. In view of this, I recommend that more meaningful staff development is scheduled, including the establishment and involvement of professional learning communities (PLC), which will develop teachers. Initiatives such as get-togethers, where teachers and parents get to know one another in

an informal setting, will contribute to better social relations within the school as well as better external relations between the school and the community.

### **Recommendation 3**

Instructional leaders should pay attention to emotions and team building which are often ignored by literature. Staff that feels neglected emotionally by the school's leadership tends to withdraw and underperform. They can be drawn in by team building and showing them concern.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Sample Participant Informed Consent Documents

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL.

DATE: 21/04/2017

Dear Principal

My name is SOLOMON CHIBAYA I am a master's student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership of Principals to Improve the Instructional Program in Johannesburg South Secondary Schools.**

My research involves gathering narratives from principals based on a fictive scenario covering the use of instructional leadership in enhancing the instructional program. It also involves interviewing a focus group made up of three teachers. These narratives and focus group interviews are then read and analysed to explore instructional leadership. The data gathering will be conducted from July 2017 to August 2017.

I have chosen your school because it is located in the Johannesburg South and complements the other three schools in terms of the demographic coverage of my research project. The other reason why I have chosen your school is because I have conveniently chosen it in order to save on travel time and money during my data collection phase.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research as this will benefit the knowledge base on school leadership in South Africa.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. You will be reassured that you can withdraw permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential and anonymous at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Solomon Chibaya

27 Andrew Street Johannesburg

solocomm@yahoo.com

0849692420

INFORMATION SHEET PRINCIPALS

DATE:21/04/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Solomon Chibaya and I am a Master's student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership of Principals to Improve the Instructional Program in Johannesburg South Secondary Schools.**

My research involves gathering narratives from principals based on a fictive scenario covering the use of instructional leadership in enhancing the instructional program. It also involves interviewing a focus group made up of three teachers. These narratives and focus group interviews are then read and analysed to explore instructional leadership. The data gathering will be conducted from July 2017 to August 2017.

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I would like to invite you to participate in this research as this will benefit the knowledge base on school leadership in South Africa

Your name and identity will be kept confidential and anonymous at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Solomon Chibaya

27 Andrew Street Johannesburg

solocomm@yahoo.com

0849692420

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **Exploring Instructional Leadership of Principals to Improve the Instructional Program in Johannesburg South Secondary Schools.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ give my consent for the following:

**Permission to review/collect documents/artifacts**      **Circle one**

I agree that my narrative can be used for this study only.      YES/NO

I know that the videotapes will be used for this project only.      YES/NO

**Informed Consent**

I understand that:

- my name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- all the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**LETTER TO THE TEACHERS**

DATE: 21/04/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Solomon Chibaya and I am a Master's student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Exploring Instructional Leadership of Principals to Improve the Instructional Program in Johannesburg South Secondary Schools.

My research involves gathering narratives from principals based on a fictive scenario covering the use of instructional leadership in enhancing the instructional program. It also involves interviewing a focus group made up of four teachers. These narratives and focus group interviews are then read and analysed to explore instructional leadership. The data gathering will be conducted from July 2017 to August 2017.

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Your name and identity will be kept confidential and anonymous at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Solomon Chibaya

27 Andrew Street Johannesburg

solocomm@yahoo.com

0849692420



Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **Exploring Instructional Leadership Practices of Principals in Selected Secondary Schools in the Gauteng Province of South Africa.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ give my consent for the following:

**Permission to review/collect documents/artifacts Circle one**

I agree that my narrative can be used for this study only. YES/NO

**Informed Consent**

I understand that:

- my name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- all the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix B: Structure of research project and Interview Schedule**

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Proposal	Research proposal Development	Feb-Apr 2017
Chapter One	Background and orientation study	May 2017
Chapter Two	Literature review	June 2017
Chapter Three	Research design and methodology	June 2017
Chapter Four	Data Collection	July-Aug 2017
Chapter Five	Data representation and discussion	Sept-Oct 2017
Chapter Six	Conclusions and recommendations	Nov 2017
Final submission	Editing and corrections	Feb 2018

<b>Focus group</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
High School 1	26 JULY 2017	3PM-3.45PM
High School 2	27 JULY 2017	3PM-3.45PM
High School 3	2 AUGUST 2017	3PM-3.45PM
High School 4	3 AUGUST 2017	June 2017

### **Appendix C: Frame story used for the principals' narratives**

Frame story used has two possible outcomes (a) or (b) and reads:

In the Johannesburg South in which you work as a principal, a decision has been made to institute instructional leadership, specifically the improvement of the instructional program. You are given a certain amount of time in your working hours for this purpose. Following an introductory discussion with your staff members you set out to do the task.

A year later you evaluate your undertakings and you are able to observe that (a) the whole project was very successful and you will continue with it (b) it failed and therefore you will not continue with it. In a short story, write your experiences in relation to your outcome. Alternatively, make a list of the things that affected your outcome.

## Appendix D: Focus group interview questions

### QUESTIONS

Key Question: How do the instructional leadership practices of the school principal influence teaching and learning in secondary schools?

#### Sub-questions

1. How do secondary school principals operationalize instructional leadership in secondary schools?
  - a) When you think about instructional leadership what is the first thing that comes to your mind?
  - b) What, in your opinion as a teacher, are the practices that entail/make up/comprise of instructional leadership?
  
2. What are the experiences of teachers of the school principal's instructional leadership practices?
  - a) What is your understanding of the principal's roles in instructional leadership in your school?
  - b) What instructional leadership practices do the school principal engage in, that would ensure quality teaching and learning?
  
3. What are the views of teachers regarding instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning?
  - a) Describe the management structures that the principal has in place in order to effectively promote teaching and learning.
  - b) How do educational policies impact on the instructional leadership practices of school principals?
  - c) How did the principal engage with you about instructional matters?
  - d) Did you implement any of the tools suggested by the principal in your teaching?
  - e) How does the principal's instructional leadership make an impact on teaching and learning in your class?
  - f) If you were the principal of the school how would you help your teachers to improve teaching and learning?

## Appendix E: Raw Data

### High school 1

Principal's narrative: Mr Adam

Response: Successful outcome

It has been a challenging journey to practise instructional leadership in my career for the past year in the school I am the principal. From the onset, I was very excited about this change in my role and was eager to practise this for the benefit of our school and specifically, learners' achievement. Straightaway, I had to review and amend my vision for the school, the learners and community that our school serves – parents and community had to witness results from this project.

I knew I was not very confident of the Science and Math curriculum content, so I looked for help to upgrade myself (using my knowledgeable staff, using materials from the district and Department and I made sure I attended all workshop pertaining to the curriculum development). This has equipped me and when I get into any classroom, I know very well what to look for, and not to criticise my teachers, but in order to assist them to achieve our common goal.

In this venture, I got a very powerful support from my staff who were prepared to listen, observe, try out things and take active part. Parents also quickly bought into the idea as soon as we updated them of the school's great mandate. The SGB members were very supportive and made sure everything we needed to do was done well, especially, in purchasing required learning materials. It was also useful to allow educators to reflect on what they were doing and at each stage suggesting for improvement, for instance, we had to review our sports time schedule for the FET Phase and allowed more time on reading to our learners. Educators' workshops and networking (both local and external) have also helped our teachers grow professionally - they have engaged themselves into so much activities, for instance, a couple of our Senior phase teachers have registered to study towards Honours degrees.

We have worked as a team and by the time we got to mid-year, the entire school structure / systems were looking good and things like assessments were properly structured and easy to follow. When we got external officials to evaluate the project by end of mid-year, we were even more motivated by the report we got – they were very impressed that we had started well, and hence, we are eager to continue with this.

Nevertheless, I did not limit myself to this instructional leadership but had to incorporate, mostly, transformational leadership skills, and also as a leader, I discovered that my commitment into this new venture inspired my followers.

I: interviewer

A: Teacher 1

B: Teacher 2

C: Teacher 3

D: Teacher 4

**1. How do secondary school principals operationalize instructional leadership in secondary schools?**

**a) When you hear about the term instructional leadership what comes to your mind?**

B: A dictator. Something more of autocratic, something more of one giving instructions and lets them be followed. I think there should be more of we do it together more than one that just tells or instructs you to do this. I do not know if you get me?

.

C: My thoughts are pretty the same only that, I feel that at some point this leader must issue instruction. It is unavoidable. He must give lawful, appropriate, clear instruction so that whatever task has to be carried out or done, the subordinates will know what to do. So, instructional leadership is relevant in any context because that is what must happen at some point. Even though it carries an element of dictatorship or autocracy, it carries that element in it but it is unavoidable.

**b) What in your opinion as a teacher, are the practices that entail/make up/ comprise instructional leadership?**

B: A leader who doesn't lead by example who just tells you what to do.

C: They focus more on getting what's on paper done instead of looking at the effects of whatever that is being instructed. That's what comes to my mind.

B: Now that we have defined this guy as a dictator, what he says goes.

**2. What are the experiences of teachers of the school principal's instructional leadership practices?**

**a) What is your understanding of the principal's roles in instructional leadership in your school?**

B: I think that the principal as he has mentioned that a principal has to be an instructional leader at some point. Yes, I agree with that but, I think the principal has to account. But again, as much as he has to do that, I think he has to ask for suggestions.

D: Autocratic leadership is what we have been experiencing in this school and it seem popular in most secondary school according to statistics. I believe that this power struggle approach leads to the downfall of schools every year. Staff turnover becomes high each year. There is no uniformity when the teachers are against management. In turn going against the vision and mission which upholds the school. The quality of education fails and the pass rate is affected.

**b) What instructional leadership practices do the school principal engage in, that would ensure quality teaching and learning?**

B: I would say on my side, the continuous reminding of what has to be done this time and this time helps us. It does help we cannot run away from that, it does help.

C: In our situation, the principal really makes use of the other branches like the HoD's. He meets regularly with those guys who then come down to the ordinary level 1 educators and filter down the information and he holds regular meetings with those people which keeps us updated.

A: I think just to add on what my colleague has just said, there is a lot of help that comes from the principal in that regard. Especially when it comes to punishing or meting punishment to offenders.

**3. What are the views of teachers regarding instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning?**

**a) Describe the management structures that the principal has in place in order to effectively promote teaching and learning.**

C: Definitely so, we have committees like the safety committee, the catering committee, there is the disciplinary committee, those are in place and they help us a lot in making sure that the system runs very smoothly and efficiently. We also have two deputy principals, each one has a group of HoD's that he works with. So, all that works together that the system works well.

A: There is always somebody present representing the SGB in the school. With the current state of affairs in the school discipline, I think that is very paramount because this member makes a difference, a big one.

**b) How do educational policies impact on the instructional leadership practices of school principals?**

C: I know of one that says "every educator must be at the appropriate time in class teaching" and that policy helps him that whenever he gives us an instruction to go into class, it supports him a lot and that we produce quality education. Even SACE has that kind of a vision or mission statement that the teachers must deliver. Most of the policies assist the principal in a very big way. I don't know my colleagues might want to add, I am stuck here.



**c) How did the principal engage with you about instructional matters?**

A: He would call you for a meeting whether formal or informal or in some form of newsletter, holding meeting when it becomes general or involving the rest of the staff.

Reports and documents.

**d) Did you implement any of the tools suggested by the principal in your teaching?**

All: No.

B: He has never been into my class so he cannot really say this is what you should be doing so, he has never been into my class so it is just me asking other teachers how do I do this, how do I deal with such an issue and so on.

**e) How does the principal's instructional leadership make an impact on teaching and learning in your class?**

C: In my case I never did apply the things that he tried to introduce. We are the people on the ground, you should say, guys I have got this idea, come and let us work together. So, I refused the tool personally.

**f) If you were the principal of the school how would you help your teachers to improve teaching and learning?**

B: Given the opportunity, on my side, I think, as a principal myself, I will give my colleagues the opportunity to express themselves, the opportunity to do their best, how best can they, to do their work.

C: I think first things first, is to make sure that teachers are happy or are emotionally stable in every way possible because I believe their attitude affects the learners so, if the teacher is frustrated

by the principal or by whatever that is out there... So, just meet them at a personal level before you can go to a professional level.

A: To just try to meet teachers halfway because as much as we have hot teachers that want to go the extra mile, to some extent there is some sort of manipulation using the power that you have. It is all about support and not trying to manipulate people because you do have a certain title of some sort.

D: I would definitely start by appreciating my teachers. One small lunch a term.

B: Let me add on to what he is just saying. I think it is of utmost importance that I should not know everything as a leader. Delegate, decentralize, so that everybody feels involved, you will be surprised.

A: Now we go back to instructions but firstly you need to see the type of people you are dealing with then you have to look at the goal. So, support, looking into the people that... hence I am saying you look at the people what are you good at? Then we support and instruct.

## **High School 2**

### School context

High School 2 has 1000 learners and 48 teachers. It is located in the South of Johannesburg currently has a 76% matric pass rate. High School 2, though multiracial, comprises mainly of black children and a multiracial representation of staff. Most of the learners come from the residential areas that are around the school.

### Principal's narrative: Mr Eve

The year has gone by and I look back with disappointment because it has not worked with us at our school at all. Instructional leadership has brought all the way with it mishaps, and it has been not easy trying to adjust into it. My role as a principal has been narrowed by just focusing mainly on the instructional activities, and most probably ignoring some other important areas.

As the school principal, I am expected to get fully immersed into the teaching and learning activities of which I also need development especially in the subject content for the FET phase – I did not have the expertise of the curriculum. As a result, I could not do much to assist the teachers in terms of new methods of pedagogy, curriculum interpretation, content delivery and assessment, even though I tried to forcefully attend those few workshops.

As a school principal, I am also trapped in the middle management position in which I have to meet the expectations of those below and above me. Whilst I have to monitor class activities, I also need to satisfy those external expectations from my district and Department, especially the weekly attendance for learners and educators and monthly submissions.

From the onset (after the introductory discussion), the staff did not accept the change, and not only that, but were also a bit confused on the emphasis placed on the instructional part so, we talked about it. Many questioned “have we not been teaching all along now that there is this emphasis, and are we now going to be paid more?” Teachers have been adamant and very influential on each other negatively. The school has lost a lot of funds when it paid for staff workshops which were never or rarely attended by teachers due to lame excuses. Teachers have not been developed in this aspect of instructional leadership and on their role as teachers.

The financial part lacked terribly since I had just completed my short time studies to develop myself in school finances, and this was time for me to concentrate in the practical part. The SGB member who had been assigned with this responsibility, unfortunately fell ill and we had to hire a temporary staff to assist – I felt I let my school down in this aspect.

## High School 2 Interview Transcript

I: Interviewer

A2: Teacher 1

B2: Teacher 2

C2: Teacher 3

D2: Teacher 4

**1. How do secondary school principals operationalize instructional leadership in secondary schools?**

**a) When you think about instructional leadership what is the first thing that comes to your mind?**

B2: I think it also goes with the, the strategic planning the strategic decision that is taken by the top management of the institution that's what I think.

D2: But now that instructional element of the term the first thing that comes to mind is a sort of despotic system where someone wants to give instructions to people and leading that way of trying to bring out the best in people finding the best qualities and letting the people shine with the qualities that they have and that they are good at

B2: I would say it is about management of the daily proceedings that includes how to implement various policies to various departments in the school situation.

C2: Instructional leadership as it entails is a leader in a hierarchical organization whereby someone takes a lead by giving instructions to subordinate by probably delegation depending on the leadership style. But basically, that leader must be accountable or responsible in the daily running of the organization. As he delegates different obligations or duties to subordinates but he will remain accountable.

**b) What, in your opinion as a teacher, are the practices that entail/make up/ comprise instructional leadership?**

C2: I think the bottom line is being a leader you are supposed to achieve certain goals so your leadership style should be attached to the goals that you want to achieve as we all know in a school situation our goal is to give or to impact skills and knowledge to our learners.

D2: It will help in that it should now clarify each person as to their role and responsibility so that they must do what they have to do and not get distracted so to speak. So, I think giving instruction or having instructional leadership it will help teaching and learning by clarifying and setting specific goals for each individual and how they function in the whole like how each part functions to make the sum of the parts work better.

**2. What are the experiences of teachers of the school principal's instructional leadership practices?**

**a) What is your understanding of the principal's roles in instructional leadership in your school?**

A2: For the school to function as other colleagues highlighted here we need to work towards our objective which is imparting knowledge on the learners to enhance performance. However, there are documents in place in where the roles of principals, HOD and educators are outlined in our institutions.

B2: I think in closing again, even though you have instructional leadership, we also need a person that will come back to the people that you are working with, your colleagues to ask before taking a firm decision or final decision on any issue. That is supposed to be discussed because at times.

**b) What instructional leadership practices do the school principal engage in, that would ensure quality teaching and learning?**

B2: It is also important as it is, is to come to be efficient in the classroom. It is also good to do team building as well. When there is team building and people get to know each other well, on a formal and informal level it becomes easier to work with staff and you get to know them better. For example, I have had several types of instances where it was staff building which was always fun.

A2: I also think that what is important is to, again you say as a principal specifically as a leader of the school, must analyse the strengths and the weaknesses of the staff involved in the school so that you can see this person's strength lies in A, B, C and Z. The same applies to your HoDs. The principal should know what is happening in their teachers' classes, they must not hear 10 months down the line that this teacher is never marking or this teacher is always late for class or this teacher kicks out the kids all the time. The principal must be around, the principal must be visible in the school.

**3. What are the views of teachers regarding IL as a tool to improve teaching and learning?**

**a) Describe the management structures that the principal has in place in order to effectively promote teaching and learning.**

A2: There is actually a structure that is coming from the department of education where we have got as he highlighted there are the HODs, there are the deputies and there is the principal in place. Where the HOD's or the deputies, we have got for a deputy that is in charge of the curriculum for the FET a deputy in charge of curriculum and for the GET so they are now making sure that there is monitoring going on when the educators are actually implementing the curriculum.

**b) How do educational policies impact on the instructional leadership practices of school principals?**

C2: Policies as we know these are guidelines that are supposed to be followed and you know when we talk of policies we cannot debated over a policy, we are supposed to implement. So, the principals are supposed to be aware of each policy and how it is should be implemented so their main responsibility is monitoring the implementation of these policies.

I: So, do you think the policies do support the principal in his role as an instructional leader?

B2: That is the tool that the principal uses...

C2: It is guideline...

A1: It supports him ...

**c) How did the principal engage with you about instructional matters?**

A2: They are times when we have got staff meetings where we have to share ideas where we have to come up with an agenda and then we deliberate on those ideas or he informs us of what is necessary. There are times where the principal also applies some sort of an open-door policy where if there is something you do not understand you can go to him and talk to him at any moment and he can assist to give an understanding of what is to be put in place.

They are times where he also visits the classroom though to certain educators they are not comfortable because they also need to be told that you are visiting. They are other principals that just decide to take a walk in the school. We have noticed the principal coming out of the classroom and walk around the school to tell the learners to go to class, to dress well so he is involved.

C2: Just to add to that one, most of the principals in schools they have management plans and those management plans are forwarded down the hierarchy to the HODs. Those HODs also have their management plans which are forwarded down to the teachers so that the teacher is aware of when events are supposed to take place like submissions date, setting tests we need to know that through management plan well ahead.

**d) Did you implement any of the tools suggested by the principal in your teaching?**

All: Yes!

**e) How does the principal's instructional leadership make an impact on teaching and learning in your class?**

C2: Follow up and feedback would – motivated, highly motivated, running of the school respect from the learners and teachers, giving support, good relationship could be maintained,

**f) If you were the principal of the school how would you help your teachers to improve teaching and learning?**

A2: My approach has to be on professional development of which I am going to encourage them in the areas they are lacking, they must develop themselves. Encourage them to have a PLCs where they share ideas with other professionals, I believe they are professionals and they should know what they are doing, I will just be there to encourage them and guide them to get to the core of their duties. That's just an aspect I would like to encourage my educators. I also need to make sure that I identify the skills that are in them in any aspect and encourage them to take on it.

B2: Just to add on that, the principal would encourage the teachers to interact with the facilitators from the district and to attend more workshops in order to get developed.

D2: I think also as a principal you should tap skills in the teachers on the skills in teachers and then also give those with the expertise to impart the knowledge to their department.

Give those with expertise opportunities to do what they can do.

B2: I think giving advice on mostly when it comes to curriculum even though the principal cannot have knowledge on all subjects but just to give guidelines.

### **High School 3**

#### 4.3.1 Principal's narrative: Miss Cain

As a principal, I had to learn to be an administrator, manager, diplomat, teacher, disciplinarian and curriculum leader all at once. Fortunately, I am a female who can multi – task, but it takes years of practice to balance all these tasks, since I was not fortunate to receive intense training to carry out all these tasks. Due to time constrains these instructional activities are sometimes not carried out proficiently.

My instructional leadership requires set goals to manage curriculum, monitor lesson plans and syllabus coverage, allocate resources, evaluating teachers, promoting staff and learner performance and development. Thus, my core business in education is teaching, learning and knowledge. We have regular staff, school management team meetings and morning briefing to improve our performance and to assist each other.



Communication skills - excellent communication skills are required to communicate beliefs and values pertaining to education and never under estimate a learner's capabilities. Empower staff and learners to develop trust and to motivate them.

The school management team serve as an instructional resource. The staff, relies on us to be the source of information, related to effective instructional practices and current educations developments like the curriculum, effective assessment and pedagogic strategies.

Being visible and accessible is very important. Thus, I have to be positive, vibrant and visible in the school to lead by example so that all stake holders can focus on the learning objectives.

As one of the leader, I have to plan well after observing and evaluating the skills of all staff members and learners. Thus, we meet annually to evaluate the school's strengths and weakness to use resources more effectively and to improve instructional methods. I insist that everyone must practice the basics to build a vital community within the school by allowing staff and learners to create a meaning learning environment. And this is done by making sure that all staff workload are equally distributed. High School 3 staff is also sent for development to professionals so that maximum educational benefits are derived from the available resources.

### High School 3 Interview Transcript

I: Interviewer

A3: Teacher 1

B3: Teacher 2

C3: Teacher 3

D3: Teacher 4

- 1. How do secondary school principals operationalize instructional leadership IL in secondary schools?**
  - a) When you think about instructional leadership what is the first thing that comes to your mind?**

C3: Autocratic leadership

B3: I was saying that instructional leadership is where the top management is giving you work assessing your work especially the teachers and then developing the teachers

A3: The principal takes charge

I: What do you mean by taking charge sir?

A3: The principal is in charge of the smooth running of the school.

**g) What, in your opinion as a teacher, are the practices that entail/make up/ comprise instructional leadership?**

A3: Knowledge of assessments of all learning areas, being a leader not a boss. Knowing where each of the subjects are. Not asking me, “by the way how many assessments are there in English?”

B3: Being a leader and not a boss.

A3: If you have been a leader for long you would know that economics must be doing this topic at this stage. As a principal you end up knowing all the learning areas.

I: So, you mean that they should be aware of the syllabus coverage?

B3: As you are saying to know your staff,

C: 3 Knowing your staff, have an individual relationship then device strategies, communication with them

I: What are the specific things that entail knowing “your staff”?

B3: When you know your staff, you have a relationship with them individually and know them individually. You can know whether they are fine or not. You can tell Mrs... is not well today, that is when you can tell

A3: And then from there you can devise strategies to help them.

B3: Communication...

D3: These guys are always ahead of me.

**2. What are the experiences of teachers of the school principal’s instructional leadership practices?**

**a) What is your understanding of the principal’s roles in instructional leadership in your school?**

A3: The challenge is if you look at delegation it is part of management. But, you delegate and remain with the responsibility. Delegation and not taking responsibility and awareness. If I delegate you to do something I must keep in touch with you so that I touch base with you to know what is happening. Not to delegate as a way of running away from your responsibility.

C3: No liaison for feedback or follow-up. Delegation has to be with feedback. Develop and motivate staff-if teacher is doing well they have to reward. Development if the teacher is not doing well. Not to delegate as a way of getting away from your responsibility.

I: What should be the roles of the principal?

B3: Develop and motivate staff.

C3: That should be the consistency even in rewards or in whatever.

A3: Even in extra mural to see my principal there it motivates.

B3: Actually, in other schools whether the match is on holiday, the principals are there. It motivates.

C3: Consistence in everything. Help in the area that you can. It is not about managing the office. The things that you consider best for the good perform of the school. Be involved, extra mutual. Weekend. Know the socioeconomic factors, feasibility of their movement. Taxi transport

**b) What instructional leadership practices do the school principal engage in, that would ensure quality teaching and learning?**

A3: To me it is important to know the socioeconomic background of the pupils.

C3: Even of the teachers as well.

**c) What are the views of teachers regarding instructional leadership as a tool to improve teaching and learning?**

**d) Describe the management structures that the principal has in place in order to effectively promote teaching and learning.**

ALL: None.

I: What management structures can the principal put in place in order to effectively promote teaching and learning?

A3: Availability of resources, even LTSM, availability of basic resources, imagine in this day in age you still write on the chalkboard. In this day in age honestly. So, those basic things, to get the school to functions.

B3: We need to go with the times, like e-learning.

D3: I understand two points have been made the availability of resources and the other being in line with technological advancements.

C3: You also involve your teachers in everything. Then also when I am saying horizontal, it is about considering or liaising with other members of the SMT. It is not only about her giving instructions but also the other managers giving ideas and information to her and taking instructions from her.

**e) How do educational policies impact on the instructional leadership practices of school principals?**

A3: If you look at it all the time there are elections, this government emphasises on education.

Some of these principals tend to be autocratic. Even if they see that this policy at the end of the day cannot help in the effective teaching and learning but because it is written in black and white...

C3: The policies are more in favour of the pupils. Than the teachers.

A3: Like the policy of pregnant girls, they must remain in school and then let's say something happens and I am here.

**f) How did the principal engage with you about instructional matters?**

A3: Only on paper. We often communicate with her through the CCM forms.

B3: Because we do not have staff meetings.

A3: Morning briefings, syllabus coverage, no class visits. She only knows what is happening when the department comes here.

B3: Communicate with the CCM forms. We have no staff meetings, we have no management meetings

**g) Did you implement any of the tools suggested by the principal in your teaching?**

ALL: No.

**h) How does the principal's instructional leadership make an impact on teaching and learning in your class?**

A3: I would enjoy my job

B3: That is what I wanted to say, I would be motivated.

D3: I think that that good relationship must be maintained and I must feel free to give support to my principal.

B3: Running of the school will be smooth and respect for learners to the teachers. Because the learners take advantage of the situation.

**i) If you were the principal of the school how would you help your teachers to improve teaching and learning?**

A3: You do a needs analysis, what do I need is different? Because we are at different stages in our teaching career. What I need as a teacher who has been teaching for 30year is different from what teacher who just enter the field needs.

B3: To adapt to the modern ways of teaching.

A3: Everyone needs development agreeable, there are people who cannot even type a document on word. There are people who need typing skills and there are people who need the use of a projector. To equip the teachers and make them abreast with the common trends. Just make the teachers happy, some intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Very basic thing, a chocolate on their birthday.

B3: With team work.

Not even buying like the awards you are talking about, we have laptops, like just printings certificates, you do not even need to buy

C3: Sometimes motivation is not about a gift.

B3: Be transparent.