

**SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' IMPLEMENTATION OF  
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE AMAJUBA DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-  
NATAL**

**by**

**LINDIWE SYBIL NTOMBELA**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROF. P. MAFORA**

**CO-SUPERVISOR:**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late father, Aaron Nsibanyoni, and my mother, Maggie Hluphekile Nsibanyoni, as well as my two children, Siphamandla Musakawukhethi and Bongani Ndabezinhle Ntombela.

## DECLARATION

Student number: **04707826**

I declare that **“Secondary school principals’ implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal”** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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DATE

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ANA: Annual National Assessment

CASS: Continuous Assessment

CAPS: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements

FET: Further Education and Training

GET: General Education and Training

# SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE AMAJUBA DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL

By Lindiwe Sybil Ntombela

Degree: Master of Education

Subject: Education Management

Supervisor: Prof. P. Mafora

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to find out the perceptions on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal with a view to provide guidelines that may be employed to enhance the execution of this role.

Scholars believe that instructional leadership can assist in the transformation of schools into effective schools with consistent high learner achievement. In the Amajuba District schools show fluctuation in their grade twelve results, hence the need to investigate the principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The grade 12 results were used because it is assumed that the variance is indicative of the differences in the principal' leadership roles in these schools.

This qualitative study examines the principals' instructional leadership role. Data was gathered by means of literature study and focus group interviews. Four interviews were held: three with Deputy Principals and Heads of Departments, and the fourth one comprised of principals of the six selected secondary schools.

## **KEY TERMS:**

Management, leadership, dimensions of leadership, school principals, instructional leadership, effective schools, effective teaching and learning, learner achievement, School Management Teams, provision of resources, barriers to effective implementation of instructional leadership



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study investigated secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal. There are 67 secondary schools with Grade 12 in this district (KZN Education, 2011:5), but only 20 of these schools are performing well. According to the report on Grade 12 performance for 2011, only twelve secondary schools achieved between 90% and 100% (Amajuba District, 2011:6). Such poor performance in many secondary schools in the Amajuba District can be ascribed to the principals' failure to implement instructional leadership effectively.

According to the District Manager of the Amajuba District, Reverend Sithole, the majority of the schools narrowly escaped being declared T50 and T60 schools. These are the schools which obtained below 50% and below 60% respectively in their Grade 12 results. The majority of secondary schools in the Amajuba District obtain 90% and above in a particular year, and then regress to achieving below 60% in their Grade 12 results in the following year. The school principals are held responsible by the District Office for this poor performance.

Studies have been conducted on instructional leadership and its positive impact on the instructional programme, but it has never been done in the Amajuba District. The underperformance of these secondary schools in this district is evident in their Grade 12 results. The principals are blamed for this poor performance.

The State President warned that if the principals of underperforming schools do not improve in five years, they will be demoted (KZN Education, 2009:12). The principals' jobs are at stake. The State President's statement was echoed by Ron Schwartz, Acting Head of the

National Educator Evaluation and Development Unit, who stated that they will get tough with underperforming officials and teachers (The Teacher, 2010:11).

When Kader Asmal was the Minister of Education in 2000, he wrote about instructional leadership in his manual for school principals, but he concentrated on the implementation of the curriculum and the three responsibilities of the principal as an instructional leader. However, the principals were not guided in the implementation of instructional leadership. From the researcher's informal conversation with some of the principals in the district, she realised that many principals do not know what instructional leadership is and how to go about implementing it. The researcher and the other school principals received those manuals from the National Department of Education and packed them in their cupboards. Nobody ever thought that the concept of instructional leadership needs to be thoroughly explained to the principals, and that they were supposed to be capacitated in the implementation thereof.

In an attempt to help the underperforming schools in the Amajuba District, the district officials have developed a Turnaround Plan which comprises ten key performance areas for the principals to implement in order to improve performance in their schools (KZN Education, 2009:1). This plan however only emphasises the principal's role as a provider of the Teaching and Learning Support Materials (LTSMs) and the arrangement of extra classes which must be conducted even during school holidays. The district officials believe that when they monitor these schools closely and regularly, learner achievement will improve. To everyone's disappointment, the Turnaround Plan has not yielded any positive results since its inception in 2006. More and more of the secondary schools in the Amajuba District are deteriorating to T50 and T60 schools.

According to the Leaves and Pensions Department of the Amajuba District, many secondary school principals of the under-performing schools take temporary incapacity leave every year (Amajuba District, 2011:3). This exacerbates the poor performance in these schools.

The implementation of instructional leadership needs to be researched in the Amajuba District so that the principals and the teachers will know what it entails, how to implement it effectively and its significant role in the improvement of teaching and learning. Once they know how to implement instructional leadership successfully, effective teaching and learning can take place and the performance of their schools can improve.

Having presented the introduction to the study, the discussion of the background to the problem follows.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

A large number of previously disadvantaged secondary schools in the Amajuba District are underperforming despite many attempts from the National Department of Education to assist them. In many cases, principals are blamed for this situation. At a meeting with the principals of KwaZulu- Natal, the Minister of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, Senzo Mchunu, said, “Show me the principal of a school and I will tell you the future of that school.” This remark emphasises the demands placed on the principals to transform their schools for the better and to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in their schools. This implies that the onus to either build or destroy a school is in the principal’s hands. Principals are like never before required to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place in their schools.

When the State President met with some of the principals in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in 2009, he warned, “All the underperforming principals must improve their schools in five

years or they will be demoted,” (KZN Education, 2009:12). The State President’s statement was echoed by Ron Schwartz, Acting Head of the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU), who stated that they will get tough with underperforming officials and teachers. Yimaki (2007:11) states that today’s school principals face unprecedented pressures to improve student performance in their schools. This notion is supported by Stiggins and Duke (2008:285) and Kaster (2010:3). According to Fullan (1993:4), principals must be agents of change in their schools. For school principals to be able to bring about change in their schools, they must be instructional leaders. According to Hallinger (2008:140), the role of the school principal as the instructional leader contributes immensely to effective teaching and learning in the school. This notion is supported by Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford (2007:56).

In order to improve reading, writing and Mathematics in the higher grades, the National Department of Education has introduced the Annual National Assessments (ANA) in the exit grades (Grade 3, 6 and 9) in the GET Phase (NDoE, 2008). A pilot study was done in Grade 10 in January 2011 (Education, 2011:6). Government believes that when learners are able to read and write and can solve simple mathematical problems in the GET Phase, their performance can improve even in the higher grades. The school principals must lead their teachers in effective teaching and correct assessment of the learners so that learners’ scores in the Annual National Assessment can improve.

In her speech on television, Angie Motshekga, the Minister of Basic Education, voiced her disappointment concerning the Annual National Assessment scores of South African learners. According to Motshekga, South African learners scored very low compared to their counterparts in America and in England. The Department of Education has also introduced the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) as an attempt to improve learner performance in South African schools. Government invests more money in all these

curriculum innovations so that education can improve in our country. Therefore, it holds the school principals responsible to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in their schools.

Educational changes which are taking place all over the world emphasise the role of the principal as a key figure in providing effective teaching and learning ( Kruger 2009:30). Greckzewski, Knudson and Holtzman (2009:72) state that changes in education landscape have focused attention on schools and classrooms as critical influences for improving learner achievement. The role of the principal as the instructional leader contributes immensely to effective teaching and learning in the school and eventually improved learner performance (Hallinger 2008: 420). In the USA, educational authorities introduced instructional leadership in poor performing schools, and those schools were transformed (Yimaki, 2007:11; Bays & Crockett, 2007:144; Hoerr, 2008:84). These scholars point out that the principal must be an instructional leader in order to be able to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school. In Australia, Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford (2007:57) used the instructional leadership model to three under-performing schools, and that bore positive results. In Europe, Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253) tested instructional leadership and it also yielded positive results. Pansiri (2006:488) tried instructional leadership in the schools of Botswana and it proved to be effective. In South Africa, the majority of underperforming schools were transformed through the effective implementation of instructional leadership, and their performance transformed tremendously (Kruger, 2009:31; Steyn, 2008:1; Hoadley, Christie, Jacklin & Ward 2007:40).

School principals are held responsible for the poor performance in their schools; therefore, they must work hard to transform their schools. Principals are like never before expected to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in their schools. The emphasis is on

improved learner performance. My point of view is that for school principals to be able to do this, they must do things in a different way. It cannot be business as usual in their schools.

The researcher believes that the recommendations and suggestions based on the findings of this study might help the school principals of the Amajuba District, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and in the whole of South Africa in the effective implementation of instructional leadership. When the school principals can implement instructional leadership correctly, effective teaching and learning is likely to take place and learner achievement might improve. Even the principals who are threatened with demotions will be assisted and their schools will be transformed for the better. It is not only underperforming schools which will benefit from the results of this study, but even the excellence of high performing schools might be reinforced and sustained.

Having provided the background to the study, the next section will focus on the following: the statement of the research problem and the outlining of the main research question as well as the aims and the objectives of the study which will assist the researcher in the collection of data.

### **1.3 Statement of the research problem**

Although the Department of Basic Education is trying hard to assist the principals of underperforming schools in the implementation of instructional leadership, there is a national outcry concerning lack of or poor provision of resources as the major barrier to the effective implementation of instructional leadership. Since the problem is pervasive, despite the intervention of the Department of Basic Education, the manner in which the secondary school principals and their School Management Teams implement instructional leadership must be investigated.

This study therefore investigated and answered the following main research question:

How are secondary school principals in the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal perceived to implement instructional leadership?

In order to help answer the main research question, the following sub-questions were investigated:

### ***Sub-questions***

- What is instructional leadership?
- What are the qualities of school principals who are instructional leaders?
- What constitutes the instructional leadership role of school principals?
- What are the barriers to the school principals' effective implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District?
- What are the recommendations that may serve as guidelines to improve the secondary school principals' instructional leadership role?

### **1.4 Research aim and objectives**

The overarching aim of this study was to find out the perceptions on secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership in the selected secondary schools in the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal, with a view to providing guidelines that may be employed to enhance the school principals' implementation of instructional leadership.

The following were the objectives of this study:

- To determine the meaning of instructional leadership;
- To identify the qualities of school principals who are instructional leaders;

- To determine what constitutes the instructional leadership role of school principals;
- To investigate barriers to the school principals' effective implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District; and
- To provide recommendations that may serve as guidelines that can be used to improve the secondary schools principals' implementation of instructional leadership.

The next section discusses of the significance of the study.

### **1.5 The significance of the study**

This study was designed to investigate the perceptions of how the secondary school principals implement instructional leadership. The study on the secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership in the South African education system is crucial for various reasons:

Firstly, this study will help the school principals and their School Management Teams to know and to understand what instructional leadership is.

Secondly, this study is significant in that it will afford the secondary school principals and their School Management Teams the opportunity to voice their thoughts, beliefs and perceptions regarding the implementation of instructional leadership in a safe and non-threatening environment. The officials of the Department never gave them the opportunity to do this.

Thirdly, this study is significant since it will clarify the roles of the secondary school principals and their School Management Teams regarding the implementation of instructional leadership.



Fourthly, the significance of this study is that it will reveal the barriers which impede the school principals' effective implementation of instructional leadership.

Lastly, this study is of significance since it may provide findings and recommendations that will make valuable contributions in the effective implementation of instructional leadership in secondary schools. The researcher hopes that the findings and recommendations of this study will have positive implications on the implementation of instructional leadership in the district, at provincial level and in the country as a whole.

A brief discussion of the research design and methodology that was used in the gathering of the data is presented in the next section.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **1.6.1 Research design**

The researcher conducted a qualitative research study. Qualitative research is descriptive and contextual (Bailey, Bemrose, Goddard, Impey & Bemrose, 1999:51; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:377). Qualitative research usually results in verbal descriptions, and might use the participants' quotations. According to Mason (2001:4), qualitative research is 'interpretivist' and contextual in that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced. In this study focus was on the secondary schools principals' and their School Management Team's interpretation of the concept of instructional leadership and how they make meaning of this concept as they go about implementing instructional leadership.

#### **1.6.1.1 Qualitative research**

The researcher used qualitative research because qualitative studies analyse people's individual and collective social actions, thoughts and perceptions (McMillan & Schumacher

2006: 372). The researcher interacted with the participants in their natural settings which are their respective schools. By so doing, the participants were given the opportunity to discuss the concept of instructional leadership as they experience it in their world. They also explained what they do when they implement instructional leadership. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:372) state that qualitative research is naturalistic inquiry and it involves the use of non-interfering data collection strategies to allow the natural flow of events and how the participants experience them.

This study was concerned with the manner in which the secondary schools principals implement instructional leadership in the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal. The participants were the secondary schools principals and their School Management Teams who were recruited to provide an extensive description of instructional leadership and their experiences in their efforts to implement it.

Bailey et al. (1995: 50) state that qualitative research usually results in verbal descriptions and might use quotations from interviewees. According to Welman and Kruger (2001:178), qualitative studies can be used successfully in the description of groups. Neumann (2000:344) points out that qualitative research allows the researcher to directly observe and participate in small- scale social settings in the present time and in the researcher's home culture. Qualitative research is ethnographic in nature and it aims to provide an in-depth description of a group of people or community (Mouton 2001:48; Bailey et al. (1995:50). The researcher interacted with the participants in their schools and also gave them the opportunity to describe their feelings, thoughts, ideas and beliefs about the implementation of instructional leadership, barriers which face them as they implement instructional leadership and its benefits on teaching and learning and learner performance.

The researcher's choice of the qualitative research approach emanated from the following considerations:

#### **1.6.1.2 Explorative study**

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:39) state that exploratory studies are used to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research. Research on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership has never been done in the Amajuba District; therefore, the exploratory study enabled the researcher to formulate penetrating questions on the secondary schools principals' implementation of instructional leadership (Welman & Kruger, 2001:160; Neumann, 2000:90). Exploratory study assisted the researcher to ask the: who, what, when, how much and how many questions concerning the principals' implementation of instructional leadership (Bailey et al., 1995:41). Babbie (1998:90) points out that these types of questions mentioned by Bailey et al. (1995:41) help in satisfying the researcher's curiosity and in testing the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study on the topic being studied.

#### **1.6.1.3 Descriptive study**

According to Bailey et al. (1995:40), descriptive research at the early stages of research often involves finding out what is taking place that is worth further investigating. In this study, the researcher was describing the principals' implementation of instructional leadership, their actions as instructional leaders and then compares that with what they do to what the literature says about instructional leadership. The use of the descriptive study for this research provided a description of how the secondary schools principals implement instructional leadership, and whether that was worth further investigation.

Babbie (1998:91) maintains that the purpose of descriptive research is to describe situations and events. Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:39) point out that descriptive studies aim to describe phenomena accurately through the narration of events, classification of documents or measuring relationships. Through focused group interviews, the researcher spoke to the participants when they were describing their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and ideals about their roles as instructional leaders.

#### **1.6.1.4 Explanatory study**

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:39) point out that the explanatory studies aim to provide causal explanations to phenomena. Neumann (2001:22) states that explanatory research builds on exploratory and descriptive research and proceeds to identify the reason something occurs. Bailey et al. (1995:42) state that exploratory research starts from questions asking how far what is being observed supports or undermines a particular explanation. In this study, the researcher found out how the principals' implementation of instructional leadership affect teaching and learning in their schools. The researcher then compared these findings with what the literature says about the concept which was being studied and then tried to find out whether the participants' responses support or refute what is stated in the literature.

#### **1.6.1.5 Contextual study**

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:373) state that qualitative researchers collect data by interacting with respondents in their own world. Welman and Kruger (2001:189) and Berg (2004:11) point out that a person derives his true meaning from his life world, and by existing he gives meaning to his world. Berg (2004:11) further maintains that in the case of the respondents' life-worlds, researchers focus mainly on naturally emerging languages and meanings which individuals assign to experience.

In this study, the participants were interviewed in their respective schools. They were given the opportunity to explain the concept of instructional leadership and what it means to them as individuals, what they do as instructional leaders and the challenges that face them when they implement instructional leadership. When the participants were busy trying to give meaning to the concept of instructional leadership in their own words, the researcher tried to find out how they implement it, the challenges they experience when they try to implement it and start to think about the ways of assisting them where there are areas of development in their implementation of instructional leadership.

#### **1.6.1.6 Naturalistic inquiry**

According to Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:43), in qualitative research, the real world situations are studied as they unfold naturally and in a non-manipulative, unobtrusive and non-controlling manner. This notion is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:372), Welman and Kruger (2001:190) and Neumann (1991:347). Bailey et al. (1999:49) stress this point by stating that the more naturalistic your research is, the more you can be sure that research is not producing distorted and misleading results.

The Deputy Principals and the Heads of Departments were interviewed in their natural settings which were their different schools. The events were allowed to unfold naturally as the participants were describing how their principals implemented instructional leadership.

A detailed discussion of the methods which were employed in the collection of the data will be discussed in the next section.

### **1.7 DAT COLLECTION METHODS**

According to Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:47), McMillan and Schumacher (2006:49) and Babbie (1998:19), data are the basic material with which researchers work. Mouton

(2001:98) states that the researcher now leaves his office or study and enters into the “field” where the research will be done. This notion is supported by Welman and Kruger (2001:191). Mouton (2001:67) and McMillan and Schumacher (2006:49) maintain that data collection involves applying measuring instruments to the sample selected for the investigation. Such instruments include observations, interviews, documents and physical sources.

In this study, data were collected by means of literature study and semi-structured, open-ended, focus group interviews. A detailed discussion of the data collection methods follows.

### **1.7.1 Literature study**

Documents are written sources. Documents, especially primary sources provide first-hand information based on direct experiences with the phenomena, usually obtained through interviews and observations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:263).

Secondary sources of information were also used in the literature study. These are documents which were containing second hand information on the problem which was being investigated.

In this study documentation such as books, articles, journals, newspapers, articles and dissertations that are related to instructional leadership were studied. The researcher studied these documents in order to find out what other researchers and scholars have already established concerning instructional leadership and the implementation thereof. Focus was on definition of the concept ‘instructional leadership’, the roles of the principals as instructional leaders and the challenges which schools principals experience when they implement instructional leadership. The qualities of leaders and their effects on the principals’ implementation of instructional leadership were also studied. The researcher then compared what the principals said to what the literature says.

The next section is a discussion of the gathering of data by means of semi-structured focus group interviews.

### **1.7.2 Focus group interviews**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:432), a focus group interview is a strategy for obtaining a better understanding of a problem or an assessment of a particular problem, concern, a new product, programme or idea by interviewing a purposefully sampled group rather than each person individually. Berg (2004:123) points out that by creating an environment in which group members are stimulated by the perceptions of each other; one can increase the richness of data through a more efficient strategy than one-on-one interviewing.

For this study, four focus group interviews were held: one focus group interview was conducted in the first three schools out of the six selected schools. The participants of the first three focus group interviews in each school were six School Management Team members, that is, the principal, Deputy Principal and four Heads of Departments. The Heads of Departments were selected on the basis that they are the ones who are directly involved in the management of the curriculum in their schools. The Deputy Principals were selected because they assist the principals in monitoring the work which has been monitored by the Heads of Departments.

The fourth focus group interview comprised the school principals of the remaining three schools from the six selected schools.

All the participants were selected on condition that they have been in their respective schools for more than five years; therefore, they possess rich information on the principals' instructional leadership roles. From their discussion, the researcher found out how their

principals implement instructional leadership as well as the principals' behaviours which characterise them as instructional leaders.

Berg (2004:123) states that the informal group discussion atmosphere of the focus group interview structure is intended to encourage participants to speak freely about behaviours, attitudes and opinions they possess.

A detailed discussion on sampling and sample selection will be presented in the next section.

### **1.7.3 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SELECTION**

Purposeful sampling was used for this study. In purposeful sampling, the researcher searches for information-rich key informants, groups, places or events to study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:194). According to Babbie (1998:195), in purposeful sampling, the sample is selected on the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research aims. Neumann (2000:1999) points out that purposeful sampling uses the judgement of an expert in selecting participants with a certain aim in mind.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:378) state that in purposive sampling, the researcher identifies information-rich participants because they are possibly knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation.

The researcher selected the participants on the basis of the Amajuba Grade 12 Examination Reports for 2010, 2011 and 2012. The Grade 12 results were used because it is assumed that the variance is indicative of the differences in the principals' leadership roles of these schools.

A discussion of the identification of the participants and sites, including the basis for their selection follows:



### **1.7.3.1 Participant selection**

There are 67 secondary schools which also enrol Grade 12 learners in the Amajuba District. Six schools were selected from the Amajuba Report on matric performance for 2010, 2011 and 2012. The secondary schools which were selected were: two high performing schools, two average performing schools and two low performing schools.

The participants were the school principals, Deputy Principals and the Departmental Heads. One principal and five School Management Team members were selected from the first three schools out of the six selected schools. The other three school principals were selected from the remaining three selected secondary schools.

The Departmental Heads were selected because they are the ones who assist the principal in the implementation of instructional leadership by managing the curriculum in their respective departments. They also serve as a link between the school principals and the teachers concerning the provision of resources. The Deputy Principals in turn assist the principal in all their instructional leadership roles. They form part of the school senior Management Team and they have been in their respective schools for more than seven years, therefore they have rich information on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership in their respective schools. Even if they do not know anything about instructional leadership, they were able to describe the principals' actions which characterise them as instructional leaders.

The principals were selected because they are the ones who are supposed to lead the way in the implementation of instructional leadership in their schools.

The next section comprises of the discussion of the selection of the sites.

### **1.7.3.2 Site selection**

The three interviews with the School Management Teams (the Departmental Heads and the Deputy Principals) were held in their respective schools after hours. This was convenient to the participants since time was saved and they did not have to travel to the venues which were outside their schools when it was time for them to go home.

The interviews of the schools principals were held at the District Office in the boardroom.

The following section is a discussion of the methods which were used to process and analyse the data which was gathered.

#### **1.7.4 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS**

Mouton (2001:108) states that data analysis involves “breaking up the data” into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. This notion is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:479). Inductive generalisation was used for the analysis of data in this study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:480), in inductive analysis, categories and patterns emerge from the data rather than being imposed on data prior to data collection.

The researcher started this study by conducting a literature review to find existing knowledge and information concerning the implementation of instructional leadership. The researcher started with literature review in order to learn how the scholars have theorised and conceptualised on the principals’ implementation of instructional leadership, what they found empirically, and what instrumentation they used and to what effect (Mouton, 2001:81). The study of the literature also helped the researcher to understand the secondary school principals’ implementation of instructional leadership and to put the results of the study in a historical perspective. The researcher also used the literature study for the clarification of concepts of the research and to find existing knowledge on the principals’ implementation of instructional leadership, what they do when they perform their instructional leadership role

and the challenges they experience when they execute their instructional leadership role. Berg (2004:29) maintains that the clarification of concepts in relation to a particular study concretises the intended meaning of a concept and provides some criteria for measuring the empirical existence of a concept.

After data had been collected through literature study, the researcher held four focus group interviews in order to get the participants' perceptions on the research problem. The researcher read through the data collected by means of focus group interviews and literature study. The researcher then started to analyse data using generally accepted methods of analysis. During data analysis topics, categories, themes and patterns which contributed to the overall explanation of data were discovered. The researcher then made a comparison and contrasting of each category and theme to determine the distinctive characteristics of each. The researcher then compared the topics, categories and themes which emerged from the collected data to the existing literature on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership. This comparison was done in order to identify differences and similarities between the researcher's findings and what the other studies state about the school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The researcher also compared data between the categories in order to discover connections between the themes.

After the interpretation of the data, the researcher presented the results in the form of sentences and paragraphs quoted verbatim from the participants.

Having elaborated on the methods of data processing and analysis, it is crucial to present a discussion of trustworthiness and ethics which were observed in the collection and the analysis of the data. The next section is a discussion of trustworthiness in the collection of the data.

### **1.7.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

According to Cohen et al. (2007:148), trustworthiness refers to the credibility and consistency of the instrumentation of data collection and findings. To ensure trustworthiness and reliability of the study, the researcher did the following:

Participants' verbatim accounts: The researcher rendered the verbatim accounts of the participants' responses. She refrained from editing and paraphrasing what was said during the interviews.

The use of the tape recorder: In order to avoid the inaccurate presentation of the data, the researcher tape recorded the participants' responses. Before the researcher used the tape recorder, she asked for permission from the participants so that the latter would not feel threatened by the researcher's use of the tape recorder.

Just as the researcher's trustworthiness is important in the collection of the data, ethics during this process is equally important. A discussion of ethics to be observed during data collection and analysis will be done in the next section.

### **1.7.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The researcher applied for permission at the District Office and also got a certificate of ethical clearance from UNISA authorising her to conduct this study. The participants' involvement was based on informed voluntary consent (Terre-blanche & Durrheim, 1999:66). The participants were also informed of their right to withdraw at any time during the study should they feel uncomfortable to continue.

The participants were assured of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality (Mason, 2001:167; Mouton 2001:167). Throughout the study, anonymity was ensured by the use of pseudonyms

instead of the participants' real names and their schools. All the information which was provided by the participants was treated with the strictest confidentiality.

The preceding is the discussion of the delimitation of the field of research.

## **1.8 DEMARCATION OF THE FIELD OF RESEARCH**

KwaZulu-Natal is one of the nine provinces of South Africa. There are four Education and Culture Regions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal: UKhahlamba, Zululand, Midlands and the Coastal Region. The UKhahlamba Region is further divided into the following districts: Amajuba, UMzinyathi and uThukela. The Amajuba District, where the study had been conducted, is further divided into two circuits: Newcastle and Dannhauser.

According to the statistics from the physical planning of the Amajuba District (Amajuba District, 2011:2), there are sixty seven secondary schools with Grade 12 in this district. The researcher conducted the study in six secondary schools in the Amajuba District. The three schools were selected on the basis of their grade 12 results from 2010 to 2012. The researcher selected two secondary schools with a consistent high matric pass rate. These schools have been obtaining between 96% and 100% from 2010, two secondary schools which are average schools which have been consistently obtaining between 60% and 70% and two T60 School and two T50 schools which have been obtaining below 60% and 50% respectively for the past three years.

The discussion of the clarification of concepts which were used in this research study follows in the next section.

## **1.9 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

According to Berg (2004:29), the clarification of concepts in relation to a particular study concretises the intended meaning of a concept in relation to a particular study and provides some criteria for measuring the empirical existence of a concept. In this section, the concepts management, leadership, instructional leadership, effective schools, effective teaching and learning, high performing schools, average performing schools, T50 schools and T60 schools are explained.

### **1.9.1 Management**

According to Koontz (2014:1) management is the art of getting things done with and through people in formally organised groups. Buckingham (2005:41) maintains that management is aimed primarily at making other people more productive. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:58) support this notion and adds that to be able to turn employee's talent into performance, the manager organises and co-ordinates group activities, maintains employees' enthusiasm and sets boundaries to maintain order and structure within the organisation.

In this study, management will refer to the secondary schools principals' efforts in making teachers more productive through organising and co-ordinating group activities in their implementation of instructional leadership.

### **1.9.2 Leadership**

According to Horng and Loeb (2010:4) leadership is the art of motivating a group of people towards achieving a common goal. Leadership is a process of getting everyone to a place they are supposed to go (Blanchard & Muchnick, 2004:103). The leader has been defined as one who guides conducts, proceeds or being foremost. According to Rafoth and Foriska (2006:132), leadership is the means to set directions and influence others to move in these

directions. Buckingham (2005:58) states that whenever a person strives to make others to see a better future that is leadership. This notion is supported by (Sterling and Davidoff, 2000:58; Sharma, 1998:89; Ricketts, 2009:9). A leader is a visionary who sees what could be (Zenger & Folkman, 2007:39). This means leadership involves more of dreaming about a better future of an organisation. There is restlessness about the status quo.

In this study, the term leadership will mean to influence others by formulating an exciting vision and communicating it to them so that they can move to a certain direction that will transform the organisation. For principals to be able to implement instructional leadership successfully, they must begin by questioning the current states of their schools, start to dream about what their schools could be and perform the instructional leadership actions.

### **1.9.3 Instructional leadership**

Instructional leadership refers to all the actions of school principals that were designed to affect classroom instruction (Gurr et al., 2007:22). Instructional leadership are all the actions and behaviours of principals that impact positively on the instruction programme and assist in the improvement of learner achievement.

In this study, instructional leadership is operationalized as anything that the principal does which has a positive impact on learner performance.

### **1.9.4 Effective schools**

According to Hanna (2010:12), an effective school is a school where the teachers believe that all children are educable and that the behaviour of the school principal is critical in determining the quality of education. Hoog (2006:596) points out that an effective school takes responsibility for ensuring that pupils develop the academic knowledge they need to be

contributing members of society. According to Ubben et al. (2006), an effective school is the one that achieves high and equitable levels of student achievement.

In this study, effective schools will be the secondary schools which have been obtaining between 90% and 100% from 2010 to 2012.

### **1.9.5 T50 and T60 schools**

According to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2009:2), T50 and T60 schools are those schools that are underperforming in their grade 12 results. These schools obtain below 50% and 60% respectively in their grade 12 results.

### **1.9.6 Effective teaching and learning**

According to Kidwell (2012:1) effective teaching and learning takes place when teachers create learning environments which promote active learner participation and where learners are made aware that learning is a process, and that mistakes are a natural part of learning. On the other hand, learners pose and respond to meaningful questions. They also demonstrate growth in content knowledge and use ideas in realistic problem solving situations.

### **1.9.7 Effective instructional leaders**

Wagner (2012:1) maintains that effective instructional leaders galvanise effort around a shared vision of high quality teaching, setting ambitious goals with monitoring and feedback systems to achieve this vision, then constructing all elements of organisation to facilitate rather than constrain success.

In this study effective instructional leaders will be the principals of secondary schools whose Grade 12 performance has been between 95% and 100% from 2010 to 2012.

### **1.9.8 High performing schools**



According to Kidwell (2012:1) in high achieving schools teachers demonstrates an in-depth understanding of content, there is instructional relevance, instructional rigor and student engagement takes place in the classrooms. Learners are assessed accordingly and reflection takes place on a regular basis. In this study high performing schools are those secondary schools which have been obtaining between 95% and 100% from 2010 to 2012.

### **1.9.9 Average performing schools**

Average performing schools are those schools whose grade 12 results have been ranging between 60% and 70% from 2010 to 2012 (KZN Education, 2010:4).

The next section is on the division of chapters.

## **1.10 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS**

### **CHAPTER ONE**

Chapter one focuses on the orientation and overview to the study. It contains the introduction, background to the problem, the main research question which relates to the title, the sub-questions, the aims and the objectives of the study, research design and methodology, data processing, ethical considerations, demarcation of the field of research, significance of the study and the clarification of concepts.

### **CHAPTER TWO**

Chapter Two is based on the study of the literature. The contents of the chapter include: the differences between management and leadership, different dimensions of leadership, the qualities of leaders, an analysis of the concept of instructional leadership, actions of principals who are instructional leaders, barriers which face the school principals when they

implement instructional leadership, the benefits of instructional leadership and the characteristics of effective schools.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

Chapter Three consists of research design and methodology. In this chapter the following will be discussed: sources of data, data collection methods, data processing and analysis methods and ethical considerations.

### **CHAPTER FOUR**

Chapter Four consists of the findings of the research. Topics, themes and categories which emerged during the analysis of the data will be discussed in detail.

### **CHAPTER FIVE**

Chapter Five consists of the summary of the research and its main findings. This chapter also provides recommendations and suggestions, based on the research findings, which can be used as guidelines in assisting the principals in their implementation of instructional leadership.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the background to the problem was discussed, the main research question and sub-questions were formulated and the aims and the objectives of the research were stated. The field of study was demarcated, the concepts were clarified, the research design and methodology was discussed briefly, and the division of chapters was done.

The following chapter is on literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a critical literature review of previous studies on the topic of this study. It will focus on what other scholars and writers have already established regarding instructional leadership and the implementation thereof. Chapter Two also helped the researcher in the formulation of her research problem in Chapter One (Mouton, 2008:91). The review of the literature also provided the researcher with theoretical answers to the first four sub-questions in section 1.4.

Chapter Two reviews literature on the perceptions of secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The differences between management and leadership are explored in the first section. The second section is an investigation of the qualities of leaders. The third section examines the different dimensions of leadership and their culmination into instructional leadership. The fourth section investigates the concept of instructional leadership: its nature, the qualities of instructional leaders, their actions as well as the barriers to the principals' implementation of instructional leadership. Effective schools are discussed in the last section: the description thereof and the roles of principals' ineffective schools.

For school principals to execute their instructional leadership roles effectively, they must know the differences between the concepts 'management' and 'leadership' and how these two complement each other. The next section focuses on the discussion of the differences between management and leadership.

## **2.2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

In the majority of definitions of the concept ‘management’, the controlling of people and their activities are prominent features.

According to Buckingham (2005:40) management is about turning the employees’ talent into performance which will ensure the success of the organisation. This implies that management is task-oriented. Managers give direction and guidance to the workforce to ensure production and progress (Chell, 2013:12).

Ricketts (2009:10) states that management is to exercise executive, administrative and supervisory direction to a group or organisation. He further states that management is aimed primarily at making people more productive. This notion is supported by Sterling and Davidoff (2000:58) and *Changing Minds* (2010:2).

Kaster (2010:4) states that the word leader comes from the Anglo-Saxon word “laeden” which means to go; therefore, the leader has been defined as someone who guides, conducts, proceeds or being foremost. Ukko, Tenhunen and Rantanen (2007:41) state that leadership is a process or action that affects the actions of an organised group when it is heading for goal setting. According to Buckingham (2005:58), leadership manifests whenever a person strives to make others see a better future. This view is supported by Sterling and Davidoff (2000:13) and Sharma (1998:43). Since leaders dream of a better future for their organisations, vision building among the leaders is the most distinguishing characteristic between management and leadership (Sterling & Davidoff, 2000:13; Sharma, 1998:89; Buckingham, 2005:60). According to Maccoby (2000:57), management is a function and leadership is a relationship. This notion is supported by Maxwell (2005:19) and Sharma (1998:95).

Many writers cite the differences between management and leadership as if they are two concepts which oppose one another. My point of view is that although management and leadership are different, they have many common characteristics, and that they complement each other. According to Sterling and Davidoff (2000:13), management and leadership are two sides of the same coin. They mention vision building by the leaders as the most distinguishing characteristic between leadership and management; however, managers provides structure (Ricketts, 2010:5) by means of the objectives they formulate (Changing Minds, 2010:2). This implies that the building of a vision is inherent in management even if the scholars do not mention it explicitly. The objectives which are clarified by the managers (Changing Minds, 2010:2; Ricketts, 2010:5; Sterling & Davidoff, 2000:13) are informed by an implicit vision, the ideal, towards which the organisation is working.

The other difference cited is that management is a function and leadership a relationship (Maccoby, 2009:57; Maxwell, 2005:19; Sharma, 1998:95). Managers manage work and they concentrate on getting the work done. This indicates the importance of establishing healthy relationships when managing or leading. According to Maxwell (2005:19), all good leadership is based on relationships. People would not work along with you if they cannot get along with you. Sharma (1998:95) states that when you enhance the relationship, you enhance leadership. Leaders can build healthy relationships with their people by being competent in communicating with them and listening aggressively to them (Blanchard & Muchnick, 2004:69). A leader's honesty and compassion makes him to gain respect and trust of his people. According to Buckingham (2005:132) once people trust their leader, there is commitment, and the realisation of the goals and objectives of the organisation becomes easy.

My point of view is that managers cannot be able to make the staff work without encouraging and motivating them. For work to be completed there must be effective communication

between the managers and the staff. This implies that there are relationships that exist between managers and their subordinates.

Management and leadership are inseparable because you cannot perform either without the other. A leader creates the vision of the organisation and then motivates the staff to make contributions towards the realisation of that vision. According to Heath (2010:78) a leader has an image of what can be achieved, why it is worthwhile and how it can be done. There are managerial tasks which go with the creation of a vision, its effective communication and its eventual realisation. The leader convenes meetings, the secretary writes notes and these are filed for future references. The leader clarifies to the staff how the vision and mission of the organisation will contribute in the transformation of the school. This creates order and structure in the organisation (Buckingham, 2005:134).

According to Buckingham (2005:70), both the managerial skills and the leadership skills are equally important for the sustained success of the organisation. A leader who may just lead without managing can create chaos in the organisation.

As an instructional leader, the school principal leads and manages simultaneously (Chell, 2013:5). The main function of a school principal is the management of the curriculum to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school (Kruger, 2009:2). As managers, school principals use the subject policy documents, work schedules of different subjects and subject Assessment Guidelines to control the teachers' files fortnightly or monthly to ensure that lessons are well-prepared and informal assessment tasks are done properly. The management of the curriculum is informed by the school's vision and mission. The learners' books are also checked to see that what is in the teachers' files is also in the learners' book. Before the school principal and the Heads of Departments can check the teachers' files, they clarify what is expected of the teachers in the first departmental meeting

at the beginning of the year. There is consensus on the dates of the submission of files. Whatever is said in the meeting is recorded in the minute book. The principal motivates the teachers to execute their teaching tasks effectively so that learner performance will improve. When the principal is busy monitoring the teachers' work, and realises that progress is slow and that the learners are not performing well, he can always remind the teachers about the vision and the mission of the school, and motivate them to exert themselves harder to help in the achievement of the goals and objectives of the school and why they need to stop their current practices which do not support the school's goals and objectives (Heath, 2010:81). The principal is the leader, but for his leadership to be successful, he must also perform managerial functions.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:58) state that to be able to turn the employees' talent into performance, the manager organises co-ordinates group activities, maintains employees' enthusiasm and sets boundaries to maintain order and structure within the organisation. This notion is supported by Blanchard and Muchnick (2004:88). As a manager, the school principal achieves this by using the Staff Time Book where all the members of staff record their time of arrival and time of departure. He also uses the individual teachers' files to record the latter's late arrival to and early departure from work. The leave register is used to control the teachers' leaves. All these activities require exceptional administrative competence and efficient human relations skills. Buckingham (2005: 40) maintains that managers speed up the reaction between each employee's talent and the company's goals. He further points out that management is measuring quantity on a regular basis and adjusting an initial plan and the actions to reach one's intended goals.

As an instructional leader, the school principal is not only a manager, but he is also a leader. As a leader, the school principal creates and communicates the school's vision and mission. (Zenger & Folkman, 2007:38). The creation of a school's vision and mission is one of the

instructional leadership roles of a principal. The school's vision contributes to the principal's effective management because the whole school community uses it as a benchmark for whatever they do. Whatever is not in alignment with the school's vision and mission is quickly eliminated. As a leader, the school principal also establishes and maintains positive and healthy relationships with the teachers (Hornig & Loeb, 2010:22). These relationships enable the principal to motivate the teachers with ease. The teachers also see the school principal as someone who is on their side; someone who empathises with them in their execution of their teaching task. According to Boris-Schacter (2006:57) instructional leadership depends on relations principals have with their teachers. For the desired transformation to be a reality, the school principal must be a role model to the school community. My point of view is that the school principals' leadership role facilitates his execution of his management functions (Chell, 2013:7). It can be very difficult for a school principal to manage without leading. As a result, management and leadership complement each other.

School principals, who do not know what instructional leadership is and how to implement it successfully, can be transformed easily to being instructional leaders by performing the leadership and management functions discussed above simultaneously or interchangeably.

A school principal who claims to be only a leader, and neglects his managerial functions in his school, or the school principal who claims to be a manager and neglects his leadership role is inviting disaster to his school (Kruger, 2009:207). That school may not improve; in short it will keep on underperforming until the Department of Education calls the principal to order. Therefore, the principal must lead and manage simultaneously to bring about positive and sustained transformation in the school.



Having discussed the differences between the concepts ‘management’ and ‘leadership’, it is pertinent to discuss the qualities which leaders must possess in order to execute their leadership roles effectively. The next section focuses on the qualities of leaders.

## **2.3 QUALITIES OF LEADERS**

As instructional leaders, principals must constantly look for ways of transforming their schools. Transforming an organisation is not an easy task; therefore the principal requires the collaboration of the whole school community (Ubben, Hughes & Norris, and 2006:59). He needs the assistance of the whole school community especially that of the School Management Team. For leaders to be able to bring about effective and sustained change in their organisations, they must possess certain qualities. These leadership qualities help in the implicit conveying of the message that it is the time for transformation to take place. According to Maxwell (1991:15), talent elevates a leader, but character ensures that he stays there. In addition, Zenger and Folkman (2007:21) describe character as the essence of leadership. Leaders who lack character must be constantly on guard that people will discover the truth about them. School principals who possess these qualities are able to perform their instructional leadership tasks with ease.

The following are the qualities which leaders must possess for positive and sustained transformation to take place in their institutions: courage, empathy, optimism, integrity, trust, perseverance, honesty, ambition, confidence, humility, warmth, flexibility, ambition and honesty.

### **2.3.1 Courage**

Principals who are instructional leaders possess courage which is crucial for the transformation of the school. According to Heath (2010:37), leaders must decide the team’s

direction. This implies that the leader is responsible for the growth and sustainability of the organisation. A leader must constantly dream about where the organisation could be. It is courage which enables the leaders to dream and visualise what their organisations might be.

Boris-Schacter (2006:28) maintains that leadership courage involves delegation of tasks. Zenger and Folkman (2007:21) state that courage enables leaders to make bold decisions with the good of the organisation in mind. It is this courage that enables leaders to dream and visualise what their organisations might be. According to Sterling and Davidoff (2000:12), courage makes a leader to see problems as learning opportunities, and not something to be avoided. Heath (2010:12) states that there have been times in history where a failure in leadership was a failure in courage.

Courage makes the school principal to do strategic planning even if there are no resources which will assist in the realisation of that planning. A principal who lacks courage will shun strategic planning, because he will be concerned about the inadequate availability of funds. He will also be sceptical about the success of the projects planned by the School Development Team, and might even sabotage these unconsciously. According to Sharma (1998:94), a leader is an innovator and a catalyst of new ideas. Courage makes the school principal to take chances in the transformation of the school. Without courage, a principal will never dream of a better future for his school. Even the communication of the school's vision and mission to the school community requires a leader's courage because he must try to make the staff see what he sees is in his mind. A principal who lacks courage will be afraid to implement instructional leadership for fear of being resisted by the staff who want to maintain the status quo.

The principal must have the courage to convey directly and indirectly the message that things will not be done in the usual way anymore. The principal's courage will enable him to

collaborate even with difficult staff members for the sake of the realisation of the school's vision and mission and eventually the transformation of the school. The principal's courage will pave the way to the transformation of the school.

A principal who is an instructional leader must have courage, and that makes him to be a visionary. Such a principal is also optimistic about the future of the school, therefore he is constantly dreaming about the next level of his school. The discussion of optimism will be dealt with in the next section.

### **2.3.2 Optimism**

School principals who are instructional leaders possess courage and they are very optimistic.

They are constantly thinking of ways of transforming their schools. Buckingham (2005:62) maintains that a leader is never satisfied with the present because in his mind he can see a better future. According to Heath (2010:23), optimism is born from passion and enthusiasm. When a leader faces all obstacles with optimism, he succeeds. Optimism enables a leader to visualise "what could be" and this stirs him and propels him forward. Optimism makes a leader to be tired of the status quo since he believes that the organisation can be transformed for the better. Sharma maintains that the leader's optimism offers his followers hope because he shows them that a higher reality exists for them if they keep moving in the direction of the leader's vision.

Heath (2010:24) points out that optimism is not taught but caught. This implies that when the school principal is optimistic, the teachers will see that, and they will automatically be optimistic just like their principal. When the principal is optimistic, the whole school community has hope that things will change for the better in the school. Even the teachers who only see the bleak future of the school become energised by the principal's optimism

(Ubben et al., 2006:117). A school principal's optimism helps in the development of a concerted effort among the staff members to exert themselves hard toward the realisation of the school's vision and mission. Optimism fuels the leader's courage to dream and to translate those dreams into action. Buckingham (2005:63) states that a leader must believe deeply, instinctively, that things can get better. Optimism causes the principal to believe in every fibre of his that he is the one to make a better future for the school come true. Even the learners catch the principal's optimism, and begin to exert themselves harder to their academic tasks. In a nutshell, the school principal's optimism promotes effective teaching and learning and eventually improved learner achievement.

A school principal who is not optimistic will not have faith in the capabilities of the teachers and that of the learners. Such a school principal will always think of the worst when the learners do not perform as they are expected. This will worsen the situation and will cause a decline in the performance of all the learners, even to those who are performing well.

Another attribute which school principals as instructional leaders must possess is integrity.

It is important for a leader to be optimistic about the future of an institution, but without integrity he will lack people who will assist him in the achievement of the institution's goals and objectives. The next section is a detailed discussion of integrity.

### **2.3.3 Integrity**

Blanchard and Muchnick (2004:40) maintain that integrity is about creating a set of operating values and then living true to them. Blanchard and Muchnik (2004:62) further state that when a leader leads with integrity what they say and what they do is one and the same. A leader who has integrity earns both the respect and trust of his people. Sharma (1998:75) states that

leaders with integrity have character congruency because what they say is aligned with what they do.

According to Blanchard and Muchnik (2004:51), the first step in moving towards integrity is to build a culture of trust and respect. The principal can do this by involving the members of staff in decision making. When the staff members are involved in decision making, they feel that their voices are heard and that their contributions are worthwhile and valued (Hornig & Loeb, 2010). They feel respected and trusted and become even more committed and dedicated in the achievement of goals and the objectives of the school (Ubben et al., 2006:59).

Conversely, the principal who tells the teachers to protect the instructional programme but arrives late and leaves before school out is not modelling integrity to the staff. Such a principal does not walk the talk. The teachers inevitably see such a school principal as an oppressor who cares less about their welfare and that of the learners. This creates mistrust between the school principal and the teachers. Collaboration, which is essential for the effective implementation of instructional leadership, will be non-existent in that school (Ubben et al., 2006:59). The teachers will sabotage the entire school principal's efforts to transform the school. The school principal's lack of integrity will cause the teachers' morale to decline. This can be evident in the teachers' regular absenteeism from work and no enthusiasm to teach the learners effectively. These factors will eventually result in poor learner achievement.

Zenger and Folkman (2007:23) state that leaders with integrity look at others through a positive lens. This causes principals to have faith in the colleagues, and then collaborate with them in all the activities that contribute to the achievement of the vision and mission of the organisation.

A school principal who has courage, optimism and integrity earns trust from his staff. The following section is the discussion of trust as one of the qualities of instructional leaders.

#### **2.3.4 Trust**

Maccoby (2009:59) points out that the leaders develop trust by walking the talk, doing what they preach. Ricketts (2009:14) states that there must be consistency between word and action. According to Sharma (1998:96), leaders foster the respect of their colleagues and build lasting trust.

Principals can increase trust by promoting transparency and by involving the whole school community in decision making. When staff members are involved in decision making, and they know about things that are happening in the school, they learn to respect and trust the principal. Sharma (1998:65) points out that only when the people know that their leader cares about them as people would they go to the wall for him. When the teachers trust the principal, commitment in the achievement of the goals of the organisation becomes stronger. Effective teaching and learning takes place and learner achievement improves.

Teachers lose trust in a principal who does not have ambition and integrity. Teachers lose commitment in the execution of their teaching task, and learner performance deteriorates.

A principal can possess all the positive leadership qualities, but he may face challenges in his instructional leadership role. The presence of challenges in a leader's job does not mean that he must abdicate his leadership role. To overcome challenges, an instructional leader must persevere.

#### **2.3.5 Perseverance**

Leaders are leading people to a distant and abstract future, and most importantly in the leaders' minds. To be able to change this vision into reality, the leader needs the assistance of

others. Heath (2010:25) points out that it takes time to win colleagues over to your course, therefore patience is of vital importance. On the journey to achieving the goals of the organisation, there will be obstacles which will call for the leader's patience, courage and optimism.

According to Sterling and Davidoff (2000:169), leading others is not an easy task. People can be destructive at times. They can be fixed in their ideas, intolerant, full of blame and grievances towards others. The principal's perseverance and his ability to persuade colleagues to co-operate in a positive way to transform the school is an essential leadership quality. A principal can dream bold dreams, but without perseverance, those dreams could dissipate into thin air. Sometime the realisation of the school's vision and mission will be thwarted, hence the delay in their realisation. The principal must be patient and start all over again with strategic planning if that is required.

A school principal who lacks patience will consider every setback as a disaster to the transformation of the school, will lose hope and stop trying to transform the school. He will fail to motivate the staff and the learners during the times of controversy. Teaching and learning will be adversely affected and learner performance will decline.

A leader must try to understand what people are experiencing and try to feel what they are feeling. A leader must have empathy. This makes him to be more patient in the implementation of instructional leadership.

### **2.3.6 Empathy**

Although it is the responsibility of a leader to transform his school and take it to the next level, he must not trample on people in the process. The leader's humanity must be seen in whatever he does. According to Buckingham (2005:132), empathy is the ability to cut

through individual differences and fasten upon few emotions or needs that all of us share. He further states that great leaders discover what is universal in an organisation and capitalise on it. Empathy is more than sympathy. It means to understand what people are experiencing and feel what they are feeling.

Empathy helps a principal to understand why the staff members behave as they do, and then becomes patient with them, for he needs their collaboration in the achievement of the goals and objectives of the school. Lack of empathy on the part of the school principal causes him to lose patience and optimism when the teachers and the learners do not perform according to the expectations of the Department of Education. On the other hand, when the school principal does that, the teachers see him as their enemy. They are reluctant to collaborate with him and execute their tasks half-heartedly. Consequently, this situation impacts negatively on teaching and learning, therefore learner performance deteriorates.

When a leader understands the experiences of those he is leading, and feels what they are feeling, he becomes compassionate to them and shows them sympathy. A detailed discussion is dealt with in the next section.

### **2.3.7 Sympathy**

Sharma (1998:105) states that a leader must constantly show kindness to his team, and must look for ways to show that his concern is sincere. When a leader is compassionate towards the team, the team members feel cherished and appreciated. Sharma (1998:106) maintains that compassion involves showing people courtesy, consideration and respect every day.

Everyone has a desire to be treated well. A leader can show his people by doing minor acts of caring to them (Sharma 1998:107). The principal must always look for ways to show the staff that he is concerned about their welfare. A principal can show kindness by sending a teacher



a thank you note when they have done something exceptionally well. Even by being there when they have lost their loved ones, the staff members realise that their principal is kind to them. When the staff members know that their principal is compassionate towards them, they collaborate with him in the realisation of the goals of the organisation. Sympathy assists in the creation of new relationships and the reinforcement of existing ones between the principal and the staff. The principal's sympathy encourages the staff to collaborate with the principal in all his endeavours of bringing transformation in the school. The school principal is seen as one of them who feel what they feel.

In contrast, the school principal who has no sympathy toward his staff is a staunch bureaucrat, who is not flexible. For example, a teacher might have exhausted his Bereavement Leave days when another death strikes in his family. The school principal who has no sympathy will insist on that he does not have any Bereavement Leave days anymore; therefore he would refuse to approve the teacher's leave. The relations between the school principal and that teacher will be tarnished. As time goes on, the whole staff will resent the principal and he will be declared as insensitive to the needs and feelings of the staff. The whole staff can even conspire against the principal. Once this happens, the teachers will not give their best in all that they do. When there is poor or no collaboration between the school principal and teachers, teaching and learning suffers. It becomes difficult for the school principal to motivate those teachers who seem to be lagging behind in their teaching task. Eventually, learner achievement deteriorates.

School principals who are instructional leaders use the situational leadership style concurrently with the other dimensions of leadership. This makes them to be flexible when they execute their instructional leadership role.

### **2.3.8 Flexibility**

According to Zenger and Folkman (2007:73), flexibility means to be open to new ideas. A flexible principal listens to and takes good ideas from colleagues. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:17) state that the principal must work together with the staff members, and take time to understand them, to recognise their needs, to acknowledge their contributions, to encourage them to fulfil their potentials. When a principal does this, the staff members will feel more hopeful and motivated.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:17) points out that a leader will soon discover that each leadership challenge is unique, and requires a unique intervention from the leader. Heath (2010:39) states that the best leader knows which style to employ to create the best team climate. That calls for flexibility on the part of the principal so that he will not respond in one and the same way to all the challenges in the school.

A flexible principal does not need fixed guidelines to help him to lead effectively. When a principal is flexible, he frees himself to make mistakes, to try out new ideas, to change his method of working if the situation calls for that. He is also able to apply different dimensions of leadership in order to bring the desired change in the school. A flexible principal listens to the ideas and suggestions of the staff that are important for the transformation of the school. According to Sterling and Davidoff (2000:18), this flexible quality of a leader also frees others in the staff team to take on new challenges without fear of failure and judgement. Heath (2010:38) states that the leader's flexibility frees the employees to innovate. The principal's flexibility spurs commitment on the staff members in the achievement of the goals of the organisation. The teachers are also motivated to innovate in the transformation of the school. A principals' flexibility can assist him in the implementation of instructional leadership, because he will collaborate with the staff on a regular basis and make changes where needed.

A school principal who is not flexible does not listen to the teachers' suggestions and ideas. The teachers feel that their voices are not heard, and they adopt a negative attitude towards the school principal's efforts to transform the school. They lose enthusiasm in all the activities of the school, and do not collaborate in the transformation of the school. Moreover, they transfer this attitude unconsciously to the learners, thus learner performance declines.

Having discussed flexibility as one of the leadership qualities, it is crucial to discuss the attribute of honesty.

### **2.3.9 Honesty**

According to Sharma (1998:109), the best leaders who win the hearts and minds of those they lead, are openly honest. An honest principal shares information with everyone and makes it his highest priorities to keep the school community informed. Honesty promotes transparency. An honest principal wins the trust of those he leads. When the staff members trust the leader, they believe so deeply in his leadership that they will do almost anything not to let him down (Sharma, 1998:110).

On the other hand, a school principal who does not share information with the teachers causes the teachers to be suspicious of him. The teachers lose trust in such a school principal and they will not support him in the transformation of the school. The teachers' negative attitude is reflected in the poor performance of learners.

A leader must have a burning passion to transform his school and that passion must be translated to ambition.

### **2.3.10 Ambition**

Ukko et al. (2007:40) state that as visionary leaders are ambitious. Leaders have clear pictures of the future of their organisations, and communicate this to the colleagues and

empower all concerned to collaborate on the achievement of this goal. Ambition is the trademark of instructional leaders. Without ambition principals can never visualise a better future for their schools. A principal who lacks ambition will lose hope when things go tough, and he will lose his dream to transform the school. A principal's ambition enables him to be patient and to be optimistic.

On the contrary, a school principal who has no ambition does not see a better future for his school. He only sees a gloom future for the school. He does not dream about where his school should be. He is satisfied with the status quo. He even kills the teachers' enthusiasm in whatever they try to come with initiatives in the school. A sombre attitude prevails in such a school, and eventually it will be reflected in the poor performance of the learners.

A principal can be ambitious and honest, but he still needs to be confident in the implementation of strategies that will transform his school.

### **2.3.11 Confidence**

A leader will sometimes be confronted with difficult situations. A school principal who is an instructional leader must approach adverse situations with confidence. Heath (2010:20) advises leaders to approach difficult and ambiguous situations with the conviction that "all will come good". To be confident during times of controversy, a principal must have courage and optimism. When a leader exudes confidence during difficult times, he gives confidence to the team, and keeps moral high (Heath 2010:21). Everybody becomes optimistic that things will change for the better. A school principal's confidence can enable him to motivate the staff to work harder even if the school's performance for that particular year was unsatisfactory. He will be able to make the staff to see the better future of the school. The teachers' morale will be restored and that will lead to effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement.

On the other hand, the school principal who lacks confidence will see setbacks as permanent. He will start to look for scapegoats who have contributed in the poor performance of the school. He will attack those teachers who obtained low percentages in their subjects, and blame them for the school's poor results.

Although the school principals are responsible and accountable for the transformation of their schools, they must still be down- to- earth people. They must treat the teachers with respect and show humility in their interactions with the staff.

### **2.3.12 Humility**

According to Heath (2010:43), humility brings reality into the leader's office. A leader who has humility is aware that he is surrounded by a team which is not there to worship him. Sharma (1998:34) states that humility makes a leader to be receptive to new knowledge.

Heath (2010:43) cites the following characteristics of leaders who have humility.

#### **They are open to the views of others.**

Humility makes a principal to be flexible. When others voice their opinions, humble leaders investigate these, and if these opinions will help in the achieving of the goals of the organisation, they adopt them. When the principal is open to the views and suggestions of the staff, he becomes approachable. This encourages the staff to dream even more about the better future of the school. The teachers' innovation also increases when their principal is approachable. An approachable principal acknowledges that the transformation of the school is a team effort; consequently the relationship between the principal and the staff improves. This promotes effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement.

### **They acknowledge their mistakes.**

Humble leaders admit when they know they are not right. This affords them an opportunity to rectify their mistakes so that the whole school community can benefit. The staff members see such principals as honest and worthy of their trust and respect.

### **They are ready to ‘roll up their sleeves’ with the rest.**

When the staff members must meet a certain deadline, and they are under pressure, a humble principal plays his part to get the work done. He goes beyond his job description and assists the staff in the achievement of the goals of the school. A principal’s humility can be clearly seen during the final examination. He offers to help with the marking of the learners’ scripts. The staff members see the principal’s empathy, and they know that they are not alone in the struggle to achieve the goals of the school.

When the principal gets involved with tasks that contribute to the effectiveness of the school, he is modelling dedication and commitment to the staff. When morale declines among the staff, the principal will be able to motivate them easily as he models the right behaviour.

Staff members respect, trust and admire a humble principal. Collaboration and commitment among staff members is promoted, and this contributes to effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement.

Humility enables a principal to be caring and warm towards his staff.

### **2.3.13 Warmth**

According to Heath (2010:26), a leader does not have to be liked, but he must be personally warm in order to be able to motivate the colleagues to perform their tasks effectively. A warm principal is able to establish healthy relationships with staff members. These

relationships between the principal and the staff members make the principal to be approachable. Staff members collaborate easily with a warm principal. This is important for the realisation of the goals and objectives of the school.

According to Heath (2010:26-27), warm people like people and accept others for who they are. When a teacher has done something wrong for the first time, a principal who likes his teachers will give that teacher the benefit of a doubt. A warm principal takes a genuine interest in the lives of the members of the school community. The principal's conversation with the staff and the learners is not always about work and issues related to work, but he also about issues of importance in the lives of the teachers and the learners.

Sharma (1998:99) maintains that great leaders are aggressive listeners, and they capture the hearts of their people by deeply listening to them. Principals who like people take a genuine interest in the lives of others. Such principals know that there is life outside the school. They initiate conversations with the staff members and enquire about their family lives and the other interests of staff members.

Heath (2010:31) cites the following characteristics of leaders who like people:

**They smile and look pleased to see people.**

**They have open body language.**

An instructional leader is warm and appears relaxed and at ease when talking to others. Ubben et al. (2006:72) state that this is crucial because the principal as an instructional leader must ensure that there is a good working relationship in the school which is characterised by a good working climate. Warm principals know their people individually, and behave accordingly when they talk with different staff members so that the latter can feel comfortable.

### **Their voice has a wide pitch range.**

A warm principal's wide pitch range conveys real enthusiasm which is an important quality in his instructional leadership role. The principal's enthusiasm energises the staff to work hard in the realisation of the mission of the school (Ubben et al., 2006:72).

### **They do not dominate the conversation.**

They give the other person to speak in the conversation and listen attentively. Heath (2010:104) maintains that listening attentively is a motivating trait in a leader. When the principal listens attentively to his members of staff, they come to realise that what they say is worthwhile and they collaborate even more with the principal toward the achievement of the school's vision (Ubben, 2006:59).

### **They avoid aggressive behaviour**

Warm people are able to control their anger. Instructional leaders choose their battles wisely and reserve their battles for the issues that are vital for their schools' goals (Heath, 2010:69).

### **They care about people**

Instructional leaders can sense when a staff member is upset, and they try to help quickly. It is because they possess both empathy and sympathy.

The previous discussion of the qualities leaders showed that they are all intertwined and are designed to enhance the principal's instructional leadership role. For example: a principal who is flexible is also humble, warm, empathetic, approachable and sympathetic.

Having presented a discussion of the attributes of leaders, it is important to present a discussion of the different dimensions of leadership.

## **2.4 DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF LEADERSHIP**



According to Sterling and Davidoff (2000:18), schools are living, growing and dynamic organisations. This implies that as instructional leaders, school principals must know different dimensions of leadership and implement these concurrently or interchangeably to bring about positive sustained change in the schools. All these different dimensions of leadership, when used concurrently and interchangeably have an inherent ability of transforming an ordinary school principal to an instructional leader. The following dimensions of leadership are geared to bringing about positive change in a school. They all emphasise the leader's ability to build and communicate the vision, teamwork, the leader's ability to communicate effectively and his ability to motivate the staff. All these aspects of leadership will enhance the principal's instructional leadership role.

A detailed discussion of these dimensions of leadership and how they enhance the principal's instructional leadership role follows.

### **2.4.1 Transformational leadership**

As an instructional leader, the school principal is a visionary who is constantly dreaming of ways of transforming his school. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:8) maintain that schools are not rigid structures, but they are dynamic organisations, which change and develop in an on-going way. According to Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:252), as organisations, schools are open social systems which are influenced and are dependent on their internal and external environments. The effectiveness of schools is determined by their ability to change. Schools must change and develop in order to survive and to be effective because of the increasingly rapid innovations. According to Kaster (2010:19), a transformational culture is the one that has a sense of purpose, collegiality, and interdependence across vertical hierarchies and shared mutual interests. School leaders and managers are in the frontline of the struggle to develop new ways of doing things in schools (Department of Education 2000:2).

According to Battilana, Gilmanton, Pasha and Alexander (2010:473), transformational leadership occurs when leaders take their organisations into the future by implementing planned organisational changes that correspond with premeditated interventions intended to modify organisational functioning towards more favourable outcomes. Stebick (2009:21) states that transformational leaders focus on change, progress and development. They emphasise the need for understanding change as a process in order to engage in a successful series of transitions during the period of change. Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:252) maintain that organisational change is defined as the adoption of a new idea or behaviour by an organisation.

According to Hanna (2010:37), transformational leadership builds the staff's commitment to the organisation's objectives. She further states that transformational leaders empower the staff to achieve the goals of the organisation. This involves the professional development of

the staff. They encourage and motivate the staff members to be as productive as they could be and also to develop a strong feeling of commitment towards the achievement of the goals of the school. To be able to do this, a principal must be patient, flexible, empathetic and warm.

Fullan ( 1991:4 ) states that education has a moral purpose which is to make a difference in the lives of learners and to help produce citizens who can live and work productively in increasingly dynamically complex societies. To be able to do this, teachers must be in the business of continuous change. For transformation to be successful, all teachers in the school must be agents of change, and they must be experts at dealing with change as a normal part of their work, and not in relation to the latest policy (Fullan 1991:5). Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:252) state that teachers' attitudes toward change play an important role on the successful implementation of the transformation policies in the school. They further state that principals play an important role in teacher's attitudes toward change. Zenger and Folkman (2007:37) state that the best leaders inspire people to rally around a change, while poor leaders have to push, cajole or even threaten employees to accept change. This means that leaders must be skilled change agents. According to Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253), for the successful implementation of the change process, the principal must have the necessary skills and be the role model to the staff. The principal must initiate, develop and facilitate positive attitudes toward change in the school. According to Osborn and Marion (2009:4), for transformational leadership to be successful, strong emotional ties must exist between the leader and the led in order to change the followers' belief systems and attitudes. When a principal is trustworthy, he represents a code of conduct, transformation takes place easily. In short, for effective implementation of transformational leadership, there must be positive relationships between the staff and the principal. The principal can have a beautiful vision about his school, but he will never realise it by himself. He needs the collaboration of

the whole school community to assist him in making the school's vision and mission to be a reality.

Osborn and Marion (2009:2) state that transformational leadership enhances innovative performance. Transformational leaders use motivation to encourage innovation. Transformational leadership involves changing and shaping values, beliefs and attitudes of followers to perform beyond organisational expectations toward specified ends by the leader. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:8) point out that it is the leader's role to encourage transformation within the school by inspiring and motivating staff and students to realise their potential. In addition, Printy and Marks (2006:377) state that as a transformational leader, the principal seeks to elicit higher levels of commitment from all school personnel and to develop organisational for school improvement.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:16) maintain that the school is a learning organisation in that it is a dynamic, living and a growing organisation, therefore to maintain the life and the growth of a school, the principal must bring new ideas into the life of the school to inspire reflection, growth and change. As a leader the principal must not introduce change in a manner in which the teachers will view it as imposed change, but it must be change in which they had a big say. Furthermore, Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253) state that the process will be successful when the principal involves the teachers in the change process, practices distributed leadership, participates in professional development and continually shares his vision.

The principal must possess certain capacities which will empower him to embrace transformation and to have the courage to reflect and to change. Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253) state that for the change process to be successful, the principal must be a communicator, a counsellor and a facilitator. Fullan (1991:60) cites four capacities required

as a foundation for building greater change capacity among the school personnel: vision-building, inquiry, mastery and collaboration. He further states that the individual teacher is a critical starting point because the leverage for change can be greater through the effort of individual who have some control. Hallinger (2006:338) maintains that transformational leadership focuses on stimulating through bottom-up participation. The principal must focus on the development of individual teachers so that they can embrace the change process successfully. Osborn and Marion (2009:193) state that leaders should develop a vision when facing complex challenges in a complex environment. Although it is the task of a leader to get the school from where it is to where they have never been before, he cannot do it alone (Hornig & Loeb, 2010).

Individual teachers must build their own personal visions. According to Fullan (1991:12), when a person articulates his vision, that person signifies his disappointment with what exists now. Everyone comes out of the closet with their doubts about the organisation and the way it operates. For transformation to take place in school, individual teachers must have their visions about the envisaged change. Fullan (1991:13) states that personal vision and purpose comes from within and it gives meaning to work and it exists independently of the particular group or organisation we happen to be in. Personal vision fuels productivity. When the staff convenes to create the vision and mission of the school, those visions will be the point of departure. After individual teachers have built their visions, the principal must work with the school community to develop a collective vision of the school since vision building is a shared process. When the teachers are involved in the creation of the vision of the school, they own it and work hard towards its realisation. According to Osborn and Marion (2009:3), transformational leaders arouse the followers' motivation by creating and presenting an inspiring vision for the future.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:93) state that there are two core principles that will help to ensure that the process of developing a vision for a school works as well as it can: making the vision inspirational and making the vision realistic.

#### **2.4.1.1 Make your vision inspirational**

The main purpose of a vision is to motivate the school community during the transformation process; therefore, it must inspire the teachers to try hard to do things differently, to make a bigger effort, to notice and to contribute to the many small steps it takes to realise a vision( Sterling and Davidoff 2000:93 ). The vision must enable the school community to dream further while they are striving to make it a reality. Battilana et al. (2010:425) state that a desirable vision causes staff members to overcome obstacles and pull together in the improvement of the school.

Heath (2010:78-79) cites the following pointers which can help to create a vision:

#### **2.4.1.2 Make your vision realistic**

A realistic school vision is the one which is rooted in a school's real circumstances. A vision of the school must be informed by the real circumstances of that particular school. When a vision is realistic, it will be achievable, and the whole school community will be inspired and motivated to make it a reality.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:93) point out that the vision must be realistic and achievable, and it must be built on the school's real strengths, challenges as well as opportunities. When a vision is inspirational and realistic, people are motivated to achieve it. The whole school community works hard to achieve the vision and the transformation in the school will take place.

#### **2.4.1.3 It must be concise.**

Sharma (1998:48) states that when a vision is concise, it becomes a strikingly clear ideal which the school community will work toward to bring change in the school.

#### **2.4.1.4 It must describe an attractive ideal.**

When a vision describes an attractive ideal, the teachers feel excited by it and they are encouraged in an on-going way as they experience progress towards an achievable goal (Sterling and Davidoff 2000:93).

#### **2.4.1.5 It must have conviction**

According to Fullan (1991:13), creating a vision signifies our disappointment with what exists now, and paints a picture of where we want to be. Sharma (1998:43) points out that the leaders are visionaries who craft their clear pictures of their organisations' futures and then link them to the present activities of the people they are leading. It is important that a vision sets out the destination the school wants to reach and why it is worth reaching.

#### **2.4.1.6 It must be adaptable.**

A school is a living, dynamic and growing organisation that changes constantly. It is important that the vision of a school must accommodate or adapt to change. This implies that the principal must also be flexible to the ideas and suggestions of the school community.

#### **2.4.1.7 It must be easy to understand.**

The language used in the vision must be simple so that it can be understood by the whole school community.

The second capacity which the principal must possess to be skilled change agents is inquiry. According to Fullan (1991:15), inquiry has to do with the internalising of habits and techniques for continuous learning. Sharma (1998:155) states that to manage change

effectively, the leader must provide a culture of learning. The leader must encourage the staff members to acquire knowledge through learning and skills development. The principal must engage the staff in professional development in order to equip them for the change. Zenger and Folkman (2007:97) maintain that the most powerful tool in a leader's own development; is to develop the people around him. Heath (2010:84) states that a leader must ensure that his people have the appropriate skills and must provide them with support to prepare them for the change. In addition, Fullan (1991:16) points out that the teachers must be involved in life-long inquiry to ensure that their initial mental maps still fit the territory. Sharma (1998:155) states that the leader must let everyone know that to stay effective and competitive in this era, they must be lifelong learners. Some researchers also point out that if school improvement is to be successful in implementing as well as planning, school leaders must ultimately transform schools into places for teachers to learn continuously about their content areas and ways to promote student achievement (Ubben et al., 2006:58).

The District Office is mostly responsible for the development of teachers concerning changes in the curriculum; however the principal who is a transformational leader must not wait for the Subject Advisors to call the teachers to a workshop for the whole district or Circuit. The principal can request the Subject Advisors to come to the school so that they can provide one-on-one assistance to the teachers concerning the teaching of different subjects and the paper work that goes with it.

The third capacity which principals must embrace is mastery. According to Fullan (1991:15), principals must not just think themselves into new behaviours and ideas, but they must behave themselves into them. Senge (1990:5) points out that personal mastery goes beyond competence and skills. It means approaching one's life as a creative work. This means that once the teachers have learnt a new skill, they must then apply it so that the change process will not be a traumatic event. Zenger and Folkman (2007:98) state that engaging the leaders



to teach new skills to their groups not only solidifies that knowledge, but builds skills in the leader and lends credibility to what is being taught. In order for the desired change to be a reality, the principal and the teachers must move learning to doing, and from wishing to be.

The principal must also possess certain skills in order to be able to transform his school successfully. The first one is the ability to create a vision and then communicate it clearly to the staff members. Heath (2010:78) states that leaders must communicate their vision so that the followers will make their vision theirs. According to Sharma (1998:154), the leader must lessen his people's anxiety about the change by continually reminding of why the change is necessary but by connecting them to many benefits that will result from it. Battilana et al. (2010:424) argue that the leader must communicate the need to change for effective change to occur in an organisation. By so doing, the leader will be destabilising the status quo, and painting a picture of the desired new state for the school. The relationship which the principal has with the teachers will make the communication of the vision to the school community easy. Zenger and Folkman (2007:38) point out that the successful leaders envision a new organisational culture and then involve others in making the change work. They further state that great leaders inspire people to rally around change. Fullan (1991:28) states that a shared vision which is essential for success must evolve through a dynamic interaction of organisational members and leaders.

The second skill which the principal must possess is to seek collaboration of the staff. Without the collaboration of the staff, the principal will never be able to bring about change in the school. Battilana et al. (2010:423) state that this is the ability to mobilise others to support the change. They further state that the aim of mobilising staff members is to develop the capacity of the staff members to co-operate with the planned course of action. The new education policy requires that school leaders and managers to work in democratic and participatory ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery

(Department of Education, 2000:2). In addition, Heath (2010:84) maintains that a leader must seek for the collaboration of staff members and maintain the impetus by keeping the motivation high. Zenger and Folkman (2007:38) point out that the most effective leaders strike a balance between directing change and involving others. Furthermore, Brown and Anfara (2008:14) state that involving all the staff members in the change process ensures democracy and this leads to increased student achievement, because such environments foster learning communities among teachers and others. Ubben et al. (2006:58) point out that it is absolutely necessary to involve others, for the success of any school improvement rests with the active involvement of all stakeholders in the school. When the staff members are involved in decision making, they begin to feel good about themselves. They realise that their views count and that they are heard. They begin to trust the leader and respect the leader, and they co-operate easily during the change process. Blanchard and Muchnick (2004:74) state that sharing the big picture puts everyone on the same page.

Thirdly, the leader must evaluate the implementation of change. Battilana et al. (2010:423) state that a leader must evaluate the content of the change initiative and ensure that the staff members comply with the new work routines. According to Heath (2010:88), a leader must ask for accurate feedback in order to gain a realistic idea of how the change initiative is progressing. Accurate feedback allows the principal to identify emerging problems and react to them quicker.

For transformation to be effective, the leader must possess two leadership competencies: task-oriented competencies and person-oriented competencies. Battilana et al. (2010:424) point out that the interpersonal skills are crucial for planned organisational change because they enable leaders to guide and direct followers. The principal must communicate with the staff by motivating and encouraging them to do their best. The teachers too need to approach the principal for guidance and support and the provision of resources. According to Battilana

et al. (2010:425), effectiveness at person-oriented behaviours relies on the ability to show consideration for others, as well as to take into account one's own and others' emotions. They further maintain that person-oriented skills include behaviours that promote collaborative interaction among the staff members, establish a supportive social climate and promote management practices that ensure equitable treatment of members. According to Battilana et al. (2010:425), task-oriented competencies are related to organisational structure, design, control and to establish routines which will assist in the attainment of goals and objectives. As instructional leaders, the principal and the Heads of Departments provide the teachers with resources; manage the curriculum; and monitor the assessment of learners. They further point out that effectiveness at task-oriented behaviours hinges around the organisation's mission and objectives.

Osborn and Marion (2009:6) cite the following characteristics of transformational leaders:

**The leader is optimistic and enthusiastic:** Transformational leaders are inspirational and motivating. They are able to build a vision and to articulate it and present it to the staff members.

**The followers identify with the leader:** This instils pride in and respect for the leader.

**Idealised influence behaviour:** The leader represents a trustworthy and energetic model for the followers. According to Hanna (2010:37), idealised influence behaviour is an attribute of inspirational leadership. The leader creates a clear vision of the organisation might be. He communicates this in an exciting manner to the staff members and the models to the staff how the vision will be realised.

**Intellectual stimulation:** The followers are encouraged to question and challenge established ways of solving problems. Hanna (2010:37) states that the leader encourages the staff members to be more creative and innovative.

**Individualised consideration:** Transformational leaders should understand the needs and abilities of each follower in order to develop and empower individual followers. According to Hanna (2010:37), individual consideration is displayed when leaders pay attention to the development needs of people and support and coach the development of followers.

The discussion of transformational leadership shows us that school principals who implement it consistently and effectively will be able to bring about positive and sustained change in their schools. Instructional leaders are transformational leaders; thus, a principal who uses the transformational leadership style is a few steps away from being able to implement instructional leadership effectively.

A discussion of charismatic leadership which is also inherent in the principals' instructional leadership role will be presented in the next section.

## **2.4.2 Charismatic leadership**

Charismatic leadership is the precursor of transformational leadership in that before a leader can be able to bring about the desired change in an organisation, he must first challenge the status quo and then starts with the process of transforming the organisation (Heath, 2010:41). These two dimensions of leadership complement each other and they can enhance the school principal's instructional leadership role.

According to Rowold and Heinitz (2007:124), charismatic leaders are agents of change. Fullan (1991:40) maintains that charismatic leaders take action to alter their own environments so that deep change can take place. According to Osborn and Marion (2009), charismatic leaders go deep into their hearts and ask themselves how they can make the greatest impact. They further state that charismatic leaders are agents of change. The followers identify with their leader. Charismatic leaders use their abilities for the benefit of their followers, and not just for their own benefit.

Rowold and Heinitz (2007:124) site the following characteristics of charismatic leaders.

### **2.4.2.1 Sensitivity to the environment:**

The leader assesses the environment for growth opportunities for his organisation, challenges the status quo and proposes radical changes in order to achieve organisational goals. A principal who is a charismatic leader is never satisfied with the current state of his school. He constantly dreams of ways of improving his school, and envisions the better future of his school. He networks and twins with the principals of high performing schools and request their teachers to teach his learners on weekends and on school holidays. The financial constraints of the school do not intimidate a charismatic principal in his attempts to transform the school. He involves the school community in fund raising in order to be able to pay

honoraria to the teachers from the neighbouring schools who teach in his school on weekends. This contributes in effective learning and teaching in the school and improved learner achievement.

#### **2.4.2.1 Sensitivity to members' needs:**

The leader carefully evaluates his followers' needs and strives to fulfil them. Sharma (1998:95) states that charismatic leaders put their people first. He further states that charismatic leaders have exceptional people skills and they are exceptional communicators. Therefore, they are able to touch the heart of their team and earn long-term loyalty. They enhance the relationships with staff members which in turn enhance their leadership.

Sharma (1998:110) states that charismatic leaders are compassionate and they do random acts of kindness for their people. When the principal is sensitive to the teachers' needs, healthy and positive relationships are established and reinforced between him and the teachers. When there is a positive relationship between the principal and the staff, collaboration towards the attainment of the school's vision becomes easy. Change in the school becomes possible.

#### **2.4.2.2 Strategic vision building and the articulation thereof**

The leader formulates a strategic vision to the organisation and communicates it to the followers in an inspiring way. Vision building is the starting point for bringing about positive change in a school. The principal who is a charismatic leader is constantly dreaming about the future of his school. He is bold in the articulation of the school's vision and mission.

#### **2.4.2.3 Personal risk:**

According to Sharma (1998:94), risk taking is a very powerful skill. He further states that a charismatic leader constantly stretches his mind and explores new pathways of thought. In addition, Rowold and Heinitz (2007:124) state that charismatic leaders exude self- confidence

and demonstrate belief in the potential outcome of the vision. According to Heath (2010:41), charismatic leaders love challenges. They see the challenges as an opportunity to sharpen their skills. Principals who desire change in their schools are risk takers. They possess courage and optimism. They are not intimidated by controversy and challenges that work against the vision and mission of the school. Sometimes the resources may be inadequate, but a principal who is a charismatic leader will continue with the realisation of the school's vision.

#### **2.4.2.4 Unconventional behaviour**

Charismatic leaders build trust and commitment in the followers because they are role models for the followers. According to Sharma (1998:110), the highest level a leader can attain in terms of the quality of the relationship he has with his people comes when believe so deeply in his leadership that they will do anything not to let her down. When the relationship between the leader and his people has reached that level, all things become possible in that organisation.

The school principal who uses charismatic leadership style is on his way to becoming an instructional leader, since his striving for change is an indication that he has a vision, he is industrious, ambitious and possesses courage. All these are the attributes of school principals who are instructional leaders.

The next section focuses on transactional leadership which is also inherent in instructional leadership.

#### **2.4.3 Transactional leadership**

Transactional leadership is the catalyst to charismatic leadership and transformational leadership, because before the members of staff can be involved in the transformation of the

school, they must know of the rewards they will receive. These rewards may be the awards such as the best teacher awards or recognition by the principal or the officials from the District Office or the Head Office.

Walumbe and Orwa (2008:252) state that in transactional leadership the leader clarifies roles and task requirements, and provides staff members with materials or psychological rewards contingent on the fulfilment of contractual obligations. In transactional leadership, leaders are climate engineers in that they motivate the staff members by clarifying roles and the incentives which the staff members will get for carrying out those roles. Stebick (2009:23) maintains that a transactional leader addresses the material needs of the employee.

Similarly, Kaster (2010:18) states that transactional leadership focuses on exchanges between leaders and followers. Each party enters the relationship with an expectation of fulfilling self-interest with the assumption that the leader's role is to maintain the followers' needs by maintaining the status quo.

According to Rowold and Heinritz (2007:126) and Hanna (2010:37), transactional leaders possess the following characteristics:

#### **2.4.3.1 Contingent reward:**

This defines the exchange between what is expected from the followers and what they will receive in return. According to Stebick (2009:23), transactional leaders cater to the self-interests of their stakeholders by rewarding desired behaviours.

#### **2.4.3.2 Active-management-by-exception:**

In order to maintain the current performance status, the focus is on detecting and correcting errors, problems and complaints.

#### **2.4.3.3 Management-by-exception- PASSIVE:**



Problems are addressed only after they have become serious. Hanna (2010:37) calls this hand off leadership.

As an instructional leader, the principal must motivate the staff to collaborate in the transformation of the school which will ensure effective teaching and learning and eventually, improved learner performance. The principal's charismatic leadership skills combined with his transformational and transactional leadership abilities position him as an instructional leader.

Visionary leadership which also contains almost all the instructional leadership roles will be discussed in the following section.

#### **2.4.4 Visionary leadership**

Before a school principal can be able to transform his school, he must be a visionary leader, a charismatic leader as well as a transactional leader. All these dimensions of leadership have the potential of enhancing the school principal's instructional leadership role and transform the school tremendously.

According to Brown and Anfara (2008:16), visionary leadership refers to the capacity to create and communicate a view of the desired state of affairs that clarifies the current situation and induces commitment to an even better future. Sharma (1998:43) states that effective leaders are visionaries who craft clear pictures of their companies' futures and then link them to the present activities of the people they are leading. A visionary leader inspires, challenges, guides and empowers. According to Buckingham (2005:60), a visionary leader is preoccupied with the future. In his head he has a vivid image of what could be.

Brown and Anfara (2008:17) maintain that a school can only be effective when a leader can provide visionary leadership. They further state that the success of transformational strategies

lies in the leader's ability to translate visionary leadership into actions. Successful principals understand their schools, the nature, needs, strengths and limitations of their staff members, and what it is going to take to achieve the desired results.

The principal's courage and confidence will enable him to dream boldly about the school's future. Principals who are visionary leaders energise and influence their staff to a better future. Moreover, school principals who are visionary leaders are instructional leaders.

The school principal must be flexible in his efforts of transforming the school. Situational leadership assists the school principal to respond differently to different people and different circumstances. The next section is a discussion of situational leadership.

#### **2.4.5 Situational leadership**

For a school principal to be able to bring about the desired change in his school, he must employ the different dimensions of leadership concurrently and interchangeably. Situational leadership assists the school principal to work with different people in different situations when change is introduced in an institution.

Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zigarmi (1987:27) state that situational leadership occurs when a leader changes his leadership style depending on the person he is working with and on the situation. According to Kaster (2010:17), the basic premise behind situational leadership is that effective leaders adjust leadership behaviours depending on the situation and the followers' ability to carry out tasks. Heath (2010:39) argues that the best leaders know which style to employ to create the best team climate. Blanchard et al. (1987:17) call these different strokes for different people. Furthermore, Sterling and Davidoff (2000:17) point out that a situational leader responds flexibly because he practises a wide range of techniques and leadership responses which they draw on as the need arises.

Blanchard et al. (1987:28) maintain that a situational leader must possess three skills: flexibility, diagnosis and contracting. Blanchard et al. (1987:29) state that a whole leader is flexible and is able to use the four leadership styles. The four leadership styles are: directing, supporting, coaching and delegating. In addition, the leader must diagnose the needs of the staff members, and he must learn how to come to some agreement with them, to contract with them for the leadership style they need from him. Blanchard et al. (1987:43) maintain that the skill of diagnosing a situation before you act is crucial to being a situational leader. After the leader has diagnosed the situation, organisational goals must be set. Blanchard et al. (1987:81) state that for situational leadership to be effective, organisational goals and objectives must be set and these must be clearly articulated clearly to the staff members. This makes everybody to know what is expected of them and ensures commitment because there is purpose and direction. The goals and objectives of the organisation also help the leader to analyse each employee's level of development in their job, and assist them accordingly so that they make a worthwhile contribution towards the realisation of the school's goals and objectives.

Blanchard et al. (1987:28) maintain that the directing style of leadership is the most autocratic in that the leader tells the staff members what to do, when, where and how to do it. There is close supervision of the people's performance in the directing style of leadership. Staff members are not offered the opportunity to express their opinions; however, democracy is evident in other leadership styles because there is collaborative decision making and the subordinates' suggestions are respected and accepted.

The principal can use the directing style of leadership successfully with beginner teachers who still need to be inducted to their jobs. According to Blanchard et al. (1987:31), newly-appointed employees still need more structure, control and supervision. They also maintain that directing can also be used to staff members who have some skills, but do not know the

company, its priorities, policies or the culture of the organisation. The principal will not use the directing style of leadership to beginner teachers only, but it can also be used to experienced teachers when there is curriculum transformation, for example, in the year 2000 the curriculum was changed from the Nated 500 Curriculum to Outcomes Based Education (OBE). The principals as well as the officials from the District Offices used the directing leadership style to all the teachers, but mostly to the well-experienced teachers who wanted to maintain the status quo. The majority of the experienced teachers resisted the change severely. Their argument was that their teachers taught them successfully using the old way; therefore, they were going to teach in the way in which they were taught. More control and supervision were needed back then for the effective implementation of the Outcome Based Education. The principals and the District Office officials provided specific instructions and closely supervised task accomplishment. According to Blanchard (1987:31 ) the leader's support is low in the directing style, because the leader tells the staff members what the goal is and what a good job looks like, and he lays out a step-by-step plan about how the task is going to be accomplished. They further state that the leader makes the decisions and the subordinates carry the leader's ideas out.

The supporting style of leadership is used to train teachers who have experience of the work. The principal works collaboratively with the teachers towards the attainment of the vision and mission of the school. According to Blanchard et al. (1987:30), the principal facilitates and supports the staff members' efforts toward task accomplishment and shares responsibility for decision-making with them. This can be evident when the principal and the Heads of Departments in the school convene meetings where, among other things, subject policies are formulated. Although the Heads of Departments have an idea of what must be done, they do not go to the meeting and tell the teachers in his/her department how things are going to be done. The Heads of Departments listen to the teachers and facilitate the teachers' interaction

with one another. Blanchard et al. (1987:32) state that the leader must build the teachers' confidence by encouraging and praising them. According to Blanchard et al. (1987:32), when leaders use the supporting style of leadership, they do not talk to the staff members about how they would go about solving problems or accomplishing certain tasks. They further state that staff members are assisted to reach their own solutions by asking questions that expand their thinking and encourage risk-taking. Sharma (1998:120) points out that a supportive leader coaches, guides and encourages the staff members to liberate their strength. Blanchard et al. (1987:24) point out that when the leader treats the staff members like this, they feel like they are competent, contributing members of a team. The leader listens to the staff members, assists them in the achievement of the organisational goals and praises them often. According to Sharma (1998:100), when a leader listens to his people, they feel respected and valued because their leader believes in them. The staff members feel good about themselves and they become effective in the execution of their teaching task, and effective teaching and learning takes place.

Coaching is used to teachers who are beginning to be established in their teaching task, and who are showing significant progress. Jackson (2009:47) points out that once trust and rapport has developed between the leader and the teacher, coaching can be used to address the underlying causes of the teachers' ineffectiveness areas in their work. According to Blanchard et al. (1987:30), when the leader uses the coaching leadership style, he continues to and closely supervises task accomplishment, but also explains decisions, solicits suggestions, and supports progress. In fact, coaching comprises directing and supporting. It comprises of directing because the leader still directs and closely supervises the staff members so that the task can be accomplished. Coaching also plays a supporting role because the staff members are involved in decision-making. Coaching can be used effectively with the teachers whose performance is unsatisfactory even though they are experienced.

Coaching can be used effectively to discouraged staff members. For example, in 2005 there was a change from the Outcomes Based Education to the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) from Grade one to Grade nine. The change that occurred from Grade ten to twelve was called the National Curriculum Statements (NCS), and it took place in 2008. There was a change of terminology and the way of planning lessons and assessment tasks changed radically. Disillusionment set in to the teachers who were still trying to grasp the principles of Outcomes Based Education. The principals and the officials from the District Offices reverted to directing since the teachers still needed to build skills for the Revised National Curriculum Statements and the National Curriculum Statements respectively. According to Blanchard et al. (1987:39), when the leaders use coaching, they must listen to the staff members' concerns, provide perspective and praise progress. They further state that the leaders must involve staff members in decision making as much as possible because that is how their commitment is built. Boris-Schacter (2006:2) maintains that when principals employ collaborative negotiation strategies, they are able to influence colleagues, identify prioritise and solve complex problems. The leader must hunt for good behaviour and must be generous with praise.

For praise to be effective when coaching, Sharma (1998:133) cites the following praise principles: praise must be specific; it must be immediate; it must be done in public; it must be sincere; and it must be personalised by using the praised person's first name.

The fourth leadership style is delegating. Hanna (2010:37) states that the leader's delegated assignments are opportunities of growth to the staff members who perform those delegated duties. Sharma (1998:69) points out that delegation empowers. Therefore, great leaders measure their success by the number of people they empower, not by the number of their followers. According to Boris-Schacter (2006:28), the modelling of professional courage

involves delegation of tasks. She further states that there is power inherent in the giving away of power.

Boris-Schacter (2006:28) points out that many principals delegate leadership tasks to eager graduate students or staff members preparing to transition into administrative roles. From my observation, the delegation of leadership tasks to teachers who are preparing for transition into administrative roles does not work, because these teachers are still not sure whether they will be promoted to those posts or not. As a result, these teachers do not want any leadership task to be delegated to them. According to Blanchard et al. (1987:42), delegating is appropriate for peak performers. Peak performers are competent and committed. In a school setting, these will be the School Management Team, Senior Teachers and Master Teachers. These people are the leaders of their own departments. The achievement of their departments is mainly their responsibility. When their departments are underperforming, the performance of the whole school will be adversely affected. Blanchard et al. (1987:43) maintain that peak performers are self-motivating and self-directing. Although the principal delegates some of the duties to the School Management Team, he is still accountable for the effective teaching and learning in the school. That means that he will use coaching to some of the School Management Team members who might be struggling in as far as the management of their departments is concerned. This means that even with delegating, the principal will still have to direct and to support the Heads of Departments to perform their delegated duties effectively.

From this discussion of situational leadership, it is clear that no single leadership style can be used uniformly to all the members of staff. The leadership style to be employed at a particular time will be determined by the nature of the task, the staff members' experience, their level of development and motivation.

When the school principal, as an instructional leader, employs situational leadership he monitors the teachers' work, provides them with professional development, delegates some of his tasks and motivates the teachers. All these roles of the principal are found in transformational, transactional and visionary leadership styles.

The discussion of distributed leadership which assists the principal in his implementation of instructional leadership will be dealt with in the following section.

#### **2.4.6 Distributed leadership**

Distributed leadership occurs when the school principal delegates some of his tasks to the School Management Team and to some of the able and willing Post Level one teachers. This dimension of leadership ensures collaboration among the school community which is essential for the effective use of all the other dimensions of leadership discussed.

According to Hanna (2010:48), the responsibilities of the principal have multiplied to the extent that some believe that the role of the principal has become too much for one person. Due to this, Heck and Hallinger (2010:867) maintain that school leadership should be distributed among the School Management Team and the other teachers who are keen in developing their school as well as themselves. This notion is supported by Kaster (2010:2) and Hallinger (2008:2). However, Boris-Schacter (2007:82) argues that the principal alone cannot fulfil all the aspects of the job as it is presently conceived; therefore, distribution of leadership tasks among staff is a response to pressure and the workload of the role. I agree with Hanna, Heck and Hallinger, Kaster and Boris-Schacter that the principal cannot do the work of improving the school alone; however I disagree with them that the leadership tasks must be distributed to the teachers who do not form part of the School Management Team. Post Level one teachers are reluctant to perform leadership functions because they feel that they are not paid to do leadership functions. Even if a post level one educator would like to



have some leadership functions distributed to them, they refuse to do them because they are afraid to be ridiculed and even rejected by fellow Post Level one educators. The principal can only distribute some of his leadership functions to the School Management Team. The principal works with the School Management Team which assists him in the day-to-day running of the school and put the school's policies into practice, while the governing body determines the policies (Department of Education; 2000:2).

Distributed leadership may be the solution to the principals' dilemma of having too much work. Hanna (2010:38) states that in distributed leadership, the principal convinces teachers to take on more leadership functions and in turn minimises the chance of burnout of the principal and as a result increases the likelihood of school improvement. She further states that when the principal elicits high levels of commitment and professionalism from teachers and works interactively with them, they are an organisation that learns and performs at a high level. Effective school leadership creates conditions that support teaching and learning and builds capacity for professional learning and change. Boris-Schacter (2006:74) points out that distributed leadership among many professionals in the building is a model in which some administrative responsibilities are dispersed among members of a leadership team, administrative council or across the professional staff in general.

According Heck and Hallinger (2010:867), the purpose of distributed leadership is to drive the development of the school's capacity for improvement. The point of departure of distributed leadership is the creation of a vision for change and then mobilising colleagues to make that vision a reality. Boris-Schacter (2006:75) maintains that delegating offers to leadership opportunities to the teaching staff serves a dual purpose: relieving the principal and providing professional development to those agreeing to take the tasks.

Hoerr (2008:84) agrees that the principal sometimes delegates, but he warns that the principal always bears the responsibility, which cuts into the time and energy needed to think about pedagogy. Although the principal is responsible and accountable for the development of the school, he cannot do it alone. He manages the school's instructional programme indirectly because it is the Heads of Departments who control the teachers' files, lesson plans, and learners' work and monitor the assessment programme. The teachers communicate their needs to their Heads of Departments and the latter then makes requisitions to the principal on behalf of his team members.

Distributed leadership promotes the establishment of healthy relationships among the school principal and the teachers; hence it promotes collaboration of the staff members. This is one of the principal's instructional leadership roles. The existence of healthy relationships between the principal and the staff promotes trust between the principal and the teachers.

The next section presents the discussion of moral leadership which runs like a golden thread in all the instructional leadership roles of the school principal.

#### **2.4.7 Moral leadership**

In moral leadership, the leaders are committed to the values of: trust, reciprocity and honesty. According to Hanna (2010:71), nowadays principals are not only expected to attend to the professional capacity of teachers, instructional quality, student achievement and accountability demands, but also to the needs of and requests of children and families of culturally, racially, linguistically and economically diverse backgrounds. School principals will not be able to execute their instructional leadership roles without being moral leaders.

Hanna (2010:72) states that moral leadership is based on the following:

Today educators are faced with a litany of social and political dilemmas: As moral leaders, principals must see to the needs of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) in their schools. Due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, many children come from child-headed families. Even some of those children who have both parents live in extreme poverty due to unemployment. As moral leaders, the principals must bring the Orphans and Vulnerable Children to the attention of the social workers so that they can receive grants. Since the processing of the applications for the grants takes a long time, the principal must help those children with food, clothes and the other amenities until their grants are approved.

Leaders must accept and celebrate cultural diversity and be able to deal with issues of power and privilege. Principals must be intellectual as well as moral. Hanna (2010:74) states that it must be an activity characterised by a blend of human, professional and civic concerns; a work of cultivating an environment for learning that is humanly fulfilling and socially responsible.

Education is intrinsically about the moral education of children and young people. Moral education means going beyond doing things right to doing the right thing.

According to Hanna (2010:72), the following are the virtues of moral leadership:

#### **2.4.7.1 Responsibility, authenticity and presence.**

Hanna (2010:72) states that authentic leaders are true to themselves and to their relationships with others, at the same time they must honour and preserve the rights of others to be true to themselves and to their relationships.

In moral leadership, personal and social aspects co-exist. As an authentic leader, the principal is involved in authentic relations with the learners in their academic endeavours.

#### **2.4.7.2 Presence**

Hanna (2010:73) points out that presence means the awareness of self and others and to allow for authentic communication through dialogue. Presence affirms the rights of others to be who they are. Presence is critical. It also helps us to name the problem and removes from blocking communication. Presence is enabling since it invites others to be involved at various levels of participation.

### **2.4.7.3 Characteristics of moral leadership**

Hanna (2010:73) cites the following characteristics of moral leadership:

**Normative rationality:** Moral leadership is behaviour that is based on what is believed to be good. It is the heart of moral leadership and it comprises beliefs, ideas and commitment.

**Technical rationality:** This is behaviour that is based on what is effective and efficient. It is the head of leadership and consists of theories of practises and experiences.

**School's covenant:** The whole school community must agree on the common purpose and hold true to it.

The dimensions of leadership discussed above are intended to bring about positive and sustained change in a school if they are applied correctly. The discussion of these leadership styles indicate that instructional leadership is a combination of transformational, visionary, moral, distributed, situational and distributed leadership. All the roles of school principals who are instructional leaders are inherent in all these leadership dimensions; for example, vision building, collaboration, the establishment of healthy relationships, professional development of teachers and delegation. In a nutshell, instructional leadership is a combination of all these dimensions of leadership which have been adapted for the school situation.

The next section is a discussion of instructional leadership, which is an amalgamation of all the different dimensions of leadership.

## **2.5 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

### **2.5.1 The concept of instructional leadership**

Literature indicates that there is no single definition of instructional leadership because its description is based on the lists of characteristics and actions of instructional leaders (Hornig, 2010:66; Chell, 2013:1). Although there is no single definition of the concept of instructional leadership, writers agree unanimously that instructional leadership refers to all the actions of a school principal which ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in school (Hanan,2010:48; Stiggins & Duke, 2008:285; Kaster, 2010:28; Hornig & Loeb, 2010:66).

Kruger (2009:30) states that the changes which are taking place in education all over the world are resulting in the decentralisation of decision-making powers to school management level. This responsibility of the principal further reinforces the role of the principal to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place and eventually improved learner achievement. This notion is supported by Lochmiller (2010:22) who submits that school districts have shifted decision-making responsibilities to school principals in order to improve education. They further state that this reform strategy is decentralisation or school-based management. Due to decentralisation of decision-making in education, managers and leaders in future will be judged on the quality of education their schools deliver (Department of Education, 2000:1). All these educational changes require that principals to change to instructional leadership.

Hanna (2010:48) maintains that decentralisation emphasises the role of the principal as the primary decision-maker. Principals are given increased flexibility from districts to make

decisions about the allocation of resources, configuration and composition of staff and the focus of the school's instructional programme. Schools are now encouraged to become self-managed and self-reliant, and if they are successful in this, they will attain Section 21 status, which will give them quite a lot of authority to run their own affairs (Department of Education, 2000:2). Hanna (2010:48) points out that while districts use decentralisation as a reform strategy that offers principals flexibility for a wider range of decisions, they also tend to hold the principal accountable for implementing instructional reforms. Kaster (2010:3) mentions that principals are no longer simply administrators and managers, but they must be leaders focused on improving student performance. The school principal must be a visionary, offering direction and expertise to ensure that learners learn. The SMT's are instructional leaders and they are responsible for taking the lead in putting their school curriculum into practice and improving it (Department of Education, 2000:1).

Kaster (2010:1) states that principals must now assume increased responsibility and accountability for assuring that each student is performing at a high level of achievement. He further states that the primary role of principals is to create a school atmosphere where teachers improve their collective capacity to ensure that all students are acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to become successful. According to Bays and Crockett (2007:143), it is the responsibility of the principal to ensure successful learning opportunities for all students. These demands which are made on principals to increase learner performance enforce the role of the principal as a key figure in the provision of effective teaching and learning. According to Kaster (2010:28), principals now must be able to increase learner performance while influencing teachers to analyse, assess and change instructional practices within the school.

Kaster (2010:1) reports that some researchers have proposed that successful leaders influence student academic achievement through two pathways: implementing effective organisational

processes and developing and supporting effective teachers. To be able to do this effectively, the principal must now be an instructional leader. Stiggins and Duke (2008:285) state that there is a universal agreement that principals play a crucial role in the improvement of student learning; therefore, they should function as instructional leaders. As an instructional leader, the principal is held accountable for the improvement of teaching and learning (Kursunoglu & Tanriogen 2009:253). Hanna (2010:9) maintains that if student performance is going to increase, principals need to demonstrate instructional leadership and make this a vital dimension of their leadership priority. According to Hallinger (2008:3), when the principal is an instructional leader, student achievement escalates. He further states that principals as instructional leaders monitor and improve school performance. Moreover, Boris-Schacter (2007:18) states that instructional leadership means mentoring staff, modelling instruction, visiting classrooms and providing customised professional development experiences. Boyd (2009:2) points out that the principals of effective and high achieving schools are instructional leaders.

According to Kaster (2010:7), in order for today's principals to be able to improve learner performance, they must:

2.5.1.1 Know academic content and pedagogical content. According to the ELRC Policy Handbook for Educators (Education, 2000:8), principals must teach at least 5% of the total teaching time per week. This implies that the principal must teach at least one subject. This gives the principal the opportunity to model to the teachers the correct implementation of the curriculum, and be able to help those who are experiencing instructional challenges.

2.5.1.2 serve as leaders for student learning;

2.5.1.3 work with teachers to strengthen skills. The principal can achieve this by conducting staff development sessions. He can also invite the Subject Advisors to come to the school and give assistance to individual teachers.

2.5.1.3 analyse, collect and use data in ways that fuel excellence. The analysis of test results must not be done just for the sake of doing it, but it must be done with an aim of diagnosing the problems of the learners. After the problems have been identified, the topics in which the learners performed poorly must be retaught.

2.5.1.4 rally students, teachers, parents, local health and family service agencies, youth development groups, local businesses and other community stakeholders around the common goals of raising student performance;

2.5.1.5 have the leadership skills and knowledge to exercise the autonomy and authority to pursue these strategies.

Bays and Crockett (2010:144) point out that analysing instructional leadership means looking closely at how school leaders define and carry out their tasks. According to Kaster (2010:20), definitions of instructional leadership in the literature are scant, unclear and varied. Bays and Crockett (2010:30) echo this and mention that instructional leadership is a common term tossed around in today's standards-driven educational world with little regards to its origin.

Although there is no single definition of the concept instructional leadership, scholars agree unanimously on the purpose of instructional leadership, namely the improvement of learner achievement. They also agree on the majority of actions of instructional leaders. Hoerr (2008:84) states that the principal is an instructional leader in that he is an educational visionary, offering direction and expertise to ensure that learners perform well. Hallinger (2008:3) mentions that instructional leadership is the principal's behaviour that directly affects the growth of students. Hanna (2010:47) states that instructional leadership is



recognised as the improvement of teaching and learning. According to Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253), principals are instructional leaders in initiating, developing and facilitating positive attitudes toward change in schools.

Bays and Crockett (2010:144) state that instructional leadership has been described as the glue that binds together school-wide goals, teachers' needs and the learning of learners. I agree with Bays and Crockett (2010:146) because as the instructional leader, the school principal must lead the teachers in the creation of the school's vision and mission. Once the vision is in place, the principal must provide the teachers as well as the learners with the resources which will assist them in the achievement of the school's goals and objectives. All these promote effective teaching and learning and improved learner performance.

Greczewski, Knudson and Holtzman (2010:75) mention that as an instructional leader, the principal is an agent of change. The principal who is an instructional leader is never satisfied with the current state of his school. He constantly dreams of ways of improving the performance of the learners. He encourages the teachers to innovate and initiate everything which will contribute to effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement. Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford (2007:20) point out that instructional leadership refers to all the activities of the principal that improve student outcomes. According to Bays and Crockett (2010:30), instructional leadership refers to administrators who focus on their students' progress. Hanna (2010:9) states that instructional leadership is leadership that is shared with teachers through coaching, reflection, study teams and problem solving. Increasing student performance is the primary focus of principals. Kaster (2010:19) defines instructional leadership as the ability 'to lead learning communities' in which people meet on a continuous basis to discuss work, solve problems, reflect on teaching and learning practises and take responsibility for student learning.

Kaster (2010:21) maintains that principals who want to be effective instructional leaders must perform the following roles:

**Focus on a shared sense of purpose:** This notion is supported by Hallinger (2008:6) and Hanna (2010:67). The principal must collaborate with the teachers in the creation of the school's vision. The principal's collaboration with the teachers in the building of the school's vision will encourage the teachers to make positive contribution toward the realisation of the school's goals and objectives.

**Develop a school culture of high expectation for teaching and learning:** The principal who is an instructional leader believes that the teachers as well as the learners can and are able to achieve when they are provided with adequate resources. Morrison (2013:1) states that when the teachers and learners know that the leadership believe in them, they excel in their work and he calls this self-fulfilling prophesy.

**Gear content and instruction to standard:** Horng and Loeb (2010:66) state that the principal who is an instructional leader mentors his teaching staff by observing practice, providing pointed feedback and modelling instruction when necessary.

Kaster (2010:21) cites seven roles of effective instructional leaders: Making student and adult learning the priority; setting high expectations for performance, gearing content and instruction to standard, creating a culture for continuous learning for adults, use of multiple sources of data to assess learning, activating the community's support for school success and engaging teachers in instructional dialogue and evaluate classroom practices.

According to Hanna (2010:37) instructional leadership constitutes the following:

Technical: The technical aspect of instructional leadership has to do with management: planning, time management, leadership and organisational development.

Human: The human component is the relational aspects of leadership: communicating with staff, learners and parents, motivating the school community to do their best in the realisation of the vision of the school and facilitating the instructional programme.

Symbolic: The principal communicates with teachers, learners, parents and the other stakeholders on what is important and to model the purpose of the school.

Culture: The principal must be skilled in creating the culture of the school that defines what the school is exactly about.

Having presented a discussion of what instructional leadership is, it is important to discuss the attributes which instructional leaders must possess. These attributes can assist the school principals in the execution of their instructional leadership role.

## **2.5.2 ATTRIBUTES OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

Principals who are instructional leaders display certain attributes which distinguish them from ordinary school principals. These attributes of instructional leaders assist them to implement instructional leadership effectively. A detailed discussion of the attributes of instructional leaders follows.

### **2.5.2.1 Industriousness**

According to Hanna (2010:55), instructional leaders are hard workers who are not afraid of rolling up their sleeves and teach classes themselves. Yimaki (2007:13) points out that the instructional leaders have a fierce determination to make a difference. Similarly, Sharma (1998:73) calls them people of action, who push constantly push themselves to find better and faster ways to mirage the present with the future. Marks and Printy (2007:377) point out that as a leader, the principal seeks to elicit higher levels of commitment from all school personnel and to develop organisational capacity for school improvement.

Principals who are instructional leaders arrive at school an hour before everyone and start preparing for the day. In the afternoon they leave an hour later than the rest of the staff to tie up the loose ends, and to prepare for the next day. During this time, the principal and the whole School Management Team get the opportunity to reflect on the day's events.

Boyd (2009:2) maintains that the best way for principals to be instructional leaders is to be active in the classroom. Yimaki (2007:14) states that it is easy for principals to pressure teachers to adopt much-needed instructional changes in their classrooms if they themselves teach. The instructional changes modelled by the principal are directly aimed at improving teaching and learner achievement. Yimaki (2007:14) states that instructional leaders work tirelessly to find resources for professional development which will in turn contribute in the improvement of learner achievement. Hanna (2010:55) states that principals who are instructional leaders work collaboratively with the grounds men to keep the school premises warm and inviting. A warm and inviting school yard contributes to the positive school climate.

Boyd (2009:3) cites the following advantages of principals who teach:

2.5.2.1 Teaching builds a positive relationship between the principal and the learners. The learners learn to see the principal a human being, not as someone who only sits in the office and dispenses punishment. This also offers the principal the opportunity to know as many learners as possible. The principals also come to learn the names of many learners. This is essential in curbing disciplinary problems.

2.5.2.2 A teacher-principal can also demonstrate to colleagues an assertive rather than an aggressive style of learner discipline.

2.5.2.3 Teaching gives the principal to personify critical abstractions: core values, beliefs, missions and vision.

2.5.2.4 Principals speak to teachers about the importance of teachers and teaching. The principal who teaches can mention his own classroom experience when giving suggestions and directives for improving teacher performance which will in turn improve learner achievement.

2.5.2.5 Teachers see the teacher principal as a fellow participant-in-action and is seen doing important, rather than appearing as some remote figure whose work may seem to be a mystery or even slightly irrelevant. This helps to build a common ground between the principal and the teachers, and this enhances collaboration on the teachers' educational task.

2.5.2.6 A principal's teaching assignment can help him to communicate the school's vision in such a way that it mobilises all efforts and people in the same direction and shows that the principal has a clear grasp of the purpose of the school.

School principals who are industrious are passionate and enthusiastic about their work. The next section is a presentation of the discussion of passion and enthusiasm.

### **2.5.2.2 Passion and enthusiasm**

Heath (2010:23) defines enthusiasm as a deep profound energy that makes you to work tirelessly to achieve your goals. According to Gurr et al. (2007:221), instructional leaders are passionate about teaching. Hanna (2010:55) states that instructional leaders are forceful and dynamic with high energy levels. Passionate and enthusiastic instructional leaders work tirelessly toward the achievement of the school's vision. A passionate leader is able to maintain an optimistic outlook even during the times of controversy. Heath (2010:22) maintains that employees are swept along by the leader's passion and enthusiastic determination and single-mindedness to realise the goals of an organisation.

According to Heath (2010:23), passion is contagious and can spread rapidly through a team. A passionate leader is able to motivate and encourage team members to do their best even if the school has experienced repeated under-performance. Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253) point out that the behaviour of the principal greatly influences that of the teacher. A passionate and enthusiastic principal is able to implement change effectively and develop positive teacher attitudes toward the change process.

Heath (2010:23) mentions the following ways to spread passion and enthusiasm in an organisation:

**Maintain an optimistic outlook:** Face controversy with the conviction that you will succeed.

**Find people who share the same passion:** There will be people in your team and even outside your team who share your passion and enthusiasm. Consult them when you are confronted by challenges.

**Control your emotions when faced with disappointment:** When the school is facing a challenge, the staff will try to read the reactions of a leader. Be as emotionless as possible in the presence of the staff during times of controversy.

**Allow people to experience temporary lows:** It is a normal thing to be discouraged when under attack. The leader must not allow the staff members to dwell in their discouragement. The leader must use his passion and enthusiasm to move them quickly to the next assignment.

**Concentrate on what can be done:** The principal and the staff must not best themselves when their efforts have failed. Work collaboratively on what can be done.

**Never let your enthusiasm interfere with your objectivity:** Feedback always retains a leader's objectivity.

The principal who lacks enthusiasm cannot motivate the teachers and the learners to do their best toward the achievement of the school's goals and objectives. He will see underperformance as permanent, and will not even try to mobilise the staff toward transformation. Teaching and learning will suffer and eventually learner achievement will deteriorate.

A principal who is passionate and enthusiastic about the transformation of his school takes care of the needs of his staff and helps assist them to succeed in their teaching task. The next section is a presentation of the discussion of the principal's other-centeredness.

### **2.5.2.3 Other-centeredness**

Marks and Printy (2007:374) state that principals who are other-centred can be seen investing teachers with resources and instructional support in order to maintain congruence and consistency of the educational programme. Principals who are other-centred provide adequate resources for teachers and maintain positive working and learning environments (Hornig & Loeb, 2010:67). They want to see the teachers succeed in their teaching tasks. When the teachers are provided with adequate teaching and learning resources, they feel cared for, and they do their best and effective teaching is the result (Kruger, 2009:206). When the teachers are successful in their teaching tasks, learner achievement improves. As a school embarks on a process of growth and transformation, staff members are likely to feel more hopeful and motivated because their principal cares about their success.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:17) point out that the principals who are other-centred encourage their staff members to take on more responsibility and look for ways of providing job enrichment opportunities so that they too can contribute to the life of the school in fresh and new ways. According to Sharma (1998:82), a leader who is other-centred listens to the staff

members to find out what makes them tick. The leader listens to the staff members' dreams, hopes and frustrations.

According to Gurr et al. (2008:84), principals who are other-centred influence the staff's working patterns by arranging the physical space and free time to promote norms of collegiality and experimentation. Sharma (1998:65) maintains that great followership begins the day your people sense that you truly have their best interest in mind. People will go to the wall for you when they know that you care about them.

The school principal who is not other-centred fails to provide the teachers with adequate teaching and learning resources. He will constantly complain about the unavailability of finance to procure teaching and learning aids. The learners will be made to share text books. This will discourage the teachers to give the learners homework regularly. The teachers will teach with no enthusiasm. Teaching and learning will be adversely affected and learner performance will deteriorate.

A principal who is other-centeredness is also approachable.

#### **2.5.2.4 Approachability**

One of the leaders' critical roles is to make informed decisions. Heath (2010:44) points out that decision-making is facilitated by access to information. That information is out there among staff members, not in the principal's office. This implies that the principal must be approachable. According to Edgerson, Kritsonis and Herrington (2006:2), the principal must establish positive healthy relationships between him and the staff members. These relationships between the principal and the staff make him to be approachable. Gurr et al. (2007:22) state that instructional leaders have a sense of humour; therefore, they are approachable. Before the principal can be approachable, a relationship of mutual trust and



respect must exist between the principal and the teachers. The teachers can discuss their instructional challenges with the principal without any fear of being ridiculed or looked down upon. The teachers will even deem it fit to alert the principal when something threatens to destabilise the organisational culture and climate of the school.

When there is a healthy relationship between the principal and the teachers, strategic conversations are facilitated. Jackson (2009:45) defines strategic conversations as a series of targeted, individualised interactions with teachers that are designed to help them significantly improve their instruction. Edgerson et al. (2006:4) point out that the most successful teachers are those who are inspired by the beautiful relationships between them and their principals who motivate them to do their best. This relationship of trust, care and support between the principal and the staff motivates the staff to execute their teaching task effectively. Effective teaching always leads to effective learning because the learners realise that the teachers mean business. When there is a healthy relationship between the principal and the teachers, teacher commitment rises, because they all want to help in the realisation of the vision of the school. Sharma (1998:65) states that this relationship will make the teachers to go to the wall for their principal because he cares for them.

Heath (2010:44-45) mentions seven ways which leaders can follow to make sure that they are approachable to the staff members:

**Have time for people:** If you cannot listen to a staff member at that moment, tell them, but make sure to make an appointment to have a meeting with them soon. Before you reschedule the meeting with that staff member, try to get head snappers to find out if what the staff member wants to say deserves your prompt attention or not.

**Approach people:** The principal must get the staff members to be used to being around him to initiate and stimulate conversation so that they can feel at ease.

**Be aware of your body language:** Do not send wrong signals when you are having a conversation with your staff members, for example, looking at your watch. The staff members will think that you are in a hurry and what they have come to tell you is a waste of time.

**Smile at people:** When you smile at a person, that person feels welcome and accepted and they feel that you are glad to see them.

**Do not just talk about work:** You and your staff members have lives outside the school. Be sociable and talk about your home life. Encourage the staff members to talk about what matters to them the most beside work.

**Listen attentively:** As a leader, the principal must learn effective listening skills and use them whenever he is having a conversation with staff members. When the principal listens to the staff members attentively, they feel valued and respected. This will make them to approach the principal easily even if there are sensitive issues which need to be brought to the principal's attention.

**Give your genuine compliments:** When the team or a team member has done well, compliment them immediately, and make them know that you are truly happy for them about their achievement.

Heath (2010:45) states that being approachable ensures that all feedback channels remain open to you.

A school principal who is unapproachable instils fear in his staff. The teachers will be scared to request resources which will improve their teaching. They will be scared to innovate and to voice their suggestions and ideas; as a result, the school will not improve. Teaching and learning will be adversely affected and learner performance will decline.

Having discussed approachability, it is crucial to present a discussion of teamwork which is enhanced by the school principal's approachability.

#### **2.5.2.5 Teamwork**

Although it is mainly the principal's responsibility to improve the performance of a school, he cannot do it alone. He needs the assistance of the School Management Team as well as that of Post Level one teachers to improve teaching and learning and eventually improved learner achievement. Ubben et al. (2010:59) maintain that the success of any school improvement rests with the active involvement of all stakeholders in the school.

According to Heath (2010:67) collaboration occurs when two or more leaders work together toward a common goal. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:17) maintain that good leadership means working with the people who make up your school, taking time to understand them, to recognise their needs, to acknowledge their contributions and to encourage them to fulfil their potential. Marks and Printy (2000:71) point out that teamwork can only be possible when the principal and the teachers share responsibility for staff development, curricular development and the supervision of instructional tasks.

Teamwork is the result of collaboration; therefore, it is the sign of healthy relationships between the principal and the teachers, and between the teachers themselves. According to Chell (2013:13) positive interpersonal relations between the principal and the staff is crucial in the formulation of the school's vision and the other policies that will have an effect on the instructional programme of the school. Edgeron et al. (2006:50) maintain that effective collaboration operates in the world of ideas, examining existing practices critically, seeking better alternatives and working hard together at bringing about improvements assessing the work.

When the principal involves the teachers in decision-making, the teachers own the school and all the activities that take place there. Ubben et al (2006:71) states that staff consensus is crucial in decision-making. The teachers work hard to contribute in the realisation of the school's vision and mission. Yimaki (2007:15) calls it a shared sense of purpose. Teachers become committed to their teaching tasks and effective teaching and learning takes place.

Sharma (1998:120) gives the following advice that promotes team unity:

Great leaders are teachers: They coach, guide and encourage the players as they liberate their strengths. They do not dictate the players' every move. This is evident when the principal is implementing instructional leadership using situational leadership to bring about change in a school.

Great leaders inspire their teams to manifest the vision of the organisation: They energise, challenge, develop and equip their staff.

They hunt for good behaviour and reward it.

Great leaders are generous with praise.

Zenger and Folkman (2007:71) state that a leader must praise other people's effort in furthering a good course. They further mention that when a leader affirms his staff, he is letting them know that what they are doing is important.

When the principal involves the teachers in decision making, trust develops. The teachers feel respected and trusted because their contributions are valued and worthwhile (Edgerson et al. 2006:4). When the principal involve the staff in decision making, he wins their trust and respect (Blanchard & Muchnick, 2004:106). In such an environment, positive and healthy relationships are reinforced. Teachers who feel trusted and respected by their leader will do anything that contributes to effective and learning and learner success in their school. The

teachers begin to feel good about themselves and their collective mission. Teamwork makes the teachers to see the principal as a colleague who has their best interest at heart. They then work to improve teaching and learning and the overall performance of the school. This makes schooling a more exciting experience for all students, teachers, parents and the community (Purkey & Strachan 1995).

The school principal must possess all the above-mentioned attributes and model acceptable behaviour to the staff.

#### **2.5.2.6 Modelling the way**

For transformation to be possible, the principal must show by his behaviour that old behaviours are no longer acceptable. He must say this explicitly and by modelling the desired behaviour. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:19) state that when you are in a leadership position, the people around you look to you for clarity and direction. They further state that modelling the way means what you think and believe is in agreement with what you say and do. According to Chell (2013:9) the best way for a principal to model the desired behaviour is to be practicing teacher. A teaching principal strengthens the belief that the sole purpose of the school is to serve the educational needs of students.

Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253) state that the behaviour of the principal greatly influences that of the teachers. It is therefore important that the principal models the behaviour that will ensure positive attitudes among the teachers concerning the instructional programme of the school, and will promote effective teaching and learning. According to Sharma (1998:233), the way a leader leads teaches his people how to follow.

According to the ELRC Policy Handbook (2003:63), principals must teach at least 5% of the teaching time per week depending on the size of the school. This allows the principal to be a

role model to the staff by honouring the periods, preparing the lessons well, being punctual for classes and staying in class until the periods end, marking the learners' work timely, classroom management and the assessment of learners. As a subject teacher, the principal is under the authority of his Head of Department. Ubben et al (2006:116) maintains that the principal must model and encourage excellence and high motivation to achieve. The principal must model to the staff members that you submit to those who are in authority and collaborate with them to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place.

The next section is a presentation of the actions of instructional leaders.

### **2.5.3. ACTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

Principals who implement instructional leadership correctly perform certain actions which ensure positive and sustained change in their schools. Most of these actions of instructional leaders are the same as those which are performed by transformational leaders, situational leaders, visionary leaders, moral leaders and charismatic leaders who practice distributed leadership.

A detailed discussion of the actions of instructional leaders follows.

#### **2.5.3.1 Defining the school vision and mission**

Kruger (2009:33) states that the vision and mission of the school form the foundation for the aims and the objectives of the school. The principal has a responsibility of determining the vision and mission of the school. This notion is supported by Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253); Greczewski et al. (2009:75); Yimaki (2007:12); Fullan (1991:13); Kaster (2010:180); Stebick (2009:30) and Sharma (1998:43). The school principals who are instructional leaders are visionaries. They show great disappointment with the current state of their schools. They constantly dream of ways of improving their schools. They constantly

dream of what their schools could be. Sharma (1998:43) points out that the effective leaders are visionaries who craft the clear pictures of their organisations' futures and then link these to the present activities of the people they are leading. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:89) maintain that when you create a vision for your school, you are no longer content to feel victimised, to blame or judge others for the flaws in your school. By creating a vision for his school, the principal allows his creative imagination to help him develop an image of what his school could be when its potential is fully realised. Sharma (1998:43) points out that when there is vision, all actions have a purpose. According to Maxwell (1993:143), what you see is what you get.

When the school vision is in place, there is order and direction in all the activities of the school. The principal must model the desired change concerning the instructional programme of the school (Ubben et al, 2006:116). For example, when the vision mentions the effective teaching of learners, the principal must be seen teaching the learners effectively. The principal must also give assistance to those teachers who might be experiencing instructional challenges so that the school's vision and mission can be realised. Yimaki (2007:12) states that the school's vision and mission compel the principal to model appropriate instructional leadership behaviours and invites other staff members to participate in school transformation. Hanna (2010:58) points out that the principal must define a clear academic vision and then communicates it to the staff. When the principal defines the vision and mission of the school, he gives direction, purpose and order to all the activities that take place in the school.

The vision and mission of the school serve as a benchmark on which teachers; learners, parents and other stake holders assess their behaviours to ascertain whether it is in alignment with what the school aspires to be. Maxwell (1993:139) emphasises this by stating that the vision and mission point to all the people involved where they want to go and everybody concentrates their energy there. The vision becomes the energy behind every effort and the

force that pushes through all the problems. The school's vision and mission motivates the whole school community to work hard toward the realisation of the goals and objectives of the school. The teachers become motivated to explore and experiment with effective teaching methods, and that contributes to effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement. Hanna (2010:570) states that the principal must frame the school's goals, purpose and mission so that the school community will know how to go about the process of education.

Although the principal is the visionary, he cannot determine it unilaterally. Collaboration with the whole school community is crucial so that there can be a shared sense of purpose (Yimaki, 2007:12). Hanna (2010:58) points out that the principal must collaborate with the staff to ensure that the school has clear measurable goals which are focused on student learning. According to Edgeron et al. (2006:2), when principals collaborate with teachers in the determination of the school's vision, the teachers see the principals as facilitators, supporters and reinforces of the jointly-determined school mission rather than guiders, directors and leaders of their own personal agenda, are far more likely to feel personally accountable for student learning. As the leader, the principal can envisage the vision of the school and then convene a staff meeting where all the stakeholders will raise their opinions. According to Buckingham (2005:134) it becomes 'our vision' to the teachers and there is a growing confidence among them that together, they can make this vision come true.

In literature, most scholars have a tendency of placing the role of vision building on the principal's shoulders alone. That is detrimental to the climate of the school. The defining of the school's vision and mission must be a collaborative effort among the whole school community (Buckingham, 2005:134). According to Edgeron et al. (2006:20), principals are the reinforcers of the jointly-determined school vision and mission. When the school's vision is jointly-determined, the whole community will strive for its realisation and effective



teaching and learning will be the result and improved learner achievement will be the result. Gurr et al. (2007:20) maintain that there must be a trusting and collaborative climate and a shared mission for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Kruger (2009:20) points out that the following aspects which focus on teaching and learning must be included in the vision and mission of the school: An indication of the core purpose, specification of the services to be rendered a reference to values, reference to values and a commitment to quality.

Ubben et al. (2007:65) state that when improvement is seen in a school's quality education, it is usually because the school has a vision of what quality represents and a sense of direction toward creating a quality instructional programme.

### **2.5.3.2 Managing the school's instructional programme**

Burch (2007:196) states that the major role of an instructional leader is to build a professional community of educators and administrators focused on teaching and learning. Chung and Penuel (2006:906) mention that instructional leadership involves the principal in taking a more active role in guiding instruction in the school. Hanna (2010:57) suggests that the principal must inform the teachers of what is needed to plan their classes effectively, and must show support for curriculum development and implementation.

According to Stebick (2009:30); Hanna (2010:57); Kursunoglu et al. (2009:253) and Hallinger (2008:6), instructional leaders who manage the instructional programme ensure that the school meets annual progress by supervising instruction, evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum to ensure that state standards are met and monitoring learner progress. Ubben et al. (2006:117) the principal must model and encourage excellence in the

academic matters of the school. The principal must also exemplify a model of high motivation to achieve.

Some principals might feel threatened by this role of managing the instructional programme, especially in secondary schools where there is specialisation in subjects. The cause of this is that many principals have not been teaching for some time (Horng & Loeb, 2010:66). The principal manages the curriculum indirectly through the Heads of Departments. Hoerr (2008:84) states that sometimes the principal is intimately involved in a certain area, and sometimes he delegates. Hoerr (2008:84) warns that even if the principal delegates, he always bears the responsibility. Even if the principal delegates the management of the instructional programme to the Heads of Departments, he must still remind and motivate the Heads of Departments to convene departmental meetings to have collegiality and strategic conversations with the teachers in their respective departments.

Teachers must be allowed to take ownership of their classrooms, and the principal must refrain from dictating to them what to do. Ubben et al. (2006:107) allowing the teachers to take ownership for their own classrooms, places the role of the principal far more solidly into the transformational leadership arena than in the transactional one.

For effective teaching and learning to take place in a school, the school principal and his School Management Team must subject teachers to professional development sessions. A discussion of the professional development of teachers will be dealt with in the next session.

### **2.5.3.3 Professional development of teachers**

Ubben et al. (2006:179) state that if schools want to enhance their organisational capacity to boost student learning, they should work on building a professional community that is characterised by shared purpose, collaborative activity and collective responsibility among

staff. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007:224), professional development covers a variety of activities, all which are designed to enhance the growth and professional competence of staff members. Ubben et al. (2006:179) maintain that human resource development is both a concept and a process. As a concept, it is concerned with the full development and utilisation of the staff. As a process, it is an integrated continuous flow of functions that make up a dimension of principal responsibility known as personnel administration.

According to Lochmiller (2010:22), decentralisation has an influence on a principal's human resource activities as it creates new opportunities for principals to recruit, hire, assign, support and evaluate staff. Sharma (1998:120) argues that the great leaders are great teachers. As a leader, the principal must coach and inspire the staff to help in the manifestation of the school's vision. The principal must assist teachers in sharpening their instruction. Hoerr (2008:84) states that principals can exercise instructional leadership just as powerfully through facilitating teachers' learning. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007:225) state that professional development is aimed at promoting learning processes that will in turn enhance the performance of both the individual teachers and the organisation as a whole.

Lochmiller (2010:22) states that instructional leadership depends on the interactions the principals have with their staff, and it is through these interactions that instructional leadership practices improve. Lochmiller (2010:22) maintains that professional development may range from providing one-to-one support in the form of mentoring or coaching to more generalised support with the school's instructional team or teams of teachers. Khan (2010:35) states that instructional leaders contribute to the learning of their students by providing learning opportunities for their teachers. Hoerr (2008:84) points out that if students are to grow and learn, their teachers must grow and learn too. According to Ubben et al. (2006:58) if school improvement is to be successful in implementation as well as in planning, school

leaders must ultimately transform schools into places for teachers to learn continuously about their content areas and ways to promote student achievement.

Lochmiller (2010:23) cites two types of professional development for teachers:

**Induction of beginner teachers:** According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007:205), staff induction is defined as the organisation's effort to enable and assist various categories of new staff members to adjust effectively to their new work environment with the minimum of disruption and as quickly as possible. Lochmiller (2010:23) points out that this type of professional development contributes to the retention of novice teachers. It helps the novice teachers to connect with the organisation, its processes and practices, and helps to introduce them to the culture of the school.

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007:205) state that staff induction assists in the familiarisation of all staff members who take up a new post in a new school or a new responsibility at the same school. According to Lochmiller (2010:23), induction of beginner teachers improves individual teachers' competencies. They further state that it serves the purpose of instilling within the individual a sense of the organisation's culture and general ethos.

**On-going professional development:** On-going professional development compliments and builds from initial induction activities (Lochmiller 2010:23). It provides sustained support for teachers over the course of their careers. According to Lochmiller (2010:24), sustained support creates a continuum that allows individuals in their early career, mid-career or late career to continue to refine and hone their practice.

Greczewski et al. (2009:72) points out that one aspect of the principal's new role is to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to increase and perfect their craft, on the assumption that

deeper teacher knowledge leads to changes in instruction, which in turn produces higher student achievement.

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007:225) mention three types of professional development:

**Personal development:** This is done by educators to advance their knowledge for personal and professional use.

**Career development:** This is conducted to support the educators' professional advancement to enable them to work in higher level jobs in the school by providing them with the necessary qualifications. It is also conducted to develop the skills of selected staff members so that anticipated vacancies can be filled.

**Organisational development:** This is done so that the performance of the whole school can be improved and it serves the primary aims of the education system which is the promotion and attainment of quality teaching and learning.

Hoerr (2008:84) refers to the learning of teachers as collegiality. He mentions four aspects of collegiality:

**Teachers talking together about students:** This aspect of collegiality usually happens naturally among teachers. They might discuss areas in which the learners are performing well as well as areas where the learners are experiencing challenges. They can also talk about learners who need to be referred for remedial classes and even those with severe barriers to learning which can even require intervention by the district office.

**Teachers developing curriculum together:** Teachers who teach a certain subject in a phase can assist one another with the preparation of lessons, selection of text books as well as the assessment of learners.

**Teachers observing one another teach:** This aspect of collegiality is only acceptable when the appraisee's DSG (Development support Group) conducts the classroom observation on him for IQMS purposes. The duration of these classroom observations do not exceed thirty minutes.

**Teachers teaching one another:** This aspect of collegiality is particularly used in the induction of beginner teachers and when certain aspects of the educators' work ethics and code of conduct is re-visited. This is usually the responsibility of the Heads of Departments and the principal. Sometimes experienced teachers in a particular subject also assist their colleagues when they are struggling with certain themes.

In South African schools, the professional development of teachers is mainly done by the Subject Advisors. The principal's role is to keep a roster of workshops and seminars and to remind and motivate the teachers to attend these workshops. The school must also finance the teachers' transport to these workshops.

The professional development of teachers revives their subject knowledge and sharpens their teaching skills. Effective professional development of teachers ensures effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement.

#### **2.5.3.4 Collaboration with teachers**

The school principal requires the collaboration of the whole school community for transformation to occur in a school (Ubben et al, 2006:59). Therefore, the principal must refrain from taking unilateral decisions in matters which will affect teaching and learning in the school. Collaboration with teachers is essential especially in policy formulation and the implementation thereof. Lochmiller (2010:30) states that developing collaborative relationships with teachers with the goal of increasing student achievement is the primary

focus of most principals. Boris-Schacter (2006:57) states that the ability to work as a group elicits contributions from teachers and offer support to each member and creates a positive environment for everyone.

Edgerson et al. (2006:4) maintain that the principal and the teachers must work together as a team so that student outcomes will be positively influenced. Collaboration enhances the school's social environment which in turn contributes in making a difference in the academic achievement of a school (Edgerson et al. 2006:3). When the principal collaborates with teachers, they feel personally accountable for student learning. Lochmiller (2010:30) maintains that an effective principal builds a culture that positively influences teachers, who in turn positively influence students.

Edgerson et al. (2006:3) state that when teachers are involved in decision making, they begin to feel good about themselves and their collective mission. Purkey and Strachan (1995:4) point out that when teachers feel good about themselves, schooling becomes a more exciting, satisfying experience for all students, teachers, parents and all the stakeholders. When the teachers feel good about themselves, they become motivated and they teach the learners effectively, learner achievement improves and the vision of the school is realised. When the principal involves the teachers in decision making, the teachers own the school and everything that takes place in the school. It seems as if they are saying: "This is our school, we determined the vision and mission, and we are dedicated and committed to improve our school. When they reprimand the learners, they say, "We say that." Yimaki (2007:12) calls this a shared sense of purpose. Collaboration ensures professional dialogue between the teachers and the principal and between the teachers themselves.

Principals must influence the development of human relations by offering intellectual stimulation, grant individual support and provide appropriate models (Chell, 2013:10). The

principal develops human relations skills, builds trust, makes sound decisions, resolves conflicts and fosters collegial working conditions which influence instruction (Lochmiller, 2010:30).

Collaboration between the principal and the teachers facilitates delegation. Teachers do not want to work for or with a principal whom they see as a director with his personal agenda (Edgerson et al., 2006:4). Collaboration makes the teachers to see the principal as someone who has the teachers' as well as the learners' interest at heart. They realise that the principal needs their support in the improvement of the school's instructional programme, and they do their best, teaching and learning improve and learner achievement soars.

Collaboration cannot exist in a school without the existence of healthy relationships between the principal and the staff and among the staff members themselves (Ubben et al., 2007:59). The establishment of healthy relationships is discussed in the next section.

#### **2.5.3.5 Establishing healthy relationships**

According to Maccoby (2009:57), leadership is a relationship. This implies that principal must always look for opportunities to build and establish positive and healthy relationships with the teachers. The principals must also encourage the teachers to build healthy relationships among themselves. Ricketts (2010:1) maintains that a leader motivates, inspires and energises his followers. He further states that a leader satisfies the unmet needs of his followers.

Principals can be able to motivate the teachers to expand their expertise only if they have positive healthy relationships with them. Relationships between the principal and the teachers also assist in the empowerment of teachers, promote idea sharing and assist in professional development. According to Edgerson et al. (2006:4), for a principal to be able to motivate



and inspire the teachers successfully, a relationship of trust and mutual respect must exist between the principal and the teachers. Sharma (1998:97) points out those visionary leaders foster the respect of their followers and build lasting trust. In addition, Edgerson et al. (2006:3) state that principals have the ability to improve teacher perceptions by simply attending to fundamental components inherent in quality relationships. As teachers begin to feel good about themselves and what their collective missions are as a result of significant interactions with their principals, they become more effective in the classroom and learner performance improves. Before teachers can commit themselves to their task, a relationship of trust must exist between them and the principal.

Consistency on the part of the principal is also important for trust to be built between him and the teachers.

Healthy positive relationships between the principal and the teachers encourage the teachers to support the principal in his endeavours to improve the general performance of the school. According to Sharma (1998:110), the highest level a visionary can attain terms of the quality relationship he has with his people comes when they so deeply in his leadership that they will do anything not to let him down. In a school situation, effective teaching and learning will be results and the achievement of learners will improve.

When there are healthy relationships between the principal and the teachers and between the teachers themselves, collaboration becomes easy (Edgerson et al. 2006:3). The teachers share their expertise with one another which helps to enhance their teaching. Furthermore, Edgerson et al. (2006:3) maintain that effective collaboration operates in the world of ideas, examining existing practices critically, seeking better alternatives and working hard together at bringing about improvements and assessing their work. This improves the general climate of the school and eventually learner achievement improves as well.

When the teachers have positive healthy relationships with one another, ideas on teaching and learning are shared freely because all have a shared vision of improving the school. Hoerr (2008:90) calls this collegiality. Learners know that their teachers love, accept and care for one another. This instils a sense of security among the learners. They begin to exert hard in their academic tasks and their performance improves.

The most important instructional leadership role is the promotion of the school climate. All the other roles lay a foundation and enhance the principal's implementation of instructional leadership.

#### **2.5.3.6 Promoting the school climate**

The most important instructional leadership role of a school principal is the promotion of the school climate. All the other roles lay a foundation and enhance the principal's implementation of instructional leadership.

According to Hanna (2010:59), an effective instructional climate is that which supports teaching and learning. They further state that the principal must create an atmosphere where learning is exciting, teachers and students are supported for their efforts and there is a shared sense of purpose. The principal can promote the school climate in the following ways:

##### **2.5.3.6.1 Provision of resources**

Kruger (2009:31) maintains that principals promote the schools' learning climate by mobilising aids in the realisation of goals and objectives of schools. In addition, Hanna (2010:55) points out that the principal as an instructional leader is a resource provider. The principal provides resources by procuring the learning and teaching support materials (LTSM's). The Learning and Teaching Support Materials include textbooks, stationery and the other teaching and learning aids. When teachers are provided with adequate resources, their teaching improves. This in turn influences the learners to exert themselves in their

academic tasks; therefore, their achievement improves. Kaster (2010:18) points out that the principal must provide the teachers with resources to enable them to carry out the best curriculum and instruction practices.

In the Amajuba District, the district officials place a great emphasis on the procurement of text books and learner stationery. To them, the use of the schools' finances on these resources is of paramount importance. When they visit the schools to monitor the schools' functionality, they want to see the proof of the procurement of the stationery and text books as well as the text book retrieval policies. To them the availability of the Learning and Teaching Support Materials is proof that effective teaching and learning is taking place in that particular school.

Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:253) maintain that the principal's knowledge of the curriculum ensures that the text books which are procured will contribute to effective teaching and learning. Collaboration with individual teachers concerning the procurement of the text books is important; since the teachers must choose the books they prefer which will assist them in the effective teaching of their respective subjects. The task of the selection of the text books by the teachers is delegated to the Heads of Departments who will turn forward the requisitions to the principal.

#### **2.5.3.6.2 High visibility**

Hanna (2010:59) warns that principals cannot be resource providers, instructional resources or communicators by sitting in their offices. Khan (2010:55) states that the principal must be a visible presence and must always remain in contact with the staff, visits classrooms and assesses the needs of the whole school community. Similarly, Hanna (2010:59) states that the principal must be a visible presence. Hallinger (2008:6) also concurs that the principal must maintain high visibility.

According to Chung and Penuel (2006:906), the principal must make it a habit to walk along hallways, and chatting to the teachers and the learners along the way. The principal can also make brief class visits. Chung and Penuel (2006:906) call these “classroom walkthroughs”. The principal gets a snapshot of what is happening in the school during these walks and ‘classroom walkthroughs’.

These walks and brief class visits are not a means of spying on teachers, but it encourages everybody to do their work conscientiously. The teachers and the learners exert themselves hard to their work, effective teaching and learning takes place and learner achievement improves.

#### **2.5.3.6.3 Protection of the school’s instructional climate**

Kruger (2009:31) states that the principal promotes the school’s learning climate by placing a high premium on the orderly running of the school’s instructional programme by not interrupting it unnecessarily. According to Hallinger (2008:6), the principal develops the school’s learning climate programme by protecting the instructional time.

To ensure that the school’s instructional programme runs smoothly, the Composite Time Table for the whole school must be in place. A Relief Time Table must be compiled whenever there are absent teachers so that the learners can be meaningfully occupied during the periods of those absent educators. The learners must not be left to their own devices and sit idly in class or loiter the school. Even the President remarked about this in his 2009 State of the Nation Address and said, ‘Teachers must be in class teaching, and the learners must be in class learning.’

#### **2.5.3.6.4 Promoter of strategic conversations**

According to Jackson (2009:45), strategic conversations are a series of targeted, individualised interactions with teachers which are designed to help them significantly improve their instruction. Strategic conversations are participative in their nature in that the Head of Department or the principal together with the concerned teacher identify problems and develop solutions to instructional challenges. Jackson (2009:45) points out that these interactions give teachers the structure and support the need to make the decisions as to how they will solve their instructional challenges and grow as professionals.

Jackson (2009:45) cites the following steps of strategic conversations:

**Determine goals:** Before the principal begins strategic conversations, there must clearly defined goals and objectives which will be achieved from these conversations. Once the goals have been defined, the individual teacher's role in improving instruction must be analysed. Lastly, the effects of the conversations on assisting the school achieve its goals and objectives must be determined.

**Identify needs, will and skill:** Once the goals of the strategic conversations have been formulated, the individual teacher's needs must be closely looked at. Some teachers need assistance in the content knowledge of subjects, others need to be helped with teaching methods and others need to be motivated and encouraged to continue with the effective execution of their teaching tasks. The identification of individual teacher's needs is important in that each teacher will receive the assistance which will suit him best. When teachers receive the appropriate assistance concerning their instructional challenges, their teaching will improve. Effective teaching and learning will be the result and learner achievement will improve.

The next aspect to be identified is the teachers' will. According to Jackson (2009:46), will is a teacher's level of motivation and resolve to do what is best on behalf of students. Will has

to do with the culture of the school since it is related to what teachers believe about children, about school itself, about teaching and about how children learn.

The last aspect to be identified is the teachers' skill in the execution of their teaching tasks. Jackson (2009:46) points out that the teachers' skills comprise both pedagogical and content-area knowledge.

**Match the conversation to need:** Jackson (2009:46) states that once the principal has figured each teacher's needs, will and skills the conversational approach must be matched to each teacher's needs so that there will be the best chance of achieving the goals of the school. He states four types of conversations which can be used include reflecting, facilitating, coaching and directing.

**Find the right balance:** Here the principal as an instructional leader will have to employ the principles of Situational Leadership. For example, when a teacher is low on skills and will, the principal must be more directing with that teacher even if he is experienced (Blanchard et al, 1998:47). The principal will have to focus on specific teaching behaviours. Once trust and rapport has been developed between the leader and the teacher, the coaching approach can be used where the teacher is given a certain degree of autonomy in making instructional decisions. However, this does not mean that the principal or the Heads of Departments will follow these Situational Leadership principles slavishly. Everything will depend on the teacher's progress in as far as his needs, will and skills are concerned.

**Follow-up:** Jackson (2009:49) points out that the strategic conversations are not a single event. These must be carried out at certain intervals to promote consistent, incremental growth of teachers.

The following is the discussion of the principal's role of supporting the teachers' use of assessment.

#### **2.5.3.6.5 Supporting the teachers' use of assessment**

According to Stiggins and Duke (2008:286), assessment is the process of gathering information in order to inform instructional decisions.

Learners must be assessed at the end of each school term to ascertain whether teaching and learning was effective or not. According to Boris-Schacter (2006:62), testing students has become an integral part of the work of schools. In addition, Stiggins and Duke (2008:286) point out that principals can be pivotal in the improvement of student learning by helping teachers develop and use sound assessments that can strengthen instruction and student learning. Furthermore, Boris-Schacter (2006:62) states that the principal as an instructional leader initiates a dialogue and teachers about how assessment will help them understand the progress of students. Hanna (2010:57) maintains that as an instructional leader, the principal must be aware of student growth and development by assisting the teachers with the use of effective assessment practices.

Assessment helps the teachers to evaluate their teaching strategies and to improve them where there are weaknesses. To this effect, teachers must use various classroom assessments. According to Stiggins and Duke (2008:286), in this era of accountability, classroom assessments are the foundation of a truly effective assessment system. If classroom assessments are not working effectively day-to-day in the classroom, then accountability tests and benchmark assessments cannot pick up the slack. According to Ubben et al. (2006:151) assessment assists teachers to identify the themes in which the learners encountered challenges and where re-teaching of those themes will be required. Stiggins and Duke (2008:288) maintain that when classroom assessment is used effectively as a teaching tool,

that is, to support learning, it greatly enhances student learning. The principal plays a vital role in ensuring the accuracy and effective use of sound assessment of learners at classroom level as well as at school level. Hanna (2010:12) points out that in effective schools there are clear instructional objectives for monitoring student performance are evident.

Stiggins and Duke (2008:287) mention ten leadership competencies which the principal must possess to be able to support the teachers' use of assessment:

As an instructional leader, the principal must:

Understand the principles of assessment for learning and works with staff to integrate them into classroom instruction.

Understand the necessity of clear academic achievement targets and their relationship to the development of accurate assessments.

Know and can evaluate the teachers' classroom assessment competencies and helps teachers learn to assess accurately and use the results productively.

Be able to plan, present or secure professional development activities that contribute to the use of sound assessment practices.

Accurately analyse student assessment information, and uses the information to improve curriculum and instruction, and assists teachers to do the same.

Must be able to develop and implement sound assessment and assessment-related policies.

Create the conditions necessary for the appropriate use and reporting of student achievement information, and can communicate effectively with all members of the school community about student assessment results and their relationships to improving curriculum and instruction.



Understand the standards of quality for student assessments and how to verify their use in their school/district assessments;

Understand the attributes of a sound and balanced assessment system.

Understand the issues related to the unethical and inappropriate use of student assessment and protect students and teachers from such misuse.

Hanna (2010:57) emphasises that the principal must be familiar with effective assessment practices and that he must be able to interpret and analyse assessment results. According to the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga (2011), the assessment of results must be used for teacher development and intervention where learners lag behind. She further states that assessment results must be used to inform teaching and learning activities.

Kruger (2009:35) states that the assessment of learner progress can be done by means of tests and examinations and the results are used to support both learners and teachers to improve. Assessment results also help parents understand where and why improvement is necessary.

In the Amajuba District, the assessment of learners is considered as key to effective teaching and learning. In the first term of every year, the principals and their deputies are called to a meeting where they are developed concerning the effective use learner of assessments. At these meetings, the principals submit their schools' assessment programmes for that academic year. The analysis of the schools' term results is now done in all the phases. It is no longer confined to Grade 12 only (Amajuba, 2009:2).

Having made a discussion of the instructional leadership roles of school principals, it is pertinent to present a discussion of how instructional leadership benefits school principals.

The next section will explore the benefits of instructional leadership.

## **2.6 BENEFITS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

According to Ubben et al. (2006:59), a school is only as good or bad, as creative or sterile as the person who serves assist head. The Department of Education (2000:1) states that due to the decentralisation of education, managers and leaders will be on the quality of education their schools deliver.

These statements make it clear that gone are the days when principals were administrators only and sat in their offices day in and day out. Changes in education world-wide require principals to be instructional leaders (Hornig & Loeb, 2010:66). Schools must be constantly improved to meet the demands of the states. According to Ubben et al. (2006:58), efforts to bring about changes or initiate something new for a school should begin with a plan. This involves the formulation of the school's vision and mission and the effective communication thereof to the school community. If a principal is not an instructional leader, he may not be able to dream of what his school could be. That school will not grow. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:16) maintain that schools are living, dynamic and growing organisations.

The building of healthy and positive relationships is one of the actions of instructional leaders (Edgerson et al., (2006:85). The principal's instructional leadership role will be virtually impossible without healthy and positive relationships between the principal and the teachers. Sharma (1998:90) points out that when you enhance relationships, you enhance the leadership. The days of principals as lone rangers who make unilateral decisions are over. Edgerson et al. (2006:84) state that when there is no relationship, teachers will be reluctant to work for or with somebody they do not like.

Today's principals cannot survive without being instructional leaders.

The implementation of instructional leadership is not plain sailing; principals face challenges when they implement it. The next section is a discussion of the challenges that face principals when they implement instructional leadership.

## **2.7 BARRIERS THAT FACE PRINCIPALS WHEN IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Chang (2010:10) states that principals are teacher-principals, who must prepare lessons, teach and assess learners just like the Post Level 1 teachers. According to Boris-Schacter (2006:18), teachers are able to devote their time to teaching and learning only, but the principal must share his teaching time with his instructional leadership role. This implies that the principal has insufficient time to teach and assess learners effectively. This poses challenges to the principal's implementation of instructional leadership; because one of the principal's instructional leadership action is to teach (Chell, 2013:3). The principal's implementation of instructional leadership interferes with his teaching time so much so that he must hold morning and Saturday classes to make up for the lost time.

Mead (2011:4) states that the nature of the principals' job description makes them to have less control in their professional task. This notion is supported by Boris-Schacter (2006:57); Chang (2011:10) and Czaczkowski (2011:84). Abdul-Aziz (2011:114) states that parents' excessive and unorganised visits to the school create barriers to the secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The parents come to school and demand to see the principal without having made appointments. The principal must leave whatever he is doing, sit down and listen to the parents lest he will be accused of violating the Batho-Pele principles (Education, 2006:8). It is not only the parents who visit the school unannounced, but also the officials from the District Office.

Boris-Schacter (2006:20) states that principals are prevented from devoting more time to instructional leadership by activities which are viewed as unsuitable to them. Issues that keep administrators out of the school cause a barrier to the principal's implementation of instructional leadership. Some of these activities are many meetings which are called by the Heads of different sub-directorates in the District Office. In the Amajuba District, it is a common thing for principals to attend three meetings in one week and sometimes a two day workshop in the same week. The principal is not at school against his will, and his visibility to the teachers and the learners is compromised. Abdul-Aziz (2011:144) calls these activities the principal's non-instructional responsibilities. Due to these meetings, the learners who are taught by principals are always lagging behind in their academic tasks; consequently, they lose continuity in their lessons. This creates guilty feelings among the principals since they feel they are doing injustice to the learners.

Mead (2011:1) states that the District Office is oblivious to the principal's instructional leadership role. Principals are expected to play multiple roles and responsibilities. This causes the principal to have information and communication overload. Today's principals are expected to be subject teachers, counsellors, social workers and co-ordinators of a myriad of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. For example, all the quintile one secondary schools in the Amajuba District were included in the Schools Nutrition Programme last year. Although there is a Nutrition Programme Co-ordinator in every school, it is the principal who must attend all the workshops and meetings for the smooth running of this programme. The principal must come back at school and cascade the information to the School Nutrition Programme Committee. Even if some of the tasks concerning the Nutrition Programme are delegated, the principal is still being held accountable for the smooth running of this programme. The District Office expects this programme to run smoothly, and regarding that, the Nutrition Programme Field Workers visit schools announced to come and monitor

anything in relation to the Nutrition Programme. This Nutrition Programme and the other activities interfere with the principal's implementation of instructional leadership.

In her speech in 2010, the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, announced that her department was going to decrease the amount of paper work done by the teachers and the principals so that they may concentrate in the effective teaching of learners. However, she did not honour her announcement. Paper work has doubled especially for the principals. This is paper work versus instructional leadership (Boris-Schacter, 2006:23). The District Office bombards the principals with paper work requiring information which, often times do not even have anything to do with instructional leadership. Sometimes the District Office officials fax a form to the principal at nine o'clock and they say that they want that information by twelve on the very same day. This is instant communication demanding instant response. Many of these schools are 50km and above away from the District Office. This implies that the principal must leave whatever he is doing, and leave the school at eleven o'clock and he will not be able to come back because of the distance.

According to Price and Clark (2011:4), another barrier to the principal's implementation of instructional leadership is an all-pervasive set of societal factors like hungry children or children whose lives are challenged daily by domestic or community violence or whose motivation for getting a good education is undermined by their observations that matriculants and the graduates from tertiary institutions are generally unemployed. This causes these children to lack motivation to exert themselves diligently to their academic tasks. Disciplinary problems are rife among these children, thus the principals spend most of their time in disciplinary hearings of these children. Although the Department of Education has introduced the Nutrition Programme to all Quintile 1 and 2 schools, the learners must still have their breakfast and supper at their homes and the majority of parents cannot afford to do that. In addition to hunger, these children walk long distances and arrive late at school. They

always lag behind with their academic tasks, and the implementation of instructional leadership is severely compromised.

Another barrier to the principals' implementation of instructional is the on-going changes and amendments to curricular. Price and Clark (2011:4) state that the implementation of Outcomes Based Education was a particular failure. To remedy this situation, the Department of Basic Education has now introduced the revised grades and subject-specific curriculum called the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements have been introduced to improve the implementation of the Outcomes Based Education. These changes in curricular confuse the teachers and the learners. These curricular changes take time and they are costly as they involve the retraining of teachers and the procurement of compliant textbooks. In 2011, text books were procured, but according to the National Department of Education, those books have become obsolete since they are not CAPS compliant. This is a waste of the school's finances.

According to Mead (2011:4), the existing leadership recruitment and preparation system creates a number of barriers to the effective implementation of instructional leadership. In KwaZulu-Natal, only the stalwarts of the South African Democratic Union (SADTU) are promoted to the principals posts even if they possess only matric plus three years of training (m+3). It is a common occurrence in this province to find a principal who possesses this qualification leading teachers who are better qualified than him. To worsen this situation, these principals who are SADTU members are not trained to be effective and successful instructional leaders, hence they do not have qualities of leaders. They are the first ones to leave the school early in order to attend the meeting of their union which are held during school hours. This haphazard promotion of teachers with little attention to the characteristics and skills required of effective leadership is a serious barrier to instructional leadership.

According to Price and Clark (2011:5), schools have become sites of struggle, thus the principals' implementation of instructional leadership is thwarted severely. This has led to the destruction of authority in schools. Attempts to reconstruct accountability systems and external controls have been further undermined by the power dynamics between SADTU and the State. To that effect, SADTU influences the appointment of senior staff members at District Office and principals who are SADTU members. The principals fail to hold the teachers to account for their misconduct lest he will be labelled as an antagonist who must be removed from the principalship post. Teachers come late to school; they absent themselves regularly and they are unable to enact the basic functions of teaching. When the principals charge these teachers of misconduct, the union protects them. Even the District Office does not intervene when the principal complaints about the teachers who are SADTU members because the District officials are SADTU members themselves; and these teachers are their comrades. This on-going crisis of authority breeds anarchy in schools.

According to Southworth (2008:11), the principal's lack of high levels of professional knowledge, skills and understanding is a barrier to the school principal's implementation of instructional leadership. This notion is supported by Hallinger (2008:145), Hoerr (2008:84) and Chang (2010:11). Nowadays teachers know more about pedagogy than the principal. Due to this, many principals do not even try to offer professional development or to offer assistance in the teaching and assessment of learners. One might ask as to why do the school principals lack knowledge, skills and understanding in the teaching and learning of learners since according to the ELRC Policy Handbook, principals are supposed to teach 5% per week of the teaching time. Most school principals in the Amajuba District do not teach. They just sit in their offices and concentrate on their administrative work. School principals who are eager to improve learner performance in their schools teach at least four periods per week. They try by all means to attend the workshops for all the subjects offered in their schools, so

that they may know what is expected of the teachers concerning the teaching and the assessment of learners. This is a prerogative since the school principal must know what is happening in class and guide and assists the teachers in the assessment of learners.

Price and Clark (2011:4) state that another barrier to the school principals' implementation of instructional leadership is the Education Department's broader failure to deliver on their core functions like the supply of learning materials, the rapid filling of vacant posts, efficient handling of disciplinary cases and the support of teacher development. This notion is supported by Mead (2011:2). In 2011, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements was introduced in the Foundation Phase and in Grade 10. This change meant that the textbooks for these grades must be changed so that they will be Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements compliant. To that effect the National Department of Education withheld the norms and standards allocation to these grades, and the school principals were instructed to order the textbooks centrally from the agent selected by the Department of Basic Education. It is appalling that by mid-February 2014, the textbooks have not been delivered to the schools yet. At the beginning of February, the copies of National Protocol of Assessment and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements policy documents were sent to schools. The school principals are now confused and they are experiencing anxiety since they were instructed to wait for the CAPS compliant textbooks. This lack of resources at the beginning of the year creates a barrier in the school principals' implementation of instructional leadership.

From this year, the employment of all teachers is done by the Head Office. When the schools re-opened, the vacant posts were not filled yet since the Head Office was still straightening certain issues. The school principals were told that first preference would be given to the teachers who were the bursary holders which was offered by the Department of Education, after that there would be a placement of teachers who were a surplus in their schools and



lastly, any applicant will be considered for employment (KZN Education Circular No 14 of 2012). The employment of these bursary holders only started during the writing of this dissertation, and many of them did not meet the post requirements of the schools to which they were sent, therefore must be placed in other schools where their skills will be utilised. It is almost March and some of the Grade 10 learners have never been taught certain subjects, but they will write common papers for their March Tests. Again, it is the principal who must ensure that these children are taught. This is a serious challenge to schools in socio-economically challenged neighbourhoods, where parents fail to pay school fees even if a school has not been declared a no-fee school. Ex-model C schools are well-off and the principals are able to hire teachers and remunerate them from the school funds. However, substitute teachers for sick teachers have not been appointed yet. Most principals in the Amajuba District spend most of their time at the Appointments Office pleading with the director to try and do something concerning the filling of vacant posts.

According to Chang (2010:12), lack of qualified staff that possesses the necessary skills and knowledge is a serious barrier to the school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. Due to a severe shortage of teachers the National Department of Education, until 2012, allowed the provinces to hire professionally unqualified teachers. These are the teachers who are qualified in other fields than teaching. These teachers are ill-prepared for their task. They lack subject content knowledge, pedagogical methods and classroom management skills (Price & Clark 2011:5).

Another barrier to the school principals' implementation of instructional leadership is learners who start their secondary school education with below average reading and mathematical skills (Mead, 2011:3). According to Chang (2010:12), when these learners start their secondary school they require more remediation. They must be placed in the special classes so that their reading and mathematical skills can be remedied. This places a heavy

demand on the school principal's instructional leadership role since he must devote most of his time guiding and assisting the teachers in the teaching of these learners with special needs. The learners' poor reading and Mathematical skills also puts a strain on the school's finances because the Department of Education does not provide posts for learners with learning barriers in the mainstream classes. Therefore, the school principal must raise funds so that he can be able to remunerate the teachers who will provide remedial classes to these learners. In many cases, the principal becomes the remedial teacher of these learners due to the lack of funds. The remediation of these learners' reading and Math skills becomes the school principal's responsibility so that he can ensure that these learners learn effectively. This places a demand on the principal's time, energy and patience. The school principal must also procure special readers and stationery which these learners use in their special class. The principal becomes fully involved in the teaching of these children because he cannot point fingers at the teachers who were teaching these children in the lower grades. He must ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school and that all the learners' performance improves.

The above are some of the barriers that the principals face when they implement instructional leadership in their schools. Most of these barriers are caused by the District Office officials who seem to be oblivious to the fact that the principals' implementation of instructional leadership is hampered by their endless demand of information. I am not saying that such information required by the district office is inconsequential. However, the amount of time given to principals to submit that information causes problems in the principals' implementation of instructional leadership.

The next section is a discussion of effective schools: the description thereof and their characteristics

## **2.8 EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS**

According to Chell (2013:3) principals who are instructional leaders make effective schools. The character as well as the actions of instructional leaders ensures positive and sustained change in effective schools. There is effective teaching and learning in these schools, and learner achievement is always high (Ubben et al, 2006:59).

According to Hanna (2010:12), an effective school is a school where teachers believe that all children are educable and that the behaviour of the school is critical in determining the quality of that education. Hoog (2006:596) states that an effective school takes responsibility for ensuring that pupils develop the academic knowledge they need to be contributing members of a society. Ubben et al. (2006:67) point out that an effective school is the one that achieves high and equitable levels of student achievement. In the Amajuba District, effective schools are those schools which achieve between 90% and 100% in their Grade 12 results every year. The learners of these schools do not strike. The educators belong to the teacher unions which discourage teacher strikes and meetings which are held during school hours.

Having presented a definition of effective schools, it is important to discuss their characteristics. The next section is a discussion of the characteristics of effective schools.

### **2.8.1 Characteristics of effective schools**

#### **2.8.1.1 Clear school mission**

Hanna (2010:12) maintains that the first indicator of an effective school is a clearly stated and focused school mission. She further states that critical learning goals must be identified to give the school direction. Ubben et al. (2006:67) states that the school mission must include the concept of learning for all.

Sterling and Davidoff (2000:90) state that the building of a vision must be participatory. When the staff contributed in the creation of the school vision, they own the vision and mission of the school. They strive to make the school mission a reality. Ubben et al. (2007:68) suggest that the process of establishing a sense of purpose in a school must be dynamic one involving teachers, community members and students. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:93) mention two core principles which must be adhered to when creating the school's vision and mission. They state that the vision must be inspirational and realistic. For the vision to be inspirational, it must not be too small and unchallenging. A realistic vision is rooted in that specific school's circumstances an inspiring and realistic school vision motivates the school community to achieve it.

The importance of the staff collaboration in the building of a school's vision and mission can never be emphasised enough. It indicates to the whole school community where the school is heading (Chell, 2013:4). The actions to be carried out as well as the values to be upheld in order to achieve this vision give order, direction and structure to all the activities in the school. Behaviour which does not contribute to the achievement of the school's vision and mission is eradicated with immediate effect.

### **2.8.1.2 High expectations for learner success**

Ubben et al. (2006:670) contend that the school climate should reflect what the teachers truly believe and demonstrate that all students can obtain mastery of essential content areas. According to Hanna (2010:12), where there is a high expectation of learner achievement all learners are expected to achieve to their potential and no learner is allowed to fall below minimum levels of achievement. Hoog (2006:602) maintains that the teachers' high expectation of the achievement of the learners creates pleasure and high results. Similarly,

Yimaki (2007:12) states that in effective schools, a positive school learning culture is created with high expectations for all students.

Hanna (2010:12) maintains that teachers in effective schools believe that their learners will complete high school and proceed to tertiary institutions. Due to this belief, no learner is allowed to underperform. Plans for dealing with learning problems are developed and implemented to support learning and provide opportunities for all learners to succeed.

When the teachers have high expectations for learner achievement, a self-fulfilling prophesy occurs (Chell, 2013:5). The learners' performance improves and it is in alignment to the teachers' expectations.

### **2.8.1.3 Instructional leadership**

The School Management Team practices instructional leadership in that they concentrate on the high performance of learners (Ubben et al, 2006:67). Hanna (2010:12) states that the school management team places a high premium on the accomplishment of the basic skills. Teachers in the Foundation Phase devote most of their time teaching the learners reading and Mathematics. They teach all learners equally regardless of their achievement level. Hanna (2010:12) maintains that in effective schools the whole school community demonstrates instructional leadership, and all are concerned about teaching and learning.

Ubben et al. (2006:67) cite the following actions of the School Management Teams in effective schools to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place:

Setting the school's goals and objectives and communicating them to the whole school community, provision of resources and the assessment of learners.

### **2.8.1.4 Safe and orderly environment**

Hanna (2010:12) states that a safe school is the one where the climate is conducive to learning, and where the learners are happy and feel safe and cared for by their teachers. According to Ubben et al. (2006:67), a safe school is free from the threat of physical violence. Bucher and Manning (2006:57) maintain that a safe school is the one where the total school climate allows teachers, students, administrators and visitors to interact in a positive, non-threatening manner that reflects the educational mission of a school while fostering positive relationships and personal growth. According to Ubben et al. (2006:99), schools should be safe places irrespective of the neighbourhood from which the students come.

Bucher and Manning (2006:57) cite three types of safety in schools: physical safety, emotional safety and intellectual safety. They state that physical safety in a school refers to a school where learners are provided freedom from violence, fear and intimidation. This is clearly stated in the school's code of conduct, and it is communicated to the whole school community. Sanctions for violating the school's code of conduct are understood by the whole school community.

Emotional safety exists where there is no bullying, teasing and isolation of learners from the other learners. According to Bucher and Manning (2006:57), intellectual safety occurs when learners can say that they do not understand a lesson without any fear of being ridiculed. It is also an environment where the learners are free to doubt and question what they are being taught. According to Hanna (2010:12), in a safe and orderly environment, day-to-day activities are focused on student learning. Ubben et al. (2006:67) state that a safe, purposeful school atmosphere ensures that the school climate is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

#### **2.8.1.4 Monitoring of learner progress**

Hanna (2010:12) points out that in effective schools there are clear instructional objectives for monitoring student performance. Ubben et al. (2006:67) maintain that in effective schools, learner progress is monitored frequently, and the results of assessment are used to improve instruction. Stiggins and Duke (2008:286) state that the principals of effective schools are pivotal in the improvement of student learning by helping teachers develop and use sound classroom assessments that strengthen instruction and learning.

#### **2.8.1.5 Opportunity to learn and time on task**

According to Kruger (2009:31), principals of effective schools place a high premium on the orderly running of the school's instructional programme, and show this by not it unnecessary. Ubben et al. (2006:67) state that in effective schools, directed instructional time is maximised, greatly reducing non-instructional activities. Hanna (2010:120) states that teachers in effective schools do not lose sight of their main objective: teaching and learning. When necessary, resources could be diverted from other businesses to meet the main objective. The teachers of effective schools finish the syllabus before they close for the winter holidays. This affords them ample time for revision and the preparation of the learners for the year-end examination.

#### **2.8.1.6. Lesson presentation**

Kaster (2010:10) states that teachers in effective schools explore the best teaching methods. They also try to use a variety of teaching methods to cater for individual differences among the learners. Teachers are able to balance individual work with group work. Classroom management is done in such a way that teaching time is spent on teaching rather than on reprimanding the learners who are disruptive. This is made possible by the presence of the school's vision, mission and the code of conduct.

### **2.8.1.7 Home/school relations**

Ubben et al. (2006:67) state that partnerships are established with the parents who assist in their children's education. According to Kruger (2009:42), parent involvement is the active and willing participation of parents in a whole range of school-based and home-based activities which may be educational or non-educational. According to Kruger (2009:43), parent involvement results in a more positive spirit between teachers and parents. This bridges the gap between the culture of the school and that of the home. The parents and the teachers speak 'one language' to the child. This makes the learners to feel safe, nurtured and ready to learn.

The principal of an effective school takes the lead and motivate and encourage parents to be involved in the education of their children. The principal does not do this alone, but he involves the teachers and eventually the parents. Ubben et al. (2006:59) argue that the success of any school improvement rests with the active involvement of all the stakeholders in the school. They further state that the most effective principals have a clear sense of purpose and priorities and are able to enlist the support of others towards any endeavour concerning school improvement.

When parents are involved in the education of their children, they pay school fees willingly. They support the school in fund raising and in the maintenance of the school grounds to keep it warm and inviting. They are even willing to pay for their children's extra tuition so that their children can achieve their academic goals.

Kruger (2009:45) mentions the following strategies to manage parent involvement:

#### **2.8.1.7.1 Devising a strategic plan for parent involvement**



The governing body and the School Management Team and the other interested teachers can devise a strategy to enhance parent involvement. At a meeting, there can be a discussion on the areas in which the parents can be involved. A planning committee can be elected and it must draw a policy for parent involvement. Parents must be involved in the initial stage so that they can own the policy on parent involvement and everything that is done in the school.

#### **2.8.1.7.2 Creating an inviting climate**

Kruger (2009:430) points out that the school climate should be warm and friendly and parents must feel welcome whenever they visit the school. The school yard must be kept clean. The reception area must be neat and be decorated. Learners and staff must be warm, positive and friendly.

#### **2.8.1.7.3 Parent and teacher training in elements of parental involvement**

Knowledgeable parents together with the teachers can conduct parent and teacher training in any area which needs development. These areas can be: conflict management, study and learning styles, gardening, communication between parent and child and communication between the home and the school.

This can be done by means of home visits by the teachers, school visits by the parents, letters, newsletters and telephonic conversations.

#### **2.8.1.7.4 Creation of opportunities for contact**

The Planning Committee can organise parent days and parent evenings where parents can come to school to view their children's work. Parents can also be invited to Awards Giving Ceremonies and Days of Prayer.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

Chapter Two focused on the study of related literature. The differences between the concepts of ‘management’ and ‘leadership’ were discussed. The different dimensions of leadership and their interrelatedness and their eventual culmination into instructional leadership were also discussed in this chapter. In addition, the definition of instructional leadership was discussed in this chapter. The discussion of the attributes and the roles of instructional leaders were also presented in this chapter. A definition of effective schools and their characteristics was presented. Lastly, a discussion of the barriers which face school principals when they implement instructional leadership was presented.

The following section is a discussion of the research design and methodology that was employed to gather the data for this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter the review of related literature on the implementation of instructional leadership was presented. The review of literature provided a clear picture of what instructional leadership is. The literature review provided theoretical answers to the first four sub- questions of this study (section 1.4).

Chapter Three provides a detailed description of the research methodology that was followed so that the researcher could come up with empirical evidence which answered the research questions in this study. This chapter focuses on the discussion of the research methods that were used to collect and to analyse data used to answer the research questions which were stated in Chapter One. Chapter Three also comprises a detailed discussion of the procedures which were followed for:

- data collection;
- sampling and sample selection;
- site selection;
- ethical considerations and
- data processing and analysis.

The following section will focus on outlining the research design for this study.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:117), research design refers to a plan for selecting subjects, research sites and data collection procedures to answer the research questions. This notion is supported by Cohen et al (2007:81). Terre- Blanche and Durrheim (1999:28) maintain that a research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between the research questions and execution or implementation of the research. This view corroborates with that of Mouton (2001:49) and Berg (2004:31) which state that the research design answers questions concerning the type of study which must be undertaken in order to provide acceptable answers to the research problem or research questions.

The researcher chose to use the qualitative approach for this study because she was concerned with understanding the principals' implementation of instructional leadership from the participants' perspectives in their natural settings. According to Bailey et al. (1995:51) and Schumacher and McMillan (2006:315), qualitative research is descriptive and contextual. A qualitative research usually results in verbal descriptions, and might use the participants' quotations. According to Mason (2001:4), qualitative research is "interpretivist" and contextual in that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced by the participants. In this study, focus was on the secondary schools principal's interpretation of the concept of instructional leadership and how they make meaning of this concept as they go about implementing instructional leadership.

According to Cohen et al. (2007:167), humans actively construct their own meanings of situations, and meaning which arises out of social situations is handled through interpretive processes. The researcher interacted with the participants in their natural settings. By so doing, the participants were given the opportunity to discuss the concept of instructional leadership as they experience it in their world. They also explained what principals do when

they implement instructional leadership and the barriers which they face when they implement instructional leadership.

Bailey et al. (1995: 50) state that qualitative research usually results in verbal descriptions and might use quotations from interviewees. According to Welman and Kruger (2001:178), qualitative studies can be used successfully in the description of groups. Neumann (2000:344) points out that qualitative research allows the researcher to directly observe and participate in small- scale social settings in the present time and in the researcher's home culture. Qualitative research is ethnographic in nature and it aims to provide an in-depth description of a group of people or community (Mouton, 2001:48; Bailey et al., 1995:50).The researcher interacted with participants in their schools and also gave them the opportunity to describe their feelings, thoughts and beliefs about the implementation of instructional leadership and its benefits on teaching and learning and learner performance.

The researcher chose to use the qualitative approach because of its characteristics as discussed below:

### **3.2.1 Explorative study**

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:39) state that exploratory studies are used to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research. Research on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership has never been done in the Amajuba District; therefore, the explorative study enabled the researcher to formulate penetrating questions on the secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership (Welman & Kruger, 2001:160; Neumann, 2000:90). Exploratory study helped the researcher to ask the: how, what, how much and the how many questions concerning the principals' implementation of instructional leadership (Bailey, 1995:41). Babbie (1998:90) points out that these types of questions mentioned by Bailey et al. (1995:41) help in satisfying the

researcher's curiosity and in testing the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership.

### **3.2.2 Descriptive study**

According to Bailey et al. (1995:40), descriptive research at the early stages of research often involves finding out what is taking place that is worth further investigating. In this study, the researcher described how the principals implement instructional leadership, their qualities and their roles as instructional leaders and the barriers they face when they implement instructional leadership, and then compare what they do with what the literature says about instructional leadership. The use of a descriptive study for this research provided a description of how secondary school principals implement instructional leadership, and whether that was worth investigating further.

Babbie (1998:91) maintains that the purpose of descriptive research is to describe situations and events. Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:39) point out that descriptive studies aim to describe phenomena accurately through the narration of events, classification of documents or measuring relationships. Through focused group interviews the researcher talked with the participants when they were describing their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and ideals about their principals' roles as instructional leaders.

### **3.2.3 Explanatory study**

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:39) point out that explanatory studies aim and providing causal explanations to phenomena. Neumann (2001:22) adds that explanatory research builds on explorative and descriptive research and goes on to identify the reason something occurs. Bailey et al. (1995:42) state that exploratory research starts from questions asking how far what is being observed supports or undermines a particular explanation. In this study the

researcher interviewed the Deputy Principals, Heads of Departments as well as the principals on the secondary schools principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The researcher then compared those findings with what literature says about the concept being studied and find out whether what the principals are doing supports or differs from what is stated in the literature.

### **3.2.4 Contextual study**

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:407) state that qualitative researchers collect data by interacting with participants in their own world. Welman and Kruger (2001:189) and Berg (2004:11) point out that a person derives his true meaning from his/her life world, and by existing he gives meaning to his world. Berg (ibid) further maintains that in the case of the participants' life-worlds, researchers focus mainly on naturally emerging languages and meanings which individuals assign to experience.

In this study, the participants were interviewed in their contexts, namely, their schools. They were given the opportunity to explain the concept of instructional leadership and what it means to them as individuals.

### **3.2.5 Naturalistic inquiry**

According to Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:43), in qualitative research, the real world situations are studied as they unfold naturally, non-manipulative, unobtrusive and non-controlling. This notion is supported by Cohen et al. (2007:168), Welman and Kruger (2001:190) and Neumann (1991:347). Bailey et al. (1995:49) stress this point by stating that the more naturalistic your research is, the more you can be sure that research is not producing distorted and misleading results.

The interviews took place in the participants' natural settings, namely, their different schools. The events were allowed to unfold naturally as the principals and the School Management Teams describe how the former implement instructional leadership. Note taking and the use of a tape recorder was used in a non-threatening manner to the participants.

The next section is a presentation of the discussion of data collection methods which were used in this study.

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Data collection methods are the procedures which the researcher employs in the collection of data. According to Babbie (1998:19), data are the basic material with which researchers work. This notion is supported by Welman and Kruger (2001:191) and Mouton (2001:67). The researcher can use field notes, participant observation, journal notes, interviews, diaries, life histories and documents. Cohen et al. (2007:181) state that the issue in the selection of data collecting methods is 'fitness for purpose'. The data collecting methods which were used in this study were the literature study and the focus group interviews.

A detailed discussion of data collection methods follows:

#### **3.3.1 Literature study**

In order to gain further insights from the purpose and the results of the study and to be able to place the study in a historical perspective, the researcher made a study of related literature. According to Mouton (2001:87), the review of related literature helps the researcher to learn from other scholars, what they have found empirically, what instrumentation they have used and to what effect. This notion is supported by Cohen et al. (2007:201). The literature which was studied for this research study included: articles, journals, text books and dissertations that are related to instructional leadership.



### **3.3.2 Focus group interviews**

According to Cohen et al. (2007:376), focus groups are contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of the population to discuss a particular given theme or topic, where the interaction of the group leads to data and outcomes. In addition, Berg (2004:123) points out that by creating an environment in which group members are stimulated by the perceptions of each other; one can increase the richness of data through a more efficient strategy than one-on-one interviewing. This notion is supported by Schumacher and McMillan (2006:360) and Cohen et al. (2007:377).

For this study, four focus group interviews were held. One focus group interview was held in each three schools out of the six selected secondary schools. The participants from the three schools out of the selected six schools were two Deputy Principals and four Heads of Departments. The Deputy Principals were selected on the basis that they form part of the senior management and they assist the principal in the implementation of instructional leadership, and they act on behalf of the principal in his absence. The Heads of Departments are part of the middle management, and they are the ones who perform the delegated duty of curriculum management in their respective departments. They also assist their principals in the implementation of instructional leadership.

The fourth focus group interview comprised the principals of the six selected schools. Two principals were selected from two high performing schools, two from average performing schools and two from low performing schools. The school principals are accountable for the performance of the whole school. They are the ones who must lead in the implementation of instructional leadership.

The researcher chose the focus group interviews because more data were collected in a very short time. Berg (2004:124) maintains that the interviewer could easily hold four or five

sessions in the course of a single week and collect necessary research information. The other advantage of using the focus group interview is that it allowed the participants to remind and stimulate one another about pertinent issues on the topic being discussed, thereby evoking thoughts and ideas in one another. Berg (2004:123) states that the informal group discussion atmosphere of the focus group interview structure is intended to encourage participants to speak freely about behaviours, attitudes and opinions they possess.

The focus group interviews were semi-structured.

During the interview, the researcher took notes and recorded the participants' responses on tape to ensure accuracy. Neumann (2001:363) cites three types of field notes which are taken during the field research:

Jotted notes are short temporary memory triggers such as words, phrases and drawings.

Direct observation notes which are taken directly after leaving the site.

The researcher's own inferences to what the participants said during the interview.

The researcher used all these types of field notes during field research.

The researcher also used a tape recorder to capture the participants' verbatim accounts of their thoughts, beliefs and ideals on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The researcher tape-recorded the interviews to ensure completeness of the verbal interactions and to provide material for reliability checks. When the interview was over, the researcher transcribed the recorded data into text without altering what the respondents said to maintain the validity of the data. The researcher ensured that neither the taking of notes nor the use of the tape recorder interfered with the full focus of the interview process.

The following section is a discussion of sampling and sample selection.

### **3.4 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SELECTION**

The researcher used purposive sampling for this study. According to Cohen et al. (2007:114), in purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks the participants to be included in the sample on the basis of his judgement of the respondents' typicality or possession of the particular characteristic being sought. Similarly, Babbie (1998:195) submits that in purposeful sampling, the sample is selected on the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research aims. This point of view is supported by Neumann (2000:1999).

A discussion of the selection of participants and sites, including the basis for their selection, follows.

#### **3.4.1 Participant selection**

There are 67 secondary schools offering Grade 12 in the Amajuba District. Six secondary schools were selected from the Amajuba Report on Grade 12 performance for 2010, 2011 and 2012. The schools which were selected were: two high performing schools, two average performing schools and two low performing schools.

The participants were the school principals, Deputy Principals and the Departmental Heads of the six selected secondary schools. One principal and six School Management Team members were selected from the first three schools out of the six selected schools. The other three school principals were selected from the remaining three selected secondary schools.

The Departmental Heads were selected because they are the ones who assist the principal in the implementation of instructional leadership by managing the curriculum in their respective departments. The Deputy Principals in turn assist the principals in all their instructional leadership roles. The school principals are the ones who are responsible and accountable for

everything that takes or does not take place in their schools. The school principals were selected because they are the ones who must lead the way in the implementation of instructional leadership.

To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the selected participants and their schools were addressed with pseudonyms. The researcher used the letters to address these schools and the teachers:

3.4.1.1 The letter H was used for the high performing schools. The School Management Team members were addressed as DP HS1, HoDHS2, and etcetera. The school principals who were selected from two high performing secondary schools in the district were addressed as Principal HS1 and Principal HS2 respectively.

3.4.1.2 For the average performing school, letter A was used. The School Management Team members were addressed as HoD AS1, HoD AS2, and etcetera. The school principals who were selected from the two average performing secondary schools were addressed as Principal AS1 and Principal AS2 respectively.

3.4.1.4 For the low performing school the letter L was used. The School Management Team members were addressed as HoD LS1, DP LS2, etc. The school principals of two low performing schools were addressed as Principal LS1 and Principal LS2 respectively.

The discussion of the selection of the sites follows.

### **3.4.2 Site selection**

Six secondary schools out of sixty seven were selected: two high performing secondary schools, two average performing secondary schools and two low performing secondary schools. These secondary schools were selected on the basis of the Amajuba Grade 12 Examinations Results Report for 2012, 2011 and 2010. The Grade 12 results were used

because it is assumed that the variance is indicative of the differences in the principals' instructional leadership of these schools.

The interviews of the Deputy Principals and the Heads of Departments took place in their respective schools. The interview of the school principals took place in the board room at the District Office. The next section is on the discussion of the methods which were used for data processing and analysis.

### **3.5 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS**

Mouton (2008:108) states that data analysis involves "breaking up the data" into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. This notion is supported by Cohen et al (Cohen,2007:81).The researcher started with the literature review in order to learn how the scholars have theorised and conceptualised on the principals' implementation of instructional leadership, what they found empirically and what instrumentation they used and to what effect (Mouton, 2008:81).

After the data had been collected, the researcher read through the data that was collected by means of focus group interviews and literature study.

After the data was interpreted, the results were presented in the form of sentences and paragraphs quoted verbatim from the participants' responses.

A discussion of the trustworthiness of the research now follows.

## **3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

The trustworthiness of the research is established when the results of a study approximate reality and are judged to be reasonable. The researcher used the following strategies to deal with threats to the validity of this study.

### **3.6.1 Observer effect or researcher bias**

According to Cohen et al (2007:150), bias in research occurs when there is a tendency for the interviewer to seek answers that support preconceived ideas. To prevent researcher bias from occurring, the researcher wrote out her potential biases about the topic before the study begins to ensure trustworthiness of the findings.

### **3.6.2 Inaccuracy of the data**

The researcher poses a threat to the validity of the research findings when he starts to interpret what the participants said during the interview in his own words. To ensure validity, verbatim accounts of the participants' conversations during the interview are important. The researcher tape-recorded the participants' expressions of their thoughts, beliefs and ideals on the topic being studied so that accurate data would be rendered. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:432), tape recording the interview ensures completeness of the verbal interactions and provides material for reliability checks.

### **3.6.3 Misinterpretation of data**

Sometimes the researcher attaches his meaning to the words and actions of the respondents. Neumann (2000:369) states that a project is member valid if members recognise and understand the researcher's descriptions as reflecting their intimate social world. To avoid the misrepresentation of data, the researcher took the field results back to the respondents so that they could judge their adequacy.

### **3.6.4 The researchers' use of non-threatening data collecting methods**

According to Neumann (2000: 369), ecological validity is the degree to which the social world as described by the researcher matches the world of members. To ensure ecological validity, non-obtrusive, non-threatening and non-manipulating methods of collecting data were employed by the researcher. The researcher asked for the respondents' permission to use the tape recorder and to take notes, and did that in a non-threatening manner to the respondents. Ethical considerations are discussed in the next section.

## **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **3.7.1 Voluntary, informed consent**

To ensure voluntary participation, the researcher began this study by establishing relationships and rapport with the participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:521; Cohen et al., 2007:382). To accomplish this, the researcher delivered the letters by which she was requesting the participants to co-operate in the study personally. The researcher asked the would-be participants to be part of the study voluntarily.

Each participant was requested to read his letter in the researcher's presence so that the researcher could give clarity where it was required. The researcher then explained that the study which was on the secondary schools principals' implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District would be of great help to the schools in the district, in the whole country as well as internationally. During the dialogue with the prospective participants, the researcher explained to them that they have the right to withdraw from this study at any time they deem it fit (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:398).

### **3.7.2 Anonymity**

To ensure anonymity of the participants and their schools, letters of the alphabet and numbers were used for the names of the schools as well as for the participants as explained in section 3.4. According to Burgess (2004:10) and Mouton (2001:167), when the participants are assured of anonymity, they become free to express themselves openly and provide “too much” data because there is no threat of being identified.

### **3.7.3 Confidentiality**

Before the participants became involved in the study, the researcher assured them of confidentiality, anonymity and non-traceability in the research (Cohen et al., 2007:318).

The researcher also explained to the participants that the data would be audio-taped then transcribed into text. During that dialogue, a relationship of trust was formed between the researcher and the participants.

### **3.7.4 Respect of participants’ privacy**

In order to ensure respect of participants’ privacy, the researcher refrained from asking them questions about personal and intimate issues which could evoke guilt and anxiety. The researcher asked for permission from the participants before she started to collect information from them or about them (Burgess, 2004:10; Mouton, 2001:167).

### **3.7.5 Deceiving subjects**

The researcher revealed her identity to the participants before the study commenced. The researcher also told the participants explicitly that she was conducting research. The researcher did that so that the participants could decide whether to be part of the research study or not. The researcher explained to them that they would be involved in a research project, what the study was about and for whom as well as its significance (Babbie &



Mouton, 2001:525). The researcher explained to the participants that the results of this study will benefit the Amajuba District and the country as a whole.

### **3.7.6 Honesty in reporting result**

When the results of the study were published, the researcher took care to protect the identities of the participants as anonymity was guaranteed prior to the commencement of the research. The researcher did not falsify or fabricate data in her findings, and did point out the limitations in her findings (Terre-Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:70; McMillan & Schumacher; 2006:399).

In order to render an honest report of the results, the researcher tape recorded and wrote verbatim accounts of the participants' comments, descriptions and interpretations, beliefs and thoughts on the secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership ( McMillan and Schumacher, 2006:399).

## **3.8 CONCLUSION**

Chapter Three focused on the research design and research methodologies which were employed in the collection of the data. The researcher elaborated on her choice of the qualitative approach to the study. Data collection strategies and the procedure that was used to select the participants for the study were also presented in this chapter. The strategies that were used for the processing and analysis of data strategies were also discussed in detail. The next chapter will focus on the analysis and the interpretation of the data that was collected by means of focus group interviews.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter Three, the researcher focused on the research design and the methodology that was used to gather data in this study. In Chapter Four, data which were gathered by means of semi-structured focus group interviews was analysed and interpreted. The purpose of this chapter is to report on the empirical enquiry by providing answers to the main research question namely: How do secondary school principals implement instructional leadership in the Amajuba District? Cohen et al. (2007:461) state that the presentation and analysis of data must abide by the issue of fitness of purpose. The principle of fitness of purpose is determined by the researcher's research questions. A brief discussion of synopsis of methodology is presented in the next section.

#### **4.2 BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF METHODOLOGY**

Data were collected by means of semi-structured focus group interviews. Four focus group interviews were conducted. Six secondary schools were selected for the study. Three school principals, two Deputy Principals and four Heads of Departments were selected from the first three schools out of the six selected schools. The three remaining school principals were selected from the three remaining selected secondary schools. The first three focus group interviews comprised the Deputy Principals and Heads of Departments from the first three selected secondary schools out of the six selected secondary schools. The fourth focus group interview consisted of six school principals from all the six sampled secondary schools. The six secondary schools which were selected were: two high performing secondary schools, two average performing schools and two low performing schools. Pseudonyms were used

throughout the study to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and their schools.

The aim of the interviews was to find out the participants' thoughts, feelings, perceptions, beliefs and their experiences concerning the implementation of instructional leadership in their schools. The researcher used an interview schedule which guided and directed all the interviews. All the focus group interviews were conducted face-to-face and were tape-recorded. Field notes were also taken during interviews. Each interview lasted for 60 to 80 minutes. Written notes were taken during the interviews.

The next section is a discussion of the data analysis process.

### **4.3 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

According to Mouton (2001:105), data analysis involves "breaking up the data" into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relations. This notion is supported by Cohen et al. (2007:461) who maintain that data analysis involves making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. In this study, the researcher made meaning of the gathered data by making a comparison of the different scholars' theorisation and conceptualisation with the participants' experiences, thoughts, beliefs and feelings on the secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership (Mouton, 2001:89).

In this study, data analysis took place immediately after the first interview. According to Cohen et al. (2007:462), early analysis of data reduces the problem of data overload by selecting out significant features for future focus. This notion is supported by Berg (2004:29).

The researcher transcribed all tape-recorded interviews immediately after each session while the researcher still had fresh and vivid pictures of the interviews (McMillan & Schumacher,

2006:356). Field notes were also used to supplement the transcription. The researcher listened to the tape recorder for each session several times and read the transcription several times in order to provide a context for the emergence of units of meaning and themes later on (Cohen et al., 2007:472). The researcher then delineated the units of general meaning by condensing what the participants said in relation to the study. The researcher then wrote margin notes in which the participants' responses were grouped according to their similarities. Codes were then ascribed to the data in order to create the units of analysis. By coding up the data, the researcher was able to detect frequencies that indicated how the principals of secondary schools in the Amajuba District implement instructional leadership. The researcher then used exhaustive categories for the description of the topics. The data belonging to each category was placed together and data analysis was conducted.

The following discussion is on the findings of the study.

#### **4.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The primary aim of conducting the focus group interviews was to determine the thoughts, feelings, experiences and perceptions of the participants concerning the secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The researcher wanted to find out what participants perceive as taking place regarding the implementation of instructional leadership, related challenges which the school principals and their School Management Teams face, and their strategies for enhancing the implementation of instructional leadership.

The findings of this study have been arranged into categories and sub-categories, where applicable. The categories are aligned to the themes which were in the interview schedule.

The broad categories used in this chapter are:

- The definition of instructional leadership;

- The role of the school principal and the School Management Team in the implementation of instructional leadership;
- Challenges which face the school principals and their School Management Teams when they implement instructional leadership;
- The effectiveness of the school principal and the School Management Team in the implementation of instructional leadership; and
- The strategies that the school principals and the School Management Teams can employ to enhance the implementation of instructional leadership.

#### **4.4.1 The definition of instructional leadership**

The analysed data suggests that while the majority of participants appeared to know something about the concept of instructional leadership, they did not describe it in terms of what they as School Management Team members do. That is, they did not give the impression that it is something which they do on a day-to-day basis. The majority of the participants struggled to describe the concept instructional leadership and to relate it to their own activities. Their responses suggested that it remained a theoretical construct which they associated only with their studies. Some informative responses in this regard were:

*I once heard of the concept of instructional leadership when I was studying for my B.Ed., yet I have never thought of my principal or us Heads of Departments as instructional leaders. Instructional leadership refers to everything that the principal does to ensure improved teaching and learning in the school (HOD HS1).*

*Instructional leadership is what the principal does to promote effective teaching and learning in the school. It is amazing that our principal executes these duties, but we have always viewed him as carrying out his managerial duties (DP HS2).*

The analysed data indicates that the concept of instructional leadership is not used at all. All the participants who attempted to define instructional leadership stated the purpose of instructional leadership and the characteristics of school principals who are instructional leaders. The participants' responses initially revealed that they were not aware that they are instructional leaders. They viewed themselves as good school principals and School Management Teams who are working hard to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in their schools. Emergent views regarding knowledge of instructional leadership cohere with what scholars hold to be common understandings of instructional leadership. According to Kaster (2010:20) and Bays (2010:30), definitions of instructional leadership in the literature are scant, unclear and varied because its description is based on the lists of characteristics and actions of school principals who are instructional leaders. Similarly, in this study, data analysis suggests that the majority of participants view instructional leadership as the role of school principals only. This view was mainly held in average and low performing schools. The rest of the School Management Team members do not realise that the implementation of instructional leadership is a collaborative effort among themselves and the staff as a whole.

The Deputy Principals' and the Heads of Departments' definition of instructional leadership indicate that there are instructional leadership roles which they evade because they view them as the responsibility of the principal. These responses suggest that the school principals are either assisted reluctantly in the implementation of instructional leadership or are not assisted at all. This has adverse effects on teaching and learning and the general performance of these schools.

The review of related literature revealed that although the definition of instructional leadership is unclear, scholars agree unanimously that instructional leadership is aimed at improving teaching and learning and eventually improved learner achievement (c.f. 2.3.3).

This coheres with the participants' perceptions of what instructional leadership should achieve. Although, initially, all the participants did not know that they are the instructional leaders in their schools, they knew and understood their primary roles as School Management Teams; which is to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in their schools and learner achievement is improved.

#### **4.4.2 The role of the school principal and the School Management Teams in the implementation of instructional leadership**

The Deputy Principals and the Heads of Departments were oblivious to the fact that they are also responsible for the implementation of instructional leadership in the school. Their view was that it was solely the principal's responsibility to execute instructional leadership roles. The analysis of data revealed the following as the perceived roles of school principals in the implementation of instructional leadership:

- Provision of resources;
- Establishing healthy relationships;
- Formulation of the school's vision;
- Professional development of teachers; and
- Curriculum management.

A detailed elaboration on the above roles of instructional leaders as mentioned by the participants during the interviews now follows:

##### **4.4.2.1 Provision of resources**

The majority of the participants in this study expressed the view that the most important role of an instructional leader is to provide resources. Some informative responses in this regard were:

*The SMT and I now select the text books ourselves, because in the past we used to give the Heads of Departments and the subject teachers the opportunity to select the books, only to find that after three months the former start to complain about the text books, and demand that they be bought another publication which they now deem richer than the ones they had ordered (Principal LP1).*

*As early as October I remind the HoDs to hold departmental meetings in which the teachers make requisitions for the textbooks, stationery, teaching and learning aids for the following academic year (Deputy Principal HS1).*

The gathered data suggest that although all the participants understand their role of providing resources and execute it as suggested by the reviewed literature; this is always thwarted by the inadequate financial resources in some schools. According to the Education Labour Relations Council Policy Handbook (2003:B43), the Department of Education is responsible for the allocation of norms and standards for school funding, but there is an outcry of inadequate school funding by the National Department of Education. The funding of schools in the Amajuba District is a contentious issue. It is only a few school principals who can afford to provide resources adequately in their schools. Some informative responses in this regard were:

*The Department allocates funds to schools, but some schools were erroneously ranked in as far as their quintiles are concerned, consequently we struggle to procure adequate resources (Principal AS1).*

*My school was incorrectly ranked as a quintile 4, and that means we are a rich school, therefore we get a small amount of norms and standards from the Department (Principal AS1).*



*We get so little funding from the department so much so that we make two or more learners share one book. It is a pity because the parents as well as the teachers fail to understand why we complain about inadequate norms and standards when the DoE boasts over the media about the large amounts of money it invests in education (Principal LS2).*

The analysed data suggest that inadequate school funding by the Department of Education is prevalent among the previously disadvantaged schools which are situated in townships and those schools which were previously owned by the mines. The school principals' execution of their instructional leadership role of providing resources is jeopardised by this. There is a serious shortage of text books in these schools, yet the parents do not want to help even if they can afford to buy their children text books. Effective teaching and learning is compromised in these schools, since the learners share the text books. Homework, assignments and projects are done haphazardly. The analysed data suggest that the majority of these are average performing schools and low performing schools. On the other hand, in high performing schools the shortage of resources, particularly textbooks, appeared to be minimal.

The analysed data points to a common understanding among respondents that it is their responsibility to select Learning Teaching Support Materials (LTSMs) from the catalogues provided by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). This ensures that schools only procure approved textbook that support the curriculum as revised from time to time. Some responses in this regard were:

*We select the LTSM's from the catalogue provided by the National Department of Education (NDoE), but Section 21 schools with function(c) have the latitude to procure the LTSM's from the providers of their choice (Principal HS2).*

*When the Department of Basic Education introduced this method of procuring the LTSM's almost all the schools were procuring from the Central Management Centre, but this method was flawed and the Learning and Teaching Support Materials were not delivered timeously (Principal HS2).*

These perceptions of the participants are consistent with the view that the school principals and the School Management Teams are responsible for the provision of resources (c.f. 2.5.3.6). Kruger (2009:3) states that when the principal provides the teachers with teaching resources, they realise that he wants them to succeed in the execution of their teaching task. They then exert themselves diligently and contribute to the realisation of the school's goals and objectives.

The findings suggest that all the principals and their School Management Teams execute their instructional leadership role of providing resources as suggested by the reviewed literature. The analysed data also suggest that although all the interviewed principals do their best to provide resources, financial constraints, as could be seen particularly in the shortage of text books, in some of the schools, makes it difficult for them to execute this role effectively. The shortage of textbooks and the unavailability of the infrastructure like laboratories is a serious problem which faces the principals of the average and the low performing schools. Effective teaching and learning is compromised, and that leads to the poor performance of some of these schools. The majority of the high performing schools are, with the exception of one school, fee schools and the parents are compliant regarding the payment of school fees. These schools are well-resourced and financially well-off. The analysed data points to principals of these schools being able to procure additional text books and all the other appropriate teaching and learning aids that enhance effective teaching and learning and consequently the consistent high learner performance.

#### **4.4.2.2 The building of healthy relationships**

Most of the participants expressed the view that it is important that the principal encourages the building of healthy relationships between the School Management Team and the teachers and among the teachers themselves. Some informative responses in this regard were:

*The principal must ensure that healthy relationships exist among the members of staff. Collaboration from the staff members becomes easy when there are positive relationships* (Deputy Principal AS2).

*When teachers have healthy relationships with one another, ideas on teaching and learning are shared freely because everyone has a common purpose of improving the performance of the school* (Head of Department HS1).

*Healthy relationships between the School Management Team and the teachers assist in the empowering of teachers, promote the sharing of ideas and assist in effective teaching and learning* (Principal LS1).

These perceptions are consistent with the view that the existence of healthy relationships between the principal and staff is crucial especially for collaboration and delegation in the realisation of the school's goals and objectives (c.f. 2.5.3.6). The related literature review further confirms that leadership is a relationship (c.f. 2.5.3.6). Ricketts (2010:1) points out that a leader who has a healthy relationships with staff, is able to motivate, inspire, and energise them. When teachers feel good about themselves and what their collective missions are as a result of significant interactions with their principal, they become more effective in the classroom and learner performance improves.

The analysed data suggest that the majority of respondents think that the establishment of healthy relationships among the staff is crucial to the principal's implementation of

instructional leadership. All the participants were aware of the importance of healthy relationships in the school and the positive effects thereof on effective teaching and learning.

Although the principals appeared to be aware of the importance of healthy relationships in a school, relationship problems were reported to exist in some of the surveyed schools. Relationships between some of the principals and the teachers were reportedly tarnished and the level of trust was low, and the teachers did not do their best in the execution of their teaching task. This reportedly impacts negatively on effective teaching and learning, and results in poor learner achievement. Lamenting the state of affairs some respondents remarked:

*A school can be a T60 school and teachers can be expected to teach extra classes in the mornings and on Saturdays, but teachers will not do it because they are not in good terms with the SMT especially the principal (Head of Department HS2).*

*The teachers conspire against the principal and the SMT to ensure that the school does not come out of the T60 dilemma (Deputy Principal LS2).*

*Unhealthy relationships among the School Management Teams and the teachers do not only affect teaching and learning and the overall performance of the school, but it also affects the school's enrolment since parents vote with their feet when there are conflicts among the teachers in a school (Principal HS1).*

These perceptions confirm what is stated in the reviewed literature that the existence of healthy relationships between the principal and the staff is crucial especially for collaboration and delegation in the realisation of the school's goals and objectives (c.f. 2.5.3.6).

The analysed data suggest that some of the principals have given up their instructional leadership role of establishing healthy relationships among the staff members since they

themselves are the victims of some of their staff members' vindictiveness. This trend is evident in the average performing schools and the low performing schools. There is no quality teaching and learning mainly in some of these schools, hence their typical poor performance. Furthermore, the analysed data suggest that relationship problems are minimal in high performing schools and the members of staff are willing to collaborate in pursuit of effective teaching and learning, which is evidenced by their consistently good Grade 12 examinations results.

#### **4.4.2.3 The creation of the school's vision and mission**

Few participants were aware that the creation of the vision and mission of the school is one of the school principal's roles in the implementation of instructional leadership. However, they did not appear to associate the school's vision and mission with effective teaching and learning and improved learner performance. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*When the team from the District Office comes to monitor the functionality of the school, they ask whether the school vision is in place. Nobody explains to us why it is important for us to have a school's vision and mission. They do not even ask to look at it as long as you say it is in place (Principal LS1).*

*It is difficult to understand why the District Office wants us to formulate the school vision and mission since everybody knows that we are here to teach the learners (Principal AS2).*

These perceptions of the participants are contrary to what is stated in literature (c.f. 2.5.3.6) that the formulation of the school vision is important in that it points out to all the people involved where they want to go and everybody concentrates their energy there (Maxwell, 1993:139). The principals' neglect of this instructional leadership role of the formulation of

the school's vision and mission contributes to the unstable performance of the majority of schools in the Amajuba District.

The analysed data suggests that the majority of the participants neglect the formulation of the school's vision and mission as one of the roles of principals who are instructional leaders. They were of the opinion that the school's vision is implicit, and that all members of staff implicitly know what is expected of them. All the participants had a theoretical knowledge of the importance of the creation of a vision and mission, but few have it in their school. Even the School Management Teams of high performing schools were guilty of this omission. The findings suggest that the principals' neglect of this instructional leadership role of the formulation of the school's vision and mission contributes to the unstable performance of the majority of schools in the Amajuba District.

#### **4.4.2.4 Curriculum management**

All the participants had the perception that curriculum management is the best way of ensuring that teaching and learning takes place in a school, and that the learners are assessed accordingly. Some responses attesting to this were:

*We manage the curriculum by checking and controlling the teachers' files in order to find out whether they prepare the lessons following the work schedule (Head of Department AS2).*

*We do not check the teachers' lesson plans only, but we also check the learners' exercise books to find out whether the teacher actually taught that to the learners (Deputy Principal HS2).*

*It is very important to check the teachers' lesson plans using the work schedule and comparing it with what is in the learners' exercise books, because that is the only proof that the learners are taught the relevant subject matter (Head of Department HS3).*

These perceptions of the participants cohere with the view that that the principal's instructional leadership role of curriculum management is the best way of having a picture of what is happening in the classroom (c.f. 2.5.3.6). According to Stebick (2009:30) and Hanna (2010:57), instructional leaders who manage the school's instructional programme ensure that the school meets its annual progress by supervising instruction, evaluating instruction co-ordinating the curriculum to ensure that standards are met in monitoring learner progress.

The findings suggest that in the majority of schools the Heads of Departments knew that they were supposed to manage the curriculum, but they neglected this task. This was evident when the researcher was analysing the pacemakers, lesson plans, and mark schedules for each term as well as the learners' written work. The teachers' files had only been controlled at the beginning of the year and it was never done again. The participants from low performing schools, in particular, turned out to be neglecting their instructional leadership role of managing the curriculum consistently. There are serious relationship issues in these schools and the District Office fails to assist in the restoration of healthy relationships in these schools. Due to the failure of the principals and their School Management Teams to manage the curriculum effectively, teaching and learning is adversely affected and the achievement of learners is consistently low or average (KZN Education, 2012:4). Conversely, in the majority of high performing schools the Heads of Departments manage the curriculum effectively. When the researcher analysed the pacemakers against the teachers' lesson plans and the learners' work, she realised that the majority of the teachers had already finished the work of the first term and they were preparing the learners for the first term exams. There is effective teaching and learning in these schools and the teachers even hold Saturday classes.

The analysed data also show that the majority of the principals leave the task of curriculum management entirely to the Heads of Departments. Some of the informative responses regarding this were:

*I manage the curriculum indirectly. The Heads of Departments check the teachers' work and the learners' work. The Deputy Principals also check the work, append their signatures and stamp the teachers' files and the learners' exercise books (Principal HS1).*

*We do the internal moderation before the teachers attend the cluster moderation of Continuous Assessment. The principal does not even check the work because I have checked and signed. He just signs under my signature (Head of Department LS3).*

The participants' perceptions are inconsistent with what is stated in related literature that although the principal manages the curriculum indirectly via the Heads of Department, he is ultimately accountable for the effective management thereof (c.f. 2.5.3.5). According to Stebick (2009:30), instructional leaders who manage the school's instructional programme ensure that the school meets its annual progress by supervising instruction, evaluating instruction and co-ordinating the curriculum to ensure that standards are met in monitoring learner progress. This notion is supported by Hanna (2010:57), Hoerr (2008:83) and Stebick (2009:30).

The findings suggest that the majority of principals do not execute their instructional leadership task of curriculum management; they depend on the Heads of Departments. A few principals were involved in the effective management of the curriculum. Those are the principals whose performance had been low for the past five years and whose schools' performance improved last year (Amajuba, 2013:10). In most of the low performing schools, the principals were on temporary incapacity leaves and the deputy principals are acting as principals. The former are doing a very bad job.

The majority of the participants expressed their concern regarding the management of the curriculum in the Senior Phase (Grade 7-9). They felt that the management of the curriculum



is neglected in this phase, since the main focus is on Grade 12 classes. The following were some of the responses regarding this:

*The Heads of Departments themselves do not devote quality time on checking and monitoring the work of the Senior Phase (Principal AS1).*

*We have the same dilemma in our school, where the Grade 12 teachers do not do their best in the teaching of the Senior Phase learners, since their main focus is matric (Deputy Principal LS2).*

*These teachers complete the work schedule timeously and assess the learners accordingly, but remedial work is neglected. Even if you speak with the teacher about the performance of learners in this phase and you encourage him to assist those learners who are performing poorly, he says he will see those learners once the Grade 12 syllabus has been completed. Unfortunately that never happens. (Head of Department, HS3).*

The neglect of the Senior Phase learners is a nationwide outcry (Education, 2011). The National Department of Education is aware of this dilemma. To combat this, the two phases of the secondary school, the Senior Phase and the FET Phase, were allocated different subject advisors since 2010 (Education, 2011), but the problem is still persisting in the majority of schools.

#### **4.4.2.5 The professional development of teachers**

Very few participants viewed the professional development of teachers as the responsibility of the principal and the School Management Team. Some informative responses regarding this were:

*The professional development of teachers is mainly the responsibility of the TLS (Teaching and Learning Services) Sub-Directorate at the District Office, but the Subject Advisors liaise*

*with the principal concerning the workshops which they organise for teacher development (Principal HS1).*

*The principal receives the circulars about the workshops and seminars, and makes copies of these and gives them to the teachers. He further said: The principal then ensures that there is a copy of these circulars on the notice board in the staff room, in the foyer as well as on the notice board in the School Management Team's offices (Deputy Principal HS2).*

The findings suggest that the development of teachers in all the schools sampled in the Amajuba District is left entirely on the hands of the District Office. The school principals are neglecting this instructional leadership role. The analysed data also suggests that the principals expect the District Office and the Heads of Departments to develop the staff and not them. Unfortunately, the Heads of Departments themselves depend on the subject advisors to develop the teachers. The subject advisors have a hectic schedule; therefore sometimes it takes some time for them to visit a particular school in order to give support in a particular subject; therefore, a teacher takes an initiative and makes an appointment with the former for guidance and assistance in a particular area.

The gathered data are inconsistent with what is stated by the literature that the principal must spearhead the professional development of the teachers especially beginner teachers (c.f. 2.5.3.3). According to Greczewski et al. (2009:72), one aspect of the principal's new role is to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to increase and perfect their craft, on the assumption that deeper teacher knowledge leads to changes in instruction, which in turn produces higher student achievement. This notion is supported by Steyn and van Niekerk (2007:225). The data analysis suggests that it is a norm in the Amajuba District that the development of teachers is done by the Teaching and Learning Support sub-directorate at the

District Office; therefore, the neglect of this role at school level does not adversely affect teaching and learning.

#### **4.5 CHALLENGES WHICH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS FACE WHEN IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The third objective of this study was to find out the challenges that school principals face when they implement instructional leadership. The participants cited the following problems which they face when they implement instructional leadership: too much administrative work, numerous meetings called by the District Office officials, insufficient provision of resources, interference of unions in promotional posts and poor parental involvement. A detailed discussion of each of these problems is presented in the next section.

##### **4.5.1 Too much administrative work**

All the participants in their different focus group interviews agreed unanimously that too much administrative duty is a hindrance to their implementation of instructional leadership. This problem is aggravated by the fact that nowadays principals are assigned multiple roles and responsibilities. Principals are expected to be subject teachers, counsellors, social workers and co-ordinators of a myriad of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. Some pertinent concerns were expressed thus:

*When the principal has received an instruction from the District Office that they want certain information immediately, both of us sit down, gather that information and fill it in the form. While we are busy with these forms, we do not attend to the classes which we teach (Deputy Principal AS1).*

*Sometimes the District Office faxes a form to the school at nine o'clock, and demands to receive the information by twelve o'clock on the same day (Principal LS3).*

The findings suggest that the amount of administrative work done by the school principals poses a challenge to the implementation of instructional leadership. This problem is prevalent in the low and average performing schools since all these schools have one clerk who is overwhelmed by her own duties as prescribed by her job description. The principal and his School Management Team are often interrupted by this paper work from their teaching task as well as the management of the curriculum. Most of these schools are very far from the District Office; therefore, it is always impossible for the principal or a School Management Team member to return to school once he has gone to the District Office to submit a particular document.

The Department of Education has introduced learner transport for the learners who live in deep rural areas. The data gathered indicates that the learner transport has added to the paper work which must be done by the principals and his School Management Team. One informative response was:

*At the beginning of the year we compile attendance registers for the learner transport. We mark these registers every morning (Principal LS1).*

In addition, the focus group interviews revealed that paper work is increased by the administrative work which is inherent to the Nutrition Programme. Some informative responses regarding this were:

*At the end of the month the supplier submits his claim forms which must be completed and signed by the principal. Although I delegate some of the paper work to the School*

*Management Team and the school clerk, I must double check its correctness. Often the information requires that I do it myself (Principal LS1).*

*It does not end there, the School Nutrition Programme field workers from the District Office visit the schools unannounced and demand to see the Nutrition Programme file and check whether everything is in order (Principal AS2).*

The data gathered during the focus group interviews indicate that it is not only the amount of paper work which is a problem, sometimes even directives concerning the submission thereof is problematic. One informative response regarding this was:

*Often you find a document in your school's pigeon hole which requires you to provide a lot of information. You suspend all your other work in order to write the information required by an unspecified sub-directorate at District Office. When you go to submit that information at District Office you are unable to because you cannot guess the office that has requested that information (Principal LS2).*

*In such cases you have no alternative but to take that document back with you because you do not know where to submit it, and the DO is very big, you cannot move from office to office asking everyone if they know anything about the document you are having (Principal AS2).*

The findings suggest that the majority of the low performing schools are situated far from the District Office whereas all the high performing schools are situated within the close proximity of the District Office and they are not part of the schools Nutrition Programme. The analysed data also suggest that some of the principals of the average performing schools and those of low performing schools are facing challenges of being the co-ordinators of their schools' Nutrition Programme when they implement instructional leadership. Furthermore, the findings justify that it is mostly the principals of low performing schools and the average

schools who spend most of their time out of school due to the numerous submissions they must make. Their instructional leadership role is negatively affected by this. They depend on the Deputy Principals and the Heads of Departments to take care of the other roles which ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in the schools. In addition, the findings suggest that some of the delegated instructional leadership tasks, for example, curriculum management, are not effectively done. This suggests the poor performance in some of the sampled schools.

Findings of this study regarding increased administrative work as a barrier to the effective discharge of instructional leadership tasks are consistent with extant literature (c.f. 2.5.5). According to Boris-Schacter (2006:23), the large amount of paper work which must be done by the principals and their School Management Teams militates against the implementation of instructional leadership. The principal who is supposed to be visible, do classroom walk-throughs and manage the curriculum is unable to do that because he spends most of his time attending to the paper work which must be sent immediately to the District Office. According to Czackowski (2011), this is instant communication demanding instant response. Many of these schools are, ironically, located more than 50 km from the District Office.

#### **4.5.2 Numerous meetings called by the authorities**

All the participants indicated that the school principals in the Amajuba secondary schools attend meetings regularly at District Office to the detriment of their instructional leadership roles in their schools. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*Sometimes principals are invited to a meeting which starts at 10.00 and adjourns at twelve. Most schools are very far from the District Office, therefore the principals cannot go back to school, and the whole day has been wasted (Principal AS1).*

*Often we are called to a meeting to listen to something which could have been cascaded to us via circulars. Due to these many meetings we have information and communication overload (Principal LS2).*

Data also indicate that the officials of different sub-directorates at District Office do not meet and discuss the dates and times of their meetings so that there will be no clashes. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*Even at District Office level the officials invite the principals to different meetings on one day; one in the morning and one in the afternoon (Principal LS1).*

The ELRC Policy Handbook for Educators (2003) states that the job description of a Deputy Principal is to perform the delegated duties of the school principal. In the Amajuba District principals can delegate anything, but the attendance of meetings called by the District Office officials. This is considered as a heinous offence. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*As the principal I must attend all the meetings myself. I cannot delegate my Deputy Principals to represent me. That is why it is difficult for me to monitor the teachers' files and the learners' written work. I leave everything to the Departmental Heads (Principal HS1).*

*I once sent my first Deputy Principal to go and represent me in a meeting at District Office, and I was called, together with the principals who had done that, to an urgent meeting and we were given a stern warning not to do that again (Principal AS2).*

*One has to wonder as to what is the role of a Deputy Principal if principals cannot be represented by their Deputy Principals in the meetings called by the District Office officials (Principal HS2).*

The review of related literature revealed that principals who are instructional leaders are subject teachers who must model effective teaching and the correct and effective use of

learner assessment (c.f. 2.5.5). Chang (2010) states that principals are teacher-principals, who must prepare lessons, teach and assess learners just like the Post Level one teachers. The numerous meetings which the principal attends interfere with his role of teacher-principal.

One informative response regarding this was:

*As a subject teacher it becomes difficult for me to prepare my lessons, because I may have prepared my lessons for a particular week only to find that I will be attending impromptu meetings for the whole week (Principal AS1).*

The perceptions of the majority of the participants were that the principals do not have sufficient time to be subject teachers because of the amount of time they spend attending meetings called by the District Office, the Circuit Managers as well as the Ward Managers.

Some informative responses regarding this were:

*It is sad that we are expected to teach and be effective instructional leaders at the same time taking into consideration the amount of time which we spend on activities which do not contribute to effective teaching and learning in our schools (Principal HS1).*

*Even the Ward Managers always remind the principals that they must teach. It is ironic because the Ward Managers are also to blame for keeping the principals out of the school (Principal LS2).*

The feelings of the participants are consistent with what is stated in the related reviewed literature that principals are prevented from executing their instructional leadership roles by activities which are not part of their job description (c.f. 2.5.5). According to Mead (2011:1), the District Office is oblivious to the principal's instructional leadership role. This notion is supported by Boris-Schacter (2006:20) and Czackowski (2011:4) who state that the nature of the principals' job description makes them to have less control in their professional task.



### 4.5.3 Insufficient provision of resources

The majority of participants in different focus group interviews revealed that there is a severe shortage of textbooks as well as the infrastructure like libraries, well-equipped Physical Sciences laboratories, the internet and the audio-visual teaching and learning aids. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*I am the HOD for the Maths and Science Department, and it is always a hassle for me to negotiate with the principal of a previously advantaged school to allow us to take our learners there so that they can be able to do the practical for the Life Sciences and the Physical Sciences (Head of Department HS1).*

*The sharing of resources with rich neighbouring schools does not always run smoothly. As the principal you are made to feel guilty about the whole arrangement. You end up feeling confused and develop an inferiority complex for being the head of such a poor school (Principal LS2).*

It also emerged from the analysed data that floor space is also a problem in many schools. The principle of 1:30 is a pie in the sky in all the average and low performing schools. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*Since the Department of Education declared the no-zoning of schools; we receive a large influx of learners whom, according to the District Office, we cannot turn away the learners who need to be admitted to our schools. Our classrooms are overcrowded (Principal AS1).*

*Overcrowding in the classrooms affects the effective controlling of learners' written work as well as Continuous Assessment. You end up taking a sample of the learners' work and check it. I always wish that I could be able to check all the learners' written work and Continuous*

*Assessment tasks on a quarterly basis, but it is difficult to do it effectively with such large numbers* (Head of Department AS2).

The gathered data also revealed that there is insufficient learner furniture in some of the schools. One informative response regarding this was:

*Due to the meagre allocation of finances we cannot procure extra furniture for the learners. Our lack of adequate furniture is more evident when the learners have to sit for ANA and the mid-year and Final Examinations, since their seating plan must be like that of the grade 12s* (Principal LS1).

The findings point to overcrowding in the average and low performing schools being perceived as causing a hindrance to the principals' implementation of instructional leadership especially curriculum management and the giving of individual attention to the learners, which is crucial for effective teaching and learning. The analysed data suggest that there is adequate floor space and no overcrowding in the high performing schools. The principals of these schools can afford to hire temporary school governing body paid teachers if the learner enrolment has increased. Teaching and learning is never affected adversely in these schools, hence their performance is constantly high.

The findings on inadequate text books, floor space, insufficient furniture and the other teaching and learning materials are consistent with the view that the Education Department's broader failure to deliver on their core functions creates another barrier to the school principal's implementation of instructional leadership (Price and Clark, 2011:4).

The majority of the participants expressed their feelings that they do not know how to combat the problem of insufficient resources in their schools. They are waiting patiently for the

Department of Education to re-rank their schools. Some informative responses regarding this were:

*My school is in a township where there is a high rate of unemployment, and yet we were ranked as a quintile 5 school. The parents are supposed to pay R170, 00 for school fees, but they do not (Principal LS2).*

*If my school can be at least a quintile 3, then we will be a no-fee school. The department will increase our norms and standards funding, and we will be able to acquire the necessary resources which will enhance effective teaching and learning and probably improve the performance of the learners (Principal AS1).*

The findings suggest that overcrowding in the average and low performing schools causes a hindrance to the principals' implementation of instructional leadership. The scarcity of the textbooks and the other teaching and learning aids that enhance the effective teaching and learning contribute to the poor performance of these schools. In addition, the findings also suggest that all the principals of high performing schools, although they also receive inadequate funding from the National Department of Education, do not experience the same problems as their counterparts because the majority of the parents pay school fees. That enables them to hire teachers who are remunerated by the school governing body, build additional classrooms and even procure the required teaching and learning aids with ease. There is effective teaching and learning in these schools and constant high learner achievement.

#### **4.5.4 Poor parental involvement**

The gathered interview data revealed that the majority of participants in the focus groups interviews mentioned poor parental involvement as a deterrent to the implementation of

instructional leadership. It also emerged from the gathered data that parents are not involved even in issues which directly affect the teaching and learning of their children. Some are unable to assist their children with their academic tasks due to their low level of education, but the majority of the parents are unwilling to assist. They also show reluctance to purchase learning teaching materials that the school is unable to provide. The majority of the participants also reported experiencing interference from civic organisations on teaching and learning matters. Some informative comments in this regard were:

*The principal delegated the handling of disciplinary problems to me. You struggle to meet with the parents of a learner when the latter has committed misconduct or his progress at school is poor (Deputy Principal LS1).*

*The code of conduct of our school states that a learner must stay at home if the parent does not come to school after three days. When we try to enforce that section of the school's code of conduct, community leaders interfere and tell us that we are violating the children's right to education (Principal AS1).*

*It is always interesting to see the parents demanding that the scripts be remarked and also wanting to see the learner's year mark whereas they were not involved throughout the year (Head of Department LS1).*

*What can we do even if the parents who serve in the school governing body do not want to be involved? It is a sad thing because in our school it is the governing body members themselves who do not want to pay school fees and to help by purchasing the LTSMs which the school cannot provide. They even influence the other parents not to help (Principal LS1).*

The data suggest that all the participants experience the problem of poor parental involvement to some extent. It is, however, worse in the low and average performing

schools. The findings suggest that the learners in the high performing schools, although they have behavioural problems, they do their academic tasks. There is effective teaching and learning in these schools and the achievement of the learners is high. In the average and low performing schools the learners have serious behavioural problems and they neglect their academic tasks as well. Effective teaching and learning is negatively affected by the lack of parental involvement in these schools, and the consequence thereof is poor learner achievement. These findings are thus consistent with what is stated in the reviewed literature that in effective schools parents are involved in the education of their children, and that enhances the principal's implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 2.5.3.6). Ubben et al. (2006:67) state that the levels of the involvement of parents in the education of their children determine the effectiveness of the school. This notion is supported by Kruger (2009:42).

#### **4.5.5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND THE SMT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The analysed data gathered during the interviews revealed that the school principals and their School Management Teams feel that they are not effective regarding the implementation of instructional leadership. Some informative responses with regard to this were:

*We as the SMT members and the teachers in our respective departments feel that our principal is ineffective in her implementation of instructional leadership because she does not fulfil his principal-teacher role effectively (Deputy Principal HS1).*

*We are aware of the fact that our principal does not do this deliberately, it is the external factors that overwhelm him yet we feel that he does not model effective teaching to us. We also feel that he is not in a position to complain to us as SMT members about our poor*

*curriculum management because he does not know what we are going through (Deputy Principal HS2).*

The participants' opinions of their principals' ineffectiveness in the implementation of instructional leadership as can be seen in the principals' failure to be subject teachers, dampens their morale especially in the area of curriculum management.

All the participants who are the Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads expressed their view of their principals' ineffectiveness in the area of curriculum management. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*Although our principal is trying her best to implement instructional leadership, we perceive that she is ineffective. Although we take the lead in the management of the curriculum, we also expect her to monitor the teachers' work after we had checked it, but she just does not have the time to do it. She would request certain teachers' files together with the learners' written work with the intention of checking it. When you as a HoD realises that it has been a number of days since she had asked for this work, you then approach her and request that work back only to find that she did not do anything to the teachers' files as well as the learners' work. We feel discouraged by all this. (Head of Department AS1).*

If the Heads of Department are not enthusiastic about their responsibility of managing the curriculum, it is easy for the teachers in their departments to evade the preparation of lessons. Lack of or poor lesson preparation affects effective teaching and learning, therefore the performance of the whole school is jeopardised.

*I feel that our principal is ineffective in the implementation of instructional leadership since he spends most of his time out of school. Even if he is present he spends most of his time in the office attending to parents and departmental officials who visit our school unannounced.*

*We have our full duty loads; therefore it is difficult for us to help when there are teachers who do not honour their periods as well as the learners who bunk classes (DP LS2).*

*We feel that contact time is not adequately protected in our school. It is only the principal who is in the best position of doing that because he does not even have a duty load (HoD HS1).*

*Together with the teachers in our respective departments; we feel neglected, overworked and exhausted. We feel discouraged and the teachers do not give their best to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in our school (Head of Department AS1).*

It also emerged from the analysed data that the participants' discontentment is causing them not to do their best in the execution of their teaching tasks. This might lead to the dishonouring of periods and lack of collaboration from the teachers in their departments.

Principals themselves expressed their ineffectiveness in their implementation of instructional leadership. One informative response regarding this was expressed thus:

*I feel that I am ineffective in the implementation of instructional leadership in that I cannot satisfy the needs of my teachers particularly the procurement of enough text books. The teachers do not understand why I cannot procure all the text book they had requisitioned. I have explained this issue to the staff and even went to an extent of making copies of the document indicating our school's allocation of norms and standards for school funding, but it was a futile exercise. There are rumours that the teachers have low morale and I am accused of being of selfish and that I do not want to help them to succeed in the execution of their teaching task (Principal LS1).*

#### **4.5.6 THE STRATEGIES THAT THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND THEIR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS CAN EMPLOY TO ENHANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The majority of the respondents agreed that although their implementation of instructional leadership is severely compromised by numerous barriers, there are strategies which they can employ to enhance the implementation thereof. This feeling was expressed thus:

*The SMT must work hard to change the attitudes of teachers by modelling the desired change in the school. The teachers will realise that the status quo is no longer tolerated therefore transformation is imminent in the school (Principal LS1).*

As a leader, the school principal must show his staff that things are no longer be done the usual way. The principal and his School Management Team must communicate this in word and deed. Transformation is facilitated when the School Management Team leads the way in bringing about change in a school. If the teachers' attitudes are not changed, it will be difficult to implement instructional leadership in a school. According to Hanna (2010:37), it is the school principal who must initiate and model the desired change in the school. This notion is supported by Zenger and Folkman (2007:37), Kursunoglu and Tanriogen (2009:252) and Fullan (1999:4).

All the participants also expressed the view that teamwork is crucial for the successful implementation of instructional leadership. One informative comment regarding this was:

*The principal must establish healthy relationships with the teachers so that we can work as a team and assist one another in the realisation of our school's goals and objectives (Head of Department AS2).*



This view is consistent with what is suggested in extant literature. Maccoby (2000:57) states that leadership is a relationship. In order for the school principal to be able to delegate, inspire and motivate the teachers with ease, there must be healthy relationships among the members of staff. Collaboration is enhanced if healthy relationships exist between the teachers and the School Management Team. This notion is supported by Ricketts (2010:1) and Heath (2010:7).

The participants also expressed the view that the school principals must spend most of their time at school implementing instructional leadership. This sentiment was expressed thus:

*If I can be able to spend more time at school, I can be able to guide the School Management Team in the effective implementation of instructional leadership* (Principal HS2).

This response is consistent with what is stated in extant literature that the principals are often out of school due to the demands placed on them by departmental officials (Mead 2011:1). This notion is supported by Abdul-Aziz (2011:144).

The departmental officials must minimise these disturbances so that the school principals can execute their instructional leadership role effectively. School principals must teach at least 5% of the teaching time, depending on the curriculum needs of the school. If school principals are side-tracked by the numerous activities which do not assist them in the implementation of instructional leadership, this will have adverse consequences on effective teaching and learning in the school.

Participants had a feeling that improved parental involvement can enhance the implementation of instructional leadership. One informative response regarding this was:

*Civil organisations and the other community leaders must assist us in motivating the parents to be involved in the education of their children* (Deputy Principal AS1).

This view is consistent with what is stated in the extant literature. According to Kruger (2009:49), all the stakeholders must assist the school principals and their School Management Teams in educating the parents about the importance of being involved in their children's education. In many cases, civil organisations are only interested in ensuring that the children's right to education is not violated, and they do not bother themselves to assist the school principals that effective teaching and learning takes place by ensuring that parents are involved. Principals are left to their own devices to deal with the lack of parental involvement, and the teachers must teach learners who are not motivated at home to do their best academically. This poses a serious barrier to effective teaching and learning.

#### **4.5.7 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

The analysed data points to school principals and their School Management Teams as being involved in instructional leadership activities on a daily basis. However, they are unaware that those tasks which they seek to implement effectively are collectively called instructional leadership. Findings also suggest that what participants perceive as the roles and responsibilities of school principals with regard to teaching and learning, and the associated barriers, coheres with component aspects of instructional leadership suggested in extant literature. The following emerged as contextual factors which form barriers to the effective implementation of instructional leadership in the Amajuba District, irrespective of the schools' performance in Grade 12 examinations:

- The schools' quintile rankings are incompatible with the socio-economic status of the communities they serve. This impacts negatively on the provision of resources particularly the provision of Learning and Teaching Support Materials.
- The failure of the Department of Education to build classrooms and the infrastructure like libraries and laboratories make it virtually impossible for these schools to teach

subjects like Physical Sciences and the Life Sciences effectively. Teaching most topics in these subjects requires the practical approach which is severely compromised in most schools, due to lack of infrastructure.

- All the surveyed schools faced the problem of poor parental involvement to some extent.
- Unreasonable administrative work from the different sub-directorates at District Office which the School Management Teams must do on a weekly basis consumes the time which the School Management Teams must devote on the implementation of instructional leadership.
- The attendance of numerous uncoordinated District Office and Circuit activities by the school principals is a barrier to the implementation of instructional leadership.

The findings indicate that in spite of the challenges which face the principals of the Amajuba District and their School Management Teams. They are willing to take steps that will assist them to improve their implementation of instructional leadership. Another noteworthy point from the interview data is that the School Management Teams from Amajuba came up with practical solutions which will assist them in their instructional leadership roles.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The findings emanating from empirical data were presented in this chapter. The findings of the current study were also discussed. The views expressed by the participants in their different focus group interviews were also verified with the findings that were captured in the related literature review. In this chapter a summary of the findings was also presented.

In chapter 5 the focus will be on the summary of this research, conclusions and recommendations. The limitations and strengths of this study will also be discussed.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Four presented a discussion of findings drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered by means of the focus group interviews with school principals and School Management Teams of the Amajuba District. The interviews sought to establish their experiences and perceptions regarding secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. In this final chapter, the following which emanated from the interview data will be the main point of focus: a reiteration of the most important points of this research project, a presentation of the key findings of this research and the provision of some recommendations. The following sub-headings will provide guidance to this chapter and to the fulfilment of its purpose:

- Summary
- Summary of the most important findings
- Recommendations
- Limitations and strengths of the study

The discussion of the summary follows in the next section.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY**

The aim of this study was to describe how the secondary school principals and their School Management Teams implement instructional leadership in the Amajuba District (c.f. 1.3). The following paragraph provides a reflection on the contents of the preceding chapter as an overview of this study.

Chapter One forms the basis of this research study. Section 1.1 provided an orientation and an overview of this study. In the introduction, the background of this study was explained. The reason for undertaking this study was stated under the sub-heading: background to the problem (c.f. 1.2). This sub-section also presented the research question and its sub-questions, respectively. The over-arching aim and its related objectives were clarified in section 1.4. The research design and methodology were covered in section 1.5.1. Data collection methods were outlined in section 1.5.2. Ethical considerations were explained in section 1.5.4. The demarcation of this field of research was outlined in section 1.6. The significance of this study was presented in section 1.7. The clarification of concepts was elaborated on in section 1.8. Section 1.9 outlined the organisation of this dissertation in terms of chapter division.

Chapter Two focused on the review of literature and theoretical underpinnings in relation to the aim of this study. Key highlights in this review were: the difference between management and leadership (c.f. 2.2); a discussion of the qualities of leaders and how these empower school principals in the successful implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 2.3); different dimensions of leadership and their enhancement of the implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 2.4.1 to 2.4.7). In addition, this chapter defined instructional leadership and described how it is implemented by secondary school principals, highlighting their attributes, functions, and the barriers they face (c.f. 2.5).

A detailed discussion at of the research design and the methodology used to investigate the research problem was presented in Chapter Three. This chapter elucidated how the participants and sites were selected for the semi-structured focus group interviews, how data were collected and analysed, and it also described measures taken by the researcher to comply with research ethics.

In Chapter Four, the analysis and interpretation of data were presented. First a brief synopsis of how the data were collected was outlined, followed by a description of how it was analysed (c.f. 4.2 & 4.3). This was deemed necessary for giving meaning to the findings. Findings from this study were discussed in terms of emergent themes. These themes were: respondents' conceptions of instructional leadership (4.4.1); the perceived instructional leadership role of school principals and School Management Teams (c.f. 4.4.2); barriers in the implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 4.5); respondents' perceptions of school principals' and School Management Teams' effectiveness in implementing instructional leadership (c.f. 4.5.5), and strategies for enhancing the implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 4.5.6).

The first theme on the views and the perceptions of the respondents of what instructional leadership is was discussed in section 4.4.1. Regarding this theme, the interview data revealed that the majority of the participants do not relate the concept of instructional leadership to their day-to-day roles as School Management Teams.

The following is a summary of the important findings and conclusions drawn from the relevant literature and the semi-structured focus group interviews in this study.

### **5.3 SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT FINDINGS**

In investigating how the secondary school principals and their School Management Teams implement instructional leadership in the selected secondary schools in the Amajuba District, the following findings were established:

### **5.3.1 Instructional leadership is an amalgamation of all the different dimensions of leadership**

If all the different dimensions of leadership are employed effectively and interchangeably, they have an inherent potential to transform an ordinary school principal of an underperforming school to a school principal who is an instructional leader. A detailed discussion of the different dimensions of leadership was presented in this study (c.f.2.4). An elaboration on transformational leadership was presented (c.f. 2.4.1). This dimension of leadership is crucial in bringing the desired transformation in a school. As a leader, the school principal must communicate the vision and mission of the desired change to the whole school community. Charismatic leadership which also contributes in bringing about change in a school was discussed in this study (c.f. 2.4.2). A school principal who is a charismatic leader is never satisfied with the status quo of his school. He proposes changes in order to achieve the school's goals and objectives. Both these dimensions of leadership, when used concurrently, will enhance the school principal's role as an instructional leader.

Visionary leadership was also discussed (c.f. 2.4.4). Brown and Anfora (2008:17) state that the success of transformational strategies lies in the leader's ability to translate visionary leadership into action. The school principal, who is an instructional leader, is a visionary leader who possesses both courage and confidence to dream boldly about the future of the school. Instructional leaders are also situational leaders (c.f. 2.4.5). They are able to change their leadership style based on the persons they are working with and on the situation at that particular moment. A situational leader must possess the following skills: flexibility, diagnosis and contracting. In distributed leadership, the school principal delegates some of the tasks to the School Management Teams and to some of the Post Level 1 teachers who aspire for promotional posts, and want to be developed in certain managerial skills (c.f.2.4.6).

When a principal delegates duties, he shows that he has confidence in the School Management Teams contributions in the realisation of the school's vision and objectives. Delegation is another method of the school principal's collaboration with the staff. The discussion of moral leadership showed that the school principal must possess the values of trust, honesty and reciprocity in order to be able to transform the school successfully (c.f. 2.4.7).

All the dimensions of leadership which were discussed in detail are intended to bring about the desired positive and sustained change if they are used consistently and interchangeably in a school (c.f.2.4). The actions of school principals who are instructional leaders are embedded in these different dimensions of leadership. These actions are: vision building, collaboration, building of healthy relationships, delegation and professional development of teachers and the promotion of a positive school climate.

The implementation of instructional leadership is a collaborative effort among the school principal and his School Management Team (c.f.2.4.5). It is disheartening to learn that the majority of the Deputy Principals and the Heads of Departments regard the implementation of instructional leadership as the school principals' responsibility. Some of the School Management Team members are selective in their execution of the tasks which ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in a school.

The next finding from literature focuses on the attributes of instructional leaders.

### **5.3.2 Attributes of instructional leaders**

School principals who aspire to be instructional leaders must abstain from maintaining the status quo. A school principal who uses the different dimensions of leadership conscientiously will be transformed radically (section 2.5). School principals who are



desperate to transform their schools to effective schools must be subject teachers. According to the ELRC Policy Handbook for Educators (2001:8), the school principal must teach at least 5% of the teaching time per week (section 2.5.1). The majority of school principals evade this duty. They stay in their offices and complain about the large amount of administrative work which faces them. Such school principals do not model the correct implementation of the curriculum (Kaster, 2010:7). When a school principal spends most of his time in his office, it becomes easy for the teachers not to honour their periods. School principals who are instructional leaders are industrious and take a lead in the realisation of their schools' goals and objectives. Furthermore, Hanna (2010:55) maintains that instructional leaders are hard workers who are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and teach. This notion is supported by Boyd (2009:2).

As an instructional leader, the school principal must be a leader in the teaching and learning activities (section 2.5.1). The school principals must work with the teachers to strengthen skills. However, this does not mean that the school principal must know all the subjects offered in his school. The school principal must enlist the assistance of the Subject Advisors for different subjects. He can also encourage his teachers to twin with the teachers from high performing schools. As an instructional leader, the school principal must also encourage and motivate his staff to excel in the execution of their teaching tasks.

The implementation of instructional leadership is not solely the school principal's responsibility. It is a collaborative effort between the school principal and his School Management Team, and even the Post Level 1 teachers. The next finding focuses on collaboration and teamwork in the implementation of instructional leadership.

### **5.3.3 The implementation of instructional leadership requires teamwork**

Although the school principal takes the lead in the implementation of instructional leadership, he cannot do this alone, nor can he do it with the School Management Team only. The involvement of the whole school community is essential for the successful implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 2.5.3.4). The primary focus of the school principal must be to develop collaborative relationships with teachers in order to improve learner achievement (Lochmiller, 2010:30). A school principal can formulate the best vision for his school, but without the collaboration of the whole staff, that vision will not be realised. Collaboration promotes teamwork which is crucial for the formulation of the school's vision and mission and the other policies which contribute in the promotion of effective teaching and learning in a school.

It is essential that the school principal works hard towards the establishment and the sustaining of healthy relationships between him and the staff and among the staff members themselves. The existence of healthy relations in a school promotes collaboration among the members of staff. According to Maccoby (2000:57), leadership is a relationship. Healthy relations between the School Management Team members and the staff facilitate delegation and teamwork. Ricketts (2010:7) maintains that healthy relationships in a school enable the school principal to motivate, inspire and energise his staff.

### **5.3.4 Effective schools are headed by instructional leaders**

School principals of effective schools are instructional leaders due to the fact that they concentrate on the high performance of learners (Ubben et al. 2006:67). The School Management Team encourages team members to teach all the learners equally regardless of the latter are level of achievement. The school principal encourages the whole staff to be instructional leaders and to be serious about teaching and learning.

School principals of effective schools are instructional leaders since they encourage the teachers to have high expectations of learner achievement. Hanna (2010:12) maintains that where there is a high expectation of learner achievement, all learners are expected to achieve to their potential, and no learner is allowed to fall below minimum levels of achievement.

As instructional leaders, principals of effective schools place a high premium on an orderly and safe school environment. Their schools are warm and inviting, hence they are conducive to effective teaching and learning and eventually high learner achievement.

Regarding effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement, the next finding from literature elaborates on the primary role of the school principals and their School Management Teams as instructional leaders, namely; promotion of the school climate which is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

### **5.3.5 The most important instructional leadership role is the promotion of the school climate**

According to Hanna (2010:59), the school principal promotes the school climate by creating an atmosphere where learning is exciting and both the teachers and the learners are supported for their efforts and there is a shared sense of purpose (c.f.2.2.3.6). Burch (2007:196) supports this notion and states that the major role of the school principal and his School Management Team as instructional leaders is to build a professional community of educators and administrators focused on teaching and learning. Seen in this light, a conclusion can be made that the promotion of a positive school climate is the most important function of the School Management Team in ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school. All the other instructional leadership functions which are executed by the school principal and his School Management Team support the promotion of a positive school climate (c.f. 2.5.3.6). The promotion of the school climate binds the School Management

Team as a whole in the implementation of instructional leadership to ensure that effective teaching and learning occurs in a school (c.f. 2.5.3.2).

The following are the sub-functions of the school principals and his School Management Team regarding the promotion of the school climate:

- Managing the school's instructional programme (c.f. 2.5.3.2);
- Provision of resources (c.f. 2.5.3.6);
- Protection of the school's instructional time (c.f. 2.5.3.6);
- Promotion of strategic conversations among teachers (c.f. 2.5.3.6); and
- Supporting the teachers' use of assessment (c.f. 2.5.3.7).

The secondary school principals' implementation of instructional leadership is not plain sailing. School principals are faced by various challenges when they implement instructional leadership. The following finding from literature concerns some of the challenges which face the school principals when they implement instructional leadership.

#### **5.4 CHALLENGES THAT FACE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS WHEN THEY IMPLEMENT INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The final conclusion drawn from the reviewed literature review is that a myriad of barriers face the school principals when they implement instructional leadership. A discussion of the challenges that face the school principals when they implement instructional leadership as well as the remedy thereof was presented (c.f. 2.5.5). Below is a brief reiteration of these challenges and the suggested remedies thereof.

#### **5.4.1 Numerous meetings attended by the school principals**

According to Abdul-Aziz (2011:145), the principals' non-instructional responsibilities hinder them in the successful implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 2.5). The findings from literature indicate that the District Office officials, Circuit Managers as well as the Ward Managers invite the school principals to different meetings at least three times a week. Some of these meetings sometimes clash.

The worst part of these meetings is that the school principals are prohibited to send their Deputy Principals to represent them in some of these meetings. Although the finding from literature showed that the school principal manages the curriculum indirectly through the Heads of Departments and the Deputy Principals, he must still monitor the teachers', the Departmental Heads as well as the learners' work (c.f. 2.5.3.2). However, this is not possible because of time spent in meetings. They are also unable to devote a minimum of 5% of their time to teaching as expected (ELRC Policy Handbook for Educators, 2003).

As a remedy to this challenge, the researcher suggests that the regulation which prohibits principals from sending delegates to meetings should be revised (c.f. 2.5.3.2). The District Office officials can also be requested to cascade some of the information to the schools via circulars.

#### **5.4.2 An unreasonably large amount of administrative work**

The introduction of the National Schools' Nutritional Programme in secondary schools as well as the learner transport in schools situated in deep rural areas has increased the school principals' administrative work even further. The principals must mark the learner transport registers daily and submit these at District Office at the end of each month. The same applies to the Schools Nutrition Programme. The teachers must mark the nutrition registers daily. At

the end of each month, the principal and the teachers who are in the school's Nutrition Programme Committee must make a summary of the statistics, process the supplier's claim and submit this information to the Auxiliary Service at District Office (c.f. 2.5.5).

At the beginning of the year the principals must conduct a Snap Survey after ten days. The principals, with the assistance of the class teachers and the admin staff, must collect information on learner enrolment as well as the state of the infrastructure. This information is used for the determination of the schools' Post Provisioning Norm (PPN), the allocation of the norms and standards for school funding as well as the National School Nutrition Programme budget. In the same term, the allocation of the funding for the orphans and vulnerable children is distributed to the deserving schools. The project for the orphans and vulnerable children itself has its own large amount of administrative work which must be done carefully. In mid-February, the forms for the schools' Annual Survey are sent to school. The information required in these forms require that the school principal and his School Management Team put everything on hold and work day and night gathering the information required in the Annual Survey. Although such administrative work helps the Department of Basic Education to ascertain whether the aid provided to the disadvantaged learners serves the desired purpose, it adds to the principals' existing large amount of paper work.

The answers to the problem of large amounts of administrative work caused by officials at Circuit, District and Provincial levels respectively is yet to be found in literature. The amount and quality of time which the school principal must spend in the execution of instructional leadership functions is pertinent for effective teaching and learning to take place in a school.

### **5.4.3 Poor parental involvement**

The involvement of parents in the education of their children is important in bridging the gap between the culture of the home and that of the school. The majority of participants stated

that poor parental involvement poses a serious barrier in the implementation of instructional leadership (c.f. 4.5.5.5). The effective and successful implementation of instructional leadership requires parents who are committed and dedicated in assisting the school in the education of their children.

Poor or lack of parental involvement causes the teachers to spend most of their time disciplining children who are not disciplined by their parents. Parents also play a crucial role in encouraging and motivating the learners to excel in their academic tasks. Effective teaching is, therefore, severely compromised when parents do not involve themselves.

The analysed interview data reveals that the majority of the school principals are perceived to lack effective strategies to improve parental involvement. Parents who are school governing body members are usually not educated and they fail to make a positive contribution towards the enhancement of effective teaching and learning. Not only do they fail to help raise funds for the school, some of them actively oppose school principals when they try to raise funds for the school, and thwart their efforts of ensuring effective functioning of schools.

#### **5.4.4 Poor provision of resources**

Another important finding from the analysed interview data is that the majority of participants expressed their concern regarding the paucity of resources in their schools. The principals and their School Management Teams need adequate resources in order to be able to implement instructional leadership successfully (c.f. 2.5.5). According to Ubben et al. (2011), the failure of the Department of Education to provide schools with resources is another barrier that hinders the successful implementation of instructional leadership.

The review of related literature showed that overcrowding in many schools is predominantly caused by shortages of classrooms and over-enrolment which is condoned by the District

Office officials since they insist that no learner must be turned away when the parents apply for admission of their children (Department of Education, 2012:6).

The findings (c.f. 4.4.2.1) suggest that the majority of respondents have the perception that their schools receive inadequate funding from the Department of Basic Education. This was particularly applicable in previously disadvantaged schools which lament shortages of text books, classrooms, laboratories, the internet and libraries. Some schools attributed their inadequate funding and associated shortages to their incorrect quintile ranking, which suggested they were located in wealthy neighbourhoods when they were not (c.f. 4.4.2.1).

#### **5.4.5 The interference of unions in promotional posts**

The study of related literature showed that the interference of unions in promotional posts leads to the promotion of people who are incompetent for these posts (c.f. 4.5.5). The majority of teachers promoted to senior posts at school level as well as Office Based teachers (Subject Advisors, Ward Managers, Circuit Managers Directors as well as Heads of Departments at head offices) have turned out to be neither competent nor ready for these posts. The majority of these promoted people do not even hold junior degrees. According to Price and Clark (2011:5), these teachers are ill-prepared for their task in many areas, ranging from subject content knowledge to pedagogical methods and classroom management.

To worsen the situation, the unions do not take the responsibility of training the teachers for whom they fought for to be promoted. The school principals are left to their own devices in the development of these undeservedly promoted teachers.



## **5.5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The fourth objective of this study was to ascertain what the views of the school principals and their School Management Teams are regarding their effectiveness in the implementation of instructional leadership in their schools. The discussion suggests that the majority of the surveyed school principals and their School Management Teams are perceived as ineffective in implementing their instructional leadership roles (c.f. 4.5.5). There is a myriad of barriers that confront them (c.f. 4.5.5).

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Flowing from the findings summarised in the previous sections, the following are some recommendations that may help school principals and their School Management Teams to improve their effectiveness in the implementation of instructional leadership. The next section is a discussion of the suggested recommendations that may assist to enhance the principals' implementation of instructional leadership.

### **5.6.1 Provision of resources**

The Department of Education should rectify the quintile ranking of the majority of schools in the Amajuba District. If schools could be ranked properly to reflect the financial well-being of parents, the majority are likely to be declared no-fee schools. Their funding would subsequently be increased and this may help to alleviate associated problems regarding resources. This may, in turn improve teaching and learning and eventually improve learner achievement.

### **5.6.2 Reduction of administrative tasks for school principals**

The researcher suggests that the officials of the Provincial Department of Education in collaboration with those at District level must try to minimise the amount of administrative work for school principals.

The school principals must conduct the Snap Survey ten days after the schools have opened after the summer holidays. The Snap Survey involves ascertaining the total learner enrolment, available infrastructure as well as the status of the human resource in the school. This information assists the Provincial Office to determine the schools' Post Provisioning Norm for the following academic year, the allocation of norms and standards for school funding, the budget for the National Schools Nutrition Programme and the provision of infrastructure. In mid-March, the principals are required to conduct the Annual Survey which is more or less the replica of the Snap Survey. The researcher suggests that the Provincial Office must use either the Snap Survey or the Annual Survey for their planning, and not both.

Regarding the problem of supervising learner transport activities, the Provincial Office should allow school principals to use the statistics from the normal school attendance registers. Photocopies of the normal class registers can be submitted with names of learners who use transport services being highlighted, instead of submitting separate lists.

### **5.6.3 Minimising the meetings attended by school principals**

The District Office officials and the Circuit Managers should decrease the amount of meetings which must be attended by the school principals by doing the following: more information can be cascaded to schools via circulars, school principals can be invited to meetings at least once every two months, lastly, Circuit Managers can cluster the schools and

call meetings after normal school hours. Most importantly, principals who are unable to attend should be allowed to send representatives.

#### **5.6.4 The recommendation of appropriate candidates for promotional posts**

The researcher suggests that the Departmental Nominees (officials deployed by the Department of Education to be observers in proxy of the department during the short listing and the interview process) must execute their task faithfully and effectively during the short listing and the interview process for promotional posts. They must not allow the observers from the unions to interfere with the Interview Committees' decisions during these processes. The researcher believes that if the Interview Committees and the Departmental Nominees could play their roles effectively, only appropriate candidates can be recommended for the promotional posts.

The researcher also suggests that the members of the Interview Committees as well as the Departmental Nominees be trained intensively so that they will be empowered to conduct the short listing and the interview processes effectively and make informed decisions when recommending candidates for the promotional posts. They must not succumb to the intimidation of the unions when they are executing this task.

#### **5.6.5 Enhancing parental involvement**

The school principals and their School Management Teams need the support of parents and other stakeholders to implement instructional leadership successfully. The Circuit Managers have to secure the commitment of various stakeholders like the school governing bodies, associations representing parents, teacher unions representing teachers and Representative Council of Learners (RCL) to work together to support the successful implementation of instructional leadership.

The school principals and their School Management Teams must have an effective parental involvement programme in place. The programme ranges from the greater support for the school programmes, improved learner academic achievement and the parents' overall involvement in their children's academic tasks. The School Management Teams must try hard to encourage parental involvement by having policies and practices that will evoke parents' trust and involvement in the process of schooling.

#### **5.6.6 Lack of professionally qualified teachers**

Due to the lack of qualified teachers in Mathematics and Physical Sciences, the Department of Education hires professionally unqualified teachers who hold Diplomas in different fields of Engineering. The researcher suggests that the Department of Education should make it a priority to ensure that these teachers receive training in pedagogical methods and classroom management so that they can be effective in the execution of their teaching task.

#### **5.6.7 Learners with below average reading and mathematical skills**

The researcher suggests that the Sub-Directorate: Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) at District Office should hire remedial teachers for each circuit who will provide extra reading and mathematical classes to learners who are lagging behind in these areas in the Senior Phase. These extra classes might be an attempt to prepare the learners for the FET Phase where they will be required to learn advanced mathematics and to use the English language effectively in all the other subjects.

#### **5.6.8 The principals' lack of professional knowledge, skills and understanding**

The researcher suggests that the Provincial Department of Education should partner with universities which will offer tuition to principals on management skills. The researcher

suggests that priority should be given to the principals of lowing performing schools and those of average performing schools.

### **5.6.9 On-going changes and amendments to curricular**

The researcher suggests that the text books should not be changed each time the curriculum is amended because the procurement of new text books almost every five years is costly. Usually it is the assessment methods that are changed when the curricular is amended, not the content in the text books.

## **5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The major limitation of the study is that the responses given may not be completely honest and a true reflection of the participants' perceptions. It emerged during the interviews that the participants suspected that the study was initiated by the education authorities to establish factors accounting for poor learner achievement in the Amajuba District. That is, the researcher was suspected to be spying for the Department of Basic Education. Responses may, therefore, reflect what participants deemed appropriate to say, not their authentic perceptions.

The researcher is also a principal in one of the secondary schools in the Amajuba District; therefore, her position was likely to influence the beliefs, perceptions and personal experiences of the participants. It is possible that some responses reflect what respondents thought would be acceptable views to their colleagues, not their actual perceptions.

Because purposeful sampling was used in this study, the findings do not reflect the views and perceptions of everybody in the selected secondary schools in the Amajuba District regarding the implementation of instructional leadership. It is possible that a different state of affairs could have emerged if simple random sampling was used. In addition, the study was only

restricted to six secondary schools in the Amajuba District, which is a very small area, given the geographical spread of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Different findings could possibly have emerged if the study was extended to other districts with schools that have different profiles in the UKhahlamba Region.

## **5.8 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The attempt to answer the research question of this study (How do the secondary school principals implement instructional leadership in the secondary schools of the Amajuba District of KwaZulu-Natal?) has revealed new problems that may be explored further in future studies. Emanating from the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following as possible areas for further study:

- The role of the District Office officials and Circuit Managers in supporting the school principals and their School Management Teams in the effective implementation of instructional leadership;
- The role of parents in the effective implementation of instructional leadership in secondary schools;
- The impact of teacher unions on instructional leadership in secondary schools; and
- Continuous professional development for sustainable instructional leadership in secondary schools.

## **5.9 CONCLUSION**

It is believed that the successful implementation of instructional leadership has a great potential to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place and that this eventually culminates in improved learner performance. The findings of this research study showed that the successful implementation of instructional leadership requires adequate and relevant

resources, active and meaningful stakeholder participation and effective support of the officials from the Department of Education in their different ranks. On the other hand, the research findings of this study revealed that the implementation of instructional leadership is severely compromised by a myriad of barriers. In spite of the fact that the implementation of instructional leadership occurs in an environment that does not support its successful implementation, there is a strong sense of willingness among the secondary school principals and their School Management Teams to do their best in its implementation.

In closing, the researcher wishes to plead with the authorities of education to provide schools, where there is a need, with temporary as well as substitute teachers promptly to minimise the disruption of teaching and learning when teachers are on temporary incapacity leave or have resigned. Furthermore, the authorities must try to speed up the provision of the relevant infrastructure which enhances the implementation of instructional leadership. In the same note, the researcher also wishes to appeal to the key role players in education: parents, community-based structures, school governing bodies, Representative Councils of Learners and teacher unions to offer their support to the school principals and their School Management Teams in the implementation of instructional leadership. It is hoped that if these facts can be taken into consideration, the quality of teaching and learning would be enhanced and learner performance would improve.

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**ANNEXURE A**

**THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN RTHE AMAJUBA DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

- 1.1 In your opinion, what do you understand by instructional leadership?
- 1.2 Can you share your views on what you perceive as the role of the school principal and his SMT in the implementation of instructional leadership?
- 1.3 What challenges, if any, do the school principals experience when they implement instructional leadership?
- 1.4 How do you perceive your effectiveness concerning the implementation of instructional leadership in your school?
- 1.5 How, in your opinion can the implementation of instructional leadership be enhanced in secondary schools to ensure effective teaching and learning and improved learner achievement

ANNEXURE B

THE LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REQUESTING  
FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AND THE RESPONSE  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



ANNEXURE C

THE LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS OUTLINING THE PURPOSE OF  
THE RESEACH AND ASSURING THEM OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE  
INFORMATION THEY GIVE

