

**The contribution of
instructional leadership
to learner performance**

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UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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**The contribution of instructional leadership
to learner performance**

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, BARBER MBANGWA MAFUWANE, declare that this doctoral thesis titled: “**The contribution of instructional leadership to learner performance,**” submitted to the University of Pretoria is my own work in design and execution.

All sources cited or quoted have been duly acknowledged. I further declare that I have not previously submitted this thesis for a degree at any university. I also have not allowed, and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of presenting it as his or her own work.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

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This is an explanatory research investigation on the role of principals as instructional leaders which has been highlighted over the past two to three decades. The emergence of this concept in the leadership field and the rigorous research attention that it has received is a result of mounting pressure faced by principals as a result of the year-on-year poor performance of learners in the matriculation examinations. Parents, politicians and other organs of civil society expect principals to be accountable for what happens in the classroom (teaching and learning), including the performance of learners.

The poor performance of learners in the matriculation examinations is the central focus of this study, growing out of the discussions and arguments which have dominated the media, social and political groupings, government, as well as the business sector. All these groupings and institutions are perturbed about the decline of learner performance in the matriculation examinations and seek possible solutions to this problem. I was therefore intrigued by the above concerns, which motivated me to engage in this study.

This study set out to investigate the variables related to instructional leadership and the contribution of these variables to learner performance. The study was guided by the following research question:

What are the variables related to instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals and what is their effect on the pass rate in the matriculation examinations?

In order to respond to the above question, the following subsidiary questions were examined:

- a. How can instructional leadership possibly contribute to the improvement of learner performance?
- b. How do heads of department (HODs) and deputy principals perceive the role of their principals regarding instructional leadership?
- c. How are principals prepared with regard to their role as instructional leaders?

This study followed an explanatory, mixed method research approach, utilising two sets of questionnaires (one for principals and another for HODs and deputy principals), semi-structured interviews, and focus group interviews. Seventy eight principals completed questionnaires regarding the performance of their learners. One hundred and thirty-seven deputy principals and HODs completed questionnaires regarding their principals' roles in instructional leadership and contribution to learner performance.

The interviewing process took place in two stages / phases. During the first phase, a group of sixty principals was exposed to the four variables which underpin this study, namely:

- a. The principals' role in promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities;
- b. Defining and communicating shared vision and goals;
- c. Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process; and
- d. Managing the curriculum and instruction.

In fifteen groups of four, the respondents brainstormed the strength of each variable and prioritised or arranged them in order of their importance and contribution to learner achievement. The outcome of this first phase of the interview process and the findings from the analysis of the questionnaires informed the formulation of questions for the face-to-face interviews with five principals who were randomly selected from the seventy eight principals who participated in the completion of the questionnaires for the quantitative part of this study.

The key insights and contributions drawn from this study make it unique in the sense that it:

- has an impact on the preparation of principals for their role as instructional leaders;
- informs the support that principals need with regard to their practice as instructional leaders;
- assists principals to identify appropriate variables to help align their own visions for their schools with the national, provincial and regional visions for the improvement of learner achievement;
- adds value to the existing body of knowledge on instructional leadership and the central role that it plays in improving the achievement levels of learners in the National Senior Certificate; and

- clarifies the fact that ‘leadership’ is not a semantic substitute for ‘management and administration’, but rather an independent construct which is capable of interacting with the latter in the practice of education.

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KEY WORDS

Variables

Instructional leadership

Teacher development

Learner performance

Curriculum management

Leadership practices

Matriculation examination

Effective school leadership

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ACRONYMS

CS1	Civil Servant at post level 1
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DV	Dependent Variables
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HOD	Head of Department
IL	Instructional Leadership
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
IDSO	Institutional Development Support Officer
IV	Independent Variables
LTSM	Learner Teacher Support Material
MDoE	Mpumalanga Department of Education
MIS	Management Information System
MV	Mediating Variables

NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NDoE	National Department of Education
NIEPA	National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
REQV	Relative Qualification Value
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SMT	School Management Team
TILS	Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

Scratch the surface on an excellent school and you are likely to find an excellent principal. Peer into a failing school and you will find weak leadership. That, at least, is the conventional wisdom. Leaders are thought to be essential for high-quality education. But is this indeed true – and if so, exactly how does leadership work? (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003:1).

One of the major challenges facing secondary school principals in South Africa is the continued decline in the performance of learners in the matriculation examination. This happens at a time when the country is faced with acute skills shortages in various sectors of the economy, thus forcing the country to transform its education system generally, and the curriculum in particular, in an attempt to provide skills that would allow citizens to adapt in this rapidly changing world. The following table represents the unemployment rate in South Africa, which can be partly attributed to shortages of skilled personnel:

TABLE 1.1: Unemployment rate in South Africa (Adapted from CIA World Fact book, 2009)

Year	Unemployment rate	Rank	Percentage change	Date of information
2003	37.00%	18		2001
2004	31.00%	24	-16.22%	2003
2005	26.20%	161	-15.48%	2004
2006	26.60%	168	1.53%	2005
2007	25.50%	172	-4.14%	2006
2008	24.30%	169	-4.71%	2007
2009	22.90%	170	-5.76%	2008 est.

The changing education system and new curriculum imply a change in the roles and expectations for principals as school leaders. In accordance with this view, Steyn (2008:889) (cited in Slater, McGhee, Capt, Alvarez, Topete & Iturbe, 2003) regards

improved leadership and management as a way to provide better quality education. Leithwood and Riehl (2003:2) argue that accountability regarding the performance of learners has put pressure on actors at all levels, from learners themselves to teachers, principals and superintendents. Principals are no longer regarded only as managers, but as leaders of schools as learning organizations, with a duty to exercise effective school leadership to ensure education reform and improvement in the performance of learners. The implication of Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) contention is that principals have to be prepared effectively in order to create good schools. They have to be able to transform human energy in schools into desired learner academic and social growth, to serve all learners well, and to react to the increasingly complex environment of the 21st century.

The purpose of this study is therefore to investigate variables related to instructional leadership in principalship and their contribution to the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination. This study views the shift from the old curriculum to a new curriculum as the first step towards curriculum transformation in South Africa, and it is hoped that this will serve as a vehicle to realize the values and ideals which are reflected in the preamble to the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, Act 108 of 1996).

It will no doubt require a capable school leadership corps to effectively implement and manage the realization of the ideals and values referred to in the preamble to the constitution. The leadership literature has consistently questioned the extent of a school's impact on learner performance, whether the level of performance can be attributed to the leadership displayed in a school (Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2004), and also the importance of leadership in an organization. The conclusion in all cases has consistently been that school leadership (particularly instructional leadership) substantially boosts learner performance (Waters *et al.*, 2004) and that leadership is considered to be a vital precondition for an organization's success (Onsman, 2003). It follows that an investigation of the variables related to instructional leadership, and the impact of these variables on the improvement of the performance of learners in the matriculation examination, needs to be conducted.

1.2 BACKGROUND

My engagement with a study of this magnitude and complexity emerged out of a plethora of communications, formal and informal, with individuals and groups, on matters related to the

decline in the achievement of learners in the matriculation examination. These communications included strategic planning meetings, learner achievement intervention strategy meetings, and comments on debates and press releases on the matter. These communications always involved individuals and groups from differing intellectual, social and political backgrounds, all intent on establishing the main cause(s) of the decline in the matriculation pass rate, and the possible role that instructional leadership may play in the education process in order to remedy the problem. All these interactions have revealed that there have to be some variables which, when coupled with effective school leadership, could positively impact on the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination. The following section is intended to provide further insight into the background of this study.

This section has provided an overview of the performance of learners in the matriculation examinations, in order to have a clear theoretical picture of the challenges facing principals with regard to learner performance. For ease of reference, this study highlights three time periods, the first of which reflects the status of the education system from 1994 to 1999, followed by the improvement in the pass rate from 2000 to 2002, and then the national pass rate for the years from 2004 to 2008.

Fleisch and Christie (2004:13) indicate that the years from 1994 to 1999 saw the matriculation examination results continuing to reflect inequalities in the education system. These results reflect the differences in learner performance between black and white pupils, which could be traced back to the scourge of the apartheid era. The years from 2000 to 2002 saw a 20% increase in the national pass rate from 47,8% to 68,9%. Within this period, the number of schools with a pass rate of less than 20% declined from 1034 to 242. This improvement looked promising, but an analysis of the results from different provinces presented a less satisfactory picture. Whilst the improvement in the national pass rate appeared to be phenomenal, the number of learners who passed with tertiary education endorsements remained low at 16,9% in 2002.

In 2007, the national pass rate was 65,2%, a decline of 1,3% from the 66,6% in 2006, and a 1,7% decline from the 68,3% of 2005. From 2004 to 2007, an overall decline of 5,5% was recorded from a pass percentage of 70,7% in 2004 (South Africa Yearbook, 2006/2007; 2008/2009). In 2008, grade 12 learners wrote the first National Senior Certificate examination based on the new curriculum, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). The

pass rate was 62,5%, a 2,7% decline from the 65,2% of 2007. The above information can best be represented in the following diagram:

TABLE 1.2 Representation of the decline in the pass rate in the matriculation examination

Years	Pass percentage	Improvement percentage	Decline percentage
2000-2002	47,8 – 68,9%	21%	
2004	70,7%	1,8%	
2005	68,3%		2,4%
2006	66,6%		1,7%
2007	65,2%		1,3%
2008	62,5%		2,7%
2004-2008	70,7 – 62,5%		8,2%

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The fluctuations in the pass rate raise alarm not only for the national and provincial departments of education, but also for other sectors in civil society. The present skills shortage in South Africa can be attributed to the slow pace at which learners leave high school and go on to universities and other institutions of higher learning. The situation also indicates that the number of economically active individuals, particularly the youth, is declining. Overall, it means that the government is working at a loss because the output (individuals becoming economically active) is incompatible with the input (the amount of money spent on the education of one learner in the country). It was therefore proposed that an in-depth study should be conducted with the aim of broadening the investigation of variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution towards the improvement of the matriculation results.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to the performance of learners in the matriculation examination. This investigation was prompted by the decline in the matriculation examination results in South African public secondary schools.

1.5 RATIONALE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

A number of reasons prompted me to engage in this study. Firstly, I was greatly intrigued by matters related to instructional school leadership and related challenges. Secondly, curriculum transformation, implementation and management, and the extent of principal preparation for the necessary instructional leadership to drive these processes, are also areas of great interest to me. Based on the reasons highlighted above, I am of the view that it is research of this magnitude, during an era of transformation in this country and worldwide, that will shed light upon and solve the intellectual puzzle related to the role of instructional leadership in the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that directed this study consist of a main question which is divided into subsidiary questions which have operationalized the inquiry. The main research question is as follows:

What are the variables related to instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals and what is their effect on learner performance in the matriculation examination?

In order to address this main question, the following subsidiary questions guided the inquiry:

- a) *How can instructional leadership possibly contribute to the improvement of learner performance?*
- b) *How do heads of departments (HODs) and deputy principals perceive the role of their principals regarding instructional leadership?*
- c) *How are principals prepared with regard to their role as instructional leaders?*

While all the subsidiary questions can be accorded the same weight with regard to the information that they have afforded this study, the second subsidiary question was expected to have a stronger impact, in that a special questionnaire was designed for HODs and deputy principals, in order to establish their perceptions with regard to the role of their principals as instructional leaders.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, popularly referred to as mixed methods research. Kemper, Springfield and Teddlie (2003) define mixed methods design as a method that includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in parallel form. Bazely (2003) defines this method as the use of mixed data (numerical and text) and alternative tools (statistics and analysis). It is a type of research in which the researcher utilizes the qualitative research paradigm for one phase of a study and the quantitative paradigm for another phase of the study.

It is common to use various methods sequentially. In an explanatory design, quantitative data are usually collected first and, depending on the results, qualitative data are gathered next, to elucidate, elaborate on or explain the quantitative findings. Typically, the main thrust of the study is quantitative and the qualitative results are secondary. Thus the qualitative phase may be used to augment the statistical data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:25).

Burke and Onwuegbuzie (2005:1) indicate that mixed methods research is a natural complement to using either of the traditional qualitative or quantitative methods in isolation. They define it as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language in a single study. They further indicate that on a philosophical level, mixed methods research is a “third wave” or third research movement; a movement that moves past paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative.

For the purpose of this study, both quantitative and qualitative research designs and methodology were appropriate. The qualitative design was appropriate in as far as it enabled the researcher to interact with the principals with regard to their practice of instructional leadership and how this practice can address the current decline in the matriculation pass rate. Since the building blocks of quantitative research are variables, and the focus of this study is to investigate the variables related to instructional leadership, a questionnaire, which is a quantitative research tool, was administered to principals to solicit information which might not have been obtained through the interviews.

1.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

As this study entails the use of both qualitative and quantitative data, it is not limited to the two factors, validity and reliability, which are traditionally associated with quantitative research. When working with qualitative data, the concepts of trustworthiness, dependability, transferability and credibility are also used. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001:407) define validity as the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher. Reliability, on the other hand, is defined by Silverman (2004:285) as the degree to which the findings are independent of accidental circumstances during the research process. Reliability is closely related to assuring the quality of field notes and guaranteeing the public access to the process of their publication. Joppe (2000:1) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and are an accurate representation of the total population under study. If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the data collection instruments are considered to be reliable.

The following processes for ensuring validity and reliability, legitimizing the data, and finally lending credibility to the research report were used in this study: triangulation, which includes data triangulation and methodological triangulation, thick descriptions and peer review. The details of each of these processes, including their definitions, their purpose and the way they benefitted this study, are explored in the research design and methodology chapter of this thesis.

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The main concepts in this study, *learner performance and instructional leadership* and are defined in order to counteract any possible confusion with different meanings of similar concepts in the social sciences. These concepts are critical to the understanding of the discourse in this study and detailed explanations of how they interact with one another in this study, are elucidated in appropriate sections of this thesis.

1.9.1 LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Boyd (2002:155) explains learner performance in terms of changes in abilities, temperament, motivation and situation, each of which mediates or affects the other. The concept encompasses changes in behaviour and attitudes of the learner. It explains the fact

that after the learner has been taken through an instructional programme, the learner sees things differently and begins to act in a responsible manner. In this study, learner performance is measured in terms of the matriculation pass rate in the Bushbuckridge schools for the past five years (2004 to 2008).

1.9.2 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The concept “instructional leadership,” according to Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford (2006), has its origins in the 19th century under the inspection system that existed in North America, England and Australia. The concept rose to prominence again in the United States in the 1970s when the instructional dimension of the role of the principal was emphasized. From the 1960s onwards, the definition of this concept has included “any activity in which the principal engaged in order to improve instruction” (Gurr *et al.*, 2006). Enueme and Egwunyenga (2008:13) view instructional leadership as a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development that facilitates school improvement.

According to Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009:3), instructional leadership focuses on the leader’s (principal’s) influence on student achievement: how he/she positively affects teachers and the outcomes of teaching, and raises learner performance. Current research by Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstron (2004) and Waters, Marzano and MacNulty (2003) emphasizes the role of the principal as an instructional leader in setting directions, developing the educators on matters of instruction, and generally making the school work.

Both 20th and 21st century commentaries on instructional leadership emphasize the view that instructional leadership encompasses those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, in order to promote growth in student learning. According to Wildy and Dimmock (1993:144), a principal must be able to define the purpose of schooling, set school-wide goals and implement strategies to achieve those goals. He/she must provide educators and learners with all the resources necessary for effective learning to occur; supervise and evaluate teachers in line with the performance of their learners; initiate and coordinate in-house staff development programmes; and create and nurture collegial relationships with and among teachers.

In concert with the above scholars’ views and assumptions about instructional leadership, Elmore (2000; 2005) and Daresh (2007) maintain that all primary activities undertaken by a

school's leadership should be tightly coupled to the core technology of schooling, which is teaching and learning. This view implies that a principal's primary role is instructional leadership and, as such, he/she must direct changes in terms of teaching and learning. Demonstrating leadership to others in the school (teachers, heads of departments and deputy principals) is included in the role of the principal as an instructional leader.

Similar to the above views, Daresh (2007) and Elmore (2000) propose a definition of instructional leadership that differentiates it from school leadership in general. They suggest that instructional leadership is a type of leadership that should guide and direct instructional improvements associated with learner performance.

1.10 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

In order to proceed with this research study, I made the following assumptions drawn from the instructional leadership literature and personal experience from my interaction with principals:

- Instructional leadership is one among many leadership tasks of the principal.
- The practice of instructional leadership involves developing educators and improving their teaching skills.
- Principals and educators have different perceptions and understanding of the concepts of instructional leadership and supervision.
- The principal understands his/her role as an instructional leader; and his/her engagement with educators on issues of curriculum delivery positively influences the performance of learners.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is an exploration of the variables related to effective instructional leadership and the contribution of these variables to the improvement of results in the matriculation examination. For a study of this magnitude and complexity, there might be arguments for and against the particular methods of inquiry that were used. To ensure that this study maintained a specific focus, the data collection process was confined to the Bushbuckridge region of the Mpumalanga Province. The fact that each province in South Africa is unique is acknowledged in this study, to avoid generalization of the findings as being representative of the circumstances, experiences, and challenges facing principals throughout the country.

Bushbuckridge is the largest region in the Mpumalanga Province, with fourteen education circuits compared to the other three provincial regions. Since its incorporation into this province in 2007, Bushbuckridge has been the worst performing region with regard to learner performance (see graphs in chapter 3). The matriculation results of 2009 indicate that this region performed poorly, not only in comparison with its sister regions in the province, but it was the worst performing region in the whole country. This poor performance may be attributed to a lack of motivation on the part of principals and teachers, thus rendering Bushbuckridge a demotivated region.

1.12 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 1 presents an introduction to the topic of the study, the background to the study, problem statement, rationale and contribution of the study, as well as an indication of the methodology used. The main concepts underpinning the study are also clarified in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2 is a review of the related literature in order to create a theoretical platform upon which this study is built. An in-depth study and analysis of both international and African literature was conducted.

CHAPTER 3 provides an explanation of the conceptual framework of the study.

CHAPTER 4 is a description of the research design and methodology. The instruments used in this study, the questionnaires and interviews, are thoroughly explained in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5 presents the results of the quantitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 6 presents the results of the qualitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 7 is the concluding chapter of the thesis, comprising a synthesis of the findings from the quantitative and qualitative research, recommendations, contributions of the research, suggestions for further research, and concluding remarks.

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CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study of instructional leadership and its possible contribution to learner performance has received scholarly attention for the past two decades. A considerable body of literature which deals with variables related to school effectiveness and improvement, leadership and different leadership practices, and the challenges faced by school principals with regard to poor performance of learners, has been produced. However, none of this literature has produced a definite answer on how to improve the pass rate in the matriculation examination in South Africa.

During this period, a large number of studies have reflected a growing interest by various researchers and leadership practitioners in the school leadership domain. In particular, research has revealed different views that exist between scholars as to whether instructional leadership practices of principals have a measurable effect on learner performance. This chapter therefore ventures into the literature to form a theoretical base for the investigation of the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination.

2.2 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Instructional leadership is one of the fundamental concepts in this study. Instructional leadership has been conceptualized in many different ways by various scholars and researchers. Mullan (2007:23) refers to curriculum leadership and conceptualises it as the jurisdiction of the principal who, as the head of the organization, must be a “master generalist,”.....“one who knows curriculum management and the change processes for the whole school.” In the school effectiveness literature there is a distinction between *instructional* leadership and *administrative* leadership, although Hallinger and Heck (1996b) argue that these concepts cannot be separated. It is appropriate to analyse this construct by splitting it into its component parts, namely *instruction* and *leadership*, in order to gain a better understanding of what each of the two concepts implies.

Instruction, according to Calitz, cited by Kruger (1995a:43), concerns itself with the selection and arrangement of learning content, setting goals and objectives, the unfolding of knowledge, the transfer of skills and attitudes, and the provision of feedback to pupils in terms of their learning achievements. For Fraser, Loubser and Van Rooyen (1993), cited by Pitsoe (2005:62), the concept *instruction* is associated with the transfer of knowledge, skills, techniques and proficiencies, while Laska (1984:9) viewed instruction as “referring to formal education which occurs in a school or comparably structured setting.... it comprises those elements of an instructional activity that represent the delivery system for the curricular content.”

Leadership, according to Yukl (2002), is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. From this definition of leadership, it follows that there must one person who wields the power and ability to influence others, and in this case it is the principal. Egwuonwu (2000) sees leadership as the “*moral and intellectual ability to visualize and work for what is better for the company and its employees...*” Ade (2003), on the other hand, defines leadership as a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational objectives. The word “voluntary” in Ade’s (2003) definition is the operational word which indicates that effective leadership does not connote the use of absolute power or authority alone. Successful leaders need to back up any authority and power vested in them with personal attributes and social skills (Asonibare, 1996).

Fapojuwu (2002) sees leadership as the ability to guide, conduct, direct or influence one’s followers for the purpose of achieving common goals or tasks. This implies that the leader possesses the ability to influence others to achieve results. The definitions of instructional leadership provided below should suffice to merge the meanings of instruction and leadership.

Wimpelberg, Teddlie and Stringfield (1989) define instructional leadership as specific policies, practices, and behaviours initiated by the principal. The concept can also be interpreted as development strategies, using a variety of management instruments to achieve a school’s most important task – the desired student results (Gaziel, 2007:17).

Hopkins (2001:114) contends that instructional leadership is about creating learning opportunities for both learners and teachers. This definition puts the development of both teachers and learners at the centre, and further proposes that developmental programmes for educators should be put in place. Weller (1999:36) adds more dimensions into the definition by referring to instructional leadership as *“the high visibility and involvement of the principal in every phase of the school programme.”*

Mullan (2007:18) indicates that curriculum leaders and curriculum leadership refer to active participation in moving schools forward to provide a learning programme that is vigorous and relevant in preparing learners for a successful future, and that demonstrates results over time. Curriculum leaders, according to Glatthorn (2000:18), rise above routine tasks, with the ultimate goal of maximizing student learning by providing quality in terms of learning content. This view reiterates the question of whether principals are supposed to manage and lead, or to lead and manage schools. Drawing on the definitions of leadership, routine has no place in leadership. Leadership calls for initiative, creativity and innovation on the part of the leader.

The following sections of this chapter deal with the development and practice of instructional leadership in five different countries: Nigeria, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Norway and South Africa. Different features of instructional leadership are discussed, including aspects such as effective instructional leadership; visionary instructional leadership; instructional leadership and school effectiveness; instructional leadership and teaching and learning; and three different instructional leadership models. It is hoped that engagement with these aspects will provide a better understanding of the place and role of instructional leadership in the improvement of the performance of learners in the matriculation examination.

It is important to deal first with the following aspects to serve as the building blocks of instructional leadership, before considering how they manifest themselves in the practice of instructional leadership in the different countries: historical context of instructional leadership; purpose and functions of instructional leadership; instructional leadership and teaching and learning; key elements of instructional leadership, which will encapsulate the variables related to instructional leadership; instructional leadership and school culture and climate, and visionary instructional leadership; prerequisites for instructional leadership; professional development for instructional leadership; principals' and teachers' perceptions

of instructional leadership; and the practice of instructional leadership in the five different countries.

2.3 HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND MODELS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The historical context of instructional leadership includes the emergence of this concept in the educational field, and how it has impacted on the changing role of the principal from being a manager and school administrator, to being an instructional leader and ultimately sharing this role with all educators in a school. Mitchell and Castle (2005) contend that the concept of instructional leadership emerged during the 1970s as a factor to improve school effectiveness, an issue which appeared around the same time. Lashway (2004:1) indicates that in the 1980s instructional leadership became the dominant paradigm for school leaders after researchers noticed that effective schools usually had principals who maintained a high focus on curriculum and instruction. The following table presents the founding views which were held about instructional leadership since its conception in the 1970s. These views serve as a theoretical point of departure that has informed this investigation into the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to learner performance.

TABLE 2.1: Founding views about instructional leadership

References	Founding views
Cotton & Sarvad (1983:42)	After surveying seven major studies related to the performance of effective principals, they concluded that in schools where principals took an active role in instructional improvement, there was higher academic achievement of learners.
The National Education Association (1986:12)	In emphasizing the importance of instructional leadership in the promotion of excellent learner performance, they reported that excellent performance is achieved in schools where the principal aggressively promoted a point of view which boosted performance.
The National Education Association, Washington, D.C. (1986:32)	The principal's leadership does have a bearing on the performance of the learners.....the principal's instructional leadership facilitates a school climate that supports learner performance (see 2.5.5 below).
Thomas (1986:27)	A principal who builds professional relations among his/her teachers based on high standards, coupled with mutual trust and respect, is most likely to be successful.
Hall (1986:51)	There is a statistical correlation between learner performance on the one hand and educators' perceptions of their principal's instructional performance on the other hand.

References	Founding views
Larsen (1987:61)	The primary contributing factor of higher achieving schools is the quality of the principal's leadership which resulted in an orderly and efficient school climate with higher levels of cooperation from the learners, the staff and the parents.
Larsen (1987:60)	There is a definite relationship between the instructional leadership behaviour of the principal and learner achievement.
Dubin (1990:86)	Instructional skills are part of the teacher's equipment, which need to be developed by the principal to ensure that teachers become effective. The principal must talk and listen and know what they are doing. He/she must have his/her hand on the pulse of the school.
Chetty (1993:89)	The role of the principal in ensuring that the primary reason of a school (teaching and learning) is carried out is to help establish, develop and maintain a teaching staff which will provide the best possible opportunities for teaching and learning.

The conception of instructional leadership which was held in the 1970s changed during the first half of the 1990s when the notion of school-based management and facilitative leadership emerged. Due to the growth of standards-based accountability systems in the education systems of the world, including South Africa, instructional leadership has now surged back to the top of the leadership agenda (Lashway, 2004).

Phillips (2009:1) views instructional leadership by school leaders as a relatively new concept that emerged in the 1980s, which called for a shift in emphasis from principals as managers or administrators to instructional or academic leaders. While a sizeable number of scholars and researchers in the school leadership field have emphasized the importance of instructional leadership on learner performance in the matriculation examination, Phillips (*ibid.*) argues that instructional leadership is seldom used or practised. Among the reasons cited for the lack of instructional leadership or emphasis thereon, are the lack of in-depth training of principals for their role as instructional leaders, lack of time to execute instructional activities, increased paper work, and the community's expectation that the principal's role is that of a manager (Flath, 1989:20; Fullan, 1991:44). Another factor is the complexity of the principal's role, which involves understanding the historical context, purpose, function, personal qualities and behaviours of instructional leaders. McEwan (2002), focusing on the development of leadership in general and instructional leadership in particular, juxtaposes the development of leadership in the business world against its practice in schools. McEwan (2002:1) argues that:

“Corporate executives can measure their success in terms of bottom lines, increased sales and productivity and rises in stock prices. Educators, particularly principals, face a different set of challenges. Although many of the lessons of leadership in the corporate world are applicable within the walls of our schools, we need our own model of leadership, one that incorporates the unique characteristics of teaching and learning.”

In pursuit of the above view, and contrary to the classical management functions associated with a principal (planning, organizing, leading and monitoring/controlling), McEwan (2002) argues that today’s principals must be trained to become instructional leaders. The same view has been held by Hoy and Miskel (2005) and various other scholars, albeit at different times, have made reference to Sergiovanni (2006) who proposed one of the first models of instructional leadership. Sergiovanni identified five leadership forces, namely: *technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural*.

The *technical aspect* of instructional leadership (IL) deals with the traditional practices of management, namely: planning, time management, leadership theory, and organizational development. The *human component* encompasses all the interpersonal aspects of IL which are essential to the communicating, motivating, and facilitating roles of the principal. The *educational force component* involves all the instructional aspects of the principal’s role: teaching, learning, and implementing the curriculum.

The *symbolic and cultural components*, according to McEwan (2002) and Hoy and Miskel (2008), derive from the instructional leader’s ability to become the symbol of what is important and purposeful about the school (symbolic), as well as to articulate the values and beliefs of the organization over time (cultural).

The emergence of instructional leadership is viewed by Hoy and Miskel (2008) as a critical breakthrough for educational organizations in the sense that it is directly linked to the performance of learners. These authors contend that a principal who is an instructional leader defines goals, works with teachers, provides authentic professional development and other resources for teachers and staff, and creates new learning opportunities for staff members. Chang (2001:8) summarizes the barriers to instructional leadership as follows (refer to table 2.2):

Table 2.2: Barriers to instructional leadership (Adapted from Chang, 2001:8)

Identified barriers	Examples
Knowledge/Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge and skills • Lack of qualified staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited training and education • Teachers teaching outside their field of study
Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership attrition • Insufficient time • Multiple roles and responsibilities • Geographic isolation • Individual and group self-esteem, pride, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant changes in leadership • Paperwork overload • Too many extra-curricular activities, work overload, e.g. some principals do not have assistant principals • Limited access to professional development • Leaders are not respected because they do not have the power and resources to solve the problems faced by the school and its personnel
Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural incongruence with contemporary demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional mores and practices may be in conflict with what the school is trying to do
Political/Legal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal/contractual limitations • Conflicting priorities among decision makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher unions protect poor teachers, principals spend time in hearings with no legal assistance • Priorities of educators may differ from those of political leaders
Professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to quality professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of mentors (principals and their assistants need mentors and support as they learn their roles in the school)
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient facilities, equipment and other supplies
Lack of Incentives/Rewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives (there should be a financial incentive for principals and assistant principals to accept leadership positions)

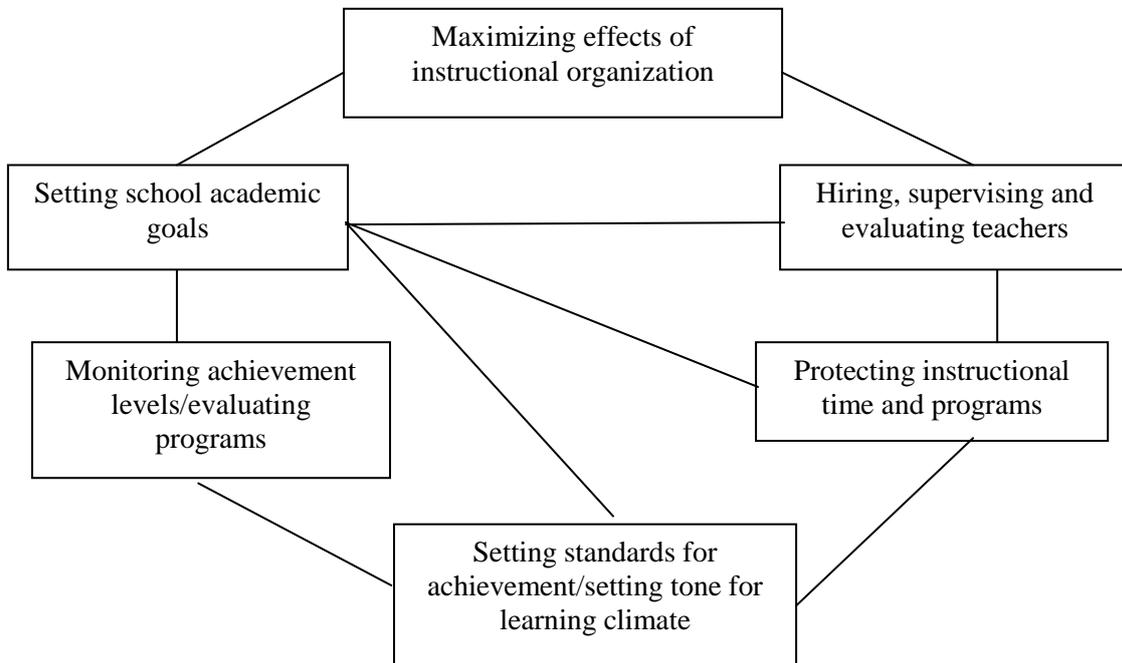
The views of Chang (2001) and Phillips (2009) are supported by Lahui-Ako (2000:233) who, by drawing on the works of scholars such as Wildy and Dimmock, (1993); Rosenblum *et al.* (1994); Hallinger and Heck (1995); and Mulford (1996), contends that while principals can and do make a difference to both teachers and learners through their skills as instructional leaders, instructional leadership has not been widely practised in schools. It is on these barriers (table 2.2) to instructional leadership as proposed by Chang (2001) that this study focused and investigated whether the preparation of principals for the practice of

instructional leadership would assist them to disentangle these barriers (*Subsidiary research question 3*).

2.4 PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

According to Weber (1987:7), a principal is the prime instructional leader and he/she works with leadership functions that are sometimes shared and sometimes not. This section investigates the development of instructional leadership, including different models that have been used to express the purpose and functions of this construct. The section concludes by considering the purpose and functions of instructional leadership as these have changed over time. The first model presented explores six interactive functions of instructional leadership. These functions are referred to as *interactive* because they affect one another. Each of the six functions is explained briefly after the structural representation of the functions shown in figure 2.1 below.

FIGURE 2.1: Interrelationships among six major functions of instructional leadership (Adapted from Weber, 1987:9)



From figure 2.1 above, two important concepts associated with instructional leadership are: supervision and school climate/culture. These concepts and their relationship with instructional leadership are dealt with in the ensuing sections of this chapter. Instructional

leadership should have as its primary goal the provision of leadership in terms of the teaching and learning processes in the school.

The function of setting academic goals refers to the responsibility of the principal in providing guidance and central themes for the school goals. Such guidance requires that the principal should be familiar with all levels of instruction in the school. Weber (1987:10) emphasizes that “the instructional leader must work with individuals of varying capacities and established score” which means that irrespective of the different capacities of the teaching staff, the instructional leader must ensure that all of them perform to achieve the same goals.

Maximizing the effects of instructional organization, which is also referred to as organizing the instructional program, is another function of instructional leadership, which is directly aligned with setting instructional goals for the school. According to Weber (1987:15), the strategies of bringing the goals of the school to reality depend on allocating staff and organizing resources to maximum effect. Again, in line with what was said about the varying capacities of the staff above, the instructional leader must be able to utilize each staff member fruitfully for the attainment of the school goals.

The hiring, supervising and evaluating of teachers is another major instructional leadership tasks of the principal. Weber (1987:23) indicates that the correct choice of people is vital to the health of an instructional programme and appropriate choices can save the principal difficulties and allow more time for instructional leadership. On the same score, even excellent teachers cannot renew themselves, but need the intervention of the instructional leader to provide in-service training opportunities. It is also important that the principal, as instructional leader, provides his/her staff with continuous/ongoing opportunities for in-service training in order to ensure that the school’s goals are realized.

The last and equally important function of instructional leadership is the protection of instructional time and programmes. The principal must be able to monitor unplanned distracters to instruction and put in place contingency measures to catch up on lost instructional time. Creating a climate for learning is regarded by Weber (1987:39) as a real factor in motivating teachers and learners to hold high expectations for themselves and to perform at their best academically. It is therefore imperative that the principal as

instructional leader creates and provides a suitable school environment, learning climate, social climate, or organizational climate.

Monitoring achievement and evaluating programmes is also a primary function of the principal as an instructional leader. It is through the instructional leader's enactment of this function that instructional programmes can be assessed and revised. The instructional leader must be able to use data collected from performance levels of learners to evaluate the school programmes.

Lashway (2004) argues that the practice of instructional leadership has consistently changed with time, from its inception during the 1970s and 1980s, to how it is practiced today. Lashway (2004:1), drawing on the work of King (2002) and DuFour (2002), indicates that current definitions of instructional leadership are richer and more expansive than those of the 1980s. The original role of the instructional leader involved traditional tasks such as setting clear goals, allocating resources to instruction, managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, and evaluating teachers. Instructional leadership today includes much deeper involvement in the "core technology" of teaching and learning, carries more sophisticated views of professional development, and emphasizes the use of data in decision making.

2.4.1 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHING AND LEARNING

A considerable body of literature in the domains of school effectiveness and instructional leadership has reiterated the power of the influence of principals on the instructional practices of teachers. The principals' instructional leadership behaviours were seen to have a significant influence on how teachers performed in their classes (Lahui-Ako, 2000; Larson-Knight, 2000; Blasé & Blasé, 2000).

Teaching and learning are the core business of schools and the main focus of this study is to establish the extent to which principals (instructional leaders) impact on these activities to improve learner achievement. According to Hoadley, Christie, Jacklin and Ward (2007), knowledge of how principals manage teaching and learning in schools in South Africa is limited. They further contend that while there is growing consensus in South African research that school principals play a crucial role in creating conditions for improved instruction, what is less understood is how principals may contribute to creating these conditions.

Ojo and Olaniyan (2008:173), in their investigation of the leadership roles of school administrators in Nigerian secondary schools, refer to the Institute of Educational Leadership (2000) which proposed that principals today must, over and above their traditional managerial responsibilities, serve as leaders for student learning; know academic content and pedagogical techniques; work with teachers to strengthen skills; and finally, principals must collect, analyse and use data in ways that fuel excellence.

Ojo and Olaniyan (2008) view curriculum development as one of the major responsibilities of principals. They indicate that a curriculum is NOT a record of “what has happened”, but a “plan of what will happen”. It specifies the learning experiences or opportunities designed for the learner. On the basis of this assertion, these authors argue that whoever owns/manages the school influences the implementation of the curriculum because he/she designs it in such a way that will satisfy some identified needs or purposes.

Following on the argument of Ojo and Olaniyan (2008:74) above, Arikewuyo (2009) poses the question of whether teaching experience is a sufficient condition/requirement for the appointment of principals, without any form of training on management and administration. In Nigeria, potential principals are expected to attend mandatory leadership courses at the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) before assuming managerial positions. According to Arikewuyo (2009:74), a principal is supposed to perform the following functions:

“...provide leadership for curriculum development; provide leadership for instructional improvement; create an environment conducive for the realization of human potentials; influence the behaviour of staff members (this view is in concert with the view of Asonibare (1996) about the impact of the principal’s personal characteristics on the achievement of learners) and supervise instructional activities in the school.”

Wong and NG (2003:37) indicate that the principal must be able to demonstrate his/her ability to lead in carrying out the above functions with professional knowledge; possess organizational and administrative competence; have the ability to work out a good school policy and put it into effect; display skill in the delegation of authority; show an ability to understand the professional problems of teachers and give professional guidance; and establish good working relationships with staff and parents.

All the above being said, Arikewuyo (2009:7) refers to the work of Akpa (1990) who found that principals in most African states, including Nigeria, ranked academic and instructional activities, including curriculum development, teaching and instructional supervision, second to staff and student management, liaison, coordinating, and financial management, which they treated with much vigour. This finding suggests that to these principals, management is regarded as being more important than instructional leadership. Although it appeared that some principals engage in instructional leadership activities, this is at a minimal level. Mulkeen, Chapman, DeJaeghere and Leu (2007) support the assertion by Akpa (1990) by indicating that principals in most African countries do not have any regard for instructional supervision and thus view it as not part of their duties. However, Bush and Jackson (2002); Bush and Oduro (2006); and Bush (2007; 2008) support the submissions made by Asonibare (1996), Arikewuyo (2009) and McKenzie *et al.* (2007) regarding the role of effective school leadership in the improvement of learner achievement, and the professional development of education leaders for school effectiveness and improvement.

Bush and Jackson (2002:418) argue that effective school leadership is a key to both continuous improvement and major system transformation. This implies that the transformation of the education system and ensuring uninterrupted improvement in the achievement of learners lies in the practice of effective school leadership. Hallinger and Heck (1999), in supporting the role of principals in ensuring effective school leadership for school effectiveness, say the following about the purposes of the school:

“...leaders in all sectors are exhorted to articulate their vision, set clear goals for their organizations, and create a sense of shared mission. Our view supports the belief that formulating the school’s purposes represents an important leadership function. In fact, the research shows that mission building is the strongest and most consistent avenue of influence that school leaders use to influence learner achievement.”

For school leadership to be effective, the leaders or leadership practitioners (the principals in this case) must have the necessary skills to enable them to perform their jobs. In response to this imperative, Bush (2007) indicates that there is little evidence of principals and other school leaders being developed for the central function of schools which is to promote learning, and that principals are further not found to be conceptualizing their role as leaders of learning. Bush and Oduro (2006) trace this lack of development of principals to the lack of capacity amongst those responsible for appointing, training, and supporting principals,

and indicate further that many of these officials are no better qualified than the principals. An example flowing from Bush and Oduro's (2006) assertion is that the principals who study the ACE School Leadership programmes will emerge from higher education institutions (HEIs) with more knowledge and leadership capacity than their circuit managers or Institutional Development Support Officers (IDSOs) and directors who control them.

The above is also true in the situation where principals or candidates for principalship positions are recruited. The major challenge in the recruitment and subsequent appointment of individuals for these positions is whether the processes are appropriate to identify the most suitable person for the leadership position. It is worth indicating that the current approaches and procedures followed in the recruitment of principals in South Africa need to be revisited. There is a general trend of appointing people into principalship positions on the basis of their time spent in a particular school, the number of years as a Head of Department (HOD) and/or the number of degrees that the person holds, without establishing the person's leadership capacity. Without the necessary leadership skills, a principal may be unable to bring about effectiveness and improvement in the school, which are prerequisites for learner performance.

2.5 KEY ELEMENTS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Phillips (2009:2), in his analysis of instructional leadership, administration, and management, argues that instructional leadership involves: setting clear goals; allocating resources for instruction; managing the curriculum; monitoring lesson plans; and evaluating teachers. It also involves those actions that the principal performs or delegates to others to promote growth in student learning. Some of the key elements that characterize instructional leadership and distinguish it from management and administration include prioritization; a focus on alignment of the curriculum, instruction and assessment standards; data analysis; a culture of continuous learning for adults; school culture and climate; visionary instructional leadership; and the variables related to instructional leadership. These key elements of instructional leadership are discussed below.

2.5.1 PRIORITIZATION AS AN ELEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This element emphasizes the fact that teaching and learning must constantly be a top priority. Phillips (2009:1) contends that leadership is a balance of management and vision

and that the instructional leader must bring that vision to realization. Bringing the vision to realization needs a principal who is in constant contact with his leadership team and the entire staff to evaluate their competencies in order to assist them to improve. This endeavour becomes possible only if the principal himself/herself as instructional leader is a knowledgeable, learning and thinking person, who appreciates the value of the intellect, who is interested in ideas, and responds to experimentation and innovation (Barends, 2004:2).

2.5.2 FOCUS ON ALIGNMENT OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT AND STANDARDS AS ELEMENTS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The principal as instructional leader must ensure that there is alignment between the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of the required standard to ensure learner achievement. In order to realise this aim, Phillips (2009:2) argues that the principal as an instructional leader should be a practising teacher. He further contends that instructional leaders need to know what is going on in the classroom, which is an opportunity to “walk the factory floor”.

Once the principal is in touch with what happens in the classroom, he/she will be able to appreciate some of the problems teachers and learners encounter, address instructional issues from a ‘hands on’ perspective rather than from their own teaching perspective, establish a base from which to address and make curriculum decisions, and strengthen the belief that “the sole purpose of the school is to serve the educational needs of students” (Harden, 1988:88).

In addition to the key elements addressed above, Phillips (2009) reiterates that the principal must display professional/leadership skills and human relations skills in his/her instructional role. These skills are essential for the development of educational excellence. Supporting Phillips (2009) in this view, Rosenblum (1994:17) proposes certain leadership behaviours and specific activities of principals that seem to have a positive effect on learner performance. These scholars contend that good leadership facilitates collaboration, communication, feedback, influence and professionalism through the establishment of a vision and a value system. In addition, good leadership presupposes having consistent policies to delegate and empower others, thus sharing leadership responsibility; modelling

risk taking; focusing on people; nurturing staff members and helping them to grow; and emphasizing the educational, rather than the purely technical aspects of schooling.

In support of Phillips (2009) and Lahui-Ako (2000), Whitaker (1997:156) identifies four skills which an instructional leader should have, as presented in the table that follows:

TABLE 2.3: Instructional leadership and principal visibility (Adapted from Whitaker, 1997)

Skills	Manifestation
1. Resource provider	In addition to their knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of their school, principals should recognise that teachers desire to be acknowledged and appreciated for a job well done.
2. Instructional resource	Teachers rely on their principals as resources of information on current trends and effective instructional practices.
3. Good communicator	Effective instructional leaders need to communicate essential beliefs regarding learning, such as the conviction that all learners can learn.
4. Create a visible presence	Leading the instructional programme of a school means a commitment to living and breathing a vision of success in teaching and learning.

2.5.3 DATA ANALYSIS AS AN ELEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Principals as instructional leaders can use data to help guide the instructional focus and professional development of teachers. The principal must be able to collect data from the performance of learners in their previous grades and different learning areas and use this data to develop teaching and learning improvement initiatives. An analysis of data from previous and current learner performance can therefore be regarded as a stepping stone for principals in the practice of their role as instructional leaders.

2.5.4 CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR ADULTS AS AN ELEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Instructional leaders who regard learning as a priority will provide release time for teachers to attend relevant training. They will follow up by monitoring and providing the support that sustains the new learning. This view supports the idea that principals have a duty to create and provide teacher development opportunities in their schools to ensure that educators keep abreast of new developments in their field.

Halverson (2002:5) argues that “...because instructional leadership is so strongly connected with student performance, accessing and communicating leadership practice is an important issue for policymakers, schools of education, and practitioners alike”. According to Halverson (*ibid*), instructional leadership is defined as establishing the possibility of instructional innovation in schools. This implies that school leadership matters for instructional innovation. This study aims to establish how leadership, particularly instructional leadership, matters in schools, with specific focus on the improvement of learner achievement.

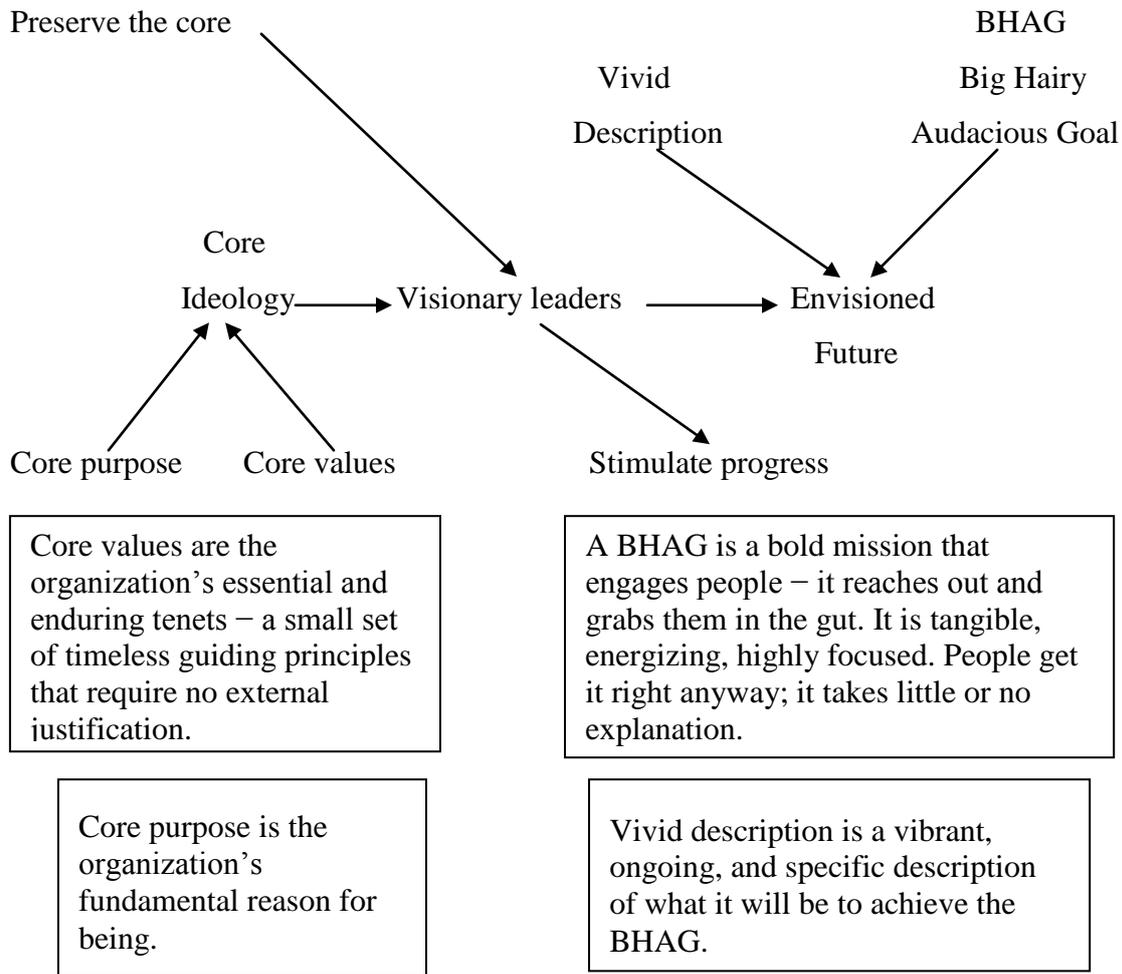
Halverson (2002:6) argues that for widespread instructional innovation to become a norm in schools, an exploration of how effective school leaders understand and implement instructional leadership practices becomes important. This position, it is assumed, will help to seal the gap that exists with regard to our knowledge of the conditions that promote leadership for innovative instruction in schools, how school leaders establish these conditions, how such conditions are artfully integrated into rich existing school cultures, and how these school cultures are communicated.

2.5.5 SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE AS ELEMENTS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

One of the core variables of this study is the responsibility of the principal, as instructional leader, to create a shared vision for the school and to provide leadership that will shape the culture and climate of the school. There are three main concepts which need to be clarified for better understanding of this function, namely: vision, school culture, and school climate.

The Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS) (2008) regard a school vision as a clearly articulated statement of goals, principles and expectations for the entire learning community. A vision becomes a guiding force when all educational decisions are based on its framework and goals. Collins and Porras (1991:32) describe a vision as an overarching concept under which a variety of concepts are subsumed. They further indicate that an organization’s vision consists of a well-defined “core ideology.” This ideology includes a “core purpose” as well as a set of fundamental values and beliefs, the “essential and enduring tenets” of an organization. These scholars propose the following structure which they call the “built to last vision framework” to explain their views about the concept of vision.

FIGURE 2.2: “Built to last” vision framework (Source: Collins & Porras, 1991)



Collins and Lazier (1992:2) explain the core aspects of this framework, emphasizing the fact that a clear vision is the single most powerful tool an organization can employ. According to these authors, the core values are where the vision begins and they are frequently referred to as the guiding philosophy of an organization. One of the variables related to instructional leadership that has been identified for this study is the communication of a clear vision and goals.

Gertz (1973), a renowned anthropologist, indicates that culture represents both written and implied messages. This means that a school's vision and mission statements may identify written goals for learner achievement, whereas unwritten goals may be evidenced by the value the school places on learner academic success. Stolp and Smith (1997) recognize school culture as everything from nonverbal communication (the warmth of the interaction between teachers and learners) to the patterns on the walls of the cafeteria. They further indicate that the most important aspects of culture are those whose meaning is shared by

members of the organization. A positive school culture is associated with higher learner motivation and performance, increased collaboration and improved attitudes among teachers towards their job.

The TILS (2008) define school culture as the values, beliefs and stories of a school. This includes values, symbols, beliefs and the shared meanings of parents, learners, teachers and others conceived as being a group or community. Culture governs what is of value for the group and how members should think, feel and believe. Jerald (2006:1) makes the following remarks about school culture:

“Walk into any truly excellent school and you can feel it almost immediately – a calm, orderly atmosphere that hums with an exciting, vibrant sense of purposefulness. This is a positive school culture, the kind that improves educational outcomes.”

While the importance of school culture was recognized as early as the 1930s, it was only during the 1970s that educational researchers began to draw direct links between the quality of a school’s climate and its educational outcomes (Jerald, 2006:2). Deal and Peterson (1990) affirm that school culture refers to the deep patterns of values, beliefs and traditions that have been formed over the course of the school’s history and which are understood by members of the school community. They define school culture as an “underground flow of feelings and folkways wending its way within schools” in the form of vision and values, beliefs and assumptions, rituals and ceremonies, history and stories, and physical symbols. Deal and Peterson (1990) further indicate that principals and administrators are central to shaping strong, professional school cultures. The more understood, accepted and cohesive the culture of a school, the better the school is able to move in concert towards its ideals and pursue its objectives.

School climate refers to the social and educational atmosphere of a school (TILS, 2008). The elements that comprise a school’s climate are extensive and may include: the number and quality of interactions between adults and learners; learners’ and teachers’ perceptions of their school environment; academic performance; feelings of safeness in the school; and feelings of trust and respect for learners and teachers. The description of culture, as proposed above by the TILS (2008), contains similar descriptive concepts to those associated with leadership, namely: vision, mission and values.

Both South African and international literature on leadership and management support the view that school principals play a crucial role in creating the conditions for improved instruction. Such conditions include the creation of a positive school culture, and a school climate that is warm and conducive for teaching and learning. Both these conditions should work towards fulfilling the mission and vision of the school.

The TILS (2008) indicate that an effective instructional leader creates a school culture and climate based on high expectations that are conducive to the success of all learners. In order to fulfil this important role, the instructional leader should be able to do the following: develop and sustain a school culture based on ethics, diversity, equity and collaboration; advocate, nurture, and lead a culture conducive to learning; develop and sustain a safe, secure, and disciplined learning environment; model and communicate self-discipline and engagement in life-long learning to staff, learners and parents; facilitate and sustain a culture that protects and maximizes learning time; and develop a leadership team designed to share responsibilities and ownership in terms of meeting the school's learning goals.

2.5.6 VISIONARY INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AS AN ELEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

One of the main variables related to effective instructional leadership is the role of the principal in creating and communicating a shared vision and goals to the teachers and learners. The concept "vision" is viewed by Mumford and Strange (2005) as a cognitive construction or a mental model, a conceptual representation used to both understand system operations and guide actions within the system. Kantabutra (2008) defines "vision" as a mental model that a leader defines, given that it is the actual mental model that guides his/her choices and actions. Reynolds and Cuttence (1996) contend that a principal who shares his vision and goals with his staff (visionary leadership) boosts the teachers' and learners' morale, thereby improving the performance levels of learners.

A visionary instructional leader attempts to transform the conformist culture in his/her school, partly by confronting the tendency of its members to resist change (Glatthorn, 2000:24). This position is supported by Henderson and Hawthorne (2002:53) who indicate that a visionary instructional leader "does not fiddle while Rome burns", meaning that such a leader provides a vision for the organization, lives the vision, and ensures that all members of the organization perform their duties to fulfil the vision.

2.5.7 VARIABLES RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

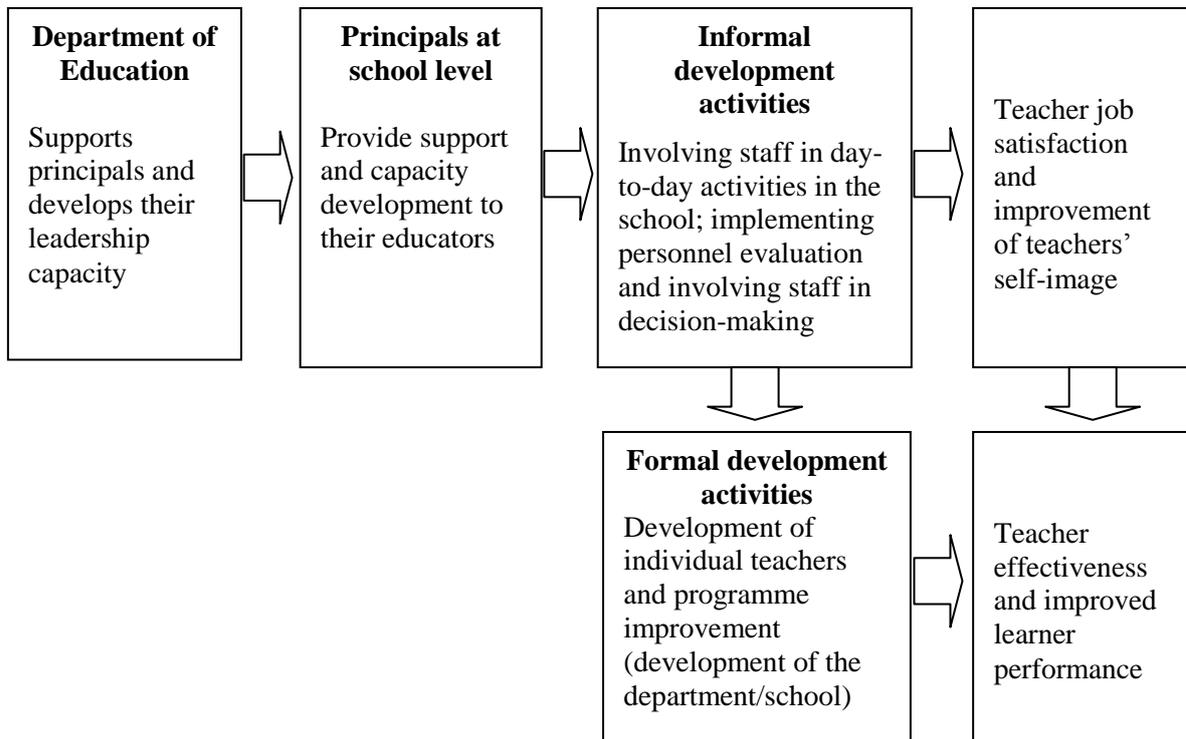
For the purpose of this study, four independent variables were identified. Their relationship with instructional leadership and their possible contribution to the improvement of learner performance are explored. These variables assisted the researcher to formulate questions for the deputy principals' and HODs' questionnaire. An exploration of each of the variables follows below:

2.5.7.1 Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities

Weber (1987:23) (refer to figure 1.1 for the six functions of instructional leadership) reiterates the fact that teacher development activities are a major task of the principal as an instructional leader. Teachers' capacity to deliver the curriculum needs to be prioritized by the principal by providing continuous in-service training for all teachers in the school irrespective of their performance records. Weber (*ibid.*) emphasizes the importance of in-service training opportunities for teachers by indicating that *“even the excellent teachers cannot renew themselves but need the intervention of the instructional leader to provide in-service training opportunities”*.

In support of the above views, Caldwell (2002) and Hallinger (2002) indicate that a school as an organization has become less in need of control and more in need of both support and capacity development. This implies that the national department of education has a duty to support and build the capacity of principals to carry out their leadership roles. The principals, in turn, need to support and build the capacity of their teachers in carrying out their teaching obligations. According to Leithwood (1996: xii), organizational needs such as described above are better served by practices associated with the concept of leadership than a focus purely on administration. The following diagram represents informal and formal teacher development activities and how they influence the performance of both teachers and learners:

FIGURE 2.3: Representation of informal and formal teacher development activities



In support of the representations in the figure above, Blasé and Blasé (2001) identify and emphasize *support* by principals for their teachers, which they view as a characteristic of instructional leadership. In a study conducted with 800 teachers in the Pacific Region, Blasé and Blasé (2000) found that both the teachers studied and their principals, emphasized teacher development and support as a characteristic of instructional leadership.

In the Blasé and Blasé (2001) study, the teachers indicated that their principals should support collaboration and build a culture based thereon; develop coaching relationships amongst them; apply principles of adult growth and development to all phases of the staff development programme, and use inquiry to drive staff development. The principals, on the other hand, indicated that in order to ensure professional development of their teachers, they should support and foster the teaching and learning process; develop and lead staff development based on teachers' needs; provide direction and support for professional development; conduct or assist in staff development; attend professional development activities with teachers; and support teacher implementation of these activities. The practice of attending professional development activities with teachers is vital for a principal in an instructional leadership role, since his/her exposure to the content of various learning areas will facilitate his/her intervention and assistance where teachers experience content-related

difficulties. This view is supported by Joubert and Van Rooyen (2010:17) who contend that *“simply providing more opportunities for professional development (workshops) is not enough. It is the quality of the interventions that counts.....effective principals enforce participation in development activities, leading by example”*.

2.5.7.2 Defining and communicating shared vision and goals

Caldwell (2002:26) associates the concept of a vision with what he calls “strategic leadership” which is defined as seeing the “big picture”; discerning the “megatrends”; understanding the implications and ensuring that others in the school can do the same; establishing structures and processes to bring vision to realization, and monitoring the outcomes. It follows that a principal must prioritize the provision of a clear sense of mission, vision, goals and objectives that are understood and supported by all groups and by key decision makers.

Chang (2001:7) indicates that an instructional leader is a person with a vision who is able to assess the needs of the school and community. Such a leader is able to articulate his/her vision into a plan of action in which all parties can participate and feel a sense of ownership that will enable quality learning to occur. According to Chang (2001), giving life to the vision of a school depends on the commitment of the instructional leader (the principal) to empowering his/her staff, to ensuring that each individual can build his/her own self esteem; and where all the components of the school become part of the whole.

The view of Chang (2001) is shared by Lashway (1995:2) who contends that whilst the setting of high expectations for teachers and learners, establishing academic goals and creating a vision, were traditionally the role of the instructional leader, recent views and discussions emphasize the collaborative aspects of the process. The instructional leader therefore has a duty to articulate, publicize, and promote the vision and goals of the school by engaging all parties concerned (teachers, learners, parents and community) in continuous dialogue on the vision and goals of the school. This dialogue will ensure that all parties are aligned with the vision and goals of the school. It will further provide a platform on which the vision of the school can be contested and altered, in line with its changing circumstances.

The realization of all the above will depend on the principal's ability and willingness to communicate and engage all the involved parties in understanding what needs to be done and why. It also depends on the part that each individual needs to play in achieving the vision and goals of the school. O'Tool (1999) advises that principals should communicate the vision often, in both subtle and dramatic ways, tying every day events to the vision and underscoring its relevance, thereby allowing the vision to serve as a reminder to the team of their purpose and goals.

2.5.7.3 Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning processes

Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process is one of the variables that characterize instructional leadership. Lashway (2002:1) refers to this role of the instructional leader as "facilitative leadership" which means that the instructional leader (principal) needs to facilitate the provision of effective teaching by the teachers; the outcome of which will be reflected in the performance of the learners in the matriculation examination.

According to Gamage, Adams and McCormack (2009), the following behaviours by the instructional leader have a significant impact on learner performance: providing instructional leadership through discussion of instructional issues; observing classroom teaching and giving feedback; supporting teacher autonomy and protecting instructional time; providing and supporting improvement through monitoring progress; and using learner progress data for programme improvement. Furthermore, Chang (2001:1) recommends that the instructional leader should spend much time in classrooms, observing teaching and learning and encouraging high performance; track learners' scores and other indicators of student learning to help teachers focus attention where it is most needed; and provide opportunities for teachers to share information and work together to plan curriculum and instruction.

In concert with Gamage *et al.* (2009) and Chang (2001), DuFour (2002) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP, 2002) assert that the principal should encourage networks among teachers to discuss their work and ensure that the teachers do not work in isolation but share their expertise with each other. In support of this view, Blasé and Blasé (2000) indicate that the instructional leader should support teacher networks by making suggestions, giving feedback on the successes/strengths and weaknesses/challenges

that teachers experience in their practice, model effective instruction, solicit opinions, provide professional development opportunities, and give praise for effective teaching.

Research on the role of the principal as instructional leader has always emphasized his/her responsibility to set high standards and expectations for both teachers and learners. Furthermore, the instructional leader must communicate these standards to both teachers and learners. Al-ghanabousi (2010:384) identifies teacher appraisal as a formal means for instructional leaders to communicate organizational goals, conceptions of teaching, standards and values to teachers. It is therefore important that once the goals of the school are set, the instructional leader monitors the implementation of strategies to achieve these goals and provides feedback to the teachers with regard to their attainment.

2.5.7.4 Monitoring the curriculum and instruction

The success of any school depends squarely on what happens in the classrooms. What the teachers do in the classrooms with their learners (curriculum delivery and instruction) will be reflected in the performance of learners. Research on the role of the principal as instructional leader shows that principals must possess an array of skills and competencies in order to lead schools effectively towards the accomplishment of educational goals and one of these skills is monitoring the curriculum and instruction. Erlandson and Witters-Churchill (1990:123) suggest that a successful principal must:

“Understand the dynamics of the classroom; identify and apply effective instructional strategies. This understanding will enable the principal to implement educational programs/curriculum development. The principal must also be able to master and coordinate the auxiliary services that support instruction, and also establish productive relationships with parents and the community.”

In order to fulfil the above role, DuFour (2002) indicates that the instructional leader needs to have up-to-date knowledge of three areas of education: curriculum, instruction, and assessment. For the purpose of this part of the study, I will focus on curriculum and instruction.

With regard to curriculum, DuFour (2002) indicates that principals need to know about the changing conceptions of curriculum, educational philosophies and beliefs, curricular sources and conflict, and curricular evaluation and improvement. In order to be able to do this, the

principal needs not only to be a “head teacher” or “principal teacher” but he/she must be the school’s “head learner” (Hallinger, 2002:3; Hallinger, 2003:17). The principal should keep abreast of new conceptions with regard to curriculum by attending curriculum workshops with his/her teachers which will assist him/her to give the necessary support to the teachers with regard to the implementation of the curriculum.

With regard to instruction, the principal needs to know about different models of teaching, the theoretical reasons for adopting a particular teaching model, and the theories underlying the technology-based learning environment (Jenkins, 2009:36). In support of Hallinger (2002; 2003) and Jenkins (2009), Mednick (2003:3) emphasizes the importance of classroom visits by the instructional leader to work with teachers and learners, and the participation of the principal in curriculum-related meetings to assist in the development of effective teaching and learning strategies. This, in Mednick’s view, enables the principal to provide instructional resources and professional development opportunities that improve learning, teaching, and assessment practices.

2.6 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISION

This section of the study is concerned with juxtaposing instructional leadership and supervision as two related concepts that have been developed and enacted differently by education leaders to achieve the same purpose of influencing teacher behaviour to ensure improved teaching and learning for better learner performance. Supervision (instructional supervision) has been assigned various definitions by different scholars at different times. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2001:1) view supervision as identical to instructional leadership for the improvement of instruction. Drawing on this view, instructional leadership can be viewed as “a function and process” rather than a role or position. This implies that educators throughout the school system, from the top to the bottom of the organization, can engage in the function and process of supervision. In concert with this view and the fact that many studies have emphasized and isolated principals as instructional leaders, Glickman *et al.* (2001:10) argue that “*what is crucial is not the person’s title, but rather his or her responsibilities*”. This is based on the assumption that typical supervisors are principals, assistant principals, instructional lead teachers, department heads, master teachers and teachers.

Supervision, like instructional leadership, is related directly to helping teachers with instruction, and indirectly to instructing learners. It is not the act of instructing learners but rather the actions that enable teachers to improve instruction for learners. Burke and Krey (2005:6) argue that early definitions of supervision indicate that its major purpose was to make judgements about the teacher rather than about the instruction or the students' learning. This approach to supervision led to decisions being made on the basis of what the supervisor or inspector had observed and the situation being remedied by, inter alia, displacing or replacing the teacher. This could be viewed as “negative supervision” in the sense that the displaced teacher is not professionally developed through the intervention of the supervisor. It is also untypical of the perceived influence that characterizes leadership.

During the period leading to and including 1936, the practice of supervision changed, with emphasis being placed on the function of aiding the teacher in terms of the improvement of instruction (Burke *et al.*, 2005:9). In line with the new emphasis on supervision, Burke and Krey (2005:21) define supervision as instructional leadership that relates perspectives to behaviour, focuses on purpose, contributes to and supports organizational actions, coordinates interactions, provides for improvement and maintenance of the instructional program, and assesses goal achievement. This definition is based on the following specific point of view:

“Personal perspectives influence behavioural choices; definition, identification, and participation are essential to the understanding and acceptance of purposes; supervision is both a contributory and a supportive action; human interactions need to be facilitated and coordinated; improvements and maintenance accomplishments are based on analysis and appraisal; and determination of goal development, progress, and achievement is essential to a productive enterprise” (Burke & Krey, 2005:21).

Drawing on the juxtaposition of instructional leadership and instructional supervision as discussed above, it is safe to argue that while the two concepts cannot be assumed to be synonymous, they have the same focus and purpose. Both focus on how people interact with one another and also on the purpose of such interaction. A supervisor providing instructional leadership must focus on the common purpose(s) that bring the supervised and the supervisor together: which in this case, is the improvement of instruction for improved learner performance.

2.7 PREREQUISITES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This section explores the different conditions that must prevail in order for the principal to be an instructional leader. Some of these conditions need to be provided by the department of education, while others have to be created and developed by the principal in collaboration with the whole staff and in some cases, with the school community. The department of education has a duty to provide all forms of support to the principal in order for him/her to carry out his/her instructional leadership obligations. According to Keefe and Jenkins (2000) the department of education should, in its effort to support the principal, adopt and provide the school(s) with a comprehensive set of policies which include the following matters:

- Learner expectations – policies indicating what is expected of learners behaviourally and academically;
- Safeguarding time – policies outlining the importance of protecting instructional learning time and optimizing academic learning time;
- Empowerment – policies specifying who will be involved in instructional decisions relating to the classroom, the building, and the district;
- Supervision – policies emphasizing the collaborative role of the teacher and principal in developing instructional processes and practices;
- Curriculum and staff development – policies requiring a vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum; continuity between the written, taught, and tested curriculum; sufficient allocation of resources to implement these policies; and
- Instructional practices – policies requiring that instructional content and delivery be based on sound research and educational practice (Keefe & Jenkins, 2000).

The support that principals receive from the department of education, particularly from the circuit, district and provincial level, is an important prerequisite. Fink and Resnick (2001) examined school districts' efforts to develop principals into instructional leaders. They developed core strategies for developing the role of the principal as instructional leader which included nested learning communities, peer learning, principal institutes, leadership for instruction, and individual coaching as reinforcing strategic activities.

Goldring, Preston and Huff (2002:2) add more to the obligations of the department of education by indicating that it should provide principal development programmes which are focused directly on the problem of developing professional practice, competence and

expertise for instructional improvement and improved learner performance. The principal, in collaboration with the staff and the school community, must ensure that there is programme coherence in the school. Programme coherence, according to Newmann, King and Youngs (2001) is a measure of the extent to which a school is programmatically integrated. Newmann *et al.* (2001) contend that unrelated and unfocused improvement programmes may affect learner performance negatively. As instructional leader, the principal must ensure that there is alignment and coordination of curriculum and instruction with learning goals and assessment. This will ensure that learner performance is improved (Schmoker & Marzano, 1999).

King and Youngs (2000) contend that the development of school capacity is a crucial prerequisite affecting instructional quality and improved learner performance. They indicate that at the heart of school capacity, are principals who are focused on the development of teachers' knowledge and skills, a professional community, programme coherence, and technical resources. Newmann *et al.* (2000:300) define school capacity as the collective power of the full staff to improve learner performance. This definition suggests that in the development of learner and school performance efforts, individual teachers and the whole school must be taken into consideration.

Lambert (1998:18) asserts that building capacity in schools embodies a new understanding of leadership by using the term “constructivist leadership” to refer to leadership as a reciprocal learning process that enables participants in a community to construct meaning towards a shared purpose. Lambert (1998:18) upholds the view that in the enactment of their instructional leadership roles, principals must distribute responsibilities to all teachers, thereby broadening the school's capacity to improve instruction. Hopkins (2001:68) indicates that principals as instructional leaders must create, within a context of values, synergy between a focus on teaching and learning on the one hand, and building professional learning communities on the other.

The prerequisites for instructional leadership can be summed up using the six standards of what principals should know and be able to do, as set out by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2002:6-7). The six standards include: leading schools in a way that places learners' learning at the centre; setting high expectations for academic and social development of all learners and educators; demanding content and instruction that ensure that learners achieve agreed-upon academic standards; creating a culture of

continuous learning for adults tied to learners' learning and other school goals; using multiple sources of data as tools to diagnose shortfalls in instructional improvement; and actively engaging the community to create a shared responsibility for the improvement of the school and learner performance.

Regarding the autonomy of the principal, he/she must be given a measure of authority within departmental guidelines, to make decisions in key areas that directly affect the instructional process. The principal must have the authority to select and place employees; and must be held accountable for the outcomes achieved by staff members. The principal must exercise his/her authority to establish objectives and indicators of success and to develop a comprehensive evaluation process, while being held accountable for monitoring the evaluation of programmes, students, and staff. Finally, the principal has, and must exercise, the authority to involve staff, students, parents, and other members of the school community in any matter that will promote the school mission and vision, while being accountable for the impact of those decisions.

With regard to the elements required for an effective and positive student learning environment, the principal must give high priority to the elements of school culture. The principal must cultivate a school culture that will guarantee a school climate that is pleasant and free of all health and safety hazards. Such an environment will be conducive for high expectations for achievement and appropriate behaviour of students, instructional and administrative staff.

The principal must also inculcate a culture of open communication and collaborative decision making. Such a culture will go a long way to cultivating an attitude of caring, respect, support, and positive reinforcement among learners, instructional staff, and the principal. Furthermore, the principal should prioritize learner achievement and continuously monitor group and individual achievement levels. The principal should be a role model, capable of establishing and displaying high achievement expectations for herself/himself as an example to others. The principal who is an instructional leader should be entrepreneurial in obtaining resources to support the instructional programme by seeking assistance from institutions such as civic groups, business, industry, and foundations. This can be achieved by establishing clear, continuous and open communication with staff members, parents, students, and community members to build broad-based ownership of the school's mission.

The principal should recognize those who achieve at a high level and strive to build and maintain a positive school climate that focuses on student welfare and achievement. Finally, he/she must be a strong decision maker, involving others collaboratively and focusing on the best interests of the learners, the school and the community.

The latter prerequisite of instructional leadership is summed up by Leithwood and Riehl (2003) as one for effective educational leaders. All the prerequisites for successful instructional leadership are informed by the view that principals need certain leadership abilities to achieve and maintain quality schools in complex environments, which, according to Vick (2004:11), implies that principals should be equipped with “multifaceted skills”. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) propose the following prerequisites for successful leadership, with their associated performance indicators.

2.7.1 SETTING DIRECTION AS A PREREQUISITE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This prerequisite includes three activities which the principal should perform, each of which has its own associated performance indicators. The first activity is creating and sharing a focused vision and mission to improve learner performance. This can be achieved by aligning the vision and mission, priorities and values with the context of the school and coupling this with charismatic leadership.

The second activity is cultivating the acceptance of cooperative goals through developing and valuing collaboration and caring about each other, thereby building trust and support among the people involved. The third activity that contributes to setting direction for the school is creating high performance expectations of staff members. This could lead to improved learner performance if the principal informs staff about their performance expectations.

2.7.2 DEVELOPING PEOPLE AS A PREREQUISITE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This prerequisite includes sharing leadership in professional communities, providing an appropriate model, cultivating learning among all members of the professional community, and providing individual support. Much of the literature on leadership has consistently emphasized the fact that leadership should not reside in one person (e.g. the principal), but the role should be distributed among staff members in the organization. The principal must

therefore know how and be willing to share and distribute instructional leadership, and empower his staff by providing them with opportunities to innovate, develop and learn together. The principal, by being an appropriate role model, should teach and help his staff to become better followers; to set appropriate examples which are consistent with school leaders' values; to manage time effectively to meet school goals; and to cultivate higher levels of commitment to organizational goals.

Cultivating learning among all members in the professional community involves the principal in facilitating learning among all staff members; implementing good teaching practices; facilitating change to cultivate a warm learning environment; instituting relationship structures to improve learner performance; monitoring the performance of learners; behaving in ways consistent with leaders' personal values, attitudes and beliefs; and promoting ethical practice. The principal must also provide individualized support to his staff by acquiring and using resources intelligently to support and monitor high levels of staff performance and needs; demonstrate respect for and concern about people's personal feelings and needs; and provide emotional, psychological and logistical support.

2.7.3 DEVELOPING THE ORGANIZATION AS A PREREQUISITE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This final prerequisite concerns the responsibility of the instructional leader (the principal) to develop the technical skills of his staff, emphasize learner-centred leadership, strengthen the school culture, and monitor organizational performance. In developing the technical skills of his workforce, the principal/instructional leader needs to implement site-based management, work in teams, plan strategically for the future, apply educational law to specific conditions, and maintain effective discipline. Learner-centred leadership can be achieved by employing instructional leadership. Strengthening the school culture requires the principal, in concert with the other stakeholders in the school, to create and maintain a safe learning environment, promote ethical practices, and possess advanced conflict management skills in order to deal with conflict situations when they arise. The instructional leader can monitor organizational performance by using indicators to determine the school's effectiveness, and monitoring both staff and learner performance.

To sum up the prerequisites of instructional leadership and those of effective school leaders as outlined above, Keefe and Jenkins (2000) indicate that

“...desire alone is not enough to ensure that instructional leadership takes place in schools. Instructional leadership can only be successfully enacted if the principal is accorded the necessary support by the department of education, his/her autonomy is recognized, an effective and positive student learning environment prevails, and if the principal is accorded the space to implement the critical roles of instructional leadership.”

Considering all the prerequisites for instructional leadership, and drawing on Daresh, Gantner, Dunlap & Hvizdak (2000); Fennel (2005); Hale & Moorman (2003); and Vick (2004), who indicate that principals need certain leadership abilities and should be equipped with multifaceted skills in order to achieve and maintain quality in schools, the question that may be asked is “Where do principals acquire these skills?” Are they inherent qualities, or do they have to acquire these skills through some process of learning? The following section responds to this question by briefly reviewing literature that deals with preparation programmes for principals (school leaders). This discussion examines arguments for and against recognition of principal preparation programmes as necessary and sufficient preconditions for the improvement of both leadership practice and learner performance.

A sizeable number of principals in South African public schools and in other countries need to acquire management and leadership skills which will be relevant to address the changing contexts of education. The 21st century context of education is different from that of previous centuries and on this basis, Wong (2004:143) proposes that different types of leadership preparation are necessary to produce a new breed of school leaders who will be able to address the 21st century educational context. Wong (2004:140) and Levine (2005:166) are critical of current preparation programmes for school leaders, which they claim, equip principals only with skills to run schools as they exist today, rather than forming leaders who can guide and develop schools for the future.

Drawing on Bush (1998); Hess & Kelly (2005); Johnson & Uline (2005); and Vick (2004), who conclude that leadership quality is a key factor in determining the success or failure of schools, principals need to be prepared by means of tailor-made preparation programmes. These programmes will, in turn, enable the principals to prepare their teachers for instruction so that learners can attain high levels of performance. The central concept in this paragraph is *leadership quality* and on the basis of a literature review conducted by Brundett (2005) and Levine (2005), it cannot be confirmed that current preparation programmes for

school leaders offer the quality of leadership that will become a necessary and sufficient precondition for effective school practice and improved learner performance. The major concern here is that the content of the preparation programmes is not effective in changing the practice of principals and thus ensuring improved learner performance.

Daresh, Gantner, Dunlap and Hvizdak (2000) propose that preparation programmes must be able to address the changing environment of schooling through the use of simulations, case studies, and other means to reflect the conditions principals face in the real world. In support of Daresh *et al.* (2000), Menter, Holligan and Mthenjwa (2005:11) surveyed the influence of the Scottish Qualification for Headship and concluded as follows with regard to what should be achieved through preparation programmes:

“Preparation programmes for principals should enhance the principal’s ability to support others, increase his/her effectiveness as a leader, extend the principal’s professional practice, make the principal a more reflective practitioner, and must effectively develop the principal’s professional values.”

The ultimate goal of this study is to make headway into understanding how we can access, document, communicate and implement good instructional leadership practices in schools. Understanding how principals and educators in general can be assisted in identifying, adopting and implementing best practices for student achievement is today, more than ever before, a central goal of education and leadership. For the purpose of this section of the study, various aspects related to instructional leadership are explored. These include an analysis of this construct by reviewing its historical context, its purpose, function, qualities of instructional leaders, and the impact of instructional leadership on the performance of learners. This analysis of instructional leadership is followed by an exploration of the concept of instructional supervision and a comparison between the two concepts is made.

2.8 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The concept of professional development and its relationship with instructional leadership has been touched on a number of times by Sweitzer (2009), Lashway (2004), and Blasé and Blasé (2000). Professional development in the instructional leadership paradigm is concerned with the role of principals as instructional leaders in influencing the professional development of educators in their schools and also the responsibility of principals to develop themselves professionally in order to be able perform their new role. Banfi

(1997:15) views professional development as comprising those activities in which professionals are engaged for the purpose of achieving professional competence. It is further perceived as a variety of activities in which educators are involved to be able to improve their practice.

It has been mentioned a number of times in the preceding paragraphs that although from its inception, instructional leadership has been documented as being on top of the agenda with regard to its influence on learner achievement, it has not been implemented. This failure to implement instructional leadership may be as a result of the principals' lack of expertise in this new role, which necessitates the implementation of a professional development programme to deal with this challenge. An example of such a programme in South Africa is the Advanced Certificate in Education (Leadership and Management) for principals. This programme is tailor-made for principals and one of its main aims is to address the leadership and management challenges that principals contend with in their practice.

According to the Centre for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2005), the professional development of staff members in terms of instructional leadership is one of the major responsibilities of school principals. The principal has a duty to provide guidance that improves teachers' classroom practices. Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004:24) cite the following specific leadership practices that help in the professional development of staff members:

“The principal must stimulate the teachers intellectually by engaging them in professional development sessions at conferences, or visits to high-performing schools; provide them with individualized support through modelling lessons by experts in the subject, classroom observation, and providing constructive feedback to teachers. The teachers can also benefit from peer observations, debriefing sessions with colleagues, and feedback from the principal.”

“The principal can also provide them with an appropriate model by providing the services of an instructional coach whose function would be to serve as a mentor for new teachers and help experienced teachers to develop strong leadership skill”.

In order for principals to successfully engage in the practices described above, Buffie (1989) identifies knowledge, skills and context as vital components in the development of instructional leadership. Buffie (1989) further contends that knowledge is central to

effective decision making and is fundamental to the skills development necessary to carry out instructional goals. Knowledge and skills are applied within the context of a set of beliefs or values and one’s beliefs and value system is what serves as a foundation for decision making. Table 2.4 represents the knowledge, skills, and context for principals as instructional leaders:

TABLE 2.4: Knowledge, skills, and context of principals as instructional leaders (Adapted from Buffie, 1989, cited by Chang, 2001)

Knowledge The instructional leader should know and understand:	Skills The instructional leader should be able to:	Context The context should show evidence of:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What goes on in every classroom • How to assess entire school and expectations at various grade levels • Curriculum development, standards, accountability • As “captain of the ship”, the principal should know the “trade” inside out • All members of his/her staff • People’s strengths and areas for development • Learning activities to produce desired learner outcomes • Supervision models (e.g. clinical supervision) • Political dynamics in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate • Mediate • Coordinate • Problem solve • Be emphatic • Be visionary • Take risks • Establish a good working relationship with teachers • Plan and coordinate curricular, social, and cultural diversity • Perform multiple tasks • Synthesize • Implement educational goals • Manage time effectively • Build effective master schedules • Support teachers in providing quality education for all students • Forge partnerships and garner resources • Nurture cooperation between schools and communities they serve • Assess the needs and strengths of the school and the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students’ learning • Effective discipline • Principals’ willingness to be the “jack of all trades” • Good instruction with a process for handling “bad” teaching and teachers • Adults talking with kids, watching them, and learning from them • Teaching that addresses children’s ethnicity, culture, language, differences in learning styles, and why they act the way they do • Excitement, collaboration, empowerment of teachers and students • Community involvement and good customer service • Trust at all levels • Active community partnerships

2.9 PRINCIPALS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

This section is concerned with understanding the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding the practice of instructional leadership. The majority of the literature used as background to this study has focused on the school principals as instructional leaders. This approach has thus exalted principalship above all other participants in the teaching and learning enterprise. Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and Van Rooyen (2009:1) indicate that the core purpose of principalship is to provide leadership and management in all areas of the school to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning take place, and which promote the highest possible standards of learner achievement. In supporting this view Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006:5) indicate that *“there is no single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership.”* In the same vein, Robinson (2007) contends that the impact of student outcomes is likely to be greater where there is direct leader involvement in the oversight of, and participation in, curriculum planning and coordination, and teacher learning and professional development *“.....the closer leaders are to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to make a difference to learners”*.

Based on the above views, the question that arises is: “What are perceptions of both principals and teachers with regard to the practice of instructional leadership?” In view of the emphasis that is placed on the principal (ship) in the school leadership and effectiveness literature, teachers would expect principals to be the sole providers of leadership for the improvement of learner achievement. The distributed leadership literature, on the contrary, sees teachers as leaders and therefore as important as principals in providing instructional leadership.

Jorgenson and Peal (2008:52) argue that *“..... there exists, in many instances where the principals distance themselves from the day-to-day challenges of teaching, a perception gap between principals and teachers that needs to be closed if they are to work together for their mutual benefit and that of the children they serve”*. Teachers therefore feel that principals should be visible in the school and also in the classroom, so that teachers do not feel isolated and left to their own devices. Where teachers feel that they are working together with the principal, their morale and performance are boosted. According to Jorgenson and Peal

(2008:54), teachers appreciate administrators who occasionally offer to relieve a class, take every opportunity to be guest teachers, and demonstrate their skills and engagement in classroom life. Teachers do not always appreciate a principal who tells them what to do, but one who models what should be happening in the classroom is always appreciated.

Gordon, Stockard, and Williford (1992) found a lack of congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions with regard to the practice of instructional leadership. While teachers would be comfortable with the visible presence of the principal in the classroom, principals need to have skills to enable them to enact this role. The effective-schools research domain has shown that principals do not necessarily have these skills. Furthermore, some principals cling to their traditional management roles, whilst others do not see themselves as instructional leaders but as managers of their schools.

2.10 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN FIVE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

This section explores the practice of instructional leadership (IL) in five different countries, namely: two African countries (Nigeria and South Africa), two European countries (the United Kingdom and Norway) and the United States of America. The discussion of the practice of IL in these countries provides an overview of the standard requirements for appointment as a principal, the procedures followed in the recruitment of individuals for appointment as principals, and the general functions of the principal in each country.

2.10.1 NIGERIA

The functions of the principal, as identified by Arikewuyo (1999:70) and the Commonwealth Secretariat (1993), indicate that the Nigerian principal is not only an instructional leader, but performs both managerial and instructional functions. The following functions are directly related to the principal's instructional leadership practice:

“Providing leadership for curriculum development; providing leadership for instructional improvement; creating an environment conducive for the realization of human potential; influencing the behaviour of staff and learners; supervising instructional activities in the school (Arikewuyo, 1999:70); guiding curriculum implementation and change, creating a professional ethos within the school by involving staff members in decision-making” (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1993:35).

The managerial functions of the Nigerian principal which are performed concurrently with the above functions include, but are not limited to:

“Managing and deploying resources efficiently; allocating school accommodation appropriately; ensuring satisfactory standards of maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities; managing the restructuring and redeployment of teachers; and managing the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE), and Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)” (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1993:35).

On the whole, principals in Nigeria ranked academic and instructional activities, including curriculum development, teaching and instructional supervision, second to staff and student management, liaison, coordinating, and financial management which were treated with much vigour (Arikewuyo, 2009:7). This assertion is supported by Mulkeen *et al.* (2007) who indicate that principals in most African countries do not have regard for instructional supervision and thus do not view instructional supervision as part of their duties.

2.10.2 UNITED KINGDOM (UK)

In the United Kingdom, according to Tjeldvoll, Wales and Welle-Strand (2005:25), the concepts of leadership and management were rethought in the 1990s. McBeath (2003) argues that leadership itself is *“a term full of ambiguities and a range of interpretations that can mean what we want it to mean”*. Leadership has been exalted above management, thereby creating a distance between leadership and management, and in the process management is seen as a more limited concept and too closely associated with managerialism, a somewhat discredited approach based on rational, scientific principles.

As in Nigeria, Tjeldvoll *et al.* (2005) highlight a need for potential principals to receive proper professional training and induction before taking up leadership positions in United Kingdom (UK) schools. According to Hopkins (2001), instructional leadership is an approach that emphasizes the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. The focus of instructional leadership needs to be on two key skill clusters, namely, strategies for effective teaching and learning, and the conditions that support implementation, in particular staff development and planning.

Successful teachers in the UK are expected to create powerful cognitive and social tasks for their learners and teach them how to make productive use of such tasks; and the purpose of instructional leadership is to facilitate and support this approach to teaching and learning. From the above statements, it follows that in the UK, instructional leadership is not necessarily a responsibility of principals only, in relation to teachers. It also involves the role of teachers in relation to their students.

2.10.3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (USA)

Hallinger (2005:1) regards instructional leadership as “one lasting legacy of the effective schools movement”, which has been integrated into the vocabulary of educational administration. He further indicates that the global emphasis on accountability since the turn of the 21st century seems to have re-ignited interest in instructional leadership. This suggests that instructional leadership is a 20th century construct that has begun to enjoy more prominence in the 21st century.

The practice of instructional leadership in the USA was highly conservative, conceived as a role carried out by the principal with little reference made to teachers, department heads, or even to assistant principals as instructional leaders (Hallinger, 2005:3). There was little discussion of instructional leadership as a distributed characteristic or function to be shared.

During the 1980s, policymakers in the USA realized that principals in instructionally effective schools exercised strong instructional leadership and this prompted them to encourage all principals to assume this role in order to make their schools more effective. In spite of some criticisms levelled against instructional leadership, it became strongly identified as a normatively desirable role that principals who wish to be effective should fulfil. The following are some of the reasons why instructional leadership survived all the criticisms in the USA:

Instructional leaders were viewed as strong, directive leaders who had been successful at “turning their schools around.” They were viewed as culture builders, who sought to build an “academic press” that fostered high expectations and standards for students as well as for teachers (Ali-Mielcarek, 2003). They were regarded as goal oriented; able to define a clear direction for the school and motivate others to join in the school’s achievement, and the effective instructional leader is able to align the strategies and activities of the school with the school’s

academic mission. On the basis of this, instructional leaders focused not only on leading but also on managing where their management roles include coordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction (Hallinger, 2007).

Instructional leaders in the USA led with a combination of charisma and expertise. According to Hallinger (2005:4), these were “hands-on principals, hip-deep in curriculum and instruction”, not afraid of working directly with teachers on the improvement of teaching and learning.

2.10.4 NORWAY

In Norway, the concept of “principal” did not carry as much weight as it did in other parts of the world. According to Tjeldvoll *et al.* (2005:27) it was only in 1936 that the concept of “principal” as a school leader who was “first among equals” first appeared. This meant that the school leader (principal) did not wield so much power and authority over the other teachers. In the 1970s, focus was placed on the assumed authoritarian relationship between teacher and pupil.

The Norwegian education system developed firstly along encyclopaedic curriculum lines and then towards progressivism, within the social democratic tradition of Scandinavia, and needs to be seen in the light of regionalism (Tjeldvoll *et al.*, 2005:27). Developments in the 1990s moved the principal from being the first among equals to a professional management representative for the education system. In the Norwegian context, “leadership used to mean, in principle, to control the relationship between the inside and outside of an organization, with the result that as long as clear rules and regulations were followed, a leader with authority was not needed, merely a gifted administrator.”

Tjeldvoll *et al.* (2005:28) indicate that the leadership focus in schools should be on “pedagogical leadership”, that is, to concentrate on planning for and inspiring the main pedagogical processes of the school, learning and development. Globalization has impacted the Norwegian education system, forcing changes upon the authorities, with the result that school leadership increasingly started to focus on specific goals. From the 1970s, the education authorities began instigating in-service training courses which were tailor-made to prepare principals for their instructional leadership roles.

On the whole, school principals in Norway tend towards a more administrative style of school leadership rather than an instructional style. The extent to which instructional leadership is reported (supervision of instruction, supporting teachers' professional development, setting the school goals) is relatively weak in Norway compared to countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America, Nigeria and South Africa, to mention just a few.

2.10.5 SOUTH AFRICA

Hoadley, Christie, Jacklin and Ward (2007) conducted a study in some South African secondary schools with the primary purpose of gaining an understanding of the issue of growing prominence in policy and research discussions as to how school management might contribute to improved student achievement outcomes. The study revealed that most leadership studies in South Africa indicate that the majority of principals have not received adequate specialist training, especially in financial management and instructional leadership. Bush and Oduro (2006), in their review of research on leadership and management, argue that most of the research into leadership is “not conceptually rich”, and assert the need for a theory of leadership relevant to the South African context.

Hoadley *et al.* (2007) indicate that knowledge of how principals manage the curriculum in schools in South Africa is limited. They further argue that while there is growing consensus in South African research that school principals play a crucial role in creating the conditions for improved instruction, what is less understood is how they contribute towards this cause. Hallinger and Heck (1998) contend that the principal's influence on schooling outcomes is in shaping the direction of the school – the setting of visions, missions and goals. This implies that principals need to create “conditions of possibility” for teaching and learning and establish a form of “organizational containment” which enables teaching and learning and sets a “climate of expectations”.

2.11 EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

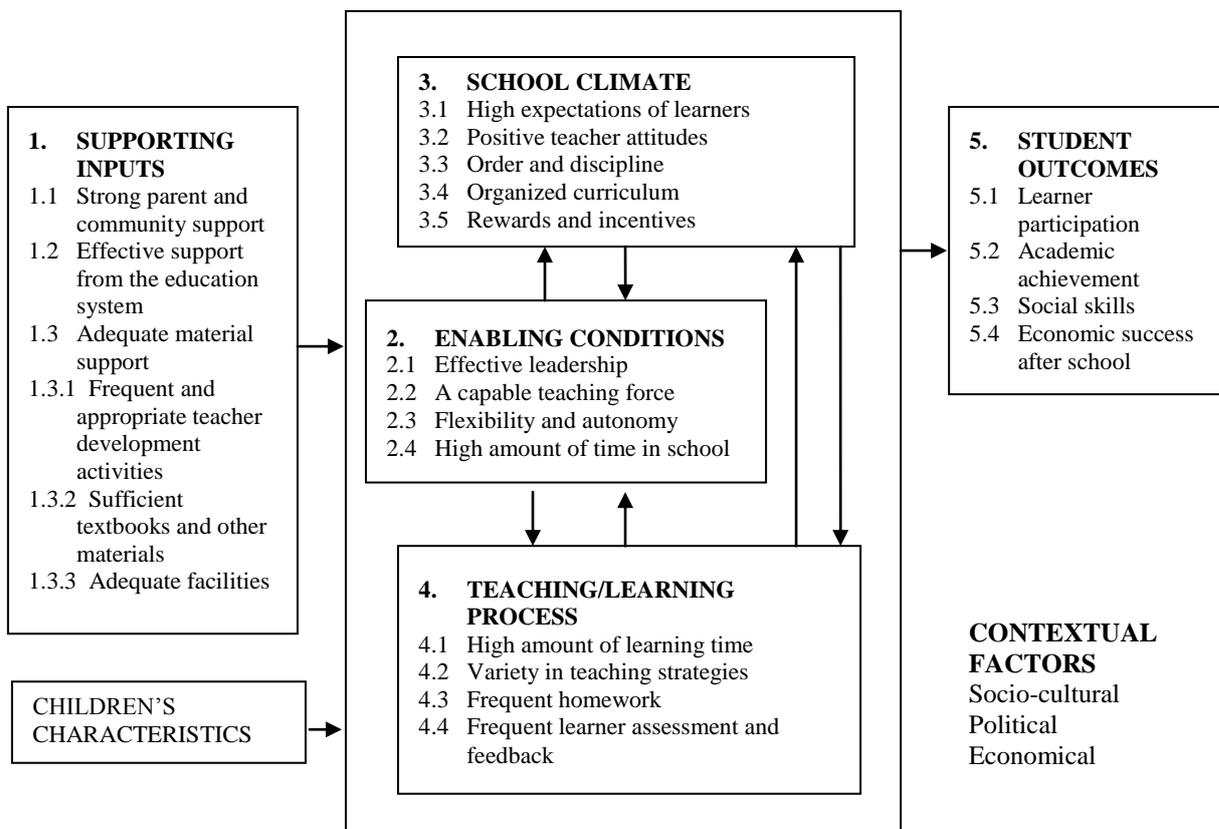
Effective instructional leadership breeds effective schools which, in turn, produce successful learners. It is important at this point to briefly indicate the characteristics of effective schools, as this will assist in providing a broader scope of what instructional leaders do to

make schools effective. Rowe (2007:5) summarizes the features of effective schools into what has become known as the “five factor model” of school effectiveness, namely:

“a purposeful educational leadership; challenging teaching and high expectations of students’ achievement; involvement and consistency among teachers; a positive and orderly climate; and frequent evaluation of student progress.”

This “five factor model” continues to form what might be termed the “optimistic account” of school effectiveness – an account that presents a positive view of the role and efficacy of structural or contextual school influences. In concert with Rowe’s (2007) five factor model and the optimistic account of school effectiveness, Heneveld and Craig (1996) present a comprehensive framework, based upon a review of key factors that influence student outcomes. This framework identifies eighteen factors divided into four categories, namely: supporting inputs from outside the school, enabling conditions, school climate, and teaching and learning processes. The following figure represents Heneveld and Craig’s (1996) framework:

FIGURE 2.4: School factors related to effectiveness (Adapted from Heneveld & Craig, 1996)



The supporting inputs are regarded as the necessary conditions that sustain the school. Heneveld and Craig (1996) indicate that the inputs can be either prerequisite conditions (material supports) or supports from outside the school (parents and educational system) and all these factors are necessary for creating an effective school.

The enabling conditions are regarded as the necessary factors relating to leadership, capable teachers, flexibility, and amount of time in the school. Schools need effective leadership with a vision and one that is capable of influencing others (teachers, learners and the community) to buy into the vision of the school. With regard to school climate, the following factors are necessary for effective schools: high expectations, positive teacher attitudes, order and discipline, organized curriculum, and rewards and incentives.

The final category in the above model is the teaching/learning process, which is regarded as very important because the quality of the instruction determines the outcomes of education. Furthermore, the teacher is regarded as the central component in the instruction, since he/she is the person who implements the pedagogical strategies, assesses performance, and

provides homework and learning time (Skipper, 2006; Craig & Heneveld, 1996; Rowe, 2007).

To recap this section of the study, the experiences gathered from the enactment of instructional leadership in the five countries discussed above adds to the perceptions that are held with regard to the practice of instructional leadership. In terms of the two African countries discussed, principals in Nigeria do not perceive instructional leadership and supervision as being part of their duties, and this is a new concept to principals in South Africa, which necessitates them having to undergo specialized training. The introduction of the ACE School Leadership programme by the South African National Department of Education in 2007 can be regarded as a starting point in the department's strategy to improve educational standards (Bush, Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2011:1).

According to Bush et al. (2011:3) the ACE leadership programme consists of the following core modules:

Module 1: Understanding school leadership in the South African context

Module 2: Managing teaching and learning

Module 3: Leading and managing people

Module 4: Managing organizational systems, physical and financial resources

Module 5: Managing policy, planning, school development and governance.

Bush et al. (2011) hold the view that effective leadership and management are vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for learners; and there is emerging evidence that high quality leadership makes a significant difference to school improvement and learning outcomes. The ACE school leadership programme was therefore designed to accomplish just that through its vision which is “to provide structured learning opportunities that promote quality education in South African schools through the development of a corps of education leaders who apply understanding, values, knowledge and skills to school leadership and management within the vision of democratic transformation” (Centre for Educational Leadership, University of Stellenbosch, 2011:1).

The core module that is relevant to this study is the second one: managing teaching and learning. This module focuses on what is required to improve teaching and learning in order to enhance learner outcomes. This is a cross-cutting module that draws upon the work covered in the other modules of the programme. The major thrust of this module is in

addressing topics such as leadership qualities and strategies for instructional leadership, distributed leadership, stimulating and motivating educators, establishing a learning culture in the school, and developing plans to manage and lead (DoE, 2008). All the topics that have been indicated above were discussed earlier in this chapter as characteristics of instructional leadership.

In the United Kingdom, the enactment of instructional leadership embraced not only the responsibility of principals to teachers, but also the role of teachers in relation to their learners (distributed leadership), while the opposite was the case in the United States where instructional leadership was seen as the absolute province of principals. In Norway, the enactment of instructional leadership carries less weight in that principals tend towards a more administrative style of leadership.

2.12 SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter has focused on the review of literature on instructional leadership and learner performance in order to enable the researcher and the readers to gain a better theoretical understanding of this study. The literature reviewed includes, inter alia, literature about the historical development of the instructional leadership construct and how it manifests itself in the school context. Scholarly articles that were reviewed reiterate the fact that there is a direct relationship between instructional leadership, school culture and school climate; and how the school principal, in developing a vision for the school, develops the culture and climate of the school. This review has been a vehicle through which the researcher has established what other researchers and leadership practitioners contend about the role of school principals as instructional leaders.

This literature review assisted the researcher to develop a focus in attempting to answer the research questions that are the focus of this study. Table 2.5 represents the most important scholarly articles which were used in the study to respond to the research questions, which are as follows:

Primary question:

What are the variables related to instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals and what is their effect on learner performance in the matriculation examination?

Secondary questions:

1. *How can instructional leadership possibly contribute to learner performance in the matriculation examinations?*
2. *How do HODs and deputy principals perceive the role of their principals with regard to instructional leadership?*
3. *How are the principals prepared with regard to their role as instructional leaders?*

The research questions above were addressed in the study through various sub-sections that form the major part of the literature review. The table below reflects the research questions, the appropriate subheading(s) responding to each question, the key references, and the predominant constructs and emerging ideas regarding the practice of instructional leadership.

TABLE 2.5: Summary of the research questions, subheadings responding to each question, key references, predominant constructs and emerging ideas from the literature review

Research questions	Subheading(s) responding to each research question	Key references	Predominant constructs and emerging ideas about instructional leadership
<p>Primary question: <i>What are the variables related to instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals and what is their effect on learner performance in the matriculation examination?</i></p>	<p>1. Variables related to instructional leadership</p>	<p>Keefe & Jenkins (1992); Hallinger (2002); Cladwell (2002); Chang (2001); Harris (2010); Lashway (1995); Blasé & Blasé (2001)</p>	<p>The instructional leader has the responsibility to perform the following functions in an attempt to improve the achievement of learners: promote frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities; define and communicate shared vision and goals of the school; monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process, and manage the curriculum and instruction.</p>
<p>Secondary question 1: <i>How can instructional leadership possibly contribute to the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination?</i></p>	<p>1. Purpose and functions of instructional leadership 2. Instructional leadership and teaching and learning</p>	<p>Lashway (2000); Du Four (2002); King (2002); Lahui-Ako (2000)</p>	<p>All primary activities undertaken by the school's leadership should be tightly coupled to the core technology of schooling, which is teaching and learning. This view implies that a principal's primary role is instructional leadership and, as such, the principal must guide and direct changes to teaching and learning. Distributing leadership to others in the school further explains the perceptions of the principal with regard to his/her role as instructional leader.</p>

Research questions	Subheading(s) responding to each research question	Key references	Predominant constructs and emerging ideas about instructional leadership
<p>Secondary question 2: <i>How do HODs and deputy principals perceive the role of their principals regarding instructional leadership?</i></p>	<p>1. Principals' and teachers' perceptions about instructional leadership</p>	<p>Robinson (2007) in Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen (2009); Jorgenson & Peal (2008); Goddard, Stockard & Williford (1992) in Kochamba & Murray (2008); Arikewuyo (2009); Mulkeen <i>et al.</i> (2007)</p>	<p>The improvement of student outcomes is likely to be greater where there is direct leader involvement in the oversight of, and participation in curriculum planning and coordination, teacher learning and professional development. The closer leaders are to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to make a difference to learners.</p> <p>Teachers appreciate administrators who occasionally offer to relieve a class, take every opportunity to be guest teachers, and demonstrate their skills and engagement in classroom life. A principal who models what should be happening in the classroom is more appreciated by teachers than one who tells them what to do.</p> <p>There is a lack of congruence between teachers' and principals' perceptions with regard to the practice of instructional leadership. The visible presence of the principal in the classroom will not have any impact on teachers unless if it is accompanied by skills that enable the principal to enact the role of instructional leadership. Research on effective schools has shown that most principals do not have such skills; further that some principals cling to their traditional management roles; and others do not see themselves as instructional leaders but as managers of their schools.</p> <p>Principals in most African states ranked academic and instructional activities including curriculum development, teaching and instructional supervision, second to staff and student management, coordinating, and financial management, which they treat with much vigour. Principals in most African countries do not have any regard for instructional supervision and thus do not view it as part of their duties.</p>

Research Questions	Subheading(s) responding to each research question	Key references	Predominant constructs and emerging ideas about instructional leadership
<p><i>Primary research question 3: How are principals prepared with regard to their role as instructional leaders?</i></p>	<p>1. Professional development and instructional leadership</p>	<p>Bush and Oduro (2006); Kelly (2005); Bush (2007); Bush and Jackson (2000)</p>	<p>Bush (2007) argues that there is little evidence of principals and other school leaders being developed for the central function of schools promotion and that principals are further not found to be conceptualizing their role as leaders of learning. Professional development of principals and their capacity to develop others in the school in line with curriculum development, management and supervision, will serve as a key to ensuring continuous and uninterrupted improvement in learner performance.</p>

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

By definition, a conceptual framework is a consistent and comprehensive theoretical framework emerging from an inductive integration of previous literature, theories, and other pertinent information. It is usually the basis for reframing the research questions and formulating hypotheses, or making informal tentative predictions about the possible outcome of a study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). According to Shields and Hassan (2006:315), a conceptual framework is used in research to outline possible courses of action, or to present a preferred approach to an idea or thought. It can also act like a map to provide coherence for an empirical inquiry.

The conceptual framework for this study is in two parts. The first part details three major issues which impact directly on a principal. These are *the decline in learner performance in the matriculation examination; the basic skills and capacities of principals; and the professional preparation of principals*. These issues are referred to in the conceptual framework as the primary or major challenges because they form the basis of the entire study; that is, they encompass the issue that prompted me to engage in this study, namely, addressing the question of the decline in learner performance.

The second part of the conceptual framework provides an overview of some ways that instructional leadership, as suggested in the literature, in the form of the four variables, namely: promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities; defining and communicating shared vision and goals; monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, and managing the curriculum and instruction may respond to the challenges faced by principals with regard to learner performance. These issues are referred to as secondary challenges because whilst their purpose is to address learner performance (as functions of IL), there is actually no compatibility between them and the traditional role of the principal. Based on this view, the enactment of these variables will always pose a challenge to the instructional leader.

FIGURE 3.1: Representation of the conceptual framework of the study



The above diagram represents the conceptual framework upon which the entire study is built. The two parts of the conceptual framework are now discussed in detail.

3.2 THE PRIMARY/MAJOR CHALLENGES

There are three major challenges which were identified through the literature review and are reflected in the conceptual framework of this study. They are discussed in detail below:

3.2.1 THE DECLINE IN LEARNER PERFORMANCE

The decline in learner performance in South African public secondary schools from 2004 to 2008 set the tone for my engagement with this study. Various education stakeholders began

to harbour expectations of school principals to bring about change in their schools. This situation required the principals to adopt a particular leadership style that would see them being “hands on” in the management of teaching and learning in their schools. Instructional leadership was identified as the most appropriate leadership style for this purpose. The literature review for this study has indicated that there is indeed a correlation between instructional leadership and learner performance.

3.2.2 THE BASIC SKILLS AND CAPACITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

The literature review reiterated the increasingly changing role of the principal from that of a traditional school manager and administrator to that of an instructional leader. This change of roles brings with it many expectations of principals, including inter alia, managing the curriculum and instruction, monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, communicating a shared vision and goals for the school, and providing teacher development. This study sets out to investigate the extent to which the principal has the basic skills and capacity for engaging in all the above instructional leadership roles, and whether this brings about improvement in learner performance in the matriculation examination.

The literature review also emphasized the importance of skills that principals require with regard to their new role. This perspective prompted me to question whether there is any correlation between departmental expectations of principals in terms of their output as instructional leaders, and the amount of support that the department provides to principals with regard to new skills, particularly those related to instructional leadership. This aspect formed part of the questions included in the structured interviews.

3.2.3 THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF PRINCIPALS

The professional preparation of principals as instructional leaders can be regarded as a topic for further research in its own right. The increasingly changing role of the principal does not depend on the number of years that one has served as a principal to enable one to adapt to new challenges. The literature review has shown that the enactment of instructional leadership requires the principal to be equipped with multifaceted skills which form the prerequisites for instructional leadership (Vick, 2004:11). The literature has also indicated that there is a lack of instructional leadership, or in other words, the practice of instructional

leadership, especially in South African schools, is limited. A lack of depth in the training of principals for their role as instructional leaders and a time-consuming increase in paperwork which consumes much of the principal's time (Phillips, 2009:1), have been cited as two primary reasons for the lack of instructional leadership. The literature also links the problem of lack of professional preparation of principals to the recruitment and appointment of principals, and their development for their role as instructional leaders.

3.2.4 THE RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPALS: THE CURRENT SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

The current situation in South Africa with regard to the recruitment and appointment of principals is based on the following criteria: the potential principal must have been a teacher for a minimum of seven years; he/she must hold a REQV 13 qualification; and must be of sound character. The REQV (Relative Qualification Value) 13 is a teacher's diploma which requires the recipient to have been trained for three years to qualify to become a teacher. A question that emanates from this requirement is whether the teacher qualifications include a module, or modules, that prepare the person for an instructional leadership role, and if not, does any person holding such a qualification qualify to become a principal?

Whilst the REQV 13 qualification plus seven years experience which are laid down as requirements for a principalship post are very low when compared to the complexity of the role of the principal, it is questionable if a highly qualified person, with many years of experience, will necessarily make a good principal. This possibility is addressed in the questionnaire which was designed for the principals.

3.3 THE SECONDARY CHALLENGES

The secondary challenges in the conceptual framework are the four variables relating to instructional leadership which were identified in chapter 2. These four variables, as secondary challenges to the principal's role, are now discussed individually, with specific focus on the important concepts that develop from these variables.

3.3.1 PROMOTING FREQUENT AND APPROPRIATE SCHOOL-WIDE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

The literature review which was conducted in support of this variable revealed that schools have become less in need of control and more in need of both support and capacity development. This implies that the department of education needs to support and build the capacity of principals. Principals, in turn, need to support and build the capacity of their teachers to enable them to carry out their teaching obligations. The principal can achieve this by attending teacher development workshops and seminars for all learning areas. The main concepts that developed from this variable are support and capacity development. Questions to establish the extent of support and the level of capacity building which the principals receive from the department were asked during the structured interviews.

3.3.2 DEFINING AND COMMUNICATING SHARED VISION AND GOALS

From the literature dealing with defining and communicating a shared vision and goals, the concepts of strategic leadership, and articulation of the vision and goals of the school into a plan of action emerged. The plan of action should allow all parties to participate and feel a sense of ownership that will enable quality learning to be realized. A further view that emerged from the literature review is that the principal must ensure that there is dialogue between him/her and the rest of the stakeholders. Such dialogue would promote alignment of all the stakeholders to the vision and goals of the school. During the structured interviews, the principals were questioned about the extent to which they engage the stakeholders on issues related to the strategic direction of their schools, and how much they engage their teachers in planning activities that might impact directly on learner performance in the matriculation examination.

3.3.3 MONITORING AND PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Some scholars in the IL paradigm have referred to the monitoring and provision of feedback on the teaching and learning process as “facilitative leadership”. This implies that they see the role of the principal as instructional leader as one of facilitating the provision of effective teaching and learning. The literature emphasizes the following activities in which the principal should engage during the monitoring and provision of feedback: provision of instructional leadership through discussion of instructional issues; observing classroom teaching and giving feedback on his/her observations as a way of providing and encouraging

best instructional practices; providing and supporting improvement through monitoring; using learner progress data for programme improvement; encouraging networking among teachers; and modelling effective instructional practices.

During the structured interviews, the principals were questioned as to how much they monitor and provide feedback on their teachers' instructional activities; and the extent to which they thought this facilitative leadership contributed to improved learner performance in the matriculation examination.

3.3.4 MANAGING THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The final, but equally important, secondary challenge for the principal's instructional leadership activities is managing the curriculum and instruction. In practice, management of the curriculum is the competency of the HODs, but within the instructional leadership paradigm this variable also falls within the scope of the principal's core responsibilities. The literature has revealed that the principal must possess an array of skills and competencies in order to address the dynamic nature of this variable. He/she must have knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment. The literature further indicates that a principal needs to be a "head learner" by attending curriculum related seminars and workshops with his teachers. Such practice would go a long way to enabling the principal to assist his/her staff with regard to curriculum matters generally and learning related matters in particular.

3.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter is premised on the view that principals' engagement with the four secondary challenges (variables) in the conceptual framework will assist them to deal decisively with the primary challenges which could otherwise be viewed as complications in terms of the principal's performance. In view of the different definitions of instructional leadership in the literature, its origins in the school effectiveness paradigm, and the changing role of the principal in an era of educational reform in South Africa, this chapter has emphasized the importance of the practice of instructional leadership.

While there is no evidence in the South African literature about the success of this leadership style, this study purports that it is only through the implementation of IL that principals, through their engagement with the four secondary challenges indicated in the

conceptual framework diagram above, will be able to translate their school visions into action. This in turn will enable improvement in the teaching and learning process, culminating in the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination. Both the primary and secondary challenges indicated in the conceptual framework have been utilized in this study to answer both the main research question and the subsidiary research questions. The next chapter focuses on the research design and methodology applied in this study.

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CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Examining the variables related to instructional leadership and the contribution of these variables to the improvement of learner achievement demands a dynamic research approach that is firmly rooted in both qualitative and quantitative epistemology. This is necessary to ensure that the respondents (principals, deputy principals and HODs) in a study of this magnitude and complexity are not denied their subjective views on the phenomena being studied, while the objectivity of the entire research enterprise is guaranteed. In line with this thinking, this study is based on a mixed methods research approach which is explained in detail in the following sections.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The two concepts *research design* and *research methodology* need to be clarified firstly, in order to clear the confusion that is often associated with their usage, particularly by emerging researchers. Each of these concepts is presented as a compound word, with the concepts *design* and *methodology* attached to the noun *research*. It is appropriate to first answer the question: “What is research?”

4.2.1 RESEARCH

A number of definitions of research have been proposed by different scholars and researchers, working in different fields. According to the Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary of Current English (1986:720), research is defined as “*systematic investigation undertaken in order to discover new facts, get additional information*”. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) define research as “*...something that people undertake in order to find out new things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge...*”

From the definitions of research provided above, it follows that research is a planned activity, aimed at establishing new facts and information about a particular phenomenon. The research process involves the identification of a particular problem or area of interest,

translating that problem into a research problem, collecting data, analyzing the data and reporting the findings of the research.

4.2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Leedy (1997:195) defines research design as a plan for a study, providing the overall framework for collecting data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001:166) define it as a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question(s). They further indicate that the goal of a sound research design is to provide results that are judged to be credible. For Durrheim (2004:29), research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution, or implementation of the research strategy.

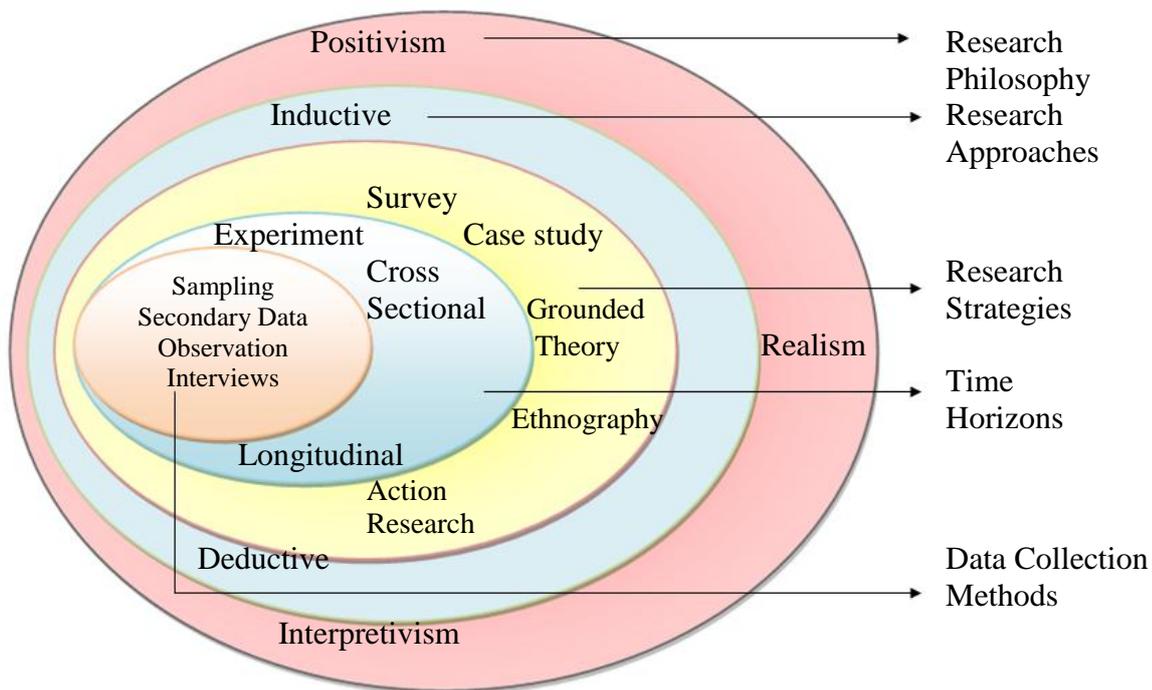
4.2.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Schwardt (2007:195) defines research methodology as a theory of how an inquiry should proceed. It involves analysis of the assumptions, principles and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry. According to Schwardt (2007), Creswell and Tashakkori (2007), and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2007), methodologies explicate and define the kinds of problems that are worth investigating; what constitutes a researchable problem; testable hypotheses; how to frame a problem in such a way that it can be investigated using particular designs and procedures; and how to select and develop appropriate means of collecting data.

4.3 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

As indicated under the analysis of the different definitions of research above, after identifying the research problem or an area of interest, the researcher has to identify appropriate method(s) to approach the problem. In order to give direction to this study, the research process “onion” of Saunders *et al.* (2003:83) was adopted. This onion illustrates the range of choices, paradigms, strategies and steps followed by researchers during the research process (see figure 4.1).

FIGURE 4.1: The research process onion (Saunders *et al.*, 2003:83)



The research process onion provides a summary of the important issues that need to be taken into consideration and reviewed before undertaking any research. The different layers of the onion serve as a basis from which to consider the following: the philosophical orientation of the researcher; the research approach adopted; appropriate research strategies; the research time lines that are under review; and the data collection techniques employed by the researcher.

4.4 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As indicated in section 4.1 above, this study adopted a mixed methods research approach. Kemper, Springfield and Teddlie (2003) define mixed methods design as a method that includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in parallel form (concurrent mixed method design in which two types of data are collected and analyzed in sequential form). Bazely (2003) defines this method as the use of mixed data (numerical and text) and alternative tools (statistics and analysis), but apply the same method. It is a type of research in which a researcher uses the qualitative research paradigm for one phase of a study and a quantitative research paradigm for another phase of the study.

Burke and Onwuegbuzie (2005:1) indicate that mixed methods research is a natural complement to using either of the traditional qualitative or quantitative research methods in

isolation. They view it as the class of research where the researcher combines or mixes qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language in a single study. On the philosophical level, according to Burke et al. (2005), mixed methods research is a “third wave,” or third research movement that moves past paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative.

Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova (2004:7) argue that mixed methods research is more than simply collecting both qualitative and quantitative data; it implies that data are integrated, related, or mixed at some stage of the research process. They further indicate that the underlying logic to mixing is that neither qualitative nor quantitative methods are sufficient in themselves to capture the trends and details of the situation...when used in combination, both qualitative and quantitative data yield a more complete analysis, and they complement each other. In pursuit of the same argument regarding the logic of mixed methods research, Johnson and Onwuegbuzi (2004:17) indicate that mixed methods research includes the use of *induction* which refers to the discovery of patterns, *deduction* which involves testing theories and hypotheses, and *abduction* which refers to uncovering and relying on the best set of explanations for understanding one’s results.

There are several viewpoints as to why qualitative and quantitative research methods can be combined. Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002:46) comment as follows with regard to the combination of the two methods:

“Both approaches can be combined because they share the goal of understanding the world in which we live. They share a unified logic, and the same rules of inference apply to both. A combination of both approaches provides a variety of perspectives from which a particular phenomenon can be studied and they share a common commitment to understanding and improving the human condition, a common goal of disseminating knowledge for practical use. Both approaches provide for cross-validation or triangulation – combining two or more theories or sources of data to study the same phenomena in order to gain a more complete understanding of that phenomenon (interdependence of research methods) and they also provide for the achievement of complementary results by using the strengths of one method to enhance the other (independence of research methods).”

In support of Sale *et al.* (2002), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006:479) identify the following rationales for mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches: participant enrichment, instrument fidelity, treatment integrity, and significance enhancement.

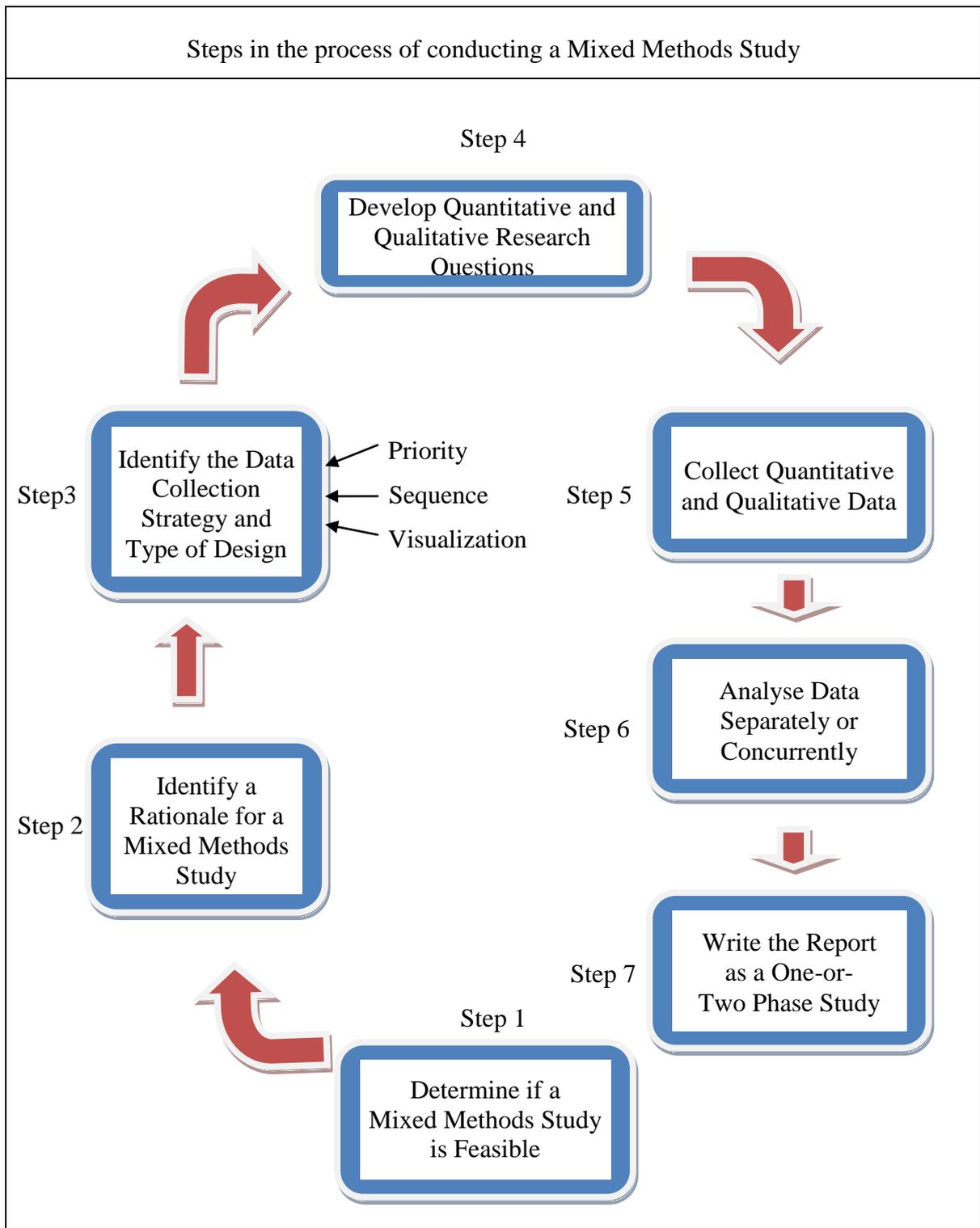
Participant enrichment refers to increasing the number of participants in the research. Leech (2006) contends that the larger the sample, the more reliable and valid the research findings will be. In terms of this rationale, the sample used for this study was limited to all the public secondary schools in Bushbuckridge, where three respondents from each school completed the questionnaire. If all the schools had responded to the questionnaires, a total of 342 questionnaires would have been returned and analyzed.

Instrument fidelity refers to maximizing the appropriateness and/or utility of the instruments used in the study. For the purpose of this study, two instruments were used, namely: questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire for principals is appropriate in as far as it assisted the researcher to solicit biographical information about the principals; the questionnaire for deputy principals and HODs solicited information regarding the principals' instructional leadership practices.

Treatment integrity refers to mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to assess the fidelity of interventions, treatments, or programmes; and *significance enhancement* refers to maximizing the researcher's interpretation of data.

The following figure shows the steps in the process of conducting a mixed methods study.

FIGURE 4.2: Steps in the process of conducting a mixed methods study (Adapted from Cannon, 2004)



The seven steps indicated in the above figure were observed from the planning stage of this research study through to the data analysis stage. Figure 4.2 above emphasizes the fact that rather than viewing various research methods as part of an incompatible quantitative/qualitative dichotomy, in this study, I have approached them as complementary

modes of investigation, resulting in a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Herman & Egri, 2003). The following section discusses in detail, the qualitative and quantitative research methods that were used in this study and, later the phases in the data collection and analysis are tabulated.

4.4.1 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research, according to Van der Merwe (1996), is a research approach aimed at testing theories, determining facts, demonstrating relationships between variables, and predicting outcomes. Quantitative research uses methods from the natural sciences that are designed to ensure objectivity, generalizability and reliability (Weinreich, 2009).

The techniques used in quantitative research include random selection of research participants from the study population in an unbiased manner, the standardized questionnaire or intervention they receive, and statistical methods used to test predetermined hypotheses regarding the relationship between specific variables. The researcher in quantitative research, unlike in the qualitative paradigm where he/she is regarded as a great research instrument due to his/her active participation in the research process, is considered as being external to the actual research, and results are expected to be replicable, no matter who conducts the research.

4.4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research, according to Van der Merwe (cited by Garbers, 1996) is a research approach aimed at the development of theories and understanding. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as a situated activity which locates the observer in the world. It involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world, i.e. qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:10).

In concert with Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Patton (2001:39) defines qualitative research as

“an approach that uses a naturalistic approach which seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as real world settings, where the

researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomena of interest...it is any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification, but instead the kind of research that produces findings derived at from real-world settings where the phenomena of interest unfold naturally.”

Weinreich (2009) indicates that the purpose of qualitative research is to provide the researcher with the perspective of target audience members through immersion in a culture or situation and direct interaction with the people under study. This implies that in the qualitative paradigm the researcher becomes an instrument of data collection, and results may differ greatly depending on who conducts the research.

The objective of qualitative research is to promote better self-understanding and increase insight into the human condition. Unlike quantitative research which has, as its objective, collecting facts about human behaviour that will lead to verification and extension of theories, qualitative research emphasizes the improved understanding of human behaviour and experience.

Qualitative methods include direct observation, document analysis and overview, participant observation, and open-ended unstructured interviewing. These methods are designed to help researchers to understand the meanings people assign to social phenomena and to elucidate the mental processes underlying behaviours. Worthen and Sanders (1987:50) characterize qualitative inquiry as “a research approach that is generally conducted in natural settings, utilizing the researcher as the chief “instrument” in both data gathering and analysis. The benefits of qualitative inquiry are embedded in its emphasis on thick description, i.e. obtaining real, rich, deep data which illuminates everyday patterns of action and meaning from the perspective of those being studied. This view emphasizes the importance of the voice of the researched and gaining first hand information regarding the lived experiences of the researched on a particular subject. It tends to focus on social processes, where the established relationship between the researcher and the respondents is valued, rather than primarily or exclusively on outcomes.”

Qualitative inquiry involves employing multiple data gathering methods, especially participant interviews, and uses an inductive approach to data analysis, extracting its concepts from the mass of particular detail which constitutes the data base. The strength of

qualitative approaches, according to Weinreich (2009), is that “*they generate rich, detailed data that leave the participants’ perspective intact and provide a context for the phenomena being studied.*” A disadvantage of data collection in the qualitative approach is that it may be labour intensive and time consuming.

TABLE 4.1: Quantitative versus qualitative research: Key points in the classic debate (Adapted from Neill, 2007)

Quantitative research	Qualitative research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aim is to classify features, count them, and construct statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aim is a complete, detailed description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher knows clearly in advance what he/she is looking for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher may only know roughly in advance what he/she is looking for
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended during latter phases of research projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended during earlier phases of research projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All aspects of the study are carefully designed before data is collected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design emerges as the study unfolds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher uses tools such as questionnaires or equipment to collect numerical data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher is the data gathering instrument
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data are in the form of numbers and statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data are in the form of words, pictures or objects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective – seeks precise measurement and analysis of target concepts, e.g. uses surveys, questionnaires etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subjective – individuals’ interpretation of events is important, e.g. uses participant observation, in-depth interviews etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data are more efficient, able to test hypotheses, but may miss contextual detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative data are more rich, time consuming, and less able to be generalized
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher tends to remain objectively separated from the subject matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher tends to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter

4.4.3 PREDISPOSITIONS OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MODES OF INQUIRY

The concept of predispositions in this context is used to refer to the acquired characteristics of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The following table represents the predispositions of the qualitative and quantitative modes of inquiry. It further sums up how each of these research approaches operates and each of the predispositions is explained below the table.

**TABLE 4.2: Predispositions of quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry
(Adapted from Glesne & Peshkin, 1992)**

Quantitative mode	Qualitative mode
<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social facts have an objective reality • Primacy of method • Variables can be identified and relationships measured • Etic (outsider's point of view) 	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reality is socially constructed • Primacy of subject matter • Variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure • Emic (insider's point of view)
<p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalizability • Prediction • Causal explanations 	<p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextualization • Interpretation • Understanding actors' perspectives
<p>Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins with hypotheses and theories • Manipulation and control • Uses formal instruments • Experimentation • Deductive • Component analysis • Seeks consensus, the norm • Reduces data to numerical indices • Abstract language in write-up 	<p>Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends with hypotheses and grounded theory • Emergence and portrayal • Researcher as instrument • Naturalistic • Inductive • Searches for patterns • Seeks pluralism, complexity • Makes minor use of numerical indices • Descriptive write-up
<p>Researcher Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detachment and impartiality • Objective portrayal 	<p>Researcher Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal involvement and partiality • Empathic understanding

With regard to the assumptions, the quantitative mode assumes that social facts have an objective reality and the researcher does not identify with the researched phenomenon. The qualitative mode, on the other hand, assumes that reality is socially constructed and the researcher's point of view matters because he/she identifies with the phenomenon being studied. The purpose of quantitative research is to predict, explain and generalize the outcomes of the research, whereas the purpose of qualitative research is to contextualize, interpret and understand the perspective of the actors.

With regard to the approach, quantitative research begins with hypotheses and theories, using formal instruments such as questionnaires, and reduces the data to numerical indices. Qualitative research, on the other hand, ends with hypotheses and grounded theory and makes minor use of numerical indices. The role of the researcher in quantitative research, as indicated under the assumptions, is that of a distant observer, i.e. the researcher is detached from the research setting to ensure impartiality and objectivity, whereas in qualitative research, the researcher identifies fully with the researched phenomenon and this may possibly lead to partiality and bias.

4.5 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Before discussing the paradigmatic assumptions of this study, it is important to begin with a discussion of paradigms by defining the concept “paradigm”, its components, as well as various perspectives. Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher and Perez-Prado (2003:19) define a paradigm as a “world view”. It is a “basic set of beliefs or assumptions” that guides a researcher’s inquiry. This implies that every researcher will approach research with a plethora of interlocking and sometimes contradicting philosophical assumptions and standpoints. Creswell (2007:15) indicates that the research design process begins with philosophical assumptions that the enquirers make when deciding to undertake a study. Researchers bring their own world views, paradigms, or sets of beliefs to the research project, and these inform the conduct and writing of the study. In concert with Creswell (2007), Mason (2002:59) indicates that in defining one’s paradigmatic perspective as a researcher, the interplay between ontological and epistemological assumptions, meta-theoretical underpinnings, the research questions, and research methodology become prominent.

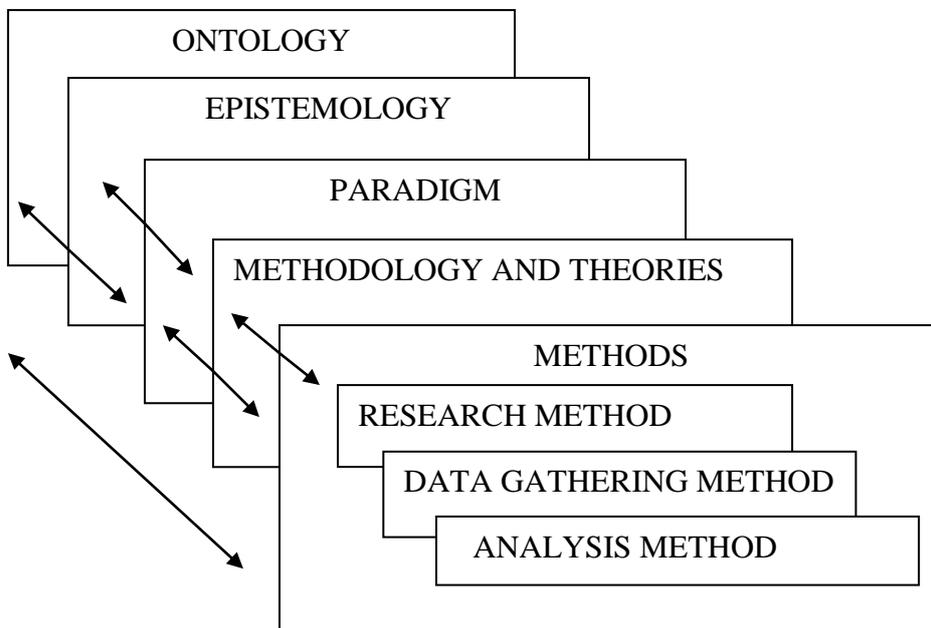
The researcher’s ontological beliefs are about the nature of reality, which is explored through the researcher’s answers to problems such as what is the nature of the world, including social phenomena; if reality is orderly or lawful; the existence of the natural social order; if reality is fixed and stable or constantly changing, and whether it is unitary or multiple; and if reality can be constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation (Creswell, 1998:76). The researcher’s epistemological beliefs are about what is possible for one to know – the relationship of the researcher to what is being researched. Fayolle, Kyro and Ulijn (2005:136) assert that:

“looking at the concept of ontology and epistemology, we can see that they are some kind of “rules of the game,” and we have different rules.....these rules are

interconnected within each game. If we assume that knowledge is not one entity but many and it changes, it is reasonable to assume that we have different ways of studying it.....”

Based on their assertion above, Fayolle *et al.* (2005:137) use a hierarchical order to express the way in which knowledge can be studied and understood as depicted in the following figure:

FIGURE 4.3: Hierarchical order of a paradigm (Adapted from Fayolle *et al.*, 2005:137)



According to Fayolle *et al.* (2005), ontology is the broadest and deepest level, followed by epistemology which is the second level and may be deduced from ontology. Ontology is concerned with the different ways of attaining knowledge which are referred to as methodology. Each methodological choice consists of several specific methods and within these methods we find several alternatives for data gathering and analysis.

Research is all about being amazed at the world around us, and the steps we take to understand this world. It concerns how we think the social world is constructed or what we think the world is (ontology), and this shapes the way we believe we can know the world. How we look at the world (epistemology) and the methods we use, shape what we can see. I accept that research is concerned with understanding the world and that such understanding

is informed by how I view the world, what I interpret understanding to be, and what I see as the purposes of understanding (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003:3). On the basis of my submissions above, my working assumptions are as follows:

Humans create reality by learning from others, teaching others and reflecting on their own understanding. Social reality can thus be understood from both an external point of view and within levels of individual consciousness (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:5). Knowledge is acquired by transactional means, which implies that knowledge can be acquired by interacting with the source in a bi-directional manner. This transactional view implies that knowledge can be viewed as hard, objective and tangible, which prompted me to use quantitative methods for this study. Knowledge can also be created by personal experiences that result in individual cognition. Such experiences require a deeper qualitative approach in order to reveal the personal, subjective and unique nature of translated interactions and intra-actions.

Burrell and Morgan (1979; 2005:24) introduce four paradigms for the analysis of social theory and indicate that: “*to be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way*”. The four paradigms are described in the table below:

TABLE 4.3: Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory (Adapted from Burrell & Morgan, 1979; 2005:24)

THE SOCIOLOGY OF RADICAL CHANGE

SUBJECTIVE	Radical Humanist	Radical Structuralist	OBJECTIVE
	Interpretive	Functionalist	

THE SOCIOLOGY OF REGULATION

Karnevio (2007:22) and Burrell and Morgan (1979) explore the above paradigms as follows but only the two paradigms that are used in this study are discussed below.

A *functionalist* paradigm is a primary paradigm for organizational study. It is realistic, positivistic, deterministic and nomothetic, giving explanations to social people. This paradigm assumes rational human action and believes that one can understand behaviour

through hypothesis testing (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). It is objectivistic so that social truths are outside human beings (Karnevio, 2007).

An *interpretive* paradigm, like the functionalist paradigm, belongs to the sociology of regulation and its purpose is to understand the world from the individual's viewpoint. It is nomothetic, antipositivistic, voluntaristic and ideographic, using subjective first-hand knowledge (Karnevio, 2007). In this paradigm, researchers attempt to observe ongoing processes to better understand individual behaviour and the spiritual nature of the world (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

The above assumptions and the subsequent paradigms influenced my methodological choices. I found it appropriate to use both qualitative and quantitative (mixed methods research) approaches for this study. On the basis of this research approach, I used two paradigms, firstly the *social constructivism (interpretive)* paradigm which employs inductive logic and qualitative research methods, and secondly the *post positivism (positivist)* paradigm which employs deductive logic and quantitative research methods (Rocco *et al.* (2003:21). Crotty (1998) defines social constructivism as "...the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context."

The reason for my choice is that through social constructivism researchers seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work and develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed towards certain objects or things. The researcher's intention is to make sense of the meanings others have about the world (Creswell, 2007:21). The social constructivist perspective of this study was embraced by the interviews conducted to collect data from the respondents in answering qualitative questions. The questionnaire (quantitative instrument) embraced the post positivist perspective by seeking answers to theory driven questions (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007:306). The constructivist perspective is supported by the participatory paradigm which proposes that at the end of the social constructivist agenda, there should be an action agenda for reform which may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which they live and work, or even the researchers' lives (Heron & Reason, 1997). Hussey and Hussey (1997:54) indicate that positivism and interpretivism are two poles of the same continuum and illustrate the differences between these two paradigms as follows:

TABLE 4.4: Differences between the positivist and interpretivist paradigms (Adapted from Glesne & Peshkin, 1992)

Positivist Paradigm	Interpretivist Paradigm
Tends to produce quantitative data	Tends to produce qualitative data
Uses large samples	Uses small samples
Concerned with hypotheses testing	Concerned with generalizing theories
Data is highly specific and precise	Data is rich and subjective
Location is artificial	Location is natural
Reliability is high	Reliability is low
Validity is low	Validity is high
Generalizes from sample to population	Generalizes from one setting to another

These two paradigms assisted me in acknowledging and appreciating the fact that there are multiple realities/truths about the world (ontology) as seen and heard from different individuals in the research setting, and therefore a single reality has to be constructed by the researcher through interaction with the researched (epistemology), i.e. reducing the distance between the researcher and the researched.

4.6 RESEARCH METHODS

This is a mixed methods research study of the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to the improvement of learner achievement. Given this focus, literature reviews, questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. According to Van der Merwe (1996:290), in theoretical studies the researcher produces his/her evidence to support arguments from existing facts or information.

4.6.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

This study focuses on variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to the improvement in the performance of learners in the matriculation examination. For this purpose, an extensive and relevant literature review was conducted in an attempt to provide a theoretical foundation for the research project. The literature review provided scientific explanations for the research question(s), and enabled me to verify my findings and to compare these with the work of other scholars in the field of instructional leadership.

According to Neuman (1997:89), a literature review is based on the assumption that knowledge accumulates and that we learn from, and build on, what others have done. Literature reviews can take various forms, namely: contextual, historical, theoretical, integrative, methodological and meta-analysis. Each type of review has a specific goal. Neuman (1997:89) indicates that the goals of a literature review are: demonstrating the researcher's familiarity with a body of knowledge that already exists about the subjects of research and establishing the credibility of such knowledge; showing the path of prior research and how the current project is linked to already completed research; integrating and summarizing what is known in and about his/her area of research; learning from others; and stimulating new ideas.

This study, in line with Neuman's (1997) goals above, used existing literature to investigate the evolution and development of instructional leadership by exploring the widely accepted models, definitions and theories of instructional leadership, and how the concept manifests itself as an accepted practice in the improvement of learner achievement.

4.6.2 QUESTIONNAIRES

A questionnaire is a form containing a set of questions, especially addressed to a statistically significant number of subjects, and is a way of gathering information for a survey. It is used to collect statistical information or opinions about people. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1997:952) defines a questionnaire as a written or printed list of questions to be answered by a number of people, especially as part of a survey.

For the purpose of this study, the questionnaire formed my second data collection method and its content was guided by the literature reviewed. Assistance from the Statistics Department at the University of Pretoria was sought, particularly to get advice with regard to validity of items for statistical purposes. The questionnaire was administered to the 114 principals in the Bushbuckridge Region of the Mpumalanga Province, as well as their deputy principals and heads of department.

4.6.2.1 Construction and structure of the questionnaires

Structured questionnaires were used as research instruments for the first section of this study. The literature review was used to construct two different questionnaires, one for

principals and another one for deputy principals and heads of departments. The purpose of the questionnaire for principals was to obtain information about them, ranging from their demographic information, the background of their schools, their qualifications, and the pass rate in their schools from 2004 to 2008.

The purpose of the questionnaire for the deputy principals and HODs was to gather information concerning their perceptions with regard to the role of the principal as an instructional leader. This questionnaire covers the four variables (the secondary challenges mentioned in chapter 3) which I adopted for this study, namely: *promoting frequent and school-wide teacher development activities, defining and communicating shared vision and goals, monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, and managing the curriculum and instruction.*

Each of the variables indicated above consists of sub-questions with a six point scale to determine the extent to which the principal performs instructional leadership related functions. Both questionnaires were structured with the assistance of statisticians from the Statistics Department at the University of Pretoria.

4.6.2.2 Distribution and collection of the questionnaires

As indicated in the sample and sampling procedures described below, my target sample was the 114 public secondary schools in the Bushbuckridge region of the Mpumalanga Province. The purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate and document the contribution of the independent variables which characterize instructional leadership and its effect on the dependent variable, which is learner performance.

The following methods were used to distribute and collect the questionnaires:

- The questionnaires were packaged according to the 14 circuits of the region and submitted to the circuit coordination office for delivery to the different circuit offices.
- Circuit managers were telephonically informed by the researcher to collect their packages from the same office and requested to expedite the completion of the questionnaires.

- Each school's questionnaire consignment consisted of one questionnaire for the principal and two questionnaires numbered (a) for the deputy principal and (b) for the HOD.
- Some circuit managers submitted the completed questionnaires from their circuits to the regional office; others handed theirs directly to me and I personally collected some from the circuits.
- Only three out of the 14 circuits did not participate in the completion of the questionnaires.

4.6.3 INTERVIEWS

Seale, Giampietro, Gubrium and Silverman (2004) define an interview as a social encounter where speakers collaborate in producing retrospective and prospective accounts or versions of their past or future actions, experiences, feelings and thoughts. Two types of interviews were used in this study, namely focus group interviews and structured interviews.

4.6.3.1 Focus group interviews

According to Rabiee (2004:655), a focus group is “...*a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative sampling of a specific population, this group being focused on a given topic.*” Lewis (2000) defines a focus group interview as a “...*carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment*”. According to Lewis (2000), this type of interview will yield both a more diversified array of responses, and afford a more extended basis for designing systematic research into the situation at hand.

The focus group interview can be used for a variety of reasons or to achieve a myriad of objectives in research. According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), focus group interviews can be used to obtain general background information about a topic of interest for generating research hypotheses that can be submitted to further research and testing using more quantitative approaches; to stimulate new ideas and creative concepts; to learn how respondents talk about the phenomenon of interest which may facilitate quantitative research tools; and to interpret previously obtained qualitative results.

According to Roberts (1997:79), purposive sampling is a commonly used procedure for focus group interviews. It is an approach that is frequently used as a method of extending knowledge by deliberately selecting sample participants who are known to be rich sources of data. Another advantage of using purposive sampling for interviews, according to Mastalgia, Toye and Kristjanson, (2003:281), is that individuals who have experienced the phenomenon of interest are invited to participate, contributing a wide range of domain descriptors and construct dimensions.

It is important to note, as Jamieson and Williams (2003:274) argue, that *“it is not usually the aim of a focus group study to achieve consensus on issues but to identify candid perceptions that may differ between participants.....thus the homogenous characteristics desired for each group should be based on a desire to promote open discussion”*. Ekblad, Marttila and Emilson, (2000:626) support this view by indicating that *“a sufficient measure of heterogeneity among the participants’ other characteristics is needed to encourage dynamic group interaction and allow contrasting opinions”*.

Jamieson and Williams (2003:272) argue that the philosophical underpinning of the focus group methodology is based on the premise that attitudes and perceptions are not developed in isolation but through interaction with other people. Based on this view, a focus group, according to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), should ideally consist of 5 to 12 relatively homogenous participants. The focus groups should not be too small to allow the domination of one or two members over the others, and should not be too large and end up being unmanageable. The size of the group should not deny the participation of other members due to the constraints of time (Harvey-Jordan & Long, 2002:20).

Focus group interviews were conducted first, followed by the one-on-one interviews. The purpose of this exercise was to assist the researcher in formulating relevant questions for the one-on-one interviews.

4.6.3.2 Structured interviews

Structured interviews were conducted with five principals conveniently sampled from the 78 principals who participated in this study and the responses were recorded with their permission. This enabled me to induce first hand information from the principals with regard to their experiences, challenges, frustrations and opinions. An interview schedule

was compiled in which the interview questions are outlined (see Appendix H). The questions are mostly open ended, making it possible for the interviewer to add new questions during the interviewing process, depending on the responses of the participants.

4.6.3.3 Collecting the structured interview data

Collection of the structured interview data involved interaction between the researcher and the respondents which needed to be documented. For the purpose of this study, the interviews were tape recorded, and I took notes at the same time. After the interviews, I reviewed the tape and notes, and wrote down direct quotes that were found to be relevant. The tape and the notes were kept as records for future reference (see Appendix H). With regard to the setting for the interview, the following measures were taken into consideration.

I ensured that each interview was conducted in comfortable, secure, and private surroundings, preferably in the interviewees' office or any place which was convenient for them. This was necessary to ensure that the interviewees felt comfortable in their own surroundings and that they did not feel intimidated during the interviews. I assured them that the information which they were going to provide would be treated in the utmost confidence. This was achieved by allocating pseudonyms for each participant and securing their permission to record them as they responded to the questions. I sought informed consent by explaining the objectives of the study, confidentiality, and the procedure that would be adopted in conducting the interviews. I provided the letter of informed consent to the interviewees to read and sign and I also signed it in their presence.

As the interviewer, I served only as a facilitator who encouraged the interviewees to respond. This was achieved by my assuming a neutral stance and non-judgemental attitude towards them. I also assumed an invitational attitude by creating a friendly atmosphere where the interviewees were encouraged to request repetition of any question in the event that they did not understand a particular question.

4.6.3.4 Analyzing the structured interview data

For the purpose of this study, I used two methods to analyze the data from the structured interviews, namely: an *interpretative phenomenological analysis*, and a *hermeneutical analysis*. The interpretative phenomenological analysis refers to the structure and essence of

experience of the respondents with regard to the phenomenon being studied, in this case, instructional leadership and its impact on learner performance. The principals responded to questions which required them to express themselves in terms of their experiences as principals (Medico, 2005).

The hermeneutical analysis is also an interpretative approach which emphasizes the importance of the views of the participants based on their experience and their standpoint (Ozkan, Davis & Johnson, 2006:11). Implicit in hermeneutical analysis, according to Willis, Jost and Nilakanta (2003), is the concept of “hermeneutic circles” which suggests that:

“...we come to understand a complex whole from preconceptions about the meanings of its parts and their interrelationships...the movements of understanding are constantly from the whole to the part and back to the whole. Our task is to extend in concentric circles in unity of the understood meaning.”

Based on Willis *et al.* (2003), the purpose of structured interviews was to obtain the interviewees’ lived experiences with regard to their roles as instructional leaders, taking into consideration their subjectivity and their socio-historical backgrounds.

4.7 DATA COLLECTION

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, data collection methods included conducting one-on-one interviews with five principals and distributing questionnaires to the 114 secondary school principals in the Bushbuckridge Region together with their deputy principals and Heads of Department.

The questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data that provided statistical descriptions, relationships and analysis. The one-on-one interviews with the five principals provided qualitative and exploratory data. De Vos (1998:358) indicates that when working from a qualitative perspective, the researcher attempts a first-hand, holistic understanding of a phenomenon and data collection is shaped as the investigation proceeds.

4.7.1 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES FOR THE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

During the initial planning stages of the research, I had intended to involve all the secondary schools in the Mpumalanga Province but, due to the size of the province, the time available

to complete the research, and financial implications, I decided to limit my sample to the 127 secondary schools in the Bushbuckridge Region. I further decided to focus my investigation on public secondary schools only, which reduced my sample to 114 secondary schools since there are 12 private schools in the region, and one which does not offer grade 12 classes. The 114 secondary schools which I identified for this research have similar backgrounds with regard to their geographical location, school facilities, funding models, and more importantly, their performance patterns.

According to De Vos (1998:191), the implications and success of the design and related methodology have a bearing on the population and sample size, for example, the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. Prior to the sampling procedures, the questionnaire was piloted with a view to testing its validity and reliability. Since the interview questions were the same as those on the questionnaire, the piloting of the questionnaire included the interview questions. De Vos (1998:179) defines a pilot study as the process whereby the research design for a prospective survey is tested.

4.7.1.1 The pilot study

The pilot study was a small scale replication of the actual study, targeting a small number of persons with characteristics similar to those of the target group of respondents, namely principals, deputy principals and heads of department of post-primary schools. The construction of the questionnaire, as indicated above, was done with the assistance of the official statistician at the main campus of the University of Pretoria, who advised on the validity of items for statistical purposes.

The pilot sample consisted of 15 respondents (five principals, 5 deputy principals, and five HODs) who were purposively sampled from five secondary schools in the Ehlanzeni Region of the Mpumalanga Department of Education (MDoE). The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the feasibility of the study; to test the reliability and validity of the instrument and trustworthiness of respondents for data collection in the main study; to establish how appropriate, understandable and practical the instrument is; to address any problems prior to the main study; and to check the time required for the completion of the questionnaire. The pilot study demonstrated that the questionnaire did not contain any confusing items and the responding principals found it easy and quick to complete.

After the completion of the questionnaires, the services of the official statistician of the University of Pretoria were sought for the analysis of the data. The findings from this pilot study informed the reformulation of the objectives of the study; consideration of the research population; elimination and/or revision of ambiguous questions; and planning for the main research study.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Clough and Nutbrown (2002:84) comment as follows with regard to ethics in research: “.....in order to understand, researchers must be more than technically competent. They must enter into chattered intimacies, open themselves to their subjects’ feeling worlds, whether these worlds are congenial to them or repulsive. They must confront the duality of represented and experienced selves simultaneously, both conflicted, both real.....” In concert with Clough and Nutbrown’s view above, it follows that in planning my research, I had to take into consideration, and protect the feelings, welfare, and rights of the participants (see Appendix A for a copy of the ethical clearance certificate from the Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria).

In concert with the rules and regulations of the university with regard to conducting research using human subjects, the following ethical considerations were taken into account during the course of the research. These considerations applied to both the quantitative and qualitative research sections of this study.

4.8.1 PERMISSION

I obtained written permission from the Head of the Department of Education in the province and the Regional Director to conduct this research, in order to ensure that it is a legal exercise. The letters of permission for each questionnaire are provided in Appendix D.

4.8.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Confidentiality refers to handling the information concerning the respondents in a confidential manner. Respondents were assured that their names and the names of their schools would be dealt with in the strictest confidence. This aspect includes the principle of trust in which I assured the participants that their trust would not be exploited for personal

gain or benefit, by deceiving or betraying them in the research route or its published outcomes (Lubbe, 2003:41).

4.8.3 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

The principle of voluntary participation was explained to the respondents and they were also informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The principle of informed consent was attached to the questionnaires and verbally explained to the interviewees. Both principles entailed explaining the research process and its purposes to the participants.

4.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Three sources of data were identified for this study, namely interviews and a questionnaire which are referred to as primary sources of data, and a literature review as secondary data. (Mouton, 2006:164). Secondary data is collected for the primary purpose of re-analyzing the data, and has the advantage of compelling the researcher to be explicit about the underlying assumptions and theories pertaining to the data.

Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) state that when analyzing qualitative and quantitative data within a mixed methods framework, researchers undergo at least seven stages, which is the procedure that I adopted in this study. The following table represents the operation of the seven stages in the data analysis process:

TABLE 4.5: Seven steps in the data analysis process

Stages in the mixed methods data analysis process	Description of each stage	Application in quantitative data analysis	Application in qualitative data analysis
1. Data Reduction	Reducing the dimensionality of the qualitative and quantitative data	Via descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis and cluster analysis	Via exploratory thematic analysis
2. Data Display	Pictorially describing both the qualitative and quantitative data	Using tables and graphs	Using matrices, charts, graphs, networks, lists, rubrics, and Venn diagrams
3. Data Transformation		Quantitative data are converted into narrative data that can be analyzed qualitatively	Qualitative data are converted into numerical codes that can be represented statistically
4. Data Correlation		Quantitative data is correlated with qualitative data	Qualitative data is correlated with quantitative data
5. Data Consolidation	Both qualitative and quantitative data are combined to create new or consolidated variables		
6. Data Comparison	Involves comparing data from both the qualitative and quantitative data sources		
7. Data Integration	This is a final stage, wherein both qualitative and quantitative data are integrated into either a coherent whole or two separate sets of coherent wholes		

4.10 ENSURING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

As this study entails the use of both qualitative and quantitative research data, the concepts used to express validity and reliability are broader than those traditionally associated with quantitative research. When working with qualitative data, the concepts of trustworthiness, dependability, transferability, and credibility are also used. According to MacMillan and Schumacher (2001:407), validity is the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher. Reliability, on the other hand, according to Silverman (2004:285), is the degree to which the findings of the research

are independent of accidental circumstances. It is closely related to assuring the quality of field notes and guaranteeing the public access to the process of the publication of the research results. Joppe (2001:1) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time, and are an accurate representation of the total population under study. If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the instrument is considered to be reliable.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the content of the two questionnaires, the questionnaires were reviewed by the official statisticians from the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria. The two questionnaires were piloted with five secondary schools in the Ehlanzeni Region of the Mpumalanga Department of Education to test their validity and reliability. The following processes for ensuring validity and reliability, legitimizing the data, and finally lending credibility to the research report were used for this study.

4.10.1 TRIANGULATION

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:112) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection to study a particular phenomenon. Bailey-Beckett and Turner (2001:2) refer to the work of Jakob (2001) who indicates that “...*by combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and empirical materials, researchers can hope to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single-method, single-observer, and single-theory studies. Often the purposes of triangulation in specific contexts are to obtain confirmation of findings through convergence of different perspectives. The point at which the perspectives converge is seen to represent reality.*”

Triangulation is viewed as a verification procedure whereby researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. It is a system of sorting through the data to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas. Triangulation was employed in this study. The 114 principals and 228 deputy principals and HODs who were identified to complete the questionnaires, the 60 principals for the focus group interviews, and the 5 principals for the structured interviews were male and female, from secondary schools in the Bushbuckridge region, from different schools of different sizes with different community backgrounds, thus providing multiple sources of information from which to form themes.

For the purpose of this study, the three sources of data are placed at the points of a triangle, where each data source provides a philosophical starting point for the other data sources. The three data sources for this study, and how they were triangulated, are represented in the diagram below.

FIGURE 4.4: Representation of the triangulation of data sources

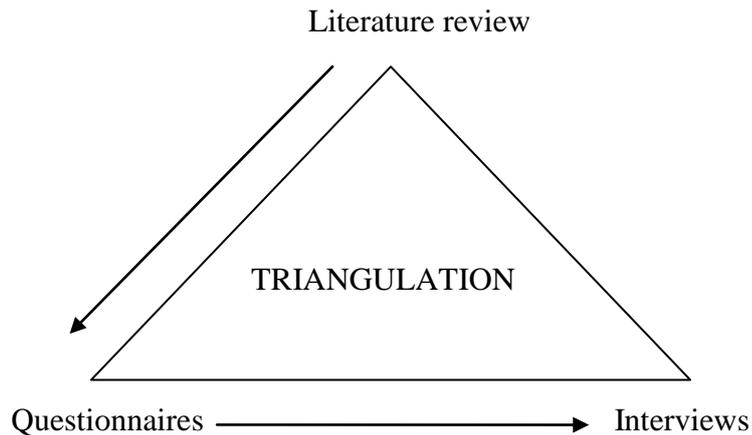


Figure 4.4 represents the three data sources used in this study, namely: literature review, questionnaires, and interviews. The literature review was used to provide secondary data which assisted the researcher to formulate questions for the questionnaires; the questions for the deputy principals' and HODs' questionnaires were drawn directly from the literature. The findings from the analyzed questionnaires informed the types of questions which were included in the interview schedule for principals. Four types of triangulation are identified by Denzin (1994). Only two of these were used for the purposes of this study, namely *data triangulation* and *methodological triangulation*.

Data triangulation concerns itself with the use of various data sources, and in this study, interviews, questionnaires, and an in-depth literature review were conducted. Methodological triangulation concerns itself with the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study. A detailed exploration of the two research methods has already been provided in the preceding sections of this study.

Triangulation offered the following benefits for this study: it provided additional sources of valuable insight that could not be obtained from the literature review alone; it minimized the inadequacies of single-source research by engaging three data sources which complemented

and verified each other, and it also provided richer and more comprehensive information in the sense that the researcher was able to draw information from various sources including the face-to-face interviews which provided first hand, lived experiences of the principals. In my study, I undertook to conduct focus group interviews as well as face-to-face structured interviews with principals and principals in training, to triangulate my quantitative data.

4.10.2 THICK DESCRIPTION

Thick description is a procedure that is used in qualitative research to ensure validity and reliability. This procedure is concerned with describing the setting, the participants, and the themes of a qualitative study in rich detail. Thick description has been used in this study in the presentation of the qualitative research findings where the actual words of the participants have been used constantly. The purpose of thick description is that it creates “verisimilitude”, that is, statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in the study.

The purpose of reporting the findings using thick description is to provide as much detail as possible for the readers. It also enables the readers to make decisions about the applicability of the findings to other settings or similar contexts. In this study, I have described in detail the two main concepts in chapter 1, which are instructional leadership and learner performance, the background of Bushbuckridge where the research took place, and all the samples of participants have been thoroughly described.

4.10.3 PEER REVIEW

The third and last procedure for ensuring validity and reliability in this study is peer review (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Peer review is the review of the data and research process by someone who is familiar with the research or the phenomena being explored. A peer reviewer provides support, plays devil’s advocate, challenges the researcher’s assumptions, pushes the researcher to the next step, and asks in-depth questions about methods and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This procedure was used during both phases of my data collection and interpretation. The peer reviewer was an experienced friend who has already completed his PhD and is a lecturer in one of the South African universities. The peer reviewer has expertise and knowledge of the subject matter of the thesis and provided quality advice and feedback.

4.11 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the research design and methodology that underpin this study. Detailed information regarding the mixed methods design, its origins, its relevance to this study and its general characteristics, were explored in this chapter. The following chapters build on from the methodological propositions made in this chapter by employing the proposed data presentation and analysis approaches to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data.

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CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER

The problem statement in this study indicates that the purpose of the research was to investigate the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to learner performance in the matriculation examination. Chapter 1 reiterated a number of assumptions which suggest that the practice of instructional leadership in schools, as a role enacted by principals, can bring about improvement in learner performance.

The assumption that the instructional leadership role of principals is crucial for the improvement of learner performance has been a guiding compass for this study. Based on this assumption, I engaged in this study to investigate, as a first step, the different variables which are related to instructional leadership and their contribution to the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination.

The investigation was conducted in the following ways: firstly, a literature review of instructional leadership was carried out, secondly, questionnaires were distributed to principals to collect their biographical information; and thirdly, separate questionnaires were distributed to deputy principals and Heads of Departments (HODs) to obtain their perceptions with regard to the role of principals as instructional leaders. Finally, a two-phased interview process was conducted with principals, starting with a focus group interview with sixty principals, followed by a one-on-one interview session with five principals.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze the data collected by means of the surveys of the principals, deputy principals and HODs. This chapter presents a justification for the quantitative method used for the first part of the study, discusses measures taken to ensure validity and reliability, and describes the ethical considerations in terms of the involvement of the respondents.

5.2 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Before presenting and analyzing the quantitative data in this chapter and the qualitative data in the following chapter (chapter 6), the following is a summary of the findings from the literature review. The reason for this summary of the literature is that the questions for the questionnaires and the structured interviews were informed by the arguments in the literature. This presentation is twofold: I present the findings from the literature in general, and then the findings from the two European countries (Norway and the UK), the two African countries (Nigeria and South Africa) and the USA.

The literature review generally revealed that instructional leadership, since its conception in the 1970s and the 1980s, has always been associated with concepts such as classroom practice, managing teaching and learning, and improvement of learner performance. The emergence of instructional leadership precipitated an evolutionary shift from managerial leadership, thus requiring principals to have new skills and competencies. The literature review also highlighted the fact that instructional leadership differs from other models of leadership in that it focuses on how principals and teachers may improve teaching and learning. Instructional leadership focuses on school goals, the curriculum, instruction, and the school environment (Stewart, 2006:4).

With regard to instructional leadership (IL) in the two African countries (South Africa and Nigeria), principals in Nigeria perform both instructional leadership and managerial functions. They ranked academic and instructional activities, including curriculum development, teaching and instructional supervision, second to staff and learner management, and financial management, which were treated with much vigour. Mulkeen *et al.* (2007) indicate that principals in most African countries do not regard instructional leadership highly, and thus do not view it as part of their duties. Hoadley, Christie, Jacklin and Ward (2007) and Bush and Oduro (2006) found that in South Africa, like in many other African countries, principals have not received adequate training on IL. These researchers therefore propose that there is a need for a theory of leadership relevant to the South African context.

The European countries (Norway and the UK) show a different picture to that of the African countries. In the UK, instructional leadership is not necessarily the responsibility of the principals in relation to teachers. It extends to the role of teachers in relation to their

learners. In order to enhance the latter, teachers in the UK are expected to create powerful cognitive and social tasks for their learners and teach them how to make productive use of such tasks. The purpose of instructional leadership is therefore to facilitate this approach to teaching and learning. Principals in Norway tend towards a more administrative style of school leadership rather than an instructional style. The extent to which instructional leadership is reported in Norway is relatively weak compared to other countries such as the UK, USA, Nigeria, and South Africa.

The practice of instructional leadership in the USA is conceived as a role carried out by the principals, with no reference made to teachers, HODs, or even deputy principals (Hallinger, 2005:3). Instructional leadership is not a shared responsibility as is the case in the UK. Literature has shown that during the 1980s policymakers in the USA encouraged all principals to assume this role in order to make their schools more effective. The literature review also revealed that instructional leaders in the USA lead with a combination of charisma and expertise, which implies that principals need to be trained for this leadership model.

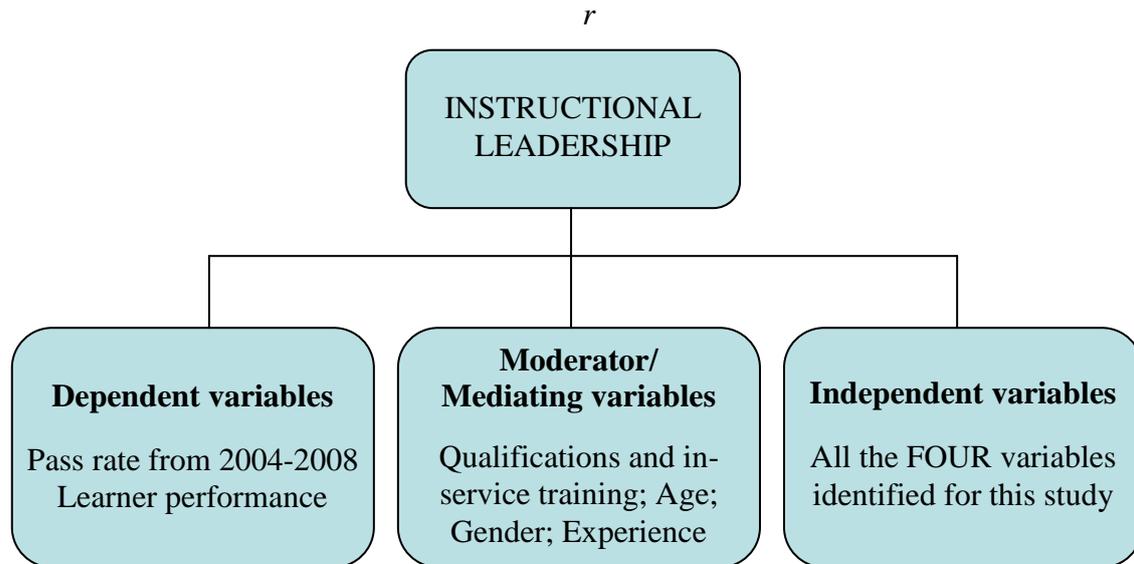
5.3 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS USING FREQUENCY TABLES

After completing the administration and initial analysis of the questionnaires using SAS, the BMDP statistical software was used for statistical analysis of the data with the assistance of the official statisticians at the University of Pretoria. In this chapter, I summarize and present the results obtained from the completed questionnaires. The results from the focus group and structured interviews are presented in chapter 6.

For the quantitative data, the analysis of variance (ANOVA), multivariate regression and correlation analysis were used to compare the variables that emerged from both the principals' and deputy principals' questionnaires. ANOVA was used to compare the qualifications of the participating principals with the outcomes (results) of their schools. Multivariate regression and correlation analysis were used to deal with the statistical differences between the variables, ranging from the variables obtained from the biographical information about the principals, to the four independent variables which were identified for this study.

It is important at this stage to indicate that during the quantitative data analysis stage, the three different types of variables (dependent variables, mediating or moderator variables, and independent variables) were dealt with separately in order to explain whether or not they influenced learner performance in some way. The following diagram represents the different variables involved in this analysis:

FIGURE 5.1: Representation of the different variables involved in the analysis



Each of the above variables, with its related examples as presented in the figure above, is explored in the following sections of this chapter.

In order to explain the strength of the relationship between the variables, the Pearson correlation and the Spearman correlation coefficients were used. A Pearson product moment correlation shows the strength of the relationship between two continuous variables and it is represented by [r]. The Pearson correlation coefficient is suitable when it can be assumed that the variables are approximately normally distributed. A Spearman rank order correlation is used for the same purpose as the Pearson product moment correlation, and it is represented by [rho]. An r / rho of -1 represents a perfect negative correlation, an r / rho of 1 is a perfect positive correlation, and an r / rho of 0 means there is no correlation. The p value indicates whether the correlation is statistically significant. Depending on the size of the sample, even a very weak correlation can be statistically significant and if the sample is very small, even a very strong correlation may not be statistically significant.

5.4 DETERMINING THE RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTS USING THE CRONBACH ALPHA

The Cronbach alpha is the most commonly used indicator of internal consistency. It provides reliability estimates from the consistency of item responses from a single assessment. The generally agreed upon lower limit for Cronbach's alpha is 0.70 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998).

According to the exploratory factor analysis conducted by the statisticians to ensure construct validity of the questionnaire, the 28 items in the deputy principals' and HODs' questionnaire measured one underlying construct, namely, instructional leadership, in as much as the four variables identified for this study describe instructional leadership. The Cronbach alpha value of the raw data was 0.971031, whereas for the standardized data (when question 18 was removed) it was 0.971021. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this study exceeded 0.9, thus satisfying the internal consistency requirements. The following table presents the qualitative description of the strength of the relationship between the variables and the quantitative value of [r] and/or [rho].

TABLE 5.1: Qualitative description of the strength of variables

Value of [r] / [rho]	Percentage equivalent	Qualitative description of the strength
-1	-100	Perfect negative
(-1, -0.75)	-99 to -75	Strong negative
(-0.75, -0.5)	-74 to -50	Moderate negative
(-0.5, -0.25)	-49 to -25	Weak negative
(-0.25, 0.25)	-24 to 25	No linear association
(0.25, 0.5)	25 to 49	Weak positive
(0.5, 0.75)	50 to 74	Moderate positive
(0.75, 1)	75 to 99	Strong positive
1	100	Perfect positive

The purpose of the above table is to indicate the statistical differences between the variables. For a p-value of less than 5% ($p \leq 0.05$), the findings are reported as being statistically significant, whereas for a p-value higher than 5% ($p \geq 0.05$), the findings are reported as being statistically insignificant.

5.5 ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPALS' QUESTIONNAIRES

This section focuses on the analysis of the questionnaires which were completed by the principals who participated in this study, using frequency tables. The target sample of principals who were expected to complete the questionnaire was 114 (n=114). The questionnaires were packaged according to the number of schools in each of the 14 circuits. Of the 114 questionnaires that were sent to the schools via the circuits, 78 (68.4%) were returned and 36 (31.6%) were not returned. Several attempts were made to obtain more responses, including issuing additional copies to the non-respondents, but still the outstanding questionnaires were not returned.

The following tables represent the descriptive statistics for the principals', deputy principals and HODs' questionnaires. The two correlation analysis tables are designated as table 5.2(a) and table 5.2(b) respectively.

TABLE 5.2(a): Correlation analysis

Pearson Correlation Coefficients								
Prob> r under HO:Rho=0								
Number of observations								
			Mean Pass	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
Instructional leadership	r/r ho	0.09938	0.03757	0.01375	0.03031	0.01535	0.21117	-0.00460
	P	0.3898	0.7440	0.9068	0.7963	0.8946	0.0652	0.9681
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
Feedback	r/r ho	0.12845	- 0.02264	- 0.08226	- 0.01791	- 0.01270	0.17029	-0.04432
	P	0.265	0.8440	0.4829	0.8788	0.9127	0.1387	0.7000
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
Management	r/r ho	0.07282	0.10701	0.08093	0.07621	0.06765	0.20723	0.07356
	P	0.5291	0.3511	0.4900	0.5158	0.5588	0.0706	0.0522
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78

Pearson Correlation Coefficients								
Prob> r under HO:Rho=0								
Number of observations								
			Mean Pass	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
Development	r/r ho	0.09161	0.02824	0.01581	0.03272	- 0.01492	0.20799	-0.03043
	P	0.428	0.8061	0.8929	0.7805	0.8975	0.0695	0.7914
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
Vision	r/r ho	0.07093	0.04289	0.05645	0.03333	0.02661	0.20639	-0.00226
	P	0.5399	0.7093	0.6305	0.7765	0.8183	0.0717	0.9843
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V9A	r/r ho	- 0.14173	- 0.20295	- 0.13817	- 0.15514	- 0.00484	- 0.15238	-0.27285
	P	0.2189	0.0747	0.2372	0.1838	0.9667	0.1858	0.0157
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
Experience	r/r ho	- 0.15522	0.07692	0.12508	0.03282	0.07120	0.05960	-0.09848
	P	0.1777	0.5032	0.2849	0.7798	0.5383	0.6066	0.3910
	N	77	78	78	75	77	77	78

TABLE 5.2b: Correlation analysis

Spearman Correlation Coefficients								
Prob > r under HO: Rho=0								
Number of observations								
			Mean Pass	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
V15.1	R	- 0.10998	-0.14208	-0.11564	-0.06008	-0.12823	-0.08487	-0.22786
	P	0.3410	0.2147	0.3232	0.6068	0.2664	0.4630	0.0448
	N	77	78	78	75	77	77	78
V15.2	R	- 0.07234	-0.33425	-0.24847	-0.21230	-0.12878	-0.27454	-0.24307
	P	0.5318	0.0028	0.0316	0.0675	0.2643	0.05157	0.0320

Spearman Correlation Coefficients								
Prob > r under HO: Rho=0								
Number of observations								
			Mean Pass	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V15.3	R	- 0.04659	-0.27987	-0.20205	-0.20008	-0.17572	-0.22805	-0.25326
	P	0.6874	0.0131	0.0821	0.0852	0.1264	0.0461	0.0253
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V15.4	R	0.00713	-0.14639	-0.10161	-0.09343	-0.08954	-0.16562	-0.05425
	P	0.9509	0.2009	0.3857	0.4253	0.4387	0.1500	0.6371
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V15.5	R	- 0.06993	-0.19547	-0.10273	-0.09643	-0.00337	-0.09301	-0.21581
	P	0.5456	0.0863	0.3805	0.4105	0.9763	0.4211	0.0577
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V15.6	R	- 0.08288	-0.12007	0.06298	-0.08600	-0.07410	-0.00031	-0.18308
	P	0.4736	0.2951	0.5914	0.4632	0.5219	0.9978	0.1086
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V15.7	R	- 0.03915	-0.17784	-0.20009	-0.16886	-0.17875	-0.17128	-0.18471
	P	0.7354	0.1193	0.0852	0.1476	0.1198	0.1364	0.1055
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V16.1	R	- 0.10216	0.20504	0.12317	0.08520	0.31205	0.09003	-0.01220
	P	0.3767	0.0717	0.2925	0.4673	0.0057	0.4362	0.9155
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V16.2	R	- 0.15942	0.23049	0.28886	0.22047	-0.21709	0,08951	0.16175
	P	0.1661	0.0423	0.0120	0.0573	0.0579	0.4388	0.1571
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V16.3	R	- 0.12509	0.01361	0.08391	0.07558	-0.00475	0.01764	-0.04960

Spearman Correlation Coefficients								
Prob > r under HO: Rho=0								
Number of observations								
			Mean Pass	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
	P	0.2784	0.9059	0.4741	0.5193	0.9673	0.8789	0.6663
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V16.4		-0.03446	0.17316	0.10158	0.13320	0.15198	0.11803	0.07483
		0.7660	0.1295	0.3858	0.2546	0.1870	0.3066	0.5150
		77	78	75	75	77	77	78

Spearman Correlation Coefficients								
Prob > r under Rho=0								
Number of observations								
			Mean Pass	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
V16.5	R	0.00369	0.13601	0.09146	0.09904	0.07191	-0.03382	0.16103
	P	0.9746	0.2351	0.4352	0.3979	0.5343	0.7703	0.1590
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V17.1	R	0.11280	0.13257	-0.00737	0.08628	0.09409	0.07529	0.14136
	P	0.3287	0.2473	0.9500	0.4617	0.4157	0.5152	0.2170
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V17.2	R	0.06464	-0.03195	-0.03933	-0.01658	-0.10945	-0.07697	0.05593
	P	0.5765	0.7812	0.7376	0.8878	0.3434	0.5058	0.6267
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V17.3	R	0.17726	0.17345	-0.00704	0.21095	0.18470	0.31515	0.10891
	P	0.1230	0.1289	0.9522	0.0693	0.1078	0.0052	0.3425
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78
V17.4	R	0.05906	0.12329	-0.00414	0.10231	0.13957	0.16226	0.02051
	P	0.6099	0.2822	0.9717	0.3824	0.2260	0.1586	0.8585
	N	77	78	75	75	77	77	78

NB: The shaded block and numbers in all the above tables show statistical significance

The statistics captured in tables 5.2a and 5.2b were used for the analysis of the quantitative data and the results are as follows:

TABLE 5.3: Gender distribution of principals

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	71	91.03
Female	7	8.97
Total	78	100

Table 5.3 above represents the gender distribution of the principals who completed the questionnaire. Of the 78 principals who completed the questionnaire, 71 (91.03%) were male and 7 (8.97%) were female. This shows that females in leadership positions in the Bushbuckridge region are under-represented, perhaps indicating that Bushbuckridge is still a very patriarchal society.

Table 5.4 below represents the age distribution of the principals who completed questionnaire. It shows that 48.72% of the principals are in the 41–49 age range, 40.92% are in the 50–59 range, and a small percentage (10.36%) are near retirement age (60+). This age distribution shows that the principals in Bushbuckridge are mainly younger than, and therefore not as experienced as their subordinates. Instructional leadership which requires monitoring, evaluation and development of teachers in the classroom could therefore be compromised due to the youthfulness of the principals and their respect for older teachers. In African culture, it is essential to respect and look up to the older and more experienced person.

Table 5.4: Age distribution of the principals

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
41 – 49	38	48.72
50 – 59	32	40.92
60 – 60+	8	10.36
Total	78	100

Table 5.5 below indicates the qualifications of the principals, where 35.9% hold a teachers' diploma plus a bachelor's degree or other qualification, which may be a further diploma in education. The highest percentage (50%) of the principals holds either a Bachelor of Education degree, a Bachelor of Education Honours degree, or a Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in addition to the teachers' diploma. The last group, which constitutes the smallest percentage (14.1%) hold, in addition to the above qualifications, a Masters' or a Doctor's degree. From this information about qualifications, it can be inferred from the high qualifications of the last two groups of principals, that they are better skilled and that their students would achieve good results in the matriculation examination.

TABLE 5.5: Distribution of the principals' qualifications

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers' diploma, Bachelor's degree, other	28	35.9
B.Ed., B.Ed. Honours, B.A. Honours	39	50
Master's degree, Doctor's degree	11	14.1
Total	78	100

During the analysis of the principals' questionnaire, it was necessary for the statisticians to classify the different participating schools according to the qualifications held by the principals. This was done to establish whether the type of qualifications that the principals hold had any effect on the pass rate in their schools. The researcher used the analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for the significance of the differences among more than two sample means (Levin & Rubin, 1998:591). This enabled me to draw inferences about whether the different qualification levels of the principals drawn from the sample of participating schools had an impact on the achievement levels of learners in their schools. The following tables indicate the differences in the pass rate, with specific reference to the qualification levels of the principals of the participating schools:

TABLE 5.6: Least square means for the pass rate from 2004 to 2008

Qualifications	Pass 2004	Pass 2005	Pass 2006	Pass 2007	Pass 2008
Diploma, B.A. and other	58.84	56.12	45.60	49.69	32.16
B.Ed.; B.Ed. (Hons) and B.A. (Hons)	65.33	54.50	50.47	57.42	40.99
M.A.; M.Ed.; PhD.	50.40	48.69	45.95	43.58	27.79

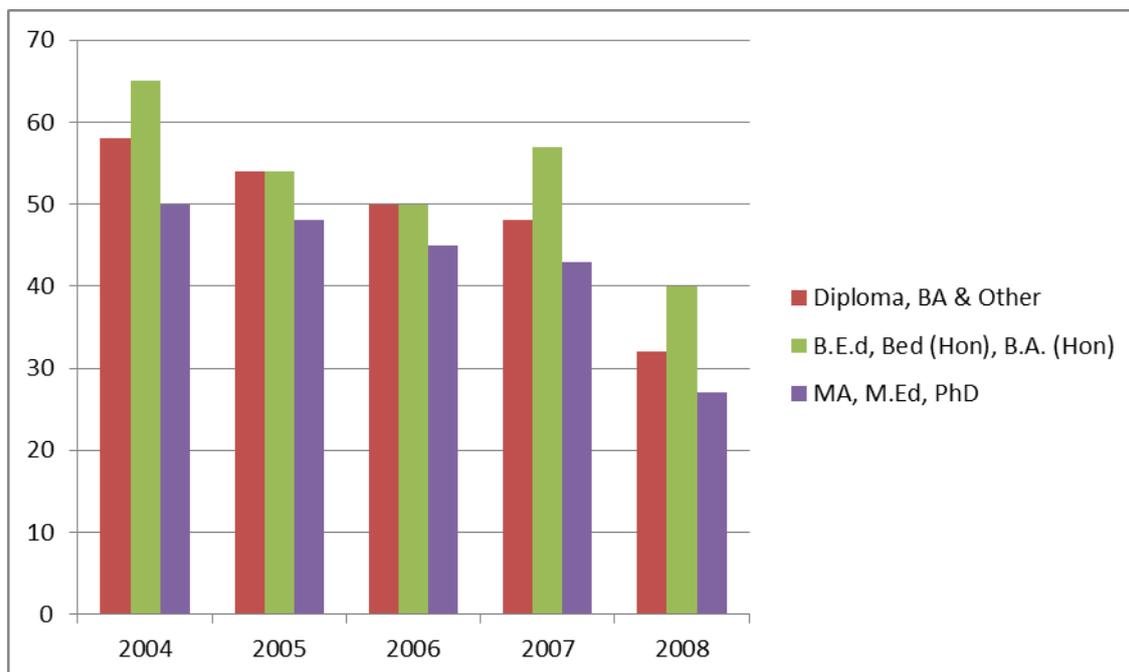
Table 5.6 represents the least square means for the pass rate from 2004 to 2008 showing that the schools where the principals hold either a Bachelor of Education degree, a Bachelor of Education Honours, or a Bachelor of Arts Honours degree achieved the best results across the years, with 65.33% in 2004, 54.50% in 2005, 50.47% in 2006, 57.42% in 2007, and 40.99% in 2008, followed by the schools where the principals are the least qualified. The pass percentage is the lowest, at 50.40% in 2004, 48.69% in 2005, 45.95% in 2006, 43.58% in 2007, and 27.79% in 2008, in schools with the highest qualified principals – those with either a Master’s or a PhD degree.

The inference may be drawn from the analysis of variance shown in the above tables that the qualifications of the principals do not always have an effect, or partially have an effect on learner performance in their schools. This implies that learner performance in any school is not entirely dependent on the qualifications of the principal. It can be further inferred that other personal characteristics and attributes of the principal, rather than qualifications alone, might be more significant in promoting learner performance. Glickman *et al.* (2005:6) contend that what is crucial is not the person’s title and qualifications, but rather his or her responsibilities.

In the literature study, Jorgenson and Peal (2008:54) state that teachers appreciate principals who occasionally offer to relieve a class, and take every opportunity to be guest teachers, demonstrating their skills and engagement in classroom life. It seems as though in the case of Bushbuckridge, these principals have little skill in classroom practice and do not take over teaching to demonstrate their teaching skills. The second reason for this incompatibility between the principals’ qualifications and learner performance is that perhaps principals are being sponsored by the department of education to improve their studies; and therefore perhaps spend time doing their university work during working hours rather than reading and implementing instructional leadership.

The following column diagram represents the fluctuating pass rate from 2004 to 2008 according to the different qualifications of the principals who completed the questionnaire.

COLUMN DIAGRAM 5.1: Representation of the pass rate from 2004 to 2008 according to the qualifications of the principals



At the planning stage of the study, it was important to determine the number of years that the principals had served as CS1, HOD, deputy principal, or as principal. The following table shows the years of experience that the principals had served in these different job categories:

TABLE 5.7: Years of experience in the different job categories CS1, HOD, deputy principal and principal

V5.1 Years as CS1	Frequency	Percentage
5 years and less	19	24.99
6 – 15 years	53	69.75
16 years and more	4	5.26
TOTAL	76	100
V5.2 Years as HOD		
5 years and less	35	67.31
6 – 12 years	17	32.69
TOTAL	52	100

V5.3 Years as Deputy Principal		
0 – 5 years	35	83.33
6 – 12 years	7	16.67
TOTAL	42	100
V5.4 Years as Principal		
1 – 9 years	33	42.85
10 – 20 years	33	42.85
21 – 28 years and more	11	14.29
TOTAL	77	100

Table 5.7 (V5.1) shows that 24.99% of the 76 principals who responded to this question served for 5 years and less as CS1 educators before they became principals, while 69.75% served for more than six years, and 5.26% served for 16 years and more. The principals who served within the range of 6 to 15 years could be expected to respond more appropriately to the questionnaire than those in the 5 years and below range. The statistics show that the principals in the 5 years and below range do not have enough experience in the classroom to be good instructional leaders. Perhaps their appointment was based on qualifications and the outcomes of an interview, without taking into consideration the value of good classroom experience.

V5.2 in the table above indicates that of the 52 principals who responded to this question, 67.31% served for 5 years and less as HODs before they became principals, while 32.69% served for a minimum of six years and a maximum of 12 years before they became principals. According to the statistics in table 5.2a above there is no correlation between the teachers' number of years of experience in any level, and the level of learner performance.

Instructional leadership requires the principal to: promote frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities; define and communicate shared vision and goals of the school; monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process; and manage the curriculum and instruction. If 67.31% of the principals have less than 5 years of experience as HODs and 83.33% of them less than 5 years as deputy principals, then it is highly likely that they are not instructionally prepared for their roles as instructional leaders.

V5.3 in the table above indicates that of the 42 principals who responded to this question, 83.33% served for five years and less as deputy principals and the remaining 16.67% served

for more than six years as deputy principals before they became principals. The inference that can be drawn from this information is that even if the 83.33% of principals served longer as HODs than as deputy principals, a longer time served as a deputy principal would have given them more hands-on leadership capacity than the length of time spent as an HOD.

V5.4 in the table above indicates that of the 77 principals who responded to this question, 33 (42.85%) have served as principals for 9 years and less, and the same number and percentage have served for 10 to 20 years as principals. The remaining 14.29% have served for 21 years and more. The inference that may be drawn is that the last two groups of principals have more experience in leadership that may be used to improve learner performance in the matriculation examination. Whether or not they are good instructional leaders remains an unanswered question. It seems that when aspiring principals are shortlisted for a principalship position, excellence in classroom teaching is not regarded as a job specific criterion.

To sum up this section, Barends (2004:6), one of the advocates of instructional leadership, comments as follows about teaching experience:

“Teaching experience is important in being a good principal. It is not that one cannot be a principal having not been a teacher. A principal is a master teacher. The principal needs to be able to model and offer suggestions on classroom control to the teacher.....I strongly feel that one should be careful about moving through the levels syndrome. One of the damage we do to aspiring teachers is to say that if you want to be a principal you have to be a head of department, deputy principal and finally, principal.”

Barends’ (2004) argument protests against the assumption that one becomes a good principal if one has gone through the different levels, which he refers to as “the levels syndrome”. As I have argued above, excellence in classroom teaching should be used as one of the criteria for the identification of prospective principals.

TABLE 5.8: Distribution of the geographic locations of the schools

V7: School geographic background	Frequency	Percentage
Township	5	6.41
Rural area	73	93.59
Total	78	100

Assuming that the geographical background of the schools might have an impact on the achievement levels of the learners and the performance of teachers, it was necessary to determine in which areas the different participating schools are situated. Table 5.8 above indicates that there is an uneven distribution of schools between the townships and the rural areas. This situation is due to the fact that Bushbuckridge is historically a rural area, with a few townships which started developing during the early 1990s. Today many learners and teachers travel from the townships to attend school in the rural areas which makes it inappropriate at this stage of the research to infer that the poor performance of learners is due to the geographical background of their schools.

The poor performance of the learners may be attributed to other factors, such as lack of interest on the part of the learners, or low morale on the part of the teachers, particularly with regard to the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). These attitudinal variables could have led to inertia in the enactment of instructional leadership. This view is pursued further in the following sections of the thesis.

The rural background of the majority of the schools, as indicated in the above table, can also be associated with the affluence of the families from which the majority of the learners come. The analysis of the data in relation to V9A (learners' backgrounds) shows a statistically significant positive correlation in 2008 ($p=0.015$) between poor learner performance and the economic conditions at home. Due to the fact that the pass percentage was the lowest in 2008 (according to the statistics), it means that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds performed poorly as compared to learners from affluent backgrounds. It could also be true that in some cases learners from rural areas perform better than learners from urban areas. The background of learners, therefore, may significantly affect the improvement or decline in learner performance.

TABLE 5.9: Distribution of the number of learners enrolled for the matriculation examination and their performance

Year	Enrolment	Pass	Percentage	Fail	Percentage	Frequency
2004	5182	2479	47.83	2703	52.16	75
2005	5918	2938	49.64	2980	50.35	75
2006	5428	2146	39.53	3282	60.46	77
2007	6373	3163	49.63	3210	50.36	77
2008	6735	2416	35.87	4319	64.12	78
Total	29636	13142	44.34	16494	55.65	

Table 5.9 above indicates the number of learners who were enrolled for the matriculation examination in each year from 2004 to 2008, the number and percentage of learners who passed, and the number and percentage that failed. It is clear from the table that patterns of learner performance in the schools that participated in this survey have been fluctuating over the years. The data in the above table confirms the concern which prompted the researcher to engage in this study to investigate the instructional leadership practices of principals, and how these might lead to an improvement in the declining pass rate in the matriculation examination.

TABLE 5.10: Distribution of the management qualifications of principals

V11: Management Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
YES	60	76.92
NO	18	23.08
TOTAL	78	100

Table 5.10 indicates that the majority (76.92%) of the participating principals have a/some management qualification(s), while the minority (23.08%) have none. The inference that can be drawn from this information is that with such a large number of principals having management qualifications, the leadership and management of teaching and learning in the schools in the Bushbuckridge Region in general, and the participating schools in particular, should be above average, and learner performance in such schools could be expected to be better. However, the management qualifications might be highly theoretical and it could be

inferred that the principals are not able to apply the theories professionally and institutionally.

TABLE 5.10(a): Distribution of the extent to which principals perceive their management qualifications to enhance their capacity to perform instructional leadership

V12: Extent of effect of management qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Greatly	47	74.60
Partially	14	22.22
Not at all	2	3.17
Total	63	100

Table 5.10(a) above indicates that of the 63 principals who responded to this question, 74.60% of them feel that their management qualifications greatly enhance their capacity to perform their instructional leadership duties, 22.22% indicated that these qualifications partially enhance their capacity, while a small percentage (3.17%) do not consider it to enhance their leadership capacity at all. These statistics show that the principals' beliefs, values and actions are contradictory. The low performance of learners may be evidence of the lack of leadership duties performed by the principals.

The extent to which the principals' management qualifications enhance their practice is linked to the in-service training which they received about instructional leadership. The following table presents the least square means for the effect of in-service training from 2004 to 2008:

TABLE 5.10(b): Least square means for the effect of in-service training of principals on learner performance

Extent of the effect of in-service training	PASS MEANS				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Greatly	64.4%	56.13%	50%	52.3%	37.49%
Partially	53.6%	50%	55.1%	55.1%	35.8%
Not at all	57%	52.8%	42.4%	52.3%	32%
P value	0.1648	0.6119	0.4126	0.9067	0.6180

Table 5.10(b) above explores the extent to which the in-service training of principals (V12) has influenced their practice of instructional leadership which in turn, influences learner performance. In all cases, the p value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), ranging from 0.16 in 2004; 0.61 in 2005; 0.41 in 2006; 0.9 in 2007 to 0.61 in 2008. The inference that can be drawn from the statistics in the above table is that there is no significant relationship between in-service training, instructional leadership, and learner performance.

In 2004, for example, 64.4% of the principals indicated that in-service training influences their practice of instructional leadership greatly, 53% partially, and 57% not at all; but the pass percentage (47%) shows no correlation with the fact that in-service training influences their practice greatly. There is however, some level of compatibility between the pass percentage in 2008 (35.8%) with the extent to which the principals indicated that in-service training influences their practice of instructional leadership, with 37.49% saying that in-service training influences their practice greatly, 35.8% partially, and 32% not at all.

TABLE 5.11: Distribution of instructional time in hours that principals devote to instructional leadership activities per day

V13H: Instructional time in hours	Frequency	Percentage
3-5 hours	14	18.42
6-8 hours	62	81.58
Total	76	100

Table 5.11 above indicates that 18.42% of the participating principals spend 3 to 5 hours per day on instructional leadership activities, while the larger percentage (81.58%) spend

between 6 and 8 hours of their working day on instructional leadership activities. The inference that can be drawn from this data is that the more time the principals spend on instructional leadership activities, such as motivating teachers and learners, engaging teachers in development activities, monitoring and evaluating the work of the teachers, and ensuring the realization of the school vision and goals, the better the performance of the learners would be. Perhaps the principals are not aware of the instructional leadership duties that they should perform.

TABLE 5.12: Distribution of the responses to V15.1; V15.2; V15.3; V16.1; V16.2 and V17.3

Variables	r/rho value	p value	years
V15.1: Teachers' job satisfaction	-0.22786	0.0448	2008
V15.2: Teachers' understanding of the school's curricular goals	-0.24847	0.0316	2004
	-0.27454	0.0157	2007
	-0.24307	0.0320	2008
V15.3: Teachers' degree of success in implementing the school curriculum	-0.22805	0.0461	2007
	-0.25326	0.0253	2008
V16.1: Teachers supporting the implementation of the NCS	0.31205	0.0057	2006
V16.2: Teachers' involvement in designing and/or supporting the school's improvement goals	0.28886	0.0120	2004
V17.3: Using learner achievement to evaluate the practice of grade 12 educators	0.31515	0.0052	2007

NB: Only the statistically significant scores are displayed in the table above

Table 5.12 indicates the strength of different variables relating to the principals' opinions of their own professional practice, how they view the practice of the teachers in their schools, and how the activities of both the principals and teachers influence learner performance in the matriculation examination. The different cases are reported below, which should be read together with tables 5.2(a) and 5.2(b).

For variable V15.1 there is a statistically significant correlation between **teachers' job satisfaction** and the pass rate in 2008, with the values of $\rho=0.22786$ and $p=0.0448$. Teachers' job satisfaction could be directly attributed to the principal's practice of instructional leadership. If the principal provides the necessary and appropriate instructional

support to the teachers, resources to assist them in fulfilling their instructional obligations, and incentives to reward good performance, the teachers will work hard to improve learner performance. This correlation can be explained as a weak one, in the sense that the pass rate in 2008 is the lowest (35.8%) when compared to the other years; it further suggests that teacher job satisfaction was low during this year. This finding therefore suggests that the lower the teachers' job satisfaction, the poorer the learner results will be.

Teachers' understanding of the schools' curricular goals (V15.2) shows a statistically significant correlation with the pass rate in 2004 ($\rho=0.24847$; $p=0.0316$); in 2007 ($\rho=0.27454$; $p=0.0157$); and in 2008 ($\rho=-0.24307$; $p=0.0320$). In 2004 and 2007, where the pass rates are 47% and 49% respectively, there is a positive correlation between the teachers' understanding of the schools' curricular goals and the improvement in learner performance. In 2008, on the contrary, with a pass rate of 35.8%, there is a positive correlation between poor learner performance and the teachers' understanding of the schools' curricular goals. This implies that the principal should involve the entire staff in the formulation of the school's curricular goals. The more the teachers participate in the formulation of the school goals, the more they will declare ownership of such goals. This will enable them to work hard towards achieving these goals, which in turn will have an impact on the improvement of learner performance.

Teachers' degree of success in implementing the school's curricular goals (V15.3) shows a statistically significant correlation with the pass rate in 2007 ($\rho=0.22805$; $p=0.0461$) and in 2008 ($\rho=0.25326$; $p=0.0253$). The success of the teachers in implementing the school's curricular goals depends on their understanding of the curricular goals; the more they understand the curricular goals, the more they will succeed in implementing them. This success is likely to have an impact on the improvement of learner performance.

Parental support for learners' achievement (V15.5): With the poor performance of the learners in 2008 (35.8%), the p value of 0.0577 indicates that there is a positive correlation between poor learner performance and the low level of parental support. From this, it can be inferred that Bushbuckridge, being an area characterized by poverty and an acute level of unemployment, probably has an illiterate parent community who do not participate in the education of their children. It could also be that most of the parents work away from home,

causing a support gap between themselves and their children due to the long distances travelled and time spent away from home.

Teachers supporting the implementation of the NCS (V16.1) shows a statistically significant correlation with the pass rate in 2006 ($\rho=0.31205$; $p=0.0057$). The National Curriculum Statement is the written core curriculum in all South African schools. It is imperative for the principal, as an instructional leader, to support the implementation of this curriculum. In chapter 2, under the sub-heading of ‘Managing the curriculum and instruction’, it was indicated that the success of the principal in managing the curriculum and instruction depends on his/her collaboration with staff and attending learning area workshops with them. This will ensure that the principal is able to intervene and assist the staff, and also provide the necessary resources.

Teachers’ involvement in designing and supporting the school’s improvement goals (V16.2) shows a positive correlation with the mean pass rate. In 2004, 2005 and 2006 the statistics show a positive correlation between learner performance and the level of the teachers’ involvement in designing and supporting the schools improvement goals, with p values of 0.012; 0.0573; and 0.0579 respectively. Teachers will perform better and impact on learner performance positively if they are involved in designing the school’s improvement goals. The teachers must be able to own the school’s improvement goals and once this becomes the norm in the school, the teachers will be more focused, and achieving the school goals will become their primary focus.

Using learner achievement to evaluate the practice of grade 12 educators (V17.3) shows a statistically significant correlation with the pass rate in 2007 ($\rho=0.31515$; $p=0.0052$). The principal, together with his/her teachers, must use the previous year’s grade 12 results to build a “winning team” for the school. Subject teachers whose learners consistently perform well should be retained in that grade, and for those who consistently underperform, the performance of their learners should be used as a means to develop their skills. In this way, the school will be able to consolidate a winning team that will contribute to improved learner performance.

The inferences that can be drawn from the correlation analysis above are the following:

- Teachers need to have some degree of job satisfaction and this can be achieved by recognition of good performance through incentives offered by the school. Poor

performance of learners could be attributed to a low level of teacher job satisfaction, as is the case with the performance of learners in the 2008 matriculation examination (pass rate of 35.87%), and in the 2006 matriculation examination (pass rate of 39.53%). It can also be inferred that in cases such as the 2004, 2005 and 2007 pass rates (47.83%, 49.64% and 49.63% respectively), the teachers experienced some degree of job satisfaction. This therefore means that learner performance increases or improves with the improvement in teacher job satisfaction, and decreases or declines with a decline in teacher job satisfaction.

- The school's curriculum goals must be clear to all teachers and the principal must ensure that agreed-upon implementation strategies are observed by all teachers in the school. This implies that only clear learning and performance goals can guide the development of effective teaching and learning which can result in measurable improvements in learner performance. The fluctuation in the matriculation pass rate between the different years under review (2004 to 2008) could be associated with the different levels of understanding of the curricular goals by the teachers. These differences in the levels of understanding could be attributed to several factors which may include low morale on the part of teachers as a result of their temporary appointment status (which is very common in Bushbuckridge); lack of appropriate training on the new curriculum and its mode of delivery; and the extent to which the principal initiates, controls and monitors the implementation of the school's curricular goals.
- The principal needs to create avenues for motivating teachers to support the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement. School-based teacher development activities can assist in this regard. Motivating and encouraging teachers are two psychological variables that can have a marked impact on the improvement of learner performance. Motivated and enthusiastic teachers will no doubt succeed in empowering their learners to contribute towards their own improved performance.
- The school's improvement goals should not be a product of only the office of the principal or the SMT. Involving all the teachers in this enterprise will facilitate the teachers' ownership of these goals, which will encourage them to work hard towards achieving them.

- The achievement of learners each year, particularly in the matriculation examination, should be used as a tool to evaluate the practice of the teachers concerned. In order to provide effective instruction that will result in improved learner performance, teachers must be researchers who are able to use research-based performance improvement strategies to plan their instruction. Intervention strategies to improve performance can only be made from such an exercise.

TABLE 5.13: Distribution of the responses to V14.1 to V14.6: time spent by the principal on different activities in the school

Variable	Description	Percentage
V14.1	Administrative duties	32.85
V14.2	Instructional leadership	22.88
V14.3	Supervising and evaluating teachers and other staff	25.46
V14.4	Teaching	17.31
V14.5	Public relations and fundraising	12.55
V14.6	Other	15.57

Table 5.13 above indicates the distribution of the responses of the principals to V14.1 to V14.6 which relate to the time spent by the principal on different activities in the school. The statistics in this table show that generally, the principals who responded to this question spend the largest percentage of their time on administrative duties (32.85%), followed by 25.46% of their time being spent on the supervision and evaluation of teachers and other staff. Instructional leadership, which is the focus of this study, was allocated 22.88% of their time, followed by teaching (17.31%), other activities (15.57%), and public relations receiving the lowest percentage at 12.55%.

The primary purpose of the above question was to establish the extent to which principals spend their time on instructional leadership. The statistics show that they spend more time on administrative duties, supervision and evaluation than on instructional leadership. The poor performance of learners in the matriculation examination could be attributed to this limited attention given to instructional leadership. In chapter 1 it was reported that Enueme and Egwunyenga (2008:1) view instructional leadership as a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development that facilitates school improvement. Given this view, if the same principals who indicated that they spend time on instructional leadership

were also to spend time on supervision and evaluation, this could possibly contribute to improved learner performance.

The quantitative data analysis presented above emanates from the data collected from the principals' questionnaire. The following section focuses on the analysis of the deputy principals' and HODs' questionnaire, the purpose of which was to obtain the perceptions of the deputy principals and HODs with regard to the instructional leadership practices of their principals. The questionnaire was structured according to the four variables which were identified, for the purpose of this study, as being related to instructional leadership.

5.6 DISCUSSION OF SOME OF THE MEAN SCORES FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' AND HODS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The following discussion involves the mean scores of the four independent variables which were identified for this study. A frequency table is provided for the four variables, to explain whether there is any statistical significance between the independent variables and the pass rate in the matriculation examination. Correlation analysis was used for this part of the data analysis.

Table 5.14: Mean scores for the four independent variables related to instructional leadership

Variables	r/rho values	p value
Managing the curriculum and instruction	0.10701	0.3511
Defining and communicating shared vision and goals	0.04289	0.7093
Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities	0.02824	0.8061
Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process	-0.02264	0.8440

Table 5.14 can be regarded as the centrepiece of this study in the sense that its primary purpose is to investigate the extent to which the four main variables impact on the improvement in the performance of learners in the matriculation examination. Using correlation analysis to investigate the data captured, the value of p should be smaller than or equal to 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$) in order for the correlation to be regarded as statistically significant.

In all the cases in the table above, $p > 0.05$ which indicates that the correlation is not statistically significant.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the findings in the above table is that the four variables, which were identified as characteristics of instructional leadership, do not have any effect on the pass rate. From this conclusion, it can be inferred that the enactment of the above functions by the principal may not bring any improvement in learner performance. This therefore implies that there are other activities in which principals should engage in order to bring about improvement in learner performance in the matriculation examination.

Noticeably the variable ‘managing the curriculum and instruction’, has a p-value of 0.3511 which is considerably lower than the other three variables; this is therefore the most important variable of the four. Research (see section 2.5.7.4) has shown that instructional leaders need to have up-to-date knowledge of three areas of education: curriculum, instruction and assessment (Jenkins, 2009:34). The principal also needs to keep abreast of new developments with regard to curriculum by attending curriculum workshops with his teachers, as this will assist him/her to provide the necessary support to the teachers with regard to the implementation of the curriculum. The importance of this variable to learner performance is supported by Mednick’s view (2003) that when principals teach in the classroom, they are enabled to obtain instructional resources and professional development opportunities that improve teaching, learning and assessment practices for teachers.

The literature that was reviewed to provide secondary data for this research, from both African and western sources, revealed that the four variables indicated above are among many other variables that are related to instructional leadership. Some of the literature also refers to such variables as “functions” of the principal. Any research findings that contradict the above conclusions regarding the four variables may indicate that further investigation of instructional leadership and its relevance to the improvement of learner performance is necessary. Such findings also call for deeper questioning as to whether instructional leadership is a prerequisite for appointment as a principal, and whether principals themselves view instructional leadership as a key to the improvement of learner performance.

The quantitative data analyzed in this chapter emanates from the responses of the principals to the questionnaire which was specifically designed to collect their biographic and other

information related to their practice as instructional leaders. The data collected from the deputy principals' and HODs' questionnaire, which was designed to solicit information regarding their perceptions about the role of their principals as instructional leaders, has also been presented and discussed. The following chapter reports on the findings from the interviews which were conducted with principals. Two qualitative research reports are provided in chapter 6: firstly, the findings from the focus group interview, and secondly, the findings from the structured interview.

CHAPTER 6

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the findings from the focus group interviews and the structured interviews.

6.2 THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The sample for the focus group interviews consisted of sixty principals who were attending classes for the ACE School Leadership programme. This programme was specifically tailored by the national Department of Education to prepare serving principals for their leadership and management roles. The principals were arranged into fifteen groups of four members and each group was given a list of the four variables which were identified in this study as relating to instructional leadership. The groups were given ten minutes to brainstorm the variables and thereafter asked to report on the variable(s) which they considered to be the most important. The researcher then asked the principals the following questions:

- Which of the four variables do you think could have a marked impact on the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination?
- Give reasons to substantiate your choice of variables in the question above.

The following table represents the responses of the principals and the reasons that they advanced for each of the choices that they made.

TABLE 6.1: Findings from the focus group interviews

Variables	Number of Responses	Reasons for the Choice
1. Defining and communicating shared vision and goals	Twenty- four principals considered this variable as the most important for learner performance	The following reasons were given for their choice: Defining and communicating a shared vision and goals makes things easy to implement; this role cannot be delegated, only the principal can and must do it; if the principal is responsible for giving direction to the school, he must live the vision because the function of a vision is to give direction to the school.
2. Managing the curriculum and instruction	Twenty principals viewed this variable as being important for learner performance	They argued that this is the core business of the school. One principal indicated that curriculum management is “the main dish and the others are side dishes”. Curriculum is the only thing that appears on the time table and if the curriculum is not monitored, defining and communicating the vision and goals fails.
3. Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process	Eight principals regarded this variable as being important for the improvement of learner achievement	They argued that monitoring and providing feedback is imperative for effective learning. One principal indicated that media reports are about learner achievement and nobody reports about policies and visions. The principals who voted for this variable emphasized that feedback, which can be done from monthly or quarterly results, can have a marked impact on learner performance.
4. Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities	No principals voted for this variable	The reason advanced for not voting for this variable was that some principals did not view this variable as being relevant to them. They argued that this variable falls within the scope of the curriculum advisors.

The findings from the focus group interviews as indicated in the above table, served as a basis for the formulation of questions for the structured interviews. The next section focuses on a discussion of the findings from the structured interviews which was the second phase of the qualitative research.

6.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This part of the thesis reports on the findings from the structured interviews which were conducted with five principals who were purposely selected from the 78 principals who participated in the completion of the questionnaire for the quantitative part of this study. The following criteria were used to select the principals for the structured interviews:

- One principal who had a track record of a pass rate of 100% during the past three years; for the sake of confidentiality this principal has the pseudonym Mr Platinum;
- Two principals whose schools have maintained a pass rate of between 50% and 70% during the past three years; one of these principals is called Mr Gold and the other Mr Gold Dollar;
- Two principals whose schools have performed below 50% during the past three years; one is called Mr Silver and the other Mr Sylvester.

All the schools headed by the principals identified for the structured interviews have similar socio-economic backgrounds. Using this sample of principals with different learner performance levels over the years has enhanced this study in the following ways, based on the principals' responses to my interview questions:

- It was possible to identify best practices from the responses of the well performing principals, which could be used to develop the principals of the poor performing schools.
- It was possible to identify, from the responses of the different principals, those practices which are compatible with, and are able to contribute to the improvement of learner performance. This could form one of the unique contributions of this study in informing the type of content that should be included in principal preparation programmes.

An interview schedule was prepared for this part of the study, using information drawn from the literature review, the findings from the quantitative section, and information obtained from the focus group interviews. Firstly, the principals were requested to prioritize the four variables and provide reasons why they arranged the variables in the manner that they did. Secondly, the principals were requested to answer the following questions:

1. How much time do you devote to the enactment of your instructional leadership roles, e.g. time spent on teacher development activities?
2. What, in your opinion, is the purpose of supervision and do you view supervision of the teaching and learning process as part of your responsibilities as a principal?
3. As a principal, what type of support do you need in order to be a better instructional leader and to what extent does the department provide such support (if any) to your school and to you as a principal?
4. As a principal, how do you support your teachers with regard to their instructional obligations?
5. Comment on the following statements:
 - 5.1 The higher the qualifications of the/a principal, the better the results of his/her school will be.
 - 5.2 There is a degree of compatibility between the performance expectations of the principal and the support that the department gives to the principal.
 - 5.3 The improvement/decline in the achievement of learners in the National Senior Certificate is influenced by the enactment of instructional leadership by the principal.
6. How do you distribute your leadership and management activities from Monday to Friday?
7. Do you conduct a weekly, monthly, or quarterly audit of your leadership/management activities and if you do, on which activity/activities do you spend most of your time in a week, month or quarter?
8. On the basis of your response to the above question, to what extent do you think that the activity/activities on which you spend most of your time contributes to the improvement of teacher effectiveness and learner performance?

With regard to the arrangement of the four variables and their impact on learner performance, the participating principals expressed the following opinions.

Mr Silver and Mr Gold were interviewed on the same day but at different times and venues. Mr Silver was interviewed in his office and Mr Gold, due to the travel distance to his school, proposed that we secure a private study room in the local community library which is where we conducted our interview.

Both principals prioritized the four variables as follows: defining and communicating a shared vision and goals; managing curriculum and instruction; monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process; and promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities. This is exactly the same priority given by the groups of principals during the focus group interviews. The following table represents the reasons provided by Mr Silver and Mr Gold for their choices:

TABLE 6.2: Representation of the prioritized variables by two principals (Mr Silver and Mr Gold)

Variables	Comments by the Principals
1. Defining and communicating a shared vision and goals	Mr Silver indicated that this variable is the most important in the sense that it gives focus to what one wants to achieve. Mr Gold indicated that the vision and goals of the school define what the school is about, which is providing quality teaching and learning, and where teachers and learners have to share a common understanding with regard to what shapes the school. With the vision and goals of the school in mind, the principal will be able to ensure that he/she plans the programmes of his/her school in line with the set vision and goals.
2. Managing the curriculum and instruction	Mr Silver ranked this variable second and indicated that curriculum management is the core business of the school. The principal of any school can only reach the vision and goals of the school through the curriculum. It is only through the curriculum that learners can achieve good results at the end of the year. Mr Gold indicated that the goals of the school are organized around the curriculum and achieved through the curriculum. When teachers plan their lessons, they should ensure that the implementation of these lessons will ensure the achievement of the school's vision and goals.
3. Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process	Mr Silver ranked this variable third and indicated that this variable monitors the movement of the school towards the achievement of its vision and goals. He further indicated that while he may not personally do the monitoring, this is a responsibility that resides in the HODs and it enables the HODs to have a feel for the challenges faced by educators and the type of support that will assist them. Mr Gold emphasized a 'hands on approach' to monitoring where he personally, as a principal, monitors the

Variables	Comments by the Principals
	implementation of plans to achieve the vision and goals and provide feedback. This approach, according to Mr Gold, culminates in the identification of hindrances to the realization of the vision and goals and the identification of appropriate corrective measures.
4. Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities	Mr Silver linked this variable to the monitoring and provision of feedback by indicating that the shortfalls identified during the monitoring process create opportunities for the development of educators. Mr Gold also indicated that challenges identified during the monitoring process can be resolved in the school through school-based teacher development workshops. Teachers can share findings from the monitoring process and wider encompassing workshops can be arranged.

It is still a puzzle to me, however, that principals considered promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities as the least important variable. According to Joubert and Van Rooyen (2008:17), principals must ensure that professional development activities are provided and that they are focused on teaching practice and learner activities. They further contend that a detailed professional development plan nurtures the growth of all individuals in the school community and for this purpose, the principal should engage in one-on-one discussions with staff members in order to identify teaching successes and concerns. The same authors (ibid.:18) conclude by indicating that the success of professional development activities should be measured not only on teaching practice changes, but also on whether learner performance increases. With the IQMS being implemented at schools in South Africa, the development of teachers has become crucial for successful curriculum delivery. The fractured apartheid system had led to unequal quality of teachers, and development of rural school teachers should be a top priority. I have come to realize that due to lack of departmental support, this important variable has been sadly neglected.

Assuming that the similar manner in which the two principals Mr Silver and Mr Gold evaluated the variables (shown in the table above) was not an accident, and that the similar reasons that they advanced for some of the variables were not first discussed between them, the following conclusion can be drawn from their responses:

The two principals have a good understanding of what each of the variables encompasses and how each of them applies in practice. The difference in the performance of their schools can be traced to the practical application of these variables in their actual practice as

instructional leaders. The good performance in Mr Gold's school indicates his ability to translate theory into practice, while Mr Silver may be incapable of applying his theoretical knowledge to the practice of instructional leadership. The inability to translate theory into practice becomes an intervening variable that can also be applied to the principals' qualification dilemma presented in table 5.6 above.

The following section represents the responses of Mr Sylvester, Mr Gold Dollar, and Mr Platinum. These principals' responses are tabled together because they prioritized their variables differently from Mr Gold and Mr Silver. Like Mr Silver and Mr Gold, these three principals were interviewed at places of their choice, where they felt comfortable. Mr Platinum and Mr Sylvester proposed that we conduct the interviews at their homes, and Mr Gold Dollar proposed that we conduct the interview in his office at school.

TABLE 6.3: Responses of Mr Platinum, Mr Gold Dollar and Mr Sylvester to the four variables

VARIABLES	COMMENTS BY THE PRINCIPALS		
	Mr Platinum	Mr Gold Dollar	Mr Sylvester
1. Defining and communicating a shared vision and goals	This variable is the most important to me. Teachers need to know what the goals of the school are and what the school needs to achieve.	This variable comes last for me. Defining and communicating a shared vision and goals leads to agreement about where people are getting to.	No comment.
2. Managing the curriculum and instruction	Curriculum management comes third for me. It follows after teacher development where the teachers are also developed in terms of curriculum management skills.	This is the core business of the school and therefore it becomes my priority number one. If the curriculum is not properly managed, people may miss the goals of the school.	To me, this is the main responsibility of the principal. We are at school because of the curriculum and therefore it comes first to me.
3. Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process	This variable becomes my least priority in the sense that the management of the curriculum and teacher development activities culminate in the realization of the vision and goals of the school.	Monitoring and providing feedback becomes an instrument for the motivation of teachers. If properly done, this can lead to improvement in both teaching and learning. It is therefore second to curriculum management. Monitoring and providing feedback on learner achievement and teacher activities is all about 'tightening the screws'.	Monitoring and providing feedback on what happens with the curriculum is also key to my understanding. I therefore would classify this variable as my second priority.
4. Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities	This variable is my second priority. When teachers are developed, they are able to move towards the right direction. Developing teachers by providing school-based development programmes helps them to work towards realizing the vision and goals of the school.	Building the capacity of the teachers to carry out their instructional obligations helps to improve the quality of what is taught. This variable comes third in terms of priority.	In my view, teacher development falls outside the scope of my responsibilities as an instructional leader. It is more the responsibility of the curriculum implementers from the regional office and head office of the department, than the principal.

The most important variable prioritized by Mr Platinum, with a track record of 100% for the past three years, was defining and communicating shared vision and goals. His second priority displays an exciting revelation – promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities. Mr Platinum is aware that the curriculum has changed over the past 16 years and that the development of teachers is important in terms of the goals of the school. The principal of the worst performing school, Mr Sylvester, however, saw this responsibility as outside the scope of his duties. In Mr Sylvester’s view the responsibility for developing teachers lies with the department of education.

These findings clarify the fact that when the principal is a good instructional leader, he/she will ensure the development of quality teachers by training them and being a role model classroom teacher as well. Principals need to accompany their subordinates in teacher development activities as this will build up professional expertise in the principal regarding curriculum, monitoring and evaluation.

6.4 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This section reports on the responses of the principals to the structured interview questions. Seven themes were identified from the focus group, and structured interview questions and the responses of the principals are presented according to the seven themes, and how the individual principals touched on these themes in their responses to the questions (refer to Appendix I for the raw data on the principals’ responses).

For the purpose of analyzing and reporting the findings from the principals’ responses, the following seven themes which include the four variables identified earlier in the study and three new themes are used: defining and communicating a shared vision and goals; managing the curriculum and instruction; monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process; promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities; principals’ time allocation and impact on learner performance; qualifications of the principal and learner performance; and support from the department and learner performance. After presenting the findings according to these themes, there is a reflection on how these themes respond to the secondary research questions of this study.

Theme 1:

Defining and communicating a shared vision and goals and learner performance

Three out of the five principals who were interviewed ranked this variable as the most important. They supported this choice by indicating that *'a vision and goals of the school define what the school is about, which is providing quality teaching and learning, where teachers and learners have to share a common understanding with regard to what shapes the school'*. They further indicated that, with the vision and goals of the school in mind, principals will be able to ensure that planning of their schools' activities and programmes is in line with the vision and goals of their school. The principals hold the view that if the vision and goals of the schools are clearly defined and communicated to all parties in the school, and in particular the learners, then learner performance will improve.

Theme 2:

Managing the curriculum and instruction and learner performance

While the various principals ranked this theme differently from each other, all of them hold the view that this variable constitutes the core business of the school. It is the curriculum, which includes all the learning areas at school, that brings teachers and learners together. The principals further agree that the principal of any school can only realize the vision and goals of the school through the curriculum and it is only through the curriculum that learners achieve good results at the end of the year. One principal commented that: *'Curriculum management is the main dish and the others are side dishes.... curriculum is the only thing that appears on the time table, and if it is not monitored, defining and communicating the vision and goals of the school fails'*.

To sum up the responses of the principals on this variable, a principal who devotes much time on managing and monitoring the curriculum and instruction will achieve the vision and goals of the school and ultimately improved learner performance.

Theme 3:

Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process and learner performance

The responses of the principals showed some degree of compatibility between this variable and the management of curriculum and instruction. The principals indicated that this

variable monitors movement in the direction of the vision and goals of the school. They further indicated that, while they may not be directly involved with the monitoring and provision of feedback, this is a responsibility that resides in the HODs and it enables them to appreciate the challenges which teachers experience and the type of support that will assist them.

Mr Gold emphasized a ‘hands on’ approach to monitoring, and that he personally monitors the implementation of plans to achieve the vision and goals of the school and provides feedback. In his view, this approach works well in boosting teacher confidence and also contributes to improved teacher and learner performance.

Theme 4:

Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities

The principals identified a link between this variable and the variable related to monitoring and provision of feedback on the teaching and learning process. One principal indicated that *‘the shortfalls identified during the monitoring process create opportunities for the development of educators’*, and another principal concurred, saying that *‘challenges identified during the monitoring process can be resolved in the school through school-based teacher development workshops during which teachers can share findings from the monitoring process and wider encompassing workshops can be arranged’*.

The inference that can be drawn from the contributions of these principals is that teacher development activities need not be the responsibility of the department, but that principals should be empowered to conduct these activities in their schools. This view is also encapsulated in the principals’ need for support from the department, since they indicated that the level of support from the department should be such that they are empowered and capacitated to carry out some of these activities by themselves. A conclusion that can be drawn from this finding is that when the principal’s capacity is improved, such a principal should be able to build the capacity of his/her staff.

Theme 5:

The different leadership activities, including instructional leadership, on which the principals spend most of their time and the possible impact of these activities on the improvement of learner performance

The principals whose schools have performed below the 50% pass rate over the years spend a large percentage of their time on administrative and other activities rather than on instructional leadership. The inference that can be drawn from this finding is that these principals are aware of instructional leadership as a practice, but they do not necessarily regard it as their responsibility. This finding coincides with my concern expressed in the conceptual framework of this study that instructional leadership is not indicated as a prerequisite for principalship during recruitment – only the level of qualification and the years of experience are required criteria.

Three out of the five principals interviewed had clearly demarcated plans for their daily activities. It did, however, emerge during the interviews that these principals find it difficult to work according to their plans, due to the unplanned meetings called by the department from time to time. These principals hold the view that if their programmes could be implemented without interference from the department, their schools could improve learner performance. The value of spending more time on curriculum management featured prominently in their responses. This was however clouded by the outcry that their personal programmes are often stifled by interference of the department through its service meetings at short notice, which sometimes take the principals away from their schools for several days. It is evident from the interviews that four of the principals, with the exception of Mr Sylvester who prioritized administration more than the curriculum, view curriculum management as the vehicle for the improvement of learner performance.

Theme 6:

The qualifications of the principal and learner performance

The responding principals indicated that it is good for principals to have advanced qualifications, but such qualifications will not necessarily assist in the improvement of learner performance. They emphasized that qualities such as the principal's commitment to his work and his/her interest in learners' performance will make a difference. On the whole, the principals hold the view that it is not the qualifications of the principal that matter but

the character and orientation of the principal towards learner performance which is important. One principal noted that:

“A highly decorated principal in terms of qualifications will only contribute by way of motivating others to improve their teaching qualifications. With regard to the impact of such qualifications on learner achievement, the principal must be able to translate his acquired skills (academic skills) into practice.”

Learner performance is also highly dependent on good teaching and assessment activities. If the leader is not prepared to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in the classrooms, and does not worry about classroom assessment and teaching resources, then learner performance will suffer. Besides, the principal should be entrepreneurial in obtaining resources to support the instructional programme. The literature study (see sections 2.5.4 and 2.5.5) highlighted the fact that instructional leadership is defined as establishing the possibility of instructional innovation in schools which leads to the creation of culture.

An effective instructional leader creates a school culture based on high expectations, a school culture conducive to the success of all learners. He/she is responsible and accountable for his/her duties as a principal and sets a vision, lives the vision and ensures that all members in the school perform their duties and fulfil the vision; therefore, visionary leadership and the creation of culture are far more important than the qualifications of the principal.

Theme 7:

The level of support that the department provides to the principals and the compatibility between the performance expectations of the department and the amount of support provided

With regard to the level of support that the department provides to principals, all the principals indicated that the department is doing little to support them in the implementation of departmental policies. This makes it difficult for the principals to realize the goals of the department generally and those of their schools in particular. Support with regard to curriculum implementation featured prominently in the responses of the principals.

The level of support that the principals provide to their teachers is limited to the provision of resources such as Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSM), policies, and ensuring that

the department provides the school with teachers when necessary. On the technical side of the support that teachers need, such as curriculum implementation, assessment, and instruction, the principals require the same support from the department. In the opinions of the principals, the curriculum implementers (CIs) who should provide this support to the schools are often not competent to offer such a service.

With regard to the compatibility between the performance expectations of the department and the support that the department provides to the principals, all the responding principals contended that they receive minimal support from the department. They further indicated that the department expects increased output from the principals while providing very little input in terms of support. The principals also indicated that if the department could provide them with the necessary support in the performance of their instructional obligations, learner performance could improve. Due to the current lack of support from the department, it was only through a “hit or miss” approach that some principals saw their schools achieving better results. The inference that may be drawn from this submission is that the practice of instructional leadership could influence learner performance provided that the department affords the necessary support to principals, who in turn would provide support to their educators.

Following from the analysis of the findings above, it is appropriate to explore the responses of the well-performing principal (Mr Platinum) and juxtapose these with those of the worst performing principals (Mr Silver and Mr Sylvester). This approach will help to uncover what it is that Mr Platinum does in his school to enable his school’s outstanding performance, and what it is that Mr Silver and Mr Sylvester were not doing in their schools, that led to such poor performance. For this section, reference is made to the raw data of the structured interviews (Appendix I) to gain a better understanding of the type of leader Mr Platinum is and what made his school perform well, as compared to the schools of Mr Silver and Mr Sylvester.

Mr Platinum indicated what each variable was about and outlined his actions about each plan. He has a clear programme of interaction with all stakeholders in the school: teachers, learners, SMT, support staff, and the SGB. This shows that the outstanding performance of Mr Platinum’s school is due to the coordinated effort by all stakeholders to ensure a productive teaching and learning experience. He has set expectations, and all the stakeholders work together to achieve goals to fulfil these expectations.

Mr Silver and Mr Sylvester, on the other hand, expressed their knowledge of the fact that curriculum and instruction are the core business of the school, but did not give a clear indication of how they go about engaging teachers and learners in this respect. Mr Sylvester referred to curriculum management as the main responsibility of the principal, but in terms of time spent on instructional leadership and management, he indicated that he spends 50% of his time on administration. Nowhere in his responses did he indicate the percentage of time that he spends on instructional leadership. Both Mr Silver and Mr Sylvester prioritize those issues that do not affect the learners directly (such as administration), and give very little time to instructional leadership. As the evidence shows, Mr Silver and Mr Sylvester's schools performed badly as compared to Mr Platinum's school. Mr Platinum showed evidence of the importance of cultural beliefs, values and actions. He believes that teacher development is important for quality education and that quality teachers will bring about quality teaching and learning.

Themes 1 to 4, which are the variables related to instructional leadership as identified for this study, are a response to the main research question of this study. The responses of the principals during the focus group and the structured interviews reveal a different perspective from that which emerged from the quantitative research. This aspect is dealt with in the synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative research findings in the next chapter.

6.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This section reflects on the purpose of this chapter, provides a summary, and offers some concluding remarks. This chapter has focused on an analysis of the qualitative data. Important themes emerged from the analysis of the structured interview data, which assisted me to summarize and present the findings from the structured interview. The themes that emerged from the structured interviews also relate directly to the conceptual framework of this study and these are used to consolidate the concluding arguments of this study in the following chapter. The table below summarizes chapters four and five:

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Table 6.4: Phases in the data collection and analysis process

Data Collection Methods	Steps in the Process	Phases of Data Collection and Analysis
Phase 1: Quantitative – Questionnaires	Step 1	Identification of respondents to the questionnaires
	Step 2	Construction of the two questionnaires for the different groups of respondents as identified in step 1
	Step 3	Administration of the questionnaires and their retrieval
	Step 4	Analysis of the quantitative data
Phase 2: Qualitative – Focus group interviews and structured interviews	Step 5	Selection of participants for the focus group interviews and conducting the interviews
	Step 6	Selection of participants for the structured interviews and conducting the interviews
	Step 7	Analysis of both focus group and structured interviews

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CHAPTER 7

SYNTHESIZING AND CONSOLIDATING THE QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA INTO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a synthesis and consolidation of the major findings of both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study, and to provide a summary, recommendations and conclusion of the study. The recommendations also encapsulate some suggestions for further research. The purpose of this chapter therefore, is to:

- Summarize the entire research project;
- Link the problem statement and aims with the data analysis and findings in chapter 5 and 6;
- Draw conclusions arising from the hypothesis and the findings reported in chapter 5 and 6 in order to indicate whether the problem statement has been responded to or not; and
- Present an alternative intervention strategy informed by the research findings and literature review in this thesis.

Before venturing into the final stages of this study it is important, as the title of this chapter suggests, dealing with the consolidation, integration and comparison of the data collected and analyzed. Chapter 4 explores the research design and methodology that was used to collect the data. The purpose of collecting the data, and the approaches that were used for this purpose, was to answer the research questions formulated for this study. A mixed methods research approach was used, namely a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Choosing the mixed methods approach ensured methodological triangulation, trustworthiness, validity and reliability of the research findings.

Figure 4.2 explains the fact that research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) cannot be viewed as part of an incompatible quantitative/qualitative dichotomy, i.e. they cannot be viewed as independent from each other but rather they are complementary modes of investigation, resulting in a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Herman & Egri, 2008). Based on this view, table 6.4 lists seven steps in the data analysis

process. The last three steps in the process, namely data consolidation, data comparison and data integration are explored in this chapter.

The integration of the quantitative and qualitative data in this study has demonstrated that the three types of variables identified may provide an answer about the relationship that exists between instructional leadership and learner performance. The quantitative data collection method employed questionnaires, which was followed by collecting qualitative data by means of two types of interviews. The qualitative data allowed the principals to indicate what could not be expressed by means of the questionnaire responses. Integrating, comparing and consolidating data from various sources has the following advantages.

The possibility of overlapping weaknesses is minimized because the methods are mixed in way that complement each other's strengths. The integrated approach provides data from which stronger inferences can be made by capturing and presenting a greater diversity of viewpoints. Integrating data further provides a deeper, richer and more comprehensive set of data to develop effective strategies to communicate best practices. Integrating, comparing and consolidating data also recognizes the fact that education is a complex phenomenon which must be studied from multiple perspectives to gain a good insight, and that no single method could adequately capture an understanding of a particular phenomenon (Lieberman & Erickson, 2010).

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to learner performance. The catalyst for this study was the observed and recorded decline in learner performance, particularly in the grade 12 examinations, with specific reference to the years from 2004 to 2008 in South African public schools. This study consisted of two phases which are briefly discussed below.

7.2.1 PHASE ONE OF THE STUDY

The primary research question focuses on the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to learner performance. In order to respond to this question, the study solicited responses from principals of secondary schools who had to provide their demographic information (and other data) through the completion of a questionnaire. A separate questionnaire was designed and distributed to deputy principals and HODs. The

purpose of the latter questionnaire was to solicit information with regard to those respondents' perceptions of their principals as instructional leaders. The questionnaires from both groups of respondents were collected and analyzed.

7.2.2 PHASE TWO OF THE STUDY

This phase consisted of two sub-phases. The first sub-phase was carried out using focus group interview with 60 principals. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to establish whether the principals understood each of the instructional leadership variables and how they chose to arrange them in order of priority. My interaction with these principals in the focus group interviews assisted me to formulate questions for the structured interviews, which formed the second sub-phase that followed after the focus group interviews.

The findings from both the quantitative data gathered during phase one of the study and qualitative data gathered during phase two, are detailed in the previous chapter and the major findings are summarized in this chapter.

7.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section sets out to determine the alignment of the problem statement in chapter 1 with the findings of this study. To achieve this alignment four questions were asked and answered. A summary of the answers to the four research questions is given below and the research findings of the entire study are discussed in the next main section.

7.3.1 WHAT ARE THE VARIABLES RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND WHAT IS THEIR EFFECT ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION?

From the literature review, four instructional leadership variables were identified which some scholars and researchers refer to as “functions” of instructional leadership. The effects of these variables on the performance of learners in the matriculation examination were tested through the questionnaires which were designed for principals. The analysis reveals that these variables seem to have little effect on learner performance and since they are characteristics of instructional leadership (also called the functions of instructional leadership), then instructional leadership appears to have little effect on learner

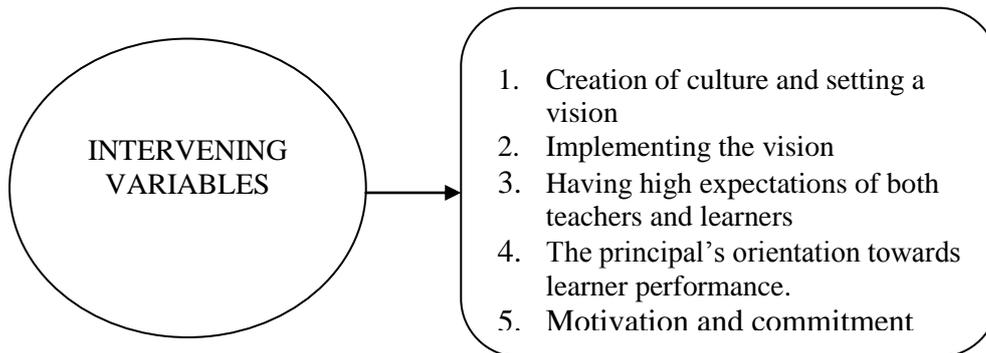
performance. Based on this finding, I inferred that there are other intervening variables, or certain characteristics which the principals must have in their practice of instructional leadership in order to influence learner performance.

It is important to note at this point that this study was not undertaken as a deliberate move to discredit instructional leadership. The findings of this study with regard to the effect of instructional leadership on learner performance contradict general understandings and conventional views about the effect of instructional leadership. This does not relegate instructional leadership and its related variables to the background. Rather, this situation opens up avenues for further research about the characteristics and values which principals require in order to perform their instructional leadership functions. It is also within the scope and functions of research and researchers to challenge existing knowledge and, by so doing, expose areas that require further research.

7.3.2 HOW CAN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP POSSIBLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION?

Drawing on the findings in the main question above, I inferred that there must be certain characteristics that principals require in order to influence the performance of learners. Intervening variables such as the principal's orientation towards learner performance, motivation and commitment could have a marked effect on the improvement of learner performance. The creation of culture and setting a vision, implementing the vision and having high expectations of teachers and learners, are further intervening variables that have a positive effect on learner performance. The following figure represents the intervening variables:

FIGURE 7.1: Intervening variables that may have an effect on learner performance



7.3.3 HOW DO HODS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF THEIR PRINCIPALS REGARDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

The distributed leadership literature indicates that teachers feel that principals should be visible in the school and also in the classroom. This, according to the teachers, would ensure that they do not feel isolated and left to themselves. The presence of the principal in the classroom is an act of instructional leadership during which teachers feel that they are being supported by the principal. Jorgenson and Peal (2008:54) indicate that teachers appreciate administrators who occasionally offer to relieve a class, and take every opportunity to be guest teachers, thus demonstrating their skills and engagement in classroom life. Teachers do not always appreciate a principal who tells them what to do, but one who models the way and shows them what should be done and how it should be done. This indicates that teachers perceive their principals as instructional leaders and would expect them to lead in the instructional process.

7.3.4 HOW ARE PRINCIPALS PREPARED WITH REGARD TO THEIR ROLE AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS?

The literature review has shown that it is only recently that a principals' preparation programme has been in place in South Africa. The ACE: School Leadership programme, as it is known, will henceforth be a prerequisite for all those who aspire to be principals and those who are already practising as principals. This question also encompasses the management qualifications which principals might or might not have. The findings from the principals' questionnaire indicate that the principal's qualifications do not have any

significance for the performance of learners. I inferred from these findings that a principal who has advanced qualifications should be able to translate the knowledge obtained through such qualifications into practice in order to be able to influence performance. Besides, instructional leadership is a module taught in the second year of the ACE programme. I believe that this module needs to be taught throughout the two years of the programme as it overlaps with and influences the content of other modules in the programme.

7.4 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The major findings from this research can be summarized under the following eleven major themes, each of which is discussed in further detail in this section: (1) the principals' qualifications controversy; (2) the effect of instructional leadership on learner performance; (3) time spent on instructional leadership; (4) support by the department of education; (5) the department's interference in principals' programmes; (6) teachers' job satisfaction; (7) teachers' understanding of the school's curricular goals; (8) teachers' degree of success in *implementing* the school's curricular goals; (9) teachers' support for the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS); (10) teachers' involvement in designing and supporting the school's improvement goals; (11) using learner achievement to evaluate the instructional practice of teachers.

7.4.1 THE PRINCIPALS' QUALIFICATIONS CONTROVERSY

This study has found that the schools where the principals hold the highest qualifications, ranging from Masters to a PhD degree, performed worst in terms of learner performance, whereas the schools of principals with lower qualifications did well. The five principals who participated in the structured interviews also indicated that the qualifications of the principal do not matter. What matters is the character of the principal and his/her orientation towards learner performance. The qualifications only give the principals extra knowledge; the principal needs to be able to apply this knowledge in his/her actual practice to influence teachers and learners.

7.4.2 THE EFFECT OF IL ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Four variables were identified in this study and most of the literature that was consulted confirms these variables as being characteristics of instructional leadership. The literature emphasizes that the enactment of these variables by principals would lead to the

improvement of learner performance. On the contrary, however, this study has revealed that there is no correlation between these variables (which are also referred to by some scholars as “functions” of instructional leadership), and the improvement of learner performance. Again, considering the patterns of fluctuations in learner performance from 2004 to 2008, the statistical analysis of the data has shown that instructional leadership accounted for less of the variation in learner achievement than expected. This deviation of the findings of this study from the conventional view that instructional leadership should have an effect on learner achievement could be a signal that there are intervening variables that act contrary to what the identified variables set out to demonstrate.

Furthermore, these findings could mean that the principals did not/were not effective during the years under review. This lack of effectiveness can be linked to intervening variables such as: (i) the challenges of dealing with changes in the education system; (ii) the incompatibility between the professional development of the principals with their tasks as instructional leaders; (iii) change fatigue that emanates from the multiple roles of the principal; and (iv) the district and/or regional management interference in the programmes of the principals through service meetings arranged at short notice. These intervening variables can be referred to as “administrative bottlenecks” which hinder the principals in realizing their visions for their schools.

7.4.3 TIME SPENT ON INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The principals whose schools recorded a good level of learner achievement over the years indicated that they spend a larger percentage of their time on instructional leadership. In spite of the interference by the department in their daily programmes, they still value the amount of time they spend dealing directly with teachers on instructional issues. The findings from the questionnaires reveal the same trend that the amount of time spent on instructional leadership has a statistically significant effect on learner performance. The inference drawn from this finding is that the visibility of the principal in the school halls and classes motivates both teachers and learners, and when the two groups are motivated, learner performance could improve.

7.4.4 SUPPORT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As mentioned in section 2.5.7.1, Caldwell (2002) and Hallinger (2002) indicate that schools as organizations have become less in need of control and more in need of support and capacity development. This view implies that principals need the support of the department of education in their endeavour to improve learner performance (see also figure 2.1). The tier of the department which is closest to the schools and well placed to provide the required support to principals is the district office. The contributions of Togneri and Anderson (2003:23), Anderson (2003:8-11) and the Centre for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2006:1) regarding the role of district offices and officials in the improvement of learner performance can be summarized as follows:

In addition to the schools' own vision, accountability systems and curricular goals, the district must also set a clear vision, coherent curricular targets and accountability systems and teach the principals and teachers how to use these supports to improve instruction for individual learners. Districts must move beyond the traditional one-time workshop approach to professional development that puts in place coherent, district-organized strategies to improve instruction.

Districts must also ensure that there is a connection between the school-based professional development activities and district level professional development. The goals of the district regarding learner performance should be directly connected to the school-level practices and the needs of the learners.

Districts should increase instructional leadership by building well-trained cadres of instructional experts among the teacher and principal corps.

This view emphasizes the fact that principals are not expected to lead alone and teachers are also not expected to work in isolation. Fostering networks of instructionally proficient principals and teacher leaders (e.g. content specialists and mentor teachers), districts may be able to increase their capacity to improve instructional practice. Novice teachers need mentoring and the district has the obligation to provide support systems for these new teachers. In order for the district to provide the necessary support to schools, strategic allocation of financial resources is imperative. Anderson (2003:11) refers to this aspect as "investment in instructional leadership development at the school and district levels" and further adds that one of the hallmarks of districts that have succeeded in moving from low to high performing in terms of learner performance is an intensive long-term investment in developing instructional leadership capacity at the school as well as at the district level.

Contrary to the summary indicated in the box above, the principals who participated in this study indicated that the level of support by the department is minimal. Others indicated that providing support to improve performance is something that would be appreciated by all principals. Further, finding fault with principals is another aspect that impacts negatively on their performance. The lack of capacity on the part of those who are supposed to provide support to principals was also identified by the principals in this study. Principals need support on issues such as management and leadership, curriculum management and implementation, policy formulation and implementation, teacher/learner discipline, and human resource provision and development.

The support of the district office and officials is therefore important for the improvement of learner performance. Newmann, King and Youngs (2001) and Schmoker and Marzano (1999) referred to earlier in this study respectively emphasize the concepts of programme coherence, alignment, and coordination of the curriculum. They argue against schools and districts "doing their own thing". Their contention is that unrelated and unfocused school improvement programmes may affect learner performance negatively. The district should therefore prepare principals and teachers to be able to align and coordinate the curriculum and instruction with the learning goals and assessment in order to improve learner performance.

7.4.5 THE DEPARTMENT'S INTERFERENCE IN PRINCIPALS' PROGRAMMES

One of the principals remarked that... *“in as much as a teacher has to prepare his/her lesson before going to class, the principal also has to be thoroughly prepared for each day, each week, each month.....the principal has to have a comprehensive programme for the year...”*. The principals indicated that the department sometimes keeps them away from their schools for several days which derail their strategic plans. They also indicated that due to a lack of planning on the part of the department, even the department's own turn-around programmes are compromised by spur-of-the-moment meetings and workshops for principals. The principals proposed a unified regional and/or district schedule of service meetings and workshops which will be friendly to the principals' own plans and programmes.

Although the ACE School Leadership programme is delivered to the principals on Saturdays and holidays, the absence of departmental officials results in principals having more knowledge about leadership and management than some of the officials who are supposed to give them support in this regard. Departmental officials sometimes lack the confidence to support and guide the principals due to their own lack of knowledge.

7.4.6 TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION

This study has shown that when teachers feel satisfied with the job they do, learner performance will improve. This can be achieved when teachers feel that their contributions are valued, and they are supplied with all the support conditions and materials to assist them in carrying out their instructional obligations. It is therefore incumbent on the principal to create collegial conditions in the school to encourage the teachers to work towards achieving the collective goals and objectives of the school.

7.4.7 TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULAR GOALS

The study suggests that it is imperative for teachers to know and understand the schools curricular goals. Most importantly, the teachers must be involved in the formulation of such goals. This will enable them to declare ownership of these goals and as a result, they will work towards the realization of these goals. If all the teachers, guided by the principal, work towards achieving the same goals, learner performance can improve.

7.4.8 TEACHERS’ DEGREE OF SUCCESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL’S CURRICULAR GOALS

The teachers’ successful implementation of the curricula goals depends on their understanding of these goals. The more they understand them, the more they will succeed in implementing the goals and this will have a positive impact on learner performance. This, according to Anderson (2003:11), can be achieved through district-wide job-embedded professional development focuses and support for teachers. The same author contends that districts that believe that the quality of learners’ learning is highly dependent on the quality of instruction, organize themselves and their resources to support instructionally focused professional learning for teachers. Based on this contention, teachers will only succeed in implementing the schools’ curricular goals if they get the necessary support from the districts.

7.4.9 TEACHERS’ SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NCS

The NCS is the core written curriculum in all schools in South Africa. The success of the principal in managing this curriculum, and its implementation, rests with his/her collaboration with the teaching staff and attending learning area workshops with them. This will assist the principal to intervene and assist the staff where there are learning area related challenges, and also in the provision of resources.

7.4.10 TEACHERS’ INVOLVEMENT IN DESIGNING AND SUPPORTING THE SCHOOL’S IMPROVEMENT GOALS

The study has shown that teachers will perform better and improve learner performance if they are involved in designing the school goals. Teachers must own the school’s improvement goals and once this becomes the norm in the school, the teachers will be more focused, and achieving the school goals will be their primary focus.

7.4.11 USING LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT TO EVALUATE THE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES OF TEACHERS

The principal and his/her staff must use the previous year’s results to build a “winning team of teachers” for the school. Subject teachers who consistently perform well should be retained in that grade, and for those who consistently underperform, the poor performance

of their learners should be used as an incentive to develop their skills. Roy and Hord (2003:3) indicate that districts need to prepare principals and teachers to use a variety of data to determine the focus of professional learning and continue to focus on long-term support for the development of classroom-based skills.

7.5 A NEW PARADIGM FOR PRINCIPALS AND THEIR ROLE AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

Earlier in this chapter I indicated that the variables related to instructional leadership as identified for this study do not seem to have any effect on learner performance and therefore need some fundamental rethinking. The findings also indicate that there must be a paradigm shift with regard to principalship per se and to principals' role as instructional leaders.

A new paradigm for principals in this context should concentrate on the emerging conceptualization of principalship, the requirements for someone to become a principal, and the recruitment, selection and appointment of principals. The emerging conceptualization of principalship emphasizes the role of principal as an instructional leader in addition to his/her other managerial functions. This raises the level of accountability of the principal on all matters related to curriculum implementation, instruction, and assessment, to levels not previously considered. This new paradigm requires the principal to be a leader of all learning interventions in the school, ranging from the learning of the learners to the professional development of teachers through school based initiatives, and the personal professional development of the principal as "head learner."

In terms of the requirements for someone to become a principal, and the recruitment and appointment of principals in South Africa, a new approach is imperative. This study proposes that competence in instructional leadership for any aspiring principal should henceforth be a prerequisite for principalship. This means that in addition to the number of years of experience as a head of department and/or as a deputy principal, any aspiring principal must have a track record of having been a "good teacher". Passion and learner performance orientation of the principal should be a driving force for all aspiring principals.

Other developments from the findings of this study challenge the traditional hierarchical view of principalship, where all the authority in the school rests in the principal. This study proposes that the principal, together with his staff, should collaboratively formulate the

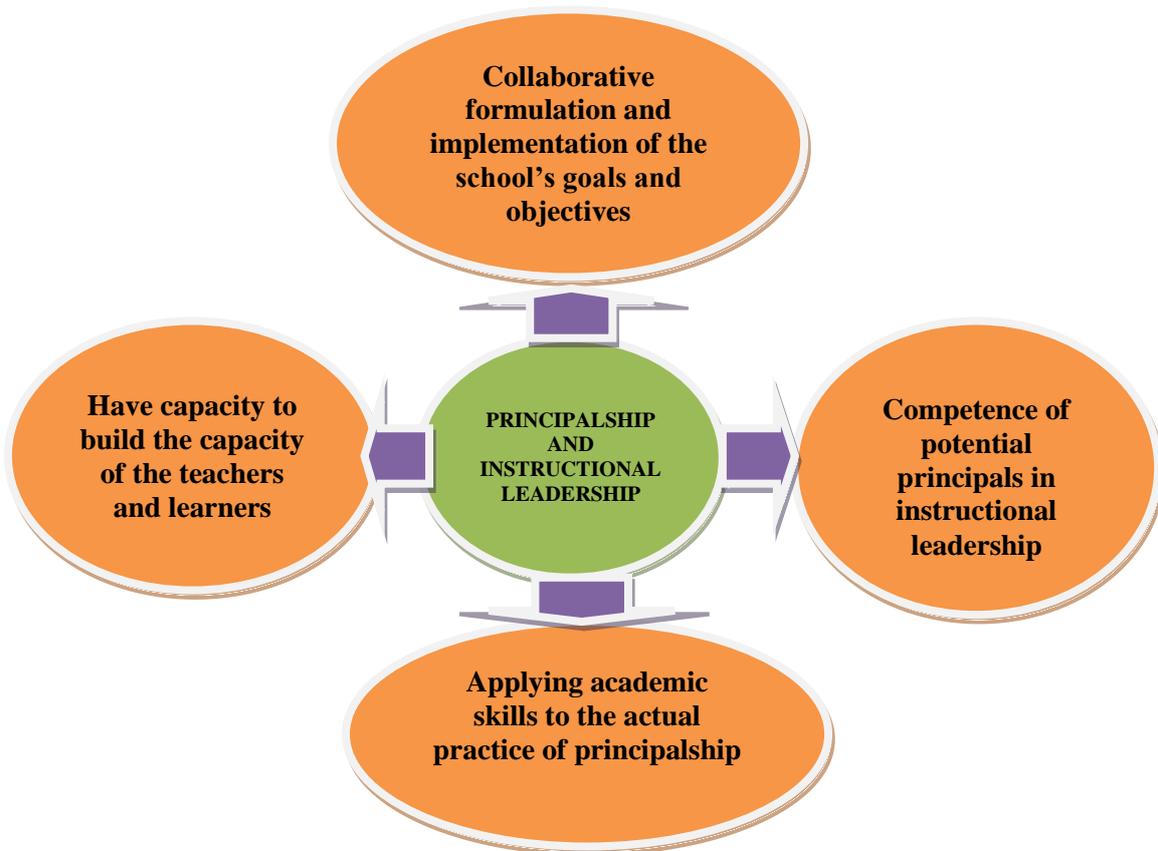
school goals. Teachers feel that they are taken seriously when they are engaged in activities that are intended to give direction to the school. Finally, the findings from this research led to the development of four propositions which, it is suggested, should underpin the emerging paradigm of principalship and the practice of instructional leadership. These propositions are a distillation of the major findings from the quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study and are presented in the following section.

7.6 FOUR PROPOSITIONS FOR PRINCIPALSHIP AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a proposition is a plan or scheme to be considered, discussed, accepted, or adopted. From a contemporary philosophical point of view, McGrath (2007:1) indicates that the term “proposition” is used to refer to some or all of the following: the primary bearers of truth- value, the objects of belief and other “propositional attitudes” (i.e. what is believed, doubted, etc.).

The four propositions proposed and indicated in the diagram below may be used to provide a framework for discussion, consideration, and acceptance of the emerging paradigm of principalship and instructional leadership.

FIGURE 7.2: New paradigm for principalship and instructional leadership



7.6.1 COLLABORATIVE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The role of the principal has become more complex over the years since the emergence of instructional leadership as a required competency of the principal. This complexity makes it difficult for the principal to perform all the roles associated with this position on his/her own. This therefore necessitates collaboration between the principal and his/her staff to formulate and agree on common goals for the school. The advantage of such collaboration is that the combined inputs of all the parties in the school save time because consensus is reached at the inception of each goal that is formulated.

7.6.2 COMPETENCE OF POTENTIAL PRINCIPALS IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

If all serving and future principals were to be productive and contribute towards learner performance in their schools, the notion of principalship should expect competency in instructional leadership as a prerequisite and serving principals should be encouraged and supported by the department of education to participate in development programmes that

prepare principals in this sphere. The principal preparation programmes that are now in place in South Africa should have a module or modules to prepare all aspiring principals for instructional leadership related activities.

7.6.3 APPLYING ACADEMIC SKILLS TO THE ACTUAL PRACTICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This research study has found that the advanced qualifications of a principal do not seem to have any impact on learner performance. Instead, the principal is expected to be able to translate the academic skills that he/she has obtained into the actual practice of instructional leadership. The literature reviewed reveals that there are certain behaviours by the instructional leader that have a significant impact on learner performance (see section 3.5.7.3). These behaviours, according to Gamage, Adams and McCormack (2009), include providing instructional leadership through discussion on instructional issues; observing classroom teaching and giving feedback; supporting teacher autonomy and protecting instructional time; providing and supporting improvement through monitoring progress; and using learner progress data for programme improvement. Chang (2001:1) held a similar view with Gamage *et. al.* (2009) above by suggesting that the instructional leader should:

“spend much time in classrooms, observing teaching and learning, and encouraging high performance, track learners’ scores, and other indicators of learning, to help teachers focus attention where it is most needed; and provide opportunities for teachers to share information and work together to plan curriculum and instruction.”

7.6.4 HAVING CAPACITY TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

The department of education has a duty to build the capacity of the principals to ensure that they know what to do in their schools and how to do it. Once the capacity of the principals has been built, they will be able to build the capacity of their teachers and that of the learners. The school will then become a learning community where all the stakeholders involved in the school are in a process of continuous learning.

As indicated in the definition of a proposition, the propositions outlined above provide a plan or scheme for discussion towards the realization of the ideals of the emerging paradigm

for principalship and instructional leadership. The recommendations informed by the findings of this study can provide a scaffold for frameworks to support the emerging paradigm of principalship and instructional leadership, and a possible recipe for the implementation of instructional leadership to improve learner performance in the matriculation examination.

7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the recommendations drawn from the findings of this research and for this purpose; they are presented according to the subsidiary research questions, and from the general analysis of the literature.

7.7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SUBSIDIARY QUESTION 1 (THE CONTRIBUTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP VARIABLES TO LEARNER PERFORMANCE)

- Principals need support from the department with regard to aspects such as performance orientation, and the translation of these support initiatives into practice in order to influence learner performance.
- Instructional leadership should be one of the major requirements for appointment as a principal.
- Aspiring secondary school principals should have a good track record as competent teachers with commendable achievements in learner performance in the matriculation examination.

7.7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SUBSIDIARY QUESTION 2 (DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' AND HODS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS)

- Principals must model exemplary instructional practices to their teachers by being involved in the actual act of teaching.
- Principals should always be visible and available to give support to their teachers when they need such support.

7.7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SUBSIDIARY QUESTION 3 (PRINCIPAL PREPARATION WITH REGARD TO THEIR ROLE AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS)

- Instead of the regions and/or district officials taking responsibility for staff development and capacity building, principals must be empowered with all the necessary skills and be given opportunities to be innovative and develop their own staff. The principal as a representative of the department at the school level is well positioned to know the strengths of his/her staff and areas of weakness that need development. The department should therefore allocate a budget for development activities at the school level and develop the principals to implement such activities.
- Serving principals should be taken through skills development programmes that will enable them to carry out their instructional leadership responsibilities.
- The department of education should serve as a resource and support hub for principals to enable them to drive their programmes for better performance of learners.

7.7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO POLICY PERSPECTIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As proposed by Keefe and Jenkins (1991), the department of education should adopt and provide a comprehensive set of policies to support principals in their role as instructional leaders. Such policies should include indicating what is expected of learners behaviourally and academically; outlining the importance of protecting instructional time and optimizing learning time; specifying who will be involved in instructional decisions relating to the classroom, the building and the district; emphasizing the collaborative role of the teacher and principal in developing instructional processes and practices; formulating policies requiring a vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum; providing continuity between the written, taught and tested curriculum; allocating sufficient resources to implement these policies; and implementing policies to ensure that instructional content and delivery are based on sound research and educational practice (also refer to The Centre for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2006), and Anderson (2003).

7.8 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to learner performance in the matriculation examination. While there have been several studies that investigated the relationship between instructional leadership and teaching and learning, the focus of this study is unique in that it investigated the linkage between instructional leadership as a role of principals, and the improvement of learner performance in the matriculation examination.

The findings from this research, together with the propositions, represent a contribution to the body of knowledge on how instructional leadership could be included into the wider conception of principalship. This research has established that a paradigm shift is required to enable the recognition and acceptance of instructional leadership as a defining feature and prerequisite for principalship. Another contribution is that the current failure of instructional leadership to contribute to learner performance in South Africa can be attributed to the national department of education making changes in the system without due consideration of the challenges facing principals with regard to coping with such changes.

This study has proposed a paradigm shift with regard to the preparation of principals, and provided succinct guidelines for preparing aspiring and serving principals for the practice of instructional leadership. When applied to both aspiring and serving principals, the proposed paradigm shift has the potential to ensure that instructional leadership becomes an important component of development when preparing principals for leadership positions. It is my contention that if the proposed paradigm shift is implemented, principals will be able to take their rightful place in providing effective instructional leadership that will go a long way to improving learner performance.

7.9 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research study, together with its propositions and recommendations, has opened a number of potential areas for further research. The following areas, in my view, warrant further research.

7.9.1 THE EFFECT OF OTHER LEADERSHIP STYLES ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE

This research has identified some shortfalls in the implementation of instructional leadership and its impact on the improvement of learner performance. A further study will be commissioned in the future to investigate the effect of other leadership styles such as transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, situational leadership, inter alia, on learner performance.

7.9.2 THE EFFECT OF TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Teacher job satisfaction features as one of the intervening variables that shows a significant relationship with learner performance. An investigation of this variable and its possible effects on learner performance may add to the body of knowledge on the effects of this variable.

7.9.3 PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EMERGING PARADIGM SHIFT IN LEADERSHIP PREPARATION

As suggested under the recommendations of this study, an investigation into the views of aspiring and serving principals with regard to the emerging paradigm on principalship is another area for potential further investigation. Principals, particularly those who are already serving in these positions, know about potential areas of development in their practice. Listening to their voices and engaging them in structuring the principal preparation programme would possibly make this programme versatile enough to address the challenges faced by principals as instructional leaders.

7.9.4 THE EFFECT OF PRINCIPALS' QUALIFICATIONS ON JOB PERFORMANCE AND LEARNER PERFORMANCE

This research suggests that there is no correlation between the qualifications of the principal and learner achievement. Investigations of the other issues that must be in place to support the principals' qualifications need to be investigated. Such issues include the four propositions suggested in figure 7.2 and the commitment of principals to improving learner performance.

7.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This research project asked the main question: What are the variables related to instructional leadership and what is the effect of these variables on the instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals? Instructional leadership was identified as a central concept, four major variables associated with instructional leadership were identified, and their contribution to learner performance was tested. Based on the findings that emerged from the testing of these variables, the findings suggest that a fundamental rethinking of instructional leadership should be encouraged in order to fit it into the broader conception of principalship.

This study has shown that the nature of successful school leadership and the paths along which its influence travels to improve learner performance, include more than a few “black holes”, not to mention many more “dimly lit” holes. This study has provided more certainty about those practices which form the core of almost all successful leadership repertoires such as passion, commitment, orientation towards learner performance, responsibility and accountability. Key dispositions such as teacher motivation, teacher job satisfaction, raising teacher efficacy, and including teachers in decision making on school policy, could shape the way in which principals approach their work as instructional leaders.

Furthermore (see figure 2.1), the department of education, through the district offices should play a role in the improvement of learner performance. The department needs to provide effective, tailor-made programmes and policies that outline all the activities that are directly linked to the improvement of learner performance. Based on these programmes and policies, they should support principals in their role as instructional leaders. Furthermore, district offices should regularly observe and assist principals in terms of their practice of instructional leadership. This would go a long way to making the principals aware that instructional leadership is part of their job. Based on this view, this study has added to the body of instructional leadership knowledge by indicating that professional development in instructional leadership and the supervision of principals needs to be linked to policy and practice.

The findings of this research further led to the development of four propositions which are viewed as imperative in informing the emerging paradigm on principalship and instructional

leadership. These propositions, together with the recommendations, could provide a scaffold to redesign principalship with instructional leadership as one of its key features.

Furthermore, this study found that the qualifications of principals do not seem to have any effect on learner performance. What is important are the principals' commitment, responsibility, accountability, passion, and orientation towards improved learner performance. Finally, this study proposes that the ACE: School Leadership programme, which is designed for principal preparation in South Africa, should have instructional leadership as a major module to prepare principals for their role as instructional leaders.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:
Ethical clearance certificate

Appendix B:
Thesis Title

Appendix C:
Application letter to the Provincial Head of Department
to conduct research in the region

Appendix D:
Letter of permission to conduct research from the
Provincial Head of Department

Appendix E:
Letter of informed consent

Appendix F:
Principals' questionnaire

Appendix G:
Deputy principals' and HOD's questionnaire

Appendix H:
Interview schedule for principals

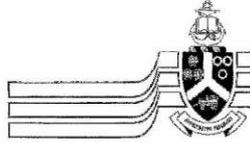
Appendix I:
Raw data from structured interviews

Appendix J:
Certificate of proof of editing

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**APPENDIX A:
ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

DEGREE AND PROJECT

INVESTIGATOR(S)

DEPARTMENT

DATE CONSIDERED

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

EM09/08/01

PhD

Variables related to instructional leadership and its contribution to learner performance.

Barber Mbangwa Mafuwane

Department of Education Management and Policy Studies

24 August 2010

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE Prof L Ebersohn

DATE

24 August 2010

CC

Dr K Bipath

Ms Jeannie Beukes

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.



**APPENDIX B:
THESIS TITLE**



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education
Student Administration

31 August 2011

STUDENT NO: 20229667/04315391

Mr BM Mafuwane
PO Box 979
Mkhuhlu
1246

Dear Mr Mafuwane

APPROVAL OF TITLE: THESIS

DEGREE: PhD: Education Management, Law and Policy

I have pleasure in informing you that the following has been approved:

TITLE: The contribution of instruct leadership to learner performance

SUPERVISOR: Dr K Bipath

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr M Gallie

The requirements for theses are listed in the General Information and Regulations of the University. Consult Regulations G.45 to G.61 which are related to theses and the assessment thereof.

Summarised guidelines for the submission and technical details of theses, a checklist as well as a "Notice of Submission" are attached. Kindly note that, in accordance with Regulation G.60 1(a), your written "Notice of Submission" should reach the Student Administration three months prior to submission.

Your registration as a student must be renewed annually before 28 February until you have complied with all the requirements for the degree. You will only be entitled to the guidance of your supervisor if annual proof of registration is submitted.

Yours sincerely

for **DEAN**
FACULTY OF EDUCATION



APPENDIX C:

**LETTER OF APPLICATION TO THE PROVINCIAL HOD TO CONDUCT
RESEARCH IN THE BUSHBUCKRIDGE REGION**

Ref: 81035811

Enq: Mafuwane B.M

Cell: 082 594 7679

Email: barbermafuwane@webmail.co.za

P.O. Box 979

MKHUHLU

1246

20 April 2009

The Head of Department
Department of Education
Mpumalanga Provincial Government
Private Bag x11341
NELSPRUIT
1200

Sir/Madam

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN THE BUSHBUCKRIDGE REGION**

I, B.M. Mafuwane, persal number: 81035811, hereby request permission to conduct research in secondary schools in the Bushbuckridg Region. I am probing into the following topic: *Variables related to instructional leadership and its contribution to learner performance in the matriculation examination.*

My research will have two phases during which I will interact with principals of secondary schools. The first phase will involve distributing questionnaires to all the principals of public secondary schools in the region. The second phase will involve structured interviews with five principals who will be sampled according to the performance of their schools in the grade 12 examinations from 2004 to 2008.

I would like to assure your office that if permission is granted, I will ensure that my research activities do not interfere with my own work as an employee of the Department and that

teaching and learning in the affected schools are not affected. I will further ensure that on completion of the study, a copy of the thesis is made available to the employing authority.

I hope your office will find this request to be in order

Yours faithfully

.....

Barber M. Mafuwane



APPENDIX D:

**LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THE PROVINCIAL HOD TO CONDUCT
RESEARCH IN THE BUSHBUCKRIDGE REGION**

MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Government Boulevard
Building 5, Upper Ground Floor
Riverside Park
NELSPRUIT
1200
Republic of South Africa



Private Bag X11341
NELSPRUIT
1200
South Africa

Tel. No.: (013) 766 5462
Fax No.: (013) 766 5577

Department of Education
Office of the HOD

Litiko LeTemfundvo

Umntyango weFundo

Departement van Onderwys

Umntyango weze Mfundo

Enquiries: A.H. Baloyi@013 766 5476

21 July 2009

Mr. Mafuwane B.M. (81035811)
P.O. Box 979
MKHUHLU
1246

**RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN OUR POST PRIMARY
SCHOOLS. (BUSHBUCKRIDGE REGION).**

Your application (dated 10 July 2009) to conduct scientific research in the selected schools in Mpumalanga Province (Bushbuckridge Region) was received on the 10 July 2009.

Your motivation for the research demonstrates that the findings and the subsequent recommendations will also benefit the Department and the schools in particular. Based on the strength of your motivation the Department therefore approves your application and further wishes you a successful research study in our schools. Attached is the Department of Education's research manual which helps to regulate all research activities in our schools. I therefore request that you observe the guidelines as provided in the manual as far as possible.

We request that after the completion of your research project you prepare a presentation of the findings and recommendations to the Mpumalanga Department of Education.

If you need more support, please contact Mr. A.H. Baloyi at 013 766 5476 or 072 201 4043.

Best wishes with this important research.

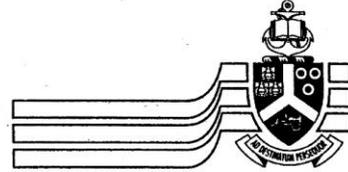
Dr. T. NGOMANE
ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

21/07/2009

DATE



**APPENDIX E:
LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT**



University of Pretoria

Pretoria 0002 Republic of South Africa Tel (012) 420 4111
Fax (012) 362 5168 /362-5190
<http://www.up.ac.za>

**Faculty of Education
School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management
and Policy Studies**

INFORMED CONSENT

RESEARCH TOPIC: Variables related to instructional leadership and their contribution to the improvement or learner achievement.

DATE:.....

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in a research project aimed at investigating the variables related to instructional leadership and the contribution of these variables to the improvement of the National Senior Certificate results.

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established, unless you are willing to be contacted for individual follow-up interviews. Should you declare yourself willing to participate in an individual interview, confidentiality will be guaranteed and you may decide to withdraw at any stage should you wish not to continue with an interview. Also note that the interviews will be recorded for data capturing purposes and that the results of this study may be published in a journal. In both instances, your identity will always be protected.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, i.e. that you participate in this project willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from the research project at any time. Under no circumstances will your identity be made known to any parties or organizations that may be involved in the research process.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I..... hereby consent that I participated in this research project out of my own free will and voluntarily shared my thoughts and experiences in this interview / completion of this questionnaire. The researcher explained to me the purpose of the research and I was informed and guaranteed my right to confidentiality. I fully acknowledge that this information will be used solely for PhD studies and not for commercial purposes and thereby give consent to the researcher to use this information.

Participant's signature.....

DATE.....

Researcher's signature.....

DATE.....

Supervisor's signature.....

DATE.....

**APPENDIX F:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

CONSENT

I participated in this study out of my own free will and voluntarily shared my thoughts and experiences in this questionnaire. The researcher explained to me the purpose of the research and guaranteed my right to confidentiality. I agree for the researcher to publish the information contained in this questionnaire provided that my name and that of my school will not be revealed in any form of documentation. I fully acknowledge that this information should be used solely for PhD studies and not for commercial purposes and thereby give consent to the researcher to use this information.

.....

Signature

.....

Date



Respondent number	For office use only																												
	Vo <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>																												
<p>A.DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS</p> <p>INSTRUCTINS: For ALL the questions put a cross next to the appropriate response or write your response in the space provided;</p> <p>1. Gender:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">1.Male</td> <td style="width: 40px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">2.Female</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>2. Age in years.....</p> <p>3. Marital status:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">1.Married</td> <td style="width: 40px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">2.Single</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">3.Co-habiting</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">4.Widowed</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">5.Divorced</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>4. <u>Highest</u> qualifications attained:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">1.Teachers' diploma</td> <td style="width: 40px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">2.Bachelor's degree</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">3.Bachelor of Education / B.Ed Honours</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">4.BA Honours</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">5.Master's degree</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">6.Doctor's degree (PhD)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">7 Other: Specify</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1.Male		2.Female		1.Married		2.Single		3.Co-habiting		4.Widowed		5.Divorced		1.Teachers' diploma		2.Bachelor's degree		3.Bachelor of Education / B.Ed Honours		4.BA Honours		5.Master's degree		6.Doctor's degree (PhD)		7 Other: Specify		<p>V1 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V2 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V3.1 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V3.2 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V3.3 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V3.4 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V3.5 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.1 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.2 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.3 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.4 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.5 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.6 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>V4.7 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p>
1.Male																													
2.Female																													
1.Married																													
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3.Bachelor of Education / B.Ed Honours																													
4.BA Honours																													
5.Master's degree																													
6.Doctor's degree (PhD)																													
7 Other: Specify																													



5. Indicate the number of years that you served in the following positions:

1.CS1 educator	
2.HOD	
3.Deputy Principal	
4.principal	

V5.1

V5.2

V5.3

V5.4

6. Type of school

1.Public ordinary secondary school	
2.public comprehensive school	

V6.1

V6.2

7. Your school is situated in a.....

1.Rural area	
2.Urban area	
3.Township	
4.Informal settlement	

V7

8. This question and the accompanying sub-questions may require you to consult school records which may require you to secure the assistance of another staff member. It is important that you get the correct records so that the information provided reflects the circumstances in your school as accurately as possible.

V8.1 2004

V8.1 2005

V8.1 2006

V8.1 2007

V8.1 2008

8.1 Indicate for each year the number of learners who enrolled for the grade 12 examinations:

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008



8.2 Indicate for each year, the number of learners who passed grade 12:

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008

V8.2 2004

V8.2 2005

V8.2 2006

V8.2 2007

V8.2 2008

9. Approximately what percentage of learners in your school comes from the following backgrounds (the percentage should add up to 100%).

	Percentage
1.Economically disadvantaged homes	
2.economically affluent homes	

V9A

V9B

10. Language of instruction in your school:

1.English	
2.Afrikaans	
3.Dual medium (two languages simultaneously)	
4.Parallel medium (two languages for some subjects in different classes).	

V10

11. Do you have a qualification in, or did you attend in-service training (INSET) interventions on instructional leadership?

1. YES	
2. NO	

V11



12. If your answer to 11 above is YES, to what extent has it enhanced your instructional leadership capacity?

V12

1.	Greatly	
2.	Partially	
3.	Not at all	

13. What is the total instructional time for grade 12 excluding breaks, in a typical day?

V13H

14.hours and.....minutes

V13M

14. By end of the year, approximately what percentage of time in your role as principal will you have spent on the following activities? (write in the percentage and the total should add to 100%).

V14.1

V14.2

V14.3

Activities	%
14.1 Administrative duties	
14.2 Instructional leadership	
14.3 Supervision	
14.4 Teaching	
14.5 Public relations	
14.6 Other (Specify)	

V14.4

V14.5

V14.6

15. How would you characterize each of the following within your school?

V15.1

	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
1. Teachers' job satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
2. Teachers' understanding of the school's curricular goals	1	2	3	4	5

V15.2



3. Teachers' degree of success in implementing the school's curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	V15.3 <input type="text"/>
4. Teachers' expectations of learners' performance	1	2	3	4	5	V15.4 <input type="text"/>
5. Parental support for learners' performance	1	2	3	4	5	V15.5 <input type="text"/>
6. Parental involvement in school activities	1	2	3	4	5	V15.6 <input type="text"/>
7. Learners' desire to do well in their studies	1	2	3	4	5	V15.7 <input type="text"/>

16. During the past four years, what percentage of your grade 12 educators have been involved in professional development opportunities targeted at the following:

	None	25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	
1. Supporting the implementation of the NCS.	0	1	2	3	4	V16.1 <input type="text"/>
2. Designing and/or supporting the school's own improvement goals.	0	1	2	3	4	V16.2 <input type="text"/>
3. Improving content knowledge.	0	1	2	3	4	V16.3 <input type="text"/>
4. Improving teaching skills.	0	1	2	3	4	V16.4 <input type="text"/>



5. Using information and communication technology for educational purposes.	0	1	2	3	4	V16.5 <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>																																
<p>17. Indicate the extent to which the following are used in your school to evaluate the practice of grade 12 educators:</p> <p>17.1 Observation by the principal or senior staff</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">No extent</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-bottom: 10px;">V17.1 <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>17.2 Observation by circuit manager or other persons external to the school</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">No extent</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-bottom: 10px;">V17.2 <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>17.3 Learner achievement</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">No extent</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-bottom: 10px;">V17.3 <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>17.4 Teacher peer review</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">No extent</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-bottom: 10px;">V17.4 <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Thank you for completing this questionnaire.</p>							No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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APPENDIX G:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DEPUTY PRINCIPALS AND HODs

DIRECTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire consists of questions that must be answered by HODs and Deputy Principals ONLY. The purpose of this part is to gather information regarding your perceptions about instructional leadership practices in your schools. There are no correct or wrong answers. The researcher is only interested in your frank opinion.

This part of the questionnaire is structured according to FOUR variables which are related to effective school leadership and school effectiveness. Familiarize yourself with each variable and then indicate your responses on the questionnaire.

- A. Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities.
- B. Defining and communicating shared vision and goals
- C. Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process
- D. Managing the curriculum and instruction

Please answer each of the following questions by marking the appropriate box. The following scale is used for all items.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. No extent | 2. Very small extent | 3. Small extent |
| 4. Moderate extent | 5. Large extent | 6. Very large extent |

Example:

To what extent is your principal accessible to educators?

(If you believe that your principal is accessible to a large extent, put a cross next to 5 as shown below)

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
					X		



Respondent number	For office use only V0 <input type="text"/>																																								
<p>A. <u>Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities.</u></p> <p>1. Does your principal encourage teachers to attend professional development activities that are aligned to school goals?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>No extent</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p>2. Does he/she plan for professional development around teacher needs and wants?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>No extent</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p>3. To what extent does he/she support individualized professional development?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>No extent</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p>4. To what extent does he/she plan professional development in-service with teachers?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>No extent</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>Very large extent</td> </tr> </table> <p>5. To what extent does he/she provide professional materials and resources to teachers?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>No extent</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>Very large extent</td> </tr> </table>	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent	<p>V1 <input type="text"/></p> <p>V2 <input type="text"/></p> <p>V3 <input type="text"/></p> <p>V4 <input type="text"/></p> <p>V5 <input type="text"/></p>
No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent																																		
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No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent																																		
No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent																																		

6. To what extent does he/she provide for in-house professional development opportunities around instructional best practices?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V6

7. To what extent does he/she schedule time on in-service collaboration among teachers?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V7

B. Defining and communicating shared vision and goal

8. To what extent does your principal use data on learners' achievement to guide faculty discussion on the instructional program?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V8

9. To what extent does he/she encourage teachers to use data analysis of learners' academic progress?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V9

10. To what extent does your principal communicate the school's academic goals to teachers?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V10

11. To what extent does he/she work with teachers to interpret assessment data for instructional implications?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V11



12. To what extent does he/she use school goals when making decisions?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

V12

Error!

13. To what extent does he/she develop school goals that promote high standards and expectations for all learners?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

V13

14. Does he/she set high but achievable standards for all learners?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

V14

C. Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process.

15. To what extent does he/she conduct classroom visits to ensure that classroom instruction aligns with school goals?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

V15

16. Does he/she monitor classroom practices for alignment with regional curriculum?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

V16

17. Does he/she work with learners on academic tasks?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

V17



18. Does he/she stay in the office the whole day?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V18

19. To what extent does he/she observe teachers for professional development instead of evaluation?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	--------------------------

V19

20. Does he/she evaluate teachers to improve instructional practice?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V20

21. Does he/she provide feedback of teacher effort?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V21

22. Does he/she provide feedback of learner effort?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V22

D. Managing the Curriculum and instruction.

23. To what extent does your principal ensure that the classroom objectives are consistent with the stated academic goals of the school?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V23

24. Does he/she evaluate teachers on academic objectives directly related to the approved national curriculum?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V24

25. Does your principal make clear who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V25

26. Does he/she participate actively in the review and/or selection of curricular materials?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V26

27. To what extent does he/she encourage the use of program evaluation for future curriculum planning?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V27

28. To what extent does he/she work in consultation with teachers to assess and revise each grade's instructional program?

No extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	Very large extent
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V28

29. How would you rate your principal with regard to Curriculum related issues? Use the three-point scale below and circle the appropriate score, where 1 represents "poor", 2 represents "fair" and 3 represents "excellent."



Activities	P	F	E
1. Knowledge of current developments in the curriculum.	1	2	3
2. Attendance and participation in curriculum related workshops.	1	2	3
3. Communication of curriculum goals to teachers.	1	2	3

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

V29.1

V29.2

V29.3

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

This study is underpinned by **FOUR VARIABLES** which are related to instructional leadership, namely:

- Promoting frequent and appropriate school-wide teacher development activities;
 - Defining and communicating shared vision and goals;
 - Monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process; and
 - Managing the curriculum and instruction.
1. As an instructional leader, can you arrange these variables in order of their importance and indicate how they contribute to the achievement of your school's goals.
 2. How much time do you devote to the enactment of your instructional leadership roles, e.g. time spent on teacher development activities?
 3. What, in your opinion, is the purpose of supervision and do you view supervision of the teaching and learning process as part of your responsibilities as a principal?
 4. As a principal, what support do you need in order to be a better instructional leader and to what extent does the department provide such support (if any) to your school and to you as principal.
 5. As a principal, how do you support your teachers with regard to their instructional obligations?
 6. Comment on the following statements:
 7.
 - 6.1 "the higher the qualifications of the/a principal, the better the results of his/her school will be."
 - 6.2 "there is a degree of compatibility between the performance expectations of the principal and the support that the department gives to the principal."
 - 6.3 "the improvement/decline in the achievement of learners in the National Senior Certificate is influenced by the enactment of instructional leadership by the principal."

8. How do you distribute your leadership/management activities from Monday to Friday?
9. Do you conduct a weekly, monthly, or quarterly audit of your leadership/management activities and if you do, on which activity/activities do you spend most your time in a week, month or quarter.
10. On the basis of your response to the above question, to what extent do you think that the activity/activities on which you spend most of your time contribute to the improvement of teacher effectiveness and learner performance?

**APPENDIX I:
RAW DATA OF THE RESPONSES OF PRINCIPALS ON THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

Themes	Responses of the Principals				
	Mr Platinum	Mr Gold	Mr Gold Dollar	Mr Silver	Mr Sylvester
5.3.1 Theme one: the amount of time that the principal devotes to the enactment of IL.	It is not easy to give an appropriate answer to this question. Interference from the department disturbs all forms of planning. I would like to devote 60% of my time on IL.	I spend three hours teaching every day. One and a half hours is spent on administrative issues and interacting with stakeholders. I spend one hour everyday supporting educators and dealing with identified gaps from interacting with teachers.	I cannot say in terms of figures but I spend the largest percentage of my time on IL.	I am not satisfied with the amount of time that I spend dealing directly with matters related to IL. I spend 15% of my time on IL and the rest is spent on the department's accidental meetings which derail most principals from their programs.	I spend 50% of my time everyday on administration, 10% on teacher development, 15% on monitoring, evaluation and providing feedback, 20% on other activities such as parents, and the SGB, and 5% on teaching.
5.3.2 Theme two: the principal's opinion with regard to supervision and whether the principal views supervision as part of his/her responsibilities.	Supervision ensures that all teachers and learners comply with the set standards. It also ensures that there is no deviation from the norm. My view is that supervision is part of my responsibilities as an instructional leader.	I regard supervision as one of my responsibilities. It is also a policy directive of the department of education. Supervision, like monitoring, works towards the achievement of the school goals. A school that does not supervise or monitor its activities is working towards its downfall.	Where there is no vision, people perish, where there is no supervision, people perish. Supervision to me is very significant because it is through supervision that we are able to align our curriculum goals to the vision of the school.	The Employment of Educators Act refers to the principal as Chief Supervisor. I regard supervision as my responsibility and I do it to give support and motivation to my staff.	Yes, I regard supervision as my responsibility. It assists me to identify gaps and challenges so that I can provide development/assistance. Supervision also ensures that teacher and learner performance are up to the expected standards.
5.3.3 Theme three: the type of support that principals need in order to be better instructional leaders and the extent to which the department provide such support.	The department is not offering enough support to capacitate me as a principal. I would like to be capacitated on monitoring and evaluation skills because these two aspects are crucial for the success of the school.	The department of education is made up of many systems. The principal needs to be supported to understand all these systems, e.g governance workshops, refresher workshops, workshops where principals share their successes and frustrations. Curriculum implementers should arrange workshops on a quarterly basis and invite	There is support from the department. Instead of providing support, the department checks on shortfalls. I would like to see the department offering close monitoring tools to support me as an instructional leader. This would go a long way into assisting me to assist my staff and build their	I need a lot of support. Any school principal, irrespective of their teaching experience, needs support. I personally need support with regard to the following aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the set goals by the department; • Managing the curriculum which is the heart of 	I need support in the area of human resource provision. I need teachers who are qualified to teach the learning areas which they are teaching. I also need curriculum support and skills development support and this should be done after working hours to avoid sacrificing contact time in favour of skills development.

Themes	Responses of the Principals				
	Mr Platinum	Mr Gold	Mr Gold Dollar	Mr Silver	Mr Sylvester
		both HODs and teachers so that they can all have the same information. The planning of the workshops by the department should take into consideration the plans of the individual schools to avoid the accidental departmental meetings which in most cases frustrate the planning of the principals.	capacity to carry out their instructional obligations.	education; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing resources, which is a challenge in deep rural schools. 	
5.3.4 Theme four: the amount of support that the principal provides his/her teachers with regard to their instructional obligations.	I supply my staff with all the necessary documents, support materials, policy documents, and syllabi to enable them to perform their instructional obligations.	The SMT puts up plans for each quarter for all aspects pertaining to ensuring effectiveness of all teachers in the school. Teachers are encouraged to indicate areas of need for support. We also invite sections from the department to intervene if we experience further challenges.	I believe in an open door policy and open lines of communication with the staff. Communication ensures talking about challenges and once we are able to talk about our challenges, we are then able to deal with them.	I try my best to give support to my staff. Even though much of my time is spent attending departmental meetings, when I have free time I try to engage with the teachers in order to ensure that I move along with them in terms of addressing their daily challenges.	Teachers have the necessary resources to assist them in their teaching. A time table is in place to ensure contact time with learners. LTSM is supplied or borrowed from other schools and we have enough staff according to our staff establishment.

Themes	Responses of the Principals				
	Mr Platinum	Mr Gold	Mr Gold Dollar	Mr Silver	Mr Sylvester
5.3.5.1 The impact of the principal's qualifications on learner achievement.	The high qualifications of the principal do not mean that the principal will influence the school to get good results. many things, other than the qualifications play a role, such as leadership and management skills of the principal. It is not the qualifications but the principal himself/herself that can improve the results.	Principal's qualifications go a long way into assisting the principal to drive the processes of the school. The principal uses the acquired knowledge to plan and to impart the same knowledge to the staff. The principal can also use his qualifications to motivate the staff. It is however important to indicate that it is not necessarily the qualifications that matters but the character and skills of the principal holding the qualifications matters most.	It is not the qualifications of the principal that matters but the commitment of the principal to the teaching and learning enterprise is very important.	The principal must be qualified and he/she must be exposed to knowledge. The principal must have knowledge on matters pertaining to education by acquiring current knowledge in order to keep abreast of and in line with the changes in education. The new curriculum, for example, needs knowledgeable principals. The question of principals with higher qualifications failing to make a difference in their schools indicates that such principals are failing to put their academic knowledge into practice.	Higher qualifications may better the results because the principal is in a better position to manage the school. The principal's qualifications alone without commitment, discipline, and the ability to work with people, the principal may not make any impact. This implies that it is not the qualifications alone that can make a difference but the person himself/herself.

Themes	Responses of the Principals				
	Mr Platinum	Mr Gold	Mr Gold Dollar	Mr Silver	Mr Sylvester
5.3.5.2 The degree of compatibility between the performance of expectations of the department and the support that the department gives to the principals.	There is no compatibility. The department provides minimum support to the school and the principal. Innovative skills and initiatives by the principal make a difference.	There is no compatibility between the input of the department with the department expects the principal to offer as an output. The department always expects more than it can provide.	If the fault finding stance of the department can be removed, there can be compatibility between the amount of support that principals need from the department in order to perform their IL duties.	There is no compatibility between the level of support that the department offers to the principals and teachers. The curriculum advisors who are supposed to give support to the teachers are not giving it their best.	There is no compatibility. The support from the department is not enough because of insufficient resources. The department cannot enforce discipline on teachers who are not cooperative. Teachers renege on their contractual obligations are not disciplined.
5.3.5.3 It has a marked effect on the improvement or decline of learner achievement.	I agree to a certain extent. It is not actually the principal per se but if standardised exams, properly moderated can be given to our learners, even the quality of learners who will come out of such exams will be enviable.	The lack of IL has a marked effect on the decline of learner achievement. If the principal is not hands on, not defining the goals of the school, not motivating, there will be no improvement in learner achievement. The principal must put plans, evaluate, monitor, and motivate both teachers and learners and by so doing, learner achievement will improve.	A lack of IL may impact negatively on the teachers' performance and learner achievement, especially with regard to the new curriculum. It is therefore important that the principal must be knowledgeable on the new curriculum in order to support the teachers.	Aspects that contribute to the decline in the pass rate include management of disturbances by the principal and the staff. It is important for the principal and his/her staff to put system in place to deal with disturbances particularly dealing with lost time.	I partly agree. The practice of IL may not be the only factor that can lead to the decline of learner achievement. The practice of IL may lead to the improvement of learner achievement but the working environment may inhibit the principal's use of IL skills and this may lead to a decline in learner achievement.

Themes	Responses of the Principals				
	Mr Platinum	Mr Gold	Mr Gold Dollar	Mr Silver	Mr Sylvester
5.3.6 Theme six: distribution of the principal's leadership/management activities in a week, month, and/or quarter.	On Mondays I have a meeting with the deputy principals; on Tuesdays I meet with the HODs; on Wednesdays I meet the administration personnel; on Thursdays I meet with the general workers, and on Fridays I meet with the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). Each of the above components provides reports related to their spheres of work.	Every Monday I put up a program for the week. Every Friday reports for the week are compiled and before we table the program for the following week, we reflect on the activities of the previous week in terms of achievable and non achievable aspects. This approach enables me to avoid "working on accidents."	Time tabling my activities as an instructional leader is essential. On Mondays I check the finance books and on Wednesdays I check activities from different grades to monitor the progress of the teachers and learners. This latter exercise assists me to draw up intervention activities to assist the teachers where they have difficulties.	Some activities need to be monitored on a weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis. Learner attendance is done on a daily and weekly basis. Learner achievement is done on a monthly basis.	My leadership and management activities are not clearly demarcated. I carry out ALL my leadership and management obligations everyday and any time of the working day.
5.3.7 Theme seven: leadership activities on which the principal spends most of his/her time and the impact of such activities on learner achievement.	Drawing from the meetings that I hold with the different components of the school in 5.6.6 above, I am able to monitor the progress of each component, check on their challenges and together with each component, we deal with the challenges and the identified gaps.	My planning in 5.6.6 above enables me to audit the monthly and quarterly achievements of the school. I spend more time on curriculum implementation which is the core business of the school. In my view, spending more time on curriculum implementation impacts on the improvement of learner achievement.	The core business of the school is the curriculum. I therefore spend more time on this aspect, checking teachers' and learners' work. I believe that this exercise has an impact on learner achievement.	I spend most of my time on teacher/learner attendance. Learners learn what they observe. Punctuality on the part of the staff will have a marked impact on the learners. Learners use their educators as frames of reference. They develop commitment as learned from their teachers. Teacher visibility in the classrooms has a strong impact on the learners.	I spend more time on administration, supervising the activities of the school and attending to teacher/learner accidental problems. My IL obligations are overpowered by my administrative engagements.

APPENDIX J:
CERTIFICATE OF PROOF OF EDITING



BrainWaves

Research & Training cc.

CK 97/20575/23
VAT Reg. No. 4290171067

Oxford, United Kingdom
7 November 2011

To whom it may concern
Certificate of language editing

This is to certify that I have edited the thesis “The contribution of instructional leadership to learner performance” by Barber Mafuwane, in terms of language usage, style, expression and consistency.

I focused on grammar, tenses, consistency of terminology, sentence construction, and logical flow. I inserted comments and suggestions for the attention of the student, where meaning needed to be clarified, or where points of confusion could arise for the reader.

I did not edit or format the List of References or the Appendices, which was outside the scope of my brief.

I wish the candidate success with his final submission and future career.



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