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Exploring instructional leadership practices of school principals and the culture of teaching and learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District

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Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.

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Protocol Number:

A research report submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

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UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Abstract

This study investigated how instructional leadership practices of the school principal impact on the culture of teaching and learning in schools. It is widely known that instructional leadership practices can improve learner outcomes. However, many primary school principals in the South African context do not conceptualise instructional leadership. The quality of education in public schools seems to be at an all-time low with research showing that educational outputs are not matching financial inputs. It is therefore recommended that principals focus their attention on leading, as opposed to the various managerial issues that seems to occupy most of their time.

The research study also explored how principals' instructional leadership practices impact on the culture of the school. School culture is created by all the stakeholders in the school. It is acquired in the form of norms, values, habits, beliefs and perceptions. Therefore, the study also focused on relationships in schools, particularly between principals and teachers and how this affects "culture behaviours" (professional collaboration, affiliative and collegial relationships as well as efficacy and self-determination (Wagner, 2006; Phillips, 1996).

The study was qualitative in nature as it allowed me to have an in-depth understanding of the issues being investigated. The methodologies used were questionnaires and interviews. The participants in the study includes the principal, the deputy principal, the Head of Department (HOD) and the teachers in three ex-Model C schools in Johannesburg East. The schools were selected on the basis of learner outcomes. It included an exemplary performing school, a good performing school and a moderate performing school.

In this study, I used Hallinger's (2011) model of instructional leadership as a conceptual framework –*Leadership for 21st Century Schools,* which identifies three dimensions of the principals' leadership role namely: Defining the schools mission, Managing the Instructional Programmes and Promoting a School Climate as a measure of instructional leadership practices. This model indicates the instructional leadership practices required to improve learner outcomes. Emphasis was placed on the creation of a positive school climate where I explored aspects related to school culture and relationships in schools. This was done in order to ascertain if instructional leadership has a positive influence on school culture which in turn, leads to improved learner outcomes.

My findings indicated that in the exemplary performing school, the principal displayed strong instructional leadership practices. This school is run as a learning organisation where there is an emphasis on professional learning and improved instructional practices. The principal displays strong instructional leadership practices and promotes an organisational culture that places emphasis on professional dialogue and collaboration. This leads to healthy relationships between principals and teachers which in turn, creates a good school culture that exhibits high levels of professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, as well as self-determination and efficacy.

In the good and moderate performing schools where the instructional leadership practices were not as strong, there was less emphasis on teacher professional development and the organisational culture was not one of shared knowledge and collaboration. Thus, an implication of my study is that principals who practise strong instructional leadership practices are able to establish an effective school culture which will result in commitment from their teaching force and therefore a rich culture of teaching and learning.

Declaration

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

School of Education

SENATE PLAGIARISM POLICY

Declaration by Students

I, Saadieka Dawood (Student number: 1587562), am a student registered M.Ed. part time in the year 2020. I hereby declare the following:

- **I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.**
- **I confirm that ALL the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.**
- **I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.**
- **I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.**

Signature  **Date:3 September 2020**

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List of abbreviations

ANA	Annual National Assessment
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CTPD	Continuous Teacher Professional Development
CEPD	Centre for Education Policy Development
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DBE	Department of Basic Education DoE Department of Education
DSG	Development Support Group
DP	Deputy principal
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
HRSC	Human Resources Sustainment Centre
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
ISPF	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSD	Occupation Specific Dispensation
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SASP	South African standard for Principalship
SDT	School Development Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMT	School Management Team
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Chapter 1: Research problem, aim, rationale, the significance of the study

1.1 Introduction

It is a common belief that in schools where there is a positive climate, effective teaching and learning take place. School Climate can, therefore, be seen as one of the most significant factors in ensuring improved learner outcomes. Moran, Carlston, and Tableman (2013) indicate that a positive school climate fosters learning and academic success. This view is reiterated by Rapti (2013), who believes that a positive school climate enhances effective teaching which ultimately leads to improved student learning. Rapti (2013) further states that principals can either improve or hinder a positive climate through the way they lead. Kruger (2003) states that it is the responsibility of principals to improve the culture of teaching and learning to create effective schools that provide quality education. The focus of my study is to explore how principals in schools use instructional leadership practices to influence school climate and thereby, the culture of teaching and learning to improve student outcomes.

The 1970s and 1980s were characterised by unrest in schools as the black majority resisted restrictions imposed by apartheid and learners were intent on getting 'Liberation before Education'. The consequence of this was a total collapse of teaching and learning in most schools. This poor culture of teaching and learning was evident in the way learners vandalised school property, the formation of gangs, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, rape, et cetera. Furthermore, weak leadership and administration, demotivated teachers and the poor infrastructure found in schools aggravated this poor culture of teaching and learning (Chisholm & Vally,1996 as cited in Steyn, 2002). The end of apartheid saw the introduction of policies that aimed to vanquish the legacy of apartheid and allow for a system of lifelong learning for all South Africans.

The introduction of new education policies was aimed at redressing the injustices of the past (South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996) and ensuring equal access to all. It was driven by a quest for equality, equity, and fairness. It saw many African middle-class parents who had the financial means opting to send their children to ex-model C schools as well as 'Coloured' and 'Indian' schools. According to Msila (2009), these parents did so as they believed quality schools exist outside townships as township schools were stricken by poverty and had limited resources. The exodus of learners from these schools led to a further decline in the quality of these schools. As a result, there are huge differences with regard to school quality and as many

as 80% of township schools or schools in geographical areas that were previously classified as "black" are dysfunctional and learners are underperforming (Pretorius, 2014). Thus, it can be stated that historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa that were dysfunctional under apartheid policies remain dysfunctional and learners are underperforming while the advantaged schools (a few ex-model C and private schools) continue to excel when it comes to producing good student outcomes.

South Africa has developed a two-tier education system: a high fee-charging private/ public school, and the second tier which constitutes a low fee / no fee paying public schools (Maringe, 2018). Spaul (2012) says that race and class still determines which tier is accessed and that these schools fail to address equality and redress. Naicker, Chikoko, and Mthiyane, (2013, p. 2) refers to the schooling system in South Africa as a "continuum" with two extremes - one is the first-class schools that produce results comparable to the best schools in first world countries and second, those that are on the other extreme, the dysfunctional schools where the culture of teaching and learning does not exist. Christie (1998) states that dysfunctional schools seem to be related to poverty, material disadvantage, and the disarrangement of communities. The problems in dysfunctional schools are therefore mostly external and poverty-related. Taylor (2012, p. 3) acknowledges the fact that low-quality education acts as a poverty trap but questions the degree to which this poor quality can be attributed to "poverty itself as opposed to other features of teaching and management." Therefore, poverty, in itself, cannot be regarded as the main reason schools are not producing good results. Spaul (2011), as cited in Motala (2015), states that although learner achievement strongly correlates to socio-economic status, research indicates that effective schools play an important part in learner achievement.

Thus, twenty-six years have passed since the emergence of a democratic society but schools in South Africa remain heterogeneous with respect to socio-economic status and highly unequal with regard to learner outcomes. According to the Human Sciences Research Council (HRSC) (2015), only one-quarter of learners at public no/low fees/schools (Quintile 1, 2, and 3) are achieving Mathematics scores above the minimum level of competency. The 2015 analysis of results from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) shows South African learners attaining second last position in Maths and last position in Science. The Progress of International Reading and Literacy Studies (PIRLS) study in 2016 indicated that 78% of South African learners who are in Grade 4 cannot read for meaning in any language. This, according to Spaull, is higher than the 58 % recorded in 2011 by the same study. International standardised results show that a large percentage of South African schools

(between 75-80%) are not able to impart the necessary skills to students. This study also included the outcomes of ex-model C schools, and it reflects the deterioration taking place.

It seems like a culture of being complacent and having low expectations has developed in our school system, even in those schools which enjoyed privileges under apartheid and continue to have more resources than other schools due to the fact that they charge higher school fees (Taylor, 2009). Motala (2015, p. 164) asserts that "while South Africans enjoy substantial physical and structural access to schooling, this does not guarantee that learners have equal experience of or access to quality education." Bloch (2008), as cited in Steyn (2013, p. 3), is of the opinion that South African schools are in a "state of disaster". He further states that there seems to be a breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning. Weeks (2012, p. 2) claims that this breakdown of teaching and learning is "reflected in multi-faceted socio-educational problems encountered in schools and communities" and features such as vandalism, gangsterism, drug abuse, low academic attainment and learners who are demotivated reflects a poor learning culture. Schools as a result, need to focus on learner welfare that emanates from disadvantaged socio-economic status and disruptive family structures. Coetzee (2014) believes that learner apathy and indifference are shaped by them having exposure to poor youth subcultures, the lack of educational support structures, sports, and recreational facilities. Due to the high unemployment rates in our country, learners seem to be disregarding the value of schooling as a means of securing a job, thus resulting in them having a poor vision of any future prospect. This perspective gets carried into the classroom and results in them displaying disruptive behaviour which impacts negatively on teaching and learning (Coetzee, 2014).

Learners are displaying the same type of behaviour as seen during the apartheid era. It can, therefore, be concluded that historical antecedents continue to shape what goes on in schools and the learners' outcomes (Maringe, 2018). Furthermore, there is also a total disrespect and disregard for teachers and several video clips on social media where teachers are physically attacked and verbally abused can attest to this. Teachers in these schools struggle to teach and have become despondent with the whole education system. These problems have also extended to ex-Model C schools and the mediocre results obtained by learners, as well as the increase in problems related to discipline in these schools, bears testimony to this.

Schools that have a poor culture of teaching and learning are characterised by various factors. Kruger (2003) says that the following are factors that contribute towards the lack of a sound culture of teaching and learning: negative attitudes of teachers and learners (remnants of

apartheid), poor infrastructure at schools, lack of provision of resources, overcrowded classrooms as well as a lack of relevant management skills to deal with challenges of school management as well as poor relationships between principals, teachers, parents. Thus, "structural barriers continue to constrain the development of epistemological access of learners" (Maringe, 2018, p. 6).

Corporal punishment is rife in many schools despite the Department of Education (DoE)'s stance on corporal punishment (SASA, 1996). Msibi and Mchunu (2013) say the behaviour of most teachers in South Africa cannot be deemed as professional. They further assert says that teachers in township schools use resource availability as an excuse for poor curriculum implementation but in actual fact, these teachers lack content knowledge, skills, and innovation and experience to put the curriculum to good use. This view was reiterated by the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga (News 24, 2010), who acknowledges that the majority of teachers lack content knowledge and the dedication to teaching for more than six hours per day. Payton (2006), as cited in Steyn (2013, p. 3), says that "poor quality" teaching is responsible for the failure of the education system in many schools. Thus, from these statements, it is evident that the teacher is the starting point for turning schools around.

There are significant pressures on the DoE to improve learner performances in schools. In South Africa, 16,7 % (approximately R246 billion in 2018/2019) of the National Budget is allotted to the education sector. A large percentage of the education budget is spent on learner resources (the Department of Basic Education (DBE) - learner books, grade R resource material, interactive whiteboards, technologically advanced classrooms, digital classrooms, et cetera), the main purpose being to improve the quality of education. The DoE has also implemented many strategies to assist in the professional development of teachers. This includes programmes such as the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) and the most current, the Maths-Science and Technology (MST) programmes. The Gauteng Member of Executive Council for Education (MEC), Mr. Panyaza Lesufi, spends millions on upgrading township schools to allow for technological advancement and better education. Jansen and Blank (2014, p. 23) state that "despite the large share of public monies going to education, South Africa consistently appears at the bottom of competitive league tables". The quality of the education in our schools is on the decline as many schools are underperforming, so it is evident that the financial investment made seems to have no/ limited effect on the outcomes of learners.

It is clear that in South Africa, the educational terrain is highly unequal. According to Fiske and Ladd (2004), as cited in Spaull (2012), three insights from the South African experience can be highlighted as to why after 26 years, education equity is still so difficult to achieve: (1) history matters –The impact and effect of apartheid results in real change becoming difficult. The identities of different people in South Africa was shaped and formed by colonisation, racism, and apartheid – this plays a huge part in the perceptions teachers have of groups other than their own (2) resources matter – It will take a lot more financially for schools to be equal in terms of resources – schools that command higher school fees can expose their learners to the latest technology, can afford for their teachers to attend private workshops which totally overtakes in terms of quality and knowledge and skills acquisitions, those provided by the Education Department. However, Fiske and Ladd (2004) are quick to maintain that resources alone do not matter: (3) implementation matters – and although the intention of these policies is good, not many of them have resulted in systemic change, mainly because "serious reform requires both the managerial capacity to implement programs successfully and close attention to the design of effective implementation strategies" (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p. 247), both of which have been lacking in the South African context.

Management of teaching and learning in schools, therefore, contributes largely to the quality of education. Christie (2007) claims that quality education in schools can be attained when there is effective leadership and management. So, leadership and management can be highly correlated with the quality of the school. The principal plays a key role in the professional management of schools. According to Marsh, (2002) and Spilane and, Taylor (2004) as cited in Hoadley, Christie, and Ward (2009), the principal's role is crucial in creating conditions where effective learning and teaching can take place. Hallinger and Heck (1998), as cited in Hoadley et al. (2009, p.140) say that the principal contributes by "shaping the school's direction-the the setting of a vision, mission, and goals". According to them, the principal establishes a form of organisational containment that allows effective teaching and learning to take place, as well as sets a climate of expectations. However, although it cannot be claimed that leadership and management alone is responsible for success in school, it definitely plays a substantial role in supporting organisational structure and social relations. This is confirmed by Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 156) who make the claim that leadership and management "holds the centre that supports the dynamic interdependence of all elements of organisational life."

Instructional leadership can be perceived as leadership that is focused on teaching and learning to improve student outcomes. It involves activities such as monitoring and evaluating as well as providing constructive feedback. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), as cited in Manaseh (2016), instructional leadership is educational leadership that is focused on what is considered as the key responsibility of school – teaching and learning. They achieve this by defining the vision, mission, and goals of the school, managing the programme of instruction as well as promoting the school climate. Christie and Lingard (2001) state that leadership must be understood in terms of social relations, rather than the characteristics of people/ persons. Although one has to acknowledge that leadership is about influence, the authors assert that educational leadership is an interplay of the personal, the organisational, and broad social context. This means that leadership must be understood in terms of the relationship between the person/ people, the workings of the school, as well as the context in which the school finds itself.

Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, and Pickeral (2009), as cited in the Climate Research Summary (2012), state that the climate of a school is determined by the teaching and learning that takes place there, the quality of the relationships between individuals in the school as well as the collaboration between teachers and administrative staff and other support services. According to Barnes, Brynard, and De Wet (2012), researchers are of the opinion that four core dimensions influence school climate: safety, teaching and learning, relationships, and environment. Climate and culture are closely related concepts that can be linked to the atmosphere at the school. Mc Neil, Prater and Busch (2009) say that one can distinguish between climate and culture – the climate is viewed as behaviour, while culture is linked to the values and norms of the organisation. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) say that the culture of a school influences and affects the school in ways that people are unaware of. The culture is made up of the values and norms of the school, it is those unwritten rules which determine and establishes a certain set of behaviours. This in turn, ensures a certain degree of conformity so that people working there also start to express these behaviours. Steyn (2002) says that the culture refers to the attitude of all the role players towards teaching and learning as well as the presence of quality teaching and learning processes in the school. Ng'ang'a and Nyongesa (2012) state that culture is an important part of building effective organisations as it influences people's attitudes and behaviours at work. The school principal has a powerful impact on the culture of teaching and learning in the school. This view is reiterated by Leithwood et al. (2008, p. 27), as cited in Brock and Gradey (2012, p.117), who claim "School leaders improve teaching and learning

indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions".

1.2 Problem statement

It can be argued that the instructional leadership practices of school principals can lead to a positive culture in the school and therefore lead to improved learner outcomes. Mestry (2013) defines instructional leadership as the actions that principals take/delegate to others with the aim of promoting growth in student learning. The quality of instruction is the top priority and instructional leaders focus on encouraging best practices in teaching.

Teachers are the most important role players in ensuring learner outcomes. Msila (2014) believes that irrespective of whether schools have visionary teams in the driving seat, these schools cannot perform effectively without the commitment of their teaching staff. However, teachers have become complacent and many of them do not feel that they are accountable for student achievement (De Clerq, 2008). They believe poor student achievement is due to the lack of resources and the socio-economic background of learners.

According to the Glossary of Educational Reform (2013), culture generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions. They further indicate that positive school cultures are conducive to professional satisfaction, morale, and effectiveness, as well as to student learning, fulfilment, and well-being. Fullan (1991), as cited in Mestry (2013), refers to instructional leadership as a form of leadership where the principal focuses on working with the teachers in a school to create shared goals, teacher collaboration, teacher learning opportunities, as well as self-efficacy, commitment and student learning. These actions could lead to a positive school culture which in turn, leads to improved attitudes regarding teaching and learning on the part of teachers which could lead to improved learner outcomes.

In resilient schools, the principal uses distributed instructional leadership (shared instructional leadership). This responsibility is shared with other teachers who display exceptional teaching skills (experts, master teachers), and this impacts positively on teaching and learning. Novice teachers work alongside more experienced teachers and there is hands-on practical training of teachers (Naicker et al, 2013). Thus, there are collaborative structures and a culture of trust where individuals are empowered. Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014) maintain when teachers and

learners feel they are trusted and supported to produce excellent results, it serves as a motivator to excel.

Establishing collaborative and congenial working relationships with leaders and teachers and nurturing teacher-teacher relationships through the support of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) has been found to be effective in closing the achievement gap for learners (Leithwood, 2010). Many governments (North America, South Africa, Alberta, and Wales) are using PLCs as a tool towards effective professional development that has a sustainable, positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning (DBE, 2015). A positive school culture is characterised by relationships and interactions that display openness, trust, respect, and appreciation. Staff relationships are collegial, collaborative, and productive, and all staff members are held to high professional standards (The Glossary of Educational Reform, 2013). Thus, developing and maintaining positive cultures in schools will improve teacher performances and ultimately, learner outcomes (Jones, 2009).

In the majority of South African schools, there is a breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning and this can most often be attributed to the absence of the instructional leadership practices of school principals in these schools. Many principals also lack an understanding of their instructional leadership role and as a result, this impacts negatively on learner performance (Mestry, 2013). Mathibe (2007), as cited in Bush et al. (2011, p. 32) says that South African principals "are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership." Many school principals do not have the capacity to manage. They lack leadership skills to develop a vision and motivate staff to unite and achieve a school vision (Pretorius, 2014). It can however also be argued that school principals in South Africa struggle to incorporate instructional leadership practices in their day-to-day running of the school as they are inundated with paperwork from the department as well as many other problems that arise daily in the running of the school (Southworth 2004; Horn 2007, as cited in Bodnachuk 2017; Silverman 2014). Principals are faced with new demands, complex decision making as well as additional responsibilities and many of them struggle to balance the administrative and management duties with curriculum leadership functions. Principals face serious challenges to focus on learning and instruction, establish relationships with teachers, and guide teachers to improve instruction which can result in enhanced learner achievement. Mestry (2019) believes that the central role of the principal is to take charge of issues focusing on curriculum, instruction, and assessment so that learner performance and learner achievement is improved.

1.3 Research Aim

The aim of the study is to gain insight into how the principal, as an instructional leader, can affect/ influence the culture of teaching and learning in schools. I researched an exemplary performing school, a good performing school, and a moderate performing school. I explored how principal instructional leadership practices impact on the culture of teaching and learning in these schools. I also explored if the instructional leadership practices of principals affect school culture (where the culture behaviours, namely, teacher professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, and self-determination/ efficacy are assessed).

The specific objectives of this research are to:

- identify what instructional leadership practices principals use to create a culture of teaching and learning.

- explore the extent to which school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools as well as to identify how this impacts teacher commitment and self–efficacy and therefore the culture of teaching and learning.

- determine the views of teachers regarding the principal's leadership practices and its effect on school culture.

1.4 Research Questions

This led me to the research questions:

How do instructional leadership practices of school principals affect the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools?

The following critical questions were used to examine the research question.

1. What are the main practices of a principal as an instructional leader that are needed so that a culture of teaching and learning can be seen in schools?

2. To what extent do school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools and which characteristics of school climate and culture should the principal address to ensure teacher commitment, trust, and self-efficacy and therefore improve the culture of teaching and learning?

3. What are teacher perceptions regarding the principals' instructional leadership practices and school culture?

1.5 Purpose and rationale of the study

This study sought to explore how instructional leadership actions and practices of principals can influence the culture of teaching and learning. It places specific emphasis on school climate and school culture. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that the culture of an organisation is a contributing factor for staff to work more effectively with the leader, it increases commitment to the school, developing trust towards management. Abelein (2013) earlier mentioned that the relationship between teachers and principal is at the heart of school culture and that their inter-relational connections shape the culture of the school. Price and Moolenaar (2015, p. 2) explain that there is "a limited understanding of the nature, quality, and importance of principal-teacher relationships for successful school learning climates".

Leadership and management can be highly correlated with the quality of the school. Christie (2007) claims that quality education in schools can be achieved if there is effective leadership and management. Teachers who are motivated and committed will produce better student outcomes. Therefore, if principals want to improve student outcomes, they should focus on the relationship between themselves, teachers, learners, and parents (Mc Neil et al., 2009). They should provide opportunities for teacher collaboration, shared leadership practices, and professional development (Sachin, 2011).

On a personal level, I want to pursue this research as I believe that the culture in the school determines how teachers perform in the classroom. If teachers feel valued, are given opportunities to make decisions, share good practices and act as teacher leaders they will be more likely to be committed to the school and its vision. I believe that in schools where there are cliques, complacency, and very little desire to participate in professional development, student outcomes will regress or remain stagnant. Leaders in the school must also ensure that there is a level of trust between themselves and their teachers. I am the HOD at an ex-model C school where the majority of learners are black and the majority of teachers (including management) are white. I have observed a reluctance and resistance to change in the culture of the school. They tend to hold on to outdated practices and rituals that were used during the apartheid era and refuse to acknowledge that the learners in their schools come from significantly different backgrounds. Their expectations of the learners they teach are viewed from "their perspective of black children" and is influenced by the privilege they experienced

as “white South Africans.” There also seems to be complacency amongst teachers regarding professional development and improving their teaching practices. Due to this lower expectation being set by many teachers, student outcomes are being affected (the grade 6 learners only managed to attain a 50% average in the Maths and a 52% average in the Natural Science and Technology Common examinations set by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE).

On the professional level, I want to investigate how the instructional leadership practices of principals impact on the school culture (i.e. culture behaviours and relationships) as defined by Phillips (1996) in his School Culture Triage Survey– teacher professional collaboration (do staff collaborate to solve instructional, organisational and curriculum issues.), affiliative collegiality (do people enjoy working together, support one another and feel valued and included) and self-determination/ efficacy (are people interdependent, do they seek an alternative to problems, are they empowered to make decisions and are they part the school because they choose to be there).

School culture varies from school to school. According to Deal and Petersen (1993), as cited in Lee and Li (2015), school culture is the inner reality of schools that reflects the state of the school climate or learning environment. A school culture influences the ways people “think, feel, and act” (Deal & Petersen, 1993, as cited in Lee and Li, 2015, p. 2). The key to the success of school education depends on a good quality school culture, because “school culture influences what people pay attention to (focus), how they identify with the school (commitment), how hard they work (motivation), and the degree to which they achieve their goals (productivity)” (Lee & Li, 2015, p. 3). The principal has a responsibility in shaping the school culture. The principal’s personality traits, attitudes, and behaviours have a crucial influence on school culture.

Teacher development mostly focuses on developing content knowledge and other pedagogic skills and various factors outside the school are often blamed for poor learner outcomes. I think that one needs to look inside the organisation first by looking at relationships between role players. Weeks (2012) indicated that Christie’s (2007) research into ‘Schools that Work’ identified that an important feature in these schools was the good relationship between the principal, management, and teachers. Where there is a high-quality, positive, and professional teaching culture, there must be a high-quality school culture (Lee & Li, 2015). Therefore, through this investigation, I hoped to understand how / if instructional leadership practices by principals in school influence the culture of teaching and learning at schools.

The model proposed by Hallinger (2009) was selected as an appropriate conceptual framework for this study. He suggests the following dimensions as prerequisites for effective instructional leadership:

• *Defining the School's Mission:* Here the focus is on the principal as an instructional leader to work with staff to ensure that the school has clear, measurable, time-based goals, focused on the academic progress of the learner.

• *Managing the Instructional Programme:* This places a specific focus on the co-ordination and control of instruction and curriculum. The school principal has a key role to play in stimulating, supervising, and monitoring teaching and learning.

• *Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate:* This dimension conforms to the notion that effective schools create an 'academic press' through the development of high standards and expectations for learners and teachers.

The above model as well as Hallinger's (2011) synthesised model of Leadership for Learning was infused in my research study.

This study used a qualitative research approach as I explored the relationship between instructional leadership practices and the culture of teaching and learning. Creswell (2014, p. 31) says that a qualitative research approach allows us to explore and try and understand the "meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem." This form of investigation linked ideally to my research problems as I asked participants in the study to share ideas and experiences and built general themes on this idea (Creswell, 2012). In this study, I explored a problem. This is a characteristic of qualitative research.

My ontological assumption (what is there that is known) as a researcher is as follows: South African learners are lagging behind as many principals in schools are not aware of the centrality of their responsibility and that of instructional leadership in leading the programme of the schools (NEEDU, 2013, as cited in Hompashe, 2018). The report further noted that despite the fact that principals and schools are unaware of the importance of instructional leadership, the schools' implementation of instructional leadership was not in line with policy as outlined in the curriculum and assessment policy statements (CAPS). Instructional leadership is focused on teaching and learning and strong instructional leadership leads to learner improvement (Hallinger, 1987). Thus one of the reasons of the underperformance of our learners is the fact that school principals are not exercising instructional leadership practices and managing

teaching and learning in their schools. Further conclusions that emanate from effective school research is that principals have a significant effect on how efficiently schools are run and how successful they are (Hawley, Rosenholtz, Goodstein & Hasselbring, 1984, p. 53 as cited in Kruger 2003). Thus, good instructional leadership can be seen as a pathway to good teaching and learning and instructional leaders ensure a sound culture of learning and teaching in their schools at all times (Kruger, 2003). Thus, a school that has a well-established culture of teaching and learning will have a good organisational structure and an instructional programme that focuses on learner achievement and teacher professional development (Kruger, 2003).

A positive school culture can be established in schools if there is a good collaborative relationship, motivation and a sense of trust amongst the role-players. Schein (2004), as cited in Senol and Lesinger (2018), states further that a positive and effective school culture has many benefits such as increasing commitment to the school, developing trust toward the school and the management, preventing destructive conflicts, shaping the behaviours and expectations of teachers and students at the school and increasing school success, et cetera. The role of leadership in relation to school culture is central (Maponya, 2020). This study further focuses on the relationship between school culture and instructional leadership, as well as the effects of instructional leadership on school culture. Sahin (2011), in his research, found that there is a positive and high-level relationship between the principals' instructional leadership style and school culture. The results further indicate that instructional leadership statistically has a significant influence upon all factors of school culture. My research focuses on three schools with varying learner outcomes. I believe that at schools where there are high instructional leadership practices on the part of the principal, there is a positive school culture which in turn, leads to higher student achievement.

Creswell (2013) states that with the epistemological assumption, conducting a qualitative study means that researchers try to get as close as possible to the participants being studied. We collect subjective evidence that is assembled, based on individual views. This is how knowledge is known – through subjective experiences of people (participants). I conducted interviews with the principal, deputy principal (DP) and a Head of Department (HOD). In this study, I utilised the Interpretivist or Social Constructivist paradigm. This type of research aims to explore the perspectives and shared meanings to develop a deeper understanding of phenomena that occur in the social world. Interpretivism is closely linked to social constructivism. The Interpretivist believes that there is no objective knowledge which can be independent of thinking, reasoning human beings. Creswell (2014) says that social

constructivists believe that people seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. As a result, they develop a subjective meaning of their experiences. In social constructivism, reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the participant and is shaped by their individual experiences (Creswell, 2013).

A research strategy will help you meet your objectives and help to answer your research questions. The research strategy I used is a **case study**. Creswell (2012) states that, in a case study, the researcher seeks to develop an in-depth/detailed/intensive understanding by gathering data of a single case or small number of related cases through a variety of methods such as observations, interviews and documentary analysis.

The sampling design I used is Purposive/ Judgemental sampling – Babbie (2013) describes this as a non-probability sampling in which the participants' selection is based on the researcher's judgement about which ones will be most useful. The only criterion I had was that the respondents should have been at the school for more than a year. Data was generated through interviews. The reason for using interviews is that it is useful for obtaining sensitive or in-depth information from a knowledgeable respondent. Furthermore, interviews are interactive and give the researcher an opportunity to probe and pursue relevant issues. Questionnaires were distributed to Intersen(Grade 4-7) and Foundation phase teacher volunteers. Questionnaires are practical and a large amount of information can be collected from people in a short amount of time. The reason for the questionnaires were two-fold. The first part was used to measure the instructional leadership practices of the principal while the second part measured the strength of the school culture.

1.6 Significance of the study

In the South African educational context, there are differences with regard to school quality, however, the causes of these differences have not been easy to identify **(**Coetzee, 2014). Most studies on the link between the culture of teaching and learning were done qualitatively in an overseas context.

Regardless of the amount of the budget given to schools to ensure equity, if one looks at the culture and conditions (poor infrastructure, vandalism, theft, late arrival of teachers, mismanagement of funds, lack of motivation of teachers and learners) of some underperforming schools and compare them to the resilient schools, it is evident that there is a lack of effective leadership and management in the former. However, strong leadership alone

is not sufficient to solve this problem. Principals need to establish an effective school culture that will result in commitment from their teaching force. My study can add to the existing knowledge base of how instructional leadership and the culture of teaching and learning can turn schools around.

Thus, the outcomes of this study can help ascertain whether instructional leadership practices impact positively on school culture and therefore on the culture of teaching and learning. An implication of this is that principals can be trained to acquire these practices, as many principals in South Africa lack instructional leadership skills (Mestry, 2017). Changing leadership practices to ensure a positive school culture where there is a strong sense of common goals, open and honest communication as well as trust and good professional relationships between stakeholders as well as a sense of belonging can increase teacher commitment, motivation, and self-efficacy. This strong school culture can nurture a culture of teaching and learning and could turn around many of the schools in South Africa and see our learners attaining higher levels in international standardised testing. Furthermore, schools that have stagnated or regressed can be turned around through collaboration and participation of their key role players o nurture a culture of teaching and learning. Principals could, therefore, develop these practices and skills through in-service training which could lead to ensuring a positive culture in the school.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The delimitations are those characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of your study. The delimitations can be controlled by you (Simon, 2011). Due to time constraints, I was not able to use more than one district in my case study. Due to this, the findings of my study are not generalisable. The interpretive/social constructive paradigm I have used also plays a role in delimiting my study. Scott and Morrison (2005) says that “the researcher can only make sense of the data if they are able to understand the data”. Thus, if data is interpreted incorrectly it cannot be utilised. Also, the reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the participant and is shaped by their individual experiences (Creswell, 2013). It is therefore subjective.

1.8 Organisation of the study

The research study is reported in six chapters.

Chapter 1: This is the introductory chapter in which the background and context of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the research study, and research questions are clarified. The chapter also gives a brief account of the motivation and significance of the study.

Chapter 2: In this chapter, I present a review of the literature, where various books, journals, articles, policies, and reports are reviewed to locate the study. This chapter also clearly clarifies Instructional Leadership and the Culture of Teaching and Learning which are the core concepts of the study. It also explains the theoretical framework that underpins the research.

Chapter 3: This chapter explores the research methodology wherein the research design and methodology, research paradigm, methods, and tools of data collection are located. The chapter also explains the case study schools, data collection, and procedures followed as well as sampling.

Chapter 4: In this chapter, I present data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations of each of the three case study schools. The interview questions data is presented followed by the teacher questionnaire. Lastly, the observation data of the principals' instructional practices and the school culture is discussed.

Chapter 5: In this chapter, findings based on the themes/topics that emerged from the data are analysed, interpreted, and discussed. It considers the three cases in a cross-case analysis.

Chapter 6: In this chapter, I present the summary, limitations, recommendations, and conclusions. Conclusions are based on my interpretation of the findings in the three schools and is an attempt at answering my research question.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter gives an outline of the deteriorating culture of teaching and learning in South African schools. This is achieved by researching three types of schools where the principal's instructional leadership practices was explored to provide insight into how these practices influence relationships between the principal and teachers as well as impacts the school culture to produce improved student outcomes.

The next chapter begins with an overview of why schools must be viewed as learning organisations, instructional leadership in an international and South African context, and the instructional leadership practices of school principals who promote teaching and learning. This is followed by literature on developing a Culture of Teaching and Learnin

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of a literature review is to gain insight into the problem that is being investigated. It allows the researcher to efficiently scan the literature on the topic under investigation. It allows the researcher to report on the knowledge that has been developed by other researchers on the specific topic. The literature review distinguishes what has been done from what needs to be done, thereby positioning the research project within a body of knowledge. This gives perspective to the audience (Randolph, 2009). Ravitch and Riggan (2012) state that the purpose of a literature review is learning. They claim that in order to thoroughly review the literature, the researcher needs to understand the conversation already happening, figure out how to add to the conversation, and then identify the best way of doing so theoretically and methodologically. The chapter presents gathered information from a diverse range of researchers and sources, which include books, journals, articles, circulars, and other government legislation and reports on instructional leadership and school culture. As a point of departure, I review the literature on schools as learning organisations and argue that due to the movement towards 21st-century skills, it is essential that schools be reconceptualised as learning organisations that can develop processes, structures, and strategies that allow for them to react towards unsure and changing environments (Senge,1995).

Further in this chapter, I review international and local literature within the field of principal instructional leadership practices that create a culture of teaching and learning in schools. I also assess and analyse existing material on how principals' instructional leadership contributes towards a positive school climate by focusing on human "culture behaviours" and the relationship between principals and teachers.

In South Africa, many school principals are not familiar with the term instructional leadership and its practices. Phillips (2012), as cited in Toale (2013), says that even though instructional leadership is of utmost importance in order for schools to run effectively, it is seldom practiced as principals are often more concerned with managerial tasks and do not give their instructional role the attention it requires. This is concerning as the Policy on the

the South African Standard for Principalship (SASP) (2015) places a lot of emphasis on this and advocates the need for principals to lead the teaching and learning in schools through instructional leadership. Instructional leadership of the principal is essential if we hope to

improve the quality of education in South Africa. This is due to the fact that instructional leadership has a higher impact on student outcomes than any other leadership (Bendikson, Robinson & Hattie 2012). Instructional leadership of the principal is therefore essential if we hope to improve the quality of education in South Africa.

One of the reasons for the under-performance of the schooling system in South Africa is the inability of its teaching force to produce quality teaching. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) argues that the restructuring of apartheid education failed to focus on one major area – the teaching force (OECD, 2008).

However, so much focus is placed on improving teacher content knowledge while less attention is given to how teachers "view their profession and perceive their competence" (Motala, 2014, p. 170). To improve the quality of education in South Africa, there should not only be a focus on improving teacher knowledge and pedagogical skills, it is also essential that school leaders set out to improve the quality of the environment in which teachers teach as this will significantly impact on the way learners learn. Mestry (2013) states that there is a belief in educational circles that principals can make a difference to the teaching and learning environment by creating conducive conditions for improved instruction that this will lead to higher learner outcomes. Thus, principals play a key role in the development and maintenance of academic standards in schools (Sergiovanni, 1984, as cited in Mestry, 2013). Christie, Sullivan Duku and Gallie (2010), in their report prepared for Bridge, South Africa and Ark, UK, state that it is important to recognise that the relationship between the influence of the principal and student learning outcomes is not direct but that the effects of leadership can be found in the way the school is organised, how teachers are supported, as well as the culture of the school.

School climate and culture play a significant role in how teachers perform their tasks. The climate of the school reflects its culture. The term 'school culture' generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). School culture also affects the methods of communication and the style of leadership of the school. The quality of communication among administrators and other stakeholders plays an important role in constructing trust in a school, increasing motivation, and creating opportunities to express the needs and expectations to each other (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Van der Westhuizen (2003) agrees that building relationships in schools should get as much attention as organisational

structure, administration, and supervision, as well as other aspects of educational management as it leads to collaboration and open communication and this results in a climate of trust and understanding. Thus, the creation of a positive school climate that focuses on relationships in schools, respect for diversity, collaboration, and motivation is of utmost importance as it contributes towards a positive school climate as well as increased teacher efficacy.

The results of the research by Blasé and Blasé (2000, p. 137) indicates that the instructional leadership practices of the principal have a "strong enhancing effect on teachers, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally." Therefore, if we want to improve educational standards in South Africa we need to focus on the role of the principal as an instructional leader as well as the culture of the school.

2.2 The need for schools to be reconceptualised as learning organisations

Post-apartheid educational policies in South Africa were driven by a quest for equality, equity and fairness. The South African government has shown its commitment to Education for All (EFA), by ensuring equitable and universal access to meaningful learning opportunities (Motala, 2015). However, Motala (2015, p. 191) further says that despite these improvements in both quality and practice, as well as resource allocation, "educational access in South Africa remains incomplete in terms of attendance, limited in terms of grade progression, unsatisfactory in terms of the age-grade norms, poor in terms of quality and inefficient in terms of learning outcomes." She states that even though South Africans enjoy considerable physical and structural access to schooling; this does not guarantee that learners have equal experience of or access to quality education. This is especially evident in all international testing done that measures our learners' reading, mathematical and scientific ability, and skills. So even though there is access for all this is not translating towards effective learning and South Africa is lagging other countries where the financial and human resources invested in education is much lower. Motala (2015) argues that meaningful access to learning opportunities requires learning that is beneficial and useful and that it can be achieved by appropriate pedagogies. She further suggests that educators need to acquire better skills as this would have a pronounced effect on the improvement of the cognitive skills of learners. The policy on the South African standard for principalship (SASP, p. 3) clearly defines two of the core purposes of principals in South African schools as: Leading teaching and learning in the school and Managing the school as an organisation. An organisation can be defined as consisting of a group of people who work together in a planned and co-ordinated way to achieve a common purpose. However, due to

the change in the social, economic and political climate in the country as well as the constant changes brought about by globalisation and increased technological advancement, there is a necessity for innovation and change in all organisations, including schools (Geleta & Tafese, 2016). Schleicher (2012; 2015), as cited in Kools and Stoll (2016), explains that the skills required by learners to contribute effectively towards society are constantly changing and teachers are not developing the practices and skills required for the diverse needs of today's learners. In response to this, researchers are calling for schools to become reconceptualised into learning organisations. According to Senge (1995), although schools are institutions of learning, they are not all learning organisations. He defines a learning organisation as "an organisation where people at all levels, are collectively, continually enhancing their capacity to create things they want to create" (Senge, 1995, p. 20).

Therefore, I argue that it is essential that schools in South Africa be redefined as learning organisations. Schools as learning organisations are guided by a strong shared vision that gives them a sense of direction. This also acts as a motivational force for people in the organisation to aspire to achieve individual and school goals. These schools further focus on learning that influences the cognitive, social, and emotional outcomes of learners (OECD, 2016). This type of learning requires teachers who constantly improve their knowledge and pedagogy so that there is a focus on developing the cognitive skills of learners so that they can meet the demands of the constantly changing education system. Harris and Jones (2018) stated that creating schools as learning organisations requires a major change in cultural mind-set as well as commitment from all to self-evaluate and reflect on practices. Therefore, any attempt at transforming schools into learning organisations requires a total commitment to making a difference in the lives of all learners, especially those who are disadvantaged (OECD, 2016).

The OECD (2016) maintains that schools that are learning organisations display supportive cultures. They ensure that they invest time and money in good quality active professional learning opportunities for all their staff. There is a focus on work-based learning that is designed to be incorporated into everyday practice. Learning organisations favour professional learning over professional development as the former is more interactive and sustainable and caters to the needs of teachers. Staff identify their professional learning needs so that these are in line with the goals of the school, as well as the needs of the learners. In schools that operate as learning organisations, there is also ongoing assessment and feedback on the daily practices of teachers. This kind of reflection brings about change and innovation in the way teachers teach (OECD, 2016). Furthermore, in schools as learning organisations, there are school

structures that encourage collaboration, communication, and dialogue. Teachers meet regularly so that they can reflect on their challenges, problem solve as well as share strategies that can improve the learning in the school (OECD, 2016). Teachers are assisted and supported to take risks and overcome the fear and uncertainty brought about by change. Schools as learning organisations regularly analyse data and use it to improve / transform their existing practices. These schools forge partnerships with networks of learners, teachers, parents, and community members. In such schools, learners benefit from various services offered by the school and therefore require extra funding so that they can adequately respond to the needs of disadvantaged learners or those with special educational needs (OECD, 2016).

It is widely acknowledged that strong leadership has a huge influence on the effective running of schools. The OECD (2016, p. 10) regards leadership as the "essential ingredient that binds all the separate parts of the organisation together" Hopkins (2018, p. 5) states that "leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school". Naidoo and Petersen (2015) state that in order to develop 21st-century skills, the schooling sector requires leaders who are actively involved in improving instruction and curricula in school. They further assert that school principals are key to developing and maintaining effective schools and education systems. Due to the substandard performance of South African learners in international testing, there is increased pressure on principals to improve learner outcomes. Motala (2015) indicates that some of the necessary conditions required to deliver quality education at school level in the South African context include a functioning institution, a focus on instructional leadership, emphasis on reading and writing of learners as well as the professional development of teachers.

Many of these functions of learning organisations are consistent with the practices of instructional leadership. Instructional leadership practices play a key role in schools aiming to become learning organisations. Naidoo and Petersen (2015) state that the more instructional leadership is provided by school principals, the more likely students are to achieve. Thus, because the foundation for learning is set in the early schooling years, the authors advocate for primary school leaders to be equipped as instructional leaders as this could lead to an overall improvement in the education system. This view is supported by Taylor et al. (2013) who believe that the educational outcomes of learners in South Africa are contingent on a strong and firm knowledge base in primary school.

2.3 Defining Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership can be viewed as leadership that is focused on teaching and learning to improve student outcomes. King (2002), as cited in Costello (2016), defines instructional leadership as the actions taken by leaders to enhance teaching and learning. Weber (1996), as cited in Naicker et al. (2013), states that the instructional leader observes and improves instruction through classroom observation and exposing teachers to professional development opportunities. Thus, it is said that the primary focus of instructional leaders is to influence the behaviour of teachers to target learner outcomes (direction, rather than influence). Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, and Hopkins (2006), as cited in Bush (2013), state that principals have an impact on how teaching takes place in the classroom by becoming 'instructional' leaders. Zapeda (2004) maintains that effective leaders are instructional leaders who support teachers in improving their instructional practices in the classroom. These leaders commit to and improve learner outcomes through improved teaching methods as well as building strong teams of teachers. Instructional leaders understand change, and why change is important and why people resist change when schools are striving to change the instructional practices of teachers (Zapeda, 2004).

Critics of instructional leadership feel that there is too much focus on the principal as the instructional leader (Hallinger, 2003, as cited in Bush, 2013) whose influence is top-down and therefore gives little opportunities for other leaders. This claim, according to Hallinger (2011) can be refuted at it was research on school effectiveness and school improvement in the 1980s that resulted in school principals being viewed as playing a key contributing role in successful change. However, Glickman (1989), in Marks and Printy (2003), acknowledges that the principal is not the only instructional leader, but is the "leader of instructional leaders." Marks and Printy (2003), as cited in Hallinger (2009), came up with the concept of shared instructional leadership. One of the reasons for this was the limitation in the instructional leadership model where principals are said to lack instructional leadership capacities as the demand for them has increased.

Further motivation for this shift was the literature on teacher empowerment which was about giving teachers the autonomy to make decisions, including them in management processes et cetera (Boyse and Bowers, 2018). It is therefore important that instructional leadership need to be distributed amongst other leaders in the school. Marks and Printy (2003), as cited in Boyse

and Bowers, 2018, p. 2) says that it is about "principals and teachers both play[ing] a part in forging an effective leadership relationship".

Leadership for Learning is a concept that is grounded in instructional leadership and is regarded as a reincarnation of instructional leadership. Leadership for Learning includes the notion of shared leadership and is not limited to the principal. Christie (2010, p.210) explains that "leadership in schools is not the preserve of any position", we can, therefore, find leaders throughout the school. This view is further reiterated by Du Brin (2013), who asserts that leadership is required at all levels of an organisation and can be practiced to some extent even by a person not assigned to a formal leadership position. Leadership for Learning also takes the school's context into account and allows for the adaptation of instructional leadership practices. It uses features such as modelling, individual focus, and capacity development. It can be seen as a process of mutual influence where leadership is but one important factor in the process of systemic change (Hallinger, 2012).

The revised "innovative and sustainable approach" (Mestry et al., 2013, p. S52) to instructional leadership places preference on organisational management for instructional improvement, rather than teaching and learning. Horng and Loeb (2010, p.66) explain that the current approach of "Organisational management for instructional improvement" means staffing a school with high-quality teachers and providing them with the appropriate support and resources to be successful in the classroom. They indicate that research by the Wallace Foundation shows that school leaders primarily affect student learning by influencing teachers' motivations and working conditions. By comparison, a leader's influence on teachers' knowledge and skills has far less effect on student learning (Horn & Loeb, 2010). They found that when principals spend more time on organisational management activities, school outcomes are better.

Hallinger (2011) also confirms that the current approach focuses on the organisation as much as individuals by promoting a positive learning environment, assists teachers as well as learners in meeting curriculum standards, as well as promoting and supporting teacher professional development. This is done by being mindful of the culture and context so that improvement strategies match the changing context (Hallinger, 2011).

2.4 The changing role of the school principal

The demands of the school principal have become complex. Christie (2010) argues that the work of the school principal has changed drastically due to the different expectations of school leadership as well as the new policy frameworks. The policy framework devolved power to schools but principals were not professionally developed to implement the policies effectively. Thus, the schools are run by principals and school management teams (SMTs) that have institutional autonomy but lack the capacity and skills to execute their tasks. They struggle to balance their various administrative and management functions and therefore find it difficult to focus on curriculum management functions (Christie, 2010).

Petersen and Naidoo (2015) state that 21st-century principals are expected to become change agents who are deeply involved in improving teaching practices and curricula in schools. According to Toale (2013), due to increased pressure for improvement of learner results, there is a demand for greater accountability on the part of the school principal and this has resulted in increased attention being paid to the role of the principal as an instructional leader. Bush (2005), as cited in Naidoo and Petersen (2016), states that principals become overwhelmed by the task of being instructional leaders. Fink and Silverman (2014) agree that principals are too busy with activities of management – such as infrastructure, discipline, handling parent meetings, and various other crises that crop up in school all the time that they rarely get the time to monitor and analyse teacher instruction. This is confirmed by Horng et al. (2009) as cited in Bodnarchuk (2017) who said that principals spend the majority of their time doing administrative duties and organisational management and less than 10% of their day on day-to-day instruction and the instructional programme. Southworth (2003), as cited in Bradley (2016), suggest principals spend too much time on administration, budgeting issues, and other school problems, so that they neglect to spend time with teachers regarding instructional issues.

2.5 The instructional leadership role of the school principal in the South African context

Instructional leadership is not a widely known term amongst primary school principals in South Africa. Van der Berg et al. (2011) state that principals in South Africa do not regard their role to include instructional leadership and this, to him, could explain the lack of teaching accountability in schools. Kruger (2003), as cited in Mestry (2013), says that many principals have a lack of understanding of their leadership function.

The complexity of the post-apartheid policies that were introduced to reform schooling as well as leadership, governance, and management in schools, requires strong instructional leadership that can be adapted to the context.

Christie (2010, p. 625) states that there needs to be "fluid and situated approaches rather than static and generic ones" in the context of school leadership. Bush (2009) states that in the context of South Africa, the principal's instructional leadership is confined to monitoring rather than the evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. The responsibility of curriculum management is given to the HODs who share it with subject heads. Bush (2016) is of the opinion that due to the disparity in leadership style, resourcing, and management, this is hampering improvement. Hoadley et al. (2009), as cited in Bush (2016, p. 8), came to the following conclusion "Successful leadership of curriculum and instruction involves the ability to oversee a wide range of functions, most of which do not relate directly to teaching and learning. Moreover . . . the majority of principals saw curriculum coverage as the responsibility of senior managers, rather than themselves."

There is a dominant belief in education circles that school principals play a key role in maintaining and developing the academic standards of the school (Pretorius, 2013; Sergiovanni, 1998). Recent studies by Bush (2013), Grobler (2013), and Spaul (2011) indicated that learner outcomes were linked to the type of school they attend. Naidoo and Petersen (2015) state that the more effectively the schools are run and the more instructional leadership is provided by school principals, the more likely the learners are to achieve. Waweru et al. (2013), as cited in Maponya's (2020) findings, indicated that the instructional leadership practices of the school principal were the central basis of influencing academic achievements.

Grobler (2013) states that in order to improve learner outcomes, the principal should be directly involved in managing teaching and learning. He further states that in order to achieve the learning outcomes and promotion requirements of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), school principals should focus on becoming instructional leaders. The role of the principal is emphasised in the *Action Plan to 2019: Towards a Realisation of Schooling 2030* which is an update of the action plan of 2014 which clearly identifies the role of the school principal one "ensures that teaching in the school takes place as it should, according to the national curriculum, and understands his or her role as a leader whose responsibility is to promote harmony, creativity and a sound work ethic within the school community and beyond" (2015, p. 9).

The South African Standard for Principalship (2005, p.7) further describes the principal as the leading professional in the school who is responsible for providing leadership and direction and for ensuring that the aims and goals of the school are met. “The principal has the overall responsibility for developing and implementing plans, policies, and procedures that will allow the school to translate its vision and mission into action and outcomes and for the creation of a safe, nurturing and supportive learning environment that will allow for effective teaching and learning taking place” (The South African Standard for Principalship, 2005, p. 10). The document identifies six key areas of principalship that constitute the generic role of the principal. These include:

- Shaping the direction and development of the school which involves the principal working with the different role players in the school, (i.e. The SMT, school governing board (SGB) and other community members), in order to create a shared vision for the school, to motivate all in the school to work hard and to develop plans aimed at sustained school improvement;

- Assuring quality and securing accountability: the principal and SMT are responsible for assuring the quality of teaching and learning in the school by establishing effective systems and procedures to ensure effective ongoing evaluation;

- Developing and empowering self and others: together with the SMT, developing and providing opportunities for others within the school to achieve the highest quality of teaching and learning, be involved in decision making, having opportunities for shared leadership and building the leadership and management capacity among other members of staff;

- Managing the school as an organisation: ensuring that the school is properly resourced in order to carry out its functions in an effective, efficient, safe and nurturing learning environment;

- Working with the community (i.e. SGB, SMT) collaboratively for the benefit of both community and school; and

- Leading and managing the school: focusing on the principals’ responsibility to create and maintain a learning culture for the learners and staff.

The Wallace Foundation (2011), as cited in Barton and Kamp; Larson, 2012) states that the principal is the central source of leadership influence and that he/she is responsible for shaping a vision of academic success. As instructional leaders, they have to develop a vision that places

teaching and learning at the centre (Bush, 2009). Hoadley and Christie (2008) contend that the principal's role is crucial in creating conditions where effective learning and teaching can take place. Principals therefore also need to support teachers and learners towards excellence by creating a safe and collaborative environment (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015).

The principal further influences student learning through organisational management in which he/she supports the teachers by giving them access to resources, budgets as well as support – this fosters a positive work place as well as a learning environment (Mestry et al., 2013). In their research, Horn and Loeb (2010) found that when principals spend more time on organisational management activities, the school outcomes were better. This included learner test-score gains and positive teacher and parent assessments of the school's instructional climate. They further assert that effective organisational managers strategically hire, support, and retain good teachers while developing or removing less effective ones. The role of the school principal has shifted from a role that is dominated by a focus on leadership, management, and administration to one that focuses on instruction, systemic instruction, and capacity building (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015).

2.6 The instructional leadership practices of the school principal that enhances teaching and learning

Instructional leadership is central to school improvement. Therefore the tasks of organising, co-ordinating, monitoring and supporting teachers in their efforts to provide high-quality learning opportunities for learners are essential to building a strong instructional programme that reaches every classroom (du Plessis, 2013).This view was suggested by Robinson et al. (2008), as cited in Bush and Glover (2016), who maintained that for school leaders to have a positive influence on student outcomes, they should pay more attention to the core business of teaching and learning.

Hallinger's (2003) model of instructional leadership for the 21st century proposes three dimensions of instructional management and ten instructional leadership functions.

2.6.1 Dimension 1 – Defining the schools' mission

Botha (2013) indicates that instructional leaders must have a clear vision of what they expect their schools to accomplish. According to Education Matters (2019), an Australian website, instructional leaders should have a clear vision with an equity mindset. This means that the vision should endeavour to give every child what they need when they need it by differentiating

the curriculum to meet the needs of every child and ensure success for all. They further emphasise that the role of the instructional leader should be transformational as it should foster a vision towards greater learning.

2.6.2 Framing and communicating the goals

To enhance the quality of education, it is essential for school principals, together with staff, to create a vision that focuses on the improvement of teaching and learning. Naidoo and Petersen (2016) indicate that one of the most crucial practices of the school principal is to create and share a vision and mission with staff, this includes staff performance expectations as well as learner outcomes. The mission brings the vision to life as it relates to the goals of the school. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that the basic mission of a school is to create an environment that can deliver an education of high quality.

The principal assists staff in acting on the vision by ensuring the creation of conducive conditions where there is a focus on professional learning. The principal also assists and supports staff and others to attain this vision by "removing barriers" and ensuring that "policies, practices and systems are in place" (Blanchard, 2010, p.3). He further states that leaders should hold themselves and staff accountable for acting on this vision. Furthermore, school leaders must develop a mission statement, which defines where the school is and where it is headed. Guided by their mission statements, schools judge decisions and actions resulting from strategic planning, i.e. whether decisions are consistent with the mission statement (NEEDU, 2018). Defining a good school vision and assertive mission is not sufficient alone. The goals of the school must be put into life by planning and reviewing constantly, depending on changing and developing conditions and redefined when necessary so that they are up-to-date (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Thus, principals need to ensure that standards of behaviour, as spelled out in the learners' code of conduct, are clear to all staff, parents, and learners. and orientate parents of new learners at the school about "how things are run at this school" (NEEDU, 2018).

Schools in South Africa have a serious disparity regarding infrastructure. Apartheid education was characterised by inequality in the funding of schools and the legacy of this funding is evident in the infrastructure in these schools and regardless of the improvement made since 1995, there are still backlogs. Sayed (2001) asserts that the education policy discourse in emphasising uniformity in educational provisions tends to ignore historically situated and developed inequities and therefore schools in South Africa are still very different with regard

to the quality of education. Due to South Africa's inclusion policy and the legacy of apartheid education where pedagogical methods are outdated and irrelevant as well as the class divide and language policy, many South African learners struggle to effectively learn without support, remediation, accommodation, and modifications. Zapeda (2012) says that as a supervisor, the principal must be occupied in helping teachers examine the way they teach such as suggest modifications, based on the characteristics of the learners. It is therefore essential for principals to ensure that correct support, modifications, and accommodation to the curriculum are made. Calik et al. (2012) indicated that effective instructional leaders are those who create a platform for the creation of an effective teaching and learning environment with enhanced quality education by moving their schools towards an ideal position. Maponya (2020) states principals need to provide individualised support for learners. They suggest that the following dimensions of support have to be emphasised: "adoption of learners by teachers, team-building workshops of teachers on how to support learners, learner individual attention, outsourcing of subject specialists to tackle content gap identified in learners, and provisioning of leadership in teaching-learning matters" (Maponya, 2020, p. 188).

Instructional leaders ensure that learners are challenged. One of Umalusi's concerns regarding the 2019 matric results is the decline in the Mathematics marks and this is attributed to the fact that learners are not taught critical thinking and problem-solving strategies. Fullan (2003), as cited in Naidoo and Petersen (2016), discusses the concept of deep learning in schools. This concept of deep learning allows learners to gain mastery in academic content that is deemed as essential, through working collaboratively and with good communication. It allows for critical thinking and problem solving and empowers learners through self-directed learning (Martinez, 2020). Fullan (2003) argues that it is the job of the principal to create opportunities for learners to engage in deep learning. The principal as an instructional leader, therefore, sets high academic expectations for learners that can be reached through communication and collaboration. This is also emphasised in the NEEDU report of 2018 which states "schools challenge themselves to provide the expectations and opportunities they might reserve for 'gifted' learners to all of their learners, including those considered disadvantaged or at-risk" (NEEDU, 2018, p. 3).

Principals, as instructional leaders, must be aware of their goal of ensuring that the entire school population works towards a common goal, that being enhancing learner outcomes. The principals' positive influence must create a climate and culture where teaching and learning take place with pride and confidence and yield a learning culture that makes learners achieve

to the best of their ability. Maponya (2020) states that principals who are not focused on the vision of improving academic outcomes might defeat the main purpose of schooling, which is proper curriculum delivery.

2.6.3 Dimension 2 –Managing the instructional programme

The principal, as an instructional leader, must have high knowledge of the school's instructional programme, commitment to the improvement of the school, and expertise in teaching and learning to co-ordinate and control the academic programme of the school. He must manage the instructional programme through supervision and evaluation of instruction, co-ordinate the curriculum, as well as monitor student progress.

Co-ordinating the curriculum

Ensuring co-ordination between curriculum and activities in school is one of the important roles of a school principal. Instructional leaders act as curriculum managers. Maponya (2020) states that principals, as curriculum managers, are a driving force behind all curriculum matters within the school. He states that a well-managed curriculum within the school has the potential to give rise to quality teaching and learning activities. In this way, the principal can ensure proper syllabus coverage as well as ascertain if the quality of the assessment tasks given to learners were well controlled, marked, and feedback provided to the learners to work on their faults and areas of need (Maponya, 2020).

However, schools have varying contexts and sizes and the principal is not an expert in all subjects. The principal can delegate this duty to other staff members. The researcher also acknowledges the need for instructional leaders to explore divergent instructional expertise of various teachers as well as their content knowledge to assist in managing instruction within the school. The principals can delegate, but not abdicate, curriculum management responsibilities to other SMT members. They do this by ensuring that staff fulfill their responsibilities as follows:

Principals monitor the work of deputy principals and HODs: Each HOD is expected to have a monitoring plan showing when he or she will collect various types of learners' work to monitor curriculum coverage. Deputy Principals monitor HODs' work (NEEDU, 2018). This practice is in line with Mestrys' (2016) view where he states that instructional leadership can be described as the actions that school principals take or delegate to others to promote growth in others. Thus, one needs to be cognisant of the fact that this duty is not merely delegated to

teachers to reduce the principals' workload, but through such delegation of curriculum responsibility, the culture of teamwork, commitment, and healthy competition is likely to be created among staff members who might aspire to perform better than expected. In this way, the principal builds capacity among their subordinates, also helps create and boost an element of trust with their staff members, and the willingness to carry out instructional duties with ease within the school (Maponya, 2020). This view is supported by Zapeda (2013, p. 23) who indicates that principals need to find opportunities for teachers to lead as well as find ways for them to be more involved in leadership and diffusing leadership "entails trust, collaboration, support, and advocacy for extending the boundaries of authority beyond the position and the person who holds the title of principal".

According to the NEEDU (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit) report of February 2018 in schools that work, principals' direct instructional leadership focuses on reviewing teachers' work, correcting curriculum pacing, moderating assessment tasks, and analysing data. Principals collect learners work at random and match it to the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP).

Supervising and evaluating instruction

The purpose of inspection in schools is to increase the effectiveness of teachers and to identify their developmental needs. This is an important practice required to obtain a high-quality education. According to Senol and Lesinger (2018), the main task of the school principal is to ensure that the goals of their school are translated into classroom activities Thus, supervision and evaluation of instruction are seen as essential and class visits are seen as developmental in nature.

Direct instructional leadership practices include the principal going into teachers' classes unannounced and observing lessons (NEEDU, 2018). In such practice, the principal, as an instructional leader, provides constructive feedback to teachers which assists teachers in their ability to reflect on their teaching. In order to ensure that teachers perform their roles better, the principal acts with them, leads them, and inspires them for self-development and keeps their motivation high. The principal works with teachers to identify and diagnose instructional problems and brainstorm strategies that need to be taken to ameliorate the problems. Teachers are held accountable for learner performance: Accountability and support are emphasised in each of the successful schools to determine where additional help is needed. It is therefore expected of principals to be instructional resources who are knowledgeable about curriculum

issues and are able to give constructive feedback on instructional practices or able to design a system where support and feedback can be given by others (Leithwood & Louis, 2012).

Mestry (2013) says that instructional leadership demands high academic excellence: sets high expectations for learner's success as well as having knowledge and experience of effective teaching strategies. The principal also awards academic excellence by announcing high-performing learners at the assembly, awards and prize-giving days or Principals' Awards (NEEDU, 2018).

2.6.4 Dimension 3 – Creation of a positive school climate

This dimension suggests that if high standards, expectations, and a culture of continuous learning and improvement are developed, an academic press can be created by the school (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Effective use of time is of utmost importance and instructional time must be used for teaching and implementing new skills and concepts and not interrupted unnecessarily. Principals, as instructional leaders, ensure that there are limited distractions to the schools' instructional programme. Principals protect teaching time by managing teaching time tightly to make every minute count. Respondents in the research about instructional leadership practices in resilient schools indicated that "the leaders work longer hours than the rest of the staff and that they were exemplary in carrying out their own teaching, administrative and management tasks" (Ngcobo &Tikly ,2010, p.24). It can, therefore, be said that these leaders lead by example by modelling good habits like being punctual, applying good methods of preparation and assessment as well as using innovative methods in their teaching. This is the behaviour that they want teachers to emulate. They are consistent in their actions and model behaviour that is conducive to achieving school goals (Harris, 2002).

Furthermore, school principals must be perceived as visible in the school i.e. observing lessons, walking around the buildings, as well as participating in professional development activities, as this strengthens communication between stakeholders of education (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). According to Taole (2013), inherent to the concept of instructional leadership is the belief that learning should be given top priority while everything revolves around the improvement of learning. Naicker et al. (2013) say that through their classroom teaching, the principal also maintains visibility. This is consistent with the instructional leadership practices of school principals who are instructional resources and always have a visible presence (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014). Furthermore, a visible presence is also created through

observing lessons, walking around the school grounds as well as actively participating in professional development opportunities (Senol & Lesinger, 2018).

The principal has to set high expectations of their learners and create a culture in the school where all learners are motivated to excel and achieve success. Effective leaders should value the success of both teachers and students. Incentives are provided and both teachers and learners are rewarded for superior performance. This leads to higher motivation and increased success on the side of both teachers and learners (Hallinger, 2003; Seno & Lesinger 2018). Principals who display instructional leadership practices will seek to improve instruction/ pedagogy by encouraging and supporting the professional learning of teachers and this can result in increased learner performances. Horn and Loeb (2010) explain that the quality of instruction of teachers is influenced by the principal's involvement. The authors support the concept of "Organisational management for instructional improvement" – this means that the principal as instructional leader recruits qualified teachers with pedagogical training and teachers with university majors or specialisation in the subjects they are teaching. Principals can also have a huge influence on creating opportunities for teachers to improve. They emphasise training staff in areas of most need as identified through the IQMS processes, the analysis of learner assessment results, and findings of SMT members' observations during class visits (NEEDU, 2018) According to Senol and Lesinger (2018), the top priority of school principals is to provide the environment needed for supporting the professional development of teachers related to school goals so that they can:

- Ensure participation of teachers in several in-service training activities
- Organise seminars, conferences andworkshops for improvement of teachers in the school
- Inform teachers on all kinds of educational opportunities outside the institution

The South African government is prioritising Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education. The MEC in Gauteng, Mr. Panyaza Lesufi, is equipping many historically disadvantaged schools with interactive whiteboards, classroom servers, laptops, and tablets. His quest is to bring change in classroom instruction and to replace outdated 20th-century methods with modern and more relevant teaching methods. He further states that introducing digital technology in classrooms not only improves teaching standards and digital skills but also makes way for new skills and methods of teaching to develop (Mail and Guardian, 2018). However, research done by Hart and Laher (2015) says that when introducing educational

technology into schools, one needs to be aware of the extent to which teachers perceive this as fitting into their frame of reference. They conclude that having access to educational technology as well as having the skills to use it, does not guarantee successful integration into schools. Potter and RockinsonSzapkiw (2015) indicate that the lack of integration of technology into the classroom is often due to the lack of teacher professional development opportunities. Jones (2001) emphasises that the principals' leadership is one of the most important factors that affect how effective technology is used in the classroom. Leaders must provide teachers with support and guidance to facilitate the change. In the South African context, I think this is especially true for older teachers who struggle with adapting their teaching styles and are scared of the challenges brought about by change. Zapeda (2014) states that instructional leaders understand that teachers find it hard to change so the principal needs to create conditions that are necessary to assists teachers to implement this change. They need to make teachers aware of why the change is necessary and how it will assist in school improvement (Zapeda, 2014).

Instructional leaders in the school focus on establishing positive relationships with parents as well as with the community (Harris, 2002). There is an emphasis on a need to have an interconnectedness of home, school, and the community as they realise that these relationships impact on learner outcomes. They encourage dialogue with parents as well as stay connected with the community leaders. Principals in these schools are highly responsive to the demands of their school context (Harris, 2002). They have found ways of winning the support of the community and the school also financially benefits from this.

In his research, Maponya (2020) states that in line with previous research on instructional leadership and learner performance, the study found that the creation of a teaching and learning culture to be at the heart of instructional leadership practices. Maponya (2020) suggests that the principals as instructional leaders are mainly responsible for creating a platform whereby teaching and learning practices can yield expected learner academic achievements. The principal influences in a positive manner both teachers and learners to enhance the teaching and learning processes. The findings in his articles showed that principals were not only expected to motivate teachers but learners as well. Principals, as instructions leaders, are aware of the socio-economic backgrounds of their learners and how important it is for them to motivate, influence, and inspire their learners in various ways so that they become self-directed and set high expectations for themselves.

School principals can influence classroom teaching, and consequently student learning, by employing highly effective teachers and supporting those teachers with productive teaching and learning environments. Communication of a shared vision, the setting of goals, promoting professional development as well as focusing on more relevant methods of teacher instruction can be considered as the major dimensions of instructional leadership.

2.7 Defining school climate and culture

The definitions of school climate and school culture are often blurred. (Hoy,1997). The school climate is composed of: buildings and physical facilities (safety), human factors (relationships, respect for diversity, collaboration, morale), organisational and administrative culture (quality of teaching, professional development, and leadership) and school culture (values, beliefs, norms and ways of thinking (Cohen et al., 2009). In this research, I focus on various dimensions of school climate, namely, organisational and administrative culture which links to the quality of teaching, professional development and leadership and human factors which emphasise how relationships in schools, respect for diversity, collaboration and motivation contribute towards a positive climate and therefore improved teacher self–efficacy.

The culture of a school can be defined as "shared ideologies, values, assumptions, expectations, attitudes and norms" that link the teachers, learners, and parents together (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosige & Ngcobo, 2015, p. 183). They say that when one talks about promoting a culture of teaching and learning in the school, it refers to words and actions that express specific values of the school. This is reflected in the initiatives taken by teachers, what they say and do as these communicate symbolic meaning and the underlying cultural values of the school.

Deal and Peterson (1999, p. 21) state that, "School cultures . . . become like tribes and clans, with deep ties among people and with values and traditions that give meaning to everyday life". Deal and Peterson take culture a step further and identify the people who shape school culture. Teachers, principals, and key decision-makers shape culture with their values, beliefs, and assumptions. Deal and Peterson (1999, p. 4) continue by connecting culture to the actions within an organisation, "Cultural patterns are highly enduring, have a powerful impact on performance, and shape the ways people think, act and feel." Hoy defines school culture is a system of shared orientations that hold a unit together and give it a distinctive identity. This identity can be either positive or negative. It can also be collaborative or singular. School culture has a direct impact on student learning.

Hoy(2010) as cited in Bueno (2015), describes school culture as a system of shared orientations that binds the school together to give it a unique identity. He indicates that this identity can be either positive or negative. Barth (2002, p. 7) states that school culture is an "historically transmitted pattern of meaning that wields astonishing power in shaping what people think and how they act".

Healthy schools exhibit cultures of being goal-focused, include communication, sharing of power, proper resource utilisation (Hoy et al, (2006) as cited in MacNeil, 2009). There is a degree of cohesiveness among staff members. High morale exists as teachers are innovative and have the autonomy to adapt their practices, as well as problem solve adequately (Fairman & Clark, 1998, as cited in MacNeil, 2009). According to Shafer (2018), the strength of the culture is determined by the interactions of the people within the organisation. She says that values, beliefs and actions can only spread if they are communicated directly. She identifies five elements that are interwoven and which she believes school principals can influence, namely, fundamental beliefs and assumptions (things that people in the organisation believe to be true), shared values (judgements people at the school make about their beliefs and assumptions, norms (how people in the school feel they should act), patterns and behaviours (how people act), tangible evidence (e.g. physical, auditory, visual signs that display people's actions and beliefs). She believes all these elements form a circle where the one reinforces and drives the other. Peterson and Deal (2002), as cited in Lee and Li (2015, p 12), state that "school culture influences what people pay attention to (focus), how they identify with the school (commitment), how hard they work (motivation), and the degree to which they achieve their goals (productivity).

According to MacNeil (2009), school principals should focus on dimensions of the school climate that affect the culture of the school. Researchers have not been able to conclude that leadership of the principal has a direct impact on the learning outcomes of students (Deane, 2015). This is confirmed by Hallinger and Heck (1998), as cited in MacNeil, Prater, and Busch (2009), who state that the impact of the principal does not directly impact learning but that it is mediated thought the climate and culture of the school. Wang et al. (1997), as cited in MacNeil et al. (2009) state that school culture and climate are among the main influences in affecting the outcomes of students. Principals have a strong impact on creating a positive culture in the school that is collaborative. This type of culture impacts on student learning and improved student outcomes. Deane (2015) strongly believes that strong instructional leadership

can be connected to a school culture that is collaborative and that this can lead to a positive attitude on the side of teachers and therefore improved student outcomes.

Kyle and Bogottch (2000) as cited in MacNeil et al. (2009), stated that real, sustainable change can be achieved if the focus is on changing the culture rather than simply changing the structures of the school. Barth (2002) maintains that changing a culture is one of the most difficult tasks of an instructional leader, but it remains the task of the leader to provide a culture that is favourable to learning and to ensure that teachers and students become lifelong learners.

Hallinger and Heck (1998), as cited in MacNeil, Prater, and Busch (2009), state that the impact of the principal on learning is mediated thought the climate and culture of the school and is not a direct effect. The principal creates a positive school climate by protecting instructional time, maintains high visibility, promotes professional development for teachers as well as provides incentives for teaching and learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). According to Fink and Resnick (2001), the principal is responsible to establish a widespread culture of teaching and learning in schools. School principals can change the culture through sharing leadership with everyone in the school. Deal and Peterson (1999), as cited in Deane (2015), believe that deep and shared leadership creates strong cohesive school cultures. The principal must model this vision in everything they do and say, and all the spaces around the school must reflect this culture. Thus, it is the job of the school principal to understand the school culture, help shape the values, beliefs, and attitudes necessary to shape this culture. School leaders also have the responsibility of managing school culture. According to the Department of Education (DoE) (2014, p. 7), the cultures of effective schools are underpinned by the democratic practices of the principal, as summarised in the various policy documents of the National Department of Education.

2.8 Promoting a culture of teaching and learning

This aspect of school climate places focuses on organisational and administrative culture.

Kruger (2003) indicates that a school that has a good teaching and learning culture has an organisational structure and instructional programme that is well developed. According to the (SASP), the other core purpose of the principal is to manage the school as an organisation. Senol and Lesinger (2018) assert that organisations are social systems and that people must be regarded as the most important element within this social system**.** Thus, in an organisation, we find people with different cultures that have come together as a group that

have formed their own belief system and values that are unique and characteristic of the organisation. This system is referred to as the organisational culture.

According to Spaull (2012, p. 4), effective schools are characterised by "strong accountability, good management, a culture of learning, discipline and order, adequate learning, teaching and support material, adequate teacher content knowledge, a completed curriculum, adequate learner performance and a low rate of learners dropping out". Kruger (2003) states that the organisational culture of the school is strongly influenced by the instructional leadership practice through staff development, decision-making, provision of resources, and instructional time, as well as supervision and feedback. Thus, effective school principals view the organisation of the school day, as well as good time management, as essential in creating organisational containment as well as creating and establishing an expectation of good quality teaching and learning (Spaul, 2012).

Developing a culture of teaching and learning in school refers to the presence of quality teaching and learning in schools as well as the role–player's attitude towards teaching and learning - it is a concept that is being used widely in the context of education in South Africa (Kruger, 2003). Davidoff and Lazarus (1997), as cited in Kruger (2003, p. 207), identify the following aspects of a sound culture of learning and teaching: the process of teaching and learning is valued by all, practices reflect commitment towards teaching and learning and the school displays structures and has resources that facilitate teaching and learning. According to November et al. (2012), principals have the primary responsibility for the creation of a safe, nurturing, and supportive learning environment, which enables effective teaching and learning to take place. The principal is expected to create an atmosphere that inspires high levels of achievement and commitment from all who work in the school, and at the same time, to develop an environment that is based on human values.

In South Africa, we are experiencing a breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning which is leading to the collapse of education in the country. This lack is especially evident in the mediocre results our learners score in international testing, an increase in discipline problems in many of our school, as well as "relaxing" the pass mark of subjects and reducing promotional requirements to reflect "good" pass marks. Schools with a poor/lack of a culture of teaching and learning are characterised by features of tension among role-players, vandalism, drug abuse, poor school results, weak leadership and management, low teacher and learner morale, poor infrastructure and lack of resources (Kruger, 2003; Badenhost & Koalepe, 2013; Blauw,

1998; Chisholm & Vally, 1996). These factors contribute to a lack of a sound culture of teaching and learning in schools. Weeks (2012) states that although the breakdown in teaching and learning in South African schools is reflected in the multifaceted socio-educational problems encountered in schools, schools can be turned around if the key role players in schools (principals, teachers, parents), as well as other key role players in the social community, assist in creating and establishing a caring environment that nurtures a culture of learning. Furthermore, a culture of commitment and hard work, along with a climate of healthy competition, must be created among staff members (Maponya, 2020). Thus, there needs to be a change in the mindset, as well as interaction that is purposeful and collaborative.

Weeks (2012) states that the breakdown in teaching and learning in South African schools is reflected in the multifaceted socio-educational problems encountered in schools. The concept of a "culture of learning and teaching" is widely being used in the education context of South Afric,. (Kruger, 2003) and this culture generally refers to the attitude of all the role players towards teaching and learning. Naidu, et al. (2015) state that the leaders may struggle to change people's characteristics, but they have a large number of opportunities to change the environment. Kyle and Bogottch (2000), as cited in MacNeil et al. (2009), stated that real, sustainable change can be achieved if the focus is on changing the culture rather than simply changing the structures of the school.

Teachers can be regarded as the most important role-players in the organisation. The principal as a leader is dependent on the teacher to reach school goals as teachers are responsible for teaching and learning happening in the classroom. Research in low performing schools indicates that one of the factors that contributes to poor student outcomes is weak teacher self-efficacy. Bandura,(2000) as cited in Bellibas (2016, p. 7), defines self–efficacy as being "the belief to execute a course of actions required to manage prospective situations". Thus, in the context of education, self-efficacy can be described as the teacher's belief in his/ her ability to execute duties that will assist them in achieving the academic goals of the school. A further problem in low performing schools is weak teacher efficacy. According to Modoge, Challens and Xaba (2018), teacher efficacy can be regarded as being the teachers' belief in himself / herself to perform a specific task while collective efficacy can be explained as when teachers in a school believe they can overcome factors linked to homes and communities and are able to make an educational difference to the lives of their learners.

Bellibas (2016) argues that if teachers have a higher perception of their self, they would be able to effectively solve problems related to educational issues. He also states that although efficacy in teaching is essential, teachers also need to develop a higher sense of efficacy in classroom management and discipline. This is especially true for teachers, especially novice teachers in South African schools, where discipline and classroom management hampers teaching extensively. Therefore, one of the most important ways to improve teaching and learning is through improving the self-efficacy of teachers. Teacher self-efficacy can lead to collective teacher efficacy and therefore can improve teaching and learning in schools. Modoge et al. (2018) are of the opinion that the challenge of low performing schools can be bridged and overcome by finding ways to enhance teacher efficacy. Schechter and Tsarennen Moran (2006), as cited in Modoge et al. (2018) suggest that high levels of collective teacher efficacy can contribute positively to learner improvement and success. According to Calik, Sezgin, Kavgaci, and Kilinc (2012), the results of research done in 328 primary schools in Ankara, Turkey, show instructional leadership was found to have had a positive impact on teacher efficacy. They further state that collective efficacy exists when principals serve as instructional leaders and work to develop teachers' gifts and talents. Calik, et al. (2012, p. 250) found "…school principals' instructional leadership behaviours have a positive, significant effect on teachers' self-efficacy". The results of research done by Bellibas (2016) confirm that the principals can influence teacher's perceptions of their self–efficacy by engaging them in activities that aim at improving teaching and learning. He states that when principals are supportive of actions that promote co-operation among staff to develop new teaching practices, ensure that teachers take responsibility for their own development, start taking responsibility for learner outcomes, they are very likely to have improved self-efficacy that allows them to incorporate new practices in their teaching as well as motivate learners to become more engaged in the learning process.

In South Africa, there is a need to restore the culture that emphasises and enables teaching and learning. However, some further challenges and factors need to be considered. According to Mlachila and Moeletsi (2019), South African teachers have lower content knowledge than their peers across Africa and this hampers their ability to pass on knowledge to their learners. Van der Berg and Hofmeyr (2017), as cited in Mlachila and Moeletsi (2019), state that this impairs their ability to judge the potential of their learners and therefore their capacity to improve the performance of the learners they teach. The authors further maintain that South African teachers have low motivation and do not deem themselves to be accountable for learner

outcomes. South African teachers have high rates of absenteeism and in predominantly black schools, teachers teach 3,5 hours, compared to teachers in previously white schools (Reddy, 2010; Irving, 2012, as cited in Mlachila & Moeletsi 2019). This low accountability and lack of effort by teachers, according to van der Berg (2011), can often be regarded as the greatest challenge to education. Mbiti (2016), as cited in Mlachila and Moeletsi (2019), states that although spending on education has increased and access has increased, low accountability is hampering improvement in the quality of education.

Another factor, according to Pretorius (2013, p. 235), teachers in South Africa are reported to be "dispirited, demoralised, underperforming and tired of reforms". He believes that teacher effectiveness is the most important factor that influences learner outcomes. Ammons (2006), as cited in Pretorius (2013), states that teacher effectiveness is influenced by context and the conditions under which they perform their tasks. Paulsen and Martin (2014), as cited in Barrett and Breyer (2014), in their research, show that teachers believe managers and leaders must understand and support teaching and learning processes and fully understand the challenges involved.

South African schools are still unequal regarding resources, school facilities and qualified teachers. They are characterised by a language policy that restricts learning in the mother tongue and curriculum policies that are erratic and inconsistent. It is well established in the literature that learners are more likely to achieve better outcomes if they are taught in their mother tongue. Thus, that the majority of learners in South Africa are taught in a language that they hardly speak at home, explains why they are struggling to achieve national and international curriculum standards requirements (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019). A large percentage of the population is characterised by poverty and truancy, sexual abuse, malnutrition, violence, and ill-discipline is rife in schools. Socio-economic status can, therefore, be said to play "a major role in determining the level and quality of education for South African learners through income and geographical channels" (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019, p. 33).

Naidu et al. (2015) state that an environment conducive to teaching and learning can be established through supporting creativity, team building, and participation in problem-solving. MacNeil et al. (2009) claim that the principal can act as a change agent in transforming the culture of teaching and learning in schools. The principal can do this by modelling instructional leadership practices in the form of motivating teachers so that they use teaching strategies that

promote student learning. They further state that when schools have a clear understanding of their vision and mission (i.e. why it exists, what its purpose is, and who it serves), the culture will ensure things work out well. A further task of instructional leaders is to ensure that resources are managed well and made available to teachers, thus creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Thus it can be is agreed that school principals are the single most influential individuals in creating a positive school culture and healthy climate (Calitz et al., 2002 Graczewski et al., 2009; Van Houtte, 2005). Major factors which enhance the culture of teaching and learning in a school include the following (Kruger, 2003): a positive school climate, sound classroom environments, sound home-school relations, effective leadership, constructive management and administration, neat buildings and facilities, the availability of resources, high professional standards among educators, healthy relationships between role players, order and discipline, effective instructional leadership, and a shared sense of purpose by teachers.

2.9 Promoting relationships that enable teaching and learning

This aspect of school climate places emphasis on human factors that look at how relationships in schools, respect for diversity, collaboration, and motivation, contribute towards a positive climate and therefore improved teacher self–efficacy. A school is a place where many people from different backgrounds and cultures come together. In South Africa, schools are expected to self-manage and therefore there is an increased potential of relationships that threaten to prevent schools from carrying out their core duties of teaching and learning.

Organisational culture is a contributing factor that allows for staff to work more effectively with the leader, it leads to an increase in peoples' commitment to the school as well as increased trust towards management. It shapes the behaviours and expectations of those working in the school as well as improving the academic success of learners and the performance of teachers (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Bossert and Colleagues (1982), as cited in Jones (2009), state that culture as part of the school climate, directly impacts teacher behaviour. Thus, developing and maintaining positive relationships with staff is critical as this leads to improving cultures which are more positive, teachers will be motivated to perform better and this will ultimately lead to improved learner outcomes. This is confirmed by MacNeil et al. (2009) who are of the opinion that a strong school climate has highly motivated teachers who impact positively on learner outcomes. They further state that if principals are intent on improving learner outcomes, they

must focus on improving the relationship between themselves, their teachers, students, and parents.

Naidu et al. (2015) say that the principal has a task in enabling relationships with staff members. Abeleen(2013) states that effective leaders assess the issue of school culture to address issues, reduce factors that diminish positive cultures, as well as to maintain a culture of academic success. Phillips (1996) developed a School Culture Triage which was used to measure the degree to which "culture behaviours" are present in schools (Wagner, 2006). These behaviours are: **Professional collaboration**: the degree to which teachers and staff work together on curriculum, instruction, assessment et cetera (instructional and organisational issues), **Affiliative and collegial relationships:** the degree to which staff communicate with and celebrate each other (feel valued and included) and **Efficacy and Self-determination**: do people enjoy working in the school and to which degree are they empowered to problem solve. According to Wagner (2005), these three culture behaviours give insight into the overall organisational culture. Wagner (2005) added that in the majority of schools that used this School Culture Triage survey, the organisational health correlated with the student outcomes.

These relationships are important as they leads to collaboration and open communication as this results in a climate of trust and understanding. Leaders also need to be open and honest and through their interpersonal relationships with the staff, they generate high levels of commitment. Furthermore, relationships that are professional and collegial are enabling as they lead to an exchange of morals, values, and beliefs (Naidu et al., 2015). Barth (2004) believes that when the relationship between the principal and teacher is trusting, generous, co-operative, and helpful, all other relationships in the school will display the same qualities. Unsound relationships in schools can threaten or destroy the culture in a school. One relationship of particular concern is that between the SMT and School Governing Body (SGB).

The SGB of schools is concerned with governance (i.e. creation and implementation of the school policies). They often deal with controversial issues such as admission, discipline, the appointment of staff, as well as determining the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) of the school. They are also instrumental in raising money for the school (Bayat, Louw, & Rena, 2014). In many schools around South Africa, there is visible conflict between the School Governing Body (SGB) and the principal regarding financial and budgetary issues as well as discipline issues (Bayat et al, 2014). According to SASA (1996), as cited in Bayat et al. (2014), the principal is an ex-officio member of the SGB who plays a key function in the SGB by

articulating the needs and the challenges of the school as well as sharing the achievements of both teachers and learners. He acts as a channel through which decisions and sentiments are communicated back to the staff. Therefore, it is important that the SGB is well-resourced and well-constituted and has the capacity to play their governance role. Bayat et al. (2014) suggest that leadership, management, and governance need to be conceptualised as they represent the most important leadership components at school. Establishing good relations will just assist schools in becoming more effective.

Another issue in the South African context is that within ex-Model C schools, where most learners are racially diverse, there is a large percentage of white teachers, especially in management. Diversity is not only about colour, it includes religion, race, economic background, and each of these factors must be remembered and acknowledged. Research shows that learners in diverse settings can push themselves further through engaging with different viewpoints and that they are able to collaborate to create solutions to problems. Diversity also equips leaders to analyse and interpret various staffing options. Promoting a diverse staff allows learners of varying backgrounds to identify with their teachers and this enhances their trust in the environment in which they are learning (https://online.queens.edu/online-programs/medl/resources/benefits-of-diversity-in-school). Walker and Riordan (2010) state that there is an increase in the number of schools that are employing staff of different cultural backgrounds. They say that regardless of the cultural composition of staff, leaders must try to understand people as individuals and as members of collectives. This calls for relationships that are grounded within not only professionalism, but also humanity. Thus, in order to improve the capacity of teachers in the school, the school leader must promote productive professional relationships among those that are culturally diverse.

Promoting good relationships between principal–teachers has a positive effect on school culture. Relationships that are characterised by trust lay the foundation for good performance and effective work (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Thu,s for positive change to occur in schools, leaders need to create an environment of relations built on trust. The quality of communication between principals and teachers plays a key role in constructing trust in schools. Trust can lead to increased motivation and co-operation and can improve organisational commitment and school culture (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Thus, school principals need to communicate effectively, display transparency and honesty to develop a high level of trust between themselves and teachers.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework illustrates what the researcher expects to find through the research. It represents how the variables you are studying relate to each other are the structure that can hold and support a theory of a research study. This study is underpinned by the following model of instructional leadership.



Figure 1: Instructional Leadership model by Hallinger (2003)

Within this model of Instructional Leadership, there are three dimensions of the principals' instructional leadership role namely: Defining the school mission, Managing the Instructional Programme, and Promoting a School Climate. These three dimensions are further broken up into ten functions.

Defining the school's mission focuses on the role, the instructional programme requires the principal has to play by working with staff to ensure the school has clear and measurable goals focused on academic progress. These goals are established through the collaboration of all staff members. These goals need to be time-bound and it is the principal's responsibility to communicate these goals to the entire school community so that they are familiar with them and can support them. Hallinger (2015) identifies various characteristics of the role of the instructional leader who is deeply engaged in defining the mission. This includes a mission statement that is written down and evident around the school, it focuses on academic development that is specific to the needs of the school, it is prioritised by teachers and accepted

as sound and valid by all the teachers, stimulating, supervising and monitoring teaching and learning in the school, as well as being "articulated, actively supported and modeled by the school principal" (Hallinger, 2015, p. 81).

Managing the Instructional programme involves three leadership/management function.The mission is defined in terms of framing and communicating goals**;** instruction, co-ordinating the curriculum. This is elaborated in terms of supervising and evaluating instruction, co-ordinating the curriculum, and monitoring the student programme. This requires that the principal become involved in the encouragement, supervising, and monitoring of teaching and learning. It requires total commitment from the instructional leader as well as knowledge about curriculum and pedagogical practices. The principal is committed to learning and is involved in managing the school's instructional programme.

The third dimension entails the creation of a positive learning climate., and monitoring student progress. A positive school climate is created by principals protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing teacher and learner incentives as well as enforcing high academic standards. Thus, there is a focus on creating an academic press (Hallinger, 2015) by establishing high standards and expectations from teachers and students alike. There is a culture of continuous improvement where incentives for staff and students are aligned with purpose and practice (Barth, 1990; Glasman, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Heck et al., 1990; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Mortimore, 1993; Purkey & Smith, 1983), as cited in Hallinger (2015). The principal has a visible presence around the school and often visits classrooms and models values, behaviour and practices that constantly seek to improve teaching and learning. Furthermore, there is a focus on the professional development of teachers where the leader strives to improve teacher attitudes towards professional development as well as improvement in self-efficacy.

I therefore, infused aspects of both models to guide me through the process of my research study.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this section, I present a detailed account of the research paradigm, methodological approach as well as the methods that were used to generate data. The data analysis, ethical issues, issues of trustworthiness, and limitations of this study are also outlined.

Through this research, I attempted to identify the main practices of the principal as an instructional leader and how these practices can assist in creating a culture of teaching and learning in three schools that varied in relation to learner achievement. I sought to explore the extent to which school principals in the three schools contributed towards a positive school climate in their schools by examining which characteristics of the climate and culture promoted teacher commitment and therefore improved learner outcomes. I also attempted to determine the views of teachers regarding the instructional leadership practices of the various school principals, as well as to understand the organisational culture of the school by investigating professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, and self-efficacy of teachers. Furthermore, I investigated the role of the principal as an instructional leader and if / how the relationship between the principal and teachers affects the culture of teaching and learning in the school.

Due to the fact that my research involvedan inquiry that explored the meaning various individuals and groups attribute to an issue, it was qualitative in nature. The ethical issues focus on steps that had to be taken to identify the three types of schools required for my study: namely, high performing, adequately performing, and moderate performing schools. Although the study focused on principal instructional leadership, I needed to include other members of the SMT and teachers to allow for triangulation, reduced bias, and improved trustworthiness and validity.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Knowledge is created by making sense of data. The purpose of research is to generate new knowledge. In qualitative research, the focus of the researcher is to answer a question/s. These questions are informed through the collection of data. Rossman and Rallis (2012) refer to the data as the building blocks of information. They are of the opinion that data only becomes information when it can be grouped into patterns and only when this information can be applied, will knowledge be created.

According to Chilisa and Kawulich (2012), every researcher has their own view of what truth and knowledge is and it is these views that guide the way they think and their beliefs and assumptions about themselves and society. These views, therefore, frame how they view the world around them and this is referred to as a paradigm. Killam (2014) refers to paradigms as frameworks that include theories, methods, and concepts. Thus, a paradigm can be described as a world view, the way in which we understand the world around us. This world view is informed by philosophical assumptions about the nature of social reality (known as ontology - What do we believe about the nature of reality?), ways in which we know (epistemology -What and how do I know reality?), how do we go about finding it out (methodology) as well as ethics and value systems (axiology – What do we believe to be true?) (Patton, 2002, as cited Chilisa & Kawulich (2012).

Ontology can, therefore, be described as the beliefs an individual has about what constitutes a fact. Sandberg (2005), as cited in Klenke (2016, p.15), maintains that our perceptions of reality are always coloured by "our specific historical, cultural, ideological, gender-based and linguistic understanding of reality." Klenke (2016, p.15) therefore concludes that qualitative researchers argue that there is no single unitary reality apart from our perceptions and that they endorse a "relativistic ontology" that subscribes to multiple realities. Rehman and Alharthi (2016) state that the ontological question leads a researcher to inquire what kind of reality exists – "a singular, verifiable reality, or…. socially constructed multiple realities" (Patton, 2002, as cited in Rehman &Alharthi, 2016, p. 52).

Epistemology answers the second paradigmatic question: How do we know what we know? It probes into the nature of knowledge and truth. The following questions are asked: "What are the sources of knowledge? How reliable are these sources? What can one know? How does one know if something is true?" (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012, p. 3). Multiple realities are socially constructed by the researcher within their own contextual understanding. Klenke (2016) states that every researcher brings into the research process a set of epistemological assumptions that influence the way they interpret and understand data.

Epistemological and ontological assumptions are translated into specific methodologies. The methodology addresses the question as to how we should study the world. It is the study of how the research is done, how we investigate a problem, how we gain knowledge. It, therefore, explains why we use certain methods and tools in our research. Chilisa and Kawulich (2012) state that when deciding on a methodology, the researcher needs to start with a research

paradigm that will inform the study (Klenke, 2016). Guba and Lincoln (2005), as cited in Killam (2014), identify four research paradigms, namely, positivism /post-positivism, interpretivism or social constructivism, critical/emancipatory, and pragmatic/ postmodernist.

Although each paradigm embraces a unique ontological and epistemological assumption and uses different methodologies, similarities underlying some, especially Social Constructivism and Interpretivism. Kawulich (2012) indicates that these approaches are closely related as both of them view the way in which others perceive the world. Therefore, in this study, I utilised the Social Constructivist / Interpretivist paradigm as my research aimed at investigating and exploring the perspectives and shared meanings related to a specific phenomenon to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Interpretivists believe that there is no objective knowledge which can be independent of thinking, reasoning human beings. Hammersley (2013) says that Interpretivism argues that we cannot understand why people or institutions act or operate in a characteristic way without distinguishing the distinctive cultural characteristics of their beliefs, attitudes, and practices how they develop over time.

According to Creswell (2014), social constructivists believe that people look for meaning and understanding of the world in which they live and work. They, therefore, develop a subjective meaning of their experiences. Kawulich (2012) believes that this knowledge is subjective because it is socially constructed and mind-dependent. Therefore, the meanings of people are varied and multiple. The researcher aims to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the problem that is being discussed (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, in social constructivism, the reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the participant and is shaped by their individual experiences (Creswell, 2013). The researchers' interpretation flows from their own cultural, personal, and historical experiences (Creswell, 2007). The researcher has to make sense of the meaning others have about the world (Creswell, 2014). Researchers will generate or use inductive reasoning to make meaning or develop a theory.

As I interviewed many different people in varying contexts, the information relayed to me was large and varied from school to school. Thus, the outcome of the research relied on the particular views of the participants. As a researcher, I had to make sense of the meaning my participants had regarding the phenomenon. Although this research process is largely inductive i.e. interpretation is grounded in the data, deduction is also apparent in the various stages.

3.3 Research design

A research design can be regarded as a road map that one follows during a research journey to find answers to your research question as validly, objectively, accurately, and economically as possible (Kumar, 2014). The research design is a plan for the collection and analysis of data in order to answer your research question (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Thus, through the research design, the researcher communicates to others the design study, how the information will be collected, the selection of respondents, analysis of data, and communication of findings.

In this study, I explored a problem. This is a characteristic of qualitative research. Creswell (2014, p. 31) says that a qualitative research approach allows us to explore problems as well as understand the "meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem." The researcher, therefore, seeks to find a better understanding of a complex situation.

A research strategy assists you in meeting your objectives and helps to answer your research questions. The research strategy I used is a Case Study. Case Studies are a design of inquiry found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Creswell (2012) states that case studies are versatile as they use various methods of data collection i.e. from observation to interviewing to testing. According to Yin (2003), as cited in Baxter and Jack (2008), a case study approach should be considered when the focus of the study is to answer How? and Why? questions, you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study, you want to cover contextual conditions as you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon being studied and the boundaries around the phenomenon are not clear.

Yin (2013) identifies three types of case studies used for research purposes: explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory case studies. He says that the case study the researcher uses in the research is dependent on the questions asked. My case study was exploratory in nature. The research questions addressed required that I get in-depth and valuable insight that was revealed by a few highly focused interviews (Burton et al., 2008). The purpose of a case study is to learn from it and develop a theory from that approach.

In my research, collective (multiple) case studies were utilised and the logic of replication (replication of the procedure) was used (Yin, 2003, as cited in Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) states that often researchers are reluctant to generalise from one case study to another because the context is different. However, in my study, schools (cases) were purposefully selected to

illustrate the different perspectives of the issue being investigated. These multiple cases were explored through in-depth data collection that involved interviews, questionnaires as well as observation sheets. Case studies are therefore viable methods through which one can get implicit and explicit data from people.

In my research, I used semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, teachers and SMT members completed questionnaires. I also observed processes in the school which included viewing the climate of the school as well as the culture of teaching and learning. As the focus of my study was a group of individuals, it was important for me, the researcher, to spend sufficient time with the respondents to develop a trustworthy rapport with them (Kumar, 2011).

3.4 Research methodology

Methodology can be defined as giving a definite idea on what methods or processes the researcher is going to use in his or her research to achieve the objectives of their research. I used a qualitative research approach as I explored the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and the culture of teaching and learning. This form of investigation was linked ideally to my research problem. I asked participants in the study to share ideas and experiences so that I could build general themes on this idea (Creswell, 2012). According to the Qualitative Research Consultants Association, qualitative research reveals the participants' behaviour and perceptions related to a specific topic. Therefore, the results of this research are descriptive and not prescriptive.

3.5 Sampling

Samples are small and they, therefore, need to be carefully selected from the population. Lowe and Winzar (2007), cited in Lim and Ting (2013), state that the process of sampling involves using a small number of items or parts of a population. So, when a researcher generalises about a certain group or topic, he/she does so on the basis of a small sample of observations.

Two standard categories of the sampling method exist. These two categories are called probability sampling and non-probability sampling. A core characteristic of non-probability sampling techniques is that samples are selected based on the subjective judgement of the researcher, rather than random selection (Cohen, 2013). The sampling design I used is Purposive/ Judgemental sampling – Babbie (2013) describes this as a non-probability sampling in which the participants being selected are based on the researcher's judgement about which ones will be most useful. In this way, the researcher can build up a sample that is satisfactory

to their specific needs. In many cases, purposive sampling is used in order to access 'knowledgeable people', i.e. those people who have thorough knowledge about various issues, maybe as a result of their professional role, their power, access to networks, expertise or experience (Ball 1990, as cited in Cohen, 2007).

My research was based in three schools, selected based on learner outcomes. Since Annual National Assessments have been discontinued from 2015 onward., it was a difficult task to choose the "correct" schools for my case studies. The other indicator of how schools are performing was the Common Examinations written by Grade 3 and 6 learners in Mathematics. My continued efforts to liaise with district officials from Johannesburg East regarding Mathematics and Natural Science common examination outcomes were rather futile as I was told that they were not at liberty to discuss results and grade schools as high, moderate, and low performing. After much convincing on my part, the district officials released the names of some schools. Unfortunately, all the principals of the low achieving schools, as identified by the district official, declined to be a part of this study. They indicated that their schools had problems and was not prepared to be a part of a research study. The three other schools welcomed me with open arms. As a result, I had to change the profile of the case study to exemplary performing, high performing, and moderate performing schools.

Further criteria for my choice of school was an expectation of the principal to have been in the post for at least three years. There was also an expectancy that questionnaires had to be distributed to teachers who had been at the school for at least one full year.

3.5.1 Data generation

In this study, I focused on three schools (very high achieving, high achieving, and moderate achieving schools). I interviewed the principal, the deputy principal (DP) as well as one HOD of each school. The teacher questionnaires consist of two sections - Section A which is designed to provide a profile of principal leadership. The questions were taken and adapted from the Principals Instructional Management Scale (PIMRS) designed by Phillip Hallinger. It consists of behavioural statements that describe principal job practices and behaviours. The second part of the questionnaire aimed to measure the school culture: it has been adapted from the School Culture Triage Survey developed by Phillips (1996).

Questionnaires consist of the same set of questions that are asked in the same order and in the same way in order for the same information to be gathered. Questionnaires are practical and a

large amount of information can be collected from people in a short amount of time. There is a limited effect on its validity. Questionnaires also provide the respondents privacy, anonymity, and space where they can reflect. However, people may read differently into each question and therefore reply based on their interpretation of the question - i.e. what is 'good' to someone may be 'poor' to someone else, therefore there is a level of subjectivity that is not often acknowledged (Creswell, 2014). There is a level of researcher imposition. This means that when the researcher develops the questionnaire, the researcher is making their own decisions and assumptions as to what is and is not important. As a result, the researcher may be missing something important. (Creswell, 2014). Questionnaires were distributed to both Foundation Phase (F. Phase) and Intersen (Grade 4-7) phase teachers. They had to use a scale of 1-5 (1 almost never and 5 almost always) to rate the instructional leadership practices and behaviour of the principal. This gave the researcher an idea of the instructional leadership practices of the principal. The second part of the questionnaire measured the school culture and focused on Professional Collaboration (how staff work together - curriculum, assessment, instruction, schedules and time for team planning, planning the code of conduct), Affiliative Collegiality (the extent to which staff communicate, celebrate and have an appreciation for each other) and third, Self-determination and Efficacy (the extent to which staff feels empowered to make decisions, be proactive rather than reactive and whether they enjoy working at the school.

I decided on questionnaires rather than focus groups as focus groups require a carefully designed discussion, allowing people to express their feelings, opinions thoughts, and points of view (Villard, 2010). As I was researching the leadership practices of the principal and trying to obtain information about the culture of the school, I did not want the principal to regard the focus group as a complaining and instigating session. Focus groups also require people to meet with the researcher at a specific time which might not be convenient for everyone as many schools have planned extra and co-curricular activities. Furthermore, in a focus group, one might find that certain people are reluctant to vocalise their opinions and thought and tend to agree with those that have the confidence to speak out.

I also conducted interviews with the Principal, DP, and one HOD from each school after school hours. Permission was gained from each participant to audiotape each interview. My interview questions were semi-structured to ascertain the School Climate and Culture of Teaching and Learning in the school, to understand the relationship between the principal and the teachers as well as to determine the practices used by the principal to promote teaching and learning in the school. This, therefore, allowed me to reframe sensitive questions as well as gave me the

freedom to explore issues that came to the fore, based on the responses from the participants. Galletta and Cross (2013) state that through semi-structured interviews, one can obtain data that is grounded in the experience of the participant. The questions for the DP and HOD were similar and were designed to triangulate and confirm what the principal said. The reason for using interviews is that it was useful for obtaining sensitive or in-depth information from a knowledgeable respondent (the principal, DP, HOD). Interviews were interactive and allowed the researcher to probe and pursue relevant issues. However, there are some disadvantages to this method as not all people are equally articulate and perceptive and the fact that the researcher is present can lead to some type of bias in their responses. Also, in my study, the participant's responses in the interview were recorded and this, I felt, inhibited people's responses.

Furthermore, I did observations around the school for a day. I opted to do so as observation allowed me to strengthen my findings and provide for the possibility of triangulation. This gave me insight into what is actually happening and helped me collect comparative evidence. It can also be used to corroborate information given through interviews by the participants as well as see if there is a match between what the participants do and what they say. Furthermore, this was useful as it helped me get a feel of the school climate as well as the values and norms that are expressed through the behaviour of the people working there. Kumar (2014) however warns that when people are aware that they are being watched, they may change their behaviour in a positive or negative way. Many teachers are not keen on outsiders observing their practice. As a researcher, I needed to be aware of this and assure people that I am merely there for research purposes.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis can be described as an attempt to take a large amount of raw data, sifting through it to separate trivia, looking for patterns and regularities that will bring order, structure, and meaning to the data collected (Creswell, 2014). It involves making meaning of the data obtained, to identify, understand, describe, and explain patterns and themes from the participants' viewpoint. During data analysis, the data was organised categorically and chronologically, reviewed, and transformed to findings. Data analysis in qualitative research is inductive in form. Inductive reasoning begins with an observation. Researchers observe a sample and then draw conclusions about the population from which the sample comes (De Vos et al., 2011).

The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcription is the process of converting audiotaped recordings to text data (Creswell, 2012). After transcribing, I read and reread the transcripts to get a general sense of the data. I then needed to provide a general view of the majority of the participants. I then analysed each question by comparing the responses of the interviews for each theme per school. To strengthen the findings, one needs to provide at least two or three robust quotations in a coherent, cogent (strong, forceful, clear, logical, persuasive) argument that serves as the evidence leading to the general view (Hakim, 2000). These quotations must be representative of the participants from which the research was conducted. These quotations are used to verify a statement and are significant as it highlights a certain perspective (de Vos et al., 2018). I then checked if the questionnaires could also strengthen the findings. Further on, I infused my literature review / theoretical framework to support/refute the findings. Thereafter, I summarised the findings in 2-3 short sentences. Negative cases were not ignored as it tended to make the research more interesting when there is comparison and contrasting of opposing views and allows the researcher to infuse literature with what the negative cases suggest.

3.7 Issues of Trustworthiness

As qualitative researchers do not use an instrument to measure how valid information is, it is important to look at how these researchers establish trustworthiness in their study. The following are key features of trustworthiness in qualitative studies, and these are measured in terms of: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity (Gunawan, 2015; Lincoln & Guba 1985, as cited in Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Credibility explains how congruent the finding is with reality. How do you know the findings are truthful and accurate? Cohen (2011) defines triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in a study to see whether the results are the same. In this study, I used the same set of questions for my interviews with the Principals, DPs and HODs and the questionnaires that were distributed to teachers had questions that would confirm/refute what the principals said about their leadership practices, relationships with teachers as well as school climate and culture. The teacher questionnaire also confirmed the credibility of the principals' behaviour and gave a sense of the organisational culture. Thus, triangulation was used to show that the findings were credible.

Transferability refers to how the research study findings can be applied to other contexts. This can be done through purposive sampling as well as through thick description of the findings to

show that they can be applied to other contexts or situations. This enabled the researcher to gain an accurate understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. My research was done in three schools of different/varying contexts in the Johannesburg East District.

Confirmability refers to the fact that the research finding needs to be based on the responses that were elicited and recorded in the research process and should be free of bias and personal motivation on the side of the researcher. This could be prevented if the researcher provided an audit trail that highlights data analysis.

Dependability refers to the extent a study can be repeated by other researchers and would lead to consistent findings. This required an outsider to review the research process.

Shenton (2004) says that the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals. It is therefore impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions apply to other situations and populations.

3.8 Ethical issues

Behaving ethically will increase the chances of the relationship between the participant and the researcher remaining positive (Burton et al., 2008). According to Creswell (2014), ”the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informant(s). Spradley(1980), as cited in Creswell (2014), says participant observation invades the life of the informant and sensitive information is frequently revealed. This is of particular concern in this study where the informant’s position and institution are highly visible.

The following safeguards were employed to protect the informant’s rights: 1) the objectives of the research was articulated verbally and in written form so that they were clearly understood by the informant (including a description of how data would be used), in my case letters were emailed to the relevant informants at each school 2) the researcher obtains written permission from the informant to proceed with the study (in my case, verbal consent was given by the principal and all informants signed a written consent form, 3) an ethics application is submitted to Institutional Review Board (ethics committee at the University of the Witwatersrand) 4) the informant will be informed of all data collection devices and activities that will be used during the research, (this was done via a letter), 5) verbatim transcriptions and written interpretations and reports will be made available to the informant for perusal and agreement, 6) the informants’ rights, interests and wishes will be considered first when choices are made regarding reporting the data, and 7) the final decision regarding informant anonymity will rest

with the informant (Creswell,2014). I visited each school to meet with the principal to explain the purpose of the research. I explained the research problem to each of the informants and provided the principal, DP, and HOD that volunteered a set of interview questions at least two weeks prior to the interviews. The principal was also given the questionnaires and asked to distribute these among the staff members that he deemed as 'knowledgeable'.

There are a few crucial phrases that describe the system that protects ethics: The principle of ***voluntary participation*** – this ensures that people are not coerced into participating in research. Closely related to this notion is the requirement of ***informed consent***. Prospective researchers have to obtain written and signed consent from participants. Due to ethical standards, participants in a situation must not be placed in any situation where they might be at ***risk of harm*** because of their participation in the study. All participants must be fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in research and have to give their consent to participate. In all research the participant must be guaranteed ***confidentiality*** – there has to be an assurance that no information identified will be made available to anyone who is not directly involved in the study. The last structure is the principle of ***anonymity*** which means that the participant will remain anonymous throughout the study (Creswell,2014).

This study adheres to strict ethical practices. I obtained approval from the Wits Ethics Committee, as well as permission from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to research the case study schools. I also phoned as well as sent letters to principals of the respective schools to ask for permission to conduct the research at the case study schools. All participants were given letters informing them of the research topic as well as their rights as voluntary participants. They in turn, completed a permission slip consenting to participate in the research study. Thus, I protected the participants of this study by ensuring voluntary participation, acquiring written informed consent as well as guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity (See Appendix).

3.9 Limitations of the study

Limitations are potential weaknesses in your study and are out of your control (Simon, 2011). Since this study used a sample of convenience, the results of the study cannot be generally applied to a larger population, only suggested. Another limitation was time. Interviews could be scheduled after school; and if the participants were not available on the days I was, a new time had to be scheduled. This created a time delay in generating the data. Participants also only had a limited amount of time for the interview and that limited their responses. The fact

that I was recording their responses could also inhibit responses to questions. The questionnaires distributed to the teachers were not all returned to me and some of the questionnaires were completed without understanding, care, or interest. Some of the participants were fearful of exposure and this could have resulted in them not being truthful. The fact that I had to do observations at the case study school required me to take leave from school. This proved to be a big challenge.

3.10 Conclusion

The data that was generated from the interview analysis was compared to that of other respondents. After interviewing respondents, they were allowed to validate their transcripts in order to identify if the transcription was correct and the inferences made were valid. The focus of this chapter is to explain the methodology used in this research. Data collection methods are described and ethical considerations that were required are explained. The data is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Discussion

4.1 Introduction to case study schools

In this chapter, I discuss in detail the description and analysis of the findings at each school. I begin by giving a brief description of the background and context of each school. The schools were selected on the basis of evidence of their academic achievement as my study focused on an exemplary achieving school, a high achieving school and a moderate achieving school. All three of the schools used in this study are ex-Model C schools (during the apartheid era the term Model C were used to describe white–only government schools). Unfortunately, all the schools identified as low achieving declined to be a part of this study even though approval was given by the GDE. This study investigates how instructional leadership practices of the principal influences the culture of teaching and learning in schools. There is a specific focus on how relationships between the principal and teachers can impact teaching and learning; how instructional leadership practices of the principal affect school culture and teacher self-determination and efficacy.

4.1.1 Interviews

A total of three participants per school were interviewed. This included the principal of the school, the Deputy Principal (DP) and one HOD from each school. Although all of them are regarded as the instructional leaders of the school, my study focuses specifically on the instructional leadership practices of the principal. The reason for interviewing the DP and HOD is to corroborate the claims of how the principal perceives himself as a leader as well as to identify the instructional leadership practices they engage in to promote a culture of teaching and learning in the school.

4.1.2 4.1.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were also distributed to teachers in all three schools. The principal of each school was asked to distribute the questionnaires to teachers – I understand that this practice could be seen as unethical as the principal could choose who he wanted to give the questionnaire to. As the questionnaire was related to the Principal and measured school culture and I needed the principals' permission to distribute it, I felt I could not decline the principals' offer to distribute the questionnaires to staff members. At school X and Z, the questionnaire was distributed in my presence to teacher volunteers in the morning meeting .The only criterion was that teacher volunteers should have some teaching experience and have been at the specific

school for more than a year. At School Y, due to various time constraints and the fact that teachers were preparing for a huge fundraiser, the principal said she would distribute the questionnaire to volunteers when things in the school was more settled. A total of eight questionnaires were distributed at each school, of which I only managed to retrieve four from School X, eight from School Y and six from School Z I personally retrieved all the questionnaires by phoning the schools to remind teachers that I would be coming around to collect the questionnaires. Questionnaires were handed to me personally by the teacher volunteers. The purpose of the questionnaire was to firstly, identify the principal's instructional leadership practices as perceived by teachers in the school. The questions were taken and adapted from the Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) designed by Philip Hallinger. The second part of the questionnaire aimed to measure the school culture. It focused on professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, and self-determination / efficacy. This was adapted from Phillip's (1996) School Triage survey which focuses on measuring school culture. Here I hoped to ascertain whether instructional leadership practices have any impact on school culture and therefore learner outcomes.

4.2 Background and context of School X: Exemplary Achieving School

This school is regarded as one of the best public boys schools in Gauteng. It is an ex-Model C school situated in the upper Houghton area. The school has a proud history of distinguished old boys who generously donate to the school, and prides itself on its establishment of a brotherhood. It boasts a beautiful campus with contemporary sporting, art and cultural facilities. The latest addition is an Aquatics Centre that has been made possible by the generous donation of an old boy benefactor. The history and traditions of this school is deemed as very important as it is over a hundred years old. Its on-site services include an aftercare, occupational and remedial therapists, as well as an educational psychologist. The school has close to 800 learners, a staff of about 40 which includes professional sport coaches. There are two DPs, one for each phase as well as four HODs, two per phase.

4.2.1 Instructional leadership practices used to promote teaching and learning

The principal is a charming middle-aged white male. He was appointed as principal in 2013 but is no stranger to the school, having previously taught there. The staff is mostly white but the learners are diverse (White, Black, Indian and Coloured). Learners are well–disciplined and behave like true gentlemen. This was evident in the way they moved around the school and the

way in which strangers are greeted and welcomed. The school has a calm environment and the staffroom has a big screen TV with no work-tables in sight.

Prior to confirming the interview, I first had to set up an appointment to discuss the research. It was during this time that Mr. A, the principal agreed to do the interview as he said that he found my research interesting as it deals with relationships and everything for him in a school is about relationships. The deputy principal (DP) is a 56-year-old White female, Ms. B who has been at the school for 28 years. She is in charge of the Foundation Phase and forms part of the executive management. The head of department (HOD) of Foundation Phase is a 41-year-old Indian lady who I will refer to as Ms. C. At school X, I collected a total of four questionnaires, three from teachers who have been at the school for a period of more than five years and one from a teacher that has only been teaching at the school for a year but has five years teaching experience.

When asked whether he maintains high visibility in the school, his response was the following:

> *Can I tell you how many steps I've done, 2 600 since morning (this was at 9:00), I do well over 6 000 steps a day, not in this office, I do go to the bathroom a lot because I drink a lot of tea, but I tell you I get to the bottom of the school at least once a day. I go to the sports field before I go home. I'm here every Saturday to do the sports - I'm around a lot no matter what. I hate rugby but I'm going on a rugby tour. I hate rugby- it's all the things that come with the job.*

Respondents in the research about instructional leadership practices in resilient schools indicated that "the leaders work longer hours than the rest of the staff and that they were exemplary in carrying out their own teaching, administrative and management tasks" (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010, p. 24). Mr. A is displaying actions consistent with that of instructional leadership.

When I enquired whether he pops into classrooms as well, he responded that he often knocks on the window to bring a little bit of excitement to the learner's day. When he does pop into classrooms and sees some fantastic practices from the learners and teachers, he responds as follows:

> *When I pass and it's busy and excited and I say that's fantastic, that gets a reward- and when I go pass and they doing nothing, I think to myself, what do*

we do waiting for the sun to set, we can't sit and do nothing, the world is moving too quickly for us to be doing that.

This high visibility is also maintained by the DP and HOD. The DP indicates that she teaches 15 lessons a week across the phase, the purpose of this being to display good teaching practices to her staff. Through this practice she is also able to ascertain which learners needs support and come up with strategies to assist these learners. The HOD, apart from teaching Afrikaans to Grade 3, learners does class visits daily, has to be available for meetings, acts as a substitute teacher for those who are absent, et cetera. Naicker et al. (2013) say that through their classroom teaching, the principal also maintains visibility. This is totally consistent with the instructional leadership practices of school principals who are instructional resources and always have a visible presence (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014). According to the NEEDU report of 2018, direct instructional leadership practices include the principal going into teacher's classes unannounced and observing lessons). The principal, Mr. A, however, ensures that he does formal class visits on a termly basis. He feels that although the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is an essential tool, it is too clumsy, so as a school they have streamlined it. He visits different subject termly.

I do visit classes - I visited math classes last term… I want to see history lesson, then I'll just go and pop in and see the History Lesson-I don't use a form I go and sit and write suggestions on what I saw from an experienced teacher's point of view- maybe things like group work, too many kids walking around, conversations were not focused- good and bad - so I try to find good things in the lesson.

He indicates that his feedback is not judgemental and acknowledges that although he is not a perfect teacher, it is his objective to find the perfect teacher. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that a visible presence is also created through observing lessons, walking around the school grounds, as well as active participating in professional development opportunities.

…I need to find the perfect teacher- if we put in the energy and we work in systems and we are trying things- that's what I'm after.

The DP, Ms. B, confirms that she develops teachers through class visits and that class visits from SMT members are the norm in the school.

…but there is no big thing about it in the school- it has become a culture of thinking-

She does termly appraisals, by making notes and then giving feedback at her last class visit; this she does deliberately because she does not want teachers to necessarily change for her report and be fake, but much rather prefers to see the growth in their teaching. The HOD feels that it is only through class visits that one can identify the developmental needs of the teachers.

It is evident that there is effective distribution of roles and responsibilities among the leaders of the school as well as effective supervision and evaluation of teachers and teaching practices. This practice is in line with Mestry's (2016) view where he states that instructional leadership can be described as the actions that school principals take or delegate to others to promote growth in others. In this way, the principals builds capacity among their subordinates, also help create and boost an element of trust with their staff members, and the willingness to carry out instructional duties with ease within the school (Maponya, 2020). This also links to the literature of Leithwood and Louis (2012) who state that instructional leadership practices involve supervision and evaluation of instruction and is seen as essential and class visits are seen as developmental in nature. They say that this allows for leaders to give constructive feedback to teachers and also assist teachers in their ability to reflect on their teaching. It is therefore expected of principals to be instructional resources who are knowledgeable about curriculum issues and are able to give constructive feedback on instructional practices or design a system where support and feedback can be given by others (Leithwood & Louis, 2012).

Mr. A says that he envisages the instructional practices of his staff to emulate that of Paul Solarz: *Learn like a Pirate*. This teacher, Mr. Solarz, focuses on child-centred curriculum, where learners are empowered to work together to problem solve. The teacher designs active relevant lessons and learners, through effective guidance and beneficial feedback, are encouraged to take risks. This increases their curiosity and learning increases exponentially.

The following quotation summarises the thinking of Paul Solarz in *Learn Like a PIRATE: Empower your Students to Collaborate, Lead and Succeed.*

> "Pirates are daring, adventurous and willing to set forth into unchartered territories with no guarantee of success. They reject the status quo and refuse to conform to any society that stifles creativity and independence. They are entrepreneurs who take risks and are willing to travel to the ends of the earth for that which they value. Although fiercely independent, they travel with and embrace a diverse crew. If you are willing to live by

> the code, commit to the voyage, and pull your share of the load, then you're free to set sail. Pirates don't much care about public perception; they proudly fly their flag in defiance. And besides, everybody loves a pirate.

He often feels disillusioned by the directives given to schools by the DoE.

> *Who is important in this equation- Mr Lesufi or all these little people- there are thousands of little people that are being damaged- because of Mr Lesufi's philosophy- perhaps it's important- then I just sit back and say that I'm just a staff member and I must do what I'm told- I don't want children to even say I must do what I'm told- because we want them to think, we want them to be able to stand up and say but why? what's the value in it for me- that's the basis of what humans want- what's in it for me- they want to know why they must learn this- because I told you- that worked in the 1980s, why would he want to learn the capitals of the world, with typing and the use of the tool you can get it just like that, what is he going to do with it.* ***(He is referring to Google).***

Fullan (2003), as cited in Naidoo and Petersen (2016), talks about the concept of deep learning in schools and argues that it is the job of the principal to create opportunities for learners to engage in deep learning. The principal of this school envisages this type of teaching and learning in his school. Mestry (2013) says that instructional leadership demands high academic excellence, sets high expectations for learner's success as well as having knowledge and experience of effective teaching strategies

Ms. B indicates that although the school has smartboards and projectors, there are still teachers who are old-fashioned in the way they teach. Hart and Laher (2015) state having access to educational technology as well as having the skills to use it, does not guarantee successful integration into schools. She, unlike the principal, feels that there is still place for classical teaching, especially in the Foundation Phase. Ms. C feels that more can be done in terms of technology in the classroom and that learners would benefit from more technology, especially with the move towards coding and robotics and as a school, they can do better in this area. Jones (2001) emphasises that the principal's leadership is one of the most important factors that affect how effective technology is used in the classroom. The principal and SMT is determined to change the instructional approaches in their school. This links with Mr. Lesufi's vision of introducing digital technology in classrooms as it not only improves teaching standards and digital skills but also made way for new skills and methods of teaching to develop (Mail and Guardian, 2018).

The principal is not happy with the restrictions teachers have when having to complete the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) in CAPS. He feels that there is a need for teachers to focus on quality rather than quantity

> *I actually don't care where people are on the ATP, if that's the curriculum and you finish it to the best of your ability and the kids have got it- if you can do it in the first week of the term or it takes you the whole year- if you finish it in the last week of the year I don't care as long as you get that done and the kids understand and they want to learn it- that's what counts, not it's the 20th week and now you've got to be doing this- absolute garbage- CAPS is content based- where is the most content in the world, it's in a computer…. the value of that learning outweighs the curriculum, the curriculum is a guide - but what are we teaching, that you must follow my steps, or find a solution- find the solution is what they going to be faced with- if we teach them to think about how do I get that, then we are teaching them the right stuff!*

This view is not consistent with that of an instructional leader who as a curriculum manager needs to ensure that there is sufficient curriculum coverage. However, the DP indicates that the school has a curriculum developer who assists them with curriculum adaptations and teaching materials that are needed, ensuring best practices - she feels that it is important to raise the bar and extend the knowledge and skills of the learners. Maponya (2020) states that principals, as curriculum managers, are a driving force behind all curriculum matters within the school. He states that a well-managed curriculum within the school has the potential to give rise to quality teaching and learning activities. The DP further indicates that a lot of effort is put into developing the management team and that they spend a lot of money to ensure that they receive high quality training from independent service providers.

> *It's an absolute lie that children are not capable of what they did 10 years ago – the problem is that the children are definitely a bit more tactile, a lot more sensory, they've got different modalities of learning, they've got a very noisy environment, so they can't sit still long enough – it doesn't mean they not listening –*

The HOD confirmed that they are constantly looking for best practices from a remedial aspect. The school offers the assistance of an external Occupational Therapist (OT) as well as employs two internal OTs that assist teachers in the classroom. Education Matters, an Australian

website, states that instructional leaders should have a clear vision with an equity mindset. This means that the vision should endeavour to give every child what they need when they need it by differentiating the curriculum to meet the needs of every child and ensure success for all. They further emphasise that the role of the instructional leader should be transformational as it should foster a vision towards greater learning. Zapeda (2012) says that as a supervisor, the principal must be occupied in helping teachers examine the way they teach such as suggest modifications, based on the characteristics of the learners. Maponya (2020) states principals need to provide individualised support for learners, and suggests that the following dimensions of support have to be emphasised: "adoption of learners by teachers, team-building workshops of teachers on how to support learners, learner individual attention, outsourcing of subject specialists to tackle content gaps identified in learners, and provisioning of leadership in teaching learning matters" (Maponya, 2020, p. 188).
The principal in this school has employed a curriculum developer as well as OTs to assist with support, remediation, and modifications to allow learners to learn effectively.

When asked whether he felt that the teachers in his school perceived professional development positively and whether they were keen on collaborating and sharing ideas, he laughs and says that he does not send people to GDE workshops as they are by and large de-motivational, he rather has teachers helping out on Saturdays on the sports field as he feels this adds more value to the growth of the "little people" (throughout the interview he refers to his learners as little people). However, the HOD confirms that the principal goes out of his way to ensure that the staff is exposed to high quality professional development. Ms. B says that when they identify teachers' development needs, they just speak to the relevant teachers and look for the best workshops to address the needs of the teachers. Senol and Lesinger (2018) mention that the top priority of school principals is to provide the environment needed for supporting the professional development of teachers related to school goals so that they can ensure participation of teachers in several in-service training activities and organise seminars, conferences andworkshops for improvement of teachers in the school. Like the principal, the DP also believes that the GDE workshops are not always of the best quality. She believes that one needs to source people who are on top of their game so that top quality development can take place.

Regarding teacher's self-efficacy, he comments that some of the young teachers struggle to be in charge of themselves and when a problem regarding teaching and learning arises, they come

to him. He then asks them for solutions, even suggests a couple of solutions to the problem, he never prescribes a solution, rather brainstorms with his teachers to find a solution.

> *- I'm not judging their emotions, my suggestion is always: look for the plan B because those sort of events you are not always ready for, it is not planned for- so many of the staff are problem driven- this is the problem what is the solution too many of the teachers are happy to see the problem- they not looking for the solution.*

Calik, et al. (2012, p. 2501) found "…school principals' instructional leadership behaviours have a positive, significant effect on teachers' self-efficacy". The results of research done by Bellibas (2016) confirms that the principals can influence teacher's perceptions of their self–efficacy by engaging them in activities that aim at improving teaching and learning. Thus, the practices of Mr. A are consistent with those of an instructional leader as he exposes teachers to professional development activities that enhance their self-efficacy.

4.2.1.1 Teacher questionnaire responses – The instructional leadership practices of the principal

The rating on the principal instructional leadership behaviour and practices ranged from 5- Almost always, 4 – Frequently, 3- Sometimes, 2- Seldom and 1- Almost never.

All the respondents felt that the principal displayed behaviour that promotes teaching and learning. He scored particularly high with making decisions related to curriculum and ensuring that the priorities of teachers in the classroom is consistent with the goals and direction of the school. There is clear clarification as to who is responsible for co-ordinating the curriculum across grade levels. The principal attends and participate in all extra- / co- curricular activities and encourages teachers to use their teaching time for teaching and practicing new skills. It is clear that the school has a vision and mission that is clearly communicated to all the stakeholders, there is clear clarification of who is responsible for co-ordinating the curriculum, the principal promotes the use of external assessment that enable him to assess the progress towards the goals of the school. All four respondents indicated that instructional time was protected and that the principal encourages them to use teaching time effectively. He is involved in appraisal as he writes personal memos to teachers, acknowledges exceptional performances in the classroom by complimenting them as well as talking to them informally. The professional development opportunities that are provided to staff is consistent with the goals of the school and the principal often leads and attend in-services activities related to

teaching practices. The high visibility and protection of instructional time and focus on professional development, class visits and giving constructive feedback links to the model of instructional leadership of Murphy and Hallinger (2003). The teacher who has not been teaching in the school for long was the only one who indicated that the principal does not take time out to chat to her or compliment her. This could be attributed to the fact that she is quite new at the school.

4.2.1.2 Teacher questionnaire responses – School climate

The teacher responses in the questionnaire regarding school climate indicates that teachers display affiliative collegiality (was consistently 4 –almost always and 5 - always) by supporting the values of the school and socialising outside of school. The school also reflects a true sense of community and the school programme allows for teachers to communicate effectively. Teachers are aware of the rich traditions and rituals of the school. For professional collaboration, there were equal scores that ranged from 3 to 5. This indicates that teachers feel somewhat involved in discussing issues about the curriculum, decision making, collaboration and planning as a collective. With regards to self-determination and efficacy, there was mostly scores of 4 and 5. Deane Williams (2015) strongly believes that strong instructional leadership can be connected to school culture that is collaborative and that this can lead to a positive attitude on the side of the teacher and therefore improved student outcomes. Hoy et al (2009)., as cited in MacNeil (2009), mentioned that healthy schools exhibit cultures of being goal focused, communication, sharing of power, proper resource utilisation. There is a degree of cohesiveness among staff members. A high morale exists as teachers are innovative and have the autonomy to adapt their practices as well as problem solve adequately (Fairman & Clark, 1998, as cited in MacNeil, 2009). Shafer (2018) suggests the strength of the culture is determined by the interactions of the people within the organisation. She says that values, beliefs and actions can only spread if these are communicated directly. In this school, people reflect the values of the institution with pride. This is done through the way people act as well as visual signs that are evident across the school, that constantly reminds people within the school of its values and beliefs. Furthermore, in schools as learning organisations there are school structures that encourage collaboration, communication, and dialogue. Teachers meet on a regular basis so that they can reflect on their challenges, problem solve as well as share strategies that can improve the learning of learners (OECD, 2016). Teachers are assisted and supported to take risks and overcome the fear and uncertainty brought about by change.

From the statements obtained from the interviewees, it is evident that School X operates as a learning organisation. This can be corroborated by the literature from the OECD (2016) which states that schools as learning organisations ensure that they invest time and money into good quality active professional learning opportunities for all their staff. There is a focus on work based learning that is designed to be incorporated in daily practice. Learning organisations favour professional learning over professional development as the former is more interactive and sustainable and caters to the needs of teachers. Schools as learning organisations regularly analyse data and use it to improve / transform their existing practices. The DP, Ms. B, explains that the school has no issue in participating in GDE National assessment as she feels it gives you a benchmark for your school. Ms. C confirms that they meet every Wednesday as a phase to analyse and plan for intervention, and that she feels that they communicate well with the teachers. The teacher questionnaire confirms that teachers feel that there is there is professional collaboration.

4.2.2 School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning

Mr. A says that he plans his day by arriving at school by 6:00 and looking at his diary to see what needs to be done, such as meetings and in between meetings. He has coffee with the deputies and they discuss the plans for the day. At 7:20 he has a brief in the staffroom where all teachers are expected to meet.

> *Some days my planning don't go as planned and I come back the next morning and have another go at it. The days just go, like today we had one meeting at 7:00 and the days just wiped out, everything is changing today. That's how it happens. But when I chose to be in education I wanted every day to be different- I didn't want to do the same thing every day- I just didn't want it this difficult (laughs) I enjoy the challenge there's no doubt I drop the ball from time to time there's just too many things going on.*

Kruger (2003) states that effective school principals view the organisation of the school day as well as good time management as essential in creating organisational containment as well as creating and establishing an expectation of good quality teaching and learning.

Ms. B, together with Ms. C, confirms that due to the fact that they are working with people, the day is often unpredictable. It is filled with administrative duties, which included meeting with parents and teachers. This is confirmed by Horng et al. (2009), as cited by Bodnarchuk (2017) who said that principals spend most of their time doing administrative duties and

organisational management and less than 10% of their day on day-to-day instruction and the instructional programme.

When asked whether he regards his school as a "good" school he states that he firmly believes that a good school is a school that produces the right kind of human being, not just academics, cultural and sports. He said that a school is where you try to work on human beings and try to manage them as such. He feels that there is a need to understand that learners come to school with their own baggage and that it is his job to try and inspire them. November et al. (2012) state that the principal is expected to create an atmosphere that inspires high levels of achievement and commitment from all who work in the school, and at the same time, to develop an environment that is based on human values.

> *… we try and get that right- so a good school is a school that produces those kinds of human beings- people who want to come to school- people are excited to come to school- people want to explore and learn out of their own not wait for the Maestro to do it-*

The HOD thinks that the school is brilliant as they offer a holistic education, there is a balance of the academics with sport and cultural activities and she is confident that they develop the whole child. The DP feels that the school is most definitely a good school as it has survived the test of time

> *…the children here they are diverse in their thinking, they are diverse in their cultures, they are diverse in their socio-economic groups, - a good school is a school that is able to take diversity and put it into one and to keep the tradition going and understand the diversity at the same time- that makes a good school-*

The principal indicates he and his SMT are at loggerheads about this issue, as they believe that the school is really successful, but that this fact is not evident for him. He always feels that things can be done better, that there is always room for improvement and that irrespective of having well-qualified and good teachers, on a bad day their actions can be destructive.

> I *think we are good- but do we have a long way to go to great- I think in certain areas yes. we are dealing with humans- some of the Geography teachers are phenomenally qualified, I've got great Maths teachers, I've got great English teachers- on a good day they can be outstanding but on a bad day they can be*

destructive-there's too many ups and downs- but that's life- probably on the big scheme of things we have more ups than downs- if we can make a difference, if we can get that right, we will be ok.

When asked whether the teachers at the school sees the school as a community, Mr. A states that he totally disagrees with Gauteng MEC, Mr. Panyaza Lesufi's idea of a community being a 5km radius around the school. He believes that this practice is exclusive and is causing inequality in learner outcomes.

our community is South African- and until we get that understanding being South African humans- we are actually going to perpetuate Apartheid forever-

He states that they have learners and teachers coming from low socio-economic backgrounds but that they are all treated equally and fairly and get the opportunity to blend in and be given opportunities to excel. Although he understands the logistics of a 5km radius understands, he indicates that this causes a divide between wealthier schools and township schools. Harris and Jones (2018) stated that creating schools as learning organisations requires a major change in cultural mind-set as well as commitment from all to self -evaluate and reflect on practices. Therefore, any attempt at transforming schools into learning organisations requires a total commitment to make a difference in the lives of all learners, especially those that are disadvantaged (OECD, 2016). The principal indicates that he is part of a programme called "Partners with Possibilities" which links a corporate business leader to a school business leader. He applauds the work some of the township schools are doing and he says many of them put him to shame. He indicates that these schools are also producing great human beings as they use the resources given to them effectively and with much gratitude and appreciation.

what they do with the little they have doesn't match with what we do-you must have a heart- it doesn't come with the money- if you've got heart it can happen - dedication- to be truthful all schools have got dedicated teachers on the other end of the scale and we have less dedicated teachers- people who are there for the ride not for the money but for the ride-

The DP confirms that the school is well-managed and teachers are happy and proud to be part of it. Student teachers aspire to be part of this school. Learners want to come to this school and they form a brotherhood and there is a certain expectation regarding behaviour. As a result, the school hardly experiences discipline issues. The principal establishes a form of organisational

containment that enables teaching and learning and that sets a climate of expectations (Hoadley & Christie, 2008).The HOD indicates that there is definitely a sense of pride, starting with management who ensures that there is an appropriate dress code, ensures that structures of mentoring and guidance are in place as well as an open door policy.

His response to whether teaching and learning is happening, he states that we must separate the two as he sees teachers and the board and learners in desks, however he believes that this type of teaching is not conducive to the learners we are teaching today. Zapeda (2014) says that instructional leaders understand change, and why change is important and why people resist change is important when schools are striving to change instructional practices of teachers. The principal at this school understands that pedagogical practices of teachers need to change.

> *these children have access to information they have access to so much- we cannot compete with Google- we shouldn't even be trying- we should be stimulating so that the learning is happening at a different level-- so teaching and learning does happen- enough learning- too much teaching- even some of the young teachers are stuck in the 19th century-- even some of the young teachers. teachers teach the way they were taught.*

Zepeda (2004) maintains that effective leaders are instructional leaders who support teachers in improving their instructional practices in the classroom, they make a commitment to learning and improve learner outcomes through improved teaching and building strong teams of teachers.

When asked how he is changing this mind-set he says he does this by removing people's comfort zones by changing their grades and subjects. He says he struggles with people using the white board and the data projector is covered with dust, so he makes suggestions on how to facilitate lessons that are more interesting and learning centred. He however maintains that there are teachers who are innovative

> *it's just prod and push- it's not a general staff thing- there are staff that are innovative- and at the general staff meeting they feel that they are being punished so they are not as motivated- so I try and prod and push wherever I can- I try and talk to them it's not a judgement, it's not a criticism, it's a growth thing- in my personal opinion if we stop learning- we are dead- try something different- if the kids are badly behaved why are they badly behaved- let's look on the cameras and see what's happened-wow they sat*

for 40 minutes- doing nothing and you want them to behave-what robots are you producing?- and we have a look and see if we can help-

He indicates that teachers do not object to the cameras in the classroom and if there is an issue the footage on the camera can be quite useful. Apart from challenging teachers to step out of their comfort zones, confronting them head on and prodding and pushing people to change the way they teach and interact with the learners, he indicates that he always goes out of his way to motivate staff members, as long as they can justify why they want to do certain things. Zapeda (2014) states that instructional leaders understand that teachers find it hard to change so the principal needs to create conditions that are necessary to assists teachers to implement this change. They need to make teachers aware as to why the change is necessary and how it will assist in school improvement (Zapeda, 2014). He also insists that teachers use new and relevant resources to teach and although the language has not changed, the relevance to the children has changed. Horn and Loeb (2010) explain that this view focuses on the organisation rather than on day-to-day teaching. Thus, according to them "organisational management for instructional improvement" means to staff a school with high-quality teachers and provide them with the relevant support as well as resources so that they can operate successfully in the classroom (Horn & Loeb, 2010).

The HOD feels that to improve the culture of teaching and learning, it is important to get the support of the parents. She envisages parent orientations and workshops as part of her improvement plan. According to Harris (2002), instructional leaders in the school focus on establishing positive relationships with parents, as well as the community. There is an emphasis on a need to have an interconnectedness between home, school, and the community as they realise that these relationships impact on learner outcomes.

4.2.3 The relationship between the principal and teachers

When asked how he (Mr. A) builds good relationships with the teachers, he responded by saying everything in education is relationship-driven, but that unfortunately, the badge of principal is a barrier as the title comes with the job. He tries to treat everyone with respect and fairly but there are people that do not get along with him. He says he tries to manage this and he wants people to know that he is there for them when the chips are down.

…two deputies that work with the staff fingers on the Pulse to see how our people are, how they doing, do we care enough someone is pregnant having morning

sickness whatever issues you have- somebody can't do playground duty- I said don't worry I will do it for you-when they say I will pay you back I say don't worry it's done-we look after each other , if someone is off sick I say don't worry I will go and teach the class for the day the deputy will take on another class – we look out for everyone – in this way we not just instruction givers , we at the goal post as well.

He further indicates that he reads stories to the Grade Ones on a Monday, he takes half of the class so that the teacher has smaller groups to work with. However, he realises that being a principal is a lonely position because often you are faced with having to discipline someone you are friendly with.

The principal feels that the most important features needed for a good work relationship with teachers is to have a common understanding of where you are going – your goal. He said that when he came in, he rattled cages by changing structures as there was this complacency of doing things the way it has always been done. The principal also assists and supports staff and others to attain this vision by "removing barriers" and ensuring that "policies, practices and systems' 'are in place (Blanchard, 2010, p. 3).

We've always done it this way is such a dangerous phrase, when I arrived here there was no computer in the office- there was no network to connect the computer in 2013- so we've made huge strides- they asked why the teachers need access to internet- I said that is where the information is- they went on a couple of courses and came back and said wow that's amazing- so breaking down some of those barriers and for the people to understand where I'm going why I'm doing it- as soon as they understood why we making those changes things then got better.

The DP and HOD feels that it is important for the SMT to show a united front, the SMT must be robust and can disagree in the boardroom but when they communicate with the staff regarding academic goals, there must be a united front. The DP feels that a good principal is one who listens to everyone's opinion. The HOD refers to the principal as a visionary leader who goes out of his to ensure teambuilding and growth in people. She indicated that he arranged a diversity workshop that was so meaningful to everyone on the staff. Furthermore, when they realised there is a need to ensure learners acquire critical thinking skills, the staff was also engaged in an excellent workshop. The principal also organised for each staff member to

undergo enneagram testing to analyse their personality type. This was for them to develop an awareness of the self so that they can take responsibility for their behaviour and growth. These also assisted members of the SMT in reducing judgement and criticism, gave them a framework of how to make sense of conflict and any challenges, enhanced and improved communication, work relationships and productivity of teams.

The DP identifies that the features that constitute a good relationship between SMT (especially the principal) and teachers are:

> *Honesty -trust, transparency, and simplicity -don't complicate the message*

While the HOD identifies the following

> *…communication, trust, a common vision, common goals, dedication, and I think to be realistic of what is achievable and what is not- and an understanding or a level of understanding of people*

Barth (2004) is of the opinion that when the relationship between the principal and teacher is trusting, generous, co-operative, and helpful, all other relationships in the school will display the same qualities. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that relationships that are characterised by trust lay the foundation for good performance and effective work.

As a principal, he considers the personal wellbeing of his staff as important and has a philosophy that their families come first as you only get one chance with your family. Although teachers are given quite a bit of administration time as the school has various activities and codes, the principal acknowledges that a teacher's job is never done. For him education is not a career, it is a way of life and he realises that it can be overwhelming and that sometimes teachers just need to get away sometimes, so often they come to him for time–off, which he allows. He feels that rather than lying and taking the day off under the pretence of being sick, teachers at his school have the freedom to come to him to discuss issues such as this. He adds that he always makes a plan for them. When he feels uncomfortable and sees that people are making it a habit, then he calls them in and has to play by the rules. At times he has to decline people's request. His teachers know that it is a privilege, and that sometimes it cannot be managed. According to Paulsen and Martin (2014), as cited in Barrett and Breyer (2014), research shows that teachers believe managers and leaders must understand and support teaching and learning processes and fully understand the challenges involved. The results of the research by Blasé and Blasé (2000, p. 137) indicates that the instructional leadership

practices of the principal have a “strong enhancing effect on teachers, emotionally, cognitively and behaviorally.”

He feels that although the majority of teachers trust him, there are those people that just do not trust management.

> *They believe that you are out to get them- there's always those people- you never find a staff room without one or two of them- they not negative they just not trusting whatever scars they've accumulated they just don't trust management- it's not peculiar to the school it's peculiar to management- you can't tell me that everybody at your school trusts your principal-*

Senol and Lesinger (2018) state trust can lead to increased motivation and co-operation and can improve organisational commitment and school culture. Thus, school principals need to communicate effectively, display transparency and honesty to develop a high level of trust between themselves and teachers.

He states that he does not treat all staff members consistently as everyone has a different need. He tries to avoid acting too harshly when people do things wrong as it

> *…. makes for a bad apple in the bag. - every staff member breeds or attracts the others happiness and so you end up with a collection of bad apples- we try and manage it as low-key as possible but in the same kind of disciplinary structures- if you've done wrong you get called in- we talk about it- it's dealt with*

Although he tries to talk to people, in the last two weeks, he has had to hold disciplinary meetings with two staff members who had issues with alcohol abuse. He has ensured that they are granted leave and they are currently in a rehabilitation facility. He feels that his job is not to dismiss people, but to let them grow. However, when the schools brand is at risk, it becomes his problem, so to ensure that teachers and staff adhere to Management Plans and Supervisory services such as book control, pre-post moderation of tasks, handing in of marks, et cetera, he “reminds” them to adhere rather than face formal proceedings.

> *I manage the brand they manage education- what I try to instill as part of the process, is to be as proactive as possible rather than reactive, so I would rather*

say to people don't forget your deadlines are met, we don't want any formal meetings, make sure that you've got your marks in by Friday –

When asked about cliques that are resistant on the staff he says that people do not like change as it takes them out of their comfort zone but he tries to have open conversations with them where they give input and suggestions and they feel that they can have a say. Wahlburg and Louis (2008) state that their research findings indicate that when teachers are involved in decision making that affects them, their instructional practices are strengthened.

The DP states that, on the whole, most of the people are very supportive-team workers. She says that all schools have cliques but that these cliques are very much appropriate to people's age. The HOD indicates that there are cliques of people that moan but that these people are manageable.

He indicates that this is unlike to the autocratic style that the GDE uses in principals' meetings where they tell principals what to do. Often, he tries to work around the instructions and deadlines given by the GDE. He feels that a lot of effort goes in motivation of staff members, keeping them positive so he tries to shield them from the demands made by the GDE.

you dealing with a LTSM document that actually is a full-time job- I said to the lady are you not the librarian- she said yes but this is for the department? I said to her, well then the department must pay you- you work as a librarian, get the books to the kids get the kids reading- a document can wait. just don't end up doing it- teaching is a priority- we are a school- the little people deserve better- so that kind of the philosophy I brought in- we lucky that I can get away with it and I'd like to do that till my last day- if a problem arises I will say that this is not right sorry- I apologise say I will get to you as soon as I can- will say that: I told the teachers to teach first- and nobody has argued with that.

The principal also assists and support staff and others to attain this vision by "removing barriers" and ensuring that "policies, practices and systems" are in place Blanchard (2010, p. 3). Intrinsic to the concept of instructional leadership is the fact that learning be given top priority while everything else revolves around the enhancement of learning (Taole, 2013).

4.3 School Y – Good achieving school

This school is situated in a quiet and calm area. While driving to my destination, I cannot help but see the serene environment where the streets have trees on both sides, filled with lilac and pink flowers. School B is an ex-model C school, which accommodates around 480 primary school learners from Grade R-7. The principal, Mrs. D, is retiring at the end of the year after being at the school for over 40 years, spending 25 of those years as principal. The school does not qualify for a deputy principal in a GDE post so the SGB has appointed an Acting DP, Ms. E is a black lady in her early forties as the previous DP/ HOD was promoted to a principal in another district. The HOD, Ms. F, a coloured lady in her late thirties, was appointed as HOD 18 months ago. She has her Master degree in Education Management and has also taught overseas. She is currently shadowing the Principal, going for Principal and DP training courses such as Financial Management, Effective leadership, et cetera, as she is hoping to step into the shoes of the principal when she retires. This is fully supported by the principal and SGB alike. The school is clean, calm and teachers are busy teaching in the classroom. The atmosphere in the classroom is jovial and teachers are happily chatting away enjoying their tea. The staff room is huge, with large comfortable sofas everywhere. There is one table with chairs for those who want to work during administration or break. I sat with a couple of 1st and 2nd year student teachers during break who described their teaching practical experience as a wonderful learning experience. They described the school as having a warm and welcome atmosphere but were also grateful for the learning opportunity they were given there. They spoke very highly of the management, teachers, and learners alike.

4.3.1 Instructional Leadership practices used to promote teaching and learning

The principal, Ms. D, maintains that she does "Leadership by walkabout". She says that she ensures that she is very visible in the quadrangle, corridor and even on the sports field. During her walkabout, she often visits teachers in the classroom.

> *It is the norm, I don't think the staff ever think that I am spying, they know I am involved in the whole school… I really believe in a walkabout.*

The principal's behaviour is consistent with that of instructional leadership practices of maintaining high visibility. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that instructional leaders display a visibility through observing lessons, walking around the school ground as well as actively participating in professional development opportunities (Senol & Lesinger, 2018)

If she hears a teacher shouting or sees a child outside the classroom, she quickly intervenes and try to resolve the issue as it is in the moment. Ms. D indicates that she is involved in observing lessons for IQMS purposes, where she observes lessons and gives constructive feedback. She is also involved in book control; she often calls for a couple of learners' books to see the work ethic they display. Weber (1996). as cited in Naicker et al. (2013), states that the instructional leader observes and improves instruction through classroom observation. According to the theoretical Hallinger's model of instructional leadership, supervision and evaluation of instruction is seen as essential and class visits are seen as developmental in nature. In such practice, the principal as instructional leader provides constructive feedback to teachers which assist teachers in their ability to reflect on their teaching. According to the NEEDU report of February 2018, in schools that work, principals' direct instructional leadership focuses on reviewing teachers work, correct curriculum pacing, moderate assessment tasks and analysis of data. Principals collect learners work at random and match it to the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). The DP, Ms. M, however states that although the supervisory services of the school looks good on paper, due to the day-to-day running of the school, it becomes difficult to implement and although book and file control as well as class visits do take place, they often fall behind schedule.

She states:

> *An ideal school is a school that follows the management plan to the tee.*

Hoadley et al. (2009) as cited in Bush (2016, p. 8) came to the following conclusion "Successful leadership of curriculum and instruction involves the ability to oversee a wide range of functions, most of which do not relate directly to teaching and learning". The HOD does think that teachers should be kept accountable for teaching and learning and that checking of books and files are not done as regularly as it should be. She also feels that the IQMS is not being done correctly in most schools, where teachers are evaluated on one lesson. Class visits are scheduled on a termly basis and people are given feedback on their practices. According to the NEEDU (2018) report, teachers are held accountable for learner performance: Accountability and support are emphasised in successful schools to determine where additional help is needed. However, she states that she does not go into classes unannounced.

The principal is very aware of what is happening in the school.

She states:

Generally, I think I know everything that's going on in the school…I can say with confidence that I know what kind of teaching is taking place in every class.

Direct instructional leadership practices include the principal going into teachers' classes unannounced and observing lessons (NEEDU, 2018). The principal constantly encourages teachers to change their teaching practices. Principals who displays instructional leadership practices will seek to improve instruction/ pedagogy by encouraging and supporting professional learning of teachers and this can result in increased learner performances.

I think that if we want to be teaching learners 21st century skills, we need to change the way we are teaching

One of the drives to improve this is through "Thinking Schools South Africa" This is an initiative that allows for critical and creative thinking that allows for collaboration. The whole staff is involved and it is their goal to develop explicit thinking, allowing children to be confident in themselves, how to problem solve and learn how to learn better and more effectively. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that the principal's top priority is to provide an environment that supports the professional development of teachers. These principals ensure that teachers are involved in in-service training, they organise workshops for teacher development, they keep teachers informed about educational opportunities from external service providers. There is a huge investment in teacher development and time is provided for teachers to collaborate.

When asked whether she was currently happy with the instructional practices of her teachers, she responds by saying that she has a lot of young staff members and that these teachers are still in the stage of teaching like they used to be taught –the teaching they were exposed to being very authoritarian in nature. She acknowledges that it is difficult for them to change their teaching practice but as a principal she often chats to them, giving advice, giving guidance, encouraging and motivating. Zapeda (2004) maintains that effective leaders are instructional leaders who support teachers in improving their instructional practices in the classroom, they make a commitment to learning and improve learner outcomes through improved teaching and building strong teams of teachers. Instructional leaders understand change, and why change is important and why people resist change is important when schools are striving to change instructional practices of teachers.

The DP however is very happy with the instructional practices as they using Chromebooks and this seem to have impacted positively on teachers changing their instructional practices. The

HOD also confirms that most teachers are willing to participate in Professional Development except for one or two, but they as a school encourage teachers to change their practice. She states:

> *we don't just tell them to change but we support them in the change help them in the change or train them for the change- we literally support them through that journey-*

Potter and RockinsonSzapkiw (2015) indicate that the lack of integration of technology into the classroom is often the lack of teacher professional development opportunities. Jones (2001) emphasises that the principals' leadership is one of the most important factors that affect how effective technology is used in the classroom. Leaders must provide teachers with the support and guidance to facilitate the change.

4.3.1.1 Teacher questionnaire responses – The instructional leadership practices of the principal

The rating on the principal instructional leadership behaviour and practices ranged from 5- Almost always, 4 – Frequently, 3- Sometimes, 2- Seldom and 1- Almost never.

The principal scored adequate on the questionnaires completed by the teachers averaging at mostly level 3. The principal scored highly when it came to encouraging teachers to use teaching time for teaching and practicing new skills. Four of the respondents felt that the decisions related to the curriculum and the priorities of teachers in the classroom were not consistent. They also felt that in-service training was not consistent with the school's academic goals. Indications were also strong that the principal only sometimes acknowledge exceptional teacher performance. Many of the respondents indicated that there was little time set aside for teachers to share ideas from in-service activities. The results from the questionnaire somewhat contrast the views expressed by the principal and SMT.

4.3.1.2 Teacher questionnaire responses - School Culture

An analysis of the culture behaviours indicate the following: for professional collaboration most of the behaviours were scored at a 3 or 4. This indicates that teachers are sometimes involved in discussions regarding teaching strategies, planning as a collective as well as being involved in decision making. For affiliative collegiality, most of the respondents scored the criterion on a 3. This indicates that teachers and staff do not always communicate, celebrate and appreciate one another. For self-efficacy and determination, the teachers mostly scored at

a 3, which indicates that the staff is sometimes empowered to problem solve and make decisions, be proactive rather than reactive, and enjoy working at the school.

4.3.2 School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning

The principal gets to school by 6:00, just to get herself organised for the day.

> *… but you never know how exactly to plan your day, working with people, working with children, working with teachers, and working with parents so that sort of influences really how the day is going to be.*

The HOD and DP also believes in coming in early so that their day can be well planned. The HOD who is shadowing the principal often meets with the principal to discuss events as well as make plans for teachers who are absent. Christie and Lingard (2001) state that because principals hold a formal position of authority, they should ideally exercise influence over others as well as recognise leadership throughout the school to achieve the goals of the organisation. However, they often do not end up following this plan as they have to attend to learners, teachers and parent needs. The HOD indicates that a part of her portfolio is curriculum development and she often meets with teachers during her administration period to discuss curriculum matters and analyse results. These meetings are scheduled on the Management Plan and it is designed so that she sees each teacher once in every two weeks. These meetings are in a non-threatening environment where people are not scared to raise concerns or fears.

She says you have to show interest in staff and assist them in improving their teaching practices by giving constructive feedback. Ms. W says that she takes charge of teacher development and is responsible for organising the professional development. She identifies the developmental needs of teachers though meaningful conversations with them. She tries to create a relationship of trust between herself and the staff so that they have the freedom to admit that they need support.

Ms. D's conception of a good school is as follows:

> *… for me a good school is a school where children are happy, where you can walk into the school and you can feel there is a calm environment, that learning is taking place but most importantly that the children feel that the school is a safe environment for them … a good school is a place where children feel they belong … so yes, I would like to believe that our school is a good school.*

The DP's conception of a good school is a school that caters for the needs of all learners, a school that is learner centred (a centre for learning). The HOD also states that a good school is where all the stakeholders are working towards a common goal and that common goal is to make sure that learners learn effectively. Therefore, there is a focus on teacher development as it is essential in improving teaching and learning and moving the school forward. Naidoo and Petersen (2016) indicate that one of the most important practices of the school principal is to create and share a vision and mission to staff, this includes staff performance expectations as well as learner outcomes. The mission brings the vision to life as it relates to the goals of the school. In this school, the vision and mission is demonstrated through the continuous professional development of its staff members. Senol and Lesinger (2018) state that the basic mission of a school is to create an environment that can deliver education of a high quality.

The principal explains that, overall, there is a feeling of community and common purpose amongst everyone in the school. This is also confirmed by the DP and HOD who say that most people display a sense of pride for the school. However, she says that if one does not acknowledge that different people have different attitudes and stances regarding their purpose and that everyone is not as passionate as you, it can create difficulties within the climate of the school. She uses the technology divide as an example. The school has decided to introduce Google Classroom, which helps facilitate a paperless classroom, it helps teachers to create an online classroom where documents can be managed and shared. She explains that many of the younger teachers have embraced it while the older ones are a bit hesitant and afraid. The school has therefore made this upskilling and development of all staff to be able to use technology in a classroom, a common goal. They have done this by starting from scratch, and everyone learnt together, there was no place for people to feel inferior or intimidated. Jones (2001) emphasises that the principals' leadership is one of the most important factors that affect how effective technology is used in the classroom. Leaders must provide teachers with the support and guidance to facilitate the change. Ms. E says that in order to ensure people's buy-in you need to sell the concept to them and for them to see the big picture. Ms. D states that if people are negative, she tries her utmost to involve them and encourage them to be part of the process of change. She indicates that change for many people is not easy and the school has undergone major strides in the past year. Zapeda (2014) states that instructional leaders understand that teachers find it hard to change so the principal needs to create conditions that are necessary to assists teachers to implement this change. They need to make teachers aware as to why the change is necessary and how it will assist in school improvement.

… so it takes time, introducing technology into the classroom takes time … I don't see it as a choice. If we want to create the type of learners that we need in South Africa, we have to use their (the learners) medium, not my old fashioned overhead projector or something.

Ms. D definitely feels that there is a culture of teaching and learning in the school. She says that this is evident to her when she walks around the school, she goes to have a look at what is happening in the classroom. She admits that there are different styles of teaching and although everyone is not at the same place regarding their teaching style, she maintains that teaching and learning is happening. The HOD, Ms. F, states that teaching and learning is definitely taking place- especially learning on the part of the younger teachers who go out and learn new things and come back to school to implement these. She says when she walks the corridors, she never finds teachers sitting at their desks – they are always busy teaching and walking in between desks. Often there is also a buzz coming from classes so it is evident that learners are involved in meaningful learning. The DP feels that although the results of the learners are no longer measured and compared to other schools, teaching and learning is taking place. She bases this on feedback from high schools as well as learner achievement in various subject competitions and Olympiads held by Johannesburg East district as well as outside organisations.

When she thinks about improving teaching and learning at the school, she says that this can be done through staff development. The school has a huge budget for staff development and they also have other ways to motivate teachers so that teaching and learning can take place. The HOD confirms that the school has a very big budget for professional development.

.. so we work it on three tiers, the professional level, the school pays for teachers to upgrade their qualifications with the understanding that the qualification should be utilised at the school.

… the individual level, this can be development in a subject, maybe the teacher shows good leadership potential, or even if you want to attend a course on discipline, we encourage and support their development by allowing them to attend and feedback the skills and knowledge into other teachers and most importantly our learners.

… the whole staff development programme, this is a big one, where we meet every week in the staffroom and we share good practice . .. we've made a

breakthrough this year with the sharing and collaborating … it's wonderful to see.

Horn and Loeb (2010) explain that the quality of instruction of teachers are influenced by the principal's involvement and that principals can also have a huge influence in creating in opportunities for teachers to improve. Senol and Lesinger (2018) agree and state that the principal's top priority is to provide an environment that supports the professional development of teachers. These principals ensure that teachers are involved in in-service training, they organise workshops for teacher development, they keep teachers informed about educational opportunities from external service providers. There is a huge investment in teacher development and time is provided for teachers to collaborate.

She feels that teachers want her as their leader to see that they are developing and improving their teaching practice. She says that this has assisted tremendously with the IQMS process. Another way of improving teaching and learning at the school is a staff wellness session every three weeks. This programme includes administration, as well as ground staff. They work on themes and their most recent one was on meditation and how it can reduce stress in the workplace. Furthermore, apart from implementing the technology, they also identified that they wanted to improve the higher order thinking of the learners so they have something that is called CHAMPIONS which helps teachers to help learners to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. This three-tier staff development programme is confirmed by both the HOD and the DP. Smith (2016) says that the vision of the school should be one where there is a constant pursuit to improve teaching and learning. The principals, together with other stakeholders, ensure that there is constant teacher development so that instruction in the school can improve. Fullan (2003), as cited in Naidoo and Petersen (2016), argues that it is the job of the principal to create opportunities for learning to engage in deep learning.

She indicates that all these strategies were brainstormed by the SMT and supported by the SGB.

The SGB sees that the only way to improve our school is to help improve the teachers because that is where the teaching and learning starts and ends.

She praises the SGB and says that part of the leadership role is to ensure that principal and SGB know their boundaries and do not overstep and personally, she feels that she wants the support of the SGB involved in the whole philosophy of developing the school, they must want the very best for their children. The HOD indicates that the governing body fully supports the

professional development of teachers and they have provided a large budget for it. It seems that the SGB in this school is well-resourced and actively involved in securing funding as well as sponsorships for the school. They therefore seem to have the capacity to play their role in governance. Bayat et al. (2014) suggest that leadership, management, and governance needs to be conceptualised as they represent the most important leadership components at school. Establishing good relations will just assist schools in becoming more effective.

4.3.3 The relationship between the principal and teachers

Ms. D feels that she regards the relationship between principal and staff as the most important in the school community. She says that the fact that she has been in the principals' position for the last 25 years, she feels that she is at an advantage. This, together with the fact that she has an open door policy, regards herself as being a good listener, helps her to create a good relationship with the staff. Furthermore, she states that at times, staff members have perceived the way she deals with various situations as being inconsistent behaviour but that every situation is different and as a principal, she has to maintain a level of confidentiality

> *I try to appeal to the staff that they have to trust my judgement … I am trying to the best of my ability to be fair*

Relationships that are characterised by trust lay the foundation for good performance and effective work (Senol & Lesinger ,2018). Thus, for positive change to occur in schools, school leaders need to create an environment of relations built on trust.

She says that she is not a 'by the book' type of principal. The DP and HOD states that the most important features in establishing good relationships with teachers are: open door policy, transparency, confidentiality and trust.

> *I understand the role of policy but I'm not a stickler for policy …We are individuals, there are different circumstances and we need to treat everybody with that respect*

The principal feels that the most important feature necessary to build good relationships with staff members is communication and staff want to be kept updated on what is happening in the school community and often relationships can break down just because of a lack of communication. The DP and HOD feels that it is important for the SMT to show a united front as teachers can feel if there is a division. They say the SMT needs to aspire towards the same goal and that although members of the SMT are allowed to disagree, they need to always do so

in a professional manner. The DP considers the Principal to be a democratic leader who listens to people and says that she is an inspiration to people as she subscribes to the notion of being a lifelong learner.

The principal considers the personal wellbeing of staff as very important so she ensures that they participate in staff wellness programmes. She tries not to have favourites but when they do socialise, she often looks for the company of people who share her interest and are closer to her in age. The HOD feels that many teachers take advantage of the principal's calm, quiet and kind disposition.

She acknowledges that there are cliques due to issues she experienced with the ex-deputy principal. She says that this was created because they had different approaches and style.

> *We still in the process of healing from that … she was authoritarian and a shoutie and that's not good… there was a time that she wanted me out of my position … she thought she should be the principal …she thought she would be a better principal … so we've been through difficult times.*

She identifies the clique as being just three people who still have contact with the old deputy principal. These staff members consult with the ex-deputy principal who often gives wrong advice to them and this leads to resistance from their side. The Deputy and HOD confirmed this. However, in the school, 90% of the teachers are embracing change and they are adapting well to their new environment where technology is being embraced and there is a renewed focus on teaching and learning. They take their new environment and implement it enthusiastically to see if change is happening. The HOD says that she is trying to develop a culture of getting people involved in decision making as well as vision and mission building. She indicates that the school does not really have cliques, rather there are social groups.

4.4 School Z - Moderate performing school

The school is a co-education public school, located in Kensington. It is a primary school from grade R to Grade 7. It is populated by over eight hundred learners. The school has a large number of Chinese immigrant learners as well as immigrants from across Africa, India and Pakistan. These foreign learners make up a significant percentage of the learner population. The remaining learners are either from the surrounding areas or from places like Soweto, Germiston and Alberton, and as far as Kempton Park. The school is regarded as a quintile 5 school. The quintile to which a school is assigned is based on the rates of income,

unemployment, and illiteracy within the school's catchment area. It also determines how much the GDE subsidises each learner in the school. However, these subsidies are not enough to assist in the functioning of the school therefore the school fees at this specific school were R18 000. The school employs a large number of SGB teachers. There is one SGB teacher to three GDE teachers in every grade. This ensures that the number of learners in each class is capped at 32, while some classes have even fewer. It also assists in alleviating the workload of the GDE teachers in the school as they now have a greater number of "free" periods which they can use for administrative activities such as planning and marking. The school also offers internship to six interns, so there is an intern assigned to each grade. These interns, apart from observing different teaching styles, are expected to teach some of the content as well as to engage in marking activities. The school promotes the involvement of learners in extra and co-curricular activities. Specialist coaches, along with teachers, ensure that the learners are correctly trained in soccer, rugby, hockey, volleyball, chess, eisteddfod, netball. The school has three GDE appointed HODs but they have created internal promotional posts and have an additional three HODs, one for Languages, one for Mathematics and one for Extramural and co-curricular activities.

The principal, Ms. G, is a 58-year-old white female who has been at the institution for over 34 years. She was appointed in 2016.The Deputy Principal (DP) Ms. H is a 53-year-old Coloured lady, who has been at the school for the last 19 years. The Foundation Phase HOD Ms. I has also been at the school for the past 16 years, eight of these in the role of HOD. Both the Principal and HOD have never taught at other schools. When entering the school, I did not experience the calmness of the other schools. The school is noisy; many children are sitting in the reception area waiting to be seen by the principal. Upon speaking to them, they indicate that they were misbehaving in class and they have been sent out. When I walked around the school it is especially noisy in one corner of the school. One of the teachers mentions that the Grade 5 learners were unruly and tend to be noisy when they are moving around in between teachers' classrooms. Most of the classroom doors were closed, despite the fact that the temperature was over 28 degrees. In classes that I passed which had the doors open, many of the learners were sitting quietly working and teachers were at their desks, most of them busy on their laptops. In the Foundation Phase, especially the Grade 1 and 2 classes, I could still hear the buzz of teaching as you could hear the learners actively participating in lessons. The grade 7 classes were separated from the other part of the school, however there was a lot of noise and shouting from teachers. One of the teachers mentioned that the Grade 7s were a very

challenging group of learners and there was a lot of discipline issues. They also indicated that teachers were struggling to motivate the learners to listen in class and do their work.

4.4.1 Instructional Leadership practices used to promote teaching and learning

In response to my question on high visibility, she explains that she has not been on the grounds for a while as she is busy interviewing parents of new learners entering the school for the first time.

She however acknowledges that this is something she needs to improve on. According to the model of instructional leadership by Murphy and Hallinger (1985), the principal as instructional leader, needs to maintain high visibility. Fink and Silverman (2014) state that principals are too busy with activities of management –such as infrastructure, discipline, handling parent meetings and various other crisis situations that crops up in school all the time that they rarely get the time to monitor and analyse teacher instruction. This is evident in the principals' response below:

> *I don't often walk into people's classes and sit in and watch lessons because I think the teachers get a little bit on edge- I do pop into class if I'm invited and I'm often invited so I do pop in and see what's happening… I don't want the teachers to think Oh God, here she comes again… I think they've (D.P and HODs) left me off, not because they don't want me but just because of all the work I have.*

*S*he explains that time is a big issue and she is not on a Development Support Group (DSG) this year nor is she involved in observing lessons for IQMS purposes. The DP explains that she is in charge of IQMS processes in the school. The HOD of Foundation Phase does the evaluation of all Foundation Phase GDE employed teachers but the SMT has co-opted the other SGB employed HODs to assist with evaluating SGB employed teachers. The DP states that the School Assessment Team (SAT) meets once a term and that they them discuss results for the term. In this meeting, they do not really plan for intervention. The Foundation Phase HOD however, has regular meetings where intervention is planned. The DP, Ms. H, further explains that they do not really do class visits in the Intersen (Grade 4-7) phase but indicates that class visits in the Foundation Phase happen on a termly basis. This was confirmed by the Foundation Phase HOD. The DP further acknowledges that teachers are not as motivated and organised as they should be and although feedback is given regarding instructional practices, advice on classroom management, et cetera, not many of the teacher implement the recommendations.

Zapeda (2012) says that as a supervisor, the principal must be occupied in helping teachers examine the way they teach, such as suggest modifications based on the characteristics of the learners. It is therefore essential for principals to ensure that correct support, modifications, and accommodations to the curriculum are made. The school has a mentoring programme in place where they have appointed grade heads and subject heads to assists teachers. However, she feels this is becoming a bit of a burden as everyone has their own load. Horn and Loeb's (2010, p. 66) view of instructional leadership emphasises organisational management for instructional improvement rather than day-to-day teaching and learning. Although the principal is not involved in formal class visits for evaluation purposes, she has empowered staff members to assist with this. Because principals hold a formal position of authority, they should ideally exercise influence over others as well as recognise leadership throughout the school to achieve the goals of the organisation (Christie & Lingard, 2001). Zapeda (2013, p. 23) states that diffusing leadership "entails trust, collaboration, support, and advocacy for extending the boundaries of authority beyond the position and the person who holds the title of principal". However, in this school, the responsibility of curriculum management is given to the HODs who share it with subject heads. Bush (2016) is of the opinion that due to the disparity in leadership style, resourcing, and management, this type of practice is hampering improvement.

Asked whether the principal is happy with the instructional practices of teachers, the response from the principal was that the HOD's are doing a fantastic job in this department. Zapeda (2013) says that the principal transforms teaching and learning through involving all the other people in the school.

The principal is happy with the instructional practices of the teachers. She indicates that she is encouraging improvement by improving access to online resources, implementing a new Mathematics and Science programme into Grade 4-7. She thinks that there is room for improvement but does not support too much technology. The DP says that there was an initiative to bring technology to the classroom but it seems as if the school wasted money as not many of the teachers implemented it in their teaching. Rockinson-Szapkiw (2015) indicates that the lack of integration of technology into the classroom is often the lack of teacher professional development opportunities. Jones (2001) emphasises that the principal's leadership is one of the most important factors that affects how effective technology is used in the classroom. Leaders must provide teachers with the support and guidance to facilitate the change

but I don't want to do too much because I think that there is value in the group work and teaching and not as always having technology

The HOD thinks that there is a need to be a little bit more open to change but that basics must not be forgotten She says that with technology, we have access to videos and interactive material but that it is important not to forget the practical applications.

As far as teacher self-efficacy is concerned, she explains that she feels that teachers need to challenge themselves. She explains that if teachers come to her with ideas ,she is open to their suggestions and ideas and if there is money to do it, she does not hesitate to support it. According to Calik, Sezgin, Kavgaci, and Kilinc (2012), the results of research done in 328 primary schools in Ankara shows instructional leadership was found to have had a positive impact on teacher efficacy.

Asked about teacher collaboration, she says that the Foundation Phase mainly work as a team because they teach everything together. In the Intersen phase, she says teams come together in subjects. However, she feels that people are trying to work together as teams but that some grades are more cohesive than others. This was confirmed by the DP who also indicated that there is not as much cohesion in the Intersen phase compared to the Foundation Phase.

The principal promotes and encourages professional development through Monday meetings. The head of support comes up with ideas of support for teachers who teach learners who are suffering with dyslexia or other learning barriers. The HODs together with grade heads, come up with good ideas.

…if people want to go to any type of professional development I don't like to say no- I really do believe that it's important especially certain organisations are better than others like Bellavista stuff is fantastic so if someone ask me as long as it's in the budget I wouldn't say no.

For the next year, her focus is on Assertive Discipline, and she wants the whole staff to receive the training. She is also ensuring that every teacher is registered for online professional development. The DP and HOD indicate that not much emphasis is placed on teachers attending professional development to improve their efficacy. Staff are encouraged to attend National Professional teachers organisation of South Africa (Naptosa) courses and if they interested in the course, they have to ask the secretary if there are finances available.

4.4.1.1 Teacher questionnaire responses – The instructional leadership practices of the principal

The principal scored at mostly 5 (this was given to her by the more experienced teachers who have been at the school longer, while the younger and newer teachers scored her mostly on level 3 for most of the practices regarding curriculum and vision). There is great clarity as to who is responsible for co-ordinating the curriculum as leadership is distributed amongst Grade heads, HODs and Subject Heads. However, many teachers felt that the principal does not protect instructional time. Furthermore, the questionnaire indicated that the principal "sometimes" acknowledge teacher performance. Many of the respondents felt that the principal is often busy with administrative tasks and does not really chat to staff and/or attend extra and co-curricular activities. Teachers also indicate that they are not given much professional growth opportunities. The principal does not always lead and participate in teacher professional in-service activities. Naidu et al. (2015) state that an environment conducive to teaching and learning can be established through supporting creativity, team building and participation in problem solving. This is not really evident at this school.

4.4.1.2 Teacher questionnaire responses- School culture

The results from the questionnaire indicate that there are average levels of collegiality (mostly level 3). For affiliative collegiality, the scores were mostly at level 3. For self-determination and efficacy, most of the teachers scored level 3 and 4. Teachers felt that ideas are not always shared and teachers are not often given opportunities to communicate. Furthermore, most teachers felt that they are empowered to problem solve and make decisions, they are proactive rather than reactive, and enjoy working at the school. Deane–Williams et al. (2015) strongly believe that strong instructional leadership can be connected to school culture that is collaborative and that this can lead to a positive attitude on the side of teachers and therefore improved student outcomes. Wang et al. (1997), as cited in MacNeil et al. (2009) states that school culture and climate are among the main influences in affecting the outcomes of students. Thus, principals have a strong impact on creating a positive culture in schools that is collaborative in nature. Ammons (2006), as cited in Pretorius (2013), states that teacher effectiveness is influenced by context and the conditions under which they perform their tasks. The environment is not very conducive to learning as teachers work in isolation and there are not many opportunities for collaboration and ideas are not often shared. Naidu et al. (2015) state that an environment conducive to teaching and learning can be established through supporting creativity, team building and participation in problem solving. The teacher

questionnaire confirms what the DP and HOD indicated – there is need for consistency in the behaviour of the principal. She needs to focus on motivating the staff and enabling relationships that are professional.

4.4.2 School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning

The principal indicates that she starts of her day with an early morning brief, then everyone proceeds to line-up. Some of the SMT members take turns to address the learners, ensuring they pray and do a bit of brain gym as the learners are very restless. Then she makes the late comers pick up litter and when the first lesson starts, she goes to her office. She indicates that normally the day does not go according to plan. She is constantly dealing with teachers and learners. Much of the time her office is filled with learners who have been sent to her for various serious discipline issues (the non-serious cases are dealt with by the teachers, grade heads or HODs). Many parents also come and meet with her regarding financial issues (exemption of school fees) or various social issues. This year she is aiming to form a good relationship with the parents of new learners entering the school. She does this by setting up interviews to meet them, chat to them, gives them a background to the code of conduct, as well as their financial obligations towards the school.

> *….and also in your day you are called sometimes for departmental meetings and then I also spend a lot of time with the secretaries discussing things like finance. I have a finance meeting every once a month; it's a committee meeting and the finances are discussed. I spent a fair bit of time with the deputy talking about strategizing and planning and getting things running smoothly- I try and have a cup of tea with my fellow staff members*

Both the DP and HOD describe their day as being unpredictable, dealing with discipline issues, parents, and teachers alike. The HOD states that it is one interruption after another and she often feels that she is not doing justice when it comes to teaching her Grade 2 learners. The DP indicates that she tries to support the principal and often has to stand in for her at meetings. Bush (2005), as cited in Naidoo and Petersen (2016), states that principals can become overwhelmed by the task of being instructional leaders.

The principal says that she classifies her school as a good school

> *I do classify my school as a good school and I think my idea of a good school I think that the school is as good as your faculty so if your staff are good your*

school is good -that's why this is the easy answer for me- that the reason why our school is so good is because of the staff and we are very lucky to have that type of staff and I think that the support that the staff members give to other staff members

She says because the staff is good, it branches into management and that she believes is the school's biggest strength. The HOD confirms that the majority of the teachers care and love the kids and passion for children is what makes a good school. The DP also feels that the school has good teachers. She feels the academics are good and the learners perform well in district competitions like Mental Mathematics and Science Scuffle. She also feels that although there is a discipline problem, 80% of the learners are doing the right thing.

She feels that although the school climate and culture is a huge dimension, one also needs to look at the time of the year (examination time, writing of reports) as stress definitely plays a role in how positive or negative teachers are. School leaders also have the responsibility of managing school culture. Healthy schools exhibit cultures of being goal focused, communication, sharing of power, proper resource utilisation (Hoy et al . (2009) as cited in MacNeil, 2009)

…if I can, our biggest and most important aim is to make sure positivity is shown because the minute negativity is shown then it's like a wave that goes over everybody- so if I am showing negativity the managers and the staff feel it and so do the children So I've got to show my best to show positivity it's hard…

So, for her, positivity has to come from the top. She shows total support to the teachers but often she is not sure if the staff sees it as support. The HOD feels that although there is negativity from some staff, the majority of the teachers are proud of the learners and that they also take pride in themselves as they feel their learners are a reflection of them. She says the teachers have a competitive spirit and she tries her best to support and motivate them. The DP was quite negative in her response as she said that people sitting on cell phones and working on their laptops while they are supposed to be teaching does not reflect a sense of pride to her. She also feels there is a need for more inclusivity. MacNeil et al. (2009) are of the opinion that a strong school climate has highly motivated teachers who impact positively on learner outcomes.

Here she is referring to the way the Muslim teachers are not catered for at school functions as well as people continuously referring to the Christian faith and their God in their interactions

with other. Diversity is not only about colour, it includes religion, race, economic background and each of these factors must be remembered and acknowledged. Walker and Riordan (2010) say that in order to improve capacity of teachers in the school the school leader must promote productive professional relationships among those who are culturally diverse.

The DP states:

> *I listen to these things and I resent it, it's all about individual's characters, it's ugly and unnecessary so unhealthy so it impacts on the climate - diversity is really a thing here- because we teach diverse kids we try we need to try and be more inclusive accommodating and appreciating and rather celebrating the diversity instead of making people feel as well they doing the wrong thing or what they are doing is less*

Ms. S says that in order to improve this culture and climate, there needs to be a focus on fairness. She says that as soon as there is favouritism, this starts to create a negative climate among the teachers. There also need to be fairness on how the learners are treated. Everyone needs to be treated the same, there needs to be consistency. She understands that there are human factors but she still expects the leader to be fair towards someone else in a similar situation. Relationships that are characterised by trust lay the foundation for good performance and effective work (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). Thus, for positive change to occur in schools, school leaders need to create an environment of relations built on trust. The quality of communication between principals and teachers plays a key role in constructing trust in schools. Trust can lead to increased motivation and co-operation and can improve organisational commitment and school culture (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). It seems that members of the SMT feel that the principal is not consistent in her actions towards teachers and learners. Ms. I indicate there is a need for more staff recognition and motivation. She says the school principal needs to recognise the teachers with passion and not only focus on the weaker teachers. She is of the opinion that as much as the principal is a good leader, she needs to focus on the staff who always come to school and school functions and not have favourites. She says that she feels people are becoming despondent as the principal does not seem to recognise them. The HOD says that as a leader, she tries to encourage and motivate good practices in her phase. It is clear the perceptions of behaviour on the part of the principal is hampering positive relations in the school as well as impacting on

the climate and culture. Van der Westhuizen (2003) states that building relationships should receive as much attention as organisational structure, administration, and supervision, as well as other facets of educational management. These relationships are important as it leads to collaboration and open communication as this results in a climate of trust and understanding. Furthermore, relationships that are professional and collegial are enabling as they lead to an exchange of morals, values and beliefs (Naidu et al. 2015). Unsound relationships in schools can threaten or destroy the culture in a school.

The mechanisms the principal indicates she uses to ensure a positive school climate is by doing various motivation workshops (the first Monday of every term). The entertainment committee organises token gestures to ensure teacher wellbeing (e.g. anonymous gifts, anonymous shout outs). She also believes thanking people goes a long way, so in her morning brief or staff meeting she always acknowledges or thanks people who have gone the extra mile.

The principal feels that in the school there is definitely a culture of teaching and learning

> *I think that it's absolutely evident, it's evident in every aspect, it's evident in the preparation that the teachers do, it's evident in how the management team is doing their job, how the SMT is motivated to do their best – I mean their departments are running beautifully - there's evidence in the children's books, there's evidence in the classrooms, there's evidence on the sports field I really do believe that teaching and learning is happening*

She acknowledges that many learners are struggling, but the social worker, psychologist and HOD of support are trying their best to see that support is given through work-shopping teachers as well as sending them on training. She states that some staff members stand above the rest regarding knowledge, skills and compassion.

> *However, there are one or two staff members that maybe don't put in as much as the others but that's fairly natural and those staff members are dealt with and spoken to it's not as advertised but they are being spoken to and they either spoken to by one of the heads of department or the deputy or myself or all of us*

Her strategy to improve the culture of teaching and learning, she puts as a high priority that she wants to place the right people in the right job. Horn and Loeb (2010) explain that

“organisational management for instructional improvement” focuses on the organisation rather than day-to-day teaching. This does not mean that this reconceptualisation disregards the importance of classroom observation. Organisational management for instructional improvement means staffing a school with high-quality teachers and providing them with the appropriate support and resources to be successful in the classroom (Horn & Loeb, 2010). Also the teachers who are not doing as much as the others must be motivated and encouraged to do more – thus the leadership from her, the DP and the HODs has to be done such that they encourage people all the time by giving mentoring, guidance and support. She states that the fact the whiteboards, projectors, interactive teaching aids and programme are available to teachers does not necessarily mean that they going to use it.

> *I don't know if that's gonna change your teaching and learning but it might improve it in the way I think. Technology is important but I don't think you must get hung up with too much technology- I don't believe in no paper; I believe that the children need to read books as well as stuff online*

Another way of improving the culture of teaching and learning but she is unsure of whether the GDE will allow it, is to have a remedial based centre.

> *…where we have the children in each grade, let's say you have two sections a junior and a senior section- so the children with learning barriers in each grade go to those two classes, they actually learning those classes, so let's say they are just struggling throughout and they come to these classes and they taught by a specialist -A LSEN class that is just for our school -that would be fantastic.*

Zapeda (2012) says that as a supervisor, the principal must be occupied in helping teachers examine the way they teach, such as suggest modifications based on the characteristics of the learners. The principal has a vision of ensuring every child gets the necessary support required so that they can achieve.

Another way of improving teaching is to extend the current Grade R class to at least 90 learners and then most of those learners will feed into Grade 1. She indicates that the current online system gives the school very little choice regarding who gets admitted. This puts the school under financial strain as many of the current parents are neglecting to pay fees. Fees are important because it allows the school to keep class sizes down by employing SGB teachers. The fees are also needed to maintain the sports fields and sports courts. The DP feels that teaching and learning can improve if there is constant motivation. Professional development is

not really prioritised at this school. Although teachers are regarded as the main role-players, not much is being done so that they can improve their instructional practices.

4.4.3 The relationship between the principal and teachers (including the SMT)

The principal feels that in order for the school to function properly, the following is of utmost importance: a good relationship with teachers, principal and deputies - these relationships needs to complement each other as well as a good relationship with the SGB. She feels that the staff needs to know that they are supported. Due to the fact that she has an open door policy, the staff at this school do not hesitate to speak to her if they are disgruntled about an issue, however some of them are "scared" to come to her and opt to rather speak to the deputy.

> *I feel that there is a good relationship but I think you go through stages where you wonder why didn't that teacher come to me and you surprised but maybe it's just because you are the boss- I did find out that moving from a staff member at the same school to the HOD is fine, moving to the deputy I saw a difference and moving as principal it's a big difference- it's like you totally away, your buddies are now working for you*

She places trust as being the most important feature in having a good relationship with teachers. She says that she feels like this about her HODs.

> *when I got into the deputy and principals positions I realised I can't do everything so then the heads of department have to take on those roles and the other people that make your life easy and if it's running properly that's fantastic so I've got to show people that I trust them enough for them to run their departments that I trust teachers enough to run their classroom- and they need to know that they are trusted- I mean trust is not the only thing but it's the main thing*

She says that she trusts her teachers 99,9 % because "you always get one or two who maybe overstep the boundaries". For her if trust is broken, there needs to be a conversation and communication. She feels that staff needs to bring things to her attention if they do not agree with certain decisions, the constructive thing for them to do is to talk to her as she often does not like what is being told to her but appreciates constructive criticism. If this is not done, it can lead to the breakdown in relationships. Thus, for positive change to occur in schools, school leaders need to create an environment of relations built on trust. The quality of communication

between principals and teachers plays a key role in constructing trust in schools. Trust can lead to increased motivation and co-operation and can improve organisational commitment and school culture (Senol & Lesinger, 2018). The DP states the features are respect and support for one another, and if there are cracks in the top structure it definitely affects the people at the bottom. There needs to be a type of solidarity as this also gives the teachers a sense of security as it then becomes evident that there is respect for each other in the top structure. She also indicates that there needs to be trust, respect, an open door policy where people are allowed to give their viewpoint without fear of it being shut down or rejected. The HOD indicates that many times people do not agree with the principal and often they are scared to approach her. She says one of the main features of a leader is to have a good listening ear, and not be as reactive as the principal often is. Barth (2004) indicates that unsound relationships in schools can threaten or destroy the culture in a school.

The principal definitely considers the well-being of her staff to be important. Three of her staff members are battling with depression and she has assisted them tremendously over the past year.

> *You can't say to someone that you don't have a job because you are actually not well you've got IT support them and you've gotta make sure but they know that they are supported I think they feel they supported*

Her response to the consistent treatment of all staff led to the following

> *I am I think I don't know that all the teachers feel that. I think I'm human I have my good days and my bad days and I would hate someone to think that I'm favouring anybody and I think it's a natural human trait that people feel that way.*

The principal claims that generally people listen and there are no real cliques, just social groupings. The HOD agrees with this statement. Barth (2004) is of the opinion that when the relationship between the principal and teacher is trusting, generous, co-operative, and helpful, all other relationships in the school will display the same qualities.

4.5 Conclusion

The data revealed in these studies clearly displays a distinction between the three schools regarding instructional leadership, the culture of teaching and learning, organisational culture, as well as the quality of relationships in schools. The principals in two of the schools display strong instructional leadership, according to the interview question analysis. However, in

School Y although the principal in the interview reveals strong instructional leadership practices, the responses from the teachers on the teacher questionnaire is not totally consistent with the findings of the interview. In School Z, the interview does not reveal much evidence of instructional leadership practices, but the principal scored adequately on the principal instructional rating scale. This could be due to various factors which include, number of questionnaires collected, understanding of the questions, care taken when completing the questionnaire as well as various interpretations of the questions. Furthermore, it could also be linked to the personality and character traits of the principal.

The responses to the questionnaire indicates a strong school culture in School X. School Y and Z displays an average school culture. In school X, there is a strong culture of teaching and learning – the principal ensures that staff are exposed to good quality professional development, the curriculum is managed well and there is adequate supervision and evaluation of teaching and learning. In school Y, much focus is placed on professional development; the leaders struggle to keep up with managing the curriculum and supervising and evaluating lessons. In School Z– teaching takes place behind closed doors and teachers are not encouraged to participate in professional development. There is a minimal amount of collaboration and teamwork and teachers often work in isolation.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Recommendations, and implications

5.1 Introduction

The research aimed to understand and explore the following questions:

How do instructional leadership practices of school principals affect the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools?

The specific objectives of this research are to:

- Identify what instructional leadership practices principals use to create a culture of teaching and learning

- Explore the extent to which school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools, as well as identify how this impacts teacher commitment and self–efficacy and therefore the culture of teaching and learning.

- Determine the views of teachers regarding the principal's leadership practices and its effect on school culture.

The dimensions of instructional leadership practices outlined in the literature were used to construct a conceptual framework for the study which allowed me to view the actions of the principals of three schools of varying context: exceptional achieving schools, good achieving school, moderate achieving school. These three schools are all ex-Model C schools in different areas of Johannesburg East district. The table below contains a summary of the context

Table 1: Summary of context

School	**Number of learners**	**School Fees**	**No of teachers**
X	Approx. 800	34 000	40
Y	Approx. 450	22 000	30
Z	Approx. 800	18 000	37

Table 1: incomplete table

5.2 Study summary

This study reveals that there is definitely a link between the principals' instructional leadership practices and the culture of teaching and learning. The findings seem to indicate that the

principals show varying degrees of instructional leadership practices and this seems to have a definite impact on the culture of teaching and learning and learner outcomes.

The following discussion links to research question 1: What are the main practices of a principal as an instructional leader that is needed so that a culture of teaching and learning can be seen in schools?

In School X, the school is well-managed and there are excellent structures in place. This is brought about by a form of distributed leadership amongst the members of the SMT in which the principal is the "Leader of Leaders ". This school emphasises the importance of the holistic development which includes sports, culture, and academic success. This school displays many features of a learning organisation. Leaders in this school are constantly trying to change teaching practices by exposing teachers to high-quality professional development. Teachers are challenged to move out of their comfort zones. The principal, together with the other instructional leaders, is involved in class visits where they ensure that constructive feedback is given to teachers. The leaders in this school model good practice in their teaching and interactions with staff. Apart from giving them an analysis of the teaching practices of teachers, this practice also allows the leaders of the school to identify areas of developmental needs. The principal envisages teaching practices that allow for active learning of learners in an environment that focuses on group work, collaboration, and problem-solving. The school has qualified professionals who assist with support, remediation, and modifications. Thus, there is a focus on assisting every learner to reach their full potential. Furthermore, the support from the parents is seen as of great importance and a lot of emphases is placed on the alumni (old boys).

At School Y, the interview with the principal and two other members of management indicated that the principal uses strong instructional leadership practices to enhance teaching and learning. The principal displays a visible presence that concurs with the theoretical framework (Hallinger, 2003) of this study. However, although there are class visits and other supervisory services, they often fall behind due to other issues of management and deviate from the management plan. The principal encourages teachers to change their instructional practices and participates in active learning with the staff to acquire new knowledge and skills. As a leader, she understands change and a need to change and this is clearly communicated to staff. There is a form of distributed leadership in the school but this seems to be confined to the three members of management. The leaders of the school believe that they can improve teaching and

learning through staff development. This development is done on three levels: the professional, the individual, and the whole staff development. The SGB of the school is supportive of this and a large budget has been made available for it by active fundraising and sponsorships.

The principal of School Z, in her interview, did not display too many instructional leadership practices. She has distributed many of the tasks to the DP, HODs, and grade heads. The school is struggling with parents not paying school fees and she is busy interviewing all (120) the grade 1 parents. Also, there are major discipline problems in the school, and learners are often sent to the principal to be disciplined. The principal is not involved in the IQMS processes, nor does she or her DP do any class visits. Class visits only happen in the Foundation Phase and it happens once a term. Professional development is not a priority as teachers are not really monitored so that areas of development can be identified. Teachers normally only attend Naptosa courses although the principal intends to book all teachers for online professional development. Some of teachers only attend GDE subject development courses which are not often of the highest quality. If teachers want to attend high-quality courses, they have to first see if it is in the budget. The DP indicates that marks are analysed but there is no real intervention planned. The school tried to implement technology in the classroom but this has failed as not many teachers are keen to use it. However, the principal is intent on improving the teaching of Mathematics and Science in her school and has just brought 'Pearson My Pedia' (scripted lesson plans and learner books which allows for interactive learning without the need for internet) on board to assist teachers in their pedagogy.

This part of the discussion tries to answer research question 2: To what extent do school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools and which characteristics of school climate and culture should the principal address to ensure teacher commitment, trust, and self-efficacy and therefore improve the culture of teaching and learning.

The principal of School X tries to promote good relations in the school by ensuring that teachers have a common understanding of the goal (where they are going). The principal is referred to as a visionary leader who encourages growth in his staff, especially the SMT, so that they can deal with the challenges thrown at them. Is seems like the leaders in the school are committed to showing a united front. There is a level of trust and communication between the principal and teachers and this lays the foundation for a good work ethic and performance. The principal places staff well-being as a priority. He looks out for his staff through his compassion and understanding. Staff members are not treated consistently, but rather according to everyone's

needs. He deals with problems amongst staff members quickly and effectively and ensures that staff is supported. He deals with issues proactively rather than reactively because he feels that his job is to manage the brand while the teacher's job is to manage education. So, if there are issues regarding education that can potentially damage the “brand”, his intervention is seen as critical. He often shields the teachers from GDE regulations and demands as he feels that this is extremely stressful and can lead to teachers becoming demotivated.

The principal of School Y describes herself as a good listener who through her open-door policy and compassion for people creates a good relationship with staff. She feels that good communication with staff forms the basis of good relationships. The principal is viewed as a democratic leader who aspires to bring change in her school and subscribes to being a lifelong learner. The school is in a process of healing as the previous DP was intent on pushing the principal out of her post and caused a division amongst staff. When this DP was eventually promoted, the post was filled by an “outsider” (the current HOD and shadow principal). This was not acceptable to staff members as they assumed that the promotion post would be filled by an insider. Thus, there was an atmosphere of resistance and animosity amongst staff and it has been hard work to get them to co-operate with the new HOD.

The principal of School Z tries very hard to promote good relations between herself and the staff. She, as well as the DP, acknowledges that there is not much collaboration and teamwork in the Intersen Phase. She supports her staff but is not sure that the staff sees it. However, the interview with the DP and HOD revealed that staff members are often upset with the principal as they find that often she does not address issues and makes the wrong decisions. They are however afraid to confront her. The issue of diversity also came to light when the DP mentioned that other faiths and cultures are not always acknowledged and respected. The HOD confirmed that the principal does not treat everyone with the same consistency and fairness and accuses her of having favourites. Therefore, organisational trust and motivation seem to be somewhat of an issue.

This part of the discussion tries to answer research question 3: What are teacher perceptions regarding the principals' instructional leadership practices and school culture and how these practices affect the efficacy of the school culture.

Analysis of the teacher questionnaire of School X indicated that teachers view the principal as an instructional leader. Measurement of the school culture shows that individuals display high levels of affiliative collegiality, professional collaboration as well as self-determination and

efficacy. Wagner (2005) states that these three cultures give an overview of the organisational culture. It, therefore, seems that this school has a healthy environment characterised by collaboration, and this leads to high levels of self-determination and efficacy. Thus, the principal acts as an agent of change to transform the culture of teaching and learning (MacNeil 2009). Strong instructional leadership practices lead to positive school culture. This contributes to staff being committed, motivated, and developing a strong sense of self-efficacy. Highly motivated teachers who feel empowered to problem solve effectively will impact positively on the outcomes of learners. This research, therefore, corroborates the fact that strong instructional leadership of the principal leads to improved learner outcomes as this school is classified as an exceptional performing school in the district.

Analysis of the questionnaires of School Y does not suggest that the principal displays strong instructional leadership and most of the respondents indicated that the practices are only displayed 'sometimes" (level 3). The results of the organisational culture scores somehow refute the claim of the HOD who indicated that 90% of the staff embraces change and are adapting well to their new environment where technology is welcomed and there is a renewed focus on teaching and learning as the SMT perceives. The school culture is not as healthy as they thought it to be and teachers feel that they are only sometimes involved in communication and collaboration and this has led to limited self-efficacy. Leadership practices of principals do impact school culture. The questionnaires display that there is a degree of instructional leadership practices shown by the principal and this leads to a fairly positive school culture. This also correlates to the outcomes of learners as this school is regarded as a good performing school.

Analysis of the teacher questionnaire for School Z indicated that the principal displays adequate instructional leadership qualities. The results of the organisational culture part of the questionnaire show that most teachers perceive the cultural behaviours as "sometimes" taking place. Thus, I would regard the school culture as being average. Most of the teachers interviewed have been at the school for more than three years, many of them have experience in the subjects they teach. Some of them have only ever taught at that school. This could also explain why they scored the principal adequately on the instructional leadership scale, as they had no other model to compare to.

This study confirms that there is definitely a link between instructional leadership practices of the school principal and the culture of teaching and learning in school. It confirms that a healthy

school/ organisational culture leads to healthy school culture and therefore increased teacher commitment and self-efficacy. This impacts the learner outcomes and it explains why the learner outcome in the three schools varies. One needs to acknowledge that other factors also play a role, that instructional leadership is context-specific, that finances matter, that socio-economic factors also impact learner outcome. However, various studies have indicated that strong instructional leadership from the principal impacts positively on school climate and culture and therefore, learner outcomes. Furthermore, the outcomes link to Hallingers' (2011) model of leadership for learning which implies that leadership is performed within an organisational and environmental setting and that it is regulated by the personal values and beliefs of principals as well as their knowledge and experience. Thus, the influence of leadership is indirect and mediated through various school conditions.

5.3 Recommendations

My findings have led me to the following recommendations:

1. Schools must be reconceptualised as learning organisations - Schools as learning organisations, focus on learning that influences the cognitive, social, and emotional outcomes of learners (OECD, 2016). Teachers in learning organisations need to constantly improve their knowledge and pedagogy to meet the demands of an education system that constantly changes

2. There needs to be training of principals so that they become instructional leaders. This research proposes that principals need to acquire instructional leadership skills and ensure that they are knowledgeable and up to date with the latest pedagogical skills and trends in education. The principal must have good knowledge of policies so that he/she can ensure effective curriculum management to ensure good learner results.

3. Classroom visits are extremely important as these identify areas of development – Principals and other instructional leaders must ensure that teacher supervision and evaluation in schools become a norm. Book and File control is not a sufficient form of monitoring, there should be lesson observation to ascertain the developmental needs of the teacher. Innovative ways of teacher development must be developed and implemented as DBE support programmes in their current form and structure do not seem to yield any positive results –Teacher development programmes must be targeted and improve pedagogical practices in schools.

4. Form Professional Learning Communities (PLC) within subjects where teachers meet on a weekly basis to share knowledge and experiences - PLCs will also lead to improved communication and collaboration amongst teachers and can improve school culture.
5. Form networks with other schools and share experiences on how to deal with discipline and other social issues.
6. Professional development must focus on knowledge and methodology so that teachers' classroom practices can improve. Pedagogical practices must link to the needs of 21st-century skills. Teachers must become active participants in their own development by being involved in the design and execution of their professional development. Innovative ways of teacher development must be developed and implemented as DBE support programmes in their current form and structure do not seem to yield any positive results. Johannesburg East district needs to be more involved in the development of principals as well as present good quality teacher training that focuses on pedagogy rather than content knowledge.
7. Diversity management programmes are essential in ex-Model C Schools - There should be a focus on the design and development of policies and programmes that create a culture that embraces diversity. Promoting diversity in staffing also allows learners from different backgrounds to identify with teachers – this enhances their trust in the learning environment.

5.4 Implications of the study

This study can add positively to the literature on instructional leadership and the culture of teaching and learning in South African schools. It clearly shows that focusing only on pedagogic knowledge and pedagogy is not going to improve learner outcomes alone. In fact, principals need to display strong leadership practices and try to develop good relations between themselves and teachers. Schools are social places and relationships matter. Animosity and unhealthy school climates will do further damage to our educational system. Schools should exhibit healthy climates where there is a focus on learning, collaboration, and collegiality.

The implications of the study for the field of education suggests that strong instructional leadership practices need to be exercised by primary school principals if we are intent on improving learner outcomes in schools. Thus, there is a need for principals to be trained as strong instructional leaders. It is recommended that SMTs and serving principals should be provided with in-service training in instructional leadership. The DBE should develop

principals using workshops or courses by external experts in leadership and management to ensure that school principals know what they are expected to do in school.

Schools need to be reconceptualised as learning organisations and principals and SMTs need to be developed as curriculum managers. It is thus essential that SMTs are highly knowledgeable regarding curriculum issues and pedagogic practices. Building positive relations between teachers and Principals (SMTs) are essentials; this could lead to trust and improvement in teacher attitudes towards teaching and learning. The focus should be placed on improving the school climate. Principals must develop good human relations skills and they need to acquire skills that allows them to build good relationship with teachers and SMT members.

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Appendices

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2019ECE006M**
PROJECT TITLE	Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.
INVESTIGATOR	Saadieka Dawood
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DATE CONSIDERED	18 June 2019
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
EXPIRY DATE	Date of submission of the project report

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 24 June 2019 **CHAIRPERSON**

(Dr. Paul Goldschagg)

cc: Supervisor: Dr. Geeta Motilal

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**03 July 2019**
Validity of Research Approval:	**04 February 2019 – 30 September 2019** **2019/127**
Name of Researcher:	**Dawood S**
Address of Researcher:	**49 Fortuna Street**
	Mayfair West
	2092
Telephone Number:	**083 409 3926**
Email address:	**saadiekad25@gmail.com**
Research Topic:	**Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**
Type of qualification	**Masters**
Number and type of schools:	**Three Primary Schools**
District/s/HO	**Johannesburg North**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

03/07/2019

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL, DATE:18/07/2019

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Saadieka Dawood. I am a M.Ed. student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with members of the School Management Team (SMT) as well as the completion of questionnaires by teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. I wish to set up an interview with you which will last for 30-60 minutes. The interview will be conducted at a time suitable for you and will be audiotaped as this will facilitate transcription and improve the validity of the data. The interview questions will be trying to ascertain the following: The School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning, the relationship between the principal and the teachers as well as the practices used by the Principal/SMT to promote teaching and learning. A transcription of the interview will be made available to you for validation.

Furthermore, questionnaires to be completed by teachers will be linked to their perception of the principals Instructional Leadership practices as well as the school culture. As a researcher I also wish to also spend some time at your school in order to observe the ethos as well culture of teaching and learning. I would also appreciate having access to documentation such as management plans as well as tools used for supervisory purposes.

The reason why I have chosen your school is that it fits the profile of my research topic.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research as it will give me valuable insight into the following:

- Identify the instructional leadership practices that principals use to create a culture of teaching and learning

- Explore the extent to which school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools
- Determine the views of teachers regarding the principal's leadership practices, the culture in theirs schools and how it affects their efficacy

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

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

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

Yours sincerely,

Saadieka Dawood

49 Fortuna Street

Mayfair-West

Johannesburg

saadiekad25@gmail.com

083 4093926

INFORMATION SHEET PRINCIPALS

Date: 18/07/2019

Dear Principal

My name is Saadieka Dawood and I am a part –time post graduate student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with the principal and other members of the School Management Team (SMT- the Deputy Principal and a HOD) as well as the completion of questionnaires by teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. Questionnaires to be completed by teachers will be linked to their perception of the principals Instructional Leadership practices as well as the school culture. As a researcher I wish to also spend two days at your school in order to observe ethos and the culture of teaching and learning in your school. I would also appreciate it if I would be granted permission to view as management plans as well as tools used for supervisory purposes.

The reason why I have chosen your school that it is fits the profile of my research topic.

I want to come in and do an interview with you regarding my research topic. This interview will take place after school hours. It will last for about 30-60 minutes and will be audiotaped as this facilitates transcription and validated data. A transcript of the interview will be made available to you for verification. Furthermore, your name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All data including audio recordings, observation sheets, interview transcripts and completed questionnaires will be stored at the Wits School of Education. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study. A copy of the completed of my completed research project will be forwarded to your school.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Saadieka Dawood

49 Fortuna Street

Mayfair-West

Johannesburg

saadiekad25@gmail.com

083 4093926

Principals Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called:

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

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

I agree that management plans and recording tools used for supervisory purposes. YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview or observation lesson YES/NO

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

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study. YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

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

Sign_____ Date_____

LETTER TO THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL, DATE:18/07/2019

Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is Saadieka Dawood. I am a MEd student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with members of the School Management Team (SMT) as well as the completion of questionnaires by teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. I wish to set up an interview with you which will last for 30-60 minutes. The interview will be conducted at a time suitable for you and will be audiotaped as this will facilitate transcription and improve the validity of the data. The interview questions will be trying to ascertain the following: The School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning, the relationship between the principal and the teachers as well as the practices used by the Principal/SMT to promote teaching and learning. A transcription of the interview will be made available to you for validation.

As a researcher I also wish to also spend some time at your school in order to observe the ethos as well culture of teaching and learning. I would also appreciate have access to documentation such as management plans as well as tools used for supervisory purposes.

The reason why I have chosen your school is that it fits the profile of my research topic.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research as it will give me valuable insight into the following:

- Identify the instructional leadership practices that principals use to create a culture of teaching and learning
- Explore the extent to which school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools
- Determine the views of teachers regarding the principal's leadership practices, the culture in theirs schools and how it affects their efficacy

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

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

All data including audio recordings, observation sheets, interview transcripts and completed questionnaires will be stored at the Wits School of Education. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

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

Yours sincerely,

Saadieka Dawood

49 Fortuna Street

Mayfair-West

Johannesburg

saadiekad25@gmail.com

083 4093926

INFORMATION SHEET DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

Date: 18/07/2019

Dear Deputy Principal

My name is Saadieka Dawood and I am a part –time post graduate student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with the principal and other members of the School Management Team (SMT- the Deputy Principal and a HOD) as well as the completion of questionnaires by teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. I wish to also spend two days at your school in order to observe the ethos and culture of teaching and learning in your school. I would also appreciate it if I would be granted permission to view as management plans as well as tools used for supervisory purposes.

The reason why I have chosen your school that it is fits the profile of my research topic.

I want to come in and do an interview with you regarding my research topic. This interview will take place after school hours. It will last for about 30-60 minutes and will be audiotaped as this facilitates transcription and validated data. A transcript of the interview will be made available to you for verification. Your name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All data including audio recordings, observation sheets, interview transcripts and completed questionnaires will be stored at the Wits School of Education. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

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You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study. A copy of the completed of my completed research project will be forwarded to your school.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Saadieka Dawood

49 Fortuna Street

Mayfair-West

Johannesburg

saadiekad25@gmail.com

083 4093926

Deputy Principals Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called:

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artifacts	**Circle one**
I agree that management plans and recording tools used for supervisory purposes.	YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview or observation lesson	YES/NO
I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only	YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study.	YES/NO
I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked.	YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

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

Sign_____ Date_____

LETTER TO THE HOD, DATE:18/07/2019

Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is Saadieka Dawood. I am a MEd student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with members of the School Management Team (SMT) as well as the completion of questionnaires by teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. I wish to set up an interview with you which will last for 30-60 minutes. The interview will be conducted at a time suitable for you and will be audiotaped as this will facilitate transcription and improve the validity of the data. The interview questions will be trying to ascertain the following: The School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning, the relationship between the principal and the teachers as well as the practices used by the Principal/SMT to promote teaching and learning. A transcription of the interview will be made available to you for validation.

As a researcher I wish to also spend some time at your school in order to observe the ethos as well culture of teaching and learning. I would also appreciate have access to documentation such as management plans as well as tools used for supervisory purposes.

The reason why I have chosen your school is that it fits the profile of my research topic.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research as it will give me valuable insight into the following:

- Identify the instructional leadership practices that principals use to create a culture of teaching and learning
- Explore the extent to which school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools

- Determine the views of teachers regarding the principal's leadership practices, the culture in theirs schools and how it affects their efficacy

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

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All data including audio recordings, observation sheets, interview transcripts and completed questionnaires will be stored at the Wits School of Education. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

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

Yours sincerely,

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INFORMATION SHEET HOD

Date: 18/07/2019

Dear HOD

My name is Saadieka Dawood and I am a part –time post graduate student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with the principal and other members of the School Management Team (SMT- the Deputy Principal and a HOD) as well as the completion of questionnaires by teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. As a researcher I wish to also spend two days at your school in order to observe the ethos culture of teaching and learning in your school. I would also appreciate it if I would be granted permission to view as management plans as well as tools used for supervisory purposes.

The reason why I have chosen your school that it is fits the profile of my research topic.

I want to come in and do an interview with you regarding my research topic. This interview will take place after school hours. It will last for about 30-60 minutes and will be audiotaped as this facilitates transcription and validated data. A transcript of the interview will be made available to you for verification. Your name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

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You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study. A copy of the completed of my completed research project will be forwarded to your school.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

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HOD Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called:

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artifacts	**Circle one**
I agree that management plans and recording tools used for supervisory purposes.	YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview or observation lesson YES/NO

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

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study. YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

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

Sign_____ Date_____

LETTER TO THE TEACHER, DATE:01/02/2019

Dear NAME

My name is Saadieka Dawood. I am a MEd student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on **Exploring Instructional Leadership practices of school principals and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in three primary schools in Johannesburg East District.**

My research involves interviews with members of the School Management Team (SMT) as well as the completion of questionnaires by the teachers in the Foundation and InterSen Phase. I have designed a teacher questionnaire that will enable me to identify the Instructional Leadership practices of the school principal. The first part of the questionnaire has been taken / adapted from the Principals Instructional Management Scale (PIMRS) The second part of the questionnaire aim to measure the school culture: It has been adapted from the School Culture Triage Survey developed by Phillips (1996) and can be used to measure professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality/ efficacy and self-determination.

I also wish to also spend some time at your school in order to observe the culture of teaching and learning.

The reason why I have chosen your school is that it fits the profile of my research topic.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research as it will give me valuable insight into the following:

- Identify the instructional leadership practices that principals use to create a culture of teaching and learning
- Explore the extent to which school principals contribute towards a positive climate in schools
- Determine the views of teachers regarding the principal's leadership practices, the culture in theirs schools and how it affects their efficacy

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

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

All data including observation sheets and completed questionnaires will be stored at the Wits School of Education. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

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

Yours sincerely,

Saadieka Dawood

49 Fortuna Street

Mayfair-West

Johannesburg

saadiekad25@gmail.com

083 4093926

Teachers Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called:

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission for questionnaire

I agree to fill in a question and answer sheet. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

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

Sign_____ Date_____

Principal interview questions – semi structured.

Section A -Here I am trying to ascertain the School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in school

1. Describe a day in the life of the principal at this school.
2. What is your conception of a "good school" and would you classify your school as a good school? Substantiate why you say so.
3. For the purposes of my research, school climate and culture are closely related to the atmosphere in the school. Do you think teachers in your school have a sense of pride, sees the school as a community and works towards establishing a positive climate in the school? What mechanisms do you use to ensure a positive school climate?

4 a. Would you say that in your school there is a culture of teaching and learning. If yes, how is this evident? If no, how is this evident?

b. When you think about improving the culture of teaching and learning in your school, how will you go / are you going about this.

Section B – In this section I hope to understand the relationship between the principal and the teachers.

1. Would you say that the relationship between the principal and teachers is important? Why? How do you create good relationships with your teachers?
2. What do you think are the most important features in order to have a good / successful work relationship between principal- teacher?

3. As a principal a) do you consider the personal wellbeing of your teachers as important and how do you ensure that they are ok?

b. Would you say that there is a level of trust between you and your teachers? Why do you say so?

c. Are you consistent in your treatment of all your teachers? How do you ensure teacher commitment and therefore improved learner outcomes?

4. How would you describe the relationship between the teachers in your schools? Would you describe them as team players or are their cliques that are complacent and resistant to new ideas and change?

Section C- Here I would like to ascertain the instructional leadership practices used to promote teaching and learning

1. Would you say that you maintain high visibility on the school ground? How often do you pop into teachers' classes for informal visits? Do you provide constructive feedback?
2. Are you involved in observing lessons for developmental purposes? How do you identify the developmental needs of teachers such as to enhance their self-efficacy?
3. Are you happy with the instructional practices of the teachers in your school? With this movement towards 21st century skills, are you encouraging teachers to change their practice? How?
4. Are the teachers in your school keen on working together, collaborating and sharing ideas? How is professional development perceived by your teachers and how do you promote and encourage Professional Development in your school?

Deputy Principal interview questions

Section A -Here I am trying to ascertain the School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in school

1. Describe a day in the life of the deputy principal at this school.
2. What is your conception of a "good school" and would you classify your school as a good school? Substantiate why you say so.
3. For the purposes of my research, school climate and culture are closely related to the atmosphere in the school. Do you think teachers in your school have a sense of pride, sees the school as a community and works towards establishing a positive climate in the school? What mechanisms do you use to ensure a positive school climate?

4 a. Would you say that in your school there is a culture of teaching and learning. If yes, how is this evident? If no, how is this evident?

b. When you think about improving the culture of teaching and learning in your school, how will you go / are you going about this.

Section B- this section I hope to understand the relationship between the School Management Team (SMT) and the teachers.

1. In your opinion, how important is it for the SMT to project a united front when communicating academic goals to teachers and staff?

2. What are the features that constitute a good relationship between SMT members? Do you think that it is important for the members of the School Management Team (SMT) to have a good relationship with each other (especially with the principal) Why do you say so?
3. What do you think are the most important features in order to have a good / successful work relationship between SMT members (especially the principal)- teacher?
4. How would you describe the relationship between the teachers in your schools? Would you describe them as team players or are their cliques that are complacent and resistant to new ideas and change?

Section C- Here I would like to ascertain the practices used to promote teaching and learning

1. As Deputy Principal, how often do you meet with Head of Departments (HODs) and staff to communicate the academic goals of the school as well as analyse results in specific subjects and plan for intervention with HODs and teachers? Do you think this is important to do? Why?
2. In your opinion, how effective is the supervisory services (Class visits, book control etc) in your school? Do you think it's important for teachers to get feedback on their teaching practices and be held accountable? If yes, why do you say this?
3. As DP, you are obviously involved in observing lessons for developmental purposes? How do you identify the developmental needs of teachers such as to enhance their self-efficacy?
4. Are you happy with the instructional practices of the teachers in your school? With this movement towards 21st century skills, are you encouraging teachers to change their practice? How?
5. Are the teachers in your school keen on working together, collaborating and sharing ideas? If yes, how is this achieved? How is professional development perceived by your teachers and how do you promote and encourage Professional Development (PD)in your school?

HOD interview questions

Section A -Here I am trying to ascertain the School Climate and the Culture of Teaching and Learning in school

1. Describe a day in the life of the HOD at this school.
2. What is your conception of a "good school" and would you classify your school as a good school? Substantiate why you say so.
3. For the purposes of my research, school climate and culture are closely related to the atmosphere in the school. Do you think teachers in your school have a sense of pride, sees the school as a community and works towards establishing a positive climate in the school? What mechanisms do you use to ensure a positive school climate?

4 a. Would you say that in your school there is a culture of teaching and learning. If yes, how is this evident? If no, how is this evident?

b. When you think about improving the culture of teaching and learning in your school, how will you go / are you going about this.

Section B- this section I hope to understand the relationship between the School Management Team (SMT) and the teachers.

5. In your opinion, how important is it for the SMT to project a united front when communicating academic goals to teachers and staff?
6. What are the features that constitute a good relationship between SMT members? Do you think that it is important for the members of the School Management Team (SMT) to have a good relationship with each other (especially with the principal) Why do you say so?
7. What do you think are the most important features in order to have a good / successful work relationship between SMT members (especially the principal)- teacher?
8. How would you describe the relationship between the teachers in your schools? Would you describe them as team players or are their cliques that are complacent and resistant to new ideas and change?

Section C- Here I would like to ascertain the practices used to promote teaching and learning

4. As Head of Departments (HODs) how often do you meet with staff to communicate the academic goals of the school as well as analyse results in specific subjects and plan for intervention with teachers? Do you think this is important to do? Why?
5. In your opinion, how effective is the supervisory services (Class visits, book control etc) in your school? Do you think it's important for teachers to get feedback on their teaching practices and be held accountable? If yes, why do you say this?
6. As HOD, you are obviously involved in observing lessons for developmental purposes? How do you identify the developmental needs of teachers such as to enhance their self-efficacy?
7. Are you happy with the instructional practices of the teachers in your school? With this movement towards 21st century skills, are you encouraging teachers to change their practice? How?
8. Are the teachers in your school keen on working together, collaborating and sharing ideas? If yes, how is this achieved? How is professional development perceived by

your teachers and how do you promote and encourage Professional Development (PD)in your school?

Teacher Questionnaire

Section A – Demographic information

Teachers name: (optional) _____Age in years: _____

Sex: _____ No of years' experience: _____

Years at the school: _____

Educational Qualifications: _____

Race: _____ Major teaching subjects? Field: _____

Section B – This part of the questionnaire aims at identifying the instructional practices of the school principal. The Questions have been taken and /adapted from the Principals Instructional Management Scale designed by Dr Phillip Hallinger

This questionnaire is designed to provide a profile of principal leadership. It consists of behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviours. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your observations of the principal's leadership over the past school year.

Read each statement carefully. Then circle the number that best fits the specific job behaviour or practice of this principal during the past school year. For the response to each statement:

5 represents Almost Always
4 represents Frequently
3 represents Sometimes
2 represents Seldom
1 represents Almost Never

To what extent does the school principal:

	5	4	3	2	1
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school.					
2. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community (School Governing Body (SGB), parents, learners , teachers etc)					
3. Refer to the school's academic goals when making decisions related to curriculum and ensure that the priorities of teachers in the classroom is consistent with the goals and direction of the school.					

4. Clarifies who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, deputy principal, or grade heads)					
5. Participate actively in reviewing curricular materials that will promote academic goals.					
6.Use tests and other performances of learner's (eg Common Exams, External Olympiads such as Conquesta)as a measure to assess progress toward school goals					
7.Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements and other interruptions					
8. Encourage teachers to use teaching time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts					
9. Take time to talk informally with teachers during their administrative periods or breaks					
10. Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities					
11. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance					
12. Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performances by writing memos for annual appraisal purposes					
13. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school					
14.Ensure that in service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals					
15. Lead or attend teacher in-service activities concerned with teaching practices					

18. Set aside time at staff meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities					

This section of the questionnaire aims to measure the school culture: It has been adapted from the School Culture Triage Survey developed by Phillips (1996)

5 represents Almost Always

4 represents Frequently

3 represents Sometimes

2 represents Seldom

1 represents Almost Never

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION:

Teachers:	5	4	3	2	1
are actively involved in discussing teaching strategies and issues related to curriculum					
are involved in decision making regarded to LTSM					
collaborate and reach consensus around the learner code of conduct					
Use organisational time to plan as a collective rather than separate individuals					

AFFILIATIVE COLLEGIALITY

	5	4	3	2	1
Teachers celebrate and support the values of the school					
Teachers socialise outside of school and enjoy each other's company					
The school reflects a true sense of being a community					
The school programme reflects many opportunities for teachers to communicate.					
Sharing of new ideas are shared and appreciated by all staff					
There is a rich tradition of celebrations and rituals in this school					

SELF DETERMINATION / EFFICACY

	5	4	3	2	1
In the event of something not working the motto is "prevention is better than cure "					
Members in the school are interdependent and they value each other					
Alternative solutions to problems/issues are looked for, rather than conventional methods					
Members of the school community look to define the problems or issues they face rather than blame others.					
People in the school feel empowered to make decisions rather than waiting for management to give them solutions					
People here are happy to be part of this school					

Observation Schedule:

In this school	Yes	No	Comment
- There is an inviting atmosphere – staff is friendly and happy			
- The principal clearly displays a leadership role and motivates staff, staff stay informed through clear communication (morning meeting)			
- Teachers are self-disciplined and eagerly assist each other- collaboration			

- Learners are self-disciplined and actively involved in the learning process			
- There are few interruptions to the teaching programme and teaching and learning is prioritised			
- Principal and SMT members come to the staffroom during break and engage with teachers			

Presenting the teacher questionnaire data –School X

Instructional Leadership Practices	**Rating Scale**				
Scale :5 represents Almost Always, 4 represents Frequently ,3 represents Sometimes 2 represents Seldom ,1 represents Almost Never	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school.	√√√	√			
2. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community (School Governing Body (SGB), parents, learners , teachers etc.)	√√	√√			
3. Refer to the school's academic goals when making decisions related to curriculum and ensure that the priorities of teachers in the classroom is consistent with the goals and direction of the school.	√√√√				
4. Clarifies who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, deputy principal, or grade heads)	√√√√				
5. Participate actively in reviewing curricular materials that will promote academic goals.	√√	√√			

6.Use tests and other performances of learner's (e.g. Common Exams, External Olympiads such as Conquesta)as a measure to assess progress toward school goals	√√√	√			
7.Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements and other interruptions	√√	√√			
8. Encourage teachers to use teaching time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	√√√√				
9. Take time to talk informally with teachers during their administrative periods or breaks	√	√√		√	
10. Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	√√√√				
11. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	√	√√	√		
12. Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performances by writing memos for annual appraisal purposes	√√√	√			
13. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school	√√	√√			
14.Ensure that in service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals	√√√	√			
15. Lead or attend teacher in-service activities concerned with teaching practices	√√	√√			
18. Set aside time at staff meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities	√√	√√			

School Culture:

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION:

Teachers:	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
are actively involved in discussing teaching strategies and issues related to curriculum	√	√√	√		
are involved in decision making regarded to LTSM	√	√	√	√	
collaborate and reach consensus around the learner code of conduct	√	√	√√		
Use organisational time to plan as a collective rather than separate individuals	√√	√	√		

AFFILIATIVE COLLEGIALITY

	5	4	3	2	1
Teachers celebrate and support the values of the school	√√	√√			
Teachers socialise outside of school and enjoy each other's company		√	√√	√	
The school reflects a true sense of being a community	√	√√	√		
The school programme reflects many opportunities for teachers to communicate.	√	√	√√		
Sharing of new ideas are shared and appreciated by all staff	√√	√	√		
There is a rich tradition of celebrations and rituals in this school	√√	√		√	

SELF DETERMINATION / EFFICACY

	5	4	3	2	1
In the event of something not working the motto is "prevention is better than cure "	√	√	√√		
Members in the school are interdependent and they value each other	√	√√	√		
Alternative solutions to problems/issues are looked for, rather than conventional methods	√√	√	√		
Members of the school community look to define the problems or issues they face rather than blame others.	√	√	√	√	
People in the school feel empowered to make decisions rather than waiting for management to give them solutions	√√	√√			

People here are happy to be part of this school	√	√√	√		

Presenting the teacher questionnaire data –School Y

Instructional Leadership Practices **Scale :5 represents Almost Always, 4 represents Frequently ,3 represents Sometimes 2 represents Seldom ,1 represents Almost Never**	**Rating Scale**				
	5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school.	√√√	√√√	√√		
2. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community (School Governing Body (SGB), parents, learners , teachers etc.)	√√	√√√	√√	√	
3. Refer to the school's academic goals when making decisions related to curriculum and ensure that the priorities of teachers in the classroom is consistent with the goals and direction of the school.		√√√	√√√√	√	
4. Clarifies who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, deputy principal, or grade heads)	√√√	√√	√√√		

5. Participate actively in reviewing curricular materials that will promote academic goals.	√	√√√	√√√√		
6.Use tests and other performances of learner's (e.g. Common Exams, External Olympiads such as Conquesta)as a measure to assess progress toward school goals	√√	√√	√√√√		
7.Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements and other interruptions		√√	√√√√√	√	
8. Encourage teachers to use teaching time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	√	√√√√√	√√		
9. Take time to talk informally with teachers during their administrative periods or breaks	√	√√√√√	√	√	
10. Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	√√√	√√√	√√		
11. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	√	√√√√	√√	√	
12. Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performances by writing memos for annual appraisal purposes	√	√	√√√√√	√	
13. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school	√	√√	√√√√	√	
14.Ensure that in service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals	√	√√√	√√	√√	
15. Lead or attend teacher in-service activities concerned with teaching practices	√	√√	√√√√	√	
18. Set aside time at staff meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities	√	√√	√√√√	√	

School Culture:

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION:

Teachers:	5	4	3	2	1
are actively involved in discussing teaching strategies and issues related to curriculum	√	√√√	√√	√√	
are involved in decision making regarded to LTSM	√	√√√√	√√		√
collaborate and reach consensus around the learner code of conduct	√	√√√	√√	√√	
Use organisational time to plan as a collective rather than separate individuals	√	√√	√√√	√√	

AFFILIATIVE COLLEGIALITY

	5	4	3	2	1
Teachers celebrate and support the values of the school		√√√	√√√	√√	
Teachers socialise outside of school and enjoy each other's company		√√√	√√√	√	√
The school reflects a true sense of being a community	√√	√	√√√√	√	
The school programme reflects many opportunities for teachers to communicate.		√√	√√√√√	√	
Sharing of new ideas are shared and appreciated by all staff		√√	√√√√	√√	
There is a rich tradition of celebrations and rituals in this school	√	√√√	√√√√		

SELF DETERMINATION / EFFICACY

	5	4	3	2	1
In the event of something not working the motto is "prevention is better than cure "	√√	√√√	√√√		
Members in the school are interdependent and they value each other	√√	√√	√√	√√	
Alternative solutions to problems/issues are looked for, rather than conventional methods		√√√	√√√	√√	
Members of the school community look to define the problems or issues they face rather than blame others.		√√√	√√√√	√	
People in the school feel empowered to make decisions rather than waiting for management to give them solutions	√√√	√√	√√	√	

People here are happy to be part of this school	√√	√√√	√√√		

Presenting the teacher questionnaire data –School Z

Instructional Leadership Practices **Scale :5 represents Almost Always, 4 represents Frequently ,3 represents Sometimes 2 represents Seldom ,1 represents Almost Never**	**Rating Scale**				
	5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school.	√ √	√√	√	√	
2. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community (School Governing Body (SGB), parents, learners , teachers etc.)	√√	√	√√√		
3. Refer to the school's academic goals when making decisions related to curriculum and ensure that the priorities of teachers in the classroom is consistent with the goals and direction of the school.	√	√√√	√	√	
4. Clarifies who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, deputy principal, or grade heads)	√√ √√	√		√	
5. Participate actively in reviewing curricular materials that will promote academic goals.	√√	√	√	√√	

6.Use tests and other performances of learner's (e.g. Common Exams, External Olympiads such as Conquesta)as a measure to assess progress toward school goals	√√√	√	√√		
7.Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements and other interruptions		√√√		√√	√
8. Encourage teachers to use teaching time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	√√	√√	√	√	
9. Take time to talk informally with teachers during their administrative periods or breaks	√√		√√√	√	
10. Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	√√		√√√	√	
11. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	√√		√ √√		
12. Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performances by writing memos for annual appraisal purposes	√		√√	√√	√
13. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school	√	√	√	√√	√
14.Ensure that in service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals	√	√√√	√	√	
15. Lead or attend teacher in-service activities concerned with teaching practices	√	√√	√√√		
18. Set aside time at staff meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities		√	√√√	√√	

School Culture:

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION:

Teachers:	5	4	3	2	1
are actively involved in discussing teaching strategies and issues related to curriculum	√	√√	√√√		
are involved in decision making regarded to LTSM	√√	√	√√	√	
collaborate and reach consensus around the learner code of conduct	√	√	√√√	√	
Use organisational time to plan as a collective rather than separate individuals	√		√√√√	√	

AFFILIATIVE COLLEGIALITY

	5	4	3	2	1
Teachers celebrate and support the values of the school	√		√√√√√		
Teachers socialise outside of school and enjoy each other's company		√	√√	√√	√
The school reflects a true sense of being a community		√√	√√	√√	
The school programme reflects many opportunities for teachers to communicate.	√	√√	√√	√	
Sharing of new ideas are shared and appreciated by all staff	√		√√√√	√	
There is a rich tradition of celebrations and rituals in this school		√√√	√ √√		

SELF DETERMINATION / EFFICACY

	5	4	3	2	1
In the event of something not working the motto is "prevention is better than cure "		√	√√√√√		
Members in the school are interdependent and they value each other		√√√	√ √√		
Alternative solutions to problems/issues are looked for, rather than conventional methods		√√√	√√	√	
Members of the school community look to define the problems or issues they face rather than blame others.		√	√√ √√	√	
People in the school feel empowered to make decisions rather than waiting for management to give them solutions		√√	√	√√	√

People here are happy to be part of this school		√√√√	√√		