

**THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
AS AN ASPECT TO IMPROVE LEARNER
ACHIEVEMENT**

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved, late mother EVELYN NDLANGAMANDLA who always wanted to see me illuminating in life.



(ii)

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In completing this research, I would like to humbly express my profound thanks and gratitude to:

- 1 The Almighty God for giving me wisdom and courage to complete a task of this nature. To Him, I am forever grateful.
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SINOPSIS

Die algemene doel van hierdie navorsing is om die rol van onderrigleierskap en die verbetering van leerprestasie onder leerdes te ondersoek. Die belangrikste aspekte waarop effektiewe onderrigleierskap berus, word bespreek. Die navorsing voorsien ook riglyne aan skoolhoofde oor hoe om onderrigleierskap te implementeer om leerderprestasie te verbeter. Die navorsingstudie word in vyf hoofstukke bespreek.

Hoofstuk een verskaf die konteks van navorsing, die formulering van die probleem, die doel met die navorsing en die navorsingsmetode wat gebruik gaan word. In hierdie hoofstuk word die konsepte wat gebruik gaan word belig en die studieveld word afgebaken.

Hoofstuk twee behels 'n literatuurstudie waar die rol van die skoolhoof as 'n onderrigleier en die onderlinge verhouding tussen onderrigleierskap en die prestasie van leerders bespreek word. Die vernaamste aspekte van onderrigleierskap word hier ook toegelig.

In hoofstuk drie word die onderwerp van die navorsingsinstrument of bespreek. Vrae wat bepalend vir onderrigleierskap is, word ook hier bespreek.

Hoofstuk vier behels die statistiese ontleding analyse van data. Dit verduidelik die enkelveranderlike meerveranderlike statistiese toetse wat die verskillende persepsies van opvoeders in die Oosvaal streek van die Mpumalanga provinsie, toets.

Hoofstuk vyf bevat die bevindings en voorstelle vir moontlike verdere navorsing.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND ELUCIDATION OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The school effectiveness studies that began appearing in the 1970's have suggested that leadership in schools with improving learner achievement differed from leadership in schools with declining learner achievement. The difference was mainly due to the fact that principals of schools that were improving were

seen to be instructional leaders who are focused on the implementation of effective instructional programmes (Sybouts and Wendel, 1994: 19). The research by Hallinger and Heck that was conducted in 1996, supports the above argument. In their research they assessed forty studies of the principals' instructional role. Their report illuminated that three quarters of their studies conceptualised the role of the principal in effective schools as the instructional leader.

When emphasizing the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement, Hopkins (2001:16) mentions that the domain of instructional leadership is the focus on student learning and achievement. Gary (1993:37) also supports the suggestion that there is a relationship between the leadership of the school and learner achievement. He contends that learning should be placed at the heart of school leadership. In order for principals to achieve excellence in learner achievement it is essential to exercise effective instructional leadership which is the path to good learning and teaching (National Department of Education, 2001:1).

The above concepts of instructional leadership suggest that principals are shouldered with the responsibility of propelling the teaching and learning activities in the right direction. Nanus (1996:5) succinctly states that the principal should constantly improve every aspect of management and governance and he/she should always strive for excellence.

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The principal who is an instructional leader helps to shape and create a school where learners continue to learn and continuous progress in learner achievement is experienced (Boyd, 2002:159).

According to Blase and Blase (1999:353) instructional leadership is construed as a blend of several tasks such as shaping and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instructional practices, developing and co-ordinating the curriculum, developing staff and evaluating progress on learner achievement. The above definition is indicative of collaborative endeavours that need to be implemented by the principal in order to achieve good classroom practice which may result into high learner achievement.

Hallinger and Heck (1996:185) emphasize the effect of school leadership on learner achievement when they contend that instructional leadership can enhance school effectiveness and learner achievement. However, schools differ from each other in their achievements (Wong and Evers, 2001:14). When explaining the difference between poorly performing schools and well-performing schools Baker (1993:199) argues that educationists often refer to the socio-economic circumstances of the area in which the school is located. On the other hand, even in these areas there can be effective schools with high levels of learner achievement. Numerous studies have been conducted in trying to understand why learners from certain schools have exceptionally good academic results, especially in Grade 12, whilst those from other schools continue to perform poorly in the same examinations (Hallinger and Heck, 1996: 55-61).

The above situation seems to be currently prevailing among schools in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa. Secondary schools in the same environment with equal provision of resources perform differently to a large extent. A similar situation is experienced among primary schools existing in

similar environments. There are those schools that are dysfunctional with poor academic performance and those that are effective with good learner achievement.

According to Squelch and Lemmer (1994:19) school leadership is a factor that needs to be considered when explaining differences in learner achievement between schools. Furthermore, Hargreaves (1994: 55) contends that the success of any educational institution depends on the quality of the leadership, on the dedication of the staff and on mutual working towards a shared vision in a happy environment characterised by teamwork and pride. The above studies are also confirmed by Murphy and Louis (1998:61) when they contend that the principal is expected to be the instructional leader, to encourage new curricula and experimentation, upgrade staff quality, add new programmes and alter attitudes.

The above concepts regarding instructional leadership lead one to believe that the instructional leadership of the principal has a direct impact on learner achievement. Therefore, assessment of the instructional leadership of the principal should enable the researcher to identify what essential features are responsible for excellent learner achievement.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

It is evident that for instructional leadership to be effective, among others things, principals should have programs for classroom observation and educator appraisal.

Weller (1999: 236) contends that evaluating becomes difficult when principals do not feel confident about their own knowledge of instruction. Since most of them have been teachers before they became principals, they are aware of how teachers feel about principals who embark on classroom visits and then make judgements

concerning their competence as educators. This study will probe the perceptions of educators about the use of instructional leadership to promote the achievement of learners.

Furthermore, Boyd (2002: 128) argues that even for principals who do manage to make frequent visits to the classrooms, the task of keeping a record of all the data can become laborious. Most evaluation instruments are designed with the idea in mind that if you did not write the information down while observing a class, "then it did not happen". The principal is then faced with the problem of being able to adequately assess his/her observation and write it down at the same time. Consequently, time then becomes a crucial factor in effectively evaluating educators and the entire school program. In order to escape the responsibility of effective observation, most principals rank time as the number one factor that prohibits them from being the instructional leaders they would like to be. In order to inculcate a sense of confidence in principals as instructional leaders, the researcher will attempt to discover the sort of guidelines that can be provided to principals on to how to assess instructional leadership in a school situation.

The problem as illuminated above can be condensed into the following questions:

- What is instructional leadership.
- How can instructional leadership be used to promote learner achievement.
- What are the perceptions of educators with respect to the criteria identified in the literature study to assess instructional leadership as an aid to learner achievement.

- What sort of guidelines can be provided to principals regarding the assessment of instructional leadership in a school situation.

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1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The general aim of this research is to investigate the role of instructional leadership in learner achievement. Therefore, in order to consummate the above general aim the following specific objectives need to be realized namely to:

- investigate how instructional leadership can improve learner achievement,
- probe the perceptions of educators with respect to the role of instructional leadership in enhancing learner achievement, and
- provide guidelines to principals as to how to implement instructional leadership in order to improve learner achievement.

Having stated the aims, a discussion of the research method is now necessary.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

A literature study will be undertaken in order to clarify the concept of instructional leadership and its impact on learner achievement. The literature survey will serve as bedrock for the formulation of a structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaire will be used to probe the perceptions of educators with respect to the role of instructional leadership in learner achievement. Data collected will be statistically analyzed and appropriate findings will be made.

1.5 DEMARCATION OF THE INVESTIGATION

The study will be conducted within the Eastvaal Region of the Mpumalanga Department of Education. Random sampling will be used and it is hoped that findings can be generalized throughout the Province of Mpumalanga.

Having stated the delimitation of the research sample it is now necessary to clarify the important concepts of this study.

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1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.6.1 Instructional leadership.

Leithwood (1999:8) perceives instructional leadership as an approach to leadership that emphasizes the behaviour of educators as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. This definition perceives instructional leadership as the leadership that puts instruction and learning at the centre.

Hopkins (2001: 114) contends that instructional leadership is about creating learning opportunities for both students and teachers. This definition embraces both the development of educators and learners. It suggests that developmental programs for educators need to be put in place. Previously the practice of instructional leadership was limited to one of inspection and judgement of classroom activities (Gordon, 1997:117).

The definition by Weller (1999:36) refers to instructional leadership as : "the high visibility and involvement of the principal in every phase of the school programme". This definition includes almost all the initiatives that the principal takes. It also suggests that through such active involvement the principal has a

sustaining impact on the improvement of learner achievement. Boyd (2002:163) summarises instructional leadership by saying: "effective instructional leadership is embedded in the culture of the school as it joins collaboration, collegiality, inquiry, peer support and reflective conversation into a circular promotion driving professional dialogue".

For the purpose of this research instructional leadership will be viewed as a blend of several tasks such as supervision of classroom instruction, staff development, curriculum development and promotion of an orderly learning climate.



1.6.2 Effective schools

Murphy and Louis (1998:80) define an effective school as the school with an atmosphere which motivates educators and learners to improve the school and improve themselves. Effective schools are those schools which are in constant state of dissatisfaction with their outcomes (Weller,1999:35).The above definitions perceive effective schools as those that always strive for excellence in learner achievement.

According to Sybouts and Wendel (1994:20) an effective school is a school where educators are responsible for producing acceptable results. This definition views an effective school as one which has educators that are effective in their teaching. The essential feature of an effective school is the attainment of high academic achievement (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:13).

For the purpose of this research, the following definition will be used:

"An effective school is one which has effective instructional leadership, high level of learner achievement and high staff expectations for learners".

1.6.3 Learner achievement

Learner achievement is explained by Boyd (2002:155) in terms of changes in abilities, temperament, motivation and situation, each of which mediates or affects the other. The above explanation encompasses change in behaviour and attitude of the learner. It elucidates that, after the learner has been taken through an instructional programme he/she sees things differently and he/she begins to act in a responsible manner.



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For the purpose of the research, learner achievement will be viewed as the attainment of good performance by learners and attainment of high academic standards through continuous efforts of the principal as the instructional leader.

Having clarified the concepts that are pertinent to the research project, the plan of the study will now follow.

1.7 PLAN OF THE STUDY

Chapter one introduces the topic under discussion, the research problem, the aim of the research and the methodology to be used. Demarcation of the study is also

outlined and key concepts involved in the research are clarified.

Chapter two will review the related literature and will build a conceptual framework of instructional leadership. When applying it to the situation in Mpumalanga schools, it will hopefully expose the contextual nature of instructional leadership and its impact on learner achievement.

Chapter three will deal with the design of the research instrument. Questions formulated pertaining to instructional leadership as an aspect to improve learner achievement will be discussed

Chapter four will capture the statistical analysis of the data. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire will also be analyzed. Discussion will involve various statistical techniques used to analyze the data.

Chapter five will consist of the findings, recommendations and suggestions for possible further research.



1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter constitutes the framework of what the research project entails. The aim of this research is to investigate the role of instructional leadership in learner achievement. Findings could be used to assist principals in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa to improve the achievement of learners in their schools. The next chapter will provide a theoretical framework of instructional leadership as the role of the principal.



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2. CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE ON INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AS AN ASPECT TO IMPROVE LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the light of what has been said in the preceding chapter, chapter 2 will concentrate on developing a literature review which underpins the theoretical perspective of this research. A number of factors that characterise instructional leadership will be dealt with.

More light will be shed on the role of the principal as an instructional leader and on how his/her instructional leadership impacts on the achievement of learners.

For the purpose of this research, it is assumed that effective instructional leadership is an aspect that is lacking in the leadership of most schools in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa, hence the performance of schools especially in respect to Grade 12 learners, in their final examination is constantly poor.

The National statistics of Grade 12 results for the past three years that is shown in the table below is presenting a situation that reflects Mpumalanga as one of the two provinces that are constantly performing poorly (Mpumalanga Department of Education, 2003;2).



NATIONAL STATISTICS

PROVINCE	2001	2002	2003
NORTHERN CAPE	84,20	89,95	90,95
WESTERN CAPE	82,70	86,50	87,50
GAUTENG	73,60	78,10	80,95
KWAZULU-NATAL	62,80	70,80	77,50
NORTH WEST	62,50	67,80	70,95
LIMPOPO	59,50	69,50	70,00
FREE STATE	59,00	70,70	80,00
MPUMALANGA	46,90	55,80	58,90
EASTERN CAPE	45,60	51,80	60,00

As a result of the above mentioned presentation of results, the primary and secondary schools in this province have a tremendous challenge to revoke the situation. Primary schools should build a concrete foundation that is sustainable and fertile so that the learners they promote to secondary schools are ready for that particular phase.

Although there are many reasons that are advanced by principals and educators in order to justify their poor performance, the lack of a high quality instructional leadership on the part of the principal is one of the most important aspects that results in poor learner achievements (Weller, 1999:48). That is confirmed by Boyd (2002:159) when he contends that the principal who is an instructional leader helps to shape and create a school where learners continue to learn and continuous progress in learner achievement is experienced.

Furthermore, school effectiveness research suggests that improvements in learner achievement are most likely to be gained in schools that are self managing and where effective instructional leadership particularly by the principal is a characteristic (Dimmock, 1995:2).

However, there is a need to look closer at the various definitions of instructional leadership, with the aim of identifying some common features that have positive effects on the achievement of learners.

2.2 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP DEFINED

Educational researchers define instructional leadership in a variety of ways:

Seyfarth (1999:169) defines it as an eclectic merging of instructional supervision, curriculum development and staff development. The definition is supported by Blase and Blasé (1999:53) when they contend that instructional leadership is a blend of several tasks such as shaping and communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating

Instructional practices, developing and co-ordinating the curriculum, developing staff and evaluating progress on learner achievement.

According to Leithwood (1994:3) instructional leadership is a series of behaviours that is designed to affect classroom instruction. In this environment principals are responsible for informing teachers about new educational strategies, technologies and tools that apply to effective instruction. Principals must also assist teachers in critiquing these tools to determine their applicability to the classroom (Whitaker and Moses, 1994:156)

Instructional leadership encompasses those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning and it comprises of the following tasks: defining the purpose of schooling, setting school wide goals, providing the resources needed for learning to occur, supervising and evaluating teachers, co-ordinating staff development programmes and creating collegial relationships with and among teachers (Van De Grift, 1993:24)

It is in the spirit of the above definition that Weller (1999:36) refers to instructional leadership as the high visibility and involvement of the principal in every phase of the school programme.

Furthermore Jantzi and Leithwood (1996:515) highlight six dimensions that are critical in the practice of instructional leadership. They include:

- 1 Identifying
- 2 fostering the acceptance of group goals;
- 3 providing individualized support;
- 4 intellectual stimulation and;

5 high performance expectations.

However, the definition by Gordon (1997:11) perceives instructional leadership as a democratic developmental and transformational activity based on equality and growth.

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In this definition there is an element of changing for the better with respect to the delivery of instruction and learner performance.

Premised on the above perception of instructional leadership, Smith (1997:288) understands instructional leadership as an discursive, critical study of classic interaction to achieve social justice.

Various researchers have best defined instructional leadership in terms of observable critical behaviours of the school principal. The thread that runs through all of the definitions suggests that instructional leadership behaviours are fundamental aspects to improve learner achievement in poorly performing schools.

The relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement will also be tackled in this research at a later stage.

At this stage, it is necessary to delve into the role of the principal as an instructional leader.

2.3 **EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Different views on the concept of instructional leadership will now be discussed.

Mc Ewan (2003:197) perceives the instructional leader as a principal who performs at high levels in four areas that is, resource provider, instructional resource, communication and visible presence. The four areas as alluded to above will now be outlined:

- 1 **as a resource provider**, the principal takes action to marshal personnel and resources within the building, district and community to achieve the school's vision and goals
- 2 **as instructional resource**, the principal sets expectations for continual improvement of the instructional program and actively engages in staff development. Through this involvement, the principal participates in the improvement of classroom circumstances that enhance active teaching



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- 1 **as communicator**, the principal models commitment to school goals, articulates a vision towards instructional goals and the means for integrating instructional planning and goal attainment, and sets and adheres to clear performance standards for instruction and teacher behaviour
- 2 **as visible presence** the principal is out and around in the school, visiting classrooms, attending departmental meetings, walking the hallways and holding spontaneous conversations with staff and students. The visible principal has the opportunity to model his or her beliefs and to promote a positive instructional climate (Krug, 1993:430).

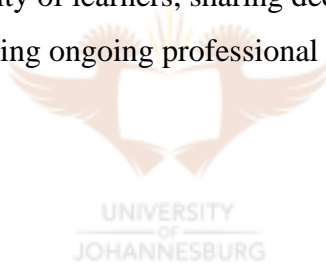
Based on the above concept of an effective instructional leader the assumption is that most principals in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa lack experience in the four areas that have been mentioned above.

Andrews, Basom and Basom (1994:100) support the above areas by contending that to

create a visible presence in day to day activities principals must model behaviours consistent with the school's vision, live and breathe their beliefs in education. They must organise resources to accomplish goals, informally “drop in on classrooms”, make staff development activities a priority and most of all to help people do the right things and to reinforce those activities.

Foriska (1994:33) describes instructional leadership as critical to the development and maintenance of an effective school. Instructional leaders must influence others to couple appropriate instructional practices with their best knowledge of the subject matter. The focus must always be on students learning and active teaching. Principals must supply teachers with resources and incentives to keep their focus on students.

The role of the principal as an instructional leader is one that requires focusing on instruction, building a community of learners, sharing decision making, sustaining the basics, leveraging time, supporting ongoing professional development for all staff



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members, re-directing resources to support a multifaceted school plan and creating a climate of integrity, inquiry and continuous improvement (Brewer, 2001:30).

Mc Ewan (2003:197) adds to the above argument by establishing seven steps to effective instructional leadership as to:

- 1 implement and achieve academic standard;
- 2 create a school culture and climate that is conducive to learning;
- 3 communicate the vision and mission of your school;
- 4 set high expectations for your staff and yourself;
- 5 develop teacher leaders;
- 6 be an instructional resource for your staff, and

- 7 establish and maintain positive relationships with students, staff and parents.

The following are the instructional leadership behaviours as highlighted by Blase and Blase (1999:64):

- 1 instructional leaders work to develop a culture of collaboration, equality and the lifelong study of teaching and learning through talk, growth and reflection.
- 2 they help to frame and support, classroom teaching and student learning, the integrated use of action research, peer coaching, the study of teaching and learning models and conscientious development of the group
- 3 they talk openly and freely with teachers about teaching and learning because instruction is a complex and artistic endeavour. Principals who are instructional leaders work to create a co-operative and non-threatening partnership with teachers that encourages openness, create a willingness to experiment and provide freedom to make and admit mistakes in the interest of improvement
- 4 they provide time and encourage peer connections for teachers. Instructional leaders believe that teachers are thoughtful, responsible, growing professionals who need to collaborate. They also enhance a professional community in schools by providing adequate time for teachers to meet with colleagues and engage in actions to link teachers with one another
- 5 instructional leaders empower teachers. A feeling of empowerment and self efficacy flourishes in a school atmosphere of free mutual dialogue

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- 1 they embrace the challenge of teachers' professional development and believe that teachers are willing to examine their work critically in order to improve.

The above behaviours have very strong, positive impacts on teachers and their classrooms instruction. Teachers gain confidence, motivation, satisfaction and high self-esteem and a sense of security (Blase and Blase, 1999:16).

Literature has revealed that the task of creating an effective and well performing

school rests with the principal. Therefore, it is imperative that principals of poorly performing schools in the Mpumalanga province should acquire the above behaviours, in order to become effective instructional leaders that will improve the performance of their learners. Hallinger and Heck (1996:185) concur with the above argument when they contend that instructional leadership can enhance school effectiveness and learner achievement.

In order to illustrate the importance of being an instructional leader Lunenberg and Ornstein (1996:348) perceive instructional leaders as also being assertive leaders. They substantiate by mentioning that assertive instructional leadership is based on courage, resolution and consistency. Assertive instructional leaders have high standards and expectations for success, the courage to implement their convictions and the resolution to stand firm on their beliefs. Assertiveness and conviction bring about substantial, widespread and enduring gains in the performance of learners.

Lunenberg and Ornstein (1996:310) also mention the role played by the principal as an instructional leader in order to benefit in the performance of learners as mentioned above:

- 2 the instructional leader emphasizes academics with learning being the most important reason for learners being in school;
- 3 models the belief that all students can learn and that schools should make a difference between success and failure;
- 4 models the school's mission and has high expectations that all learners can and will learn the curriculum content and master the basic skills;

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- 1 keeps teachers focused on the mission of the school and supplies the necessary time, resources and technical assistance necessary to promote effective classroom teaching and learning;

- 2 is actively involved in all phases of the school's instructional program; and
- 3 consistently evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum and learner progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the instructional program.

The above characteristics are supported by Gary (1993: 39 – 42) by adding the following:

- 1 as an instructional leader the principal should provide in service training programs for new and experienced teachers with the aim of constantly improving the instructional program;
- 2 the principal should provide support by reducing class disruptions and by involving teachers, learners and parents in the resolution of school problems, for example, absenteeism and late coming;
- 3 the principal should maintain quality control of the instructional program and of learner's progress; and
- 4 the instructional leader should also co-ordinate activities of the school and ensure that the entire curriculum is aligned.

In this chapter the researcher has alluded to instructional leadership as the role of the principal as indicated by various scholars. Instructional leadership puts together various behaviours and skills that are generated by both the principal and educators. Taken together, these behaviours constitute the academic environment that is experienced by the learners and which enable them to be responsive by exerting their efforts in improving their performance.

The next discussion will focus on visionary instructional leadership.

2.4 VISIONARY INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Research by Reynolds and Cuttence (1996:154) indicates that the school, which is performing well, has a visionary principal who ensures that educators execute their responsibilities in a competent manner. It is the principal's visionary leadership that encourages educators to distinguish between minimum performance and maximum performance in a classroom situation.

Visionary instructional leadership provides educators and learners with an overall sense of purpose and what responsibility is expected of them. Christie and Potterton (1997: 94) contend that creating a sense of responsibility in the school makes everyone in the school to realise the importance of good learner achievement.

Riddel (1997: 49) further elucidates that the visionary principal has a driving force and a high consideration in decent treatment of educators. The educators group themselves socially within the school to sustain the prevalence of team spirit and unity. The morale of both educators and learners is high and tasks within the school are performed effectively.

The visionary instructional leadership also aims at achieving effective teaching and learning. Educators motivate learners by trying to find a way of contact with their needs, wishes and desires through the instructional program (English and Hill, 1994: 24).

According to Weller and Hartley 1994: 25) schools that are improving in learner achievement have vision statements that focus on curricular and instructional goals. These goals become the framework for everything the school does and are translated into a vision for excellence.

It is the role of the principal as an instructional leader to make that vision a reality through communicating it to all stakeholders. The joint ownership of the school's vision provides a level of enthusiasm and commitment among others while modelling the vision serves as a daily reminder even to educators who are the key people that will make improved learner achievement a reality (Brent and Ellison, 1997:113).

The visionary school leader values the views of all stakeholders. Such leaders acknowledge that educators, parents and learners can have good suggestions and ideas for improving their schools. The shared vision propels everyone's actions. Everyone in the school is enthusiastic, optimistic and uplifted by the school vision (Hargreaves 1994: 163: Herman, 1993: 19: Nanus, 1996: 115).

Having discussed about the visionary instructional leadership and a shared vision, now, parental involvement will be discussed.

2.5 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

The South African Schools Act (1996: 6) encourages parental involvement. This Act empowers parents and school governing bodies to participate effectively for the benefit of their children. Vaillant (1993:111) contends that well performing schools benefit from a generalized form of parental support, including support in maintaining discipline.

Epstein (1998:59-60) supports the above argument by confirming that parental involvement through a variety of activities improves learner attitudes towards

school including arrival on time, reduces the number of discipline problems and it also contributes to the overall success of the school. Therefore, instructional leaders should take the initiative of developing parental involvement programs in order to foster a school culture where parents feel welcome and recognized as important stakeholders in enhancing effective teaching and learning.

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Parental involvement in school activities not only promotes learner achievement but it also fosters a more positive attitude towards the school on the part of the learner (Jones, 1993: 120). Visionary instructional leaders acknowledge the fact that parents' attitudes can strongly influence their children's progress and acceptable behaviours (Smith, 1997:76).

Parents who feel their efforts are meaningful and appreciated are likely to have sustained commitment to their contributions and will be a source of good public relations for the school. Parents and educators both play a role in the improvement of learner achievement (Everard and Morris, 1996:113).

Henderson (1995:200) relates parental involvement to learner achievement when he contends that, like the quality of teaching, active parental involvement is a good leading indicator of school successes. Parents are made to realize that the role of the teacher is to help all students to achieve high standards. When the parents and community truly embrace the goals of all students achieving to high standards the principal will be empowered to make that come true.

Furthermore, the involvement of school governing bodies in the formulation of school policies, school rules, code of conduct for learners and involvement in school budgets cultivate fruitful relationships with parent and community. They also contribute to the learning of their children by providing financial support so that the quality of teaching and learning is improved through the

purchasing of relevant resources. The above reasoning is supported by the South African Schools Act (1996:8) which mandates the school governing body to raise funds for the school in order to supplement what the State is providing.

The direct participation of parent at the school makes parental beliefs, values and their perceptions more central in the lives of both professional educators and learners. This fosters a sense of cohesion among parents for the sake of the school. Visionary instructional leaders believe that parents are entitled to explanations that they may require and justification of the decisions that are taken (Herman, 1993: 42; Murphy and Louis, 1998: 146).

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The democratic principle that is tabulated in the South African School Act (1996) entitles parents to participate and contribute effectively in the education of their children. Therefore it is the responsibility of the principal as an instructional leader to ensure that the school governing body is empowered through training in order to make their contribution beneficial to the entire institution. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:65) hold a similar opinion that co-operative school governance is a more effective way of creating an effective school because it is more inclusive and seeks to meet the collective needs and aspirations of the broader community.

Whitaker and Moses (1994:123) articulate that working together produces better results than working alone. Therefore it is imperative for the principal to communicate his or her vision of academic success for the school in terms that parents, teachers and students can understand. With a clear vision and with commitment, the school community will focus its energies around a common purpose and a shared belief in the learning standards that will guide teaching, high levels of student learning, parental understanding and community support for high quality education standards and accountability (Cross and Rice, 2000: 61-65).

It is now necessary to elaborate on the relationship between learner achievement

and instructional leadership.

2.6 **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT**

Earlier on, the implication that evolved from various contentions with respect to instructional leadership implied the existence of a relationship between the instructional leadership of the principal and learner achievement. When supporting the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement, Hopkins (2001:16) indicates that the domain of instructional leadership is the focus on student learning and achievement.

Heck and Marcoulides (1993:154) in their research surveyed principals eight instructional leadership behaviours that is:

- 1 regular class visits;
- 2 discussion of instructional issues;
- 3 eliminating class interruptions;
- 4 emphasis on tests results;
- 5 discussion about how instruction affects achievement;
- 6 monitoring of student progress;
- 7 communicating instructional goals; and
- 8 protection from external pressure.

The results of the findings summarized that principals in high achieving schools, as measured by academic achievement in a variety of areas, are more effective instructional leaders than their counterparts in consistently low achieving schools.

Heck and Marcoulides (1993:23) in their study attempted to link the principal's instructional leadership practices to learner achievements. They discovered that learner achievement in schools with principals as effective instructional leaders are

significantly greater in both reading and mathematics than those of learners in schools with average or weak leadership.

Instructional leadership behaviours have enhancing effects on teachers, emotionally, cognitively and behaviourally. Consequently, these behaviours result into improved learner academic performance (Glickman, Gordon and Ross, 1995:14).

It is the principal's passionate commitment to the student's academic achievement that will make the difference between a highly successful school and one that is ineffective. The common feature of successful schools is a principal who is an academic, instructional leader. Where schools are performing well one will find a principal who places academics first and who knows how to motivate staff and learners towards that end (Findley and Findley, 1993: 271).



The instructional leader has the opportunity to monitor the progress of learners, to mentor teachers who need help, to develop a satisfactory instructional strategy leading to improved learner performance. He/she also recognizes teachers who create classrooms with rich academic environment that motivate students and that produce the desired student mastery of the content being studied (Krug, 1993: 16).

Furthermore, research by Hallinger and Leithwood (1996:110) provides evidence that principals who are effective instructional leaders are a fundamental component in schools that embrace high levels of student engagement, as the main effective medium to affect learner achievement.

If a school is to be instructionally successful as a learning community, it will be because of the instructional leadership of the principal (Prawat, 1993:9).

However Siens and Ebmeir (1996:17) perceive the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement in a slightly different way. They agree that principals have strong, direct effects on school variables such as teacher attitudes. They expostulate that principals have little, direct effect on student outcomes as principals are removed from the classroom. They put forth that principals can only influence student achievement indirectly by working through the teaching staff.

In my opinion the above expostulation concurs with all the other arguments that have been alluded to in this research, that the instructional leadership of the principal influences learner achievement. Whether directly or indirectly it does not matter. All the behaviours that are expedited by the principal as the instructional leader are endeavouring to improve the quality of the instruction in the classroom hence the staff development is another activity that is undertaken by the principal so as to gain improved learner achievement. Therefore the impact is direct and not indirect or accidental.

Stooksberry (1996:358) views the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement from a perspective of student engagement in active learning and instructional practices. He brings into perspective the amount of time in which

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students are actively involved in academic practices on which high rates of success are experienced. High rates of success are a direct correlate to learner achievement (Carbo, 1996:64-67). Active engagement of students is described by Painter (1998:51) as a product of instructional leadership behaviours.

In view of the above relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement the assumption is that schools that are constantly performing poorly in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa, need principals who are instructional leaders and who can change the performance of learners for the better. The above

statement responds to the following questions:

- 1 What is missing from those schools in the province of Mpumalanga as they continually fail to present acceptable results especially in Grade 12 as compared to the improving performance in other provinces?
- 2 What is it that highly effective principals do on a daily basis to foster an environment where teachers and learners achieve good results?

When concluding the discussion on the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement one can highlight the following perspectives in order to give hope and encouragement to principals of these under-performing schools to become instructional leaders so that their schools could also experience improving learner achievement. Effective instructional leadership is not something principals achieve by following a checklist of tasks or a step-by-step program. But, instructional leadership can be taught and consequently be learned by those principals who need to improve their schools. In order for principals to succeed in inculcating the correct teacher behaviours, principals must create an atmosphere of trust and loyalty. Teachers need to know that their efforts are valued and appreciated by their principal. In that case, they are likely to improve their performance in respect to the delivery of the instruction. Furthermore, teachers need to know that they are free to take risks without fear of penalty.

In addition, principals need to model the value of continual learning and the ongoing pursuit of success. Opportunities need to be created for teachers to collaborate and

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learn from each other routinely and informally. Principals need to promote teacher participation in staff development activities.

Principals must provide instructional leadership so as to facilitate and promote active learning experiences for all students. Through their words and their actions, principals

model the importance of students being actively engaged in their learning and should highlight the achievement gains that are a product of this engagement (King, 1993:31). The above contention identifies a correlational relationship between the principal's instructional leadership behaviours and instructional practice. Therefore, principals must collaborate with educators to create an environment that values and supports learner's engagement and commitment. Furthermore the above argument implies that educators cannot be exonerated from accountability that may result from poor learner performance. If principals of schools in Mpumalanga are to heed the call from concerned stakeholders to change the current status quo, they should become instructional leaders. It is inevitable that they must take on a dramatically different role. The dramatically different role of the principal as an instructional leader is outlined by Brewer (2001:33) as one that requires focusing on instruction, building a community of learners, sharing decision making, sustaining the basics, leveraging time, supporting on-going professional development for all staff members, redirecting resources to support a multifaceted school plan, creating a climate of intergrity, inquiry and continuous improvement.

In the above argument Brewer suggests that instructional leadership requires a different sort of responsibility that can be adopted by principals of poorly performing schools. Instructional leadership practices are not the private property of a selected few leaders but are available to anyone who wants to accept the instructional leadership challenge (Kouzes and Posner, 1993:8). When confirming the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement, Hammond and McLaughlin (1995:597) ascribe instructional leadership to instructional improvement. They argue that to be an instructional leader the principal should have the ability to motivate and inspire teachers with the ultimate goal of impacting instructional practice on learner achievement.

There is an axiom that if educators want to improve instruction then the skills of educators and principals should be upgraded. Professional development that focuses on improving teachers' skills must be conducted and teachers should be required to provide evidence of change (Benveniste, 2002:91).

In order for teachers to gain professional growth and development, staff development programs should be put in place. The primary task of the instructional leader is staff development, curriculum development, direct assistance to teachers and action research (Boyd, 2002:150).

Having alluded to the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement, the discussion will now turn to the major dimensions of instructional leadership.

2.7 MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

After having explored various literature sources on instructional leadership, the researcher has discovered that there are major dimensions of instructional leadership that are common to most literature reviewed. These are acquired and are essential to principals who aspire to be effective instructional leaders. They are:

- 1 staff development;
- 2 teacher supervision and evaluation;
- 3 high performance expectations and trust; and
- 4 having clear vision and commitment.

2.7.1 Staff development

Staff development programmes assist educators to reach their potential by improving their skills and performance. Therefore staff development should form an integral part of the school program. Staff development implies a change in the knowledge, behaviour, understanding or attitude of groups of people.

An obvious assumption that is underpinning most staff development efforts is that such change will improve performance of educators and learners in a constructive way (Clark, 1996:34).

Effective instructional leaders organise staff development programmes that are school based and linked to the improvement of teaching and learning.

Staff growth and development refers to the instructional leadership's responsibility to develop more determined attitudes among educators. Training and professional development subjects educators into intellectual engagement and it ultimately adds meaning to the high performance expectations (Whitaker and Moses, 1994:127).

Northouse (1997:136) posits that high performance expectations subject the instructional leadership to motivating and inspiring educators to become committed and to be part of achieving excellence. Therefore, high performance expectations are essential for improving learner achievement.



Provision of staff development programs is supported by Du Four and Eaker (1993:39) when they concur that it is part of the effective instructional leadership. The effective principal allows teachers to choose topics which they deem important and they schedule these programmes in an order of priority to facilitate effective instruction.

According to the above scholars, through staff development the following behaviours are acquired by both principal and staff:

- 1 Emphasis is made on the importance of collective participation and teamwork.
- 2 Educators find the opportunity to discuss their concerns and to plan.
- 3 It ensures collaboration that is adequate to produce shared understanding and shared investment.
- 4 It is focused on crucial problems of curriculum instruction.

- 5 It ensures progressive gains in knowledge, skills and confidence.

Though the principal is expected to play a pivotal role in the process of staff development, educators who have expertise in particular areas can be engaged in facilitating the process.

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2.7.2 Teacher supervision and evaluation

It is in the context of supervision and evaluation that actual improvement of instruction and learner achievement is most likely to occur. Supervision is construed as the direct monitoring of instruction and the collection of data that may be useful in setting targets for improvement. Classroom observations play a vital role in this process. It calls for considerable personal contact between teachers and principals. It is in this context that the instructional leader will encourage educators to utilize the available resources in the most efficient and effective way to secure the best possible student learning outcomes (Dimmock, 1995:67).

In his research Hopkins (2001:24) observed that the more classroom observations that were conducted by principals of effective schools, the better the learners performed. He adds to say, in effective schools the principal was an instructional leader and had knowledge pertinent to instructional matters.

Feedback from observation should be given promptly. Educators should know how they perform and areas of improvement should be indicated by the principal and assistance should be given (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:122). Interaction and feedback are crucial in this process. Feedback provides possible development to the teacher as he/she will be aware of his/her shortcomings and will improve on them. While the principal is in the classroom, he or she should not only take note of the activities in the classroom, but should participate and interact with learners

if the situation permits. After the principal has been in a classroom he or she must provide feedback to the teacher concerned. Feedback should contain words of encouragement and praise about specific teaching strategies or classroom management. These practices are supported by Foriska (1994:33). This researcher contends that principals must keep educators informed about educational tools and development in the field of effective teaching. They must also be available to teachers to help critique these tools and teaching practices and to determine the applicability to the classroom.

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It is of utmost importance that the instructional leader should build trust and confidence so that educators can accept the supervision process. Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 122) have the following suggestions about supervision:

- 1 the goals of the supervision process must be discussed overtly and honestly with teachers. The primary goal of supervision, which is the improvement of instruction, must be continually stressed by the instructional leader for the benefit of the learner;
- 2 teachers often have legitimate concerns about the supervision process. The instructional leader should encourage educators to talk about these feelings and should provide information and respond positively to their concerns;
- 3 the principal should provide appropriate orientation for all educators to the supervision process. Such orientation includes information about observation procedures, discussion of the instrument that will be used in the observation process, discussion of relevant departmental policies and time lines that will be followed;
- 4 lastly, feedback should be given after the observation process and areas that need improvement should be mentioned by the principal; and
- 5 staff development and staff appraisal are interrelated in a sense that they both

result into improved performance by both educators and learners.

According to Squelch and Lemmer (1994:123) the following are the benefits of teacher appraisal:

- 1 it provides an opportunity for the principal to have a face to face, private discussion of teacher's performance and progress;
- 2 it provides a valuable opportunity for the principal to keep in touch with what teachers are doing and to show a personal interest and be aware of their achievements, needs and concerns. Whitaker (1997:156) concurs with the above argument. He contends that effective instructional leaders know what is going on in the classrooms of their schools. They visit classrooms, attend departmental or grade-level meetings and hold spontaneous conversations with staff and learners.



Obviously the above practice will enable the principal to identify problems that may lead to poor learner achievement and those problems could be addressed promptly before they can escalate and a positive instructional ambience will be created.

2.7.2.1 Staff participation

Participation is likely to be high where the principal encourages participation, values individual contribution and involves educators in the decision making. Participation results in improved relationships between principal and staff. The prevalence of the above-mentioned climate that is participatory and trusting, contribute to the quality of teaching and learning (Dimmock, 1995:7)

According to Dimmock, enhanced staff participation benefit the learners in the following ways:

- 1 Teacher participation in decision-making provides the intrinsic motivation

needed to sustain the dedication necessary to achieve improved academic results;

- 2 When teachers talk about teaching, the complex relations between their actions and student learning are clarified; and
- 3 Teachers are more willing to participate in classroom observation of each other's lessons and to provide feedback. This situation, promotes co-operative learning among learners as they see educators engaging in co-operative teaching.

Through teacher participation instructional leaders solidify energies and creativity of teachers to strive towards instructional improvement in the curriculum and the classroom.

2.7.3 **High performance expectations and trust**

Research by Hallinger and Leithwood (1996:808) indicates that high performance expectations refer to the behaviour that demonstrates the instructional leadership's expectations for excellence, quality and high performance on the part of the educators and other staff at the school. High performance expectations and trust are motivational and assist educators and staff to see the challenging nature of the goals that the instructional leadership is pursuing. High performance expectations should be the norm for the principal, teachers, students and parents (Leithwood, 1994:101).

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The above reasoning suggests that all participants in the school should be committed to the pursuance of goals that are set by the instructional leader and they should all adopt an attitude that, "they will do it". Therefore inculcation of self-confidence, high staff morale and trust building by the principal is essential.

Research by Whitaker and Moses (1994: 127) specifies four elements that can enhance high performance expectations as follows:

Research by Whitaker and Moses (1994: 127) specifies four elements that can enhance high performance expectations as follows:

- i) **Intensity:** It implies that the instructional leader should have passion and dedication towards accomplishment of the goals set. Meaningful goals are set through collaborative input, which legitimises the instructional leader to hold everyone accountable for improving performance without compromise. Increasing intensity to performance, however, requires that the high performance expectations should be expressed in clear goals accompanied by agreed upon systems of measuring the accountability for improvement as well as a well balanced assessment program.
- ii) **Staff growth and development:** It refers to the instructional leader's responsibility to develop more determined attitudes among educators. Training and professional development subjects educators to intellectual engagement and ultimately adds meanings to the high performance expectations.
- iii) **Teamwork:** It implies increased cooperation, interaction, sharing of vital information amongst educators and being loyal to the set goals and to colleagues. The instructional leader builds teamwork by modelling and making it a core part of the organisational structure and culture.
- iv) **Capitalising on challenges, conflicts and problems:** It implies a situation where the instructional leader converts what others see as insurmountable

problems into opportunities to excel. The instructional leader should be able to create optimistic mindsets in educators.

Educators must have the capacity to think ahead, be proactive and have the drive to initiate activities that will illuminate high performance.

Northouse (1997:136) posits that high performance expectations subject the instructional leader to motivating and inspiring the educators to become committed to and be part of achieving excellence. Therefore high performance expectations and trust are essential for schools to attain high learner achievement. The effective instructional leader ensures that teachers and staff understand academic and performance standards, believe that standards are reasonable goals for learner achievement, and have high expectations of student learning.

Learners who achieve are expected to achieve first by their principal and secondly by their educators (Blase, Blase, Anderson and Dungan, 1995: 81). Murphy and Louis (1998: 203) refer to high performance expectations as a climate where the instructional leader influences staff to:

- 1 expects all learners to do well;
- 2 believes that all the learners have the potential to do well; and
- 3 accepts responsibility and accountability for learners' achievement,

Having discussed high performance expectations and trust it is now necessary to discuss another dimension that is vision and commitment.

2.7.4 **Vision and commitment**

Aspiring principals seeking to become effective instructional leaders need a personal vision for the school that is focused on high learner achievement. Implementing the vision for a school's academic program begins when the principal creates and maintains an inviting learning environment for learners (Brent and Ellison, 1997: 113).

It is important that the principal shares his or her vision of academic success for the school in terms that parents, teachers and learners can understand. That vision must animate every aspect of the school so that it can be said that the principal demonstrates commitment to the vision and is relentless in preparing learners to read, reason and discover the satisfaction of learning (Dubrin, 1997:32). Teachers must embrace this vision and provide the focused learning experiences, skills and knowledge that enable learners to achieve at high academic levels (English and Hill, 1994: 24).

The above statement implies that educators and other stakeholders must share the vision. Therefore it is the responsibility of the principal as the instructional leader to communicate the vision clearly to all stakeholders and to invite their contributions towards its pursuance. The importance of shared vision and commitment is emphasized by Sergiovanni and Starratt (1996: 146) when they posit that with a clear vision and with commitment, the school community will focus its energies around a common purpose. It is also share a belief in the learning standards that will guide teaching, high levels of student learning, parental understanding and community support for high quality education standards and accountability.

The shared school vision should direct all aspects of classroom activity, for example, every classroom should post appropriate content standards. This practice helps to ensure that a consistent program of instruction is afforded to all learners. However, the posting of standards in classrooms should not preclude educators from expanding and elaborating on specific content standards nor restrict teachers from developing and implementing their most effective teaching strategies (Cross and Rose, 2000: 61-65).

The above dimension of instructional leadership that is, vision and commitment, postulates the role of the principal as instructional leader in a standard driven

school. Therefore, aspiring principals to become effective instructional leaders so as to improve learner achievement in their schools should acquire this behaviour.

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Having discussed the major dimensions of instructional leadership that are common, it is now necessary to determine whether these behaviours can be learnt or taught to enthusiastic principals who desire to transform their schools.

2.8 **ACQUIRED BEHAVIOURS**

The above research studies as well as other research on effective schools have sparked interest in the ways principals as instructional leaders influence the performance of the learners and the educators. Mounting evidence from these studies suggests that schools who perform well are characterized by effective instructional leadership. It seems reasonable to assume that cultivating the leadership skills of principals will improve the achievement of learners in the province of Mpumalanga.

The possible acquisition of instructional leadership behaviours was tested in Washington, DC in the 1980's. In shaping the performance of school principals workshops were offered that focused on instructional leadership behaviours. Principals of low performing schools and those that were new entrants were trained on instructional leadership skills (Murphy and Louis, 1998: 79). Instructional leadership was identified as vital for good schools. This confirms the contention that good principals are not born that way but they can learn to be effective through an ongoing process of growth.

In view of the results that were produced by principals after they had undergone

training that boosted the instructional leadership, the program was sustained and was referred to as an insightful, innovative program that is job embedded and that engages educators and learners (Stritcherz, 2001: 6).

Seeing that instructional leadership behaviours can be acquired it is necessary for principals of low achieving schools to be taken through the instructional leadership programs.

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Having stated the possibility to acquire instructional leadership skills, it is important to provide a conclusion to this chapter.

2.9 SUMMARY



The theoretical framework of this research has been explored in this chapter. The literature review revealed that in order to create effective schools with high learner achievement in the province of Mpumalanga, principals and educators should recognize the multi dimensions of instructional leadership that are aimed at improving the performance of learners.

Having provided the conclusion, the next step would be to put to test these dimensions in the context of Mpumalanga province of South Africa, in the form of questionnaires and tests that would be administrated to some Deputy Principals, Heads of Departments and educators. The randomly selected primary and secondary schools in the Eastvaal Region within the Mpumalanga Department of Education will be used.

3. **CHAPTER THREE** **DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND EMPIRICAL** **INVESTIGATION**

3.1 **INTRODUCTION**

The literature study in chapter two formed the framework for the structured questionnaire that was used to probe the perceptions of educators, HOD's and Deputy principals with respect to instructional leadership as an aspect to improve learner achievement.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to outline the methodology the researcher used to collect the data. The research design focuses on the following aspects:

- 1 the purpose of quantitative research;
- 2 the design of the questionnaire as a research instrument;
- 3 a discussion of some of the questions used by this researcher; and

- 4 a discussion of the respondents used, biographical details requested and the return of the questionnaire.

A brief discussion to elucidate the merits of quantitative research now follows.

3.2 THE PURPOSE OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The purpose of quantitative research is to make objective descriptions of a limited set of phenomena and also to determine whether the phenomena can be controlled through certain interventions. Thus, initial quantitative studies of a research problem typically involve a precise description of the phenomena and a search for pertinent variables and their inter-relationships. Ultimately, a theory is formulated to account for the empirical findings (Borg, Gall and Gall, 1993: 195 – 196). Quantitative research is used to gather information about people's attitudes, opinions, beliefs, demographics and behaviour. Information gathered from a sample of respondents can be generalized to a population.



Another purpose of quantitative research is to describe the frequency, incidence, the distribution of the characteristics of an identified population and to explore relationships between variables (Creswell, 1994: 188).

According to Borg, Gall and Gall (1993: 195) quantitative researchers make the assumption that they can discover “laws” that lead to reliable prediction and control of educational phenomena. They view their task as the discovery of these laws by searching for irregularities in the behaviour of samples of individuals. This research is aided by statistical analysis which reveals trends in the sample's behaviour. Quantitative researchers believe that such trends or laws are sufficiently strong to have practical value, even though they do not allow for perfect prediction or control. Quantitative researchers use a deductive form of

reasoning and begin with hypotheses and move towards proving these. More specifically in this research project use will be made of statistical hypotheses.

A further important view to be noted with quantitative research is that questionnaires can be used to ensure that the researcher remains as objective as possible.

In this research study the researcher opted for the quantitative approach as it is the most suitable for gathering information from a sample of educators representative of the large population of educators in the Mpumalanga province in primary, secondary and combined schools.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

In quantitative research, the researcher's goal is objectivity. That is, the researcher seeks to keep his/her personal values, beliefs and biases from influencing the process of data collection and analysis. Thus the researcher typically administers tests that involve minimal personal interaction between him/her and the research sample. If interaction is necessary as when conducting an interview, the researcher tries to standardise the interaction process so that it is identical for every individual in the sample. Conversely, the respondents' role in the research is relatively passive. Their function is to react to the researcher's questions and interventions (Borg, et. al 1993: 195).

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For this particular research study, the researcher needs the structured questionnaire as a data collection method.

A discussion of the questionnaire now follows.

3.3.1 THE STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE RESEARCH

The design of the empirical investigation included a structured questionnaire consisting of 30 open-ended items (See appendix A). These items were based on the literature reviewed by the researcher concerning the instructional leadership of the principal and the academic achievements of the learners.

The questions were designed to probe the perceptions of educators in promotion posts and educators on post level one. The questions were formulated around the aspects of:

- 1 staff development;
- 2 teacher supervision and evaluation;
- 3 high performance expectations; and
- 4 having a clear vision and commitment.

When constructing the questionnaires, it was ensured that questions were standardised and that each question would be interpreted by each respondent in a similar manner. The questions were also kept very short and simple and double-barrelled questions were avoided. Each question was formulated in such a way that the respondents could indicate their honest opinions regarding the extent to which their principals practise certain instructional leadership behaviours as given by the statement.



The following tables indicate the distribution of responses in section B and the percentages.

TABLE 3.1 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES AND PERCENTAGES

1	2	3	4	5	6		%
To no extent	To a very small	To a small extent	To a moderate	To a large extent	To a very large	Total	Selecting 5 or 6

Item			extent				extent				extent			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
B1	5	1,9	18	6,7	38	14,1	71	26,4	97	36,1	40	14,9	269	51,0
B2	15	5,9	12	4,5	33	12,3	76	28,3	99	36,8	33	12,3	269	49,1
B3	5	1,9	19	7,1	39	14,5	54	20,1	111	41,3	41	15,2	269	56,5
B4	20	7,4	18	6,7	37	13,8	70	26,0	86	32,0	38	14,1	269	46,1
B5	49	18,2	29	10,8	42	15,6	59	21,9	60	22,3	30	11,2	269	33,5
B6	11	4,1	12	4,5	39	14,5	46	17,1	83	30,9	78	29,0	269	59,9
B7	9	3,3	23	8,6	30	11,2	47	17,5	101	37,5	59	21,9	269	59,4
B8	7	2,6	21	7,8	21	7,8	50	18,7	98	36,6	71	26,5	268	63,1
B9	68	25,3	32	11,9	34	12,6	61	22,7	52	19,3	22	8,2	269	27,5
B10	10	3,7	17	6,3	42	15,6	43	16,0	75	27,9	82	30,5	269	58,4
B11	14	5,2	20	7,4	46	17,1	56	20,8	89	33,1	44	16,4	269	49,5
B12	31	11,5	44	16,4	40	14,9	46	17,1	67	24,9	41	15,2	269	40,1
B13	17	6,3	19	7,1	40	14,9	66	24,5	84	31,2	43	16,0	269	47,2
B14	47	17,5	26	9,7	28	10,4	56	20,8	67	24,9	45	16,7	269	41,6
B15	49	18,2	25	9,3	28	10,4	45	16,7	69	25,7	53	19,7	269	45,4
B16	32	11,9	25	9,3	38	14,1	40	14,9	71	26,4	63	23,4	269	49,8
B17	76	28,3	21	7,8	41	15,2	59	21,9	54	20,1	18	6,7	269	26,8
B18	24	8,9	40	14,9	40	14,9	51	19,0	64	23,8	50	18,6	269	42,4
B19	40	14,9	28	10,4	32	11,9	46	17,1	71	26,4	52	19,3	269	45,7
B20	4	1,5	12	4,5	16	5,9	30	11,2	83	30,9	124	46,1	269	77,0
B21	53	19,7	16	5,9	35	13,0	62	23,0	66	24,5	37	13,8	269	38,3
B22	11	4,1	13	4,8	37	13,8	60	22,3	99	36,8	49	18,2	269	55,0
B23	19	7,1	28	10,4	50	18,6	54	20,1	72	26,8	46	17,1	269	43,9
B24	25	9,3	39	14,5	23	8,6	64	23,8	75	27,9	43	16,0	269	43,9
B25	9	3,3	14	5,2	37	13,8	60	22,3	93	34,6	56	20,8	269	55,4
B26	53	19,9	51	19,1	37	13,9	51	19,1	51	19,1	24	9,0	267	28,1
B27	84	31,3	19	7,1	27	10,1	21	7,8	54	20,1	63	23,4	268	43,6
B28	14	5,2	12	4,5	24	9,0	63	23,5	72	26,9	83	31,0	268	57,9
B29	17	6,4	25	9,4	40	15,0	41	15,4	80	30,0	64	24,0	267	54,0
B30	41	15,3	29	10,8	40	14,9	44	16,4	57	21,3	57	21,3	268	42,6

The following 6 point scale was used:

- 1 = To no extent
- 2 = To a very small extent
- 3 = To a small extent
- 4 = To a moderate extent
- 5 = To a large extent
- 6 = To a very large extent

Having indicated a profile of educators' responses in the above table, it would also be pertinent to indicate some biographical information with respect to the sample.

3.4 **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

In this research study a convenient random stratified sample was used. The sample was representative of primary, secondary and combined schools in the Eastvaal region of the Mpumalanga province. The sample consisted of 269 respondents. Three hundred questionnaires were handed out to educators, Heads of department and Deputy principals. Of the 300 questionnaires 269 were returned and usable and it represents a return rate of 89,7%. This high return rate adds to the validity of the research.

The following tables show how representative the sample was.

TABLE 3.2: ATTENDANCE OF ANY COURSE/WORKSHOP/SEMINAR RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE PAST TWO YEARS

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	82	30,5

No	187	69,5
Total	269	100,0

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TABLE 3.3: HAS THE COURSE ENHANCED YOUR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

	Frequency	Percentage
Definitely	37	45,7
Parially	41	50,6
Not at all	3	3,7
Total	81	100,0

TABLE 3.4: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	82	30,5
Female	187	69,5
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3.5: AGE OF RESPONDENTS (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Years	Frequency	Percentage
35 or younger	78	29,0
36 to 45	137	50,9
46 or older	54	20,1
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3.6: POST LEVEL (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Current position	Frequency	Percentage
Management	61	22,7
Educator	208	77,3
Total	269	100,0

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TABLE 3.7: TEACHING EXPERIENCE (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10	81	30,2
10 to 19	125	46,6
20 or more	62	23,1
Total	268	100,0

TABLE 3.8: EDUCATOR ORGANISATIONS

Organisation	Frequency	Percentage
SADTU	201	74,7
TUATA/SAOU/NAPTOSA/SAVBO	61	24,2
Other	3	1,1
Total	265	100,0

TABLE 3.9: MOTHER TONGUE

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Nguni	189	70,3
Sotho	44	16,4
Afrikaans/English	31	11,5
Other	5	1,9
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3.10: HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 12	4	1,5
Teachers' Diploma or certificate	106	39,4
Teachers' Diploma certificate plus Educ. Diploma/Certificate	79	29,4
Bachelor's degree or higher	80	29,7
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3.11: RELIGION (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
None	6	2,2

Christianity	248	92,2
Others	15	5,6
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3:12: AREA WHERE SCHOOL IS SITUATED

Area	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	67	25,0
Urban	43	16,0
Township	158	59,0
Total	268	100,0



TABLE 3.13: LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Language	Frequency	Percentage
English or Afrikaans	199	74,0
Language of instruction	65	24,2
Other	5	1,9
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3.14: ATTENDANCE OF EDUCATORS (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	129	48,5

Average/poor	137	51,5
Total	266	100,0

TABLE 3.15: ATTENDANCE OF LEARNERS

	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	84	31,5
Average/poor	183	68,5
Total	267	100,0

TABLE 3.16: GENDER OF PRINCIPALS

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	193	72,6
Female	73	27,4
Total	266	100,0

TABLE 3.17: TYPE OF SCHOOL

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	73	27,1
Secondary	100	37,2
Combined	96	35,7
Total	269	100,0

TABLE 3.18: PRESENT LEVEL OF DISCIPLINE (GROUPED FOR CONVENIENCE)

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent / good	142	53,0
Average / poor	126	47,0
Total	268	100,0

10 Having displayed the frequencies of the sample of the research a brief discussion of items selected by the researcher now follows.

3.5 DISCUSSION OF TEN SELECTED ITEMS

Question B20: To what extent does the principal encourage educators to be punctual?

- 1 Mean score = 5,0
- 2 Mode = 6
- 3 Rank order = 1
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 77,0

The question had a mean score of 5,0 and a mode of 6 with 77% of the respondents selecting either option 5 or 6. This indicates that the vast majority of the respondents believe to a very large extent that their principals do encourage educators to be punctual. This may be because as educators they know that they are expected to be punctual and observe school times as they have a contractual obligation with the Department of Education. Therefore, they strongly believe that they are encouraged to a large and very large extent to be punctual all the time. A high percentage of 77,0%

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also implies that they acknowledge that it is also their responsibility to ensure that they abstain from arriving late and that they should be punctual when attending their teaching periods.

Question B3: To what extent does the principal encourage learner participation during teaching?

- 1 Mean = 4,3
- 2 Mode = 5
- 3 Rank order = 5
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 56,5

The above results indicate a mean of 4,3 and a mode of 5. The indication is that these respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do encourage learner participation during teaching. The implication is that they have the perception that their principals are not doing enough to encourage learners to play an active role and take responsibility for their own learning during teaching and learning. The above perspective may be engendered by the Grade 12 results that are not improving in the Mpumalanga province. However, it is also their responsibility as educators to encourage learner participation during teaching and learning.

Question B6: To what extent does the principal encourage educators to be loyal towards the school?

- 1 Mean = 4,5
- 2 Mode = 5
- 3 Rank order = 1
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 59,9

With a mode of 5 and only 59,9 percentage of the respondents choosing either 5 or 6, the indication is that the respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do encourage educators to be loyal towards the school. The implication is that the respondents do acknowledge the fact that as educators they should be loyal towards the school without being coerced by their principal. With a percentage of 59,9% of the

respondents that believe to a large extent, the researcher may conclude that respondents feel that the principal does not encourage educators sufficiently to be loyal towards the school.

Question B1: To what extent does the principal display an attitude that fosters effective teaching?

- 1 Mean = 4,3
- 2 Mode = 5
- 3 Rank order = 6
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 51,0

The above information indicates a mean score of 4,3 and a mode of 5 with 51,0% as a percentage of the respondents that selected 5 or 6. With reference to the above, respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do display attitudes that foster effective teaching. The percentage that is 51,0%, which is just above average of the respondents choosing either 5 or 6, implies that respondents believe that principals are not injecting much efforts into trying to reinforce effective teaching. The possible reason could be that, they themselves as educators feel guilty of not giving teaching and learning the attention it deserves. Alternatively, principals may be playing their part fairly but educators may be resistant and inconsiderate with respect to classroom practices that result in effective teaching and learning.

Question B7: To what extent does the principal encourage educators to accept accountability for the achievement of learners?

- 1 Mean = 4,4
- 2 Mode = 5
- 3 Rank order = 4
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 59,4

With a mean score of 4,4 and the most typical score being 5, the implication is

that

the respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do encourage educators to accept accountability for the achievement of the learners. From the above

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information one can conclude that respondents feel that as educators they should take responsibility for the poor learner achievement. A mode of 5 indicates that the respondents acknowledge and accept that they need to improve their commitment towards teaching so as to be able to accept accountability for the achievement of learners.

Question B10: To what extent does the principal encourage educators to cooperate with one another?

- 1 Mean = 4,4
- 2 Mode = 6
- 3 Rank order = 2
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 58,4



A mode of 6 reflects that the respondents strongly believe to a very large extent that their principals display the above-mentioned instructional leadership behaviour which is encouraging educators to cooperate with one another. With a mean of 4,4 and a percentage of 58,4 of educators selecting either 5 or 6 one can conclude that though principals do encourage educators to practise collegiality and teamwork it is not overtly seen being implemented by some of the educators. Therefore, principals need to pay more attention to the above-mentioned aspect of instructional leadership.

Question B8: To what extent does the principal encourage high levels of achievement among learners?

- 1 Mean = 4,4
- 2 Mode = 5

- 3 Rank order = 3
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 63,1

With reference to the results shown above, respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do encourage high levels of achievements among learners. Taking into cognisance the lower pass rate in Grade 12 in the schools of Mpumalanga province, the researcher may deduce that though principals encourage learners to work hard, there is

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a lack of commitment from the learners themselves. Attainment of high levels of achievement requires learners to take ownership of their own learning and a great deal of dedication. Principals need to be creative in inculcating that attitude in the learners.

Question B22: To what extent does the principal demonstrate interest in the academic development of learners?

- 1 Mean = 4,3
- 2 Mode = 5
- 3 Rank order = 5
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 55,0

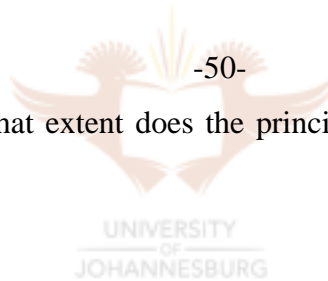
Item B22 is about the demonstration of interest in the academic development of learners. A mode of 5 indicates that respondents do believe to a large extent that their principals do demonstrate the abovementioned leadership behaviour. With respect to the percentage of 55,0% of the respondents selecting either 5 or 6 the indication is that some of the principals are not committed to the academic development of the learners. One can conclude that the abovementioned instructional leadership behaviour is still lacking among many principals of schools in Mpumalanga province.

Question B25: To what extent does the principal hold high expectation for

learners?

- 1 Mode = 4,4
- 2 Mode = 5
- 3 Rank order = 4
- 4 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 55,4

From the above it can be inferred that the respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do hold high expectations for learners. The percentage of the respondents choosing either 5 or 6 indicates that there is room for improvement. Principals still need to develop this area of competency as instructional leaders in order to promote high learner achievement and to encourage learners to maximize their potential.



Question B28: To what extent does the principal ensure that learners observe school rules?

- 5 Mode = 4,5
- 6 Mode = 6
- 7 Rank order = 2
- 8 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 57,9

With a mean score of 4,5 and a mode of 6, the reflection is that respondents strongly believe that their principals do ensure that learners observe school rules. Though learners may be trying to observe school rules, it may not materialise if they do not see those conditions existing for teachers as well. Principals may encourage learners to observe school rules, but educators should also be encouraged to operate within the stipulated code of conduct for educators. If educators behave as professionals and role models, it is likely that learners will emulate that behaviour and the tone of the school may be uplifted, consequently improved learner achievement may be experienced.

Question B29: To what extent does the principal recognize parental contributions to the school?

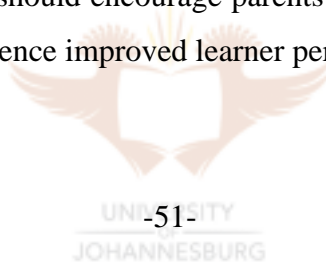
9 Mode = 4,2

10 Mode = 5

11 Rank order = 1

12 % respondents who selected 5 or 6 = 54,0

The above results indicate that the respondents believe to a large extent that their principals do recognize parental contributions to the school. Though the respondents feel that way, the question may be “what is the nature of that contribution”? If the contribution does not have a positive impact on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, then that contribution is futile. Principals as instructional leaders should encourage parents to contribute constructively in a manner that would influence improved learner performance.



3.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter a description of the empirical investigation was provided. Relevant tables were provided and some of the questions pertinent to instructional leadership as an aspect to improve learner achievement were discussed. It is evident from the items that were discussed that respondents regard instructional leadership as important for the improvement of learner achievement. According to the responses, principals have not shown sufficient demonstration of instructional leadership. A discussion of the respondents sampled and their biographical details were also provided.

In chapter four, the following aspects will be examined:

- 1 reliability and validity of the research instrument;

- 2 some aspects of the data flowing from the statistical analysis will be examined and interpreted.



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4. **CHAPTER FOUR**

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF A SELECTED SAMPLE OF EMPIRICAL DATA

4.1 **INTRODUCTION**

In chapter three the instrument of the research, the questionnaire and the selected items were discussed. The biographical details of the sample were also displayed.

In this chapter the following aspects will be tackled:

- 1 the reliability and validity of the structured questionnaire;

- 2 a discussion of the factors involved;
- 3 a comparison of two independent groups by stating the appropriate hypotheses and analysing the data using multivariate statistical tests;
- 4 a comparison of two or more independent groups by stating the appropriate hypotheses and analysing of data by means of multivariate statistical tests;
- 5 a discussion of the significance of differences between the factor mean scores of the independent variables; and
- 6 a summary.

4.2 **RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

The concept of validity and reliability are multifaceted. There are many different types of reliability and validity. Threats to reliability and validity cannot be removed completely, rather the effects of these threats can be attenuated by paying attention to reliability and validity throughout a piece of research. When one attempts to determine the perceptions of educators using a structured questionnaire, it is important that it is valid and reliable. Validity is concerned with whether what one is measuring is what one really intends to measure. For example, say you want to measure a person's height. If all you had was a bathroom scale, you could ask the person to step on to the scale and record the result. Even if the measurements were highly reliable, that is, consistent from one weighting to the next, they would not be very valid. There is no doubt that a metre stick or a tape calibrated in millimetres would be more valid for measuring height than a bathroom scale (Voght, 1993: 240). Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of measure (Rose and Sullivan, 1996: 19).

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A brief discussion of reliability now follows.

4.2.1 **Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency and accuracy with which a measuring instrument measures something. A reliable instrument will yield similar

data from similar respondents over time. For example, if we measure a particular person's height over a short period of time with a measuring tape, we would expect that the person's height would be the same at each subsequent measurement. The measuring tape is therefore reliable (Rose and Sullivan, 1996: 19).

A brief discussion on validity will now be given.

4.2.2 Validity

There are different types of validity but for the purpose of this research only content and construct validity will be clarified. A measuring instrument has content validity to the extent that its items represent the content that it is designed to measure (Borg, et. al 1994: 120). Content validity is not a statistical property, it is rather a matter of expert judgement. To ensure content validity the questions were designed within the framework of the critical theory substantiated by a thorough literature review that is relevant to the research topic. Furthermore, several principals from primary, secondary and combined schools and researchers from the Department of Educational Sciences reviewed the questionnaire in order to judge the relevancy of each item. The questionnaire was also submitted to the Statistical Consulting Services of the Rand Afrikaans University for further scrutiny and refinement of the items.

An instrument has construct validity to the extent that it can be shown to measure a particular hypothetical construct. Psychological concepts such as effectiveness, creativity and anxiety are considered hypothetical constructs because they are not directly observable but rather are inferred on the basis of

the measuring instrument. The construct validity of the measuring

instrument was investigated by means of factor analysis.

Borg, et. al (1993: 269) define factor analysis as a correlation technique that examines a large number of items and determines whether they cluster into a smaller number of underlying factors.

The construct validity of the questionnaire was investigated by means of successive first and second order factor analytic procedures. These procedures were performed using the SPSS 12 programme to identify a number of factors that may facilitate the processing of the statistics. All 30 questions in section B were factor analysed. The first order procedure resulted in four factors that were used as an input for a second order procedure. A subsequent second order factor analysis yielded a single second order factor. For each respondent a calculation of his/her average score over all 30 questions in section B was made. The scores range from 1 that is, there is no instructional leadership to 6 which represents excellent instructional leadership.

These procedures resulted in the 30 items being reduced to three first order factors. Two questions, that is item 23 and 27 were removed because of the diagnostic criteria of the Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA). Three of the first order factors had reliability coefficients high enough to enable their use in data analysis.

Discussion of these three first order factors that were named staff development, vision and commitment and lastly, educator and learner discipline now follows.

4.3 THE SCALE ASSOCIATED WITH THE FACTOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The 14 items of factor 1 were named “staff development” with a Cronbach-Alpha-reliability coefficient of 0,9658. The 14 items can thus be regarded as forming one scale with a minimum value of $14 \times 1 = 14$ and a maximum value of

14 x 6 = 84. The six point scale should be understood in terms of the new scale that can be presented as follows:

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Item Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6
			(3 x 14)			
Factor Scale	14	28	42	56	70	84

A score between 70 and 84 would indicate that the respondents believe to a large and very large extent that their principals show the behaviours related to the factor concerned. A score of 56 would indicate a belief to a moderate extent by the respondents whereas a score between 56 and 70 would indicate moderate to a large extent with regard to the factor concerned. A factor mean score of 28 would indicate a belief to a very small extent by the respondents concerned.

Having discussed the above factor, factor two will now be discussed.

4.4 THE SCALE ASSOCIATED WITH THE FACTOR VISION AND COMMITMENT

The 8 items of factor two were dubbed “educator and learner commitment” with a Cronbach-Alpha-reliability coefficient of 0,9385. The 8 items can thus be regarded as forming one scale with a minimum value of $8 \times 1 = 8$ and a maximum value of $8 \times 6 = 48$. The six point scale should be understood in terms of the new scale that can be represented as follows:

Item Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6
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			(3 x 8)			
Factor Scale	8	16	24	32	40	48

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A score between 40 and 48 would indicate that the respondents believe to a large and very large extent that their principals practise the behaviours concerned. A score of 32 would indicate a belief to a moderate extent by the respondents whereas a score between 32 and 40 would indicate a moderate to large extent of belief with regard to the factor. A factor mean score of 16 would indicate a belief to a very small extent by the respondents concerned.

It is now necessary to discuss the last factor, which is factor three.

4.5 THE SCALE ASSOCIATED WITH THE FACTOR LEARNER AND EDUCATOR DISCIPLINE

Factor three consisting of six items was named “learner and educator discipline” with a Cronbach-Alpha-reliability coefficient of 0,8912. The six items were thus regarded as forming one scale with a minimum value of $6 \times 1 = 6$ and a maximum value of

$6 \times 6 = 36$. The six point scale should be understood in terms of the new scale that can be presented as follows:

Item Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6
			(3 x 6)			

Factor Scale	6	12	18	24	30	36
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A score between 30 and 36 would indicate that the respondents believe to a large and very large extent that their principals enact the behaviours concerned. A score of 24 would indicate a belief to a moderate extent whereas a score between 24 and 30 would indicate a belief that is moderate to a large extent by the respondents with regard to the factor concerned. A factor mean score of 12 would indicate a perception by respondents that their principals do not have a very high regard for learner and educator discipline, a result that is unlikely.

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The three factors and their new scales were briefly discussed. It is now essential to state the various hypotheses involved.

4.6 **HYPOTHESES**

Due to the restrictions placed on the length of a mini- dissertation, only one example of two independent groups and one example of three or more independent groups will be discussed in detail. The comparison of two independent groups will be the first to be discussed.

4.6.1 **Comparison of two independent groups**

At the multivariate level two independent groups can be compared for possible statistical differences in their vector mean scores using Hotelling's T^2 test. This implies that the vector means of the two independent groups are compared in respect of the three factors considered together. Should a statistically significant difference be found at this multivariate level then the Student t-test is used in respect of each of the variables taken separately (Borg, et. al 1993: 158). The independent group chosen by this researcher is educators who attended a workshop on instructional leadership. The discussion will now turn to possible

differences between educators as respondents who attended a workshop on instructional leadership and those who have not, relative to the three factors.

4.6.1.1 Differences between respondents who attended a workshop on instructional leadership and those who have not as independent variable.

TABLE 4.1

Dimensions	Variable	Symbol	Description	Test
Multivariate level	Workshop attendance	HoT	There is statistically no significant difference between the vector mean scores of educators who attended an instructional leadership workshop and those who did not in respect of the three factors considered together.	Hotellings's T ²

Dimensions	Variable	Symbol	Description	Test
		HaT	There is a statistically significant difference between the vector mean score of educators who attended a workshop and those who did not in respect of the three factors considered together.	
Univariate	Workshop attendance	Hot	There is statistically no significant difference between the mean scores of educators who attended a workshop on instructional leadership and those who did not in respect of each factor taken separately namely:	Student t-test

		Hot 1	Staff development	
		Hot 2	Vision and commitment	
		Hot 3	Educator and learner discipline	
		Hat	There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of educators who attended a workshop on instructional leadership and those who did not in respect of each factor taken separately namely:	
		Hat 1	Staff development	
		Hat 2	Vision and commitment	
		Hat 3	Educator and learner discipline	

TABLE 4.2: SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EDUCATORS WHO ATTENDED WORKSHOPS ON INSTRUCTINAL LEADERSHIP AND THOSE WHO DID NOT REGARDING THE FOLLOWING THREE FACTORS

Factor	Group	Mean	Hotelling T² (p-value)	Student t-test (p-value)
Staff development	Yes	4,2413		0,000 * *
	No	3,4850		
Vision and commitment	Yes	4,7744	0,000 * *	0,000 * *
	No	4,2132		

Learner and educator discipline	Yes	4,7293		0,005 * *
	No	4,3316		

* * Statistically significant at the 1% level ($p < 0,05$) Yes N = 82

* Statistically significant at 5% level ($p > 0,01$ but $< 0,05$) No N = 187

Table 4.2 indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the vector mean scores of educators who attended a workshop on instructional leadership and those who did not at the multivariate level in respect of all three factors considered together ($p = 0,000$). H_0T is thus rejected and the alternative hypotheses H_aT is accepted. At the univariate level educators who attended and those who did not attend a workshop on instructional leadership also differ statistically significantly from one another in respect of all three factors considered separately. H_{01} , H_{02} and H_{03} are thus rejected in favour of the alternative hypotheses namely H_{a1} , H_{a2} and H_{a3} .

Educators who attended the workshop on instructional leadership believe that their principals do practise the instructional leadership behaviours. A possible explanation could be that those who have been exposed to the instructional leadership program have an idea of what is it all about. Therefore, they perceive their principals as

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performing those behaviours particular to instructional leadership to a larger extent than they would have if they had not attended such workshops.

Having set hypotheses and tested them in respect of one example of two independent groups it is now necessary to do the same for one of three or more independent groups.

4.6.2 Comparison of three or more independent groups

In respect of three or more independent groups, multivariate differences are investigated by means of MANOVA (Multivariate Analysis of Variance) in respect of the three factors considered together. The vector mean scores are compared and should any difference be revealed at this level then ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is used to investigate which of these three factors are responsible for the significant statistical difference. Groups are analysed pairwise by means of either the Scheffé or the Dunnett T3 tests. If the homogeneity of variance in the Levene test (an advanced form of the Student t-test) is more than 0,05 ($p > 0,05$) the Scheffé test is used to investigate possible differences between pairs. Should the homogeneity of variance be less than 0,05 ($p < 0,05$) then the Dunnett T3 test is used to investigate the difference between the various pairs. The difference between the different age groups will now be discussed.

TABLE 4.3: HYPOTHESES WITH DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS AS THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Dimension	Variable	Symbol	Description	Test
Multivariate level	Age groups	HoM	There is statistically no significant difference between the vector mean scores of the three age groups in respect of the three factors taken together.	MANOVA
		HaM	There is a statistically significant difference between the vector mean scores of the three age groups in respect of the three factors taken together.	

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Dimension	Variable	Symbol	Description	Test
Univariate level	Age groups	HoA	The average scale scores of the three age groups do not differ in a statistically	ANOVA

Pair-wise differences		<p>HoA1</p> <p>HoA2</p> <p>HoA3</p> <p>HaA</p> <p>HaA1</p> <p>HaA2</p> <p>HaA3</p> <p>HoS</p> <p>HoS1</p> <p>HoS2</p> <p>HoS3</p>	<p>significant way from one another in respect of the following factors taken separately:</p> <p>Staff development</p> <p>Vision and commitment</p> <p>Learner and educator discipline</p> <p>The average scale scores of the three age groups do differ in a statistically significant way from one another in respect of the following factors taken separately, namely:</p> <p>Staff development</p> <p>Vision and commitment</p> <p>Learner and educator discipline</p> <p>There is statistically no significant difference between the average scale scores of the three age groups compared pair-wise in respect of the three factors considered separately, namely:</p> <p>Staff development</p> <p>Vision and commitment</p> <p>Educator and learner discipline</p>	
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Dimensions	Variable	Symbol	Description	Test
		HaS	There is a statistically significant difference between the average scores of the three age groups compared pairwise in respect of the three factors considered separately, namely:	
		HaS1	Staff development	
		HaS2	Vision and commitment	
		HaS3	Educator and learner discipline	

TABLE 4.4: SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE AGE GROUPS IN RESPECT OF THE THREE FACTORS

					Scheffé/Dunette T3			
					A	B	C	
Staff development	A B C	3,4355 3,8107 3,8783	0,019 *	0,099	A B C	/ - -	- / -	- - /
Vision and commitment	A B C	4,2212 4,4398 4,4792		0,295	A B C	/ - -	- / -	- - /
Educator and learner discipline	A B C	4,1581 4,4998 4,7593						

* Statistically significant at the 1% level ($p < 0,01$)

** Statistically significant at the 5% level ($p > 0,01$ but $p < 0,05$)

Group A = 35 or younger (N = 78)

Group B = 36 to 45 years (N = 137)

Group C = 46 or older (N = 54)

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Using the data in table 4.4 it follows that there is a statistically significant difference at the 5% level between the age groups at the multivariate level. HoM is thus rejected. At the univariate level the subsequent ANOVA's show that it is in terms of the third factor that the age groups differ significantly ($p=0,004$). The result thus indicates that age groups differ significantly in terms of educator and learner discipline but not in terms of professional development and vision and commitment.

The Dunnett T3 test shows that it is the younger age group that differs significantly from the oldest age group of 46 or older. Therefore, HoS 3 is rejected.

In respect of the pair-wise comparison, the following conclusions can be made:

With regard to the factor staff development, educators who belong to the oldest age groups namely, 46 years and older have a higher factor mean score than the other two age groups. Though they differ, the difference is not statistically significant. In trying to understand the above-mentioned outcome, the rationale could be that age does not have a significant effect with regard to staff development. Whether young or old, all educators need to be taken through development programmes in order for them to keep abreast with current demands pertinent to teaching and learning. The three age groups seem to believe that staff development programmes could improve the performance of educators, and that would culminate in high learner achievement. On average, all age groups perceive the commitment of their principals to staff development to a small and moderate extent. The degree of the extent of the belief leaves much to be desired about the instructional leadership capacity of the principals of schools in the province of Mpumalanga. It also necessitates the inculcation of instructional

leadership behaviours in those principals if their schools are to experience improved learner achievement.

In respect of factor 2, that is vision and commitment there is no statistical significant difference between the mean scores of the age groups. Though the younger group of educators differ from the older age groups, the difference is not that significant in terms of how they perceive the instructional leadership of their principals. Younger educators seem not to be observant of the instructional leadership behaviours of their

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principals regardless of the fact that all age groups seem to believe from moderate to a large extent that their principals do implement the instructional leadership skills.

Only one example of two independent groups and one example of three or more independent groups have been discussed completely. Due to the limitation in length placed on a mini-dissertation, it is not possible to discuss all the independent groups in this fashion. The various factor mean scores will, however, be summarised in Table 4.5 followed by a brief discussion for each of the groups.

TABLE 4.5: MEAN SCORES OF THE OTHER INDEPENDENT GROUPS IN RESPECT OF THE THREE FACTORS MAKING UP INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

		Factor Mean Scores		
		F1	F2	F3
Gender	Male	3,81	4,39	4,56
	Female	3,67	4,37	4,40

Post level	Management Educator	3,56 3,76	4,22 4,43	4,69* 4,38*
Teaching Experience	Less than 10 years 10 to 19 years 20 or more years	3,69 3,65 3,86	4,41 4,39 4,33	4,40 4,38 4,66
Mother tongue	Zulu Other Nguni Sotho Afrikaans/English	3,88 3,57 3,55 3,52	4,57 4,20 4,21 4,21	4,46 4,33 4,35 4,72
Type of school	Primary Secondary Combined	4,26** 3,30** 3,72**	4,61 4,26 4,33	4,58 4,38 4,42
Attendance of educators	Excellent Average/poor	4,06** 3,40**	4,67** 4,12**	4,66** 4,24**



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		Factor Mean Scores		
		F1	F2	F3
Attendance of learners	Excellent Average/poor	4,05** 3,58**	4,59* 4,29*	4,59 4,38
Level of discipline	Excellent/Good Average/Poor	4,22** 3,16**	4,76** 3,96**	4,79** 4,06**
Gender of principal	Male Female	3,93** 3,22**	4,59** 3,88**	4,65** 3,93**

** Statistically significant at the 1% level ($p < 0,01$)

* Statistically significant at the 5% level ($p > 0,01$ but $< 0,05$)

F1 Staff development

F2 Vision and commitment

F3 Educator and learner discipline

The mean factor scores of the various independent groups in Table 4.5 will now be discussed.

4.7 DISCUSSION OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FACTOR MEAN SCORES PRESENTED IN TABLE 4.5

In order to facilitate the discussion of the factor mean scores, the factors will be discussed separately with staff development being the first to be examined.

4.7.1 Staff development

The various factor mean scores in Table 4.5 should be interpreted against the following scale:

To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	To a very large extent
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The first independent group to be discussed is the gender of the respondent.

1 Gender

There is statistically no significant difference in the factor mean scores between male and female educators with respect to the factor staff development. Though males have a slightly higher factor mean score than female educators, the difference is not significant. Nevertheless, both male and female educators believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals implement the instructional leadership behaviours as presented in factor one. The possible interpretation could be that principals are not clearly seen to be instructional leaders by their educators in terms of staff development. Furthermore, it could indicate a lack of commitment from principals to initiate staff development programs in order to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning which is likely to impact on the

performance of learners.

2 **Present post level**

Respondents who are educators have a higher factor mean score than educators in management posts though the difference is not significant. Educators have a higher factor mean score and probably, they do not fully understand the role that is supposed to be played by their principals as instructional leaders in terms of staff development. However, the difference in mean scores is not statistically significant. Both groups do however believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals are committed in terms of the first factor.

3 **Teaching experience**

Educators with 20 or more years of teaching experience have the highest factor mean score whilst those with 10 to 19 years of experience have the lowest factor mean score. However, the three groups do not differ statistically significantly in their factor mean scores with respect to staff development as an important aspect of instructional leadership. They believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals have the instructional leadership skills in terms of the first factor namely, staff development. Educators with fewer years of teaching experience are still largely dependent on their principals for guidance and leadership hence

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their factor mean score is low. Those with more years of experience are probably more independent and are capable of handling teaching and learning activities effectively hence their factor mean score is higher.

4 **Mother tongue**

Relative to staff development educators with Zulu as a mother tongue have

the highest factor mean score whilst educators with Afrikaans or English as mother tongue have the lowest factor mean score. The difference in the factor mean scores is not statistically significant. All groups seem to believe that their principals have the instructional leadership capacity in terms of staff development only to a small and moderate extent. The above reasoning is indicative of the fact that most principals are not orientated towards instructional leadership to the extent that they should be.

5 **Type of school**

Respondents teaching in primary schools have the highest factor mean score relative to educators that are teaching in secondary or combined schools and the difference in mean scores is statistically significant. Educators in primary schools believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals do initiate staff development programmes. Possibly, primary school principals are trying to attend to staff development as an aspect of instructional leadership. Contrarily, educators that are teaching in secondary and combined schools only believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals are committed to staff development. From the above, one can deduce that, one of the contributory factors to poor results in Grade 12 in the Mpumalanga province is the lack of staff development as an aspect of instructional leadership. Secondary and combined schools principals are not seriously attending to this critical aspect, which is a key to effective teaching. Thus, primary schools believe that their principals have instructional leadership quality in terms of staff development and secondary schools seem to be hesitant that their principals are indeed instructional leaders.

6 **Attendance of educators**

Educators who believe that attendance of educators at their schools is

excellent have a significantly higher factor mean score than educators who believe that attendance is average or poor. Educators who perceive attendance of educators as being excellent believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are committed to staff development. Educators who perceive attendance of educators as being average or poor believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of staff development. The difference in factor mean scores between the two groups is statistically significant in terms of how they view the instructional leadership of their principals relative to staff development. Educators need to be exposed to programmes that address misconduct related issues. The group that view attendance of educators as average or poor believe that their principals are not instructional leaders probably because they do not receive training on the code of conduct of educators, hence attendance is a problem.

Furthermore, the size effect for this factor with respect to the attendance of educators as measured by partial eta squared was 0,056. This translates to a r value of 0,24. The practical significance of this is that the development of staff should include training on how to improve educator attendance.

7 **Attendance of learners**

Educators who have the perception that attendance of learners at their schools is excellent, have a significantly higher factor mean score compared to educators who believe that attendance of learners is average or poor. The group that declare the attendance of learners as being excellent believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in respect of staff development. On the other hand, educators that perceive the attendance of learners as average or poor believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals are committed to staff development. Possibly, the latter group feel that because they are not developed by their principals on how to motivate learners to attend regularly,

they are not capable to exercise that, hence according to them, the attendance is average to poor.

8 **Level of discipline**

The group that perceive the level of discipline at their schools as excellent have a significantly higher factor mean score than educators who perceive the level of discipline to be average or poor. The excellent group believes to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in respect of staff development. Probably, these educators are themselves disciplined and they ascribe their behaviour to staff development. However, educators with an average to poor perception of discipline in their schools, believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals initiate staff development programs. This could be the group that looks up to their principals as instructional leaders and they expect their principals to expose them to programs that could improve the level of discipline in both educators and learners. Therefore, according to them their principals are instructional leaders, in terms of the first factor, only to a small and moderate extent.

According to the effect size ($r^2 = 0,148$) the level of discipline can explain 14,8%

of the variance present in the factor staff development. The practical significance of this is that principals should ensure that strategies to facilitate learner discipline are built into the staff development programme.

9 **Gender of the principal**

Educators with male principals have a higher factor mean score than educators with female principals. The difference is also statistically

significant. Educators with male principals believe to a larger extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of staff development. On the other hand, educators with female principals do believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals initiate staff development as an aspect of instructional leadership. One would, however, have expected higher factor mean scores and this may be indicative that principals need to concentrate more on learner discipline in their staff development programmes.

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4.7.1.1 **Synopsis of the factor staff development**

Almost all of the independent groups only believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals execute instructional leadership behaviours pertinent to staff development. Their responses support the notion that staff development is an essential aspect of effective instructional leadership which is an aspect to improve learner achievement. Principals, however, need to concentrate more on instructional leadership skills relevant to staff development.

This completes the discussion on the first order factor namely staff development. The second factor to be discussed as an aspect of instructional leadership is vision and commitment.

4.7.2 **Vision and commitment**

The various factor mean scores in Table 4.6 with regard to this factor should be interpreted against the following scale:

To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	To a very large extent
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The factor mean scores of the various independent groups are provided in Table 4.6.

The first independent group where factor mean scores relative to vision and commitment will be discussed is the gender of the respondents.

10 Gender

There is statistically no significant difference between male and female educators in terms of how they view the instructional leadership of their principals with regard to vision and commitment. Both male and female educators believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals have the necessary vision and commitment towards their schools.

1 Post level

Educators occupying promotion posts have a lower factor mean score when compared to educators in respect of how they perceive their principals as

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visionary and committed instructional leaders. Though the difference is not statistically significant, educators in managerial positions are more aware of the leadership behaviours and weaknesses of their principals as they are also in management. On the other hand educators may think that all is well. Nevertheless, both groups believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals have vision and commitment towards their school.

11 Teaching experience

Educators with less than 10 years of teaching experience have the highest factor mean score while those with the most experience, that is, 20 years or more have the lowest factor mean score. Though the groups differ, the difference is not statistically significant in terms of how they view the commitment and visionary leadership of their principals. They all believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders with regard to the second factor, namely vision and commitment.

12 **Mother tongue**

Educators with Zulu as mother tongue have the highest factor mean score compared to the other mother tongue groups. The group with other Nguni dialects as mother tongue have the lowest factor mean score which does not vary much from the mean score of the English or Afrikaans group. However, the difference is not statistically significant. All groups seem to believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals have vision and commitment behaviours towards their schools which is one of the essential features of instructional leadership.

13 **Type of school**

Educators teaching at primary schools have a higher factor mean score than educators at either secondary or combined schools. Thus, primary school principals are perceived to have more instructional leadership qualities when compared to secondary and combined school principals. Though the three groups differ, the difference is not statistically significant. All three groups do believe to



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a moderate and large extent that their principals exhibit instructional leadership behaviours in respect of the second factor.

14 **Attendance of educators**

Respondents who perceive that the attendance of educators in their schools is excellent scored higher than the group who perceive the attendance of educators to be average or poor. The reasoning could be that principals of schools where the attendance of educators is excellent have the vision that is communicated to all stakeholders and are committed to its realisation. Educators at these institutions seem to be aware of the vision of their principals since they also attend regularly to ensure the improvement of

learner achievement. Both groups of educators, do however, believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of the second factor namely, vision and commitment.

15 **Attendance of learners**

Respondents who believe that the attendance of learners in their schools is excellent have a higher factor mean score when compared to their counterparts who perceive attendance of learners as only being average to poor. This makes sense because the vision and commitment of the principal as an instructional leader establishes regular attendance for both learners and educators. Both groups of educators believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in relation to the second factor.

16 **Level of discipline**

Educators with the perception that discipline in their schools is excellent have a significantly higher factor mean score than educators who believe that it is average to poor. Relative to the second factor that is reasonable, because if the principal is committed to the pursuance of his/her vision, he/she will ensure that there is discipline in the school in order to facilitate the achievement of improved learner performance. The difference between the factor mean scores of the two groups is statistically significant. The excellent group believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of vision and

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commitment. The average to poor group only believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals have instructional leadership qualities. Their belief may be prompted by the fact that they perceive the level of discipline as only average to poor. Therefore, according to their perception their principals are not effective instructional leaders.

In terms of effect size ($r = 0,36$) the 13,3% of the variance that can be explained by level of discipline is deemed to be a medium to large effect size. The practical significance is again founded in the vision and commitment of the school which should make provision for excellent level of learner discipline.

17 **Gender of the principal**

With regard to vision and commitment, male principals are perceived to perform the behaviours related to instructional leaders to a greater extent than their female counterparts. Respondents that have male principals have a higher factor mean score than educators who have female principals. This may be due to the fact that female principals are known to be considerate, accommodative and sympathetic than their male counterparts. The difference in the factor mean scores is statistically significant. Educators with male principals believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are excellent instructional leaders in respect of vision and commitment, whilst educators with female principals believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of the second factor.

4.7.2.1 **Synopsis of vision and commitment**

The independent groups that have been discussed have the factor mean scores that range from a belief between a small extent and large extent in terms of how they view the instructional leadership or their principals. The differences were briefly discussed and possible reasons for the differences in the factor mean scores were postulated. It does seem that principals are evaluated more positively with respect to vision and commitment than was the case with staff development.

Having discussed the results of the second factor, it is now necessary to

discuss the third factor namely, educator and learner discipline.

4.7.3 Educator and learner discipline

The various factor mean scores in Table 4.6 in respect of this factor should be interpreted against the following scale:

To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	6	To a very large extent
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------------

The first independent group that will be discussed is the gender of the respondents.

18 Gender

There is statistically no significant difference between the factor mean scores of the male respondents and the female respondents. Both male and female educators believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of encouraging educator and learner discipline. Though principals may try hard to inculcate the above-mentioned behaviour, if there is no compliance from the side of the educators and learners their efforts become futile. That leads one to the thought that principals of schools in the Mpumalanga province should be skilled in a number of instructional leadership behaviours in order to improve in the manner in which they try to promote educator and learner discipline in order to establish the culture of teaching and learning in their schools.

19 Post level

Educators who are in management posts have a higher factor mean score than educators. Educators that are not in the management of the school have a lower factor mean score because they are not close enough to the principal therefore they are not always aware of what the principal is planning. Though they differ in their factor mean scores the difference is not statistically significant. They all believe to a moderate and large extent that

their principals are instructional leaders regarding educator and learner discipline.

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20 **Teaching experience**

There is statistically no significant difference among the factor mean scores of the three groups in terms of how they view the instructional leadership of their principals. Despite the differences in years of their teaching experience, all three groups believe to a moderate and large extent that their principal do try to promote educator and learner discipline in their schools as a possible endeavour to promote higher learner achievements.

21 **Mother tongue**

Educators with English or Afrikaans as a mother tongue have a higher factor mean score than the rest of the mother tongue groups. This is understandable because most of the English and Afrikaans speaking educators are employed at the ex-model C schools where the educator and learner discipline is perceived to be excellent. The higher factor mean score indicates that principals at those schools are perceived to be excellent instructional leaders in respect of the third factor. Though the four mother tongue groups differ, the difference is not statistically significant in terms of how they perceive the instructional leadership of their principals. All groups believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of the third factor.

22 **Type of school**

It is not surprising that educators in primary schools have a higher factor mean score than the other groups. Primary schools educators and learners are normally better disciplined than educators and learners at secondary schools. Generally, educators from all three types of schools believe to a moderate and large extent that their principals do encourage educator and learner discipline.

23 **Attendance of educators**

Educators who perceive the attendance of educators in their schools to be excellent have a higher factor mean score than the group of educators who perceive the attendance of educators in their schools to be average to poor. The difference in the factor mean scores of the two groups is statistically significant in terms of how they believe the instructional leadership of their principals to be,

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in relation to the third factor. Both groups believe to a moderate extent that their principals demonstrate behaviours that support educator attendance as aspects of factor three.

24 **Attendance of learners**

Educators who perceive the attendance of learners to be excellent have a higher factor mean score than educators who believe that the attendance of learners is average to poor in their schools. Though they differ, the difference is not statistically significant in terms of how they perceive the instructional leadership of their principals. Both groups do believe to a moderate extent that their principals are instructional leaders in respect of the third factor namely, educator and learner discipline.

25 **Level of discipline**

With regard to the level of discipline, educators who believe that the level of discipline in their schools is excellent have a significantly higher factor mean score. Relative to the third factor which is educator and learner discipline, the higher factor mean score does make sense because at schools where the level of discipline is excellent, it is normally so because the educators and learners are disciplined. Those educators ascribe this good behaviour to the effective instructional leadership of their principals with regard to the third factor. The mean score is 4,79 and it is significant to note that among all the

factor mean scores of different groups that have been discussed around all three factors, 4,79 is the highest factor mean score that was obtained in the analysis of this empirical data. On the other hand, respondents who perceive the level of discipline in their schools to be average or poor, have a factor mean score of 4,06. That is, they only believe to a moderate extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of the third factor.

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4.7.3.1 **Synopsis of educator and learner discipline as an aspect of instructional Leadership**

Educators who have female principals have the lowest factor mean score (3,98) and educators who believe the level of discipline to be excellent at their schools have the highest factor mean score (4,79) in terms of the third factor. Most independent groups indicate a belief to a moderate and large extent that their principals have the instructional leadership capacity in respect of the third factor.

Having discussed the various statistical results of the three factors that are involved in instructional leadership, it is now necessary to summarise the important aspects of this chapter.

4.8 **SUMMARY**

In this chapter the analysis and interpretation of some empirical data was undertaken. The construct validity of the research instrument was investigated by

means of the factor analyses which reduced 30 items to the following three factors:

- 1 staff development consisting of 14 items with a reliability coefficient of 0,9658;
- 2 vision and commitment consisting of 8 items with a reliability coefficient of 0,9385;
- 3 educator and learner discipline consisting of 6 items with a reliability coefficient of 0,8912.

The statistical analysis of the research was rationed to a comparison of one example

of two independent groups and one example of two or more independent groups.

Hypotheses were defined and multivariate statistics were used to analyse and interpret the data.



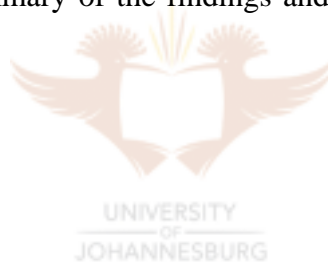
The questionnaire that was used was able to distinguish between groups which are known to differ from one another. These differences were briefly discussed and possible reasons for the differences in the factor mean scores were postulated. The above instrument had construct validity as it was able to distinguish between groups,

which are known to differ from one another. It can be seen from the data in Table 4.6 that many groups differed from one another in terms of how they perceived the instructional leadership of their principals in respect of the three factors.

It also seems to me that attendance of educators and learners and the level of discipline in the school play an important role with respect to the three factors. It is thus essential that these variables be incorporated in any training scheme regarding instructional leadership. These mundane management factors are all something that any principal can do something about as training in these aspects should enhance any principal's ability to manage these factors more effectively. Learner and educator attendance and level of school discipline seem to be strongly correlated.

The instrument I have developed could be used to assess the instructional leadership of principals with a view of improving learner achievement.

After having analysed and interpreted the empirical data in chapter four, chapter five will provide a summary of the findings and consequently recommendations will be made.



5. CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research study was to investigate the role of instructional leadership in improving learner achievement. In order to consummate this

general aim the specific objectives were to:

- 1 Investigate how instructional leadership can improve learner achievement;
- 2 probe the perceptions of educators with respect to the role of instructional leadership in enhancing learner achievement; and
- 3 provide guidelines to principals as to how to implement instructional leadership in order to improve learner achievement.

This being the final chapter, it is necessary to recapitulate the salient points of this research project under the following headings:

- 1 summary – which will present a global overview of the entire mini-dissertation;
- 2 important findings – which will be drawn from the literature review and from the responses of the educators to the questionnaire in respect to the instructional leadership of their principals;
- 3 recommendations – which will flow from the important findings;
- 4 topics for further research; and
- 5 conclusion – which will attempt to highlight the relationship between the effective instructional leadership of the principal and learner achievement.

5.2 SUMMARY

Chapter one was concerned with defining the problem, setting out the general and specific aims of this research as well as the methodology to be implemented. This chapter also clarified the concepts that were to be used and the demarcation of the investigation was also given.

Chapter two dealt with the literature study that was undertaken to:

- 1 define instructional leadership;

- 1 describe the role of the principal as an instructional leader;
- 2 discuss the visionary instructional leadership of the principal;

- 3 highlight the role of parents in enhancing learner achievement;
- 4 deliberate on the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement;
- 5 discuss major dimensions of instructional leadership; and
- 6 acquired behaviours.

Chapter three dealt with the design of the research instrument as well as the empirical investigation. A questionnaire was developed to obtain the perceptions of educators in promotion post and educators regarding the instructional leadership behaviours of their principals.

Chapter four explained the univariate and multivariate statistical tests that were used to test the various hypotheses regarding the responses from educators in the Eastvaal Region of the Mpumalanga province.

Hotellings T-squared test was used to examine the difference in the vector means of the two independent groups and where significant differences occurred. The Student t-test was used to investigate possible statistically significant differences.

Significant statistical differences for three or more independent groups were investigated at the multivariate level using the MANOVA test. Any differences found at this multivariate level were further investigated using the ANOVA test.

After the analysis of the statistical tests, some important findings emanate which result in illuminating recommendations. These findings are discussed below.

5.3 IMPORTANT FINDINGS

The findings which emanate both from the literature review and empirical analysis of this research, will be discussed respectively in the sections which follow.

5.3.1 Findings from the literature review in respect of instructional leadership as an aspect to improve learner achievement.

Weller and Hartley (1999:148) identifies the lack of a high quality instructional leadership on the part of the principal as one of the most important aspects that results in poor learner

achievement. The assumption made in the above identification is that instructional leadership is aimed at improving the achievement of learners. It also implies that principals of schools in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa need to be capacitated on the instructional leadership competencies in order to revoke the current status quo which is constant poor learner performance in Grade 12. It is supposed that both primary and secondary schools principals in Mpumalanga still lack the instructional leadership tendencies that will help shape and create schools where learners can continue to learn and where continuous progress in learner achievement is gained (Boyd, 2002: 159).

According to Dimmock (1995: 2) improvements in learner achievement are most likely to be gained in schools where effective instructional leadership particularly by die principal is a characteristic.

Based on the literature that was explored, various researchers have best defined instructional leadership in terms of observable behaviours of the school principal. The thread that runs through all of the definitions suggest that instructional leadership behaviours are fundamental aspects to improve learner achievement in poorly performing schools. That is, the remedy to poorly performing schools in Mpumalanga would be to train principals on instructional leadership behaviours.

The literature reviewed also confirmed that these behaviours are not inborn, but they can be learned or acquired by principals who are eager to improve their learners' achievement in their schools. In view of the prevailing situation at

schools in Mpumalanga province, the research study shows that there is still much to be done in this area of preparing principals for their roles as instructional leaders. An essential task of capacity building has to be commenced in the province and all principals have to undergo a form of training that will equip them to be effective instructional leaders.

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The literature reviewed also revealed that effective instructional leaders are principals who:

- 1 implement and achieve high academic standards;
- 2 communicate the vision and mission of the school;
- 3 set high expectations for staff, learners and themselves;
- 4 establish and maintain positive relationships with students, staff and parents;
- 5 create a school culture and climate that is conducive to learning and teaching;
- 6 are an instructional resource for the staff;
- 7 show a visible presence;
- 8 are visionary instructional leaders;
- 9 view high learner achievement as the most important reason for the schools to exist; and
- 10 value the views of all stakeholders.

The literature reviewed has also confirmed the existing relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievement. Hopkins (2001:16) contends that the domain of instructional leadership is the focus on student learning and achievement. The literature research has also revealed that principals in high achieving schools, as measured by academic achievement in a variety of areas, are more effective instructional leaders than their counterparts in constantly low achieving schools.

However, the findings from various literature sources on instructional leadership behaviours culminate in the following major dimensions:

- 1 staff development;

- 2 teacher supervision and evaluation;
- 3 high performance expectations and trust; and
- 4 having a clear vision and commitment.

Having presented the key findings emanating from the research literature review, the important empirical findings will be outlined in the next section.

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5.3.2 Important empirical findings in respect of the instructional leadership of school principals

The results of the factor analytic procedures reflected that instructional leadership consists of three fundamental factors namely:

- 1 staff development which is composed of 14 items with a Cronbach-Alpha-reliability coefficient of 0,9658;
- 2 vision and commitment which consists of 8 items with a Cronbach-Alpha-reliability coefficient of 0,9385; and
- 3 educator and learner discipline which consists of 6 items with Cronbach-Alpha-reliability coefficient of 0,8912; and

5.3.2.1 Staff development

The research project also exposed certain significant variables. Educators who attended a course on instructional leadership have a statistically significant higher factor mean score than those who have not attended such a course. It indicates that workshops for principals on instructional leadership are essential activities that could enhance the achievement of learners in Mpumalanga. Educators that have not attended any workshop only believe to a small and moderate extent that their principals are instructional leaders in terms of staff development. The above finding reveals that principals of schools in Mpumalanga lack in this tendency of instructional leadership. Both groups believe that staff development is an

essential aspect of effective instructional leadership which is an aspect to improve learner achievement. Principals however need to concentrate more on instructional leadership skills relevant to staff development.

5.3.2.2 Educator and learner discipline

The educators who perceive the attendance of educators and learners at their schools to be excellent have a statistically higher factor mean score than those who perceive the attendance of both educators and learners to be average or poor. Excellent educator and learner attendance thus seems to effect perceptions of instructional leadership behaviours in a positive way. The above confirms that educator and learner discipline promotes high learner achievement. It also necessitates the

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enactment of this instructional leadership behaviour by the principal which is, inculcation of discipline in educators and learners. Consequently an orderly teaching and learning milieu are created.

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5.3.2.3 Vision and commitment

In respect of vision and commitment as an essential aspect of instructional leadership, it does seem that principals are evaluated more positively that was the case with staff development as well as educator and learner discipline. All the independent groups support the notion that vision and commitment is one of the instructional leadership behaviours that propels the performance of learners towards excellence.

It is also possible that educators may have evaluated their principals more positively on vision and commitment because the principals' vision is not known to them. Therefore, they may not know whether the principal is committed towards the realization of the school's vision or not. Inevitably, it is the role of the principal as an instructional leader to make that vision a reality through

communicating it to all stakeholders. In that way, the vision will gain joint ownership and the shared vision will propel everyone's actions.

5.4 **RECOMMENDATIONS ON FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

RECOMMENDATION 1

The researcher recommends that the department of education in Mpumalanga should set up in-service trainings for all principals that would be based on instructional leadership skills as identified in the literature review. Newly appointed principals should be taken through the instructional leadership program as a form of induction. Trainings should be mandatory and ongoing for all principals. Sustainability of the program could be maintained through implementation at Regional and Circuit levels. At these trainings it must be emphasized that the effective instructional leadership of the principal is the most fundamental aspect to improve learner achievement at schools in Mpumalanga Province. In that way, the poor performance in Grade 12 will gradually improve for the better.

RECOMMENDATION 2

For principals to be effective instructional leaders they need to have a personal vision for their schools that is focused on high learner achievement. The vision should be well communicated to educators, learners and parents. It should direct all aspects of

classroom activity for example, every classroom should post appropriate content standards. To make it simpler, the vision should be converted into a development plan and should be seen day by day in all aspects of school life. At every stage of development of the plan the principal who is the instructional leader should emphasize the central purpose of the exercise, so that a school development plan is created to improve the achievement of learners. The effectiveness of the school is rooted in a clear vision and which as far as possible is owned by the whole school

community (Green, 1995: 43).

RECOMMENDATION 3

Principals should enhance instructional leadership through establishing a healthy working environment of educators. They should boost educators' morale by giving them authority in curriculum and instruction, allocate time for teamwork in order to reinforce the prevalence of team spirit and joint problem solving. If the above conditions exist for educators, learners will emulate and cooperative learning will be practised. Consequently, academic achievement will improve.

RECOMMENDATION 4

It is in the context of supervision and evaluation that actual improvement of instruction and learner achievement is most likely to occur. Principals should establish reciprocal supervisory relationships and be actively engaged in observing and evaluating instruction. Effective instructional leaders respect the expertise of educators and educators in turn respect the principal's responsibility to observe, supervise and appraise performance.

RECOMMENDATION 5

High performance expectations and trust are essential for schools to attain high learner achievement (Northouse, 1997: 136). Learners who achieve are expected to achieve first by their principals and secondly by their educators (Blase, Blase,

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Anderson and Dungan, 1995: 81). The staff should believe that all learners can learn and principals should give them assurance that they have the potential to help all learners to learn. Principals should inculcate a sense of self-confidence in the learners and should also uplift their morale in various ways. As instructional leaders

principals should set clear academic goals that are made known to all learners and educators.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The development of staff competence is essential if a school is to maintain high learner achievement. Training and professional development adds meaning to the high performance expectations and it contributes towards changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviour. Principals should create opportunities for staff development in various forms, for example:

- 1 workshops and conferences;
- 2 instant feedback after lesson observations;
- 3 allow educators to observe teaching of their peers;
- 4 mentoring, that is, a senior educator should mentor to the novice educator;
- 5 coaching, educators in promotion posts should provide coaching to other educators;
- 6 grade-level and department meetings; and
- 7 to encourage educators to conduct research.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Mpumalanga education department should ensure adequate staffing in all institutions. In this province, there are still primary, secondary and combined schools that are without administration clerks. As a result, principals spend most of their time in administration duties, instead of playing their instructional leadership roles. There is a great need for principals to leave the comfort of their offices and be visible and accessible to educators and learners. The visible principal has the opportunity to model behaviours consistent with the school's vision, live and breathe his or her belief in education. The prevalence of the above situation would create a climate that will enhance the performance of educators and improvement of learner achievement.

5.5 SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Since this research deals with the assessment of instructional leadership as an aspect to improve learner achievement, further studies would be required in the

following aspects:

- 1 creating a balance between school management and instructional leadership: its impact on school effectiveness; and
- 2 school vision as an aspect of instructional leadership and its impact on learner achievement.
- 3

5.6 CONCLUSION

This research project has evidently and overtly reflected that the instructional leadership of the principal is an aspect to improve learner achievement. The achievement of learners can be affected by what goes on in a school. The literature reviewed has exposed that effective schools share one quality, that is, an exceptional principal who is an instructional leader. In effective schools an ethos or set of expectations and norms that anticipate and support learner achievement is established, fostered and pursued diligently. Instructional leadership is the "bonding agent" for effective teaching and learning. By focussing upon effective teaching and learning the principal's role has changed from that of a manager to an instructional leader. There is no effective school without effective instructional leadership (Sybouts and Wendel, 1994: 19).

Undoubtedly, the above argument necessitates that principals of schools in Mpumalanga should assume the roles of instructional leaders in order for the province to acquire well performing schools, from the primary to the secondary school level.

The literature reviewed endeavoured to identify instructional leadership behaviours of the principal that impact positively on the achievement of learners. Four major dimensions that encapsulate instructional leadership were highlighted. It is now incumbent upon all managers in the line function of the Mpumalanga department of education to ensure that those dimensions are unpacked through trainings of

principals on instructional leadership competences. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that the quality of the instructional leadership of the principal, determines the quality of learner performance. That is, effective instructional leadership produces high learner achievement. Therefore, the acquisition of instructional leadership skills is indispensable to principals of schools in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa.



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SECTION: A

PERSONAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Kindly circle the applicable code or fill in the number where necessary.

6. Teaching experience (in complete years)
(e.g. five years then enter _____)

7. Number of completed years as a principal (if applicable)
(e.g. five years the enter _____)

8. To which of the following educator organisations do you belong?
Please circle yes or no for each one (as you may belong to more than one).

SADTU _____

TUATA _____

NATU _____

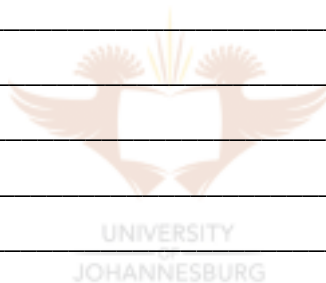
NUE _____

SAOU _____

NAPTOSA _____

SAVBO _____

Other (please specify) _____



9. What is your mother tongue? (Mark one option only)

Zulu _____

Swazi _____

Xhosa _____

English _____

Afrikaans _____

North Sotho _____

South Sotho _____

Ndebele _____

Venda _____

Tsonga _____

Shangaan _____

Tswana _____

Other (specify) _____

10. Your highest educational qualification?

Lower than grade 12 _____

Grade 12 _____

Teacher's diploma/certificate _____

Teacher's diploma certificate plus further educational diploma/certificate _____

Bachelor's degree _____

Bachelor's degree plus a teacher's diploma/certificate _____

Post graduate qualification _____

11. Your religion?

None _____

Christianity _____

Muslim _____

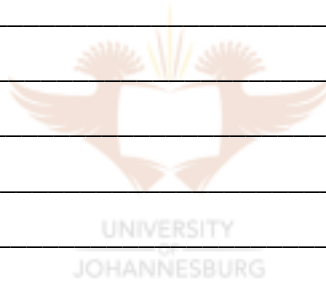
Hinduism _____

Judaism _____

Buddhism _____

African Traditional _____

Other (Specify) _____



12. Your school is situated in a

Rural area _____

Urban area _____

Township _____

13. Language of instruction at your school

English _____

Afrikaans _____

Dual medium (two languages simultaneously in every class) _____

Parallel medium (two languages for some subjects in different classes) _____

Other (specify) _____

14. How will you describe the attendance of educators in your school?

Excellent (18 or more present per week out of every 20 i.e 90% or more)___

Average (16 – 17 present per week out of every 20 i.e 80 to 89%) _____

Poor (15 or less present per week out of every 20 i.e 79% or less) _____

15. How will you describe the attendance of learners in your school?

Excellent (36 or more present per week out of every 40 i.e 90% or more) _

Average (32 – 35 present per week out of every 40 i.e 80 to 89%) _____

Poor (28 or less present per week out of every 40 i.e 79% or less) _____

16. What is the gender of your principal?

Male _____

Female _____

17. Your school is a:

Primary school _____

Secondary school _____

Combined school _____

Special school _____

Other (specify) _____

18. How would you classify the present level of discipline in your school?

Excellent _____

Good _____

Average _____

Poor _____

SECTION B

Please answer each of the following questions by marking the appropriate box:

The following scale is used for all items:

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



EXAMPLE

To what extent is your principal accessible to educators?

(If you believe that your principal is accessible to a large extent then encircle 5 as shown below)

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

SECTION B

To what extent does your principal:

- 1. Display an attitude that fosters effective teaching?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

2. Consider learner performance as a key management area?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

3. Encourage educators to foster learner participation during teaching ?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

4. Use learner achievements as a means to evaluate educators?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

5. Use classroom teaching activities to appraise educators?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

To what extent does your principal:

6. Encourage educators to be loyal towards the school?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

7. Encourage educators to accept accountability for the achievement of their learners?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

8. Encourage high levels of achievement among learners?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

9. Provide feedback to educators after observing classroom teaching?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

10. Encourage educators to co-operate with one another?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

11. Assist educators to utilize existing resources efficiently?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
12. Involve educators in the decision-making process?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
13. Allow educators autonomy in deciding how to teach?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
14. Display commitment towards developing educators?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
15. Share his/her vision for the school with all stakeholders?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent

To what extent does your principal:



16. Support the professional growth of educators?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
17. Provide educators with opportunities to observe the teaching of their peers?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
18. Involve parents in decisions relating to the discipline of learners?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
19. Work with educators to identify goals for improving the discipline at the school?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent

20. Encourage educators to be punctual?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
21. Institute developmental programs for educators?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
22. Demonstrate interest in the academic development of learners?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
23. Hold educators accountable for poor learner achievement?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
24. Demonstrate behaviour indicating that he/she is accessible to educators?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
- To what extent does your principal:
25. Hold high expectations for learners?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
26. Accept constructive criticism from educators?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
27. Encourage grade 12 learners to work hard towards academic achievement?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent
28. Ensure that learners observe school rules?
- No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Very large extent

29. Recognize parental contributions to the school?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

30. Ensure that the school governing body has the necessary training to govern the school effectively?

No extent

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Very large extent

