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**THE DISTRIBUTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AMONG THE SCHOOL
MANAGEMENT TEAM IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GAUTENG**

by

CYPIWE MAPAIRE

MINOR DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements of the degree

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Almighty Jehova God, my source of inspiration, strength and illumination.

DECLARATION

I, Cypiwe Mapaire, the undersigned, declare that the minor dissertation submitted by me entitled THE DISTRIBUTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AMONG THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GAUTENG is my own work.

I further declare that the work is original and authentic, and this work was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.

Signature:

Date:



ABSTRACT

This study focused on the concept of distributed instructional leadership (DIL) to investigate the social distribution of instructional leadership (IL) among the School Management Team members in a public secondary school. Furthermore, this research sought to determine the tools used by the SMT in enacting DIL. DIL is viewed as the distribution of instructional leadership functions enacted by the SMT as they go about defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate. The study was framed with a social constructivist paradigm using a qualitative research design. A case study approach was employed, the case being one public secondary school with good academic results in the national Grade 12 examination. Purposive sampling was used, and the sample comprised the principal, deputy principal and three HODs who make up the SMT members in the school. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The findings indicated that instructional leadership was widely distributed among all the SMT members in all three domains namely, defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate. Notably, the SMT played a strong role in curriculum delivery and promoted a positive learning climate. Interestingly, the distribution of the IL role was extended to subject heads who assisted HODs in their IL monitoring and supervisory roles. Various tools were used by all SMT members to enhance effective IL. The tools comprised mainly policies and committees. Some challenges encountered by SMT members in their IL role were high workloads, excessive paperwork, inadequate IL skills, insufficient parental involvement, poor learner discipline and insufficient cooperation on the part of subject heads. It is recommended that SMTs are trained in IL as they require clarity on their specific roles. Furthermore, the position of 'subject head' needs to be considered as an official post for which the subject head is remunerated.

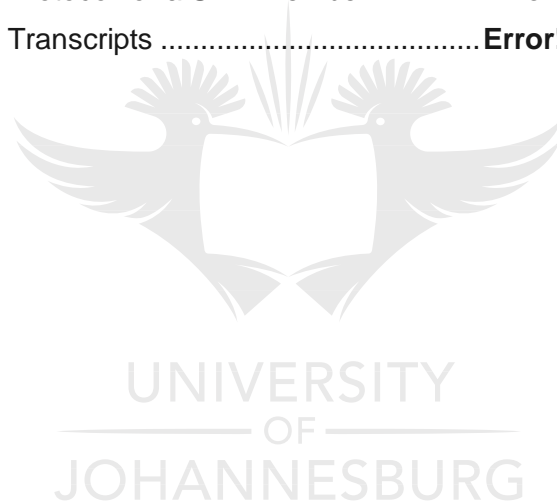
Keywords: Distributed instructional leadership, instructional leadership, school management teams, principal, subject head, head of department, deputy principal

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
DECLARATION.....	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	ix
CHAPTER ONE ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background to the problem.....	1
1.3 Research aim and objectives.....	4
1.4 Methodology.....	4
1.4.1 Research paradigm.....	4
1.4.2 Research approach.....	5
1.4.3 Sampling	5
1.4.4 Research method.....	6
1.4.5 Data analysis.....	6
1.4.6 Trustworthiness.....	6
1.4.7 Ethical considerations.....	6
1.5 Clarification of concepts.....	7
1.5.1 School management team (SMT).....	7
1.5.2 Instructional Leadership (IL)	7
1.5.3 Distributed Instructional Leadership (DIL).....	7
1.6 Division of chapters.....	8
1.7 Summary	8
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Conceptualising Instructional Leadership.....	10
2.3 Conceptual framework of the study	11
2.3.1 Dimension 1: Defining the school mission	12
2.3.2 Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programme.....	13
2.3.3 Dimension 3: Promoting a positive school learning climate.....	14
2.4 The role of the school management team	15
2.4.1 The IL role of the principal	15
2.4.2 The IL role of the deputy principal	19
2.4.3 The IL role of the HOD.....	20

2.5	Conceptualising distributed instructional leadership	22
2.5.1	Aspects of distributed leadership.....	23
2.5.2	Factors that contribute to effective distributed leadership	24
2.5.3	Arguments against the concept of distributed leadership	24
2.5.4	Benefits of distributed leadership	24
2.5.5	Challenges of distributed instructional leadership.....	25
2.6	Summary	25
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY		26
3.1	Introduction.....	26
3.2	Research paradigm.....	26
3.3	Research approach.....	26
3.4	Research design	27
3.5	Sampling.....	27
3.6	Context of the school in the study.....	28
3.7	Data collection procedures	28
3.8	The role of the researcher.....	28
3.9	Data analysis.....	29
3.10	Trustworthiness.....	29
3.11	Ethical considerations	30
3.12	Summary	30
CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION		31
4.1	Introduction.....	31
4.2	Themes.....	31
4.2.1	Distribution of IL functions	31
4.2.1.1	The principal's main IL role	31
4.2.1.2	The deputy principal's main IL role	35
4.2.1.3	The IL functions of HODs.....	38
4.2.2	Tools used by SMT members in IL.....	43
4.2.3	Challenges hindering the effectiveness of IL	46
4.3	Summary	49
CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION		50
5.1	Introduction.....	50
5.2	Summary of the study	50
5.3	Limitations of the study	54
5.3.1	Finding 1	54
5.3.2	Finding 2	55
5.3.3	Finding 3	55

5.3.4 Finding 4	55
5.3.5 Finding 5	55
5.4 Recommendations	56
5.4.1 Recommendation 1	56
5.4.2 Recommendation 2	56
5.5 Recommendations for further research	56
5.6 Conclusion	56
LIST OF REFERENCES	58
APPENDICES	71
Appendix 1: Ethics clearance	71
Appendix 2: Approval – Gauteng Department of Education	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 3: Consent Forms	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 4: SMT Minutes	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 5: Interview Protocol for a SMT Member	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 6: Interview Transcripts	Error! Bookmark not defined.



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Instructional Management Framework (Hallinger 2005:5)	12
Figure 2.2: The principal's effect on learner achievement (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2018:8)	18



LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Participants' biographical information	27
Table 5.1: Distribution of IL role by SMTs at the school	52



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DBE	Department of Basic Education
DIL	Distributed Instructional Leadership
HOD	Head of Department
IL	Instructional leadership
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team



CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Due to its significance in student academic outcomes, instructional leadership (IL) has gained popularity globally (Hallinger, 2005:2; Lunenberg, 2002:1, 2010:5). Instructional leadership is referred to as leadership directed towards the promotion of effective teaching and learning in organisations (Blasé & Blasé, 2000:130). The post-apartheid era saw South African education in a decentralised position where IL could no longer be the domain of the principal (Williams, 2011:190) but was distributed among others in the school. This study focuses on the concept of Distributed Instructional Leadership (DIL) and interrogates how it exists in the context of the school.

1.2 Background to the problem

The poor performance of learners in South African schools calls for strong IL (Naicker & Mestry, 2015:1; Spaul, 2013:3). Harrison (2018:1) argues that South African education is suffering because the knowledge base of IL is not well developed. In addition, Harrison (2018:1) points out that the country's high failure rate is a result of ineffective teachers, learners who cannot learn at the pace and level at which they are being taught, as well as principals' poor leadership styles. The Western Cape Department of Education has launched an intervention programme called the 'Collaboration Schools Pilot Programme' in an effort to improve education in all public schools. In Gauteng, the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education (DBE), is engaged in an intervention programme named the 'Wits Maths Connect' in an effort to assist under-performing schools. Although these initiatives are intended to improve education, the country's public schools continue to experience overall poor student outcomes. The recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) test, indicated that South African Grade 4 learners performed the lowest from the 50 countries who participated in the testing (Kerfoot & van Heerden, 2015:235). The question that remains is, why is the country still experiencing a huge number of underperforming schools in almost every

province? This question prompted me to delve further into how instructional leadership is enacted.

IL is referred to as the way in which principals influence the behaviour of educators by “defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school learning climate” (Heck & Hallinger, 2014:14). Notably, in the absence of IL, student achievement suffers (Howard, 2016:4). In present times, there is emphasis on the “need for principals to be instructional leaders” (Bendikson, Hattie & Robinson, 2012:2; Heck & Hallinger, 2014:659; Lunenburg, 2010:2). However, it is disconcerting that South African principals have not received sufficient specialist training in instructional leadership (Bendikson et al., 2012:2). Furthermore, it is interesting to note that only 17% of principals regard the supervision of the curriculum as their role (Hoadley, Christie & Ward, 2009:381). In addition, time constraints on principals due to their numerous responsibilities, make it difficult for principals to focus on their IL role (Kruger, 2003:206). Thus, the monitoring of the teaching and learning process is left largely to Head of Departments (HODs) (Hoadley et al., 2009:376).

A principal’s school time ought to be dedicated to the supervision and monitoring of teachers and learning processes (Sibanda, 2018:567). The principal is responsible for reporting to the school district about all matters related to teaching and the student learning process. The principal is engaged in the supervision of the school management team (SMT) members, who in turn supervise and monitor teachers in their respective subject department. It is therefore evident that IL exists in a distributed form in schools which is referred to as DIL (Harris & Spillane, 2008:31; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:4). The distribution of IL is not surprising, since deputy principals and HODs are responsible for evaluation and supervision, including classroom observation (Hoadley et al., 2009:376).

DIL implies a social distribution where “a leader’s power of decision-making is dispersed or stretched and staff specialities are also spread across the many, but not the few staff members” (Anney, 2014:272). In this way, more people are involved in decision-making, and the expertise of educators can become a basis for leadership opportunity. Howard (2016:14) asserts that with a distributed model of IL, principals, HODs and other teachers can share their skills and expertise to effectively manage the school. Social distribution may be accomplished by sharing responsibilities

pertaining to IL among the principal, deputy principal, HODs, senior teachers and level one educators (Botha & Triegaardt, 2015:212). “Collaborative structures and processes” can assist principals in their instructional leadership role (Lunenburg, 2010:1). This requires leadership which is focused directly on learning and extended to other members of the organisation. A social distributive perspective calls for meetings to discuss academic progress of learners, monitoring learners’ progress and creating committees and sub-committees for the purposes of sharing expertise (Botha & Triegaardt, 2015:212).

Distributed leadership theory emphasises “how leadership practices take shape in the interactions between leaders, followers and their situations” (Spillane, 2014:26). Distribution is not a leadership style, but it is a “way of viewing leadership practices” (Howard, 2016:45). Therefore, DIL focuses on “leaders, followers and the situation, and how they interact to perform leadership practice” (ibid.). Leadership in this case is viewed as “spread over both leaders and followers given key aspects of the prevailing situation, including organisational routines, structures, and tools” (Spillane, 2005:144).

Hoadley et al. (2009:375) state that studies reveal, “detailed normative frameworks” on what principals should do, but there is very little consideration of the nature of principals’ work in particular settings and what principals really do. A study by Ng, Nguyen, Wong and Choy (2015:402) revealed that in Singapore, principals tend to delegate their instructional leadership responsibility to HODs. Klar’s (2012:72) research in the United States of America highlighted the crucial role that the principal played in involving department heads in “instructional leadership initiatives and providing continuous support, resources and commitment necessary” in order to develop greater IL capacity. Lee, Hallinger and Walker (2012:689) found that in schools in East Asia, DIL promoted professional interactions among staff across programmes and organisational units. Despite poor student achievement, it is concerning to note that in South Africa, IL is relinquished to HODs and subject heads, while principals take on administrative and disciplinary roles (Hoadley et al., 2009:381). The same study revealed that, in looking for evidence of effective IL, we should not expect IL to be found exclusively, or even primarily, in the principal. Thus, there is a need to explore DIL to understand how IL is distributed among the SMT. Exploring DIL in schools might assist SMTs to improve their IL practices, bearing in

mind that ultimately, principals are accountable for learner achievement.

It is against this background that the research question is:

How is IL distributed among the SMT in a secondary school in Gauteng?

The following sub-questions will be used to explore the research problem:

1. What role is played by each SMT member in enacting distributed instructional leadership?
2. What are the tools used by the SMT in enacting distributed instructional leadership?

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The aim of the study is to explore how instructional leadership is distributed among the SMT in a secondary school in Gauteng.

Objectives:

In order to fulfil the aim, the objectives are to:

- investigate the social distribution of IL among the SMT members; and
- determine the tools used by the SMT in enacting DIL.

In the next section, the research design and methodology employed in the study is outlined.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Research paradigm

This study employed a social constructivist paradigm. Social constructivists “hold assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work” (Creswell, 2008:4). Thus, I sought to understand how instructional leadership is enacted by the participants in the particular context of their school. I relied on the understandings of the SMT members themselves, as they provided insight of the context in which they work.

1.4.2 Research approach

Qualitative research was employed to investigate DIL. Qualitative research places focus on “understanding the meaning people have constructed in making sense of the world and experiences they have in the world” (Merriam, 1998:8). Qualitative research gathers data from participants from “their natural settings” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:321). Social constructivists rely on qualitative research since it provides deep meaning (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997:1) which is what I sought about DIL and how it is enacted.

This investigation was “contextual in nature because it was concerned with the unique context of a school situation” (Yin, 2012). Therefore, a qualitative case study approach was used, the case being one public secondary school. A case study allows for “multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood” (Baxter & Jack, 2008:544). Furthermore, a case study is useful for a detailed investigation into “a contemporary phenomenon within its real-world context such as the phenomenon” of DIL (Yin, 2012:4).

1.4.3 Sampling

Purposive sampling was used in this study to select participants with certain characteristics (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:138). The participants in this study were five SMT members which included the principal, the deputy principal and three HODs from one secondary school. These participants have served in their leadership positions for at least three years and are regarded as being informative about how IL is practised at the school. The education district classifies schools generally into two categories according to the National Senior Certificate (Grade 12 exam), namely high performing (99%-100% pass rate) and underperforming (50%-60% pass rate). The school in the study obtained a 90% average over two years (2017-2018) which was considered as good academic performance. The reason for the selection of a school with good academic performance rather than underperformance, is that it was hoped that a school which obtained good learner results could provide rich data for the study. A district official from the Gauteng East district assisted in the selection of the school.

1.4.4 Research method

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data in this study. This is a type of interview which consists of several key questions that allow for discovery and elaboration of information from participants (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008:294). Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they give room for “focused conversational communication” while allowing the researcher greater flexibility during the interview to express the questions differently or arrange the questions in a different sequence (Barriball & While, 1994:328). Data was further collected by means of document analysis. The documents analysed were eight SMT meeting minutes with the intention to explore the IL roles of the various SMT members at the school and identify tools that they used to distribute IL.

1.4.5 Data analysis

The recorded and transcribed interviews and the documents were analysed using thematic analysis. This is “a systematic technique used to reduce voluminous text into fewer content categories” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:5). The data analysis procedure required coding the data using codes that is, using either a word, or “a short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative” attribute to the interviewed data (Saldana, 2016:4). Codes were categorised and themes were generated “following which an explanation of the meanings of the themes and the data was given” (Elo & Kyngas, 2007:107).

1.4.6 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the study followed Guba and Lincoln’s (1981:8) strategies of credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. These strategies involved prior engagement with the participants to learn about their culture (Shenton, 2004:65), providing a true reflection of the participants’ responses (Shenton, 2004:2) and providing “thick descriptions” of the research findings” (Creswell & Miller, 2000:126). The measures for trustworthiness are further discussed in Section 3.9.

1.4.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical measures were observed in this research study process which included clearance from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Johannesburg and obtaining permission to carry out the research study from the Gauteng Department of

Education (GDE). Furthermore, informed consent from all the participants was also obtained. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:15) states that it is ethical that participants are protected during the research study from any form of danger.

1.5 Clarification of concepts

1.5.1 School management team (SMT)

The SMT of a school comprises the principal, the deputy principal and heads of departments (HODs). The SMT is responsible for fulfilling the school's "mission, vision, curriculum goals and action plans" by aligning the "current practices and plans to strategies, structures and systems" that will lead the school to success (Department of Education (DoE, 2000:1). Furthermore, the SMT is required to "select the best practices for the school to accommodate the diversity of needs which exists in the school" (DoE, 2000:1-2). The SMT should strive to work in the context of outcomes-based education to achieve the "aim of informing good practice and quality delivery within the whole school development" (DoE; 2000:2).

1.5.2 Instructional Leadership (IL)

IL places focus on the schools central activity which is "teaching and learning" (Bush, 2007:401). IL is an approach where the principal assists educators to "foster a learning climate free of disruption, a system of clear teaching objectives, and high teacher expectations for students" (Blasé & Blasé, 2000:130). This study is concerned with three dimensions of IL as posited by Hallinger (2005:5). These dimensions are: "defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school climate" (ibid.). A working definition of IL for this study, is thus the actions taken by principals or other members of the school management team to promote teaching and learning in the areas of defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate.

1.5.3 Distributed Instructional Leadership (DIL)

DIL is conceptualised as the distribution of a range of leadership functions pertaining to IL which is undertaken by leaders to promote instructional improvement (Sibanda, 2017:567; Witten, 2017:62). The DIL model draws on the "full potential of distributed leadership" to describe the role of SMT members and the tools used to improve

teaching (Halverson & Clifford, 2015:389). A working definition of DIL for this study, is the distribution of leadership functions that promote instructional improvement in the areas of defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate.

1.6 Division of chapters

The dissertation is divided into five chapters:

Chapter One

Chapter One provided an overview of the study, outlining the research problem, the aim and research objectives. The research paradigm, design and research method were also outlined in this chapter.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two presents an overview of the existing knowledge on the concept of IL and how IL is distributed in a public secondary school. The conceptual framework used in the study will be outlined.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three focuses on the research paradigm, design and research method that was used to gather data. The trustworthiness of the study and ethical measures undertaken are further expanded upon.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four presents an analysis and interpretation of the data collected based on the interviews and documents analysed.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five provides the summary, findings, conclusion and recommendations from the research study.

1.7 Summary

Principals are expected to be effective instructional leaders in order to address the

poor academic achievement of public school learners in South Africa. However, due to various reasons such as time constraints, administration tasks, heavy workloads and insufficient training, the principal cannot manage IL alone. Thus, there is need for distributing the responsibilities among other instructional leaders. In some cases, principals may have even relinquished their IL functions to the rest of the SMT members. Thus, this study investigated the distribution of IL among the SMT in a public secondary school. Having orientated the reader to the study in this chapter, the next chapter will focus on the review of the literature and will present a conceptual framework relevant to this study.



CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Instructional leadership (IL) is not just the domain of the school principal; it is distributed among school management teams (SMTs) and together they play an instructional leadership role. In this chapter a literature review will be undertaken. A literature review seeks to “describe, summarise, evaluate, clarify and/or integrate the content of primary reports” (Cooper, 1988:37). By means of undertaking a literature review existing studies and theories in the field of instructional leadership will be elucidated (ibid). The literature review of this study is aimed at providing the necessary theoretical framework to describe how IL is distributed. It provides a background of IL and the roles of the SMT members. The aim of this chapter is to pinpoint recent information relevant to IL and how IL is distributed in public primary schools.

2.2 Conceptualising Instructional Leadership

The concept of IL and its practices can be comprehended from as early as 1970s in the United States of America’s education system (Hallinger, 2005:6; 2011:139). The late 1980s and 1990s marked a considerable change in the conceptualisation the principal’s function moving from management to “school instructional leader” (Counties, 2017:22). The idea of principals being viewed as instructional leaders was welcomed (ibid). IL was viewed as a significant strategy to reform and improve schools (Hoy & Miskel, 2005:29). As stipulated in the Government Gazette of the (2016:8), IL “constitutes the core business of a school” principal in South Africa. The definition of IL is a school leader who focuses on providing assistance to educators to benefit teaching and learning activities in the classroom. (Hallinger & Heck, 2014:659).

There are various views and interpretations of IL. One view is that IL is a crucial aspect in the improvement of learner performance (Joyner, Ben-Avie & Comer, 2004:93). Another view is that IL means “working directly with teachers, group improvement, professional development, curriculum improvement and action research implementation” (Glickman, 1985). Southworth (2002:79) connects IL with “teaching and learning including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth”.

Similarly, Bush (2007:401) sees IL as targeting “the school’s core activities, teaching and learning”. Spillane (2004:11) defines IL as “the identification, acquisition, allocation, coordination and use of the social, material resources” that are required for learning to occur. Masuku’s (2011:60) outlook is that IL is about how principals go about creating a conducive “working environment” for educators and learners. IL is described by Di Paola and Hoy (2005:3) as “direct and indirect behaviours” which have an effect on teaching and learning. Lashway (2002:1) asserts that there should be “school policies and procedures” that guides the instructional processes in schools (Lashway, 2002:1).

2.3 Conceptual framework of the study

A conceptual framework is a guideline of how one wants to conduct one’s research as well as positioning one’s research within the larger field of research (Shoemaker, Tankard & Lasorsa, 2004). This study employed Hallinger’s (2005:5) model to examine the IL behaviours of SMT members. The framework highlights three major dimensions of IL namely; “defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school learning climate” (Hallinger, 2005:5).

The three dimensions are further broken down into ten IL functions as shown diagrammatically in Figure 2.1. The ten IL functions depicted in Figure 2.1 are expected to be performed by principals. However, in this study, it will be ascertained how these ten instructional functions are distributed among the other members of the SMT.

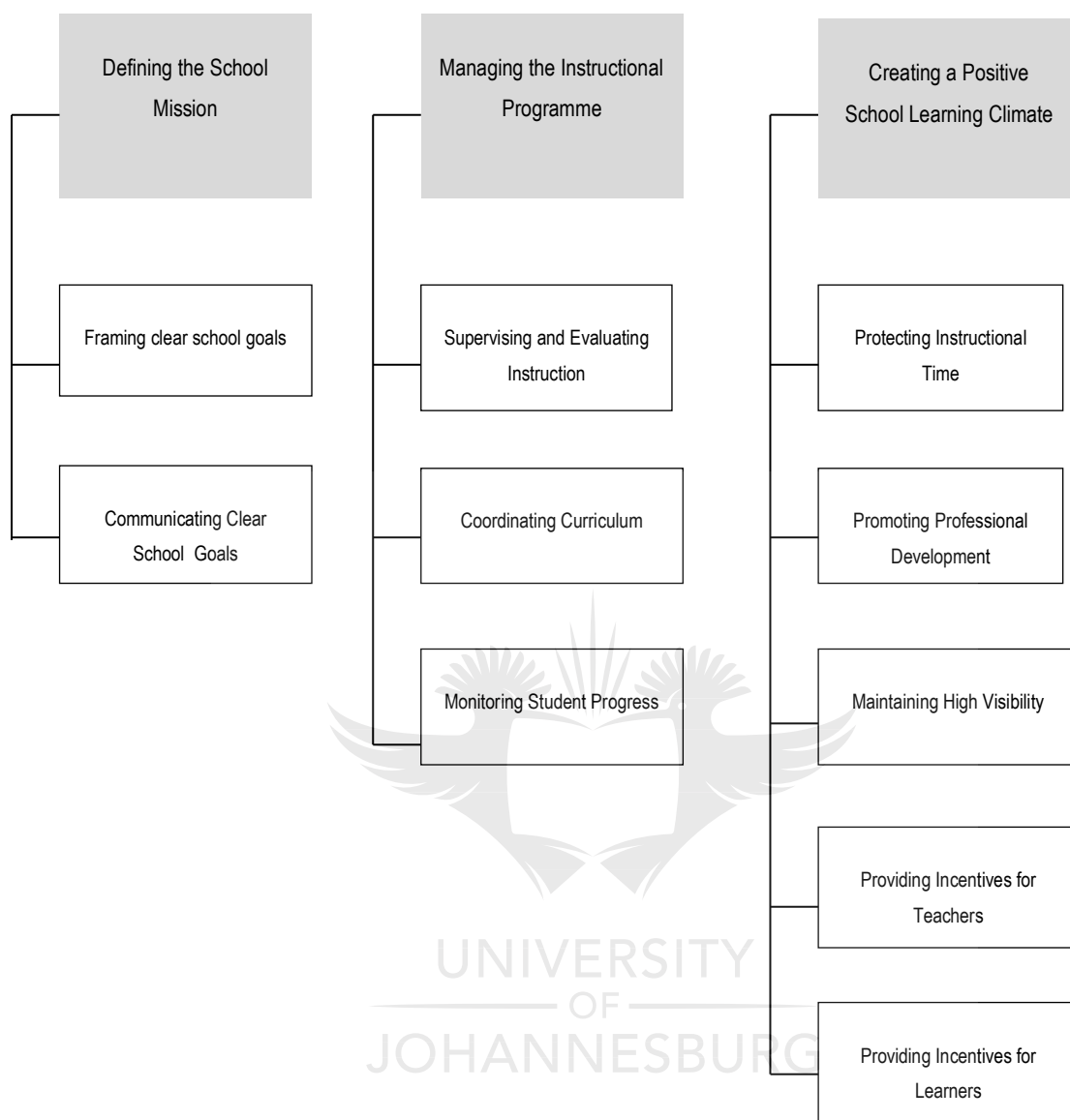


Figure 2.1: Instructional Management Framework (Hallinger 2005:5)

2.3.1 Dimension 1: Defining the school mission

The purpose of the school's existence is ascertained from the school's mission (Hallinger, 2005:5). A school's mission is a guideline of how the school should operate on a daily basis. The guideline has to be absolutely clear. A school's mission serves many important roles for schools (Stemler & Bebell, 2012:47). It provides a "shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of the students and overall effectiveness of the school" (Bittencourt & Willets, 2018:223). The school's mission

should be easily spotted on the school's premises and has to be in line with the learners' needs (Sindu, 2003:441). Hallinger (2005:7) maintains that the mission has to be "articulated, actively supported and modelled" by the principal.

The dimension of defining the school mission depicted in Figure 2.1 indicates two major leadership functions namely, "framing the school's goals" and "communicating the school's goals" (Hallinger, 2005:5). In order for learners to perform optimally, the "academic goals" that educators are striving for collectively should be clearly defined and easily understood (ibid.). Lunenburg (2010:2) adds that the goals ought to be "measurable and time-based". Communication of the goals is important to garner support from the learners, educators and parents (Hallinger, 2005:9).

2.3.2 Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programme

The dimension of 'managing the instructional programme' depicted in Figure 2.1, is aimed at ensuring the smooth running of instructional activities and execution of the curriculum (Hallinger, 2005:6). 'Managing the instructional programme' requires a great deal of proficiency and experience in curriculum related matters and dedication to fulfilling the academic goals (Hallinger, 2005:6). This dimension comprises of three functions namely, "supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum and monitoring student progress" depicted in Figure 2.1 (Hallinger, 2005:6).

The leadership function of 'supervising and evaluating instruction' centres on the monitoring of teaching and learning activities by principals (Gawlik, 2018:542). The principal is also engaged in the supervision of SMT members who in turn supervise and monitor teachers in their respective subject department (Tan, Heng & Lim-Ratnam, 2016:1). The supervision of instruction further involves the observation of classroom activities which can be conducted through class visits.

'Coordinating the curriculum' entails all activities related to the smooth implementation of the curriculum such as timetabling, the allocation of subjects and resources such as material and financial resources (Manaseh, 2016:32). Classroom visits might also be undertaken to make sure that the curriculum is taught effectively (Mathunyane, 2013:12).

With regard to 'monitoring student progress', the principal acts as the facilitator of

teaching and learning with the assistance of SMT members as well as checking students' progress mainly by their achievement on written tests as a basis for establishing plans for under-performing students (Mathunyane, 2013:14).

2.3.3 Dimension 3: Promoting a positive school learning climate

The third dimension of Hallinger's IL model (2005:6) (Figure 2.1) calls for the promotion of a positive school learning climate. The climate of a school is understood as "the quality and frequency of interactions between all the stakeholders involved in the school" (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:14). Hallinger (2005:6) identifies five functions that contribute to a positive learning climate. The first is "protecting instructional time". One way to protect instructional time is by making sure that no time is wasted or extending the time to teach beyond the prescribed time frame. The second function is "promoting professional development" which is key to the development of teachers (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009:475). Staff development programmes equip teachers with relevant skills for effective teaching.

The third function implores the principal to schedule time to allow teachers to attend relevant and useful professional development programmes based on their needs (Catano & Stronge, 2007:384). In cases where some of the professional programmes do not meet the teachers' needs, additional staff development programmes could be designed by the school. It is the instructional role of the principal to keep teachers abreast of developments in technology and new pedagogic practices (Maponya, 2015:24). The fourth function requires instructional leaders to be visible in their schools. According to Mathunyane (2013:13), the principal's high visibility on school premises and in classrooms, contributes much to student performance to protect learning instructional time. High visibility is maintained by engaging in purposeful activities such as collecting data, observations, coaching and management by walking around (Hallinger, 2005:9; Mathunyane, 2013:36). Providing incentives for teachers is necessary to motivate teachers to put more effort into teaching. Motivation can involve "expressing appreciation for their work through verbal encouragement, written appreciation and nominations to head committees" (Nel, Gerber, van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2004:333). Other incentives for teachers might be "a supportive school environment" in which the challenges that teachers face are reduced and the relations among staff are strengthened (Ng et al., 2015:392). Hallinger

(2005:6) suggests that when “high expectations” are set and achieved, that both teachers and learners ought to receive rewards as a form of incentive. This is a very important motivational aspect of IL for school principals to take into recognition (Ng et al., 2015:391).

2.4 The role of the school management team

The SMT represents the school’s management structure, which is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school and for putting the school’s policies into operation (Bush, 2007:392). In most schools, SMTs comprise of the principal, deputy principal and HODs (Ndou, 2008:28). The SMT is responsible for working with the broader school community (DoE, 2000:8). In South Africa, management is widely practiced through the medium of school policies, implying that decision-making and problem solving is the responsibility of SMTs (Wyk & Marumoloa, 2012:73). The benefit of such a management team is that it maximises a leader’s potential while minimising his/her weaknesses (Ndou, 2008:28). The SMT structure further provides multiple perspectives on how to meet a need or reach a goal, thus devising several alternatives for each situation (ibid.). Within the collective structure of the SMT each member has a particular role.

2.4.1 The IL role of the principal

A recent Government Gazette (DBE, 2016) outlines several IL responsibilities of the principal. The principal is expected to “monitor learners, ensure that effective learning is taking place and engage in continuous improvements of curriculum implementation” (DBE, 2016:14). Other responsibilities include the hiring and induction of staff (ibid.), providing assistance to staff members, allocating work and coordinating individual efforts through work schedules to avoid unnecessary delay in task accomplishment (DBE, 2016:23). Principals are required to empower teachers to become instructional leaders who have the ability to share the responsibility for accomplishing the mission, vision and set goals (ibid.).

The literature further indicates various roles of the principal that are concerned with promoting effective teaching and learning. The principal is expected to develop and implement an instructional framework which is aligned with the national curriculum (Catano & Stronge, 2007:379). It is also the duty of the principal to undertake

classroom observations and provide “constructive feedback” to educators as well as ensure that the necessary “learning and teaching support material” (LTSM) is provided (Mestry, 2017:258). The principal plays a key role in IL practice through goal setting, inspiring and supporting followers in the task of achieving set goals (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu, & Van Rooyen, 2010:91). According to Gupton (2003:63), the main role of the principal resides in “managing the instructional program and promoting a positive culture of learning”. The principal is the figure head who oversees all the educational processes in an educational institution. He/she is the chief director of operations in the teaching and learning sphere (Bush et al., 2010:92). In line with Hallinger’s (2005:5) assertion, Gupton (2003:63) points out that a principal who seeks to create a culture of learning and teaching, communicates high expectations for student academic performance to both teachers and students. Furthermore, the principal protects teachers, students and support staff from undue pressure (Gupton, 2003:63).

Communication is vital for managing sound relationships among teachers. It is the duty of the principal to employ effective strategies of communication for the smooth running of the organisation (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2012:145). The principal must also be competent in the management of conflict, group processes, change process and environmental interaction (Hallinger, 2005:6-7). Instructionally, high performing “schools develop a culture of continuous improvement in which rewards for learners and teachers” are according to Mestry (2017:263), are through purposes and practises.

Principals operate within the sphere of four main leadership functions: planning, organising, leading and monitoring (Lunenburg, 2010:4). Planning navigates the school to where it wants to be in the future (ibid.). It becomes the basis for monitoring and evaluating teacher and learner performance. Organising involves developing organisational structure, hiring and training suitable staff and “establishing common patterns and networks” (ibid.). Moreover, at the school level, the principal must ensure that the required school policies are established and operational. The principal and the deputy principal must design an efficient programme that allows for relief educators to replace absent educators for continuity in the learning programme (ibid.). After planning and organising, the next step is leading teachers to achieve the school’s goals. The process of leading entails seeing a change in the day-to-day operations of

the school. People should show the kind of behaviour directed towards accomplishing organisational goals (Mullins, 1999:260). Facilitating and collaborating are some of the terms used in place of leading (Mullins, 1999:257).

Liu and Hallinger (2017:292) note that it is the principal's duty to clarify values, vision and to be resourceful. Principals should have pedagogic expertise, allocate instructional leadership tasks and establish a climate conducive to learning (ibid.). Staff efforts need to be harmonised by "shared values and a common vision" in order for improved learner performance as well as the creation of a school culture (van Niekerk & van Wyk, 2014:407). Norms that espouse the school culture should include a collective "responsibility for student learning, a caring environment, open communication, a balance of personal and common ambitions and a trusting relationship" (ibid.).

Principals are expected to lead their staff with a "sense of purpose and confidence" and be influential in providing the necessary direction towards "goal or task achievement" (Bush & Glover, 2003:10). Furthermore, leadership involves "inspiring and supporting followers" so that they can fulfil these goals (ibid.). Principals ought to drive a compelling vision with a focus on "academic excellence" and "quality teaching" which provides learners with a learning climate that supports them to bring out their full potential (Liu & Hallinger, 2017:292). The rationale behind such a vision is to create a learning culture in the school where learning is of value to everyone. The principal's role in this regard is to encourage the professional development of staff towards greater effectiveness and motivating learners to achieve their very best (ibid.). Good teaching habits need to be appreciated and experienced teachers need to assist novice teachers (Nel et al., 2004:314).

Liu and Hallinger (2017:291) maintain that modelling has a huge impact on followers as it demonstrates the "core values of a leader". For instance, the principal must be the first one to arrive at school and last one to leave the school, hence maintaining high visibility (Hallinger, 2005:6). He/she has to be innovative, "enterprising, open to change and supportive of others who are trying to change" (Catano & Stronge, 2007:383).

Sebastian and Allensworth (2012:6) provide a helpful model of IL which conveys the instructional role of the principal. The model is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

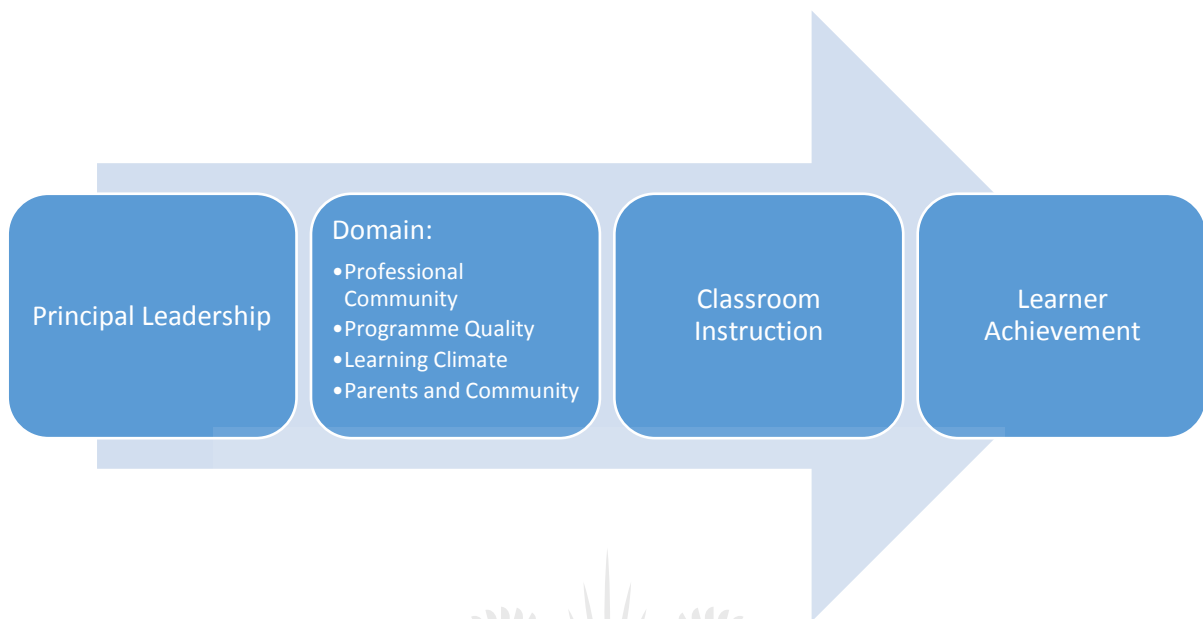


Figure 2.2: The principal's effect on learner achievement (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2018:8)

Sebastian and Allensworth (2012:8) maintain that the framework of organisational support for learning begins with IL as the vehicle for change. They suggest four domains of instructional leadership which, if practised, can improve learner performance. The four domains are family engagement, providing adequate resources for learning at the school level, the professional development of staff and creating a school climate conducive to learning (ibid.).

The school principal works collaboratively with other stakeholders to address the educational issues at hand (Witten, 2017:2). This suggests that through different types of interactions that the stakeholders are engaged in, leadership practice is instructionally distributed across the broader context of the school. In fact, research undertaken by Maponya (2015:14) indicates that small groups of people working collaboratively as a leadership team can yield more positive student outcomes than either the principal alone or a group of individuals working in isolation. In every competitive organisation the combined efforts of everybody yields good results (Nel et al., 2004:352). Furthermore, the principal has to involve other members of staff to ease his/her workload. As noted by Harris (2015:89) "good leaders grow other leaders." In

support of this idea, Grenda (2011:15) observed that the current climate of “high-stakes accountability” requires principals and teachers to work collaboratively to assist all students to achieve better. The principal works closely with the deputy principal.

2.4.2 The IL role of the deputy principal

The IL role of the deputy principal is to deputise for the principal in guiding and supervising the work of the learner and teacher performance (Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC, 2003:C-65). That means when the principal is away, the deputy principal takes over all the duties of the principal. According to Hallinger (2005:6), deputies ought to work hand-in-hand with the principal in defining the school’s mission. Whenever they have social gatherings like annual parent meetings, speech and prize-giving ceremonies, the principal and the deputy principal should communicate the mission and vision of the school.

The deputy principal participates in the performance appraisal programme of staff for developmental purposes (ELRC, 1996:C-66). Drafting the master timetable, examination timetable and resolving issues associated with timetabling issues, are some of the responsibilities of the deputy principal (Grenda, 2011:58.) The deputy principal also has classes to teach. For purposes of accountability, the deputy principal works hand in hand with the principal since they operate under the common dimension of IL. As argued by Williams (2011:192) and Harris (2010:317), sharing leadership does not mean to give away “power, authority and control”. In fact, sharing leadership is a prerequisite for high student achievement (Williams, 2011:193).

Communication is viewed as an important skill for the deputy principal. Firstly, the deputy principal must be able to clearly articulate the objectives of various tasks and projects and secondly, he/she should foster effective communication to relevant stakeholders on all aspects of the school (DBE, 2016:40). It is vital that when undergoing any change that communication is effective and where required consultation should be undertaken with all the affected people (Stone, 2006:35). It is also the role of the deputy principal to communicate with parents and community to support student learning (ibid.). Organisational leaders such as deputy principals must focus attention on communication to avoid uncertainty and miscommunication. Stone (2006:41) argues that an effective communicator is expected to spend 90% of his time

communicating issues, which is not feasible due to heavy workloads. Hence this requires the distribution of responsibilities to attain effective instructional leadership.

The role of the deputy principal is unsystematic and depends on the day-to-day needs of the running of the school, as well as advanced planning (Badcock, 2010:93). Unfortunately, the duties of deputy principals are not clearly explicated but are quite broad and demanding in terms of the nature of the role and the hours of work (Cranston, Tromans & Reugebrink, 2004:227).

2.4.3 The IL role of the HOD

Globally, the job of the HOD has become more complex and demanding, as schools rely on HODs for improved learner performance (Bryant, 2017:2). Accordingly, Shaked and Schechter (2017:132) argue that the nature of the HODs leadership is such that it is “located within an organised holistic system”. In South Africa the work of the HOD is outlined in legislation which states that “their job depends on the approaches and the needs of a particular school but is not limited to administration; teaching personnel; extra and co-curricular activities and communication” (DoE, 1998:5). In this context HOD refers to a teacher who has been appointed to a special responsibility in the school (DBE, 2000:6-9). It is the duty of the HOD to coordinate teaching and learning in the subject department.

HODs are part teachers and part leaders and when outside the classroom they remain connected to the classroom through monitoring (Javadi, Bush & Ng, 2017:486). Their partial priority task firstly includes teaching subjects throughout the school, developing the curriculum that involves teaching and learning strategies, as well as implementing school policies. Besides teaching, HODs are engaged in supervising and monitoring colleagues’ work to ensure that policies are followed. Supervising is done through classroom observation, checking teachers’ recording files and learners’ exercise books (ibid.). Studies by Javadi et al. (2017:484) revealed that the teaching role is the most important responsibility and that HODs are reluctant to conduct lesson observations and resort to alternative methods such as checking exercise books.

Communication is very crucial in the effective management of an organisation; therefore, it is the duty of the HOD to promote effective communication channels (Jaca, 2013:31). All communication with the senior leadership and external officials

should be facilitated by the HOD. As highlighted by Harris (2008:175), HODs should facilitate developmental opportunities for teachers in their subject area.

Leading teaching and learning requires instructional leaders to supervise and appraise teachers in their subject areas. Studies by Zepeda and Kruskamp (2007:48) indicated that HODs should engage in formal and informal classroom observations in order to capture what happens in classrooms. An HOD has to engage in supervision, “evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress” (Hallinger, 2005:6; Jaca, 2013:2). This role requires the HOD to be immersed (Hallinger, 2005:6) “in stimulating, supervising and monitoring teaching and learning in the school”. Among other duties, the HOD is required to play a pivotal role in the supervision of the teachers in his/her subject area and reporting departmental progress to their principal and deputy principal (Jaca, 2013:2). HODS are responsible for co-ordinating and guiding educators on pedagogy related to subjects which includes new developments “on approaches to the subject, method, techniques, evaluation, aids” (ibid.).

It is virtually impossible for the principal to manage the workload alone and many principals are using a distributed model in order to effectively implement IL (Howard, 2016:14). Heads of departments (HODs) therefore assume a more significant instructional role in many schools. Much time is spent supervising the teaching and learning activities (du Plessis, 2014:56). In addition, they have to be administrators dealing with a lot of paperwork, providing resources, supporting teachers and supervising teachers (Jaca, 2013:26).

As noted by Gunter (2001:107), HODs plays a significant linking role between the principal and classroom educators. They accomplish this through activities like setting examination papers, moderating, coordinating marking schemes, checking educators “files and learners” work. HODs make sure their departmental teachers are adequately resourced by providing textbooks and various teaching materials. Manaseh (2016:32) observes that HODs go beyond their traditional role of leading a departmental subject and they ought to devote time to “developing knowledge and implementation of the curriculum, as well as instruction and assessment of instruction”. In support of this assertion, Hoadley et al. (2009:378) in their study, found that principals spend most of their time on administrative functions and disciplining learners, forcing them to

relinquish their instructional responsibilities to HODs.

McEwan (2003:108) argues that the principal alone can hardly succeed in creating a school learning and teaching culture without the involvement of other staff members. In every competitive organisation, combined efforts of everybody yield good results (Nel et al., 2004:352). Principals can no longer be expected to lead schools alone (Botha & Triegaardt, 2015:2017). These situations gives rise to the concept of DIL. The next section examines DIL more closely.

2.5 Conceptualising distributed instructional leadership

Given the traditional roles and responsibilities of a principal, it is virtually impossible for the principal to manage the increased workload alone (Howard, 2016:14; Naicker, 2012:134), nor lead schools alone (Botha & Triegaardt, 2015:2017; Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & van Rooyen, 2010:1-20). According to Jenkins (2009:34), management of teaching and learning was ranked only seventh of 10 leadership activities. A principal's time is largely absorbed by administrative activities (ibid.). As a result, principals employ a distributed model of instructional leadership as a way to lighten their workload (Howard, 2016:6). Thus, the instructional leadership concept has been expanded by integrating a distributed perspective into it.

DIL is defined as a distribution of an array of leadership functions (Sibanda, 2017:567; Witten, 2017:62) rooted in IL, which are undertaken by leaders to promote instructional improvement. Such functions include setting goals, monitoring instructions or promoting professional development. The integration of the distributed perspective in IL reflects the importance of multiple individuals or roles to enact these instructional leadership functions (Howard, 2016:5). The DIL perspective describes leadership "functions stretched across two or more individuals to accomplish a common goal" (Spillane et al., 2004:16). In the South African school context, the distribution of the leadership functions is evident in the practices of SMTs, while task distribution is part of distributed leadership and not just mere delegation (Howard, 2016:5). Distributed leadership is focused on how leaders, followers and situations interact to lead in a collaborated, coordinated or collective style (Spillane et al., 2004:7). Trust is also a prerequisite and key to effective implementation of distributed leadership (Botha & Triegaardt, 2015:209).

2.5.1 Aspects of distributed leadership

Sibanda (2018:784) describes different aspects of distributed leadership namely, collaborated leadership, co-ordinated leadership and collective leadership. Collaborated leadership involves shared tasks among two or more individuals who work together, for example, a group of teachers discussing students' results so as to enhance classroom achievement (ibid.). The distribution in co-ordinated leadership entails leadership routines which are comprised of two or more activities to be performed in a particular sequence (ibid.). Collective leadership is when two or more leaders work separately but interdependently, on such activities such as staff development, monitoring and evaluation (ibid.). Each individual member of the school shares leadership responsibilities in a joint manner, depending on what they are good at. These changing contexts for distributed leadership are bringing about changes in the roles of school principals (Bush & Glover, 2016:213), suggesting a growing attention to IL and the effective use of all teachers through distributed leadership.

Lack of this knowledge about how to distribute leadership will compel principals to stick to the traditional leadership styles of centralised leadership and this may lead to underachievement in schools (Sibanda, 2017:571). In South Africa, leadership largely follows hierarchical, centralised and authoritarian leadership styles and distributed leadership should be seriously considered as pointed out by Sibanda (2018:784). Sibanda (2018:784) further argues that distributed leadership can only be effective if principals and their deputies know what it entails and its benefits.

IL cannot be exercised in isolation. Mayrowetz (2008:426) asserts that distributed leadership is “an emerging theory with minimal focus on individual capabilities, skills and talents, but rather a focus on joint responsibility for leadership activities”. According to Mayrowetz (2008:426), this suggests that distributed leadership encourages collaborated work between individuals who trust and respect each other's contribution. This seems to suggest that distributive leadership brings together role players to a joint venture of improving instruction. Research by Olujuwon (2016:206) supports the view that when leadership is distributed it boosts teachers' “confidence”, builds “trust”, fosters “collaboration” and promotes “professional development”. Williams (2011:198) is of the view that improving instruction in schools can only be achieved through a sound distribution of instructional leadership. MacBeath, Oduro

and Waterhouse (2004:27) argue that the principles of shared, dispersed, collaborative and democratic leadership, must be exercised effectively to achieve a sound distribution of leadership.

2.5.2 Factors that contribute to effective distributed leadership

A study by Dagnev (2017:1), demonstrated that schools that communicate their vision and mission statement among employees, students and parents, practice effective distributed leadership. The principals in Dagnev's (2017:1) study, encouraged teachers to participate in the decision-making processes of their schools. Studies by Glover and Bush (2012:26), came up with school factors that promote distributed leadership practice namely: effective communication and support, good leadership style, and trust and capacity of the formal leaders and teachers. Zhong, Wang and Chen (2016:55) maintain that the distribution of IL is only effective when leaders possess IL expertise. In another study conducted in New Zealand by Stephenson (2010:61), it was found that instructional leaders lacked skills, qualities and subject knowledge required to fulfil IL roles. Subject knowledge was rated very high as a prerequisite for ILs to enact instructional leadership roles (ibid.).

2.5.3 Arguments against the concept of distributed leadership

Some scholars argued "that distributed leadership is not a solution; it all depends on how it is shared, received and practiced" (Sibanda, 2017:570). Harris (2013:87) notes that "distributed leadership can be destructive and damaging if it is not" properly handled. In line with the same argument, Bush (2011:112) adds that those who are in formal leadership positions tend to prevent others from taking opportunities to become leaders. According to Hartley (2007:202) "there is very little evidence of a direct causal relationship between distributed leadership and student achievement". Hartley (2007:202) argues "that while there is a strong belief in the idea of distributed leadership, there is not a great deal of evidence about how it works in practice".

2.5.4 Benefits of distributed leadership

Distributed leadership is an idea that is growing in popularity in education. Distributed leadership allows improvement in leadership skills and self-empowerment (Masekoame & Zengele, 2015:359). Hammersley-Fletcher (2005:48) contends that distributed leadership promotes effective utilisation of "colleagues' expertise,

experience and energy, thus building up good teamwork skills". Harris (2003:313) believes that the distribution of tasks contributes to school effectiveness and academic outcomes through building professional learning communities within the school. As revealed by the literature reviewed, the managerial, administrative and accountability tasks consume the principal's typical day and the distribution of leadership is therefore called for to ensure effective teaching and learning.

2.5.5 Challenges of distributed instructional leadership

Scholars of distributed leadership reveal that leaders have a sense of their role as leaders, but several factors constrain them. These factors include inadequate and inappropriate preparation for the role, such as the allocation of subject areas to lead, about which they have little knowledge (Smith, Mestry & Bambie, 2013:163). In addition, instructional leaders lack interest in carrying out their supervisory role with the belief that some practices tend to discourage teachers (Manaseh, 2016:42). Furthermore, teacher union policies and some principals' own contrast of their roles and responsibilities, tend to minimise the distributed leadership effect (Leithwood, 2016:117). Monitoring as an expected quality assurance process, may contrast with collegiality as a process that emphasises mutual learning, hence, monitoring may affect relationships between instructional leaders and teachers (Javadi et al., 2017:487). Another challenge is that schools in South Africa are still mainly confined to the boundary of the traditional areas of classroom (Williams, 2011:194). Furthermore, roles and responsibilities are still loosely defined and poorly understood, thus stereotyping that the principal has to be the only leader (ibid.).

2.6 Summary

The chapter discussed a theoretical framework to support the study. It explored the instructional leadership roles of each SMT member and discussed the concept of DIL. The main barriers facing the distribution of instructional leadership were identified as lack of resources, inadequate and inappropriate preparation for the instructional leadership role and stereotyping. What follows is an exploration of the phenomenon of distributed instructional leadership by researching the main roles and responsibilities of SMTs in a single selected public secondary school in South Africa. The next chapter describes the research design and methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The literature review conducted in Chapter Two provided a framework for the study. This chapter outlines and discusses the research design and methodology employed in the study. The sampling procedure, data analysis procedure and measures for trustworthiness are explained. An appropriate design and methodology should be chosen in order to fulfil the study objectives, which are reiterated as follows:

1. To determine the tools used by the SMT in enacting DIL.
2. To examine the social distribution of IL among the SMT members.

The discussion commences with a consideration of the research paradigm for this study.

3.2 Research paradigm

A paradigm is defined by Creswell (2013:92) as “a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists on how problems should be understood and addressed”. This study was informed by the social constructive paradigm, “which focuses on the perspectives, feelings and beliefs of the participants” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:347). This study sought to examine how members of the SMT enacted instructional leadership within the school, from their viewpoints. This then shed light, on how principals involved their SMT members in achieving instructional goals.

3.3 Research approach

This investigation followed a qualitative approach. In qualitative research, the researcher is “the primary instrument of data collection and analysis which employs an inductive and investigative strategy and a richly descriptive end product” (Merriam, 2002:6). This study was inductive in nature and focused on participants’ views in one school so as to figuratively “zoom in” and gather rich data.

3.4 Research design

The study employed a single case study. Scholars like Yin (2003:6), do not view “case study research as a methodology but as a choice of what is to be studied” or a strategy of inquiry. However, Denzin and Lincoln (2005:22) and Creswell (2007:15), describe a case study as a methodology suitable for studying a group of people, an incident or phenomenon. Since case studies are frequently used when studying or exploring the influence of a particular practice, this method of inquiry was seen as suitable for the examination of DIL (Yin, 2003:7).

3.5 Sampling

Purposeful sampling was employed in this study to select one school from which “the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learnt” (Merriam, 2009:59-61). The criteria for the purposeful sampling which was used was the selection of a public school which was performing well academically and where the SMT members (principal, deputy principal and HODs) had been in their position at the school for at least two years. Creswell (2003:98) added that participants’ selected using purposeful sampling will assist in understanding the research problem and research questions. The participants in this study were the school management team (SMTs) of a secondary school. The biographical details of the participants in the study are illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Participants’ biographical information

	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Leadership Experience
Principal	M	61	29	15
Deputy Principal	M	68	35	11
HOD 1	M	41	12	5
HOD 2	F	49	14	8
HOD 3	M	51	18	6

3.6 Context of the school in the study

The school in this study has been in existence since 2001. The school is in the township region where members of the community live in a context of poverty. However, the school has been a consistently high performing school in the Gauteng East District achieving an average of 90% pass rate in the National Senior Certificate (Grade 12) exam. The school has a staff establishment of 21 teachers, 10 male teachers and 11 female teachers. The participating school is made up of 18 classes with an enrolment of 1351 learners and a teacher compliment of 41. The number of learners in each class ranges from 35 to 40 in a class.

3.7 Data collection procedures

Data collection for this research study was through the use of semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Five, face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with the principal, deputy principal and three HODs. Each interview took about 60 minutes and was audio-taped and transcribed. The interviews followed a semi-structured format. As suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2007:511), semi-structured interviews “build rapport, trust and establish a relationship with the interviewee and interviewer”. The goal for this interview is for participants to feel relaxed and open to talk about the topic in a meaningful way (ibid.).

Document analysis is a “systematic procedure for reviewing documents” printed or electronic, for purposes of gaining understanding (Bowen, 2009:27). Documents may include agendas, advertisements, brochures, diaries and minutes of meetings. For purposes of this study I checked minutes of SMT meetings only (ibid.). Documents provide background information, as well as historical insight (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:361). According to Bowen (2009:31), document analysis is less time consuming and hence more efficient than other research methods. The minutes of eight SMT meetings were analysed. Public schools follow a four term calendar. Thus, the minutes of two SMT meetings per term were analysed.

3.8 The role of the researcher

Reflexivity means “researcher engagement in explicit self-awareness of meta-analysis towards critical realistic and subjectivist issues” (Finlay, 2002:209). Since a qualitative

researcher collects the data, he/she has to “be aware of bias and apply reflexivity to minimise bias” (Roller, 2012:1). Reflexivity involves the capacity and preparedness of a researcher to accept that it is highly possible for the researcher to influence the research outcome (Sandelowski & Borroso, 2002:222). In this study, I tried very hard not to over-emphasise questions when interviewing participants.

3.9 Data analysis

Basically data analysis is an "inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:133). The aim is according to Bogdan and Biklen (2007:133) to “discover patterns, concepts, themes and meanings”. Data analysis commences by categorising and organising data “in search of patterns, themes and meanings that emerge from the data” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:367). In a single case study like this one, the participants’ views “will be analysed, compared and categorised with the results of transcription of the focus” (Kolb, 2012:84).

3.10 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of this study followed Guba and Lincoln’s (1981) strategies of “confirmability, credibility, dependability and transferability”. Credibility involves “prolonged engagement with the participants to familiarise with the setting and context and to build trust with the participants” (Rolfe, 2006:308). Shenton (2004:65) suggests that “early familiarisation with the participants’ culture” is a way of ensuring credibility. I conducted a pilot interview at a school different from that involved in the study, to test the interview schedule. Dependability was assured through the recording of the interviews (Shenton, 2004:66). Confirmability was achieved through “providing a true reflection of the participants’ responses and details of their own experiences”. During the interview process my opinions about DIL were suspended. I attempted not to lead the participants in any way. Transferability “is the extent to which the research findings can be used in other contexts” (Anney, 2014:277). I made sure that I provided sufficient background information about my research site, participants and data analysis to address the transferability of my findings to other contexts.

3.11 Ethical considerations

A researcher should be aware of ethical considerations, “demonstrating care and respect for all those involved and affected” in the research process (Burton & Bartlett, 2009:29). Macmillan and Schumacher (2010:15) point out that the rights of the participants have to be considered. Hence the researcher has to obtain consent from participants of the study prior to data collection.

Ethical clearance from the University of Johannesburg was obtained (Appendix 1). Furthermore, approval from the Gauteng Department of Education (Appendix 2) was obtained before commencing with the research. Thereafter, approval was sought from the selected school authorities in the Gauteng East District region (Appendix 3). Respondents were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could stop the interview or withdraw without any penalty.

3.12 Summary

This chapter focused on the research methodology. The study is grounded in the social constructivist paradigm and used a qualitative approach. A case study methodology was used and data collection took place through face-to-face, semi-structured, interviews and document analysis. Measures to ensure trustworthiness of the findings were outlined and ethical measures undertaken throughout the course of the study were described.

The next chapter will elaborate on the study’s findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three focused on the research methodology used in this study. This chapter presents the findings from the data which was collected through the semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Five participants were selected to take part in the study. The participants were SMT members of a school in the Gauteng East District in the Gauteng province. The data collected is presented and discussed in relation to the aims of the study and the research questions. The aim of this study is to explore the distribution of instructional leadership among the SMT in public secondary schools.

4.2 Themes

The themes are presented with direct quotes from the research participants and quotes from the document analysis. Codes will be used to indicate the participant and the referring line from the interview transcripts. The codes are: principal (P), deputy principal (DP), head of department (HOD1/2/3) and L for the referring line. For reference to the eight documents the codes D1-D8 will be used.

4.2.1 Distribution of IL functions

Each of the IL functions that emerged from the data will now be discussed in relation to the SMT members' main roles identified.

4.2.1.1 *The principal's main IL role*

The findings indicated that a main role played by the principal is to oversee curriculum delivery. This entails making sure that learners achieve the academic outcomes. The principal stated:

Like any other school, the major issue is curriculum delivery. That's the key issue (P, L7-8).

Evidence collected from the deputy principal's interview response concurred with the principal's view as expressed in the following quote:

To assist the principal in the management of the school in areas such as curriculum delivery (DP, L8).

The principal promotes curriculum delivery by means of getting feedback from other SMT members regarding how teaching and learning is progressing in the school. There was evidence from the documents to support that the principal monitors educators by checking through their subject files, assessment plans and lesson plans, to ensure they have all the tools in place needed for effective teaching and learning. The principal was “*impressed by the English department for submitting all files for the educators on time*” (D2). A further excerpt from the documents indicated that:

The principal advised the HODs to collect all assessment plans and teaching plans and submit them to the principal on Friday the 26th of January 2018 (D1).

A primary task of instructional leaders is maintaining student performance standards through monitoring teachers’ work (Mestry, 2017:257). Evidence from SMT meetings revealed the principal’s concern about the quantity of work given to learners. The following quotation from the SMT meeting minutes supported the principal’s view:

The principal expressed concern on the [General Education and Training] Natural Science educator on the quantity of work given to learners; that it must be increased from 5 questions to at least 10 questions especially to good performing classes (D8).

Hallinger’s (2005:5) second dimension of the IL model, requires the principal to be immersed in supervising and monitoring instruction (Hallinger, 2005:6). Studies by Hoerr (2007:84) revealed that instructional leaders such as principals, are expected to oversee the curriculum across the school and evaluate learner performance.

The findings revealed that the principal was of the view that it is his main function to create a positive school learning climate which promotes effective teaching and learning. The following quotes highlighted how the principal addresses the learning climate:

This is done through increasing learner achievement and promoting teacher satisfaction in the school (P, L10-11).

Promoting good relationships among staff members is also an important function performed by principals (P, L 39-40).

The document analysis yielded evidence of praise as the starting point of each SMT meeting. Positive comments featured as a way of praising and acknowledging good IL practices. The following direct quotations from the minutes of the meetings supported the assertion:

The principal congratulated the Life Sciences department and the tourism department for obtaining 100% pass (D1).

Principal commended all HODs for submitting all files of the educators on time (D2).

The principal showed his support for educators who took the initiative of conducting afternoon classes to assist learners in areas in the following quote:

The school to provide refreshments to educators who are engaged in afternoon classes to motivate them (D7).

Promoting a positive learning climate includes the provision of incentives (Hallinger, 2005:6), such as in the previous quote. Another form of incentive that is present, is the school's annual prize giving ceremony to celebrate its achievements. On this occasion, teachers and learners with outstanding performance are provided with awards. During the SMT meeting regarding the preparation of the Annual Prize-Giving Day, the principal stated that he would, "*source donations with the assistance of the prize giving committee*" (D7).

It was also evident that one of the principal's main roles is creating a positive school climate through maintaining high visibility, as supported by Hallinger's (2005:6) model. The principal is visible in the school by collecting demographic data from learners and by walking around the school. This is indicated in the next quote.

This is done through collecting demographic data done by me and the deputy principal, and walking around by all SMT members. This ensures high visibility on the school premises and in classrooms (P, L132-135).

There was evidence to show that the principal encourages SMT members to be visible and thus promotes a positive learning climate in schools. A quote supported the visibility of the SMT in the school:

The principal requested all members to join the walk-around every Monday for purposes of setting a tone. The deputy principal and the principal will do the walk around from Tuesday to Thursday (D9).

Studies by Catano and Stronge (2007:384), support that the principal should play a key role in creating a positive school climate which is a prerequisite to effective teaching and learning. High visibility and incentives for learning are being used at the school. This is in keeping with Hallinger's (2005:6)'s third dimension of the IL model, claiming that principals ought to create a positive teaching and learning climate.

The SMT members indicated that the principal's role in the aspect of school vision and mission is key. This view is supported by the following quotations:

Creating the school mission and vision is mainly the principal's responsibility (HOD1, L37-38).

The principal in collaboration with the SGB (School governing body) members were responsible for the creation of the school mission statement (HOD2, 100-101).

The principal, SMT representative, learner representative, teacher representative, the SGB and the deputy principal are involved in the creation of the mission and vision of the school (HOD3, 65-67).

When it comes to creating the school mission and vision, I coordinate – work with and through the other SMT members, the SGB, learner representative, teacher representative, in effectively creating the mission and vision of the school (DP, L55-57).

The principal's role in defining a school mission is to provide direction by setting clear and measurable goals for the school. Goals should be communicated clearly to the staff so that they will be able to "incorporate it into their daily practice" (Hallinger, 2005:6). The communication and monitoring of these school goals is central to the work of the principal (Meyer, Sinnema & Patuawa, 2018:1).

The principal promoted professional development by class visits to teachers and encouraged staff to attend professional development workshops offered at the school district. The following quotes indicated the role played by the principal.

I do provide staff development information through distributing circulars from the district or the province to HODs (P, L129-130).

The principal reminded the mathematics HOD of the staff development workshop at Krugersdorp this coming Saturday (D9).

The principal and I [deputy principal] carry out class visits for newly appointed educators and any other teacher who might need development (DP, L103-104).

According to Hallinger's (2005:6) IL framework, professional development is a function that contributes to the enhancement of the school learning climate. The evidence indicated that the principal relies on professional development opportunities from the school district. The principal is expected to provide staff development to teachers as a way to promote intellectual and leadership growth to enhance effective teaching and learning (Mestry, 2018:5).

Having discussed the main functions that the principal of this school executed, the next section will focus on the IL function of the deputy principal.

4.2.1.2 The deputy principal's main IL role

The findings indicated that one of the deputy principal's main functions is the management of curriculum delivery. Evidence revealed that the deputy principal is expected to be highly active in promoting teaching and learning. This is supported by the following quotes:

To assist the principal in management of the school in areas such as curriculum

delivery (DP, L8).

As a deputy principal, I am involved in the process of learner enrolment, communicating with all the stakeholders, as well as teaching (DP, L25-26).

The deputy principal's involvement in curriculum delivery was corroborated in seven out of the eight documents analysed. The documents indicated that most of the monitoring and supervisory reports are submitted to the deputy principal:

He was impressed by the quality of work displayed in the learner exercise books inspected (D3).

Departments with outstanding files were reminded to submit the files by the end of the day to the deputy principal (D2).

The deputy principal expressed concern about learners who returned progress reports which were not signed by parents. Letters to invite parents to school will be issued (D6).

There was evidence that the deputy principal is involved in the supervision of instruction, as well as the logistical aspects of curriculum co-ordination as evident in the following quotes:

The deputy principal promised to print all the supervision tools soon after the meeting (D2).

Deputy to issue examination regulations to teachers (D5).

Deputy was assigned to draft the study time table (D7).

In addition, the deputy principal spoke about his management role of learner discipline, which is a very important aspect of an effective teaching and learning climate. He stated:

... for example, designing the school master time table, signing and issuing of progress reports, disciplining students, distributing resources to various departments, analysing both internal and external results and many other duties, which all promote effective teaching and learning (DP, L32-34).

The document analysis revealed that the deputy principal plays a pivotal role in learner discipline. The documents reflected:

The deputy principal advised all HODs to assist in disciplining the class and strict measures should be enforced right from the beginning (D1).

The deputy principal ensured that he will meet with the classes and reprimand them (D8).

At a school where there is sound discipline, student achievement is high (Mullins, 1999:171). According to Hallinger's (2005:6) instructional framework, instructional leaders must create a conducive learning climate. Thus the deputy principal is playing a key role in trying to achieve good discipline in the school. Literature indicates "that there is need for instructional leaders to improve the school climate" towards effective learning (Makombe & Madziyire, 2002:85).

The findings indicated that professional development is coordinated by the deputy principal. He works with and through the HODs to identify educators who are in need of professional development, as well as providing resources needed to support the process of professional development. In support of the above assertion, the deputy principal said:

The principal and I carry out class visits for newly appointed educators and any other teacher who might need development (DP, L103-104).

In addition to professional development, it is evident that the deputy principal occupies an important role of motivating teachers. All the three SMT meetings chaired by the deputy principal, started in a positive way of praises and acknowledgement of good practices:

The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting, commented all the departments for the job well done (D3).

Thanked the HOD English teacher for the debating club which came as number one at the district competitions (extend to the coach) (D4).

Commented the examination committee for smooth running of the examinations (D6).

In his interview response, the deputy principal remarked,

It is my responsibility to acknowledge good performing teachers or [write] them acknowledgement letters (DP, L96-97).

Motivating teachers is in line with the third dimension of Hallinger's (2005:6) instructional management framework, where instructional leaders are obliged to provide incentives to teachers, as well as learners. On prize-giving days, achievers are awarded with certificates or donations received from different companies and organisations. It was interesting to note that the prize-giving function acknowledged both learners and educators. It is essential for instructional leaders to instil positive perceptions in their subordinates, through motivating them when they have done something good (Firmaningsih-Kolu, 2015:22). Failure to do that, may yield negativity on the part of the teachers and disturb the working atmosphere. Hence, student performance could automatically be affected.

The deputy principal performed many duties, including supervising instruction, protecting instructional time and maintaining high visibility and teaching. However, curriculum delivery, managing learner discipline, providing resources and professional development, emerged as major responsibilities that directly supported teaching and learning. Furthermore, it was interesting to note that the principal distributed leadership to the deputy principal to conduct SMT meetings in the principal's absence. In the next section, the IL role of the HODs will be discussed.

4.2.1.3 The IL functions of HODs

From the interview data, there was evidence that HODs play a major role in managing the instructional programme in respect of different subjects. HOD 1 is in charge of History, Geography, Life Orientation and Creative Arts; HOD 2 is in charge of commercial subjects which comprise of Accounting, Business Studies and Economics and HOD 3 is leading the languages department made up of English and IsiZulu. The following quotations supported the idea, as the three interviewed HODs remarked:

It's monitoring, coaching and developing History teaching in the school, making sure that History is taught the way it is supposed to be taught (HOD1, L6).

My main role is to manage and head the department of commercials (HOD2, L7).

My main role as an HOD is to lead a subject department (HOD3, L8).

The findings from the document analysis concurred that HODs manage the instructional programme concerning the subjects that they lead, as indicated in the following quotation:

The HOD for Mathematics was advised to identify the reasons why there was this decline [in marks] and what strategies they [teachers] are going to be engaged in to improve the results (D1).

The previous quote indicated a joint responsibility of the SMT in monitoring student progress (Hallinger, 2005:6). The HOD was advised by the principal to monitor student progress in Mathematics and follow up in the department. Thus, there was a distributed responsibility/accountability for monitoring student progress. This view is supported by Mestry (2017:258), who asserts that principals monitor the work of HODs and HODs will in turn monitor the work of educators in their departments.

It further emerged that a main function of the HODs is monitoring educators in their respective departments. This relates to the 'supervising and evaluating instruction' function of managing the instructional programme. The HODs remarked:

It's monitoring, coaching and developing History teaching in the school (HOD1, L6).

In relation to an academic area, make sure teaching and learning activities go on smoothly and according to the educational guidelines expected (HOD2, L13-15).

Leading a subject means I will be monitoring the teachers in my department (HOD3, L11).

The evidence from the documents indicated that HODs work closely with educators monitoring their activities related to teaching and learning. This was visible in the

following quotes from the documents analysed:

HODs can also assist in monitoring classroom attendance (D1).

Principal commended all HODs for submitting supervision reports on time (D2).

All HODs reported 100 percent syllabus coverage for term 1 (D3).

Urged HODs to make sure that all educators in their departments have completed the syllabus (D4).

HODs to submit all moderated papers to the deputy principal soon (D5).

Submit marks to HODs for moderation (D6).

The timetables to be supervised by HODs and subject heads (D7).

All HODs provided feedback on syllabus coverage (D8).

Managing the instructional programme comes with many responsibilities as pointed out by the three HODs. Jaca (2013:13) is in agreement, that HODs play an important monitoring role in order that “teaching and learning takes place” in schools.

There was evidence from the interviews and the documents analysed that HODs are involved in securing the necessary teaching resources for educators. All the three HODs confirmed this role during interviews:

My duty is to compile a list of the resources needed (HOD1, L14).

As an HOD, I am also expected to communicate policy issues to teachers in my department, as well as ensuring that teachers have enough resources to allow effective teaching and learning (HOD2, L9-11).

Leading a subject means, I will be monitoring the teachers in my department, supervising and providing them with the resources and guiding them in whatever they need (HOD3, L11-13).

The first document of the analysed SMT minutes of the meetings stated:

Invigilation timetables to be released to teachers and learners today since they are already completed (D5).

HOD Mathematics to design certificates for teachers and learners (D7).

Literature from both international and local studies reveal that HODs play an essential role in providing resources to teachers to ensure effective teaching and learning (Mestry, 2018:13; Nobile, 2018:399). Hallinger's second dimension of management of IL, suggests that instructional leaders must strive to coordinate the curriculum to promote effective teaching and learning (2005:5).

There was strong evidence that HODs play an important role in disciplining learners. HOD 1 stated:

Learners are also difficult to manage as they at times lack discipline, so we spend most of the time disciplining learners instead of teaching (HOD1, L84-85).

I experience challenges emanating from disciplinary issues touching both teachers and learners; sometimes we call their parents to resolve the disciplinary issues (HOD2, L150-151).

The HOD is the one who sees to it that teaching is taking place and there is discipline in classrooms (HOD3, L56-57).

This role of the HOD of maintaining discipline was also supported by document analysis as quoted below:

The deputy principal advised all HODs to assist in disciplining the classes and strict measures should be enforced right from the beginning (D1).

The deputy principal acknowledged the good practices of maintaining discipline and order at the school by the SMT (D4).

Punctuality on the part of educators to be enforced by all SMT members, especially on lesson attendance after break (D8).

The previous quotes indicated that managing learner discipline emerged as a key role for HODs. Learner discipline according to Mestry, Moloï and Mahomed (2007:95) is ranked as the most problematic aspect of teaching in most South African public schools. Dhlamini (2017:474) is of the view that learner discipline calls for a collaborative effort of all SMT members. Hence, HODs are expected to work in collaboration with the principal and deputy principal, to manage learner discipline in the schools (Mestry, 2017:263). Evidence collected from interviews and documents indicated that there is distribution of discipline responsibility among all the SMT members. HODs pointed out that they discipline learners at departmental level whereas the principal and the deputy principal deal with whole-school disciplinary issues. The deputy principal stated in his interview responses, that he is in charge of discipline for the entire school. However, the principal dealt with serious issues of discipline. Hence it was evident that there is distribution of discipline responsibility among the SMT members, to ensure effective teaching and learning.

An important finding that emerged is that HODs play a key role in engaging educators in their respective departments in professional development programmes. The HODs reported:

I provide them with the necessary staff development sessions (HOD1, L43).

I am also expected to provide professional development for teachers as per identified needs (HOD2, L36-37).

When a teacher in my department has got a problem in teaching a certain topic, we always invite one member within the department who is competent in that topic to teach on behalf of the individual, that particular topic. So that is how we help each other whenever we have one who is struggling with a certain topic (HOD3, L45-49).

The views in the previous quotes concurred with evidence from the document analysis as follows:

The HOD Mathematics was advised to identify the reasons why there was this decline and what strategies they are going to be engaged in to improve the results (D1).

Professional development is an area that supports a positive learning climate as posited by Hallinger's (2005:6) IL management model. Instructional leaders are expected to provide and implement professional development to teachers.

The next theme that will be discussed is tools used by SMT members to distribute IL.

4.2.2 Tools used by SMT members in IL

In this study, tools refer to documents, structures, committees and policies used by SMT members in exercising IL. The findings identified numerous tools explicated in the following quotes:

I am guided by policies, for example the CAPS [Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement] document ATP [Annual Teaching Plan], CMM [Curriculum Management Model] and committees such as SBAT [School Based Assessment Team], SBST [School Based Support Team], the disciplinary committee and the examination committee. I am the leader of the SBST [full] responsible for school staff development programmes (HOD1, L73-77).

The same view was shared in another HOD's response as follows:

For example, the school Code of Conduct assists us to avoid time wasting ... and we also have policies which guide us in supervising instruction such as the CAPS document, the ATP, moderation and lesson observation tools (HOD2,L 146-150).

Similar to HOD 2, yet another HOD mentioned similar tools including the fundraising committee. It was reported:

I am in charge of the disciplinary committee and the fundraising committee which generates funds to hire extra personnel when there is need (HOD3, L137-139).

From the deputy principal's responses, it came out strongly that the already outlined tools contribute positively to the teaching and learning process. However, the deputy principal claimed that the SMT committee is an essential component in the school, from which all the other committees are constructed. In his response he declared:

The SMT is the central committee in the school because every committee revolves around the SMT as the core committee (DP, L119-120).

The principal's responses indicate the importance of tools in the practice of IL. As an overseer of the whole school, the work of the principal is made easier by the availability of committees and structures in the school. Principals should always strive for an excellent teaching and learning environment, which can only be possible by close monitoring of all the committees and structures in the school.

There are plenty of them. These include The South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA), Code of Conduct for Learners, IQMS document, Learner Admission Policy, School Based Assessment Team (SBAT), Examination Committee, Fundraising Committee, Disciplinary Committee and many others. I, as the school principal am the overseer of all these committees. I make sure that all the committees in the school are functional. I work with and through the SMT members. The deputy principal is in charge of the SBAT. Each of the above mentioned committee is headed by an HOD (P, L140-146).

All three HODs were of the view that subject heads play a considerable role in the teaching and learning process. A subject head is a teacher appointed within a department to assist in a subject he/she specialises in. In most cases, subject heads are appointed because the HOD is not a specialist in that particular subject, where a subject head needs to be appointed. Subject heads are not recognised by the DBE and are not remunerated for the subject head position. Hence, they are not accountable for any IL problems. However, from the HODs' responses, it is evident that they play an essential role in IL, as evidenced in the following remarks:

I also prepare assessment tasks for the classes that I teach and give them to the subject head to moderate, Furthermore, I delegate my supervisory role to subject heads to assist in book inspection (HOD1, L22-25).

Subject heads assist me to moderate assessment tasks and marked scripts, since a lot is involved in the process (HOD2, L107-109).

I have one subject head who assists me in checking books and moderation of formal assessment tasks, since I have a teaching load (HOD3, L35-36).

There was evidence in the document analysis to support the interview findings. The minutes indicated that:

Departments with subject heads must request them to assist in the process of moderation (D6).

The new educator replacing Mrs Dick on maternity leave has to receive proper orientation from the subject head and the HOD (D7).

Research conducted by Mestry (2018:6), confirms the important IL role of subject heads which should not be neglected by SMT members. Evidence from interviews suggests that principals are faced with complex demands that call for more additional responsibilities than ever before. They do not have time to closely monitor the work of the teachers; they strongly rely on the work of the HODs who lead the committees (Mestry, 2017:258).

The analysed documents revealed that the effectiveness of the school depends on the functionality of the committees in the school. The documents analysed showed that the deputy principal acknowledged the good work displayed by the examination committee. The deputy principal “*commended the examination for smooth running of the examinations*” (D6)

Minutes of the SMT meetings confirmed that the principal alone cannot effectively manage the school without the assistance of other role- players.

The principal will source donations with the assistance of the prize-giving committee (D7).

It can be argued that the principal cannot manage the instructional programme in isolation. Various committees such as the School Based Assessment Team (SBAT), School-based Support Team (SBST), the examination committee, discipline committee, as well as the SMT, ensure the smooth execution of instructional functions and related tasks. The data indicated that tools such as the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document, the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP), the Curriculum Management Module (CMM), moderation tools and lesson observation tools, are also essential tools used by SMT members when monitoring and supervising instruction. The next section will focus on the challenges that may hinder the SMT’s IL.

4.2.3 Challenges hindering the effectiveness of IL

Responses from the participants indicated that although the school is performing well, there are various challenges in the day-to-day practice of IL. HODs were unanimous that they are overloaded, leaving them with insufficient time to concentrate on their IL role. It must be borne in mind that HODs have classes to teach as well. The following quotes indicated the HODs views:

I am overloaded that I do not have enough time to monitor and supervise my teachers, hence I am forced to delegate some of my duties to the subject head who might not perform the job as expected, as they argued that they are not remunerated for the job. Learners are also difficult to manage as they at times lack discipline, so we spent most of the time disciplining learners in time which should have been used for teaching learners (HOD1, L82-84).

Also, since I have a lot of work load, I find it very difficult to perform my role effectively and also feel I am doing duties which are supposed to be done by the principal (HOD2, L154-157).

Heavy workload, lack of resources and ill-discipline. I am also not trained for the job, so sometimes, I feel not equipped for the role. I was promoted on the basis of experience (HOD2, L145-146).

According to Mestry (2017:257), HODs play a significant role through monitoring the work of educators in their departments, whereas principals only scrutinise HODs' work without direct involvement with teachers and learners.

HODs spoke about demanding workloads and other challenges that they face in the next quote:

High workloads for teachers, lack of resources, stereotyping that the principal has to be the only leader, pose as challenges in hindering IL. Lack of parental involvement in handling student disciplinary issues is sometimes another hindrance (DP, L132).

The deputy principal also supported the view that high workloads on both teachers and HODs make it difficult to practice effective IL. Jaca (2013:25) is of the view that

the workload of an HOD is made up of “a large amount of administration involving both performance appraisal and moderation”. HODs are expected to teach, mark, assess, moderate, attend SMT meetings, supervise teachers, discipline learners, as well as chair meetings in their departments. All these responsibilities make it very difficult for them to perform effectively.

It is also strongly evident from interview responses that there is a lot of paperwork involved in practicing IL. The following direct quotes from the five participants indicated paperwork as a drawback to effective IL:

There is also too much paperwork involved (HOD1, L85).

There is a lot of paper work involved in the role of the HOD (HOD2, L154-160).

Heavy workload, lack of resources, a lot of clerical work (HOD3, L144).

There is a lot of paperwork involved in today's leadership role, most of the time is spent compiling reports (DP, L134-135).

There is a lot of clerical work associated with my job. Much of my time is spend on compiling reports, dealing with learner discipline, late coming and a lot of administrative work (P, L149-151).

Lack of clarity on the SMT IL role also emerged as a challenge experienced by most of the interviewed members. The respondents highlighted that their ineffectiveness in engaging in IL functions is attributed to a limited knowledge of IL. HODs leading subjects they did not specialise in found it very difficult to carry lesson observations in that subject. They were forced to delegate the responsibility to subject heads. HODs are therefore limited to the learners' book inspection. Furthermore, a lack of training contributed to ineffectiveness in practicing IL. SMT members were vocal about requiring training:

I am not comfortable leading subjects which are not my area of specialisation. I specialised in history in History, but I am leading Geography, Life Orientation and Creative Arts (HOD1, L86-88).

I am also not trained for the job so sometimes I feel not equipped for the role. I

was promoted on the basis of seniority and experience (HOD3, L144-146).

A study by Manaseh (2016:44) admits that instructional leaders feel discouraged to perform their IL role due to limited knowledge of their IL role. Literature suggests that the education system appoints leaders into positions that they are not trained for (Jaca, 2013:26).

Findings further indicated that disciplining learners consumes much of the IL time. Most participants identified learner discipline as one of the challenges they were facing in the school. The view was supported by the following interview responses:

Learners are also difficult to manage as they at times lack discipline, so we spent most of the time disciplining learners instead of teaching (HOD1, L85-86).

Heavy workload, lack of resources, a lot of clerical work and ill- discipline (HOD3, L144).

Lack of parental involvement in handling student disciplinary issues is another hindrance (DP, L133-134).

Much of my time is spend on compiling reports, dealing with learner discipline (P, L149-150).

One HOD mentioned lack of parental involvement as one of the challenges faced by IL, since they would want to discuss their children's progress, but parents do not turn up at parent meetings. An HOD remarked:

Sometimes I face problems with parents who fail to be involved in their children's education (HOD2, L170-171).

Another HOD further indicated the challenge he is experiencing working with subject heads as a way to lighten his load, as well as grooming them for future leadership. Subject heads are appointed within the department and their role is not recognised by the DBE; hence, they do not receive any remuneration for the job. In support of this view HOD 2 said:

Furthermore, the subject heads they sometimes refuse to assist me because they argue that they are already overloaded so they don't want extra responsibilities which they are not paid for (HOD2, L178-180).

The issue of discipline was also echoed in the minutes reviewed, where educators were concerned about the learners' behaviour which was getting out of hand.

Educators are complaining about the learners' behaviour which is increasingly getting out of hand. The deputy principal ensured that he will meet with the classes and reprimand them (D8).

4.3 Summary

This chapter focused on the findings and interpretation of the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews. Different themes and sub-themes emerged which were presented and interpreted. Curriculum delivery, providing resources, providing professional development and maintaining discipline, strongly came out as the four pillars of effective distribution of IL. Some challenges encountered by SMT members in their IL role which emerged from the findings were high workloads, massive paperwork, inadequate IL skills, insufficient parental involvement, lack of learner discipline and insufficient cooperation on the part of subject heads. While it is difficult to iron out these challenges, instructional leaders must strive to reduce the effect of operating in such an environment.

The next chapter will conclude this study. It will give a summary of the study, consolidate the main findings in relation to the research question and sub-questions and offer recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Principals are regarded as ILs who play a key role in “defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school learning climate” (Heck & Hallinger, 2014:14). However, principals are not the only leaders involved in these instructional roles, as IL functions are enacted by other SMT members. Thus, a range of instructional leadership functions are distributed among the rest of the SMT members, which is referred to as DIL (Witten, 2017:62). The DIL model draws on the “full potential of distributed leadership” to describe the role of SMT members and the tools used to improved teaching (Halverson & Clifford, 2015:389). Using Hallinger’s (2005:6) IL framework, this study examined how the instructional leadership functions are distributed among the SMT. This chapter concludes the study. An overview of the study ensues, followed by a discussion of the findings and recommendations arising from the study.

5.2 Summary of the study

DIL is viewed as the distribution of instructional leadership functions enacted by the SMT as they go about “defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school learning climate” (Heck & Hallinger, 2014:14). This study focused on the concept of DIL to investigate the social distribution of IL among the SMT members in a public secondary school. Furthermore, this research sought to determine the tools used by the SMT in enacting DIL.

The literature study presented and explicated the IL framework used in the study which comprises three dimensions namely, “defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school learning climate” (Hallinger, 2005:5). Furthermore, the role of each SMT member including the principal, the deputy principal and the HOD was explored. The concept of DIL was discussed, as well as factors contributing to effective distributed leadership, arguments against the concept of distributed leadership, benefits of distributed leadership and challenges of

distributed leadership.

The study was framed with a social constructivist paradigm using a qualitative research design. A case study approach was employed, the case being one public secondary school with good academic results in the national Grade 12 examination. Purposive sampling was used and the sample comprised the principal, deputy principal and three HODs who made up the SMT members in the school. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

The findings indicated that all SMT members play a strong role in curriculum delivery. The principal and deputy principal play a key leading role in steering curriculum delivery, but the HODs play an essential supportive role in managing the instructional programme and coordinating the curriculum. Another finding that stood out, is that great focus was placed on promoting a positive learning climate. Some key focus areas for creating a positive learning climate in this school was placing emphasis on learner discipline, encouraging professional development, motivating educators and being visible on the school premises. These aspects were well distributed among all the SMT members. Regarding the aspect of learner discipline, it came out strongly that the deputy principal takes control of the whole school discipline and the principal and HODs play a supporting role, much needed as a whole school approach. Interestingly, the distribution of the IL role is extended to subject heads who assist HODs in their IL monitoring and supervisory role.

Various tools were used by all SMT members to enhance effective IL. The tools comprised of mainly policies and committees. Some challenges encountered by SMT members in their IL role were high workloads, excessive paperwork, inadequate IL skills, insufficient parental involvement, poor learner discipline and insufficient cooperation on the part of subject heads.

Hallinger's (2005:5) IL management model was used to measure the IL role of SMT members. The model comprises of 10 IL functions. A summary of the IL roles of all the SMT members who participated in the study is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Distribution of IL role by SMTs at the school

Role players	The Principal	The Deputy Principal	HODs	Subject Heads
Framing clear school goals	√	√	×	×
Communicating clear school goals	√	√	√	×
Supervising and evaluating instructions	√	√	√	√
Coordinating the curriculum	√	√	√	×
Monitoring student progress	√	√	√	√
Protecting instructional time	√	√	√	×
Providing professional development	√	√	√	√
Maintaining high visibility	√	√	√	×
Providing incentives for teachers	√	√	√	×
Providing incentives for learners	√	√	√	×

The first IL function **framing clear school goals** found that the principal plays an essential role in framing clear and measurable goals with the assistance of the SGB members. During the phase of **communicating the school goals**, all SMT members are involved. The principal communicates school goals through parents' meetings, consultation days and prize-giving days. The deputy principal employs the same platform as the principal, the HOD communicates school goals both at school level and departmental level. The third IL function **supervising and evaluating instruction**, revealed that the principal collects supervisory and monitoring reports from the deputy who receives reports from the HODs. This IL distribution does not imply some form of simple division of labour, but it shows leadership "stretched" for purposes of growth and effectiveness. **Coordinating the curriculum** is the fourth IL

function, which the deputy principal takes charge of in terms of coordinating all the curriculum activities at the school such as organising, implementing and supervising all educational programmes. The deputy principal organises, HODs implement and then the principal supervises the programmes. **Management of student progress** is also shared among all SMT members where the principal receives student progress reports and feedback from the deputy principal who also gets reports from HODs. Usually classroom observation is carried out by the HODs who submit the reports to the deputy principal, who informs the principal. HODs are assisted by subject heads in moderating tests and inspecting learner books. There is clear evidence of distribution of instructional leadership role among the SMT members. Although **protecting instructional time** is the role of the principal and the deputy principal, HODs also take rounds to **maintaining high visibility**, checking whether teachers are **providing professional development** and ensuring that teachers within the institution are developed. HODs and subject heads carry out staff development sessions within their departments. Participants indicated that the school relies strongly on IQMS as an effective way of developing teachers. All HODs facilitate this programme with the assistance of the deputy principal. SMT members showed strong agreement that the principal **maintains high visibility** more than anyone else from the SMT team, followed by the deputy principal and lastly HODs. Finally, **providing incentives** is practiced by all members of the SMT in different ways which includes verbal acknowledgement, in written form, as well as through prize-giving ceremonies where teachers and learners are awarded for their achievements. The above discussion outlined how SMT members distribute leadership in performing the 10 functions. DIL is extended to educators who serve as subject heads assisting the SMT but as the table (Table 5.1) indicates, their participation in the instructional functions is limited.

The majority of the SMT members indicated that their IL role was guided by tools such as the South African Schools Act, which guides the principal in his/her instructional leadership role. The Code of Conduct for learners assists in managing learner discipline. The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, Annual Teaching Plan and Curriculum Management Module documents guide HODs when monitoring and supervising teachers' work. It was also indicated that the existence of committees in the school promotes teamwork and efficiency that brings about positive student

outcomes.

This summary provided some of the essential aspects and procedures that were undertaken during the course of this study. Important findings emerging from the data will now be presented and recommendations highlighted.

This study had various limitations which will be outlined.

5.3 Limitations of the study

The study was initially planned to be conducted in a primary school. However, the staff indicated they were too busy for participation in interviews on several occasions. Thus, a new school was sought for this study, where the SMT was willing to be involved in this research with their full co-operation. The new school was a secondary school in one geographical region in Gauteng and the transferability to findings in other schools is not possible nor intended. As the study revolved around the SMT's performance of their expected IL role, respondents may have felt undermined. As a result, in some cases, total honesty and cooperation may not have been achieved. Even though eight sets of meeting minutes were provided by the school, the minutes of the meetings were not detailed enough to provide sufficient information on how IL is practised in the school.

Significant findings emerging from the data collected are now presented. The findings discussed below arise from the qualitative data collection and analysis.

5.3.1 Finding 1

Curriculum delivery emerged as one of the themes from the qualitative data analysed. It was discovered that curriculum delivery was "stretched" among all the SMT members in the school from the principal to the HODs. The principal as an overseer keeps his/her 'pulse' on curriculum delivery through working with other SMT members. The principal ensures that teachers have enough resources, the school time table is in place, all subjects receive the correct time as stipulated in the CAPS document. As indicated in the responses, the principal does not do this alone, all the SMT members are involved in the process of curriculum delivery. The deputy principal is involved in managerial and administrative duties such as drafting the school master time table,

learner enrolment and chairing SMT meetings in the absence of the principal. HODs monitor and supervise teachers in class. Resources needed by teachers are provided by HODs such as resource files, and plan books.

5.3.2 Finding 2

A main finding was that all SMT members are engaged in the 10 functions of Hallinger's framework (2005:6). It is interesting to note that while Hallinger's (2005:6) framework focuses on the ten functions as the principals' sole responsibilities, this study shows that when the framework was applied to all the SMTS members, it was found that all often are involved in most of these functions. Thus, IL is widely distributed among all SMT members.

5.3.3 Finding 3

It came across in the study that while the SMT practised the IL functions, they experienced insufficient clarity on the SMT's IL role. This hindered their IL role. An HOD pointed out that he lacks proper guidelines for instructional supervision, yet he is held accountable for student outcomes in the department. SMT members complained that they are leading some members in the departments who are highly educated so it is very difficult for them to supervise them.

5.3.4 Finding 4

The tools used in the distribution of IL occurs through the use of committees, policies and committees. There are a number of committees in schools to support IL such as SBAT, SBST, SDT, SAT, examination committee, discipline committees and the SGB.

5.3.5 Finding 5

DIL is enacted in the school by the involvement of subject heads who due to their specific subject expertise work in collaboration with HODs. In some cases, HODs lead a subject area for which they are not specialists and hence the need for subject heads. The subject heads play an important role in supervising and monitoring instruction, monitoring student progress and professional development. Notably, the appointment of subject heads lightens HODs' workload.

5.4 Recommendations

Having stated the findings from the study, some recommendations will now be provided.

5.4.1 Recommendation 1

SMTs can be workshopped by the DBE on the important of instructional leadership and be provided more clarity of the roles played by each member. Success of inter-school collaborations depend on the availability of role players to enact their leadership roles confidently. SMT members need to be well informed on how their IL role is shared among other members in their quest to improve teaching and learning. Therefore, the school, in collaboration with DBE must provide more workshops on how IL is distributed.

5.4.2 Recommendation 2

There is need for recognition of subject heads since they seem to be play a significant role in accordance with DIL. Subjects heads assist HODs in monitoring and supervising teachers in the department. They should be offered an officially recognised position and remunerated for their expertise as subject heads.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

DIL is gradually gaining prominence both internationally and locally. As such, more studies in this area are necessary to improve educational management and leadership in South Africa. The following areas may be considered for further research in DIL.

- How DIL is enacted in the school community which includes SMTs, learners, parents and other educators.
- The experiences of the subject head as an instructional leader.

5.6 Conclusion

The general aim of this study was to explore the distribution of IL with regard to the SMT members in a public secondary school. Due to the increasing demands of the principal's role, it is genuinely clear that distribution of the role is called for. Efforts have been made to engage SMT members in collaborative engagement in curriculum

delivery, resource provision, professional development and maintaining learner discipline. It was interesting to note that qualitative research data indicated that SMT members are the role players of the management of teaching and learning and they have shifted away from the traditional principal-centred approach to leadership, to a distributed perspective.

However, the distribution of IL has its own unique challenges. Four main challenges that impeded the distribution of IL emerged as high workloads, massive paperwork, lack of clarity for their roles and lack of learner discipline. Poor learner discipline resulted in wasting instructional time that could have been used for teaching and learning matters. It is important to appreciate the work of the SMT as a major committee in the school that strives to take the school to the next level of school improvement, through operating as a team.

It is hoped that this research will contribute positively to educationists and policy makers regarding the importance of stretching IL to ensure school effectiveness.



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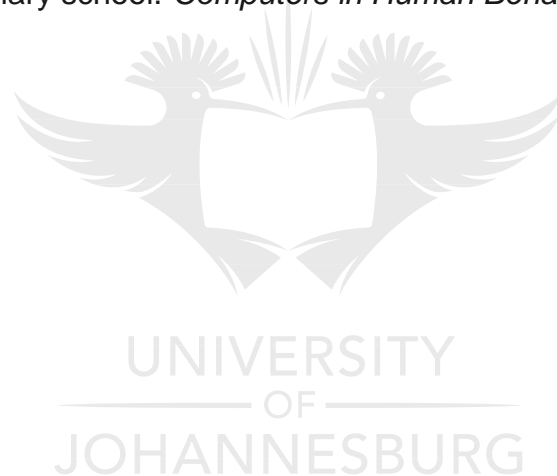
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethics clearance



UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

ETHICS CLEARANCE

Dear Cypiwe Mapaire

Ethical Clearance Number: 2018-049

The distribution of instructional leadership among school management teams in public primary schools

Ethical clearance for this study is granted subject to the following conditions:

- If there are major revisions to the research proposal based on recommendations from the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted.
- If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, it remains the duty of the student to submit a new application.
- It remains the student's responsibility to ensure that all ethical forms and documents related to the research are kept in a safe and secure facility and are available on demand.
- Please quote the reference number above in all future communications and documents.

The Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee has decided to

- Grant ethical clearance for the proposed research.
- Provisionally grant ethical clearance for the proposed research
- Recommend revision and resubmission of the ethical clearance documents

Sincerely,



Dr David Robinson

Chair: FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

31 August 2018