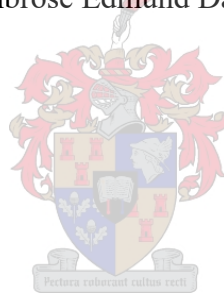


The role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture

by

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Master of Education (Policy Studies) in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University*

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Abstract

The study investigated the role of four principals in creating a positive school culture in their respective schools. The study adopted a qualitative case study approach, with data from document analysis, observations and semi-structured interviews. The study is situated in a primary school context of the Department of Education of the Western Cape. The participants were purposely selected based on a set of criteria to ensure actively participating principals who could contribute to providing a rich description of the research question. The study was premised on the assumption that principals played a crucial role in the creation of a positive culture at schools. The participants' creation of a positive school culture was investigated through four policy expectations on school principals namely, time management, resource management, financial management, and curriculum management.

This study used Schein's notion of three levels of culture, namely observable artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions to address the study's main research question, which is: What is the role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture?

The study was approached from an interpretive phenomenological perspective. This approach is distinguished by its emphasis on the research of participants' lived experiences. As a result, it was selected as most appropriate to understanding the nuanced educational roles of the participants in establishing a positive school culture. The data was finally processed using Schein's model of institutional culture as a lens, which brought an interesting dynamic to the study in framing the analysis and findings.

The most important findings of this study are that the participant principals were resilient despite the restrictive cultural influences around them and made time available to engage with colleagues on non-academic issues. They also managed resources effectively and created skills development opportunities. This grounded their ability to use their roles to recognise and utilise

the opportunities for creating a positive school environment inside the school. Although the study was limited to four principals, the insights generated can inform and motivate the next generation of principals who will serve in our schools and communities.

Key words

Positive school culture, principals and school culture, primary school culture, Schein and school culture, developing a positive school culture.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie het die rol van vier skoolhoofde in die skep van 'n positiewe skoolkultuur in hul onderskeie skole ondersoek. 'n Kwalitatiewe gevallestudiebenadering is benut met data vanuit dokumentanalise, observasies en semi-gestruktureerde persoonlike onderhoude. Die studie is uitgevoer binne primêre skole onder die beheer van die Wes-Kaapse Onderwysdepartement. Deelnemende skoolhoofde is doelbewus gekies op grond van bepaalde kriteria, insluitend aktiewe deelname en 'n bydrae ter verryking van die navorsingsvraag. Die aanname was dat die deelnemende skoolhoofde 'n sleutelrol speel in die skepping van 'n positiewe skoolkultuur. Vier beleidsverwagtinge rakende skoolhoofde het die ondersoek onderlê, naamlik tydsbestuur, hulpbronsbestuur, finansiële bestuur en kurrikulumbestuur.

Voorts is Schein se idee van drie vlakke van kultuur vir die ondersoek benut, naamlik waarneembare artefakte, aanvaarde waardes en onderliggende aannames. Die hoofnavorsingsvraag was derhalwe: Wat is die rol van skoolhoofde in die skep van 'n positiewe skoolkultuur?

'n Interpretatiewe fenomenologiese navorsingsperspektief is in die ondersoek benut. Hierdie benadering fokus veral op deelnemers se deurleefde ervarings en het gedien as die mees toepaslike vir die verstaan van die genuanseerde rolle van skoolhoofde in die skep van 'n positiewe skoolkultuur. Data is finaal ontleed en geïnterpreteer deur die benutting van Schein se model van institusionele kultuur, wat 'n interessante en dinamiese blik op die studiebevindinge na vore gebring het.

Die belangrikste bevindinge vanuit die studie was soos volg: Die deelnemende skoolhoofde het aangehou presteer te midde van die beperkende kulturele invloede in hul onmiddellike omgewing; hulle het ook tyd gemaak om te kommunikeer. Hierbenewens was hulle in staat om hulpbronne effektief te bestuur en geleenthede tot vaardigheidsontwikkeling vir hul personeel

te skep. Hierdie aksies het hulle bemagtig tot rolbenutting sodat hulle die geleenthede tot die skep van 'n positiewe skoolkultuur te kon waarneem en te benut.

Hoewel die studie beperk was tot slegs vier deelnemende skoolhoofde, sal die insigte wat uit die ondersoek voortvloei 'n volgende geslag skoolhoofde inlig en motiveer tot beter diens in skole en aan gemeenskappe.

Sleutelterme

Positiewe skoolkultuur, skoolhoofde en skoolkultuur, kultuur in primêre skole, Schein en skoolkultuur, ontwikkeling van 'n positiewe skoolkultuur.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to My wife, Yolande, for her compassion and encouragement during my studies. You have taught me so much about commitment, discipline, compassion, devotion, patience, and support. My son, Curtley Ambrose, you are my pride and inspiration.

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ACRONYMS

DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EEA	Employment of Educators Act
FMA	Financial Management Act
HOD	Head of Department
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
SASA	South African Schools Act
SMT	School Management Team
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

School principals play a critical role in managing and creating a school culture. They direct all school programs and have an influence on both school culture and teacher performance (Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckennooghe & Aelterman, 2008:160). Principals are described as “change agents” and “culture builders” by Leo and Wickenberg (2013:407). However, according to Spaul (2013), strong accountability, school culture is characterised by good management, a culture of learning, discipline, and order, adequate learning, teaching, and support material, adequate teacher content knowledge, a completed curriculum, adequate learner performance, and a low learner dropout rate. According to the Department of Education (DoE, 2014:7), culture in schools are underpinned by the democratic practices of the principal, as summarised in the various policy documents of the National Department of Education. November, Alexander and Van Wyk (2010:789) argue that the principal is expected to create an atmosphere that inspires high levels of achievement and commitment from all who work in the school and develop a positive school culture based on human values. According to the Department of Education (DoE, 2014:7), a principal’s role is central to providing guidance and management to the school and core societal and educational values that underpin everything in a school. Schools are frequently expected and occasionally compelled to fulfil parental and security surrogacy roles physically and emotionally. According to Negis-Isik and Gursel (2013), parents frequently prefer to transfer their children to schools with a positive school culture and harmonious relationships between teachers and principals with exceptional leadership qualities.

This study focuses on four principals’ roles in creating a positive school culture, and how openness to change contributes significantly to organizational effectiveness (Fullan, 2001). As a result, the purpose of this research is to better understand the roles that principals play in creating a positive school culture in their respective schools. The term “principal’s role” refers to how [principals] focus on creating an atmosphere, or culture, conducive to school success, so that teachers and learners perceive the school as successful (Sergiovanni, 2000).

1.2 Background and rationale

As a principal in the Wine Land Education District, this research topic is of particular interest to me. Using the four selected “principal roles,” research can provide insights into how principals deal with the challenges of post-apartheid schooling. The support and collaboration of the SMT, staff, and SGB assist principals in creating a positive school culture. Historically, principals were only required to have strong managerial and political skills (Herrera, 2010). However, 21st-century school expectations now necessitate principals assume a variety of roles that foster a positive school culture. This is because, in addition to instructional and programming pressures, principals today face budgetary constraints, school safety, contract administration, supervision, data management, and marketing.

The Department of Basic Education believes that it is critical to develop a clear and shared understanding of what the South African education system expects of those who are or aspire to be entrusted with school leadership and management. As a result, the DBE (2015:5) created the Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship (hereafter “the Standard”), which fully defines the role of school principals and the critical aspects of professionalism, image, and competencies required.

The eight interdependent areas outlined in the Standard (DBE, 2015:10) constitute the generic role of the principal in any school context, but they are focused on the priorities of the South African educational system. Within each of these key areas, examples of typical actions that a principal must take in relation to the Core Purpose of Principalship are provided, with examples of the types of knowledge requirements that support these actions. This section will point out the various roles that the principals in this study had to fulfil in fostering a positive school culture. These four roles correspond to the Standard: time management (DBE, 2015:19(d) - 20(b)), resource management (DBE, 2015:14(1)), and financial management (DBE, In 2015:12(a),16(e),17(b) & 21(d)). addition, curriculum management is required (DBE, 2015:20(b)).

1.3 The research problem

Roberts (2004:120) defined the problem statement as, “the issue that exists in the literature, in theory, or in practice that leads to a need for the study”. The research problem I address in this study is the role of the principal in cultivating a positive school culture. The investigation sought to understand how time management, resource management, financial management, and curriculum management, contributed to creating a positive school culture. These were critical to informing the cultivation of a positive school culture by the participating principals.

1.4 Aims and research objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of the principal to cultivate a positive school culture.

Research objectives

The study’s research objectives are to:

1. Understand what a positive school culture is.
2. Investigate how principals contribute to the cultivation of a positive school culture in their schools.
3. Explore the challenges that principals face in their efforts to cultivate positive school cultures.

1.5 Main Research question

The main research question is:

“What is the role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture?”

The sub-research questions are:

1. What is a positive school culture?
2. How do principals’ management practices contribute to the cultivation of a positive school culture?

3. What challenges do principals face in their efforts to cultivate a positive school culture?

1.6 Exposition of chapters

The first chapter introduces and summarizes the research. Then, it considers the research objectives, research questions, research methods, research methodology, the problem statement, study limitations, and ethical considerations. The chapter also discusses the motivation for, as well as the context of, the research. The second chapter provides a background of international and South African literature relevant to the research topic and serves as the foundation for my research. It also presents the conceptual framework adopted which provides analytical lenses to inform and guide data collection, presentation, and analysis. The third chapter focuses on the methodology used to guide data handling procedures and processes. This chapter explains why a qualitative approach was chosen and why in-depth semi-structured interviews were chosen as the primary data collection tool. In addition, to supplement the data, follow-up interviews were conducted. The data are analysed and summarised in Chapter four. Finally, chapter five provides data analysis and interpretation, from which conclusions are drawn, and recommendations for future research are made.

1.7 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to provide an overview of the thesis focus, the main and sub-research questions, the aims and objectives of the study and a delineation of the chapter.

In the next chapter literature pertinent to the role of the principal to cultivate a positive school culture is explored and a framework for the study is outlined.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the literature pertaining to culture in general, school culture, positive school cultures and more specifically, the role principals play in the creation of a positive school culture. The chapter situates school culture in current international, regional and local debates. School cultures pre- and post-apartheid South Africa are discussed to illustrate how the notion of school culture has shifted and its impact on emergent roles of principals to the cultivation of a positive school culture. The chapter is drawn to a close with a focus on the challenges to the cultivation of a positive school culture.

The focus for the study is the role and influence of principals in cultivating a positive school culture. The approach adopted in this study is that all behaviour is informed by and embedded in ideological conflicts within society and do not operate in a vacuum. Van den Berg (cited in Higgs, 1995:175) warns that taking the object of research out of context and thereby omitting salient features is fallacious. Rather, I sought to investigate the role and influence of principals in cultivating a positive school culture as it appears and speaks for itself, in the data. The literature begins with a more detailed discussion on culture, school culture, and positive school culture will then follow.

2.2 Culture

Culture is a conceptually elusive and a deeply contested social abstraction. An anthropologist, (Edward B. Taylor (cited in Kien, 2014), presents one of the first attempts at defining the concept of culture scientifically as, "... that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society" (Kien, 2014:8). This definition points out a lot of independent factors that make culture become an object of a separate science, Bernardi (cited in Kien, 2014). Édouard Herriot (1930), according to Kien (2014:8), stated that culture is, "what remains when one has forgotten everything". This definition does not provide a scientific understanding, but it still manages to point out that culture belongs to the root of society. Gruenert and Whitaker (2015:6) defined culture as, "patterns of behaviour that distinguish us from them" and "a set of

behaviours that seem strange to new employees”. For the learners and staff who live these traditions, they form memories that will last a lifetime and the traditions will be a part of the school culture forever. Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) suggested: Cultural artefacts are all around us in the trophy case, in the alignment of desks in classrooms, in the amount of time provided for lunch, in the types of learner data we collect, in what we laugh at. Culture tells us when to be tense and when to relax and rewards us for acting appropriately, usually in the form of greater security, more self-esteem, or access to inside information (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015:17).

Culture as a system, however, seems to be so complex that its completeness may be concealed by the components. For example, some definition of culture may consider it as sum of discrete parts from different sections. The definition of Taylor (cited in Kien, 2014) falls into this type:

$$\text{culture} = \text{knowledge} + \text{beliefs} + \text{arts} + \text{morals} + \text{laws} + \text{customs}...$$

But culture is systematic, that means values need to be considered in close relation with one another. Its completeness allows us to distinguish a complete culture from a set of discrete cultural values. Culture is a system with values and is a measuring tool of the level of humanity. Culture is shared and learnt, thus culture can be inherited and transmitted from one generation to another, which makes it dynamic and continuous. Through its historical growth, culture can change in response to physical environmental conditions, *e.g.*, financial, political, and social. Culture contributes to building relationships based on trust and communication, and therefore work can be carried out without any effects upon authority in an organisation (Mallak & Kurstedt, 1996). According to Ramovha (2009), culture, in its true sense, although it is not tangible, has a tremendous influence on every activity within an organisation. Any number of organizations be it a church, a business or a school, develops a culture of its own. Therefore, culture is closely linked to organisations. The interactions, relationships, beliefs, assumptions, values and norms of people, capture a certain culture. Every culture evolves with time and space. Systems are not rigid but are shaped by multiple influences, such as social, political, and economic forces. Such causes affect the actions of humans and culture changes as well. Culture also filters and affects schools in communities. That is why the school cannot be isolated from its immediate cultural setting. It is within this setting that the role of the principal to create a positive school culture at school is explored in this study.

Deal and Peterson (1999:60) argue that symbolic aspects play a powerful role in cultural cohesion and pride. There are various artefacts which are found within the school context, and

these have various meanings. The vision and mission statements of a school are powerful symbolic statements of its values as displayed on the walls for visibility showing commitment to these values Ramovha (2009). Furthermore, Ramovha (2009) states that in some schools athletic awards and singing competition trophies are displayed in the staff room or the principal's office. These symbolic artefacts are there to symbolize what is valued.

Ramovha (2009) states that the formation of structures such as the School Management Team (SMT) plays a pivotal role in articulating culture. Such a structure is a description of how people organize themselves, what they do and how they do it to achieve the organisational aims. Bush (2003:167) states that there is a link between culture and structure. The structure has rules and regulations in place to supervise people. The staff should be involved in the formulation of rules and regulations in order to turn a school into a humane, friendly, ethical and cultural space. When different activities are planned, it is important that those SMT and staff members participate fully to create a culture of reporting and collaboration. The role of the SMT is to assist the principal to establish a positive school culture. One of the questions is how the principal recognises this role of the SMT as she/he shapes the culture of a school.

According to Sergiovanni (1984), all schools possess a representative culture; whether it is dysfunctional or functional, weak or strong. Both the [principal] and membership purposely nurture schools with strong cultures. Amongst definitions proposed by different researchers, an attempt by Hofstede (cited in Beverly, 2012:20) defined culture as the collective mental programming of people in a particular setting. In other words, depicting culture as a set of values, beliefs, attitudes and patterns of behaviour common or shared by a group of people in an environment (Chew Keng Howe, Tsai-pen Tseng & Teo Kun Hong, 1990). Hofstede (1997) emphasised that culture is not inherited but learnt. Culture has also been defined as consisting of:

Patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas especially their attached values (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952:181).

Schein (1984:14) defined culture as “a set of shared meanings that make it possible for members of a group to interpret and act upon their environment”. Thus, indicating that rather than an individual characteristic, culture is a set of theories of behaviour that are shared by a group of individuals. A discussion about the definition of culture is endless, with a definition

of culture being paradoxically, a blurring, even a transgression of the boundaries that one traditionally associates with the act of defining. So rather than attempting to define it, culture should be studied in terms of one's experience and knowledge of the social things that culture interacts with, relates to, possibly shaping things in the process, and through which it arrives to us as something we can actually speak about (Beverly, 2012:22). The components of school culture will now be examined and explained.

2.3 School Culture

Schools have their own unique and individual cultures as social structures. Depending on the circumstance and history of each school's development, various schools form their own unique school culture, "... systems and standards, social structures, attribution statements, values and goals" (Banks & Banks, 1995). Sergiovanni and Starratt (cited in Van der Westhuizen, 2007:1179) define school culture as, "rules, norms, values, beliefs and discipline which determine the behaviour of those in the school". Swanepoel calls these values, norms, rules and assumptions the school's "intangible foundation" Van der Westhuizen (2007:1179) and adds that, in addition to this intangible foundation, a school's culture consists of what he calls, "tangible manifestations" – visible and notable elements of the school culture such as, "rituals, traditions, symbols *etc.*" (Van der Westhuizen, 2007:1179). School culture can therefore be defined as the intangible foundation of norms, values, rules, beliefs and common assumptions that govern and determine not only the behaviour of all the role players in a school, but also the attitude of these role players towards the school and the character and success of the teaching and learning that takes place there. This intangible foundation is manifested in visible elements such as the school's rituals, symbols, traditions *etc.*

Prosser (1999) thinks that school culture gives school community a meaning. It determines activities and mobilises school staff. Smey-Richman (1991) describes school culture as a mechanism of social control that directs people's behaviour. Domović (cited in Družinec, 2019), says that school culture affects peoples' behaviour and determines school life. Stoll (1998) describes it as the school reality which determines people's identity, gives them support and a framework for professional work and friendship. Vrcelj (cited in Družinec, 2019) emphasises that school culture gives order which assures proper school functioning. Gruenert (2008) is of the opinion that a collective set of expectations is developed when a group of

people at a school work together for a significant period. These standards then develop into a set of unwritten rules that members adopt in order to function effectively. The standards generate and transmits knowledge from generation to generation in a common school culture. Barth (2002) defines school culture as a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, values, ceremonies, traditions and myths which are deeply embedded in each aspect of the school. It is an historic legacy of power that is exerted over people's thoughts and their actions. Hinde (2004) views school culture as norms, beliefs, traditions and customs that develop in a school over time. He says that there is a range of clear expectations and assumptions which influences the activities of the employees and the learners directly. Therefore, school culture is not static, but a self-perpetuating process encapsulating the collective ideas, beliefs, and convictions that represent each learner's identity and behavioural expectations.

According to Robbins and Alvy (2009), school culture reflects the aspects that the school community cares about; how they celebrate and what they talk about. It occurs in their daily routine. School culture has an influence on the learners' productivity, professional development and leadership practices and traditions (Robbins & Alvy, 2009). Furthermore, Reames and Spencer (1998) are of the opinion that the internal structures and processes of the school can be determinants in the efficiency and functioning of a school. For example, collegiality, cooperation, shared decision-making processes, the continuous improvement of educational practices and long-term involvement are ways to enhance the culture at a school. Cavanagh and Delhar (2001) agree that factors such as professional development, cooperation and leadership practices contribute to a school culture of quality. According to Deal and Petersen (1999:4):

School cultures are complex webs of traditions and rituals that have been built up over time as teachers, students, parents, and administrators work together and deal with crises and accomplishments. Cultural patterns are highly enduring, have a powerful impact on performance, and shape the ways, people think, act and feel".

One can conclude that culture as a set of unspoken ideals and aspirations influences the growth of a school culture and contributes to the standard of schooling in everyday life hoping to inspire everyone to do the best they can.

2.4 Positive school culture

A positive school culture and an openness to change contribute greatly to the organizational effectiveness of a school (Fullan, 2001). An essential attribute of being an effective principal is the ability to create a culture of change (Smith, 2016).

According to Smith (2016), one of the major issues facing our schools today is that of educational reform. In order to find better ways to do things, principals' educational reform is changing the culture in our schools in a positive manner as seen in the ideals of professional learning communities and the focus on formative assessment. Functionalist studies of culture offer the promise that a 'strong' culture (one that generates much consensus among employees of an organization) will lead to outcomes most top executives desire to maximize, such as greater productivity and profitability (Martin, 2002:361). This statement identifies the significant role that [principals] play in ensuring a positive school culture. Creating a strong culture that embraces change will ultimately lead to an improvement in the overall goal of all educational institutions, an increase in learner engagement and learning (Smith, 2016). It is sustained by consistent [principalship] that engages stakeholders; a purpose that is clear; a value system that guides behaviour and builds respect; flexibility of design that includes choice; and relationships and a sense of caring that reach all learners and the community beyond. Karpicke and Murphy (2000:69) define a positive school culture as the culture that produces excellence in learners' academic achievements.

A positive school culture reflects the shared beliefs, traditions, ceremonies, narratives, and an internal network of society that honours legends, like an outstanding educator. This encompasses what can be seen and heard as workers communicate. It embraces the way members of staff dress, their language, observable rituals and ceremonies held at school, physical environment, stories and the myths told and published about the organisation (Chance, Cummins & Wood, 1996:121). The physical layout and decorations of the school environment communicates meaning. A school with a lawn and beautiful flowers planted in front of the classrooms represents the care and attention the learners have, but a dilapidated and dirty school becomes an eyesore rather than a symbol of pride. Teaching and learning cannot take place in an unsafe environment. In view of the above features that typify positive school culture, it is therefore important to discuss the role of the principal in the creation of a positive school culture. A study of creating a positive school culture, according to DuFour *et al.* (cited in Habegger, 2008), characterised such intentional [school] communities as environments with a

shared mission, vision, and values; collective inquiry; collaborative teams; action orientation/experimentation; commitment to continuous improvement; and results orientation as a professional learning community.

2.5 Policy Requirements

The eight interdependent areas as stated in Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship (DBE, 2015:10), hereafter SASP, together constitute the generic role of the principal in any South African school context. There is no implied hierarchy in the order in which they are presented. However, leading learning and managing the curriculum is a key area, at the heart of the work of any school and defined first: Leading school teaching and learning; shaping school direction and development; managing quality and maintaining accountability; cultivating and inspiring self and others; managing the school as an organization; working with and for the community; managing human resources (staff) and managing and advocating extra-mural activities (DBE, 2015:10). Furthermore, the mentioned key areas referred to in the Standard are in line with the core purpose and responsibilities of the principal (DBE, 2015).

The principal must be knowledgeable in order to carry out the actions required in Cultural management, where culture refers to a specific group of people's way of life and includes behaviour, beliefs, values, customs, style of dress, personal decoration such as make-up and jewellery, relationships with others, and special symbols and codes. Because the principal is expected to interact with people from various cultural backgrounds, he or she must understand how to promote cultural diversity, gender equality, religious tolerance, and multilingualism in the school setting (DBE, 2015:12). The principal should ensure that the school is effectively organized and managed, and he or she should constantly seek ways to develop and improve organizational structures and functions based on ongoing review and evaluation. The principal is responsible for organizing and managing the school, its people, assets, and all other resources in order to provide an effective, efficient, safe, and nurturing environment. These management functions necessitate the principal developing and strengthening the capacity of those working in the school, as well as ensuring that all available assets and resources are equitably deployed to support effective teaching and learning (DBE, 2015:16).

The principal's core social, educational, and professional values are reflected in how he handles all time-related issues, such as providing quarterly feedback to parents on learner progress (DBE, 2015:5.1.5:19d), and methods for establishing and maintaining partnerships between the school, the home, and the larger community (DBE, 2015:5.1.8:21h). With enough time on their hands, principals can foster an environment in which continuous school improvement planning is incorporated into all school systems (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.2:11e). Principals who manage their time well can maintain a high level of visibility throughout the school (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.2:11g).

Principals are responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing the quality and use of the school's available resources to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and the effective and efficient use of ICT (DBE, 2015:17g, h). Also included are procedures for the effective and equitable allocation and deployment of human, financial, and physical resources and all other assets in pursuit of the school's educational priorities, including procurement processes (DBE, 2015:16b). They must also ensure that existing and emerging technologies are used for organizational management (DBE, 2015:16b).

Principals must manage the school's finances, material resources, and all assets efficiently and effectively in accordance with departmental and SGB policies in order to achieve educational priorities and goals (DBE, 2015:5.1.3: 17b). They must, together with the SMT and SGB, ensure that the school's operational budget is carefully and responsibly managed so that there is enough money for all the school's programmes and activities (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.5:12a).

Principals are responsible for creating a collaborative work environment that is site-based, supports teamwork, and promotes cohesion and cooperation because curriculum management is ingrained in its culture (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.1:11i). This, in turn, leads to ongoing improvement in curriculum implementation (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.3:11b). They must also keep up with current developments in national education policy and schooling around the world (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.1:10h). Their priority should be to use ICT to lead the school into the future (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.3:11c) and to empower staff to become instructional leaders who share responsibility for achieving the school's mission, vision, and goals (DBE, 2015:5.1.1.3:11g). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the principal to foster relationships between performance management, continuing professional development, and long-term school improvement (DBE, 2015:5.1.7:20a). Finally, the policy suggests to principals methods for encouraging, promoting, and implementing shared leadership, decision-making participation, team-building, and effective teamwork in order to create a positive school culture (DBE, 2015:5.1.7:20b) These

values inform the central purpose of education, influence the essence and direction of the school principal's roles in developing a positive school culture, and inform this study.

2.6 Principals - creation of a positive school culture in terms of four roles

Mullen (2007:100) argues that a principal's actions can change the school [culture] but cannot create an entirely new [culture] in the school. He says that the school principals will reshape the school culture by first recognizing the history and culture of the school. The principal should then identify the core values of the school and identify healthy or unhealthy aspects. The positive quality of school culture and the resolution of negative aspects must also be strengthened. School culture and school principalship are inseparable issues because cultural management remains the responsibility of the school principal. It deals with the ability of principals to know, understand the culture of the schools, and modify where necessary in order to meet the needs and goals of the school. School principals are held accountable to move the process along through their actions, conversations and what they normally utter in public. In a way, school principals must model the way (Ramovha, 2009).

Principals who can build relationships with teachers and interact with all staff members hold the central elements for creating a positive school culture (DiPaola, Tschannen-Moran & Walther-Thomas, 2004). This ties in well with what Adeogun and Olisaemeka Blessing (2011:555) found that to be influential, "[Principals] must be consummate relationship builders within groups, especially with people different from themselves. Leo and Wickenberg (2013:14). (cited in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:174) describe principals as "change agents" and "culture builders". Principals do not only create the school culture; they also manage it (Bipath & Moyo, 2016:174). In recent years the role of the principal has changed and there is a greater emphasis on shared decision making and professional learning communities (DuFour, 1998). As Valentine and Prater (2011:5) stated, "... [t]he principal's role has become increasingly complex as the nature of society, political expectations, and schools as organizations have changed. According to Gruenert (2000:14), a "collaborative school has been identified as an effective context for student and teacher learning". Strong relationships in the school are afforded when the role of the principal accepts, respects, and dignifies employees. This means all employees are accepted for the value they bring to the building of a positive school culture. The relationship is about the person and not the person's personality (Toll, 2010). Principals

act according to the unique culture of their schools. When school [principals] focus on creating an atmosphere, or culture, conducive to school success, the school is perceived by the teachers and learners as being successful (Sergiovanni, 2000).

Distributing the control in an innovative way to all of the stakeholders, including learners and their parents as well as teachers, can provide all with feelings of efficacy and worthiness. This practice deepens the stakeholders' personal investment and further promotes a common focus for the greater good of the school. Principal's management practices of sharing power can create increased motivation, genuine trust, and promote risk-taking, along with building a sense of community and efficacy among its members. Principals who have the administrative competency especially in [school] development and creating a positive school culture, can function better at schools in terms of learner outcomes (Balyer, 2016). School principals, along with their SMT's, have a key role to play in setting direction (Hallinger, 2011). One needs to create a positive school culture, include a proactive school mind-set, and support and enhance staff motivation and commitment to foster success at schools. It is crucial for the principal to create a school community in which educators, learners, and parents work together to accomplish a positive school culture. I will now focus on the principal's four management roles which contribute towards the creation of a positive school culture.

2.6.1 Time management

The research by Claessens, Van Eerde, Rutte and Roe (2007) and Macan (1994) on how time management increases the creation of positive school culture identified several techniques and behaviours. From their study, one derives that the way the principal exercises time management contributes to the creation of a positive school culture. For example, by setting short- and long-term goals, maintaining time logs, prioritizing activities, developing a to-do list, and scheduling and organizing your workspace, one can use time efficiently and productively to create a positive school culture (Britton & Tesser, 1991). Studies also indicate that principals' time investments in some instruction related tasks, including coaching and teacher professional development, are associated with more positive school culture outcomes (Grissom, Loeb & Master, 2013). Many professions have high demands for their time. As Britton and Glynn (1989:429) put it, "intellectually productive people usually have more things that they would like to do, or need to do, than they have time." This description applies to the work of most school principals who have the responsibility for the time-intensive tasks of managing school operations, overseeing instructional programs and building relations among staff members (Hornig, Klasik & Loeb, 2010). In such professions, becoming more productive means finding

ways to accomplish more with less time. Managing time more ably is one way for principals to promote the creation of a positive school culture (Claessens *et al.*, 2007). For example, more seasoned principals tend to use better time management techniques. Principals may also have adapted different time management practices to meet employment requirements in more difficult school environments. Principals are often called on to meet with parents or deal with parental concerns (Miller, 2001). They spend large portions of their days in planned and unplanned meetings and on completing administrative duties (Horng *et al.*, 2010; Morris, Crowson, Hurwitz & Porter-Gehrie, 1981). Britton and Tesser (1991) proposed three facets of time management: short-range planning, long-range planning, and time attitudes. Short range planning is the ability to set out and organize tasks in the short run (*e.g.*, within a day or a week). Long-range planning is the capacity to manage tasks over a longer time horizon (*e.g.*, in a quarter or a year) by setting goals, keeping track of important dates and limiting procrastination. Positive attitudes towards time indicate that a principal is constructively oriented towards time and the maintenance of time in his agency.

2.6.2 Resource management

Proper management of existing resources is yet another crucial concern if the principal and his management team want to create a healthy school culture of learning and teaching. Every classroom should have the best equipment and stock available. The DBE (2015:16), showed in their research how resource management increases the creation of positive school culture. Here the principal is responsible for ensuring that the school and its people, assets and all other resources are organised and managed to provide for an effective, efficient, safe and nurturing environment. This management of resources requires the principal to build and strengthen the capacity of all staff. The principal must also ensure that all available assets and resources are equitably deployed to maximise effective teaching and learning. Since the implementation of the South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996a), the management of physical resources has become a key function for school governance (Mestry & Bodalina, 2015).

The role of principals to improve a positive school culture distinguishes four types of resources; people, buildings, equipment and materials (Pollard, 2002:80). Research indicates how the management of resources improves the development of a positive school culture, where these resources affect both quality and quantity in terms of what can be done in schools and classrooms. The study further highlighted how the principal's role to improve a positive school culture identifies people (educators and support staff, learners and parents), school finances, physical resources (buildings, furniture, textbooks, exercise books, educational aids, etc.) and

time (tuition timetable) under the rubric of resources (Prinsloo, 2009:13). Pollard (2002:78) notes how the principal promotes a positive school culture that encapsulates improvements in schools and adds national resources that are accessible to all the schools, particularly in relation to information technology (ICT), to this list. ICT involves the interconnection of learning networks and educational services offered through the internet. Funds should be made available for the training of educators to use ICT. The policy intention (RSA, 2004:3) is not just to build technical skills, but also to use ICT's to extend and enrich educational experiences across the curriculum. Therefore, the goal is to increase digital and computer literacy and the ability to use technology to contribute to a productive and prosperous South African society in positive school culture (RSA, 2004:3). Pollard (2002:78) mentions that the principal should exercise the leadership and management skills necessary to use the school resources in pursuance of the school's stated aims and objectives.

Research indicates that a sound and adequate infrastructure in school is vital to enable the principal to create a positive school culture that supports education and learning. According to Ngcobo and Tikly (2010:209), the provision of materials and buildings may differ from school to school. Many townships and rural schools in South Africa suffer from the deterioration of school buildings and property; therefore, the importance of the principal's role to create a positive school culture. The research also supports the notion that school buildings and the school grounds should be maintained if the principal strives to create a positive school culture. Clean, safe buildings, therefore, lead to sound learning and a positive education community. In keeping with the principal's position, buildings are a challenge, but if the principal improves the school buildings' condition, it creates a positive school environment. The proper maintenance of school buildings is essential and that adequate budget allocations are needed to fulfil this function in order to establish a positive school culture. Pollard (2002:77) emphasizes that aesthetic considerations influence the quality of the environment. The four principals in this study were challenged to create a positive school culture and they were concerned with the architectural quality of the learning environment of schools and sought to optimize the efficiency of the buildings and their space. Buildings have a distinct fixed quality and can be a source of restraint. Creative principals can, however, create a positive school atmosphere if school buildings are used effectively.

In schools, particularly in the primary schools, equipment and learning materials are especially important. Ngcobo and Tickly (2010:209) maintain that many township and rural schools in

South Africa lack recreational and sports facilities, furniture and equipment, for example, a school hall and a playground, facilities for music, a library and resources to meet the needs of the science, mathematics and technology curricula. The procurement, use, and maintenance of equipment are vital and have a significant impact on the learning and education culture that affects the learner's achievement. According to Prinsloo (2009:67), the principal and the management team are responsible to put into place procedures to minimize vandalism and the loss of equipment and stock, the cleaning of the buildings and the school grounds, and procuring new stock and equipment. Proper management of existing resources is a crucial concern if the principal and the management team want to create a positive school culture.

Urba and Brewis (2002:4), in reflecting on the role of the principal in developing a positive school culture, state that during the course of their daily work, principals typically fulfil several roles. They need to perform these roles effectively in order to develop a positive school culture. According to Hellriegel, Jackson and Slocum (2005:4), sound financial management improves positive school culture. Principals are responsible for the organisation and management to create a positive school culture of financial management. Mestry (2004:128) mentions that the principal should have various kinds of school accounts and records kept properly and should make the best use of funds for the benefit of learners in consultation with the appropriate structures. He also states that the principal sees to the daily governance of the school and the observation and implementation of the many guidelines and policies as formulated by the Department of Basic Education and the SGB as crucial to the creation of a positive school culture. The study also underlines the principal's responsibility for supervising and maintaining resources and managing the school liabilities. Efficient and economical administration of available working capital for financial accountants by the principal should contribute to the creation of a positive culture of schools.

2.6.3 Financial management

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:234), many aspects of schooling is mainly financed by private and/or individual funding. The latter includes the school fees contributed by the parents, and various costs being taken care of by the learners and the parents (*e.g.* Transport, textbooks and school uniforms). Public funding refers to the responsibility of the state to fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis. The principal and the SGB must consider the probable expenditures for educational purposes during the next year. The school cannot spend more money than it has, and therefore the budget must be balanced (DoE, 2012:49). The principal must ensure a positive school culture in school administration, maintain the school accounts and records appropriately, and make the best use of the funds to

benefit the school community in consultation with the appropriate structures, particularly the finance committee (Department of Education and Culture, 2002:15).

2.6.4 Curriculum management

The principal's role is directly linked to the management of the school's curriculum or education programme. Despite the complexity and volume of a principal's job, its main task remains to ensure efficient teaching and learning to improve learners' achievement. The principal will know the curriculum and guidelines and supervise and monitor the progress of learners. Cardno (2003) and Kyahurwa (2013:14) define curriculum management as an academic [principal], or management of the core business of the school, teaching and learning process. It means ensuring the interpretation and execution of the curriculum policy statement.

The school principal and School Management Team, hereafter SMT are responsible for managing the curriculum in schools. For them to be able to successfully manage the curriculum, they need to be familiar with subject contents and methods of all the subjects taught in their schools so that they can be able to facilitate change and offer support to teachers (Mandukwini, 2016). Mandukwini (2016) attests to this when saying, the pivotal influence of a principal determines the pace and extent of change. School principals should encourage teachers and learners to embrace curriculum change for it to be smoothly implemented. Dimba (2001:15) states that curriculum manager's role is to question, modify, and adapt the prescribed curriculum within the set of values espoused by the school in order to meet the needs of the learners.

There is a strong belief among educationists that principals can improve the teaching and learning environment by creating conditions conducive to improved curriculum management (Early, 2013; Kiat, Tan, Heng & Lim-Ratnam, 2017; Yu, 2009). They are responsible for creating positive school climates, motivating teachers and learners; and effectively managing resources to enhance best instructional practices. Thus, principals play a key role in the development and maintenance of academic standards which include the knowledge and skills that learners are expected to learn in a subject and in each grade (Mestry, 2017).

Implementation of policy poses many demands in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, which do not take place without interpretation or recreation of policy (Smit, 2001:68). According to Wahyudin (2010:29), principals should also recognize and support their teachers. Principals should conduct formative and summative evaluation of their teachers and support

them in their professional development. A principal who is acquainted with the curriculum that he/she must manage will be able to see the shortfalls of the teachers and identify areas on which they need development. Positive school culture encourages professional training and achievements. Teachers' experience is directly connected to culture and level of discipline in school (Van der Westhuizen, Mosoge, Swanepoel & Coetsee, 2005). Team building workshops can assist school teachers, novice teachers and experienced teachers to work together, share experiences and assist each other to produce required outcomes as there would be shared goals. According to Christie (1999:1), principals and teachers are expected to work together as a team to promote a [positive school] culture of teaching and learning. The growth and professional development of teachers is an important element of developing a positive school culture. The role of the principal is critical in this instance.

Bush and Glover (2009) summarises the activities discussed above that principals are required to undertake as follows: oversee the curriculum across the school, evaluate learner performance through analysing internal continuous assessments and examination results, monitor the work of heads of departments (HODs) through scrutiny of their work schedules and portfolios, ensure that HODs monitor the work of teachers employed in their subjects/learning areas and arrange a programme of class visits followed by meaningful feedback to teachers, and ensure the availability of appropriate learning and teaching support materials (LTSM). It is vital to explore the significance of the establishment and maintenance of trust connections for their relationship in the development and support of a positive school culture.

The role of the principal as a primary agent of change and influencer of school culture has now been focussed on. Critical issues like relationship building, teacher development, aspects of management and power sharing have been highlighted from the literature. This raises challenges faced by the principal in attempting to create and maintain a positive school culture. These aspects in the context of school culture will be discussed in the next section.

2.7 Challenges to the creation of a positive school culture

Principals are faced with new demands, more complex decisions and additional responsibilities more than ever before. Their day is usually filled with diverse administrative and management functions such as procuring resources, managing learner discipline, resolving conflicts with

parents and dealing with unexpected teacher and learner crises (Mestry, 2017). Hoy and Hoy (2009) assert that many school principals experience great difficulty in balancing their diverse administrative duties with their curriculum guidance functions. They question whether one person has the capacity to do all the tasks of a principal and suggested distributive management and the need to empower subordinates to exercise guidance as a possible solution. This would undoubtedly alleviate the burden of principals and enable them to focus on instructional matters (Bush, Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2011; Hallinger, 2005; Van Deventer, 2016; Van Deventer & Kruger, 2008). According to Mestry (2017), many school principals lack the time for and an understanding of their [principal] functions. Many of them spend relatively little time in classrooms and even less time analysing curriculum delivery with teachers. While they may arrange time for teachers' meetings and professional development programmes, they rarely provide intellectual [principalship] for growth on instructional issues. [Principalship] should emerge freely from the combined efforts of the principal; the school management team (SMT) and teachers (Hoy & Hoy, 2009). Kallaway (2009) found that [principalship] of school principals has been completely disregarded. Goslin (2009) argues that many school principals overlook their main responsibility of [principal's guidance,] because they are far too busy attending to day-to-day critical issues, including learner discipline and parent complaints. Bush (2011) concurs with Hallinger (2005) that principal effectiveness can be attained when they find the correct balance among their various functions for a given school context. School principals are appointed based on their teaching record rather than their [principalship] potential (Mestry & Singh, 2007). Induction, mentoring and other tangible support are usually limited, and principals must adopt a pragmatic approach to managing the day-to-day operations of schools. The lack of stringent criteria and the absence of explicit [principal's] and management qualifications for the appointment of principals have resulted in many principals under-performing resulting in dysfunctional schools (Fleisch, 2008; Kallaway, 2009; Mestry & Singh, 2007).

Evidence seem to suggest that there is a positive link between high-quality [principalship] and schools with a positive school culture (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Huber, 2004; Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom & Anderson, 2004). It can thus be inferred that the lack of effective [principalship] in curricular issues leads towards systemic challenges in schools and contributes towards poor academic standards of learners. Spaul (2013:3) claims that South Africa has the "worst education system of all middle-income countries that participate in cross national assessments" and the country performs "worse than many low-income African countries. Among the reasons

cited for these dismal performances is the ineffective [principalship] of school principals” (Dobbie & Fryer, 2011). There is growing evidence in South African literature that supports the view that [principal’s guidance] is crucial if schools are to significantly improve learner performances (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2010; Christie, 2010). In the following section, the conceptual framework discusses the aspects of the principal's participation that have an impact on a positive school culture.

2.8 Conceptual framework

This study explored the lived experiences of four school principals creating a positive school culture at their respective schools. In order to conduct this study, it was critical to have an understanding of what school culture is, how it permeates the entire school, how it is core to the school and how school culture is key to the success or lack thereof of the school-as-a-whole. Educational research has a rich tradition of recognizing schools as complex entities with distinctive school cultures. This understanding has led to the development of several operational definitions that serve to clarify the essence of the roles of principals to create a positive school culture.

As Barth (2002:40), observed, “School culture is a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, values, ceremonies, traditions and myths which is deeply embedded in each aspect of the school.” Schein (cited in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:175) identifies three levels of culture, namely observable artefacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. These levels of culture range from the very concrete open indicators that can be seen and felt, to the deeply rooted, unconscious, basic assumptions that are regarded as the essence of culture. Within these layers one finds various espoused beliefs, values, norms, rules and behaviour that principals use to portray their schools’ culture to members of the school community. The three of the levels of [school] culture identified by Schein (1997) are readily observable in the contemporary primary school (see Hatchet, 2010). Adherence to formal timetabling, short- and long-term planning, educational resources, finances and curriculum documents, codes of learner conduct, and other administrative practices, constitute a positive school culture and serve to make daily life in these institutions routine. The research focused on positive school culture and thus explored the foundational components of Schein’s [school] culture theory. Chance *et al.* (1996:121) aver that a positive school culture reflects the shared beliefs,

traditions, ceremonies, narratives, and an internal network of society that honours legends. It embraces the way members of staff dress, their language, observable rituals and ceremonies held at school, physical environment, stories and the myths told and published about the organisation.

The first level of culture, according to Schein (cited in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:175) describes the observable artefacts as those things one would see, hear or feel when one encounters a new group or a new environment.” This level typically reveals artefacts that are unique to each organization. These artefacts include tangible representations such as symbols, crests, mottoes, motifs, and rites, rituals, and ceremonies, as well as behavioural representations such as rites, rituals, and ceremonies. Schein (2004) clearly distinguishes the fact that attempting to infer deeper assumptions from artefacts alone is risky because the interpretations one has are directly a projection of one's own feelings and reactions. As a result, artefacts are placed on level one, the surface level, of the school's culture. The artefacts manifest themselves in the visible world and include the physical environment in which a school functions, its products and the behaviour of members of the school community (Nordengren, cited in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:175). Principals are also described as "change agents" and "culture builders" (Bipath & Moyo, 2016:174). As a result, we can argue that the principal's daily managing time can be classified as Schein's second level. However, it progresses to the third level, where it becomes an assumption about the significance of time in a group and how time is to be defined and measured. Principals prefer a change in the artefact, such as using an electronic calendar, assuming that the artefact will be used to navigate the future (both short and long term). It is viewed as an assumption that management tool that is being integrated into daily routines. Schein (1992) further asserts that time imposes social order [in schools] and the time structure implies [school] priorities (Schein, 1992; Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003). Therefore, the assumption is that more time for professional development and collaborative planning will result in richer experiences for students, according to the rationale for changing how principals spend their time at school (Stoll, Fink, Maxine, & Earl, 2003). Schein's level three impact assumes that the principal makes time to maintain and strengthen relationships between the school, corporations, and old boys' clubs. Horng *et al.* (2010), using scheduling as an artefact to manage principals responsibility for time-intensive tasks such as managing school operations, overseeing instructional programs, and building relationships among staff members. Schein's visible signs of an organisations culture is represented by the assumption of the principal managing resources, utilizing technology (Google calendar projectors, white interactive and

computers) as artifacts to communicate with staff members and to enhance learner progress, that contributes to the creation of a positive school culture. According to the White Paper on e-Education (RSA, 2004:3) the policy intention is not just to build technical skills, but also to use ICTs to extend and enrich education.

The second level of culture identified by Schein (2004) is espoused beliefs and values. This level is frequently expressed in prospectus documents, mission statements, or credos and includes the ideals that the organization presents to the outside world. While these values provide an additional glimpse into a school's culture, they are frequently contradictory or inconsistent with behaviour (Schein, 1992), and are only testable by social consensus (Owens & Valesky, 2007). Principals advocated for the school's espoused values by modelling the values they wish to see in their school. In this study the practices modelled by the participant principals were explored. Their practices informed the values that in turn established the framework for their schools' culture. Furthermore, these values and beliefs may be merely "espoused theories," right words that lead to right rhetoric and speech but may not translate into actual practice within the organization (Schein, 2004:30). According to Schein (2004:29) beliefs or values develop only as a result of [improving school culture] when solving problems. I can also argue that the primary value of empowering staff is the possibility of developing a sense of ownership, which could result in the staff's sharing of responsibility for running the school Horng *et al.* (2010). According to Schein (2004:29), this process is known as social validation, and it means that beliefs and values are "confirmed only by the shared social experience of the group". This study explored the staff development programmes initiated by the principals as forms of validation and creating shared growth experiences for staff.

I can argue that the principals' espousal of values and a culture of shared roles will advance the development of a nucleus of teachers with the necessary skills to meet the school's objectives while fostering a positive culture of value driven and shared decision-making. SMT, staff, and principals will work together to identify challenges, propose solutions, share roles, and promote values and decision-making at different levels. These could include hiring, structuring the school day and year and designing professional learning. It is important to explore the underlying assumptions of these values get a better understanding of school culture.

Schein's (2004) third level, basic underlying assumptions, which include tacit, implicit, and pre-conscious assumptions and beliefs about the organization, capture the essence of an

organization's culture (in this study the school culture). According to Nordengren (cited in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:175), the basic underlying assumptions are solutions to problems that have become so accepted by the school community as, “the way things are done here”, that all other alternatives may appear unavailable. At this level, the roots of each tacit assumption can be revealed. Owens and Valesky (2007:193) state that, “below... behavioural norms lie the assumptions that comprise the bedrock on which norms and all other aspects of culture are built... an organization's cultural norms... arise directly from the underlying assumptions”. I can argue that the principal's underlying assumptions about time management are to reduce stress for all staff, learners, and even parents who visit the school, which will define systematic academic achievements of defined cultural goals. This underlying assumption may have the potential of reducing employee anxiety. This is supported by DiPaola *et al.* (2004), who state that principals who can build relationships with teachers and interact with all staff members are key to creating a positive school culture.

Furthermore, Schein (1992:26) contends that any meaningful positive cultural research must seek to reveal underlying assumptions because “the essence of a culture lies in the pattern of basic underlying assumptions, and once those are understood, one can easily understand the more surface levels and deal appropriately with them”. This requires researchers to look beyond personal interpretations of symbolic meaning (which frequently occur at more publicly visible levels) and question group members' fundamental assumptions about the interpretation and symbolic meaning of artefacts and elements within the organization. This prompted me to apply Schein's model as a lens to explore the assumptions that informed the actions of the participating principals in this study. One of these underlying assumptions of principals is that time is critical for future planning. Principals take up their management roles in the daily operation of their schools in accordance with this assumption. While many of these values are openly stated in documents such as school mission statements and learner handbooks, others are not and constitute, what Dei (1996:177) referred to as, the "deep curriculum." This includes, “not only stipulated and hidden school rules, but also regulations that influence student and staff activities, behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, exceptions, and outcomes” (Dei, 1996:177). Principals' underlying assumptions are often to prioritise support in the form of organised staff development and team building sessions which enhance a more positive approach to teaching and learning. Christie (1999:1) states that principals and teachers are expected to work together as a team to promote a positive school culture of teaching and learning. These assumptions, along with espoused values and artefacts, contribute to the very core of a school's culture.

Zhang (cited in in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:6) proposes four constructs of school culture, namely environmental culture, rule and regulation culture, etiquette culture, and spiritual culture. This is related to Schein's level three, which describes their assumptions about the organization's relationship with its environment, their understanding of work and play, and how much activity and passivity is appropriate. He concludes that the assumption of these models of school culture are needed to understand how the principal's roles can perform in the various aspects of creating a positive culture and warns that culture building cannot be rushed. It needs time, patience, space and experience.

According to Guthrie and Schuermann (cited in Bipath & Moyo, 2016:175), positive school culture serves as a framework for how principals underlying assumptions “act, interact, think, and feel,” particularly the nature of interactions; the manner in which discussions between individuals are held; the physical appearance of a school and how it is presented. Schein's theoretical concepts helps us to understand the complexities of these assumptions in the creation of a positive school culture on three levels. We can conclude that level one is the visible element in the organization and marks the surface of the culture. While level two is less visible than behaviours and artefacts, level three is where principals, staff, learners, and parents interact with one another, the appropriate ways to distribute power and responsibilities, and the appropriate ways to resolve conflicts and make decisions based on these assumptions. By purposefully structuring and separating the principal's different management roles (time, resource, financial, and curriculum management), Schein's three levels were used to make sense of and explore how principals contributed towards creating a positive school culture.

2.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed culture as an elusive and contested social abstraction and considered various definitions. I then sharpened the focus by exploring school culture as foundational to the identity and functioning of a school. The discussion was then refined to unpack what constitutes a positive school culture and finally what the role of the principal is in the process of creating a positive school culture. This is also the focus of this study. The study is situated in schools under the jurisdiction of the DBE and consequently pertinent policies were examined as part of the environment in which principals operate. The SASP was used as the primary policy context. The roles of the principal in the creation of a positive school culture was then

reflected on. A discussion and presentation of the organisational culture model of Schein as a lens and conceptual framework then followed.

This study will attempt to link positive school culture with Schein's (2004) theory in order to explore and describe the roles of principals, as well as how they describe and experience the impact of the roles in order to create a positive school culture. The chapter identified a variety of distinctive cultural features that distinguish school cultures. Schein's three levels of [school] culture model and strategies for preserving core cultural values and identity within school cultures was used to investigate four school principals'. The critical role of principals as symbolic cultural meaning-makers was investigated, and literature on the atrophy of cultural values, identity, and distinctiveness within schools was also presented. The research consulted informs and supports this study of four schools in which the principals' roles create and maintain a positive school culture at their respective schools. The research methodology for the empirical part of this study is outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and motivates the methodology used in this study. I will now reflect on the research paradigm, the method of analysis, sampling, data collection, unit of analysis, validity and reliability and finally the ethical considerations before drawing the chapter to a conclusion.

3.2. Research paradigm

Kuhn (cited in Flick, 2009: 69), defines a paradigm as: “an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables, and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools...”. The term paradigm refers to a research culture that consists of a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions shared by the research community about the nature and performance of research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:24). Olsen, Lodwick and Dunlop (1992:16) put it as follows, a paradigm thus consists of a scientific pattern, academic values or assumptions and a structure. This is a qualitative study located within an interpretive paradigm. Interpretivism is based on the belief that a deeper understanding of a phenomenon is only possible if the views and interpretations of persons experiencing it are understood (Shah & Corley, 2006:4).

Connole (1993:19) argues that understanding of humanity is only possible by strongly identifying with the other and grasping their subjective lived experiences and realities. The interpretive researcher assumes that natural reality and social reality are distinct and, as a result, requires different types of investigation methods depending on the phenomenon under investigation. Thus, five approaches to interpretive research can be distinguished: symbolic interactionism, realism, hermeneutics, naturalistic inquiry, and phenomenology (Gray, 2013:23). My research attempted to understand the phenomenon of how principals create a positive school culture.

I used an interpretive approach to probe the participants’ experiences and perceptions of their participation in their roles to create a positive school culture. This approach is advocated by

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:19), who contend that, "... interpretive research, the researcher with a frame of reference can understand individual behaviour: Individuals' interpretations of the world around them must be understood from within rather than from without." This was the challenge posed by my study. I had to understand the participants from within and thus the onsite observations. Kaplan and Maxwell (1994:4) share this view and contend that interpretive research methods are designed to enable researchers to understand human beings and their social and cultural contexts. When I investigated four different primary schools in two different areas to shed light on the issue at hand, I kept this in mind. The four different schools offered different experiences, which allowed me, as the researcher, to get a sense of each school's unique social and cultural contexts.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:372) point out that interpretive research is based on naturalistic inquiry using non-interfering data collection strategies to identify and interpret the natural flows of events and processes. I therefore observed and interpreted what was happening in the natural settings of the schools in a non-obtrusive manner. I considered that those involved (research participants) were best suited to describe their situations.

Miles and Huberman (1994:6–7) contend that the researcher's role is to gain a holistic overview of the context in which the said [schools] operate. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) concur that holistic qualitative research promotes contextual understanding of complex interrelationships between causes and consequences that influence human behaviour. My research dealt with complex relationships at schools hence the interpretative stance taken based on the nature of my study and the characteristics of interpretivism

I am aware of the criticism levelled at the interpretive approach. Walker (1985:88), for example, argues that, "Qualitative methods are subjective, unreliable, and unsystematic, lack adequate checks on their validity and are generally speaking unscientific". I utilised techniques to advance the reliability of the data that I discuss further down in this chapter. Finally, I am confident that a qualitative approach with an interpretative stance is appropriate for this research.

3.3. Method of analysis: A thematic analysis

I used thematic analysis because it, "... provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of the data' (Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. & Moules, N.J. 2017, 2017:2). The data corpus consisted of both semi-structured interviews and observations. A thematic analysis, by combining these two data sets, helped to develop the representation and illumination of "a positive school culture" as a social construction pursued in my study. I applied a hybrid process by incorporating both inductive and deductive approaches as I adopted Schein as my conceptual framework. The themes were informed by the conceptual framework which in turn guided the semi-structured interviews and observations. I engaged with the raw data inductively and with the conceptual framework deductively. In this way I attempted to create a holistic and coherent analysis of the themes.

The data organisation for the interviews consisted of re-reading the transcripts from each participant several times, becoming familiar with what they had said to get a sense of the whole and generate the recurring ideas and meanings. I began this process with some preliminary data organisation ideas from the research questions and interview guide. I began to generate descriptive codes from each set of data from each principal while reading and revisiting the transcripts. I then compared the data and grouped similar codes to avoid duplication and overlapping descriptions while remaining focused on the research questions at hand. The next step was to organise the presented codes into categories and then arrange the relevant categorized data under potential themes. This process aided me to develop the major themes for data analysis and presenting what each theme entailed and in interpreting the participants' points of view and drawing conclusions.

The shadowing observation data analysis in the studies consisted of four principals. It entailed transcribing and organising the field notes and then capturing the data in Microsoft Word alongside the data collected from the four participants from each of the four schools. I read and revisited the data alongside the data from the interviews, using the same names to generate potential themes like those presented in the interviews for additional information. Finally, the findings from both interviews and observations were organised within the major developed themes to assist me in making a comprehensive interpretation of both the participants' perspectives and the shadowing data. I then had to relate these to Schein's model of organisational culture as applied in my study.

3.4 Sampling

Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). In a phenomenological study, it is essential to select people who can best help the researcher to understand the central phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2012:206). This study made use of homogeneous sampling by purposefully sampling individuals based on the research question. Given that the main research question of this study is, “What is the role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture?”, the criteria for selecting the participants for this study were:

- Participants are principals currently managing primary schools
- Participants are from the same Educational District namely the Wine Lands Educational District area.
- Participants are willing to participate, i.e., willing to articulate their thoughts regarding their educational experiences openly and honestly.

The official list of all the primary schools in the Wine Lands District of the Western Cape was used to identify the schools from different socio-economic contexts. Four principals that met the above criteria were identified from these schools to constitute the purposive sample for the research. These are the guidelines that were followed to select principals from these schools. Finally, I used the process of purposive selection to ensure participants that could provide rich data to develop a deep understanding of the role of principals in creating a positive school culture.

3.5 Data collection methods, techniques & instruments

Babbie and Mouton (2001:563) argue that, "the value of all scientific findings depends heavily on how the data were collected and analysed". As a result, the availability of valid, reliable, and credible data is a critical aspect of the study. In this regard, data collection is regarded as an essential component of the entire research process, which can legitimize or invalidate the study's purpose and significance. The meticulous collection of data relevant to the general

research or the specific goals and issues of a study is referred to as data collection (Burns & Grove, 2011:52).

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that the first goal of qualitative research is to understand social phenomena from the perspective of participants. The perspectives of the participants: their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts, and actions, were collected through and grouped into themes linked to the research questions.

This study was reliant on rich data based on the lived experiences of the participants reflecting these perspectives and contexts, hence I used observations and semi-structured interviews to collect the data.

3.5.1 Observation

I only observed the four principals during the second phase of the study. Each principal was observed in his or her respective school for one week to gather data about the various activities in the school setting and determine how they led and managed their schools towards the development of a positive school culture. Yin (1994) argues that observation helps provide additional information about the topic to be studied. Moyles (2007) states that observation is a data collection technique that is not dependent on respondents' personal views but seeks explicit evidence through the observer's eyes. Observation leads to a description of people's perspectives, actions, events, and culture. It is a holistic approach to everyday activities and the description and construction of meanings rather than a reproduction of events. The purpose of my observation was to investigate how the four primary school principals, from high-scoring and low-scoring schools respectively, carried out their various management roles in their respective schools. Moyles (2007) posits that whatever it is we observe, and want to understand, undergoes significant interpretation and adds that the [observation] procedure is not always perceived as observational research, but clearly stands in that category. She qualifies it as a non-participatory approach that necessitates field observations close to the subject.

A non-participatory approach necessitates several conditions, not the least of which is that the subject feels entirely at ease with the researcher in constant attendance. As a result, the observation required careful planning and a significant amount of non-observed trial time. The person being observed needs to feel comfortable and able to ignore the researcher sufficiently to make the data collected valid.

I assumed the role of a non-participant observer and entered the school setting with knowledge of what I wanted to observe and why, without being part of the natural setting (Moyles, 2007). My observation primarily consisted of discovering what was going on in each of the four

schools involved, rather than what the participants told me. It entailed investigating how the schools were run, how relationships and communication were organized, and observing school life in general. It must be noted that observing the four school principals for one week does not necessarily provide a reliable basis for drawing conclusions about their behaviour. This aspect of the research provided only a snapshot of the principals practices and was followed up with semi- structured interviews with them.

3.5.2 Semi- structured interviews

The observations were followed up with semi-structured interviews. Interviews present several advantages over questionnaires. Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) point out the following; the cost of sampling respondents over a wide geographic area is lower, time limit required to collect the data typically is much less and with questionnaires you cannot probe as deeply into respondents' opinions and feelings as with interviews.

Moreover, once the questionnaire has been circulated, the items cannot be modified, although some respondents may not know them. The main advantage of the interview is its adaptability, as a qualified interviewer can follow the respondent's answer to obtain further information and clarify vague statements. Interviews can also build trust and rapport with respondents, thus making it possible to obtain information that the individual probably would not reveal in a questionnaire response.

In order to create more flexibility and the possibility to probe and seek clarification semi-structured interviews were used. There were pre-planned questions in the author's research, but these were supplemented by open-ended questions, prompts, and probes primarily for clarification rather than to extend the discussion. In this way links could be drawn to the data from the observations to deepen understanding and enrich the data.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) point out that an interview schedule with a list of questions concerning the study's objectives can be prepared, however, appropriate probes can be used to clarify. Creswell (2009) notes that non-standardized interviews can improve the consistency with which respondents interpret the meaning of interview questions and responses, thereby increasing the research's validity as there are no communication issues, and respondents perfectly match their thoughts.

I selected semi-structured interviews to learn about what was going on at the schools without imposing anything on the participants. This allowed me to learn about their perspectives in ways that other data collection instruments like questionnaires cannot. Findings are reported in

the participants' own words to the greatest extent possible. These semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with the four primary school principals to gather information from each participant and lasted approximately 30 minutes each.

Furthermore, I tried to manage bias from either himself or the participants by avoiding anything that could influence the participant's response. These interviews were open-ended and assumed a conversational tone. The four principals were observed using a method closer to the structured end of the semi-structured continuum, which allowed me to produce comparable results. Open-ended research study interviews are typically conducted in which the researcher asks key respondents for facts and their opinions about events. According to Ribbins (2007), the primary goal of qualitative interviews is to provide a framework within which respondents can express their opinions in their own words. This means the production of a semi-structured interview schedule is determined mainly in terms of sequence and wording.

In contrast to interviews, I probed more deeply with the research studies and linked the participants' opinions to observations.

3.6 Unit of analysis

The basic unit of analysis was the lived experiences of the 4 participant-principals situated at two high-scoring schools and two low-scoring schools. The purpose of the study was to develop an in-depth understanding of how these principals developed and contributed towards a positive school culture at their schools. The unit of analysis was not representative of a large group and consequently the findings cannot be used for broad generalisations. Therefore, all four participants were observed and interviewed for the study.

In this study I aimed to contribute to a better understanding of the role of principals in creating a positive culture at their schools and how it assists the schools to function more efficiently. My study thus explored the narratives of the participant-principals for analysis and description. A detailed description of each participant is contained in the following chapter of this dissertation.

3.7 Quality criteria of the research

3.7.1 Trustworthiness

According to Boudah (2011), trustworthiness is how the researcher persuades the audience that the findings described are credible and provides appropriate and fully developed findings and conclusions. The key to trustworthiness is the degree of neutrality of the findings or decisions taken, hence its credibility. This notion of credibility greatly contributes towards establishing the study's truth-value. According to Gay *et al.* (2009), the concept of credibility ensures the ability to account for all the complexities that emerge in the study and to deal with patterns that are not easily explained. Boudah (2011) holds that the credibility of qualitative research is dependent on the credibility of the researcher as well as the credibility of the methods and findings. In this study I operationalised trustworthiness by pursuing the compatibility between the constructed realities which exist in the minds of my respondents and those attributed to them by following 'procedures' suggested to achieve credibility as discussed below.

Credibility of the research

Credibility speaks to the degree of compatibility between the respondent realities and the interpretations made by the researcher. This is also influenced by the relationship set up between researcher and respondents. I entered the research site respectfully, made participants feel at ease, meticulously collected and analysed data, and presented the findings and recommendations (Patton, 2002). I also considered all personal and professional information that could have influenced data collection, analysis, and interpretation, either positively or negatively. I also considered the various realities and subjective experiences of the research participants. The following section discusses the credibility of the methods and findings.

Credibility of methods and findings

Once the researcher's credibility has been established, the credibility of the methods used must be addressed. The study's research methods must be appropriate to the research question (Lincoln & Cuba 1985). The following four aspects, as mentioned by Boudah (2011), were considered in order for the research methods to fit the research question.

a. Truth value

The first source of concern about the credibility of methods and findings is the issue of truth-value. "How does a researcher establish that the description given is one of truth?" one might ask (Marshall & Rossman 1995:95). As a researcher, I made certain that multiple perspectives were used over time to answer this question. Multiple perspectives are the result of a prolonged engagement, in which I stayed in the context of the study for an extended period as a researcher. The measure is persistent observation, so I allocated ample time for the observations which were conducted on a regular basis. The final step is peer debriefing, which I used as a researcher to go over data with participants to fill in the gaps that had been identified.

b. Applicability

Applicability is another way to boost the credibility of methods and findings. Researchers in qualitative research do not generally conduct research for the purpose of broad generalization. As a result, in this study, I included a detailed description of every aspect of the study in order to better comprehend the data in context.

c. Consistency

According to Boudah (2011), consistency improves the credibility of methods and findings. I verified my data, as noted earlier, as well as my analysis of the data. I therefore presented a detailed description of the data collection and analysis to create consistency in my study.

d. Conformability

Conformability occurs when the researcher has identified an acceptable method of conducting the investigation so that the results are consistent. I observed neutrality and objectivity during collecting data for this study to obtain conformability (Punch 2009).

3.8 Ethical considerations

It is important to conduct research ethically. The researcher must abide by the rules and guidelines as prescribed by all participating institutions and ethical conventions as outlined in the research community. Yin (2014) that in the case of human subjects and gather and present. I thus observed the following ethical principles and practices:

I did not begin data collection until ethical clearance approval both from the university and the WCED who employed the principals. I contacted the participant -principals telephonically to explain my study and obtain initial permission to participate in the research study. The principals then completed letters of consent giving informed consent to participate in the research (see addendum 3). The four principals participated in the study on a voluntary basis.

I briefed the participants about the purpose of my research and guaranteed their anonymity and the confidential management of the data. For this reason, I used pseudonyms for each school and for each participant in the study. Transcripts were thus code-named, and I used a secure space to store physical data such as recordings and notes. I used a password-protected personal computer to store digital information, like transcripts and access to this data was limited to me. Participants were aware that the risk of this study was minimal, and I informed them that they could withdraw from this study without any recourse at any time. Building trust with participants through these procedures was of the utmost importance for obtaining accurate and rich data. Finally, the undertaking was given that the data would be used for research purposes only.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I described the research paradigm and approach I followed. I then explained the sampling utilised, how the data was collected and analysed. I presented the unit of analysis, reflected on the issues of validity and reliability as pertaining to my study and concluded with the ethical considerations. The next logical step is the presentation of the data that is the focus of chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data from the participants' responses. The chapter starts by offering brief descriptions of the contexts of the four schools, which are called A, B, C, and D (pseudonyms). The data collected from the four participants, through interviews and observations, are then arranged thematically. The data collected were not intended to present a complete picture of the entire experiences, personality traits, and educational philosophies of the principals interviewed. However, it suggested salient attributes that arose during the interview processes which focused on the culture in the schools.

4.2 Descriptions of the school contexts

This section will present brief descriptions of the four schools.

School A

School A was established on 31 October 1969 and is situated in the Wine Lands District of the Western Cape Education Department (from here on WCED). The first principal occupied this position for thirty years until 1995. The current principal, Jason (pseudonym), took over in 1997. During Jason's time of leadership, he affected many infrastructural changes to the school, like an activity room, music centre, swimming pool, two computer centres, and fourteen new classrooms. The school is an article 21 school and has a learner total of 799. The language of instruction is Afrikaans. During the years, school A established a good partnership with local businesses that supported it financially as well with the necessary resources. According to the "schoolroom type survey" in 2019, it has 36 classrooms, a computer lab, a library, and six specialist rooms. It is a fee-paying institution, has winter and summer sports and vast sports fields. The principal's experience and partnership seemed to have impacted the school's culture in a manner that mainly enhances communication and organisational values.

To summarise, school A is an established institution, situated close to town. The school's infrastructure seemed to have been well-maintained over the years. School A is integrated with

local businesses to secure financial assistance. School A offers various extramural activities that seemed to contribute to a positive school culture. In the next section, I will present a brief profile of School B.

School B

School B was founded on 31 October 1986 and is situated in the Wine Lands District of the WCED. Under the leadership of Principal Eric (pseudonym) the school has received the award as a school with very high academic standards from the WCED. Since his appointment in 2017 the school received an award from the Minister of Education for Excellent Mathematics Teaching. In 2018, they received an outstanding prestige award for Language and Mathematics and won an academic performance award.

Their systemic results indicate year after year that they are striving for excellence. Their ex-scholars regularly make the WCED's merit lists and a number of the matriculants qualify for tertiary education on a regular basis. According to the schoolroom type's survey (WCEDEMIS) in 2019, the school has thirty-four classrooms, a science lab, a computer lab, a library, and two specialist rooms. School B is a fee-paying school and has a total of seven hundred and forty-eight learners. They play winter and summer sports, have extensive sports fields and the medium of teaching is Afrikaans. They offer numerous other extramural activities that seem to contribute to a positive school culture.

School C

School C was founded in 1943 and is situated in the Wine Lands District of the WCED. They began with twelve learners. Soon children from the farming community to the north of Stellenbosch also joined the school. School C serves a vibrant and dynamic cultural society. Historically the school was built as a former ex-Model C format of schooling. The vision of School C communicated to me is to develop the children holistically so that they could become productive members of an ever-changing and dynamic global community. School C is not affluent, nor does it serve a prosperous society. According to the schoolroom type's survey in 2019, School C has twenty-seven classrooms, a computer lab, and a library. School C is classified as an Article 21 school with school fees payable by parents. School C has winter and summer sports and extensive sports fields, and the medium of teaching is English and

Afrikaans. School C has a total of six hundred and thirty learners. The school prides itself on its multiculturalism and the claim that it has become the community's beacon of learning. The school is not, however, situated in an affluent area, but the infrastructure of the school seems to be in good shape. They offer numerous extramural activities that appear to contribute to a positive culture for the school.

School D

School D comes across as a dynamic school and houses about 250 learners from Gr. R to 7. It is situated in the Wine Lands District of the WCED. The school is church-based and more than 50 years old with a very distinctive Catholic history. The School was also one of the first schools to open their doors to learners of all races. The vision of the school, as shared with me, is to develop the children holistically so that they could become productive members of a changing dynamic global world. It is a school with Christian principles where learners still receive Religious Education. The school is an Article 21 school, but also a no fee-paying school — the medium of teaching is Afrikaans. According to the schoolroom type's survey in 2019, the school has nine classrooms and one computer lab. The school also has a kitchenette for storing National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) food.

The four primary schools are situated in the Wine Lands District of the WCED. They are all section 21 schools according to par.110.B-53, of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (hereinafter referred to as SASA). This indicates that, aside from handling their budgets, additional tasks have been delegated to these schools, based on their demonstrated capabilities. Notable differences between the schools varied from school fees, the availability of sports fields, the total number of classrooms, and facilities like libraries. School D is the oldest of the four research schools. The next section presents short profiles of the four principals.

4.3 Biographical information of principals

During my observation, Jason's qualifications were on display in his office. From these qualifications I observed that he got appointed in 1997 at School A. He completed his teaching diploma at Paarl College, and his Bachelor of Arts (hereinafter BA degree) at Stellenbosch University. His first teaching post was at W.A. Joubert in Paarl, and then as Head of

Department (hereinafter HOD) for one and a half years at De Le Bat, a school for the deaf in Worcester. When asked about his experience in the teaching profession, Jason remarked that he served the department in various capacities in education and at different post levels for thirty years, of which he spent twenty years as a principal. Jason's administrative experience is informed by exposure as a curriculum head, chairman of the leadership team, key member of the governing body, appointment of new teachers, managing in-service teachers, budget management, and setup of the school timetable. In extramural activities, he developed coaching skills, coached four school teams and provincial teams that included rugby and athletics.

Eric completed his matric certificate at the Outeniqua High school in George in 1975. He began his teacher training studies at the former Onderwyskollege Oudtshoorn in 1977 and obtained his teaching Diploma in 1980. He furthered his studies and obtained bachelor's and master's degrees in education and a doctorate in education. In terms of experience, he stated that his first appointment was in 1981 at Aberdeen primary school (Eastern Cape) where he taught for only one year. In 1982 he was appointed at Molteno high school (Eastern Cape) and taught in the lower and senior school divisions of the School. In April 1992, he was appointed as HOD at Bellville elementary school. In April 1997, he became deputy principal at Eversdal Primary School in Bellville. He became the principal of School B in January 2002. The previous principal exposed him to a variety of facets of administration, management, and leadership.

Karin holds a four-year higher diploma in education and completed her B. Tech in School Management through Technicon RSA. She also completed a school management leadership course through the University of KwaZulu Natal. Her experience spans thirty-four years of which fifteen was as principal. She grew up in a family that made teaching part of their lives. During the year 1960, her grandfather was a Deputy Director in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education. Her grandmother was a music teacher and her uncle a mathematics teacher. Her vision as a child was to follow in her dad's footsteps, because he was also a teacher. Her teaching career began in the year 1984. In 2000 she was promoted to Head of Department. She became principal in April 2003 and skipped the position of deputy principal in doing so. Her experience spans the positions of teacher, HOD, and school principal.

Marian attended Athlone College after grade 10, and in 1976 she finished her two-year teaching diploma. Marian then decided to leave the teaching profession to work in a bank. She finished her matric in 1987 and completed a four-year teaching course in physical education at

Zonnebloem College. Marian continued her studies and completed bachelor's, honours and master's degrees in educational leadership and management. Marian has 35 years' experience, eight of which she served as a principal. In addition, after 1997, she served on the Governing Body as a treasurer. It prepared her to manage the finances of the school. Her varied experience of different positions allowed her to acquire skills to become a principal. Marian's experience further gave rise to value-driven, positive relationships with teachers, pupils and parents. It seemed that she allowed reinforcement of curriculum review, new curriculum creation, teacher mentoring and induction programmes, transparency, e-learning, school maintenance, initiatives, communication, ideas and change-implementation.

The next section presents a discussion on how these principals perform their duties and responsibilities with specific reference to time, resource and financial management.

4.4 How the principals perform their responsibilities

The core purpose of a principal's role, the key areas of such a role, the values which underpin it, and the personal and professional qualities required to fulfil the role frame this discussion. The key areas referred to in the (DBE, 2015:10), are in line with the core purpose and responsibilities of the principal as set out in Sections 16 and 16A of the South African Schools Act (DBE, 2015:10) as explained in Chapter 2. I focused on four roles the principal needs to fulfil to create a positive school culture. They are as follows: time management, resource management, financial management and curriculum management.

4.4.1 Time management

I observed that Jason arrived at school very early every day. Optimising time provided opportunities to attend to administrative duties in order to focus more on the human aspects of education during a school day. Jason used extra time like weekends and holidays to do this.

In his words:

"My beste tyd is vroeg in die oggend voordat die skool begin, om die meeste van my administrasie te voltooi. Dit gee my genoeg tyd om te fokus op die belangrikste prioriteite wat my onmiddellike aandag benodig. Hierdie benadering stel my in staat om onmiddellik aandag te kan gee aan probleme wat mag opduik. Ek is gevolglik meer

toeganklik vir my opvoeders wat uiteindelik bydrae tot 'n samewerkende en positiewe klimaat in die skool".

("My best time is early in the morning before school starts to complete most of my administration. It gives me enough time to focus on the top priorities that need my immediate attention. This approach allows me to get immediate attention. Therefore, I can be more accessible to my educators who ultimately contribute to a collaborative and positive climate in the school".)

Creating consistent rhythms of work was important for Jason as this potentially created synergy in the school. Knowing what to do, when to do it and how to do it, potentially lowered anxiety levels among his staff. Jason created consistent rhythms of work by:

"Konsekwenheid van aktiwiteite, skep 'n positiewe atmosfeer in die skool in die sin dat almal weet wat van hulle verwag word in terme van akademie, sport, kultuur en administrasie". As prinsipaal sorg ek dat daar so min as moontlik onderbrekings in die skool se kern-aktiwiteite plaasvind".

("Consistency of activities creates a positive atmosphere in the school because everyone knows what is expected of them in terms of academia, sport, culture, and administration." As principal, I make sure that there are as few interruptions as possible in the school's core activities".)

Carving out time for empowering staff, Jason argued, had the potential of developing a sense of ownership which could result in people sharing the responsibility of running the school. When staff felt empowered, the principal's work was merely to facilitate empowering opportunities. Jason empowered his staff by delegating short- and long- term plans and tasks to educators because:

"Ek reël 'n maandelikse distrikswerkwinkel om personeel in die verskillende begrotingskomitees op te lei en doen 'n beroep op die finansiële kundigheid van die organisasie om die personeel te wys hoe om invordering en effektiewe strategieë te finansier. Dit bespaar tyd omdat personeel in hul verskillende komitees saamwerk. Die dissipline van skole het byvoorbeeld verbeter toe personeel eienaarskap oorgeneem het. SBS en personeel werk nou saam om aan die kurrikulumdoelstellings te voldoen. Dit toon aan dat roetine-ontwikkeling van werknemers personeel aanmoedig om te help met tydsbestuur en sodoende 'n ondersteunende atmosfeer opbou deur vroeë beplanning".

("I arrange a monthly district workshop to educate staff in the different budgetary committees and appeal to the organisation's financial expertise to show the staff how to finance collecting and effective strategies. This saves time as staff works together in their different committees. For example, the discipline of schools improved when staff took ownership. SMT and staff work closely to meet the curriculum objectives. It demonstrates that routine employee development encourages staff to assist in time management, building a supportive atmosphere by early planning".)

In addition to the core functions of a principal and those practices mentioned by Jason, he also made time in his busy schedule to maintain and strengthen relationships between the school, corporates and old boys'-clubs to support his school operations.

In this regard, he mentioned the following:

"As skoolhoof bestee ek tyd aan die ontwikkeling en handhawing van gesonde bande en verhoudings met buite skole, insluitend besighede en verskaffers. Ou studente van die afgelope tydperk het gereeld funksies om geld in te samel vir 'n skoolprojek, soos 'n skoolpiekniek, wat help om 'n gemeenskap in ons skool te skep. Fondsinsamelings vir pieknieke lewer die geld wat hulle nodig het om buitentyd te ondersteun. 'n Deel van die fondsinsamelingsprojekte sluit in aansporings vir onderwysers om onderwysers ekstra te motiveer om buitemuurse aktiwiteite te ondersteun. Volgens ons begroting dek alle skenkings alle uitgawes om ons sportvelde, tuine, klaskamers en skoolsale van alle skenkings te verbeter, en bestee baie tyd aan die ontwerp van sakeplanne om borge van verskillende ondernemings in my skool dorp te kry. Hierdie sakeplanne is op plaaslike ondernemings gerig om ons kurrikulumbronne te verbeter. Ek werk saam met SBL om besluite effektief te neem en om prioriteite, doelstellings en wetsnakoming te bereik. Sommige van ons oudstudente is prokureurs wat die skool bystaan in alle regsake. Om noue bande met praktiese en gevestigde ondernemings te bevorder deur bemerking te bevorder, doen ek 'n beroep op onderwysers om raamwerke vir ondersteuningsgroepe en subkomiteestrukture te ontwikkel. Om alle verhoudings gesond te hou, reël ons as skool 'n jaarlikse funksie om alle borge te bedank en ons waardering te betoon".

("As a principal, I spend time developing and maintaining healthy ties and relationships with outside schools, including businesses and providers. Old students from the past period regularly have functions to raise money for a school project, such as a school picnic, which helps create a community in our school. Picnic fundraisers produce the money they need to support outdoor time. Part of the fundraiser projects includes incentives for teachers to motivate teachers to extra mile to support extramural activities. As per our budget, all donations cover all expenses to improve our sports fields, gardens, classrooms, and school hall from all donations and spend much time designing business plans to get sponsors from various businesses in my school town. These business plans are aimed at local businesses to enhance our curriculum resources. I work with SGB to make decisions effectively and to achieve priorities, objectives, and legal compliance. Some of our former students are lawyers who assist the school in all legal matters. To foster close ties with practical and established businesses by promoting marketing, I urge teachers to develop frameworks for support groups and sub-committee structures. In order to keep all relationships healthy, we, as a school, organise an annual function to thank all sponsors and show our appreciation".)

In addition to building and maintaining relationships with businesses, and old-boys' clubs, Eric also invested in upgrading the infra-structure like introducing finger-scanners and the D6 school communicator software:

"Die gebruik van die vingerskandeerder om gedurende die dag aan te meld en af te teken, is 'n prioriteit vir enige opvoeder. Dit vertel my dat ek nou dae, weke, maande en jare by my personeel bywoon. Ek kan maklik die neiging van afwesigheid van ander opvoeders. Gegevens oor bywoning is maklik aanlyn en op my slimfoon beskikbaar, en dit gee my kosbare tyd om vinnig my dagbywoning te bepaal. Dit help my om alle druk in die afwesigheid van werknemers te verlig. Dit bevorder 'n positiewe skoolomgewing".

("The use of the finger scanner for sign up and sign off during the day is a priority for any educator. It tells me my attendance at my staff right now for days, weeks, months and years. I can easily observe the trend of absenteeism of other educators. Attendance data is readily accessible online and on my smartphone. This allows me precious time to quickly assess my daytime attendance. This helps me to alleviate all pressure in the absence of employees. This promotes a positive school environment".)

And

"Ek soek gedurig na innoverende maniere om die administratiewe stelsels van die skool aan te pas. Ons het byvoorbeeld nou onlangs weer 'n programme sagteware, "D6 skool kommunikeerder" installeer het, wat tot gevolg gehad het dat ons beter met ons ouers kan kommunikeer. Dit bevorder die gevoel onder mense dat die skool goed bestuur word en gevolglik is daar meer vertroue in my, 'n verhoogde sin van behoort aan onder die skoolgemeenskap en gevolglik 'n positiewe klimaat".

("I am constantly looking for innovative ways to adapt the administrative systems of the school. For example, we recently installed a software programme, "D6 school communicator", which has resulted in us being able to communicate better with our parents. It promotes the feeling among people that the school is well run and as a result there is more trust in me, an increased sense of belonging among the school community and consequently a positive climate".)

Eric seemed to support and enhance his educators' daily educational activities by focussing a lot of energy on maintaining and strengthening relationships between the school and external funders. This potentially contributed to a better school climate in his school.

Apart from adhering to the required policy expectations for school principals, transparent and effective communication for Karin positively supported educators' work within confined timeframes. One of Karin's central priorities was to find ways of utilising time in a day more effectively.

"We use an internal communication app (WhatsApp) that allows teachers to exchange information immediately. In the morning, the SMT informs teachers of the immediate priorities to be completed for the day, and this form of instant messages is more useful than long meetings. This allows teachers to help everyone who needs assistance during the day. It also works for our SMT, which can easily make video calls to the SGB and quickly make a collective decision. We also use the intercom system to send important

messages to students early in the morning or before the end of the school day. This form of communication saves time in our planning and improves the objectives of my school's annual curriculum and establishes a healthy school relationship”.

Marian persuaded her senior management team to put in extra time by focussing on their duties per post level. Senior members, she argued, “... have extra responsibilities for which they get paid”. She used her persuasive skills to remind her SMT members of the higher expectation on educators per rank. She has daily meetings at 7h45 with her SMT to quickly reflect and focus on priority management tasks.

“Usually, I plan my SMT meetings in the morning. We have it as an early breakfast while strategising for the weeks ahead. This is a way to protect contact time and limit unnecessary meetings in between periods or intervals”.

She also led by example - showing staff that she makes time in her busy schedule for not only managing, but actively practicing the ideals of the school. She remarked:

“Staff and parents need to see that I can take time to coach one of the netball teams in school. It demonstrates that I manage my time well and motivates teachers and parents to participate in every activity if our school requires immediate support. I know it has a positive impact on the environment of the school”.

In this section, I have discussed the time management practices that the participants utilised, the different modalities they used in their time management activities. From the data it appears as if, apart from adhering to the policy requirements about time management in schools, the participants applied nuanced ways of working within time constraints to enhance the workings of the school.

4.4.2 Resource management

As per the SASP (DBE, 2015:16), the principal is responsible for ensuring that the school and its staff, assets, and all other resources are organised and managed to provide for a productive, efficient, safe and nurturing environment. These management functions require the principal to build and strengthen the capacity of those working in the school. Furthermore, the principal must ensure that all available assets and resources are equitably deployed to maximise active teaching and learning. The participants utilised various forms of technology to support their staff's curricular activities. Encouraging their colleagues to maximise the use of the available

technological resources at the school, appeared to have a positive effect on their daily educational activities.

For Jason, Eric, Karin and Marian, the use of technology aided their management activities, which potentially enhanced a positive school culture in their schools. Jason used Google Calendar to enable his staff to share their calendars to better coordinate their activities. In his words:

“Ek gebruik Google Apps-kalender sodat personeel en onderwysers die inligting oor die kalender en inligting self pos op die kalender kan sien. Alle skoolaktiwiteite vir my personeel en ouers is onmiddellik beskikbaar. Gesinne sal dit dalk net sien, maar die personeel self mag gemagtigde skoolaktiwiteite byvoeg. Hierdie tegnologie bied aanspreeklikheid wat mense in staat stel om 'n aangename atmosfeer te geniet”.

(“I use Google Apps calendar so staff and teachers can view the calendar and post calendar information too. All school activities for my staff and parents are immediately available. Families may only see, but the staff themselves may add authorised school activities. This technology provides accountability that enables people to enjoy a pleasant atmosphere”.)

Utilising technology like Google Classroom, in Jason’s view, helped him and his staff to better coordinate their educational activities and in so doing, minimising the time on meetings and consultations.

Eric’s promotion of the use of interactive whiteboards by all staff members seem to have brought about a positive change in curriculum delivery. He remarked:

“Ek dink altyd dat onderwysers met die hele klas speel, om 'n omgewing van betekenisvolle leer te skep. Met die instrument kan studente vinnig insette lewer, waardeur studente en onderwysers die vordering van studente vinnig kan assessee. Ek sien wonderlike praktyke in die klaskamer, en gebruik die wit bord as 'n hulpbron.”
(“Educators use white interactive boards to allow children to engage with the learning content. You may also teach each other and become part of the lecture. I always think that teachers play with the entire class creating an environment of meaningful learning. The tool allows students to quickly provide input, enabling students and teachers to assess student progress quickly. I see wonderful practices in the classroom, using the white board as a resource”.)

Karin’s move to electronic information sharing as opposed to the traditional paper printing and dissemination also seemed to have improved accessibility to information which, in turn, facilitated a shift in her staff’s attitudes. In her words:

“The staff enjoys visual effects and can easily relate to the images I am projecting. For example, I showed them a picture of how dirty school premises look after an interval. Immediately rally teachers to improve the school premises without telling them again. Using a projector is a powerful resource for managing and creating a positive school culture”.

Karin combined technology with traditional research sources to enhance learning at her school. She commented:

“We have a data projector ceiling mounted in our staff room. It is easy to connect to my laptop and start presenting it. I can project my graphics, images, and even play a short ice breaker video. Even after my meeting, the presentation is quick and visible. The staff enjoys visual effects and can easily relate to the images I am projecting. For example, I showed them a picture of how dirty school premises look after an interval. Immediately rally teachers to improve the school premises without telling them again”.

Furthermore:

“Each student and staff member receives assistance from the school library. This allows students to identify and use the necessary knowledge and excel in their lives and work today and in the future. I can see that students are delighted to visit the library. We also offer students to buy our old books using tuckshop money, which motivates them to be proud of a book. It builds a positive culture in the school library”.

Like the other participants, Marian also emphasised the maximisation of technology to enhance teaching and learning. Because not everyone in her school has access to a personal computer, she encouraged her staff to optimise the use of the school’s computer lab for teaching and learning. Although it was not always easy to persuade all of her staff members to buy into the use of technology, those who did, saw an increase in the teaching and learning engagement in their classrooms. Utilising the technology gave staff members a new sense of job satisfaction which enhanced positivity:

“We have a time table for every teacher to visit the computer laboratory. Learners have the opportunity to research information in school and after school. Staff and students know that it is necessary to enhance students' capacity for science and technology research and innovation in a computer laboratory. Students enjoy spending free time studying programming, automation, and improving necessary computer skills. This promotes a positive atmosphere in education”.

In this section I discussed the participants’ management of resources and how this potentially enhanced a positive school culture. Although they had different approaches and placed

emphasis on different technological applications, all the participants emphasised the optimal use of technology to enhance teaching and learning activities. Encouraging their staff to use technology, but also making sure that the necessary infrastructure was in place for this, seemed to have a positive effect in all four schools. In the next section, I will discuss the role of school finance management on the culture of the school.

4.4.3 Financial management

According to Ntseto (cited in Matshika, 2014), financial organisation includes the development of the school building, delegating and coordinating the actions of the school budget. Section 15 of the SASA regards schools as a “juristic person”, meaning that they are viewed as a legal entity. Public schools, as financial organisations, are required to adopt standardised processes when it comes to management of school funds. All the powers are vested in the hands of the principal, school financial committee and the SGB (Matshika, 2014). Depending on the type of school, principals are required to co-manage their schools’ finances together with their respective school governing bodies. During my observations, I saw that all four schools’ infrastructures, grounds and facilities were well maintained. Different principals used different kinds of financial management strategies. Jason for example, placed great emphasis on the maintenance of the school grounds. He explained why:

“Ek dink onderwysers en leerlinge verdien om elke dag in 'n pragtige skool te wees. Ek sorg dat die omgewing bevorderlik is vir leer en speel. Daarom verseker ek dat al ons pogings om skoolgeriewe te verbeter, soos die pragtige skooltuine, veilige plekkies vir studente om te sit en geniet by 'n tafel en onder die skadubome, deur skoolfondse befonds word. In die oë van die publiek en die breër skoolgemeenskap, projekteer dit 'n positiewe beeld van die skool. Dit adverteer die skool vir nuwe leerders”.

(“I think teachers and students deserve to be in a beautiful school every day. I make sure the environment is conducive to learning and playing. Therefore, I ensure that all our efforts to improve school facilities such as the beautiful school gardens, safe places for students to sit and enjoy a break at tables and under the shade trees, are funded by school funds. In the eyes of the public and school community at large, it projects a positive image of the school. This advertises the school for more learners”.)

Emphasising the importance of the school’s outward appearance and actively advocating for money to be budgeted for this, helps Jason in his efforts to maintain a positive school image not only for the broader public, but more importantly, for his staff and learners who feel proud of their school:

“The aesthetic value of environment at school is directly included in our budget. As a result, it creates a positive atmosphere at school. That is why with the help of my SMT and staff we ensure that the premises looks presentable to visitors, students and parents. Students enjoy the various seating and safe playing areas around the school. Teachers are always available to ensure that our premises are being looking after during break and school functions. Our groundsman are well trained to maintain the school’s buildings, sports grounds and gardens”.

Because of Eric’s innovativeness, he and his SGB can use smartphones to access the school’s finances immediately and execute financial functions that would otherwise have to be done through time- wasting meetings. He has answers readily available to his staff and can better advise on decisions entailing money.

"Oral in 'n gesprek of vergadering is dit nodig dat ek toegang tot finansiële data van my skool kry. Ek het toegang tot my slimfoon tot my skoolfinansies. My personeel waardeer dat ek hulle vinnig kan laat weet van ons skool se finansiële situasie en hoe ons die begroting bestuur. Dit beïnvloed die finansiële begrip van my personeel oor die hantering van ons skoolfinansies. Dit het dalk 'n positiewe invloed op die vertroue in die finansiële sake van ons skole”.

("Everywhere in a conversation or meeting, it is necessary for me to access financial data from our schools. I have access to my smartphone to my school finances. My staff appreciates it that I can quickly let them know about our school's financial situation and how we manage our budget. This affects my staff's financial understanding on how our school finances are handled. This may have a positive impact on confidence in the financial affairs of our schools”.)

Eric senses that his staying abreast of the state of his school finances, potentially instils more confidence in him as this is appreciated by his staff. This appreciation, he believes, evokes positivity among staff.

The data indicates that Karin asked her SMT to carry out regular educational audits and plan the school budget daily. It also appeared that she had instructed her SMT and staff to request new instructional materials, such as new textbooks, stationery, etc.:

“We have a central online system for logging all SMT and new year educational material requests from staff. The staff feel they are involved in the budget preparation of schools. I make sure that the school’s finances cater for the needs of educators and students. Parents are mostly involved with certain financial projects that save time and energy. This also strengthened their trust in our school management, which evolves further into positive school culture”.

Marian's school being an article 21-school, posed different kinds of challenges, but working closely with parents, SGB and her SMT, Marian could navigate most obstacles and still create a sense of positivity contributing towards a positive school culture. She recalls a particular challenge:

"In winter, our school needed a hall for us to have assemblies. Working closely with my parents and SMT, we have decided on joining two classrooms together. It was the best decision we have made because the teachers use the hall multiple times for curriculum and co-curricular activities. Collaboration with other stakeholders, rather than doing your own financial planning, seemed to work better".

With the foundation phase staff's and SMT's help, Marian successfully erected a new playground where learners could play safely. Both staff and learners appreciated the new addition which boosted positivity in the school.

"In collaboration with staff and SMT, we erect a new playground for our Foundation phase learners. The safe playground is fully equipped with the necessary equipment that integrates with the daily curriculum. It creates a warm, positive and safe environment for learners and teachers".

Both Karin's and Marian's financial strategies were to get their parents involved as much as possible. With the parents at the helm and them merely checking that projects remained within the ambit of policy prescriptions, and an increased sense of ownership among parents translating into a positive school culture in their schools. When more parents were involved with fund raising, teachers could focus more on their primary functions. With more time to focus their energies on their primary functions, positivity is enhanced among teachers and eventually their learners in their schools advancing a positive culture.

In this section, I discussed the principles' various financial management activities to create positive school culture in their schools. While the male participants seemed to opt for innovative strategies that focussed on more efficient management of finances, the female participants seemed to be focussing more on relationship-building and collaboration. While three of the four schools were article 20 schools, Marian (being principal at a section 21-school) had different sets of challenges and strategies. Irrespective of their differences, the principles' approaches to finance management in lieu of their goals of creating a positive school culture, all seemed to have had positive effects on their school communities.

4.4.4 Curriculum Management

The South African Department of Basic Education's Action Plan (2019:1) requires of school principals to ensure that teaching in the school takes place as expected and determined by the national curriculum. The principal is expected to have insight into, "... his or her role as a leader whose responsibility to promote harmony, creativity and a sound work ethic, within the community and beyond" in order to manage the school effectively DBE (2019:1). The challenge for principals is to adhere to regulatory requirements whilst creating a school environment conducive for learners' achievement and teacher satisfaction (Rigby, 2014).

To enhance a conducive teaching and learning environment, Jason stays informed about curriculum developments and makes sure that his staff is equally informed. He attends workshops for different phases in his school, as often as he can, to get first-hand information.

"Kyk, hoekom is u hier, wat die kurrikulum bestuur, is dit nie iets wat u vir iemand kan rig nie, want dit is u taak en om dit te kan doen, moet u kundig wees. Hy moet byvoorbeeld weet wat in die grondslagfase aangaan, alhoewel hy senior onderwysers het". ("Look, why are you here, steering the curriculum, is not something you can direct for someone, because it is your job and to be able to do it, you need to be knowledgeable. For example, he needs to know what is going on in the foundation phase even though he has senior teachers".)

Staying abreast with curriculum changes and regulatory requirements keeps Jason informed and enables him to guide his staff better. Understanding the regulatory demands, guides him in his decisions about support measures for his staff. He believes that by supporting his staff with resources and information, he creates a more positive atmosphere.

Eric emphasises researched methods in his curriculum management. He said:

"Ek doen deeglike kurrikulumnavoring, versamel en ontleed studentedata en bepaal hoe om nuwe metodes te gebruik wat die beste by my studente en skoolpersoneel pas. Voordat ek voortgaan om hul gemaklikheid te evalueer, sal ek tyd met elke werknemer neem". ("I conduct thorough curriculum research, gather and analyse student data and determine how to use new methods that best fit my students and school staff. Before I proceed to evaluate their level of comfort, I shall take time with each employee".)

Eric, encouraging his staff to always be prepared and use researched and informed curriculum strategies, enhanced achievement among both teachers and learners which, ultimately, produced better results. This, in turn, developed a sense of pride among his staff and learners. Karin focussed on key priorities to support learner outcomes.

“I promote several components such as, goals, attitudes, time, student and teacher during curriculum planning. Furthermore, I analyse various needs, teaching activities, materials, learning qualifications, language skills, vocabulary, grammar and evaluation. I delegate a portion of my curriculum to SMT and highly experienced and long-standing teachers at school”.

By narrowing down key goals, Karin seemed to focus her staff’s attention on the critical aspects needed for teaching and learning. Karin enhanced collaboration by analysing with her staff the key problematic areas in learners’ learning and by delegating curriculum responsibilities to SMT-members. She also felt more positivity in the area of curriculum management through implementing collective responsibility, the sharing of ideas and strategies coupled with focussed and collective planning.

Marian prioritised support in the form of “organis[ed] staff capacitation and team building sessions” to enhance a more positive approach to teaching and learning. She made sure that this form of support kept respectful and collegial relationships between herself and her SMT which, in turn, “rubbed off on [her] staff”. Marian did regular class visits, “not to check on compliance, but to offer first-hand support to my staff”. She further remarked:

“I think that the knowledge among my staff that I am accessible and available to each of them, that I am there to support, compliment, help and guidance, boosted their confidence, not just in terms of curriculum tasks, but also personally”.

In this section I discussed the principles’ curriculum management practices in relation to the creation of a positive school culture. In varied ways, the participants showed how their approaches potentially enhanced curriculum activities in their respective schools which influenced the culture at their schools positively.

The four schools differed in terms of context, infrastructure, resources, budgets, learner population and capacity levels. Although each principal had a different style and strategy in terms of the four areas of management discussed, they contributed to the enhancement of

positivity in their schools' day-to-day operation and, ultimately, towards a positive school culture. Each principle however, also faced challenges which will be presented in the next section.

4.5 Challenges faced by principals

During my observations I often noticed the secretary reminding Jason of scheduled meetings. It became clear to me that the administrative demand on principals were immense. Jason indicated that he had to act on the many demands, and as a leader, he needed to assume multiple roles. He stated the following:

“Te veel inisiatiewe het tegelyk begin. Ons het voortdurende verbetering op skool, 'n nuwe leerkurrikulum vir taalkuns, nuwe administratiewe sagteware, nuwe programme op die bouvlak, ens. Al te veel dinge om te doen en goed te doen. Ek voel versplinter en nie so effektief as wat ek kon wees as ek op 'n paar inisiatiewe kon fokus nie. Ek het gereken dat ons ses nuwe inisiatiewe het wat tans hierdie jaar alleen is, bo en behalwe die vele nuwe inisiatiewe wat verlede jaar begin is”.

(“Too many initiatives started at one time. We have continuous school improvement, a new language arts curriculum, new administrative software, addition of new programmes at the building level, etc. There are way too many things to do and do well. I feel drawn in different directions and not as effective as I could be if I could focus on a few initiatives. I have counted that we have six new initiatives currently running this year alone, on top of the many new initiatives that were started last year”.)

In terms of the core business of schools (teaching and learning), Jason remarked:

“My uitstaande taak, hoofsaaklik administratiewe werk van die administratiewe sentrum, moet verminder word met die doel om op die skool te fokus. Ek verloor kontak met die onderwysplan. Te min werksinkels van die WKOD om ons voor te berei op opvoedkundige program aangeleenthede. Aangesien ek administrasies benodig om onderwysbeleid te bevorder, benodig ek die bates om my opvoeders op te lei in nuwe onderrigprosedures en benaderings”.

(“My outstanding task at hand, mainly administrative work from the administrative center, ought to be diminished with the goal that I can focus on the school. I'm losing contact, dealing with the educational plan. There are too few workshops from WCED to prepare us on educational programme matters. As I need administrations to advance educational policies, I need the assets to train my educators in new teaching procedures and approaches”.)

From the data it seems that despite Jason's innovative management plans and ideas, he still felt overwhelmed by all the demands placed on a school principal. This, he felt, was hampering his efforts to create a positive school culture in his school.

In a similar vein, Eric called out the 'constant paper war' he had to fight. In his words:

"Ek moet die hoofkantoor met papierwerk beveg. Sodra hulle die papierwerk verminder het, sal ek genoeg tyd hê om aan al my skoolvereistes te voldoen".
("I have to fight the head office with paperwork. Once they have reduced the paperwork, I will have enough time to meet all my school requirements".)

Karin had challenges with the language of instruction for her immigrant learners. Here is an extract of her comments on this matter:

"I individually believe that we should open the doors for immigrant students. However, most of the students are from Nigeria and Zimbabwe, and we do not know their mother language. In this case, how we teach them or how they learn in English instruction. Another important point is that there are some cultural differences between them and us. So, this is another issue to think about".

Although English was used as the language of instruction, it was still difficult for her foreign learners to engage meaningfully in the learning process. This frustrated Karin because she thought of this as a possible oversight in government policies. "Placing learners into a whole new world is already difficult", she said. She also noted, "Then, having to be inducted into new cultures and languages of learning is extra hard on learners. Despite our best efforts, we make small progress".

For Marian, issues of diversity and inclusivity, access and equity are complex. Her school is mostly attended by the poorest of the poor. She stated that learners bring their social challenges with them to school. She continued:

"For example, where other schools can start normally and focus on core business on most days, a school day at our school consist of dealing with social welfare issues for the most part. The department don't want to hear about those issues and expects the same from all principals and schools as if we were all on the same level. We are not....as a principal I have to work towards the aims of the department, the educational interest of my learners whilst being expected to create a positive environment to get

this done at the same time.... That is why I think it takes special qualities to manage a school such as this”.

Despite all their good efforts of trying to create positive school environments, all the participants faced challenges that ranged from administrative overload, communication between schools and the education department, to diversity and inclusivity issues. These challenges were noted by all the participants as distracting from their efforts to cultivate positive school culture in their schools.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the data by firstly providing context on the participants and their schools. Secondly, I discussed four key management areas of school principals in relation to the creation of a positive school culture. This section showed similarities and nuances in different principles' approaches and strategies in their respective schools, which were all aimed at creating a positive school culture in their schools. Thirdly, I discussed some of the challenges these principles faced. These challenges were varied and multiple and they all complicated these principles' efforts to create a positive school culture in their schools. In the next chapter, the data will be analysed from which inferences will be made.

CHAPTER 5

DATA INTERPRETATION, FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the research findings, draws conclusions from the research questions analysis of the data, and makes recommendations for practice and future research. The discussion, research and analysis focused on the principals' roles in cultivating a positive school culture in their respective schools in the Wine Lands Educational District. Inferences are drawn from the data in chapter four and deductions made in relation to the research focus.

The key findings in chapter 4 cluster around three themes: time optimisation, resource alignment and curriculum enhancement. These will be discussed in a response to the research questions. Finally, the implications of this research study for future principals are discussed, specifically the implications for creating a positive school culture.

5.2 Time optimisation

Despite the difficulties encountered by the participants that were highlighted in the previous chapter (*cf.* 4.4.1 on pages 6, 8, 9 and 17), all participants maximised their time in various ways. The participants worked beyond the regular working hours due to time constraints on an average day. The participants oversaw a practice of going well beyond by opening early in the morning and closing late in the afternoons every day, including weekends and holidays, to attend to staff personal/non-academic needs while meeting target deadlines. The participants planned ahead and had monitoring strategies (SMT) to ensure that everything went according to plan. In addition, participants used technology to communicate with staff and access information in real-time—this instilled confidence in the employees.

Bipath and Moyo (2016:174) describe principals as “change agents” and “culture builders”. The participants acted as catalysts for cultural change by managing their roles. They assessed the present, were moderately dissatisfied with it, imagined a better future for their schools, and took action to achieve the positive school culture required to achieve the desired future.

As Britton and Tesser (1991) suggested (in section 2.5 of the literature review chapter) that principals, in collaboration with staff and SMT, prioritized activities, created a to-do list, scheduled, and organized their workspace, which leads to collaboration among staff and promotes a positive school culture. The participants devote their time to the essential tasks that will pay long-term dividends. They spend time with people and put effort into developing relationships. Schein explains in section 2.8 of the literature review chapter that the participants assumed that time is critical for future planning. Time is valued as per the second level of Schein's model. However, it is taken to the next level where it migrates into an assumption concretised in their actions as stated earlier. Principals assessed how successful they have been in achieving their objectives over a specific time and could see the improvement in creating a positive school culture. Furthermore, the participants, as expressed in Schein's presentation of *assumptions* in his theory, reflected on their short-term and long-term planning. This assisted them to spend more time on future planning that could ease the burden of stress and contributed to a positive culture. The participants' time optimization provides preliminary evidence that time management contributed towards a positive school culture.

5.3 Resource alignment

Even though principals faced several resource management challenges (with reference to data: cf.4.4.2 in chapter 4 pages 10 to 13) they could persuade their staff to use the limited resources productively. Besides having enough educators, the participants recognized that schools required practical and appropriate teaching and learning aids to improve teaching. The principals' encouragement of utilising digital learning tools in the classroom, increased learner engagement, aided teachers in improving lesson plans, and enabled personalized learning. It also assisted learners in developing essential skills. Staff became more adept and increased their use of technology. They realised its usefulness in saving time and simplifying repetitive work. This contributed towards a positive school culture.

Participants maximised available funds while working in various contexts and managing their budgets optimally, such as maintaining school infrastructure (beautifying the gardens and maintaining the computer lab and library). They not only valued the improvements made but acted on the assumption that these improvements will contribute towards the success of the school. Participants, in accordance with this assumption, conducted regular educational audits

to keep records to update resource statistics, which were then included in the school's budget. The participants viewed school finances as crucial to sustaining the school and used the financial resources for the smooth operation of the school and added valuable changes and upgrades that worked towards a positive school culture.

According to the literature, physical resource management has become a critical function of school governance (Mestry & Bodalina, 2015). The findings demonstrated that the principals had the knowledge and understanding to establish sound financial management systems that allowed them to use their school budgets to ensure enough resources Hellriegel *et al.* (2005:4). In line with section 2.8 of Schein's theory on espoused beliefs and values, participants emphasised expanding on their school's values using financial efficiency to maintain physical resources and attract new learners yearly as parents noticed the increasing positive culture in the schools. The espoused values also boosted the morale of the staff who coordinated other activities in the school system and to ensure the achievement of goals unity. The friendly atmosphere gave staff members job satisfaction. The harmony and collaboration added towards a positive culture at the school. The participants' work provided preliminary evidence that physical, human, and financial resource management can contribute to a positive school culture on all the levels of Schein's model; from mere artefacts like a policy document to actions underpinned by value-based assumptions. The curriculum is yet another document that could remain at the level of an artefact. The successful implementation thereof is primarily determined by the values staff, and the school embraces, and the assumptions that drive their action. This will be the focus of the next section looking at the data used to test for relationships between time management time allocation and school performance.

5.4 Curriculum enhancement

A variety of curriculum management issues were confronted by the participants (see data cf.4.4.4, in chapter 4 pages 15 to 19) but they still went about creatively to enhance curriculum activities which created positivity in their respective schools. The participants established timelines for achieving educational objectives, analysing and identifying problematic curriculum issues and developing interventions with staff. In a positive environment, the participants could consequently monitor and evaluate syllabi, pacesetters and assessment programmes in collaboration with SMT during their interactions with educators in their

department in a positive school culture. When observing educators' teaching and learners' learning, the curriculum's quality was achieved by allocating resources and assisting staff in a friendly manner. This action was informed by the assumption that there is a relationship between by proper allocation of resources and staff support. Furthermore, to promote quality curriculum delivery, the participants sent educators on development programmes that they assumed might assist them in adequately delivering the curriculum to learners and foster a positive educational culture.

According to the DBE (2015:16), resource management contributes to positive school culture. The principal is responsible for ensuring that people, assets, and all other resources are managed, efficiently safely and in a nurturing environment. According to the White Paper on e-Education (RSA, 2004:3), practical use and management of resources in a school is dependent on the actions of the principal, SMT, and teachers' expertise to improve positive school culture. A nurturing and positive environment is valued by the DBE as expressed in these documents. It is clear from the data that the respondents/participants/interviewees assumed this role in their implementation of the curriculum. one of the policy goals is to develop technical skills and use ICT's to extend and enrich educational experiences across the curriculum. The respondents shared this assumption that technology can serve curriculum and translated it into the utilisation of technology as discussed in chapter 4.

The value the participants/respondents attached to the importance of a nurturing environment informed their active engagement to create it in order to deliver the curriculum, prepare learners for the real world, and assist them in becoming "world-class" citizens. This translation of what they valued underpinned by the assumption that it could improve teaching and learning ties in with Schein's theory on espoused beliefs and values (section 2.8 of the literature review). My participants created a positive school environment to the participants agreed that their role was to promote curriculum in order to foster a positive school culture. The key findings of the study will be addressed in the following section.

5.5 Key findings

In order to facilitate a meaningful discussion of the key findings of the research, the synthesis was chronologically presented according to the main research and sub-questions.

Main research question

What is the role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture?

Finding 1

Sub-question 1: What is a positive school culture?

The principal's role in creating a positive school culture reflects the shared beliefs, traditions, ceremonies, narratives, and the internal network of society that honours legends, like an outstanding educator. It was clear that the principals encouraged a positive school culture through professional training and achievements. DuFour *et al.* (cited in Habegger, 2008), characterised such intentional [school] communities as environments with a shared mission, vision, and values; collective inquiry; collaborative teams; action orientation/experimentation; commitment to continuous improvement; and results orientation as professional learning communities. For example, Marian's experience gave rise to value-driven, positive relationships with teachers, pupils and parents. It seemed that all principals who created a positive school culture allowed reinforcement of curriculum review, new curriculum creation, teacher mentoring and induction programmes, transparency, e-learning, school maintenance, initiatives, communication, ideas and change-implementation.

Finding 2

Sub-question 2: How do principals' management practices contribute to the cultivation of a positive school culture?

According to Van der Westhuizen (2008), the principal plays a decisive role in initiating and maintaining a positive school culture. His/her management and leadership style can improve the motivation and professionalism of teachers and influence discipline, collaboration and teamwork within the school. Firstly, the principal reflected on his own principalship style for example by optimising his/her time and in so- doing, enabling them to engage with their colleagues' non-academic challenges. This was appreciated by their staff and in turn created positivity among their staff.

Secondly, the principals' alignment of resources with the needs helped their schools to realise objectives they set for themselves. When these objectives were met, the staff were satisfied and

positive about the school. Therefore, the alignment of resources with the needs of a school and maintaining that focus contributes to the creation of a positive school culture.

Thirdly, the participants' investment in their staff through personal and skills development opportunities and putting necessary teaching infrastructure and support structures in place consequently contributed to curriculum enhancement in the school. This in turn, created positivity among the staff and learners. Curriculum enhancement thus contributed to the creation of a positive school culture. It, therefore, seems that the principal can have a positive impact on school culture.

Finding 3

Sub-question 3: What challenges do principals face in their efforts to cultivate a positive school cultures?

Despite all their good efforts to create a positive school environment, all the participants faced challenges that ranged from administrative overload, communication between schools and the education department, to diversity and inclusivity issues. These challenges were noted by all the participants as distracting from their efforts to cultivate a positive school culture in their schools.

5.6 Limitations

This qualitative study was limited to four principals, and the findings cannot be generalized to the entire population. It, however, offered insights from principals' perspectives in various contexts that could be drawn upon by others in similar contexts. This study provided insights into school principals' productive engagements with work requirements and creative practices that contributed to the creation of a positive school culture in their respective schools irrespective of the challenging contexts.

5.7 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made for:

5.7.1 Future studies

1. That a more expansive study is conducted to investigate principals' practices and how it potentially contributes to the creation of a positive school culture in various contexts.
2. That more forums or communities of practice are created for principals to share skills and knowledge to assist the creation of a positive school culture.
3. The application and or adaptation of Schein's model in more extended research to explore school management practices.

5.7.2 The improvement of practice

The Department of Education should train principals in strategic project management skills, including fund-raising skills, to secure sponsorships for under-resourced schools and lead projects aimed at the infrastructural improvement that promote a positive school culture for learners. This type of training would prepare principals and SMTs to approach private businesses for sponsorships, donations, and funds to improve the school infrastructure (cf. 2.6.3). Furthermore, school sponsorships would enable the recruitment of experts such as social workers, educational psychologists, and remedial experts to assist learners and their families, who are frequently victims of poor socioeconomic conditions. The principal could incorporate sponsored projects into the school's vision and planning in order to improve the school culture over time.

5.7.3 Recommendation for policy

In my study, I only examined school policy documents and, to a lesser extent, the perceptions and narratives of the role players regarding moral values transformation. As a result, I would like to recommend a detailed exploration and analysis of all role-players within a school institution, particularly the principal and SMT, to create a positive school culture.

5.8 Conclusion

This study was motivated by the research problem:

What is the role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture?

The first chapter explained the rationale for the study as well as the motivation for conducting this research. It also provided context for exploring and understanding positive school cultures.

The second chapter offered an exploration of international, regional, and local (South African) literature related to the research topic. This chapter looked at culture, school culture, positive school culture, and more specifically, the role of principals in creating a positive school culture. This chapter also addressed the difficulties in establishing a positive school culture.

The third chapter described the research design and methodology used in the study. Principals from the Wine Land Educational District were purposely sampled. Following that, I used data from in-person observations of four principals for each of the observed principals. Throughout the school day, they went about their business and performed their management roles as usual. I compiled the observation data into four broad categories: time management, resource management, financial management, and curriculum management. I also employed in-depth semi-structured interviews and informal follow-up interviews which proved to be the most appropriate method for gathering the data needed for this type of qualitative study. Maintaining regular contact with the participants aided in establishing the rapport required for the open communication required to collect data on the research topic of principals creating a positive school culture.

The fourth chapter presented themes viewed through Schein's model of three levels of culture extracted from the observations and interviews, and the analysis summarized the data collected. It entails the interpretation of data gathered through the application of analytical and logical reasoning to identify patterns, relationships, or trends. The data was interpreted and analysed in Chapter 5 based on three themes. The main findings and recommendations were then presented. As we look at redefining principals' roles and experiences, these voices need to be heard to help ensure that the next generation of new principals who serve as educational managers in our schools will do so with a sense of passion, vigour, and commitment to their schools. Finally, I hope that my research, like a pebble thrown into a pond, will create a ripple effect that will inspire other principals somewhere to foster a more caring and collaborative environment among their colleagues and peers in their own schools by creating a positive school culture that can embrace growth and affirmation of the entire school community.

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ADDENDUM 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

The Interview questions must be completed by the principal himself/herself.

1. Demographic/educational environment

1.1 Please share with us the following:

(a) Your educational background (degrees, certification, teaching)

(i) Length of time in teaching?

(ii) Length of time as principal?

(b) Your administrative experience. Please explain!

(c) Your interest in this position. Why?

1.2 Please take a few minutes to tell us about your education, teaching and administrative experiences, and yourself. Feel free to add any other details and experiences outside the educational field that you feel will help us know you better.

1.3 Tell us about you, your education and experiences and how they relate to this position.

1.4 Please describe your experiences and personal strengths that qualify you for this position. What particular skills, knowledge and abilities would you bring to our district and [primary] school programs?

1.5. What are your understandings of being a principal? What characteristics or skills do you associate with the position?

1.6 Why do you want to be the principal at this school? What interests you most about this position?

2. The Principal ship and General Questions

2.1 What are the qualities of a leader and principal?

2.2 You know some principals are more successful than others. What are the key characteristics of a successful principal?

2.3 Specifically, what do you define as your three (3) most important responsibilities as the principal? How would you ensure that each of the three (3) was achieved? What other responsibilities beyond the three (3) identified would be important to you?

2.4 What is an emerging issue in education that will impact your role as a building leader? How will you prepare yourself to meet this issue?

2.5 How do you balance the many demands and multiple roles of the principal position?

2.6 What do you see as your role in working with the administrative team?

2.7 What do you see as your role in working with the SGB?

- 2.8 The most challenging ethical dilemmas you face as a leader are the “right v. right” type. What is your framework for deciding these sorts of dilemmas? Please give us an example.
- 2.9 How would you define your role within the district administrative team?
- 2.10 Describe an effective school.
- 2.11 How would you describe an ideal primary school? What steps would you take to move the staff in that direction?
- 2.12 Name some “best practices” in primary education. Why are they effective?
- 2.13 What are some of the characteristics of effective schools? How will you promote these at school?
- 2.14 We as educators frequently use the term “exemplary school.” Please share your perception of the exemplary elementary school that you would create at your school, and include how you would involve or utilize students, staff, and parents.
 - a. Describe your perspective on how you would differentiate needs of students and staff in a primary school.

3. School Culture

- 3.1 Your administration has identified your school as a having a positive school culture. Why do you think this school has been identified as such?
- 3.2. How do you define positive school culture?
- 3.3 What do you think the ideal culture of a school would look like? Give examples
- 3.4. How would you describe the culture of your school? Give examples.
- 3.5. How does your current role influence the school culture?
- 3.6. What key role-players need to be involved in cultivating a positive school culture?
- 3.7 What key role does the SGB play in cultivating a positive school culture?3.8 What does it take foster collegial and/or collaborative relationships among the school’s stakeholders?
- 3.8. Which do you think influence people’s behaviour and achievement more? The principal’s leadership or the school culture? Why?
- 3.9. What are the leadership characteristics that you think best contributes to consistent improvement and/or change within the school culture? (Give examples working with each of the main groups—board, teachers, parents).
- 3.10. What would you say is the one aspect of building school culture that you struggle with the most? Why?
- 3.11. Being successful as a culture builder, what do you think is the key leadership

characteristic to cultivating a positive school culture?

- 3.12. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your success as a school leader?
- 3.13. How much influence do you think the principal has in changing or improving the school culture? Please explain.
- 3.14. How do you view the positive and/or negative influence of your principal's leadership characteristics on the school culture?
- 3.15. What does it take, in your opinion, create and sustain positive culture in a primary school?
- 3.16. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your principal's leadership?

ADDENDUM 2: OBSERVATION DOCUMENT

Principal	
District: Wine Lands	
School:	PERIOD: ___ Week: Time: Hours per day
Observer: A.E Daries	

1. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION				
		Evidence	No Evidence	Exemplary
1.1	There is a school Mission Statement or Vision Statement that includes a stated commitment to diversity and/or global citizenry.			
1.2	The vision & mission statements are displayed for all to see in the school building			
1.3	School leadership is guided by a cohesive action plan that is based on data related to student learning, attendance, and behaviour.			
1.4	School leadership analyses and uses data to make decisions about school-wide programs and resources and solicits feedback regarding the effectiveness of those programs.			
1.5	School leadership, teachers and staff maintain a positive school culture. Elaborate			
1.6	School leadership provides formative feedback and guidance to teachers about the quality of planning, teaching, and adjustment of practice.			
1.7	School leadership has created mentoring and/or other induction programs to support teacher and staff development.			
1.8	School leadership acknowledges and celebrates the accomplishments of teachers and other staff members.			
1.9	School leadership, teachers, and staff build strong relationships with families and community stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.			
1.10	School leadership, teachers, and staff ensure that school-wide communications take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity of school stakeholders.			
1.11	The school's data indicate that school staff is diverse in terms of gender, and/or race/ethnicity, and/or teaching experience.			

2. TIME MANAGEMENT				
		Evidence	No Evidence	Exemplary
2.1	Does the principal prioritize tasks?			
2.2	Does the principal know how to limit distractions?			
2.3	Does the principal manage deadlines?			
2.4	Does the principal know the importance to manage time well?			
2.5	Does the principal balance work and personal life?			
2.6	Does the principal manage stress at work?			
2.7	Does the principal were late to complete a task, or you missed a deadline?			
2.8	Does the principal use delegate tasks to save time?			
2.9	Does the principal commit to his/her schedule?			
2.10	Does the principal make time for extra mural activities?			
2.11	Does the principal follow a daily routine?			

3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT				
		Evidence	No Evidence	Exemplary
3.1	Are all bathrooms in an orderly environment (i.e., doors on stalls, appropriately stocked and no trash on the floor or students congregating in groups)?			
3.2	Is the physical school environment secure (i.e., outside doors are kept closed or monitored, and outside student activities and transitions are monitored)?			
3.3	Is the physical space utilized effectively (i.e., not overcrowded or underutilized) and routinely checked by staff for students lingering or loitering?			
3.4	Classrooms neat?			
3.5	Are the classrooms neatly spaced with furniture?			
3.6	Does the school have a hall?			
3.7	Is the hall been utilized once a week for cultural events?			
3.8	Is the playground sub-divided in different grades play spaces?			

3.9	Are educators divided to monitor the learners during break time?			
3.10	When exchanging classes are learners covered with a roof from the weather?			
3.11	Principal's office well			
3.12	Does the school have a waiting space for parents at the office?			
3.13	Does the school have a staffroom for teachers to enjoy their break?			
3.14	Does the school have enough storerooms for sport equipment?			
3.15	Does the school have a storeroom for all educational resources?			
3.16	Does the school have offices for SMT members?			
3.17	Does the school have a library?			
3.18	Does the school have a computer lab?			
3.19	Does the school have Wi-Fi?			
3.20	Does the school have an intercom system?			
3.21	Does the school have an alarm system linked to a security company?			
3.22	Does the school have enough parking for his personal?			
3.23	Does the school have security personal on the school ground?			

4. FINANCIAL MANANGEMENT				
		Evidence	No Evidence	Exemplary
4.1	Does the school have a good financial management?			
4.2	Does the principal have the ability to manage the financial responsibilities of the school?			
4.3	Who do you think should be responsible for the training of principals in terms of their new financial responsibilities?			
4.4	According to you, what should be covered in the training of financial school management for principals?			
4.5	What would you want to gain from such a training programme?			
4.6	Who is ultimately responsible for the drawing up of the school budget and what is your role function in drawing up the budget?			
4.7	Legally it is the function of the SGB to manage the school budget. What role does the SGB play in this regard at your school?			

4.8	Comment on the procedure of budgeting at your school?			
4.9	How do you monitor the budget at your school? Explain.			
4.10	Are you able to delegate any of your financial role functions to your senior management team, if so, what functions are you able to delegate?			
4.11	What measures do you have in place to ensure that transparency, accountability and responsibility, in terms of your school's finances, are adhered to?			
4.12	Does a Finance Committee exist (is it properly constituted) and what is your role in the Finance Committee?			
4.13	Are you able to delegate any of your financial role functions to your senior management team, if so, what functions are you able to delegate?			

5. CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT				
		Evidence	No Evidence	Exemplary
5.1	Will we use technology to support teaching and learning?			
5.2	Are the principal committed to curriculum delivery?			
5.3	Does the principal manage the curriculum while fulfilling multiple responsibilities?			
5.4	Parent involvement programs exist for all culture groups.			
5.5	Does the principal know the legislative frameworks that assist him/her to manage the curriculum?			
5.6	Does the principal ensure there is teaching and learning taking place in the school?			
5.7	Does parents participate in the schools projects?			
5.8	Does the parents talk regularly with the class teacher about your child's behaviour in class?			
5.9	Does the parents help with sports activities after school?			
5.10	Does parents participate in fundraising activities aft the school?			
5.11	Do parents assist teachers with disciplinary matters?			
5.12	Are parents volunteering in playground duty?			

ADDENDUM 3: RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Dear Mrs/Mr.....

My name is Ambrose Daries and I am a master's student. I would like to invite you to participate in a research project entitled **“The role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture.”**

Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project and contact me if you require further explanation or clarification of any aspect of the study. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

I would like to conduct interviews and observe the Principal in his/her environment as the chosen sample for my studies at the above site. Strict confidentiality and anonymity of all participants will be maintained. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the findings and to determine how the **principals can cultivate a positive school culture** at the identified school.

I trust that my request to conduct the study is viewed favourably.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Student: Ambrose Daries
Supervisor: Dr.J.P. Joorst
Office (012) 808 2877

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms. Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.
You have right to receive a copy of the Information and Consent form.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the attached Declaration of Consent and hand it to the investigator.

Yours faithfully
Mr A.E Daries

DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT

By signing below, I agrees to take part in a research study entitled: “**The role of principals in cultivating a positive school culture.**” and conducted by **Ambrose Daries**

I declare that:

- I have read the attached information leaflet and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.
- All issues related to privacy and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide have been explained to my satisfaction.

Signed on

.....

Signature of participant

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to He/She was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [Afrikaans/*English/*Xhosa/*Other] and [no translator was used/this conversation was translated into _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator

Date

ADDENDUM 4: WCED CONSENT FORM



Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za

tel: +27 021 467 9272 Fax: 0865902282

Town, 8000 wced.wcape.gov.za **REFERENCE:** 20180301–9933

Private Bag x9114, Cape

ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mr Ambrose Daries

Bellville

7530

Dear Mr Ambrose Daries

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS IN CULTIVATING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **28 January 2018 till 28 September 2018**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.

10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research
Services Western Cape
Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

**Directorate: Research
DATE: 02 March 2018**

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001 Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000
tel: +27 21 467 9272 fax: 0865902282 Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 33 22
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47 www.westerncape.gov.za

ADDENDUM 5: ETHICS APPROVAL STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY



CHANGES REQUESTED

12/02/2018

Project reference number: 1736

Project title: The role and influence of principals in cultivating a positive school culture.

Dear Mr Ambrose Daries

Changes have been requested on your application form. Please see below for the list of changes requested on your application. Please ensure that you respond to each of the comments below within **3 days**.

Title	Comment
9.2 Please confirm the form in which the data will be shared with the external party:	The researcher states in section 2.2.2 of the form that data will be shared with the WCED and will not be anonymized. It is not clear what information will be shared with the WCED and whether principals will be informed that the data will be shared with the WCED and that they will be identifiable.
2. Please specify who will be invited to take part in the Study	The researcher should identify the four schools selected for this study in section 5.2 of the application form.
3.2 Please justify why participants will not be allowed to withdraw their participant and/or their data from the study (make sure that you inform participants of this in your consent process/form)	The researcher confirms in section 5: Informed consent process (3.2) that participants are eager take part in the study when asked how he will manage the data should a participant wish to withdraw from the study. The researcher does not however consider what he will do should one of the four participants wish to decline participation: would he still want to use the data collected (with consent of the participant)? Will he be able to complete his study should one of the principals withdraw and he is only left with the data of three participants. Furthermore, he states in the consent form that participants are free to withdraw at any stage of the study, yet in the application form, it appears that he has not made alternative strategies in place should this event occur.
5. Please upload the informed consent template that will be used to confirm consent from participants	No information is provided as to what the observations entail nor how much time is required from participants to take part in this study.
5. Please upload the informed consent template that will be used to confirm consent from participants	The informed consent form is insufficient for consent as the information provided is vague, for example the consent form does not address the fact that data will be shared with the WCED as stated in the application form. Furthermore, he states in the consent form that participants are free to withdraw at any stage of the study, yet in the application form, it appears that he has not made alternative strategies in place should this event occur. There are also grammatical and language errors in the consent form i.e. 'strict confidentially...'.

One of the consent forms addressed to a female participant contains the statement 'I would like to contact interviews and observe the principal in his environment'. It also appears that consent was confirmed before the application for ethics clearance was submitted for review. For future reference, the applicant should note that the REC must review the consent form template before it is presented to participants so that the REC can make recommendations where necessary. The REC does not require a copy of the signed consent form as this is considered confidential information between the researcher and participant.

5. You have confirmed that you have not yet received permission from the relevant gatekeepers to access data or participants. Please identify the gatekeeper(s)/ organisation(s) from whom permission will be sought.

The researcher is reminded that data collection may only commence once WCED permission is confirmed. The researcher is reminded to submit proof of WCED permission to the REC as soon as it is obtained.

Yours sincerely
Miss Clarissa Graham