UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

THE ROLE OF CIRCUIT MANAGERS IN LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS: PERSPECTIVES OF SIX SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

BY

NOMUSA PRINCESS SHAMASE

(205525229)

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Supervisor: Dr S.B. Blose

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DECLARATION

I, Nomusa Princess Shamase, declare that:

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ii.   This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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Researcher: ██████████████   **Date: October 2022**

Nomusa Princess Shamase

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation is submitted with my approval

Signature: _____ **Date:**   17.10.2022

Dr. S.B. Blose

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother, Roseline Shamase (MaSibiya) and aunt Nonhlanhla Doris Khulekani Dlamini for being a positive influence in my life. Aunt Nunu for kick starting my tertiary education. Their teachings, values and prayers moulded me into the phenomenal woman I am today. I wish my granny was alive to witness her dream come true.

ABSTRACT

The focus of the study reported in this dissertation was to explore the role of circuit managers in the leadership and professional development of principals; this was studied from the perspective school principals. The study was conducted in six secondary schools in Umlazi District in KwaZulu-Natal, and principals of these schools participated voluntarily. Since there is no prior qualification that is needed in South Africa before teachers are appointed to a principal position, I wanted to understand the principals' perceptions of the role played by circuit managers in their leadership and professional development. The study also intended to explore the different strategies that circuit managers implement in pursuit of developing principals' leadership and professional skills. Lastly, the study also explored the impact of the strategies implemented by the circuit managers.

I located myself within an interpretive paradigm in this study; this paradigm is grounded on the belief that there is no single absolute truth, but it is created through the engagements of the researcher and participants. Reality is subjective and emanates from people's real-life experiences. Transformational leadership theory and Gray and Bishop's leadership development model formed the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. Furthermore, the case study research methodology was used to comprehend the principals' experiences. The thematic analysis method was chosen to analyse data that was generated through semi-structured interviews.

The study found that the role of circuit managers, from the perspective of principals, played a pivotal role in developing principals' leadership and professional development. The participating principals shared a similar sentiment that circuit managers played the role of building their capacity. Among other things, principals mentioned that circuit managers implemented mentoring and modelling, twinning schools to foster collaborations and ongoing training as strategies to enhance principals' professional and leadership growth. The study further found that the implementation of these strategies by circuit managers resulted in principals growing their management and leadership practices.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE   Advanced Certificate in Education

CMC   Circuit Management Centre

CPTD   Continuing Professional Teacher Development

DBE   Department of Basic Education

DSG   Development Support Group

EGD   Engineering Graphics & Design

ELRC   Education Labour Relations Council

EPMDS   Employee Performance Management Development Systems

GDE   Gauteng Department of Education

IQMS   Integrated Quality Management System

IT   Information Technology

KZN   KwaZulu-Natal

PAM   Personnel Administrative Measures

QMS   Quality Management System

SMT   School Management Team

STD   Secondary Teachers Diploma

UKZN   University of KwaZulu-Natal

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BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

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BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Different legislative mandates and high expectations from policy makers and the public have put pressure on school principals to lead and manage schools effectively for quality teaching and learning to materialise. Circuit managers are immediate supervisors of school principals and as supervisors, it is their responsibility to facilitate principals' leadership and professional development (Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), RSA, 1998b). The expectation for circuit managers is to be responsible for developing capability and to support the principals so that, they will concentrate on and be proficient at leading and managing their schools (Saphier & Durkin, 2013).

This study focused on the role played by circuit managers in the leadership and professional development of school principals. To understand this role, the perspectives of six secondary school principals were explored. This chapter introduced the study; to this end, I presented the background to the study, the rationale and motivation for the study, the significance of the study, objectives, key research questions as well as the location and demarcation of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The South African educational system is faced with challenges of meeting the standard in the international, technological, cultural, and socio-economic field of knowledge and skills. There are many demands and challenges that school principals are faced with which are related to their job. These challenges have to do with, among other things, compliance with different policies which are constantly changing, regulations and legislative mandates; developing and maintaining educational norms that are of high standards; creating a culture of quality teaching and learning; dealing with different internal and external school stakeholders including parents; managing conflict, diversity and change; organising and distribution of scarce resources; being accountable to the department of education and the respective communities; and coping with external factors (Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2011; Mestry & Grobler, 2004; Steyn, 2008).

School principals as leaders in the school environment, play a vital role in the transformation process and in creating new norms, changing the attitudes of teachers, creating a vision that will be shared by all the teachers in the school, organisational culture and setting the direction

for their schools. According to Mestry (2017) many school principals must be exposed to basic leadership and management training before and after their entry into the principalship position. According to Ndlovu (2017) school principals must contend with both the department of education and communities in holding them accountable for learner outcomes.

Successful learner outcomes and quality teaching and learning are crucial for school improvement. Available literature supports the view that for schools to improve, effective and efficient leadership by principals is key. According to Steyn (2011) continuous professional development for principals will benefit the learners and the entire school. Mestry (2017) concurs that high-quality professional development of school principals is an essential component for improving education and learner outcomes. Principals' leadership and professional development is important as they are expected to lead teachers and learners to attain new levels of teaching and learning performance.

Principals are expected to develop their leadership and professional skills. Effective principals have solid information and knowledge about the task at hand and be able to process that information for successful leadership (Steyn, 2011). To increase leaders' inter- and intra-personal, emotional and intellectual skills, effective and relevant professional development programmes must be included in the theory of adult learning (Duncan, Range & Scherz, 2011). According to Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) there is a growing important link between good leadership and management and the quality of education that can be provided by effective professionally developed principals. The success of the school depends on the principal and excellent principals focus on the quality of learning.

Given the fact that principals are holding the most senior position at schools and their supervisors are outside the school at district level, the principal carries the ultimate responsibility for all that happens at school. Education districts are the link between provincial office and schools. Schools and principals are directly supervised by circuit managers on behalf of the district director. One of the key responsibility areas of circuit managers is to transform schools under their supervision, through conducting monitoring and evaluating the daily operational tasks conducted in schools (Ngubane, 2006). The expectation for circuit managers is that, they must provide intervention and remedial strategies by building individual and collective professional and leadership capacity of principals. This study focuses on the role of circuit managers in leadership and professional development of principals. To garner this

understanding, I examined the perspective of principals on the role of circuit managers on their leadership and professional development. This study investigated the principals' perspectives because they are the supervisees and recipients of the leadership and professional development programmes from circuit managers, therefore their input was vital in assessing the role played by circuit managers.

This feedback can also be used by circuit managers for their personal professional growth and the development of the Department of Education.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The job description of a circuit manager, as outlined in the collective agreement 4 of 2017 comprises of provision of effective supervision of school performance, to ensure optimum curriculum delivery. This is done through professional and educational leadership, guidance and development. Therefore, circuit managers have a role of providing support to schools to ensure effective management and the facilitation of training to school principals (DBE, Republic of South Africa, 2013). The DBE policy on district roles and operations and the collective agreement, 4 of 2017, are in agreement with each other on the role of circuit managers, which is to provide training and guidance to school principals through educational leadership and professional development.

In the South African context, it is not a requirement that principals must have a leadership and management qualification before applying for a principalship position. According to the Personnel Administrative Measures document, (RSA, 1998) a teacher must have a three-year teaching qualification. The teacher must have taught for a minimum of seven years. The expectation is that the teacher must have formal or informal leadership and management experience. One of the roles of circuit managers as immediate supervisors to principals is to conduct an induction programme for their novice principals once they are appointed. Circuit managers are expected to work closely with their newly appointed principals. Given that principals are appointed without a measurable understanding of leadership and management, circuit managers as their line managers have a responsibility to induct them on appointment. Apart from this, they need to facilitate the leadership and professional development of principals to ensure that schools are led in a proper manner.

Government Gazette no. 35107 (2013) pronounces that each circuit must have 25 to 30 schools as a norm. Training and developing an average of thirty principals that the circuit manager

supervises is therefore the expected role to perform. Noting that principals are expected to start leading the school upon appointment, circuit managers have the difficult task of training them while they are already on the job. This can be equated to constructing a road whilst travelling on it. Due to the nature of their work, most circuit managers conduct professional development training during the principals meeting that they are expected to hold on a monthly basis and during their school visits. Given the time constraints arising from circuit managers packed daily activities, as a researcher I often ask the following questions; Do circuit managers set aside time for professional development? What kind of development programmes do they offer to their principals? How often do they offer leadership and professional development to their principals?

Given the fact that the role of a circuit manager is complex, the study sought to scrutinise their roles in the provision of leadership and professional development to principals. To this end, the perspective of school principals on the role of circuit managers were explored. This study was about the principals' perspective because they are the recipients of training, leadership and professional development and work closely with circuit managers as supervisors, hence they are the most suitable participants and have in-depth knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon.

1.4 RATIONALE AND MOTIVATION

According to Moloi, Gravett and Peterse (2009) the role of principals is to effectively lead schools to produce learners that will participate effectively in the global context that is continuously changing. In my 10 years as circuit manager, I have supervised 5 different circuits and worked with more than 60 newly appointed principals. The challenges I faced in having to induct and develop the leadership, management and professional capacity of some of the principals made me wonder how my colleagues cope with this task.

My experience as a circuit manager has revealed how some principals, newly appointed and experienced principals, are not sufficiently ready for the leadership role which they are expected to execute at the variety of tasks that principals are expected to perform. This is due to lack of professional and leadership development which has resulted in principals failing to solve the challenges that they face at school, which indirectly leads to poor performance of learners (Ndlovu, 2017).

Professionally, as the principals' supervisor I have participated in Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) appraisal processes, and have identified the leadership and professional developmental needs of some of the principals in the circuit. This further highlighted the role that circuit managers must play in the development of principals. PAM (RSA, 1998b) agrees and states that circuit managers as immediate supervisors must utilise the performance and developmental appraisal tool available and personal development plan to monitor and evaluate the developmental needs of principals. This can be done by assessing staff development activities based on needs identified through the personal development plan, implement and participate in staff development programmes. The researcher has observed that some colleagues have encouraged the principals to embark on professional and leadership development programmes and have seen benefits in the transformation of their principals and enhancement of learner outcomes.

The researcher was motivated to do this study after identifying a gap in literature for this kind of study as research on the role circuit managers are very few. Ndlovu (2017) did a similar study in 2017 on the role of circuit manager in professional development of principals, but it was done from the perspective of the circuit manager. Most studies on circuit managers are on their role in supporting and improving principals in executing instructional leadership and improving teaching and learning. Mthembu (2014) studied the role of circuit managers in enhancing instructional leadership practices in schools, while Ncwane's thesis (2019) is titled 'supporting teaching and learning in challenging contexts: in a phenomenological study of the leadership role of circuit managers.' Bantwini and Moorosi (2018) investigated 'The Circuit Managers as the weakest link in the school district leadership chain! Perspectives from a province in South Africa.' This study tried to close the gap in the literature in terms of the multifaceted role of circuit managers by exploring the perspectives of school principals.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study provided an assessment of professional and leadership development programmes offered by circuit managers to school principals. The study showed how these programmes impact on the leadership growth of principals. Available literature on the role of circuit managers in the principal's professional and leadership development has a gap, as it mostly studies the perspective and the voice of circuit managers. By conducting this study, the researcher was trying to fill that gap, as this study explored perspectives and the voices of the principals. Through the analysis of a variety of the literature, the researcher realized that, the

role of principals in developing teachers have been studied countless times. A lot of research has also been conducted by scholars on professional and leadership development of principals. Circuit managers are line managers and immediate supervisors of school principals. Circuit managers have an important role to play in the development of effective and efficient principals. As, there are very limited studies on the role of circuit manager in professional and leadership development of principals, I decided to pursue this study focusing on the perspectives of principals as most of these studies are through the eye of the circuit manager.

It was the first time the study of this nature was conducted in Umlazi District. The findings and recommendations of this study will assist the department of education officials and school principals to understand the role played or not played by circuit managers in professional and leadership development of principals. The development strategies implemented by circuit managers and their impact were revealed at the end of this study.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are:

1. To explore the principals' understanding of the role of Circuit Managers in relation to their professional and leadership development.
2. To explore the strategies Circuit Managers, apply to enhance principal's professional and leadership development.
3. To explore how the strategies implemented by Circuit Managers impact on the principals' professional and leadership growth.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What do principals understand as the role of Circuit Managers in relation to their professional and leadership development?
2. What strategies do Circuit Managers apply to enhance principals' professional and leadership development?
3. How do strategies that are implemented by Circuit Managers impact on the principals' professional and leadership growth?

1.8 LOCATION AND DERMACATION OF STUDY

This study was located in Umlazi District. The researcher selected six secondary schools from three diverse circuits. Three circuits were chosen out of sixteen circuits in Umlazi District to obtain the perspectives on the role of at least three different circuit managers. The circuits chosen were led by experienced circuit managers, while principals that were chosen have a minimum of three years' experience. The principals' experience is important as through the years, they would have interacted with one or more circuit manager as their supervisor. This was a small-scale study and the findings may not represent all circuit managers.

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The research study was divided into five chapters that are outlined below:

Chapter one

Chapter one discussed the background, problem statement, rationale and motivation and the significance of this study. The objectives, the key research questions that inform this study and location and demarcation of study were presented.

Chapter two

This chapter focused on the literature reviewed that relate to the key questions. The review focused on professional and leadership development and the role of circuit managers. Transformational leadership theory and Gray and Bishop's leadership development conceptual framework underpinned this study.

Chapter three

Chapter three discussed the research paradigm, research design and methodology utilised in this research study so as to answer the main research questions in chapter 1. The data collection method, sampling and data analysis techniques were presented. An account of ethical issues and limitations of this study then brought the chapter to a close.

Chapter four

In this chapter the focus was on the analysis, findings and discussion of the data generated from the semi-structured interviews. The data collected from the interviews with participants was categorised into themes and sub themes and is discussed in this chapter. A discussion of the

data in reference to the theoretical and conceptual framework outlined in chapter two was presented.

Chapter five

The main conclusions and recommendations were presented in this chapter. The conclusions and recommendations drawn, were based on the findings outlined in chapter four.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the outline of what this study entails. It provided the introduction and background of the study and the rationale and motivation for the study were explained. Particular attention was given to the significance of the study, objectives, the key research questions. as well as location and demarcation. The chapter organisation was also presented. The next Chapter dealt with the literature reviewed, theoretical and conceptual framework that underpins the role of circuit manager in leadership and professional development of principals.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 1NTRODUCTION

Chapter one provided the orientation of the study; to this end, the background to the study, the problem statement, as well as the motivation for the study were presented. Additionally, three main objectives of the study and three research questions were presented.

According to Mouton (2001), the purpose of the literature review in chapter two is to engage with the available literature from different studies conducted in the last two decades. Furthermore, the purpose for conducting a literature review is to analyse how different scholars conceptualized and presented the topics around this phenomenon. In this study, I firstly present a discussion on principals' professional development. Secondly, the professional development needs of principals are discussed. Thirdly, I present a discussion on the international and local perspectives of principals' professional development, as well as challenges facing circuit managers in principals' professional development. Lastly, the transformational leadership theory and the leadership development concept are discussed as components of the theoretical framework.

2.2 WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

The body of literature available shows that there are lots of studies conducted on professional development. These studies focus mostly on professional development for teachers, however, there is little evidence on how school leadership can be developed. Professional development, in this instance, is about learning programmes that are designed to take place when a principal is already on the job (Mathibe, 2007). This is corroborated by Ndlovu (2017) who also highlighted that professional development is an ongoing education and training for principals to improve their skills and knowledge to enhance performance in their career. Retna (2015) concur with Ndlovu by emphasising that professional development refers to activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes that will improve the performance for a future role.

 May, Huff and Goldring (2012) define professional development for school leaders as those training sessions which are formal and informal and they take place between principals and teachers and amongst principals themselves. This view is corroborated by Preston and Huff (2012) when they define informal and formal interactions and trainings that occur between

individual principals, different groups of principals and principals together with teachers as professional development for school leadership. Hunzicker (2010) explains effective professional development as supportive, job-embedded, instructional focus, collaborative and ongoing learning programmes. Professional development programmes include and are not limited to qualifications obtained academically, professional learning communities, workshops, in-service training, cluster meetings, principals' meetings, networking, reflective practice and other informal activities (Mathibe, 2007). Goldring et al. (2012) highlighted that principals' professional development is significant as their role is to effectively guide teachers and learners to achieve quality teaching and learning at the desired learner outcomes. Principals are the most senior and accountable leaders at school, and they require continuous empowerment so that they can in turn capacitate their staff (Zondo, 2013). These definitions suggest the need for programmes aimed at developing principals to promote excellence in their daily practice. Steyn (2011, p. 43) from the South African context, contends ongoing development of professional knowledge, skills and attitudes is a significant element of improving performance in all professions. For this study, professional development for principals is understood to be an ongoing activity that intends to empower principals with knowledge, skills and the required abilities to enrich their professional knowledge and performance within the school environment.

2.3 IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PRINCIPALS

The importance of professional development is to develop principals who will excel in their jobs. According to Sutcher, Podolsky and Espinoza (2017) a system of high-quality preparation and professional development can enhance the principal's capabilities to set direction in their institution, restructure the organisation, build staff capacity and lead teaching and learning in accordance with set outcomes.

The significance of professional development is vital to schools as school principals are required to lead teachers and learners to attain high levels of performance and learning (Preston & Huff, 2012, p. 223). According to Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009), education ministers of the countries participating in the Commonwealth conference have stressed the necessity to enhance school leadership as a means to escalate school effectiveness and realize excellent performance. They also argued that there is a need for a new generation of school leaders to be recruited and developed with knowledge, skills and dispositions best suited to meet the current and future needs of education systems. Mestry (2017) from the South African context, also concurs with this view and highlighted that many progressive countries have placed Continuing

Professional Development (CPTD) for school leaders on the education agenda. Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009) further clarified that an international focus on leadership development has started to change, and many countries have come to realise the significance of advancing in a school leadership support system. They also elaborated that professional development should continue immediately after principals' appointments to support them in facing the various challenges they may experience at school as new principals. According to Mestry (2017), professional development programmes are systemic efforts to enhance transformation in school leadership and management where emerging practices, attitudes and beliefs add to the learning results of learners. That is confirmed by Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009) when they emphasised that school principals are important in making certain that quality teaching and learning is obtainable in schools. The professional development of school leaders through a contextually appropriate school principalship qualification must be an approach accepted more broadly between different countries. They further highlighted that the appointment of principals in various countries is built on irrelevant or unsatisfactory criteria; they are appointed because of their teaching experience instead of their leadership capabilities, teaching capabilities and long service in education. All these factors are not considering any higher academic qualification.

Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009) highlighted the need for more training on instructional and strategic leadership skills for more experienced principals, while the inexperienced principal seems to also require training on technical aspects, such as financial management. The National Staff Development Council (as cited in Preston & Huff, 2012) further suggested that one purpose of professional development is to instil a school's positive norms and assumptions. Evans and Mohr (as cited in Preston & Huff, 2012, p. 224) emphasised the seven core beliefs about professional development for principals as follows: principal learning is personal but is more effective in groups; principals encourage better learning for learners when they concentrate on their own learning; principals must be pushed past their comfortable assumptions about unproductive practices and beliefs towards replying to challenging questions that are essential to their job; professional development must accommodate several chances and approaches for focused reflection; learning by principals is most democratic when principals listen carefully and design work for groups; rigorous planning is essential for the flexible and receptive execution and; professional development must offer a safe environment for increasing learning. Lawrence (as cited in Preston & Huff, 2012, p. 224) highlighted five similar principles; principal professional development should provide on the job learning,

comprehensible curriculum; practical tools and procedures for everyday work of leading change; a safe environment to practice acquired skills; continuing support through coaching; and a protracted and sustained mutual network for consultation and problem-solving.

2.4 METHODS USED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Different literature name different activities that constitute professional development for school principals. Some of those activities are; taking part in professional learning communities, mentoring, workshops, coaching, seminars conferences, modelling and shadowing (Ndlovu, 2017). Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009) agree and emphasise that traditional course-based challenges encountered by principals should be complemented by scientific training practices like problem-based learning, coaching and mentoring, and peer networking. That is corroborated by Preston and Huff (2017) who explain that professional development for school leaders comes in many different forms such as workshops, seminars and conferences, mentoring, shadowing, and coaching. Professional development can be offered by an extensive selection of institutions such as universities, professional associations, governmental agencies and other organisations (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2009). These scholars also stressed that collaborations between several organisations can also improve the impact of training on school leadership teams, they further explained that it was also required to have a central agency responsible for monitoring the standard of professional development activities.

2.5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF PRINCIPALS

The need for principals' professional development is great. The objectives and purposes of the professional development of principals must be clearly defined and conceptualised (Preston & Huff, 2012). According to (Msila & Mtshali, 2011; Lethoko et al., 2001; Taylor, 2008) South African principals do not specifically receive any formal training in leadership and management skills before their appointment. School principalship has unfortunately hardly been perceived and established as an occupation which requires specific professional knowledge, skills and expertise. Mathibe (2007) further elaborates by stating that principals in South Africa do not have suitable training and skills for school management and leadership. This has resulted in a call for intensive professional development of school principals. Derrington and Sharratt (2008) concur with Mathibe by emphasizing that principals need continuing, on the job opportunities for professional development. That is corroborated by Spillane et al. (2008) who highlight that principals also require formal training if ongoing

development is expected. This is particularly true for novice principals (Michaelidou & Pashiardis, 2009; Woods, Woods, & Cowie, 2009). Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009) also emphasised that the professional development needs of school principals may be determined by numerous job-related functions connected to the respective features of training programmes available. Preston and Huff (2012) concur with them by highlighting that professional development should be aligned and concentrated on both leadership and professional needs pertaining to the principals' context. They were also supported by Van der Westhuizen, Mosoge and Van Vuuren (2004) who indicate from the South African context, that the strategy and content of training programmes should be aimed at developing needed skills and knowledge. The training must equip the principals for a new environment and definitely for the school situation. They further elaborated by saying trainings should properly planned and not started for the sake of malicious compliance.

Michaelidou and Pashiardis (2009) stated that the needs of newly appointed principals require a much broader range of developmental areas when compared with the more experienced principals. According to Eller (2010); Michaelidou and Pashiardis (2009) as well as Daresh and Playko (1994), these development needs consist of technical skills as well as adaptation to the supervisory role. Contrary to that, Zepeda (2007) discovered that novice principals, were commonly concerned with socialization including being accepted by stakeholders, teachers, and their line managers contrary to those about to exit the profession. Peterson (2002) placed the professional development needs of principals into two groups, namely structural and cultural elements. Eller (2010) and Woods et al. (2009) further explained that structural elements of professional development are sometimes referred to as technical skills and have a direct impact on student learning. While cultural elements of professional development depend more on the development of social skills and collective processes (Rodriquez-Campos, Gomez, & Shen, 2005).

Remarkably, Grissom and Harrington (2010) establish that principals are involved in professional development with attention to mentoring and coaching, were regarded as more effective by the teachers under their supervision. Furthermore, principals prioritise networking prospects in which they get a chance to engage in reflective conversations with other managers and administrators regarding planning, implementing, and supporting procedures that lift up the standards for student performance and outcomes (Duncan, 2009; Hill, Hawk, & Taylor, 2001; Reardon, 2011). While there is some evidence of research on individual professional

development needs of principals it is important to note that according to (Grissom and Harrington, 2010; Spillane et al., 2009) a 'one-size-_fits-all' method to principal development will be a waste of time and ineffective. Districts should determine the exact aspects in which their principals require support (Duncan & Stock, 2010). The areas of development may be made available through school districts' teacher development sub directorate programmes, offered by professional institutions, or provided in partnership with colleges or universities. Lahui-Ako (as cited in Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2009) further argued that principals can be equipped with appropriate leadership knowledge, skills and attitudes to mitigate the challenges of their responsibilities and role they have to perform.

2.6 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS

The development, engagement and empowerment of principals with management and leadership skills when they are already on the job is a worldwide initiative and phenomena, and is not happening in South Africa only. In Singapore, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, China and England there are evident studies conducted about the training of school leaders. In England, Singapore and China similar initiatives have been employed to help principals learn and have more insight about the expectation of their profession as well as develop their roles and responsibilities as senior leaders in schools (Steward, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2010). According to Preston and Huff (2012), in the United States, professional development usually refers to learning opportunities that happen once a leader is already on the job. They further expounded that professional development is normally implemented through the school system by government or districts, or by external service providers that includes but not limited to; universities, professional associations, non–profit organisations and profit-making bodies. Preston and Huff (2012) further, emphasised that case studies of professional development programmes in the United States showed that most of their trainings concentrate on improving teaching and learning outcomes.

Quinn (2004) contrasted professional development prospects for principals in the United States and England and established that current accountability processes in both countries have made professional development to focus mainly on instructional leadership, that is, structural skills. Although, cultural skills are equally essential. Effective instructional leadership needs a foundation of collaborative and well-developed interpersonal skills. Contrary to that Blandford and Squire (as cited in Van der Westhuizen et al., 2004) specify that initiative and some

management development programmes presented by districts in England for novice principals were quite intensive while others, were found to be slight formal activities. Furthermore, McClay (as cited in Van der Westhuizen et al., 2004) also discovered that females as principals were insufficiently trained. This resulted in the under-representation of women in senior management positions in schools. Even though in South Africa both male and female teachers have the same training, there is also a shortage of women in principalship positions.

The challenges of training school leaders have been given the top priority of the social goal in the United Kingdom (UK) (Mestry, 2017). He further emphasised that in the United States of America (US), Continuing Professional Development programmes are frequently presented by external organizations. However, in Singapore, successful prospective school leaders with potential are chosen to attend the Management and Leadership in Schools programme at Singapore's National Institute for Education, based on interviews and leadership-situation exercises (Mestry, 2017).

Nasreen and Odhiambo (2018) also recommended that the Directorate of education should organize regular trainings for principals to improve their skills associated with learner performance and school improvement. National and international research (Michaelidou & Pashiardis, 2009; Rodriguez-Campos et al., 2005; Wong, 2004; Woods et al., 2009) has stressed the aspiration of principals for further professional development in mentorship and coaching, especially in working with underperforming and novice employees.

2.7 SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals' professional development is a serious concern here in South Africa. Mestry (2017) highlighted that the South African education experts must draw and choose prospective principals with the potential leadership and management abilities to lead and manage public schools. He further explained that there is an urgent need for principals to be developed and professionally equipped for their roles and responsibilities as heads of schools, and to continuously improve their skills, qualities and capabilities through planned CPTD programmes. Van der Westhuizen et al. (2004) specified that researchers seem to hold the opinion that principals are not sufficiently trained for their duty of managing and leading schools. "Prospective and practising principals should be given a chance of taking part in formal professional development programmes so that they can successfully adjust to their roles and responsibilities, which are ever changing radically" (Mestry, 2017, p. 3). Msila and Mtshali

(2011) corroborated by claiming that professional developed leaders will be able to prepare and develop their teachers in a time of change when it arises. Crowther et al. (as cited in Msila and Mtshali, 2011, p. 3) argued that principals have a huge role to play for school reform to occur and that successful school transformation encompassed five functions which are as follows:

i) Visioning, link to evolving tasks in schools with an inspirational image of a preferred future.

ii) Identity generation, promote the establishment of cultural meaning where the beliefs and moral values of the school and the community at large are considered.

iii) Alignment of organizational elements, where the all-inclusive implementation of school-based changes.

iv) Distribution of authority, influence and leadership, encourage teachers and all stakeholders to view themselves as essential role players in determining the school's course.

v) External coalitions and networking, allow schools to work closely with other schools and with the community.

According to Van der Westhuizen et al. (2004), in the development of educational managers in South Africa, some of the training aspects that were effectively learned were learner disciplinary and teacher grievance procedures, problem-solving practices, conflict management, involving different stakeholders, drawing policies like code of conduct, strategic planning and team building.

Steyn (as cited in Mestry, 2017) highlighted that it is very imperative for principals to comprehend that leadership is a process aimed at developing human relation skills amongst staff, encourage collective participation that will result in school improvement and efficiency. Starr (as cited in Mestry, 2017) also added by stating that the role of the principal compares with that of the chief executive officer of a corporate organization as they are responsible for strategic planning, budgets, managing relations, procuring resources and facilitating marketing and public relations with the school stakeholders. Goslin (as cited in Mestry, 2017) also emphasised that principals are inclined to ignore and delegate their responsibilities of curriculum or instructional leadership to their deputies and departmental heads, because they are not completely aware of their primary task, or they are too busy with their administrative duties, and they are either resolving conflicts among role players or dealing with learner discipline. Mestry (2017) indicated that South African principals need development in

supporting collaborations, legislative and policy mandates and interpersonal skills. He further placed a need for strong focus on their administrative, financial and human resource management roles. Steyn (as cited in Msila & Mtshali, 2011) emphasised that researchers in South Africa are starting to realize that professional development is an important aspect in the creation of effective schools and in raising learners' performance.

2.8 ROLE OF CIRCUIT MANAGERS IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS

The role of circuit managers has evolved. Ngubane (2006) explains that in most countries that were colonised by the United Kingdom, circuit managers were called inspectors, while American literature referred to them as superintendents. He further states that in the past the role of an inspector was for fault-finding, examiner and custodian of standards. There was no time for guidance, support, advice and professional and leadership development. Mthembu (2014) adds that the role of inspectors in Nigeria's traditional supervision was coercive, witch-hunting, and unhelpful and their visits were a nightmare for teachers. To cater for the new democratic dispensation in South Africa, the name for inspectors was changed firstly to the superintendent of education management and subsequently to circuit managers.

Circuit managers are answerable to the District Director for the learner outcomes of schools under their jurisdiction and supervision. Part of the circuit managers core duties as office – based educators is to plan, execute model expectation, coach and supervise staff development activities to stimulate principals' everyday thoughts and everyday practice (PAM, 2016). Circuit managers as immediate supervisors must conduct some kind of baseline assessment of new or inexperienced principals to evaluate their capabilities, development needs and development programmes that they will require (Naidoo, 2011). They must develop and implement an induction programme, for newly appointed principals, put in place a mentorship plan and have coaching sessions for principals as their supervisees.

During the implementation of the performance appraisal system, Quality Management System (QMS), the circuit manager as the immediate supervisor must evaluate and assess the performance of the principal. He or she must ascertain development needs and design development programmes for the principal using the continuous professional teacher development process. According to Matiwane and Pitsoe (2014) circuit managers must play a

proactive and positive role by providing professional and leadership development opportunities for growth and support of the principals under their supervision.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was underpinned by transformational leadership theory, which was supplemented by Gray and Bishop's (2009) leadership development model. The theoretical and conceptual framework will help in making sense of both the role of the circuit manager as a transformational leader in the professional and leadership development of school principals and the principal as a transformational leader at school.

2.9. 1 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Most companies use the transformational leadership model for motivating innovations in the organization. Transformational leadership originated in 1978 through Burns, who first authored transactional and transformational leadership. Transformational leaders inspire followers to achieve performance and surpassing expectations by changing the followers' thinking, beliefs and standards as opposed to just gaining followers compliance (Bass, 1985; Yulk, 1999). Transformational leadership theory is used by leaders to encourage, inspire, and influence employees to transform and generate change that will assist to develop, grow and direct the future success of the organization. Berkovich (2016) concurs that transformational leaders inspire their employees to obligate to a common vision and goals for their organization, stimulating them to be innovative problem solvers. Transformational leaders lift their followers to higher levels.

Bush (2013) and Hallinger (2003) (as cited in Berkovich, 2016) noted that transformational leadership is one of "the dominant and most significant leadership model in the field of education administration". That was supported by Moolenaar, Daly and Sleegers (2010) by highlighting that the findings of their study indicated transformational leadership was positively connected with schools and innovative climate. They also noted that "leaders who can develop common vision and goals, address the social requirements of individual stakeholders, and offer intellectual encouragement, they are perceived as supporting the conducive ground for transformation and innovation to develop" (Moolenaar et al., 2010, p. 655). Transformational leadership is appropriate for a school setting because it stresses principals making teachers to adapt to new innovations, building and reinforcing new school culture, and creating new innovative ways of thinking. According to Loon, Lim, Lee and Tam

(2012) transformational leaders can revitalize and alter their organizations by making and modelling the vision. It is effective as a tool for assisting school leaders to break well-known norms and start new organizational norms that transform school culture. Transformational leadership promotes that principals should be agents of change and motivate the teachers they are leading to become agents of change also.

This theory encourages that transformational leaders develop leadership capacity of their followers by mentoring, coaching, supporting and providing for their challenges. George and Jones (2005) define the three essential ways that transformational leaders can develop their followers;

(i) being able to stimulate awareness of the significance of performing daily management and leadership tasks well by their followers;

(ii) cultivating the need for their followers' individual growth and development; and

(iii) motivating their followers to work for the betterment of the institution.

Zondo (2013) states that transformational leaders support and empower their followers through appropriate professional development programmes. Transformational leadership theory transforms the thinking of the followers on their roles and motivates them to become leaders themselves (Bass, 1999).

This theory was relevant for this study because the circuit manager as a transformational leader must pay attention to the professional and leadership development needs of the principals under his or her supervision by providing them with new learning opportunities. The circuit manager as a transformational leader must be able to encourage principals' consciousness of the significance of performing their daily tasks well, nurture their individual progress and development needs and encourage them to work for the betterment of their schools. The circuit manager must sometimes act as a coach, and mentor, and provide support, advice and hands-on guidance to both novice and veteran principals as the followers to improve the performance of their daily tasks.

Even though transformational leadership theory dates back more than four decades ago it is still relevant, applicable and links well with this study as it encourages both the principal as the school leader and the circuit manager as the district leader to deal with education challenges

that are brought by the new demands and legislative mandates that they must fulfil to achieve educational goals.

2.9.2 GRAY AND BISHOP'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Leadership development is taken as one of the most significant aspects of the professional development of principals. Leadership development is the facilitation of the leadership capacity of principals to be effective in their leadership role function and responsibilities to the advantage of learners' learning and performance outcomes (Gray & Bishop, 2009). According to Bush (2013), leadership development is more important for practising principals. He went further and emphasised the significance of preparing novice principals with suitable skills to meet the ever-increasing demands of the 21st century.

Gray and Bishop (2009) strongly believed that for schools and districts to achieve high performance, they need to have strong leaders. Gray and Bishop (2009) defined the individual needs assessment, support and challenging leaders' safe place as the three features of school leadership development. The three key drivers for Gray and Bishop's (2009) leadership development are assessment of individuals' strengths, weaknesses and areas of development needs. They continue to discuss the second driver of leadership development as challenging means of taking people out of their comfort zone by developing and enhancing their new experiences. The last driver of leadership development is to provide individual support through motivation and inspiring people to grow and change (Gray and Bishop, 2009). Rieckhoff and Larsen (2008) support the notion that principals are responsible for pinpointing their development aims to make sure that the required developments and modifications are applied to the educational programme, and the work with the schools' external stakeholders.

According to Msila and Mtshali (2011), school leaders need to know about the effectiveness and performance of schools. Msila and Mtshali (2011) revealed that people who aspire to be leaders need to know about leadership capabilities, required to be effective, preconceived attitudes about male and female managers, acumen, personality, morals and leadership styles. That is corroborated by Rieckhoff and Larsen (2008) by emphasising that principals are accountable, responsible and answerable for all functions and operations of the school including all of the staff and students.

Gray and Bishop (2009) claim that leadership development is more effective when all three key driving components are in existence. They further posit that assessment is pinpointing a personal leader's strengths, flaws and development need. The circuit manager can use the findings of the QMS performance appraisal process to identify the principals' individual needs and strengths or use individual principals' self-evaluation for the identification of these aspects. CPTD can thus be used to address the development areas identified.

Gray and Bishop (2009, p. 29) highlighted five aspects that contribute to the accomplishment of leadership development initiatives as follows:

      i)   Role-based learning, where superior training, put together with on-the-job application and practices, are characteristics of successful leadership development practices.

      ii)   Mentors to coach performance, where good mentors giving the daily feedback and coaching to assist with adapting from the role of the classroom teacher to that of a school leader.

      iii)   Focused learning practices, where leadership development involves prospects for emerging leaders to resolve a range of school challenges, first through witnessing and partaking and then by actually leading teams in detecting, applying, and assessing development interventions.

      iv)   Capabilities or standards to guide performance, where numerous districts and universities make or adopt a set of proficiencies to guide the performance of new leaders before becoming a school or district leader.

      v)   Reflection on practice, where leadership development is most effective when new leaders understand and practice leadership behaviours and then reflect on their decision and actions.

The five conditions that contribute to the success of leadership development seemed to be relevant in the role of the circuit manager to develop the leadership of principals as they provide a model of role embedded learning, which is on-the-job learning. This assistance as principals must be developed when they are already employed and performing their tasks. Focus learning will empower principals with skills and experience to solve problems that they are encountering when performing their daily tasks. Both transformational leadership theory and Gray and Bishop's (2009) leadership development emphasise individual development, mentoring and on the job training as some of the practices and techniques a circuit manager can use to promote the professional and leadership development of principals.

2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the existing literature in the field of study was reviewed. The first part of the chapter focused on professional development. The second part of the chapter reviewed the professional development needs of principals. The third part focused on the international and local perspectives of principals' professional development, as well as challenges facing circuit managers in principals' professional development. The final part of the chapter discussed the transformational leadership theory and Gray and Bishop's (2009) leadership development model which constituted the theoretical framework of the study.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an account of the research design and methodology employed in this study. A discussion on the interpretive paradigm and qualitative methodology approach will be presented. Following this, the case study methodology is discussed. Further, research methods including sampling, data generation and data analysis methods are discussed. Finally, trustworthiness issues, ethical issues and the limitations of the study are presented.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research studies are based on different fundamental philosophical hypotheses about what represents an applicable research study and which research method is relevant for the development of knowledge in a particular study. According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) the choice of a paradigm sets down the purpose, explanation, expectations and motivation for the research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) agree that the notion of fitness for purpose is vital in the choice of a paradigm. The choice of research paradigm is determined by the purpose of the research to be conducted. The research paradigm within which the study is located also determines the choice of methods and research instruments appropriate for the study.

This study is located within the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive paradigm is defined as a set of critical assumptions and views about understanding the world and how this understanding assists as a rational structure that supports the actions of the researcher (Jonker & Pennick, 2010). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008) support this statement by stating that interpretive paradigm is valuable when the researcher is seeking to comprehend and interpret the world according to its role-players as people interact in their different context and experience to form their own reality. According to Blanche and Durrheim (2007) interpretive paradigm includes taking seriously the participants subjective experiences, building insight into their experience through collaborating and listening to what they say to generate and analyse data. The interpretive paradigm was chosen because it allows the participants to relate their lived experiences and points of view of the phenomenon that is researched (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). The interpretive paradigm recognizes that there is no unique single complete truth. The truth is created through engagements between the participants and the researcher and

it is not discovered by the researcher. (Msweli, 2020). Cohen et al., (2008) explain that when the researcher describes participants' personal understanding, intentions, values and beliefs in the interpretive paradigm knowledge can be observed. The choice of interpretive paradigm in this study was appropriate as the study aimed to elicit the perspective of six school principals through their experience and interaction on the role played by their circuit managers in their professional and leadership development. The principals as participants' interpretation and the researcher in this study created meaning, and interpreted the context and phenomena.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods are the three types of research designs. The study used the qualitative approach. Research design is aimed at specifying a plan of evidence that will be utilised to respond to the research question so the researcher can come to the most credible and valid conclusions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007) a qualitative methodology is viewed as a suitable research design for researchers who framed their studies within the interpretive paradigm. Creswell (2008) asserts that qualitative design is about understanding and reporting on human and social experiences based on participants' views and conducted in their natural environment. Maree (2007) further describes qualitative research design as an inquiry by which the researcher generates data utilising one-on-one contact with the chosen participants in their own environment.

Maxwell (2005) mentions the fact that the qualitative approach is concerned with finding the opinions, interpretations and explanations of the participant's world. While Forde (2010) argues that one of the characteristics of a qualitative study is to attempt to clarify the phenomenon and also try to offer interpretations to what is being witnessed. Circuit managers are principals' supervisors and they interact with them daily. Principals are better placed to narrate their observations, experience and understanding of the role of circuit manager in their professional and leadership development in this small-scale study. The qualitative study was selected because the data was gathered by visiting the principals in their schools' natural location. The researcher sought to get answers to the three research questions, whereby principals will be recounted their own understanding of the role of circuit managers in their leadership and professional development.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is how data will be obtained, organised and analysed (Polit & Hungler, 2004). The research methodology is also explained by Maxwell (2005) as a theory of correct scientific decisions. The choice of research methodology is determined by the nature of the research questions. The case study is the research methodology used in this study. Baxter and Jack (2008) describe the case study as a research methodology utilised to advance the examination of a phenomenon within its environment utilising a variety of data sources. Creswell (2007) concurs that in a case study, the researcher explores a bounded system or multiple bounded systems over a period of time, through comprehensive, thorough data gathering comprising of several sources of information. Creswell (2007) continues to emphasise that in a case study, the researcher explores a comprehensive programme or occurrence, an activity, a practice on different people. In this study, the researcher interacted and generated data from six secondary school principals who were be interviewed in their schools as their natural daily setting. This study provides an easy-to-understand illustration of real individuals in their authentic environment which will let the readers to comprehend the points of view more openly instead of only presenting them with abstract hypothesis and theories. This case is made up of six secondary school principals from three circuits in the Umlazi District.

Baxter and Jack (2008) argue that it is difficult to use a case study methodology for research, if the topic is quite extensive and have many questions. This study utilised a bounded case study through defining and placing boundaries like the place and activity (Creswell, 2007). The research was conducted at Umlazi District in three circuits; namely Umbumbulu, Phumelela and Durban Central. The study looked at the role of circuit managers in enhancing leadership and professional development of principals. The bound case ensured that the study remained within a reasonable scope.

3.5 SAMPLING METHOD

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) suggest that sampling is a process used to choose the participants from the population for the study. Sampling is the appropriate choice of participants that are most suitable for a study. There are different sampling methods; this includes among others convenience, random, stratified and purposive. In this study, purposive and convenience sampling were chosen.

According to Pieterson and Maree (2007) purposive sampling is when a researcher chooses participants based on some predetermined features they possess. These features make the participants owners of the information needed for the study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) attest to the fact that the selection of participants in purposive sampling is based on the requirements of the research problem. Six secondary school principals from three different circuits in Umlazi District were purposively selected as participants for this study. I am also a circuit manager in Umlazi District, and all the participants in this study were not in the circuit I am managing. The samples were selected as they are likely to have an insight and information about the phenomenon the researcher is exploring (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study, the participating principals were purposively selected because they match the purpose of the study and are holders of the information about the role their circuit managers play in their leadership and professional development. Principals are the recipients of training and capacity building from circuit managers and they work closely with the circuit managers as their supervisors. For this reason, principals were the most suitable participants and have in-depth knowledge on the phenomenon.

Ilker, Sulaim and Rukayya (2016) define convenience sampling as a non-random sampling procedure that has to do with the selection of participants on certain criteria. This convenient sampling includes issues of access to the schools and the availability of the participants. This method assisted the researcher in nominating the participants based on the fact that the participants are easily available and conveniently accessible (Cohen et al., 2007). This is therefore the method that considers even the geographical proximity of the participants. Convenience sampling allowed the researcher to choose six secondary schools that are within Umlazi District which made travelling affordable.

3.6 DATA GENERATION METHOD

The data generation method focuses on the collection of information techniques from participants (Creswell, 2012). In a qualitative study data can be generated on natural occurring environment, in the form of text instead of figures and using different data generation methods to get deep insight into the phenomenon being studied (McMillan & Schumacher, 2011). For this study, the researcher generated data by utilising semi-structured interviews. Below, I discuss this method.

3.6.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This study utilised one-on-one semi-structured interview method with each individual principal. According to Msweli (2017), semi-structured interview is a technique used by researchers to collect data from participants using open-ended questions. Ndlovu (2017) supports this view by stating that a semi-structured interview is characterised by few main questions with sub and follow-up questions. Rule and John (2011) further emphasize that semi-structured interviews allow for flexibility and for the researcher to give clarity in case the participants need it. Semi-structured interviews have a high degree of engagement, are easy to conduct, user-friendly and quick (De Vos, 2005).

The semi-structured interview method was chosen because of its flexibility and for allowing the researcher to probe further and ask follow-up questions. Semi structured interview is helpful in getting more information that can be appropriate to the study while directed by the interview timetable (Creswell, 2012). Interviews were appropriate to solicit responses from principals on their understanding of the role of circuit manager in their professional and leadership development. Principals were encouraged and allowed to describe and share their perspectives on the phenomenon. Each interview was conducted at school in the principals' office and it took approximately an hour.

Due to the fact that I conducted the interviews during Covid-19 lockdown level three, I adhered to the following prescribed health protocols; I was screened on arrival at the school, both the participants and myself wore face masks during the entire interview, we both sanitised our hands before the start of the interview and our seating arrangements adhered to one metre social distancing.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Mthembu (2014) stated that qualitative analysis transforms the collected data into research findings. Qualitative data analysis includes the generation of data and analysing it into groups (McMillan & Schumacher, 2011). Vithal and Jansen (2001) shared a related view as they emphasized that data analysis is a method of interpreting the generated data. Yin (2009) further affirms that data analysis is a method used to reduce data into smaller meaningful parts. Data analysis is helpful, as it assists the researcher to organise and make sense of the generated data.

This study used thematic analysis to analyse the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis is a common approach that a qualitative researcher can use to analyse generated data (Percy, Kostere & Koster, 2015). Braun and Clark (2006) described thematic analysis as a method of discovering, interpreting and reporting patterns or themes that came out of the data. According to Cohen et al. (2011) thematic analysis includes coding the generated data, into meaningful groups according to themes and patterns.

The themes are grouped as per related answers to the critical questions asked (McMillan & Schumacher, 2011). The digital voice recorder was used to record six interviews, and the cell phone recording was used as backup. The voice records were transcribed into text verbatim. Transcripts were then shared with the six principals to confirm that they were accurate. Data was analysed through reading carefully so as to familiarise the researcher with data. Data was coded into themes through grouping responses for each question for further analysis. Coding is the process whereby answers to interview questions are deciphered to appropriate groups with the goals to analyse them (Cohen et al., 2011). The researcher used the emerging themes to categorise and further analyse data. Further to that the researcher verified the data and drew conclusions with an objective of matching the findings with the research questions.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness refers to how a researcher tries to validate that the data collected is of good quality. Yin (2009) states that the aim of trustworthiness is to minimise the inaccuracies and prejudices in a study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) declare that trustworthiness comprises four criteria called credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

3.8.1 Credibility

Lincoln and Guba, (1985) refer to credibility as evaluating and checking whether the collected data is precise to illustrate the researched phenomenon. To ensure that the study is credible, semi-structured interviews of six different principals were recorded and used for data generation. Interview transcript was shared with participants for them to verify that what is written is what transpired in the interview. Guion, Diehl & McDonald (2011) describe data triangulation as the use of a variety of sources of information to increase the legitimacy of a study. The researcher selected six experienced principals, who were interviewed in their natural environment where they work to ensure credibility of the study. To ensure credibility further the interviews were tape recorded.

3.8.2 Transferability

Bitsch (2005) defines transferability as the stability of findings over time. According to Yin (2014) transferability means that the findings of another study can be utilised to comprehend a certain phenomenon in a related condition. All the information and data generated methods related to this study have been provided so that any researcher can choose whether to use the information of this study in another similar circumstances.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is a way of assessing quality used during the data collection process (Yin, 2014). This study uses semi-structured interviews as data generating method to guarantee dependability. The same questions and schedule were utilised when interviewing the six secondary school principals to guarantee that the findings derived are consistent and dependable. Participants were all treated the same.

3.8.4 Confirmability

The collected data must confirm and establish the accuracy and reliability of the interpretations of the findings. The findings must not be the creation of the researcher's own thoughts, but must be taken from data (Tobin & Begley, 2004). The interview recordings were compared with a copy of the transcript to verify and check data accuracy. The researcher verified if what was written down is an accurate reflection of what emerged and was said in the interview and discussions by giving the transcripts to each participant.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Flick (2006) code of ethics are the well-known regulatory standards that were put in place to dictate accepted relationship and behaviour between the study participants and the researcher. Reardon (2006) argues that the researcher has to uphold the code of ethics continuously and at all times. Firstly, as part of ethical consideration the researcher obtained approval to do the study by applying to the UKZN higher degrees' committee. To this end the application for ethical clearance was submitted to the committee. Secondly, permission to research the selected schools was applied for and obtained from the KZN DOE HOD, Dr EV Nzama. Copy of the consent letter was shared with participants. After getting permission from the HOD, a request for consent and approval from the gatekeepers and the six purposively sampled principals of secondary schools who were participants in this study was obtained.

Macmillan and Schumacher (2014) state that in research, participants must participate voluntarily, and must not be coerced or compelled. In this study the researcher explained the principle of autonomy; that participation in this study is voluntary to the selected principals. Participants are not forced to participate in the study and can withdraw at any stage of the study. Cooper and Schindler (2003) declared that a participant may not be abused, harassed, humiliated, or physically injured during the interview process. Loss of privacy is supposed to be avoided when conducting research. Their rights as participants was explained. The purpose of the study which is to understand the perspective of principals on the role of circuit managers in their professional and leadership development was explained to participants.

Macmillan and Schumacher (2014) further posit that confidentiality must be kept and no one must get access to participants' identity in the study. Data generated from the participants will be kept confidential and not shared with anyone (Niewehuis, 2007). Participants were assured that their responses will be known to the researcher only. The researcher ensured that participants responses did not reveal their identity. Their right to privacy was respected.

Msweli (2017) refers to anonymity as the ability by the researcher to keep the participants' identity a secret. The anonymity of the participants was assured. This was done through ensuring that the names of participants, schools and the community where the schools are situated are protected and not revealed (Blanche *et al*., 2006). Fictitious names were used as the pseudonyms of principals and schools taking part in the study. The names of principals and schools participating in the study was coded in the findings to ensure anonymity. Lastly, the final research report will be available to the stakeholder who may be interested to read it.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
According to Msweli (2020) limitations are factors that weaken the study. This study is limited by the fact that it is based on the perspective of only six principals in Umlazi District which has over 450 principals. These findings may not be taken as representing all principals in Umlazi District of KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education since this was a small-scale study. This study is limited to six participants therefore it lacks generalisation. However, any researcher can choose to use the findings from this study in similar context if they are applicable.

Creswell (2007) cautions that researchers should be wary of biases or assumptions that may influence data collection and analysis. It was a limitation that I am a circuit manager. I could

have approached the study with predetermined ideas and, principals could have felt pressurized to only state good and positive things about my colleagues. To minimize researcher bias and ensure that participants expressed their views candidly, I explained that I was conducting an independent study and my capacity as the researcher was not to represent the Department of Education. I did not choose participants in the circuit I am managing. The purpose of the study was clearly explained. Participants were encouraged to express their views candidly. Participants were assured of absolute confidentiality, as the information they shared was not going to be shared with my colleagues.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher has described and outlined the research design and methodology used in this study. The chapter outlined the qualitative approach which was utilised and is underpinned within the interpretive paradigm. This study used a qualitative case study of six secondary school principals. The sampling method was discussed. One method of data collection namely; semi-structured interviews was utilised in this study. Data analysis procedures and the processes to ensure trustworthiness were explained. Issues of ethical considerations and limitation of the study were outlined. The next chapter will present data generation, data analysis and findings from the field.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter the research design and methodology that informed this study's process was presented and discussed. Chapter three also discussed the method utilised to collect data; namely semi-structured interviews. This chapter concentrates on presenting data. A thematic presentation and discussion of findings emerging from data analysis will follow. I will begin this chapter by introducing the profiles of the participants and profiles of the schools where participants work. Thereafter, I will present and discuss the three themes and sub-themes that emerged.

4.2 PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

The study generated data from six participants. These participants are principals in six different secondary schools in Umlazi District. Pseudonyms were given to the six participants and their schools, in order to protect their identities. Table 4.1 below presents the pseudonyms of participants and their schools: thereafter, participants' profiles are presented.

No	Name of participant	Name of school
1.	Dr Madixadixa	Mfusi Secondary School
2.	Mrs Nkone	Mpofu Secondary School
3.	Mrs Matshezulu	Mhlophe Secondary School
4.	Mr Hlakuva	Mdaka Secondary School
5.	Mrs Mlindankomo	Mbomvu Secondary School
6.	Mr Dabulumhlambi	Mnyama Secondary School

Table 4.1: List of participants

4.2.1 Dr Madixadixa

The first participant was given the false name of Dr Madixadixa for anonymity reasons. He is 54 years and is a principal in a school named Mfusi Secondary school, for anonymity reasons. Dr Madixadixa started teaching thirty-three years ago; he started as a Post level 1educator in 1988. In 2000, he was promoted to a position of departmental head. Again in 2003, he was promoted to a position of deputy principal. In 2005, he was once more promoted to a principal position; he has been a principal of Mfusi Secondary school for sixteen years. Dr Madixadixa holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts Honours, Bachelor of Education Honours, Master of Education and Doctor of Philosophy which he obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. His school is located at Phumelela Circuit Management Centre in Umlazi District and is ranked at quintile 3. The school has an enrolment of one thousand three hundred grade eight to twelve learners that are accommodated in 24 classrooms. The school has the following speciality rooms; a consumer studies room, Engineering Graphics & Design (EGD) room, Information Technology (IT) room and Science Laboratory. The school has forty educators and eleven support staff.

4.2.2 Mrs Nkone

The second participant was given a false name of Mrs Nkone for anonymity reasons. She is 53 years and is a principal in a school named Mpofu Secondary school, for anonymity reasons. Mrs Nkone started teaching thirty-two years ago; she started as a Post level 1educator in 1989. In 1996, she was promoted to a position of departmental head. Again in 2004, she was promoted to a position of deputy principal. In 2015, she was once more promoted to a principal position; and has been a principal of Mpofu Secondary school for five years. She holds a Secondary Teachers Diploma which she obtained from Adams College. Her school is located at Umbumbulu Circuit Management Centre in Umlazi District and is ranked at quintile 3. The school has an enrolment of seven hundred and one grade eight to twelve learners that are accommodated in fifteen classrooms. The school does not have speciality rooms but has converted classrooms into a Hospitality room, Visual Art room, Engineering Graphics & Design (EGD) room, and Physical Science Laboratory that is closed for now because of termites. The school has twenty-four educators and six support staff.

4.2.3 Mrs Matshezulu

The third participant was given a false name of Mrs Matshezulu for anonymity reasons. She is 51 years and is a principal in a school named Mhlophe Secondary school for anonymity reasons. Mrs Matshezulu started teaching twenty-eight years ago; she started as a Post level 1educator in 1993. In 1996, she was promoted to a position of departmental head. Again in 2004, she was promoted to a position of deputy principal. In 2015, she was once more promoted to a principal position and has been a principal of Mhlophe Secondary school for sixteen years. She holds a STD, B Paed. and a Higher Diploma in Education which she obtained at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She started teaching as a Post level 1 educator in 1993. She was promoted to be a deputy principal in 2009 and was promoted as a principal in 2005. Her school is ranked at quintile 3. Her school is located at Durban Central CMC in Umlazi District. The school has an enrolment of one thousand three hundred and seventy grade eight to twelve learners that are accommodated in 24 classrooms. The school has the following speciality rooms; Hospitality room, Engineering Graphics & Design (EGD) room, Information Technology (IT) room, Physical Science Laboratory, Computer room and Life Science Laboratory. The school has forty-three educators and seventeen support staff.

4.2.4 Mr Hlakuva

The fourth participant was given a false name of Mr Hlakuva for anonymity reasons. Mr Hlakuva is 53 years and is a principal in a school named Mdaka Secondary school, for anonymity reasons. Mr Hlakuva started teaching twenty-three years ago and has been a principal of Mdaka Secondary school for five years. He holds a STD, ACE and B. Ed (Hons) which he obtained at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He started teaching as a Post level 1 educator in 1998. He was promoted to be a departmental head in 2011, as a Deputy principal in 2011 and was promoted as a principal in 2016. His school is ranked at quintile 3. His school is located at Durban Central CMC in Umlazi District. The school has an enrolment of one thousand two hundred and seventy-seven grade eight to twelve learners that are accommodated in 26 classrooms. The school has the following speciality rooms; a Consumer room, Engineering Graphics & Design (EGD) room, Computer room, Science Laboratory and a multi-purpose room. The school has forty-two educators and fifteen support staff.

4.2.5 Mrs Mlindankomo

The fifth participant is named Mrs Mlindankomo for anonymity reasons. Mrs Mlindankomo is 53 years and is a principal in a school named Mbomvu Secondary school, for anonymity reasons. Mlindankomo started teaching twenty-eight years ago and has been a principal of Mbomvu Secondary school for eight years. She holds a STD and B Com which she obtained at the University of South Africa. She started teaching as a Post level 1 educator in 1993. She was promoted to be a departmental head in 2000 and was promoted as a principal in 2013. Her school is ranked at quintile 1. Her school is located at Umbumbulu CMC in Umlazi District. The school has an enrolment of four hundred and twelve grade eight to twelve learners that are accommodated in 7 classrooms. The school does not have speciality rooms. The school has thirteen educators and five support staff.

4.2.6 Mr Dabulumhlambi

The sixth participant was given a false name of Mr Dabulumhlambi for anonymity reasons. Mr Dabulumhlambi is 59 years and is a principal in a school named Mnyama Secondary school, for anonymity reasons. Mr Dabulumhlambi started teaching thirty-one years ago and has been a principal of Mnyama Secondary school for five years. He holds a STD, B Com and B BA which he obtained at the MANCOSA. He started teaching as a Post level 1 educator in 1990. He was promoted to be a departmental head 1995, as a Deputy principal in 2006 and was promoted as a principal in 2016. His school is ranked at quintile 3. His school is located at Phumelela CMC in Umlazi District. The school has an enrolment of one thousand and fifty-seven grade eight to twelve learners that are accommodated in 22 classrooms. The school has the following speciality rooms; a Computer Laboratory, Physical Science Laboratory, Life Science Laboratory and two smart-board rooms. The school has thirty-three educators and ten support staff.

4.3 DATA PRESENTATION

The findings presented the three themes and sub-themes that emerged from the collected data to address the main critical questions and objectives of this study.

4.3.1 Principals' understanding of the role of circuit managers in relation to their professional and leadership development

In answering the first research question that focused on the principals' understanding of the role of the circuit managers in relation to their professional and leadership development, the following two themes emerged. These themes are:

4.3.1.1 Circuit Managers provide guidance and support to Principals

In responding to the question of the principals' understanding of the role of circuit managers in relation to their professional and leadership development, one of the themes that emerged is guidance and support. The guidance and support that the principals are claiming to be receiving from their circuit managers include developing their leadership styles, problem-solving and decision making, motivation and professional development.

The participants clearly articulated that one of the roles of the circuit managers is to provide guidance and support through their leadership and management styles. Dr Madixadixa mentioned the following:

*"When I look at the support that was given to me by different circuit managers since I became the principal of the school, it becomes clear that when I convey problems to them, they ensure that they support me in attending to those problems appropriately." (*Dr Madixadixa)

The above is further supported by Mrs Matshezulu; she explains that she realised the role of circuit manager when she was facing challenges with teachers at school. She explains:

"I think the very significant role as I said, when I came here there was a lot of opposition and I relied on the guidance and support of my circuit manager. One of the challenges we have been facing at the school was teachers administering corporal punishment to learners. I shared this challenge with the circuit manager who subsequently provided support in a form of empowering my staff on alternative strategies." …Working with circuit managers has been a good journey, I don't want to lie, I moved from strength to strength because of their support. You see, if I did not have the kind of supervisor like my circuit manager, I would not be where I am now. Even when I had challenges with my parents, they will listen to me and give me good guidance; sometimes they will tell me that I did not do right, but in the future, I should know that this is how I need to handle things. (Mrs Matshezulu)

Mr Hlakuva expressed similar sentiments as other participants; he highlights the support of his circuit manager even during a devastating pandemic. He had this to say:

"He used to come here at school to motivate me to do as much as I can so that I can be able to lead effectively. He even indicated that I need not be afraid of my teachers and not be friends with my teacher but make it a point that I do my job. If I do like that, I will be on a safer side." *(Mr Hlakuva)*

Mr Dabulumhlambi also attested to the above by mentioning how circuit managers help them with on-the-job development on solving problems.

"I think the role of a circuit manager is to give a lot of support to the principal and remember that sometimes you go to the post not knowing where to start as a principal and you think things are right the way you find them and you discover that things are not supposed to be done this way. So, the role of the circuit manager is to help the principal on how can I achieve this and how could I start solving these problems." *(Mr Dabulumhlambi)*

The responses from principals were congruent with the Personnel Administrative Measures (RSA, 1998b), which indicates that some of the key responsibility areas of circuit managers include providing guidance and support to their schools. One participant mentioned that the circuit manager was supportive even on issues of conflict management. ELRC Collective Agreement 4 of 2017 states that circuit managers should assist schools on fair labour environment which includes conflict resolution in schools. Larasati and Raharja (2020) highlight that if the conflict is not handled correctly by principals, it will have a negative impact on the schooling environment.

The above extracts show different ways of support and guidance that circuit managers provide to principals. The above extracts suggest that circuit managers are transformational leaders, as Bass and Riggio (2006) state that transformational leaders provide motivation and professional development to the people they lead. The participants' responses that suggest that circuit manager supports them when they are faced with challenges by empowering them with innovative problem-solving skills that influenced them to be better leaders of their schools reflect the motivation characteristic of transformational leaders (Berkovich, 2016).

4.3.1.2 Capacity building

In South Africa, there is no prior qualification or training to become a principal. Most of the leadership and professional development activities take place after principals are already appointed. In this study, I found that principals understand that another role of circuit managers is capacity building. All the participants agreed that their circuit managers personally developed them in different leadership, management and professional aspects of their daily duties.

Four participants stated that circuit managers used the process of IQMS to identify their development needs and then provided capacity building initiatives to develop them in financial management, time management, curriculum management and examination procedures respectively. Dr Madixadixa explains:

"We sit together with the circuit manager as part of my Development Support Group (DSG) to discuss my weaknesses as the school principal and we will come up with strategies of how to improve. He will tell me what to do in order to improve in that particular aspect. In terms of IQMS, I see improvements in what we discussed during the process. The circuit managers have also helped me a lot with time management, submission dates as a leader and sticking to the due dates. We also attended workshops on exam matters as principals conducted by circuit managers."

Mrs Matshezulu also added on what she considers to be capacity building from the circuit manager. Her circuit manager helped develop her financial management skills.

"I was not good in finances, like not good at all! I used to write it down even in my IQMS that I need some help in financial management. The circuit manager organised a workshop on financial management and the policy on norms and standards. Slowly and surely, I am improving in this regard".

Mrs Mlindankomo indicated how the circuit manager contributed to her level of growth by capacitating her in the understanding of departmental policies and managing IQMS.

"I think I am a better leader now than before as I now understand departmental policies and QMS. During the IQMS process, I discovered that I am poor in filing and the circuit manager assisted me in this regard"

Mrs Nkone agreed with Mrs Mlindonkomo regarding capacity building on IQMS management and even went further to develop her in managing the curriculum.

"When I came to my school, IQMS was not done and nobody understood its importance and planning that goes with it. But now they are trying to come back because of the development that I received from the circuit manager. I also received academic workshops on curriculum management from the circuit manager".

Mr Dabulumhlambi was capacitated on human resource management, legislative mandates and discipline by his circuit manager.

"I think I have gained a lot because one circuit manager did a financial management session and now, I am hands-on, on executing my financial management responsibilities and now I can say, I am competent on this aspect. Secondly, time management and knowing exactly if something must be submitted and must be done on time. You have time frames that you have to adhere to. I received capacity building from circuit manager which includes aspects of how to manage your staff and your subordinates, understanding education acts and discipline at school." (Mr Dabulumhlambi)

Mr Hlakuva added to the topics covered by the circuit manager's capacity building sessions.
"Most of the workshops done by the circuit manager included safety in schools, workshops to solve conflicts and how to deal with bullying."

The above assertions from participants reflect the different capacity building and management programmes that circuit managers embarked on to build the capacity of their principals. Mostly, the circuit managers do the development themselves after identifying the principals' development needs through the performance management process of IQMS. The capacity building sessions delivered by the circuit managers seems to improve the principals' practice, as some even cascaded what they learnt to their staff members.

According to IQMS policy, during the implementation of the performance appraisal system circuit managers as immediate supervisors must evaluate and assess the performance of the principal. They must ascertain their development gaps and needs and design a personal growth plan for each principal that will be addressed through continuous professional teacher development. According to Matiwane and Pitsoe (2014) circuit managers are expected to take

an active role in the provision of professional and leadership development to enhance growth and support of the principals that they supervise.

Judging from the responses of the participants, their circuit managers display qualities of transformational leaders as they identify principals' developmental needs during school visits and performance appraisal sessions. Circuit managers follow up by designing and implementing individual and group capacity building to the principals. The capacity building includes collaboration with other sub-directorates. Loon, Lim, Lee and Tam (2016) posit that transformational leaders recognize and cultivate the needs of their followers by providing them with guidance and development. Transformational leaders promote individual and group learning to improve the followers' personal and professional abilities.

4.3.2 Principals' views on the strategies applied by circuit managers to enhance principals' professional and leadership development

This section provided answers to the second research question. The following three themes emerged in responding to the strategies circuit managers apply to enhance principals' professional and leadership development.

4.3.2.1 Mentoring and modelling

Mentoring of novice principals and modelling the expected behaviour and practice by Circuit managers is important in leadership and professional development. According to Hansford and Ehrich (2006) "mentoring is a planned and coordinated approach of guiding individuals, usually beginners, on the job by the more experienced person. It entails agreeing to engage in a professional and close relationship that is intended to provide professional development, growth and different degrees of personal support".

Role modelling is a recognized strategy for communicating professional attitudes and behaviours from a leader to a follower (Bidwell & Brasler, 1989). While Taylor, Taylor and Stoller (2009) further describe modelling as learning where leaders are observed and watched in action and emulated by subordinate. It is also described as observational learning and "watching leaders-in-action". Some participants alluded to the fact that their circuit managers will model the management practice they wanted them to emulate. Four Principals highlighted that their circuit managers mentored them in the form of conducting one-on-one meetings and modelling the school management practices that they were supposed to emulate.

Dr Madixadixa explained that the circuit manager used one-on-one sessions for mentoring him on what he should do.

*"Sometimes the circuit manager will do a one-on-one mentoring. You know where we discuss issues pertaining to the school and then will give you guidance as a leader and a manager of what I have to do." (*Dr Madixadixa)

Mr Hlakuva was also in agreement with Dr Madixadixa on holding one-on-one mentoring session with his circuit manager.

"We will have one-on-one discussions with the circuit manager at the office and later on he will call the staff so that he can be able to address them on a number of issues including motivating them."

Mrs Matshezulu and Mrs Nkone also agreed with mentoring by the circuit manager in the form of modelling the expected behaviour.

"The circuit manager will move from room 1 to room 28 and tell you what was happening in each class when he comes back to the office. He did this by indicating that this is what I need to do as the principal in checking if teachers are teaching and how the food was prepared in the kitchen. He will say, if you are a leader, you manage everything." (Mrs Matshezulu)

Mrs Nkone agreed with Mrs Matshezulu by mentioning the following.

"The circuit manager made me understand that when I make a mistake, he will correct and teach me how to resolve the mistake. That has taught me to do the same with the staff and avoid to be punitive and vindictive but assist the educators to learn from their mistakes." (Mrs Nkone*)*

Mr Dabulumhlambi concurred with the fact that the circuit manager modelled the expected practice during their school visits.

"Most of the time the circuit manager moves around the whole school enters the classrooms and toilets to see how clean they were, also discipline the learners who are loitering around. So, when he was doing the rounds, he was teaching me what I had to do that."

The findings from data presented above indicate that four participants agreed that some form of mentoring and modelling by their circuit managers take place during school visits. Circuit

managers visited the schools to hold one-on-one meetings with their principals. During those meetings, they will share knowledge and skills with their principals, thereby contributing to the principals' leadership and professional development. Mrs Nkone confirmed that during the meetings with circuit manager she learned how to resolve her mistakes and avoid being vindictive with her staff. Circuit managers as supervisors are expected to have the one-on-one sessions with principals during their school visits, who are their supervisees. The collected data also reflected how the circuit managers modelled the behaviours of how the principals were supposed to execute their supervisory role by walking around the school, checking the cleanliness of premises, learner discipline and whether teaching and learning was taking place at the school. What was not clear from the responses of participants is whether the mentoring and modelling was a planned programme of circuit managers to develop principals on leadership and professional aspects or if it was a spontaneous action as the need arose.

According to Taylor, et al. (2009) leaders understand mentoring and role modelling as a strategy that plays a significant role in career development. Warhurst (2011) validates that mentoring is preferred as it is short, focused and strategic mentoring sessions are preferred by many than the long ones. Circuit managers used the hierarchical relationship mentoring, where the mentor is in a senior or top position and the mentee is at a junior or lower position (Taylor, et al., 2009). Warhurst (2011) confirmed that modelling can be an unconscious process that becomes conscious when reflection takes place. The participants valued and appreciated role modelling as an experience that is separate from mentoring and the impact of learning from direct observation of skilled leaders as fruitful.

According to Collective Agreement No 04 of 2017 one of the key performance areas for circuit managers is to support school principals and provide support for professional growth. Mentoring and role modelling by the circuit managers was for the purposes of supporting, dispensing advice, professional development and communicating important policy matters of the department of education. The principals clearly stated how they grew professionally and their practices were transformed from these mentoring and modelling sessions.

4.3.2.2 Twinning schools to foster collaborations

Twinning of schools is known as partnership among schools under which two schools come together to greater exposure. The aim is to promote shared learning among students and teachers with a focus to encourage learning inside and outside the classroom. This exercise considers the well-resourced school twinning with the poor school with the aim of improving performance. The principals expressed that the twining of schools that was used by the circuit managers was a form of collaboration between high-performing schools and under-performing schools as well as the pairing novice principals with veteran principals. Four of the participants contributed to this theme and the other two participants were silent on the issue of twinning and collaborations with other schools.

Mrs Nkone mentioned how the circuit manager facilitated the twinning of her school with a neighbouring high performing school when she started her career as the principal.
"The circuit manager gave me a veteran principal of Zibusise Secondary to twin with as this school was performing very well. This is the principal that I contacted whenever I needed management, curriculum advice and support. So, there was a lot of assistance that I got from the principal."

Mrs Mlindankomo was also twined with another by her circuit manager; she explains:
"I was twinned with Zulani Secondary school, a highly performing school in my circuit where we shared management practices with the principal. The teachers from Zulani Secondary school used to conduct extra lessons for my learners, they taught them History and Geography."

Mrs Hlakuva's requested to be twinned with another school and the circuit manager agreed.
"I engaged with the circuit manager regarding twinning with another high performing school and he was supportive of the initiative by monitoring the visits between the two schools. I was collaborating with Jobe secondary, a high performing neighbouring school so that I can replicate their good practices".

Mrs Matshezulu mentioned another important aspect in twinning.
"I was provided with an experienced female principal and I was able to engage with her as woman to woman. She assisted me a lot with professional advice at the beginning of my career and it was a directive from the supervisor".

From the data excerpts, it is evident that circuit manager used twinning as one of the strategies to develop principals' leadership and professional skills. The circuit managers managed to successfully identify individual principal's strengths and weaknesses. This led to the circuit manager twinning veterans with novice principals. Mlindankomo even alluded to sharing of management practices with the veteran principal that was appointed by the circuit manager to support her. Part of collaborations were between high performing schools and underperforming schools, where the principals engaged on curriculum management issues, sharing good practices and professional support. Collaborations went further to having teachers from high performing schools engaging on subject teaching in under performing schools for the purposes of improving learner performance.

Different scholars are of the same view that twinning and fostering of collaboration is one of the critical aspects in enhancing leadership and professional development. Through the twinning relationships, veteran principals formed professional relationships with newly appointed principals to give support and guidance (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). According to Ragins and Verbos (2017) the twinning relationship involved learning, shared growth, personal, leadership and professional development in career path. Purposeful collaborative relationships for principals can enable continuing professional development practices, possibly enhancing, increasing, and expanding their leadership capabilities (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Grogan & Crow, 2004). By facilitating twinning and collaborations relationship amongst veterans and novice principals, high performing and underperforming principals, the circuit manager was providing on the job-embedded leadership and professional development.

4.3.2.3 Ongoing training

For some training programmes the circuit manager used principals' meetings and invited other district officials to conduct trainings after identifying the principals' needs. The participating principals mentioned being trained on human resource management issues like leave management, staffing and performance management QMS and Employee Performance Management Systems (EPMDS).

Dr Madixadixa supported the notion of the circuit manager working with other sub-directorates.

"During principals' meetings, circuit manager used to invite an official from HR to develop us. HR matters were part of the agenda of our meetings including staffing and how to employ educators and that is how I was developed as a principal."

Mrs Matshezulu attested to the circuit manager organising a specialist on QMS as an ongoing training programme.

"Quality Management System was a serious challenge. Initially I perceived it as a lot of work with too many documents but the circuit manager made it easy by organising officials from Performance Management to assist me. It was a lot of work but he was able to simplify it for me to master and implement it."

Mrs Mlindankomo confirmed that circuit managers planned and coordinated trainings for the principals.

"I am developed now as the circuit manager brought specialists to develop us on HR issue, leave management, staffing, Employee Performance Management Systems (EPMDS) and I was able to come back and develop my staff at school".

Mr Hlakuva agreed with the other participants regarding the involvement of other sub-directorates in their trainings and professional development.

"There were many professional development activities. They even invited other people to come and address us during the meetings. The circuit manager called the leave section officials to workshop us including all staff members as they did not know the types of leave available."

Mrs Nkone indicated that circuit manager provided trainings some of the training themselves.

"The circuit manager provided support on curriculum management trainings which I felt it was important for the SMT members to be trained on those aspects."

The discussion above reflects that circuit managers had continuous training programmes to develop leadership and professional skills of the principal under their supervision. They used the monthly principals meeting that are stipulated in the policy on roles and responsibilities of education districts (DBE, 2013) to schedule professional development sessions on performance, human resource and curriculum management. What came out clearly was that

circuit managers did not do all the trainings, but they collaborated with officials from other sub directorates to come and train the principals. Mr Mlindankomo and Mr Hlakuva supported this observation of having other departmental officials training them.

Kaplan and Owing (2015) and Naidoo (2011) posited the perspective that it is necessary for principals to receive training and professional guidance so as to perform effectively at each stage of their leadership and professional development. Hutton (2010) further assert that there is a positive effect on the principals' performance on areas of confidence, collegiality and leadership development if they undergo continuous training. Even though Reeves (2002) agrees with the importance of continuous training for principals, he emphasises that it should be done by different people from within education department, private and non-governmental organisations. That is evident from the responses of the participants where they appreciated the inputs from different officials. As indicated by Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) strategy which is informed by The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (DoE, 2006) it is mandatory that educators at all levels undergo continuous training and professional development. According to Mathibe (2007) worldwide transformation, efficient and effective management and leadership are raised to the highest platform in many countries. Principals are leaders who should champion the learning of teachers and learners, hence it is important that, they are required to participate in a continuous process of learning and development. This will assist principals to meet the challenging demands of transforming current schooling and enhance the different needs of teachers and learners.

4.3.3 The impact of circuit managers' strategies on principals' professional and leadership development

This section provided answers to the third research question. The following two themes emerged as a response to the impact of the strategies implemented by circuit managers on the principals' professional and leadership growth.

4.3.3.1 Growth in leadership and management practices

It is critical that the strategies used by circuit manager in leadership and professional developing of principals provide impact. The changes that can be identified due to the direct and indirect interventions provided by the circuit manager are identified below. This is evident in the responses provided by the participants where it is indicated that the circuit managers'

role, mentoring and modelling and training impacted positively on the principals' leadership growth and change management practices.

Dr Madixadixa indicated that the support on leadership and professional development by the circuit manager had some impact.

"I can say without any fear that now I am able to provide guidance in my school through the different strategies that the circuit manager provided. I gain something whenever I attend workshops and meeting and this includes management plans, setting goals and targets."

Mr Hlakuva agreed with the impact on the leadership and professional development received from the circuit manager.

"Yes, it has helped me a lot because now I am able to apply the policies of the department and make decisions".

Mrs Matshezulu indicated the following:

"I now understand that mistakes are part of growth. Now I am able to utilize the strengths of the educators and not focusing on their mistakes. I am also able to manage conflicts, holistic problem solving and decision making. I do this by looking at all the factors that make me to be able to achieve the outcomes".

Mrs Nkone mentioned the impact that has taken place due to the circuit manager's inputs.

"I think there have been an impact because I have been able to change even the perception of educators towards learners. I have made sure that whatever skills and training that I received, I share it with my staff".

Mr Dabulumhlambi indicated the circuit manager's contribution in his management journey.

"The circuit manager has contributed a lot in my leadership skills development. I am now involved in running Matric Intervention Programmes (MIP) for neighbouring schools. I am also involved in being a resource person in the interview processes and there has been no disputes."

Mrs Mlindankomo has benefitted from the provided leadership and professional development provided by the circuit manager.

"The young and new educators in my school have benefitted from the leadership practice that I have shared with them. Even the inexperienced SMT members have been developed by myself in terms class visits and curriculum management. I have gained confidence in professionally developing my team and that even led to the improvement of learner performance".

The responses from participants attest that the support, guidance capacity building, twinning and collaborations and ongoing training strategies used by circuit mangers enhanced the principals' management practices, leadership and professional growth. Principals started to implement departmental policies and management practices that they had never done before. Circuit managers empowered principals to execute their leadership functions like decision making and goal setting with success and confidence. For some principals, as evidence of the impact of their leadership growth, they began the practice of developing their own staff and fellow neighbouring principals. Daily management practices improved, even maintenance of labour peace through capacity building on conflict resolution as this is one of the circuit managers' key performance areas (ELRC, 2017). There is clear evidence that some of the capacity building and ongoing training programmes by circuit mangers were specifically designed as a result of the principal's development needs that were identified during the IQMS performance appraisal process.

Harman (2013) argues that for effective leadership and professional development a planned shared learning must be rooted within work environment. Peterson and Cosner (2005) emphasized that school superintendent can use diverse approaches to improve principals' opportunities to learn from on-the-job experience. Peterson and Cosner (2005) further list some of the approaches that will yield impact such as induction programme, mentoring programme, collaborations and networking and encouraging attendance at principals meeting. Fleck (2007) supports this notion by stating that these kinds of collaborations will build confidence in new principals. Harman (2013) emphasises that on-the-job training which underpins transformational leadership theory and leadership development concept is the chief learning opportunities for new principals. However, districts through teacher development sub-directorate must provide more effective and structured professional development for principals.

4.3.3.2 Change in behaviour

Four of the participants confirmed that the strategies that the circuit manager implemented resulted in the principals' behaviour changing positively. The positive behaviour change was evidence in the improvement of not only their management functions, leadership and

professional practices but also developed positive characteristics traits. These positive characteristics include improved resilience and confidence of the principals.

Dr Madixadixa attests to the fact that behaviour change has been identified.
"I can safely say that professionally I have grown as I have improved my time management skills and I can now deal with conflicts when it arises at school. My leadership style has evolved with time".

Mrs Matshezulu adopted the circuit manager's strategy of one-on-one engagement with teachers in understanding and dealing with matters that are affecting the school functionality.
"I have learnt that engaging with teachers one on one also assist. I had a teacher who used to come late to school and after sitting down with him I identified that he had a personal problem at home and we discussed a strategy of how to manage the family situation. We came up with a collective agreement that we were both happy about".

Mr Hlakuva indicated the behaviour change as a result of the circuit manager's leadership and professional development.
"I have now developed resilience and perseverance on pushing even though there are challenges sometimes. This has impacted on the improvement of learner results at school".

Mr Dabulumhlambi alluded to the following:
"I have become very much confident in what I am doing as this has impacted on my conduct, approach, politeness and the way of communicating with people".

The above extract on interactions between principals and circuit managers clearly indicate the behaviour change on the side of principals in different aspects of executing their daily tasks. It appears that one-on-one assistance by the circuit managers motivated principals to change their behaviour, which resulted in the improvement of their practices and work relations with their staff. Mrs Matshezulu attested to the fact that she is now able to respond differently to her teachers when engaging with them. It is evident that such change of behaviour was caused by the impact of the circuit managers different strategies to enhance the principals' professional development. The impact is also articulated by participants when they state that, they have developed their personality traits such as patience, resilience, politeness, confidence and perseverance.

Green's (2010) principal leadership development model offers a useful lens that can be used to view and support leadership development. This model is described through four dimensions of the principals' work namely; comprehending oneself and others, comprehending the difficulty of organizational life, comprehending relationships and their significance, and engaging in best practices. Green's model supports the utterances of four participants whose behaviour changed due to the impact of the circuit managers' role. Fullan (2002) defined the change leader as one who has critical features which comprise of the ethical drive, comprehension of the transformation process, the capability to develop interactions, create knowledge and sharing, and making coherence. He further describes the ''cultural change principal'' as one who transforms their schools using the available teams and people.

Ozaralli (2003) supports this notion that transformational leaders, provide a vision, and they also engage in inspirational behaviour which builds subordinates' self-confidence. The principals' perspective on the impact of the strategies applied by circuit managers is how the partnership allowed them to change behaviour and focus on clearly defined school enhancement goals. The targeted professional and leadership development result in sustainable changes that develop over time.

4.3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The findings in this chapter indicates that the principals' perspective on the role of circuit managers is to give support, guidance and capacity building to both novice and veteran principals. This support is in line with the policy on education districts (DBE,2013) that officials must provide professional and management support to principals to help schools achieve excellence in teaching and learning. The support, guidance and capacity building come in different strategies like mentoring and modelling done by both circuit managers and other principals. Circuit managers further foster twinning and collaborations amongst highly performing and underperforming schools and novice and veteran principals. Circuit managers use their principals meeting and officials from other sub directorates to conduct continuous training for principals in different professional and leadership aspects of school management.

Even though it is not clearly indicated that the programmes were tailor-made for individual principals' needs, the findings do reflect that circuit managers sometimes used the outcome from performance appraisal, IQMS to develop the principals' professional gaps as stipulated on one of their key performance areas (ELRC, 2017) that they must provide support to school

principals and for professional growth of educators. The chapter concluded by indicating that growth in leadership and management practices and change in behaviour are the impacts caused by the strategies used by the circuit managers in leadership and professional development of school principals.

The next chapter delivers the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the discussion of data and findings; seven themes emerged from the data and were discussed. These themes were; circuit managers provide guidance and support to principals, capacity building, mentoring and modelling, twinning schools to foster collaborations, ongoing training, growth in leadership and management practices and change in behaviour. This is the final chapter which aims to present the summary and journey of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings and also recommendations to different stakeholders.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY JOURNEY

This study was aimed at exploring the role of circuit managers in the leadership and professional development of principals. This was a qualitative study of six secondary school principals' perspectives in the Umlazi District. This study is presented in five chapters, which focus on different aspects of the study respectively. The contents of each chapter are briefly presented below.

Chapter one presented the introduction and overview of the study. In this chapter, I presented the introduction and background of the study, the problem statement, rationale and motivation, significance and objectives of the study, research questions, and location and demarcation of the study.

Chapter two provided an in-depth review of literature on different research that has been conducted on the role of circuit managers in the professional and leadership development of school principals. This was done to broaden the researcher's understanding of the studied phenomenon and to identify literature gaps in terms of the studied phenomenon. Different aspects of professional development for principals were reviewed. This chapter further discussed transformational leadership theory which formed the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. In addition, Gray and Bishop's (2009) leadership development model was discussed as the concept that supplemented the above theory.

Chapter three explored the research design and methodology utilised in this study for data generation and analysis. Firstly, the researcher started this chapter by explaining the interpretivism paradigm as the worldview. Secondly, the chapter explored qualitative research design and the case study as the methodology processes that guided this study to understand the principals' perspective on the circuit managers' role in principals' professional and leadership development. Thirdly, the sampling method, data generation method and data analysis method were discussed. Lastly, the issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations were explored as critical aspects of the study.

Chapter four focused on data presentation, discussion and findings. This chapter started by exploring the profiles of the six participants and the schools that they are principals of. Subsequently, the findings were thematically presented in the seven themes that emerged from the generated data.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE FINDINGS

In this session, the researcher presents and discusses the conclusions drawn from the findings of this study. This study was driven by three research questions and the conclusions are drawn from these research questions. The research questions are presented below.

Key question one
What do principals understand as the role of Circuit Managers in relation to their professional and leadership development?

Key question two
What strategies do Circuit Managers apply to enhance principals' professional and leadership development?

Key question three
How do strategies implemented by the circuit managers impact the principals' professional and leadership growth?

5.3.1 The role of circuit managers in relation to principals' professional and leadership development

This study explored principals' understanding of the role of circuit managers in relation to their professional and leadership development. It was clear from the discussions that principals had different views on this issue. Principals in South Africa receive no training or role specific qualifications before they are appointed principals. The principals are promoted from different levels, management experience and exposure which make them have different competency gaps. The principal holds the highest position of leadership at the school level and whenever they face challenges or need development, they have no one else to turn to at school to guide and support, except the circuit manager. In some instances, principals are supported by other veteran principals. The circuit manager as the immediate supervisor is the next person in line in the department of education hierarchy, hence their role in the principals' leadership and development will always be vital.

Firstly, this study found that circuit managers played the role of providing guidance and support to the principals under their supervision. The guidance and support were in the form of developing the principals' leadership styles. Circuit managers empowered principals with management skills like problem-solving and decision-making that improved their practices. The circuit managers' guidance and support assisted principals in managing the challenges that they experienced with teachers defying instructions, learner discipline and complaints from parents in their respective schools. Some principals alluded to getting guidance and support from their circuit managers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Principals indicated that the circuit managers' role of providing guidance and support occurred during school visits, telephonically and during principals' meetings.

Secondly, this study found that the circuit manager played the role of building capacity for the principals. According to the policy on the role of education districts (DBE, 2013), each circuit manager is supervising an average of thirty principals, who are at different levels of development. Circuit managers used the performance measurement tool of Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) to identify the principals' areas of development needs. The participating principals explained that circuit managers used the school visits to capacitate them on time management, curriculum management, record keeping and financial management. The study also found that circuit managers, initiated workshops to build the capacity of the principals. Some of the workshops that circuit managers conducted were on dealing with

bullying, conflict management, human resource management and managing examinations. Some principals attested that their leadership, management and professional skills improved because of the role that was played by their circuit managers through the capacity-building initiative. Circuit managers seemed to exercise transformational leadership by providing on the job-embedded capacity-building training for their principals. According to Zondo (2013) transformational leaders supported and empowered their followers through relevant professional development programme. Circuit managers as transformational leaders identified their principals' developmental needs and provided guidance, support, ongoing training and twinning between schools to foster collaborations so as to develop principals' leadership and professional growth.

5.3.2 Strategies implemented by circuit managers to enhance principals' professional and leadership development

One of the main aims of the study was to learn from principals' perspectives the strategies implemented by circuit managers to enhance principals' professional and leadership development. This study established that the circuit manager implemented different strategies that focused on the improvement of the principals' leadership and professional skills.

Firstly, the study found that one of the strategies used by circuit managers was mentoring novice principals. According to the participating principals circuit managers used one-on-one school visits to mentor, guide, motivate and hold discussions with principals when a gap was identified. Circuit managers went as far as addressing other issues with the staff as well as holding motivation sessions with the entire staff. Another strategy implemented by the circuit manager was role modelling. Circuit managers seem not only to discuss the expectation with the principals, but when visiting the schools, they will enact the expected behaviour. They modelled management by walking about to check learner discipline, cleanliness, condition of infrastructure, honouring of teaching periods by teachers and whether teaching and learning were taking place.

In addition, four of the six principals who participated in this study asserted that circuit managers used twinning of schools to foster collaborations amongst highly performing and underperforming schools as a strategy to develop them. In some instances, twinning was initiated by the circuit manager, while in some schools the principal requested for their schools to be twinned. Twinned schools collaborated on a variety of aspects namely, principals sharing good management practices and teachers conducting extra classes across these schools. The

twinning of schools to foster collaborations was also in the form of pairing novice principals with veteran principals. The principals collaborated on sharing curriculum management advice and support. The paired novice and veteran principals used school visits and telephonic consultations to discuss and assist each other. Circuit managers monitored and supported these twinning initiatives. The twinning of schools resulted in novice principals' leadership and professional skills improving, as well as with underperforming schools improving their learner outcomes.

According to the study findings, the last strategy that was implemented by the circuit managers to enhance principals' professional and leadership development was subjecting them to ongoing training. Most of the training was conducted during the monthly principals meeting as professional development was one of the standing items on the meeting agenda. Circuit managers conducted the training on curriculum management and Quality Management Systems (QMS). Circuit managers also collaborated with different sub-directorates to conduct training by doing presentations on different management and professional functions of principals. Officials from Human Resource Services conducted training on leave management, staffing and appointments in schools. Performance management officials conducted Employee Performance Management Systems (EPMDS) and performance measurements. It was evident from the principals' responses that the training assisted them with their professional development and they appreciated them. Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) policy mandates that all educators undergo continuous training and professional development. Level one training is self-initiated, level two training is school initiated and level three training must be initiated by the department (DoE, 2006). The ongoing training initiated by the circuit manager fell under level three.

5.3.3 How strategies implemented by the circuit managers impact the principals' professional and leadership growth

Circuit Managers play a pivotal role in school principals' development and support as they have a strong role to play in forming school cultures that encourage change. The findings of this study have already revealed that circuit managers used mentoring and modelling, twinning schools to foster collaborations and ongoing training to enhance the principals' professional and leadership growth.

The study further established that the strategies employed by circuit managers resulted in the principals' growth in leadership and management practices. Principals who participated in this study articulated different aspects of their leadership, management and professional functions that have improved due to the circuit managers' strategies. Application of departmental policies, curriculum management, planning, targeting, conflict resolution and human resource management are some of the professional practices that principals grew on. The study found that the principals' acquired growth also impacted their decision-making, goal setting and problem-solving as important leadership skills. Some principals attested to implementing their newly acquired skills in motivating their staff, developing inexperienced School Management Teams (SMT) and assisting other neighbouring principals. Other principals confirmed that the strategies implemented by the circuit managers to enhance their professional and leadership growth had a positive impact on learner performance as well.

The study found that strategies implemented by circuit managers impacted positively on the principals' change in behaviour. The growth is evident in the change in time management as well as change in leadership styles. Principals started one-on-one engagements with teachers, which improved communication with the staff and other stakeholders. For some principals, the change in behaviour resulted in character modification. Principals attested to becoming more confident, resilient, persevering and polite. According to (Zondo, 2013; Berkovich,2016; Bass, 1999) transformational leaders motivate, mentor and model the expected vision for their followers. The findings of this study reveal that circuit managers are transformational leaders. This is evident as principals indicated that, circuit managers provided support, guidance, mentoring and modelling that resulted in principals' growth in leadership and management practices.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations to the following stakeholders; school principals, circuit managers, the department of education, and future researchers.

5.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRINCIPALS

This study found that mentoring and twinning between veteran and novice principals was beneficial to the participants' professional and leadership development. I, therefore, recommend that every novice principal should consider finding a mentor or request that the

circuit manager twins them with veteran principals. I also recommend that principals have intensive training and possible Job specific qualifications that will prepare them for the principalship position. Principals should familiarize themselves and develop an awareness of the responsibility and accountability that goes with being the principal of a school, since they do not undergo any preparations before they become principals.

5.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CIRCUIT MANAGERS

Circuit managers must balance one size fit all support with individualised support for the principals under their supervision. Since some participants stated that they received different support from some of their circuit managers, this calls for circuit managers to empower themselves with skills to be able to venture into the terrain of identifying, developing and supporting all school principals under their supervision with management, leadership and professional skills gaps. It is important for all circuit managers to put maximum effort to develop principals, given the fact that when they are appointed, they are not prepared for the critical task of leading and managing a school.

5.4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT

One of the glaring findings of this study was that circuit managers in the same district do not follow the same programme in the implementation of their roles. I recommend that the department of education needs to standardize the work of circuit managers. This can be done through programmes for circuit managers to be engaged with intensive high level of training focusing on their roles so that they can support and guide principals accordingly.

The second recommendation to the department is that it must use the CPTD tool to regularize the capacity-building programmes and ongoing training that are conducted for principals. This will result in principals earning professional development points as well. The department can also introduce structured, generic and compulsory training for principals when they are appointed as principals.

5.4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO FUTURE RESEARCHERS

This was a small-scale study conducted in one education district with six principals participating. Future researchers can explore the same topic across districts and other provinces. I also recommend that future studies explore the perspectives of circuit managers

on their roles. More research is needed on the role of circuit managers to guide and support principals efficiently as this topic is under-researched.

5.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This study focused on understanding the role of circuit managers in enhancing principals' professional and leadership development. The study explored the perspective of six secondary school principals. The study was guided by three research questions. In answering these research questions, the following findings were established. Firstly, the role of circuit managers is to provide guidance and support to the principals under their supervision. Circuit managers also played the role of building the capacity of principals. Secondly, the study found that circuit managers implemented mentoring and modelling, twinning of schools to foster collaborations and ongoing training as strategies to enhance principals' professional and leadership growth. Thirdly, the study further found that the implementation of these strategies by circuit managers resulted in principals growing their management and leadership practices. Some principals attested to their behaviour changing positively. This chapter ended with recommendations to the following stakeholders; school principals, circuit managers, the department of education, and institutions of higher learning, as well as future researchers.

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DATA GENERATION INSTRUMENT

Title: The role of circuit managers in leadership and professional development of principals: Perspectives of six secondary school principals.

Interview schedule for semi-structured interviews

1. Tell me more about yourself. (Name, background and experience)
2. What do you understand by leadership?
3. What do you understand by professional development?
4. Do you think there is a difference between professional development and leadership development? Explain briefly.
5. What is the role of your circuit manager in your professional and leadership development in relation to your school?
6. What professional and leadership growth strategies has your circuit manager applied to enhance your professional and leadership development?
7. How often does your circuit manager conduct or organize professional and leadership development activities for you?
8. How have the strategies applied by your circuit manager impacted on your professional and leadership growth?
9. How has your school benefitted from your professional and leadership development strategies applied by your circuit manager?

CONSENT OF PARTICIPATION

███████████

Caversham Glen

Pinetown

3610

14 April 2021

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH

I am Nomusa Shamase and I am conducting research as a requirement at the University of KwaZulu-Natal towards a Degree of Masters in education. The title of the research is "**The role of circuit managers in leadership and professional development of principals: Perspectives of six secondary school principals.**"

 The objectives of the study are:

> **1. To explore the principals' understanding of the role of Circuit Managers in relation to their professional and leadership development.**
>
> **2. To explore the strategies Circuit Managers, apply to enhance principals professional and leadership development.**
>
> **3. To explore how the strategies applied by Circuit Managers impact on the principals' professional and leadership growth.**

The study will focus on principals. This letter intends to elucidate the purpose of the study and to request your participation in the study.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.

- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split into two parts depending on your preference.

- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.

- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.

- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.

- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment.

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		

I can be contacted at:

Email: msoshamase@gmail.com

My supervisor is Dr S.B. Blose who is located at the School of Education, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He can be contacted at:

Email: Bloses@ukzn.ac.za

Phone: 031 260 1870

I hope this letter will find your positive consideration, thanking you in advance.

Yours Sincerely

Nomusa Shamase

‒ ‒

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTION FOR CONSENT OF PARTICIPATION:

‒ ‒

I _____ (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the nature and purpose of the study entitled: "**The role of circuit managers in leadership and professional development of principals: Perspectives of six secondary school principals.**"

I agree to participate in the study. I am also fully aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point should I wish to do so, without any negative or undesirable consequence. I am also aware that there are neither any foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with my participation in this study. I therefore understand the contents of this letter fully and I do **GIVE CONSENT / DO NOT GIVE CONSENT** for the interviews to be digitally recorded.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

School stamp

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SCHOOLS

HIGH SCHOOL

Private bag x03 Isipingo 4110 Tel: (0 1) 907 3575/6 Fax: (031) 907 3582

E-mail:

Date: 15/04/2021

Dear NP Shamase

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT   HIGH SCHOOL

Your letter titled "Request to conduct research . . . has reference. Please be informed that you are granted permission to conduct your research at the above-mentioned school.

ITAL DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
ISIKOLE ESIKHULU SEZOHWEBO
HIGH SCHOOL

2021 -04- 15

PRIVATE BAG X03
ISIPINGO, 4110

TEL: 031 907 3575
EMAIL: @vodamail.co.za

Yours sincerely

Principal

SECONDARY SCHOOL

P.O.Box 54295 Umlazi 4031

131Thabo Morena Road Umlazi. 4031

Email•

Tel: 031 9075285

Date 15/04/2021

Dear: NP Shamase

 PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT   HIGH SCHOOL

Your letter titled "request to conduct research. " has reference. Please be informed that you are granted permission to conduct your research at the above-mentioned school

School stamp

Yours _____ sincerely

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

SECONDARY SCHOOL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZÜLU-.NATAL
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NÅTAL
PROVINSIE VAN KWAZULÜ-NATAL

Dear NP Shamase

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT ISISUSA SECONDARY SCHOOL

Your letter titled "Request to conduct research..." has reference. Please be informed that you are granted permission to conduct your research at the above-mentioned school.

Yours sincerely

_____

Name of Principal

KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SECONDARY SCHOOL
PRIVATE BAG X1015 UMBUMBULU. 4105
School stamp
1 5 APR 2021
PRINCIPAL
SIGNATURE:

Dear Ms Shamase

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SECONDARY SCHOOL

Your letter titled "Request to conduct research." has reference Please be informed that you are granted permission to conduct your research at the above-mentioned school.

Yours sincerely

_____

Name of Principal

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Old Dunbar Road, CATO MANOR

Cell phone

Dear NP Shamase

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT   SECONDARY SCHOOL

Your letter titled "Request to conduct research..." has reference. Please be informed that you are granted permission to conduct your research at the above-mentioned school.
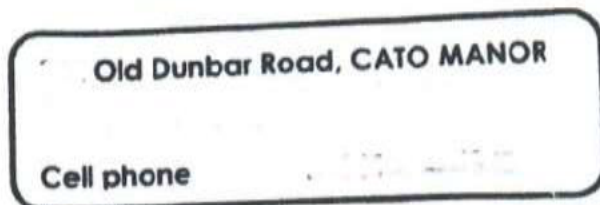
Yours sincerely

_____

Name of Principal

.EO ATI N&CULTURE

SECONDARY SCHOOL

2021 School stamp

P.O. BOX 3*2,

TEL: 031261 2237 FAX•03i 261

PERMISSION FROM DBE

KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137 PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel 0333921063/ 033-3921051

Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za
Buyi.ntuli@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Phindile Duma/Buyi Ntuli   Ref.:2/4/8/1701

Ms NP Shamase
~~10 Mmmmlin Place~~
Caversham Glen
PINETOWN
3610

Dear Ms Shamase

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"THE ROLE OF CIRCUIT MANAGERS IN LEADERSHIP AND**
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS: PERSPECTIVES OF SIX SECONDARY
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been
approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1.   The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2.   The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3.   Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4.   Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results
       of the research. 5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and
       Heads of Institutions where the   Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6.   The period of investigation is limited to the period from 19 March 2021 to 01 August 2023.
7.   Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved
       by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials
       and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss
       Phindile Duma/Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9.   Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full
       report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department.
       Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10.   Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in
       KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMLAZI DISTRICT

Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 23 March 2021

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

08 July 2021

Miss Nomusa Princess Shamase (205525229)
School Of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Miss Shamase,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002931/2021
Project title: The role of circuit managers' in leadership and professional development of principals: Perspectives of six secondary school principals.
Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 04 June 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 08 July 2022.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

_____
Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

INSPIRING GREATNESS

TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

Mrs N. Shamase

ORIGINALITY REPORT

17%	12%	3%	11%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	6%
2	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	4%
3	files.eric.ed.gov Internet Source	1%
4	www.cedol.org Internet Source	1%
5	www.scielo.org.za Internet Source	1%
6	docshare.tips Internet Source	1%
7	wiredspace.wits.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
8	Vitallis Chikoko, Inbanathan Naicker, Siphiwe Eric Mthiyane. "Leadership development: School principals' portfolios as an instrument for change", Education as Change, 2011 Publication	<1%

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE LETTER

25 Maple Crescent   Phone 031 – 7075912
Circle Park   0823757722
KLOOF   Fax 031 - 7110458
3610   E-mail:
dr1govender@telkomsa.net
sathsgovender4@gmail.com

Dr Saths Govender

14 OCTOBER 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

THE ROLE OF CIRCUIT MANAGERS IN LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS: PERSPECTIVES OF SIX SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, by NOMUSA PRINCESS SHAMASE, student no. 205525229.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used meets generally accepted academic standards.

Yours faithfully

DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D. Admin.

APPENDIX G   **LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**