THE ROLE OF FEMALE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN LEARNERS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT HIGH SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA

by

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[DOCTOR EDUCATIONIS]

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education, entitled, “THE ROLE OF FEMALE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN LEARNERS’ ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT HIGH SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA” is my original work and has not been submitted to any educational institution for any academic award. The sources have been indicated to acknowledge other researchers’ work.

…… …….

Nthabiseng C. Teba-Teba Date

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Certification

I, Nthabiseng Clementina Teba-Teba, hereby certify that I applied and got permission from the Central University of Technology, Free State to undertake D. Ed research under the supervision of Professor Alfred Henry Makura and Doctor Ratokelo Willie Thabane. I also asked and was permitted to carry out the study by the Department of Education, Free State. The title of my thesis is: **"The role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools: A comparative study of Lesotho and South Africa."**

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Doctor R.W Thabane (Co-Supervisor)	Date
……...	…….
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	Date
……...	…….
DEAN	Date

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Abstract

Leadership in schools has been a primary cause for concern, not only in developing countries but also on a global level. The role of instructional leaders is viewed as a key element for the improvement of the school worldwide, as they are responsible for the success of their schools. Hence, through a qualitative approach, this study sought to investigate the role of female instructional leadership in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement at high schools in Lesotho and South Africa. Alternatively, the qualitative approach was used to explore the level of knowledge and experience of participants, of the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in high schools. A sample of twenty participants, comprising ten school female principals was interviewed, while ten male and female heads of department were given an open-ended questionnaire. They were both asked to give their perceptions of the role of female principals. The sample was purposely selected as it was considered to be information rich. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the principals. An open-ended questionnaire was given to the heads of department. All interviews were conducted on the school premises. Data were analysed through the use of a thematic approach. The results of the study indicated that the female principals are fully aware that it is their role to influence educators to work in a manner that learners succeed in their learning. Female school leaders can influence educators and learners to collaborate in teaching and learning. This enables them to work towards a common goal, that is, learners' academic achievement. The results showed that in almost all the schools, female principals are excellent at managing the daily instruction process. Due to their quality traits, female leaders work hard to ensure that learners achieve success, that is, to complete secondary school level in a way that allows them to pursue their studies in the colleges and universities of their choice. The study recommends that female educators be given high positions in leadership in the field of education because they can demonstrate their leadership traits that help them become excellent leaders. The female leaders also need to be given a good salary as a motivation in the hard work they perform daily.

Keywords: role, female instructional leadership, academic achievement

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List of acronyms

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

DBE – Department of Basic Education

DECD - Department of Economic (and) Community Development

DEP – Diploma in Education Primary

DES – Diploma in Education Secondary

DoE – Department of Education

ECCD – Early Childhood Care and Development

GEQIP – General Education Quality Improvement Programme

HOD – Heads of department

LEC – Lesotho College of Education

LEQEP – Lesotho Education Quality for Equality Project

MEDP – Malaysian's Education Development Plan

MOE – Ministry of Education

MOET – Ministry of Education and Training

NEEDU – National Education Evaluation and Development Unit

NUL – National University of Lesotho

SGB – School Governing Body

SIP – School Improvement Programme

TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Technology

USA – United States of America

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CHAPTER 1 – BACKGROUND AND CONTEXUALISATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 The Introduction

The broad study sought to investigate the role of female principals as instructional leaders in the improvement of learners' academic performance. This is a comparative study of the roles of both Lesotho and South African high schools' female principals. The chapter outlines the background of the study and the statement of the research problem, research objectives, and questions. Finally, the purpose and significance of the study and its delimitation as well as limitations are described in this chapter.

Within a global context, quality education is the focus. Hence, the school principals are expected to spend most of their time supervising instruction in a way that both educators and learners are motivated to improve teaching and learning (Bridges 1967:137; Kwan 2019:1; Hallinger, Gumus and Bellibas 2020:1632; Grant 2021:6). Research on instructional leadership has been conducted by countless authors who proposed their own models of instructional leadership. One is proposed by Phillip Hallinger (2000). Another model that was adopted by the study, due to its three-dimensional model, which is demarcated into ten instructional functions, is Hallinger and Murphy's Model (1985). The third one, which is proposed by Murphy (1990), consists of four dimensions and sixteen elements (Si-Rajah and Musa 2019:927).

As was already mentioned, the study assessed the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in high schools, as perceived by female principals and heads of department (HODs). Instructional leadership according to Taole (2013:76) is a multifaceted concept and is defined in a way by various researchers. Instructional leadership is the actions taken by school leaders to endorse learners' learning and their academic achievement (Shaked and Glanz 2017:2; Shaked and Glanz 2018:2). Instructional leadership is, therefore, crucial for the enhancement of teaching and learning for educators as well as learners.

Instructional leadership's main focus is the learners' outcomes, that is, their academic achievement. This concept according to Bush (2015:487) emerged in the United States, sometime in the 1980s, as evidence collected that leadership could have a positive

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outcome on learners' learning outcomes. Hence, it is the principals' major responsibility to see to it that all educators exert more effort on learners' success. Research on instructional leadership indicates that school principals as instructional leaders are obliged to improve instruction in their schools. It is the principals' daily duty to ensure that teaching and learning are being handled, by all the stakeholders, in the way the curriculum is designed. This model assists school leaders in persistently demonstrating their desire to see educators working in collaboration for the success of learners (Mendels 2012:56).

Female instructional leadership is a central concept in liberal feminist theory as well as in instructional leadership theory. Research in female instructional leadership indicates that there is a gender disparity gap, especially in top leadership positions within educational organisations (Bush, Bell and Middlewood 2020:183). Globally, females are underrepresented when it comes to top leadership positions in education. What is always surprising is that in almost all the schools the number of female educators is far more than that of their counterparts, male educators. However, in many schools, the higher leadership positions are occupied by males with a great number (Makura 2012:279; Diez Gutierrez 2016:343; Ukimeraj and Trnavcevic 2020:136). This has been in discussion among researchers for numerous decades, more than five decades (Ukimeraj and Trnavcevic 2020:136). The increasing body of research on (female) instructional leadership suggests that gender inequality should come to an end. They base their argument on the liberal feminist theory that stresses equality in leadership between males and females. They strongly emphasise that female leaders are found to be capable in their instructional leadership which is related to learners' academic achievement. They went on to state that they declare war against women's underrepresentation and discrimination in top leadership positions which have become a culture worldwide (Ukimeraj and Trnavcevic 2020:136-138). Instructional leadership compels the principals to influence educators to employ learner-centered methods in their teaching (Millar 2015:1). In short, the female principals who have acquired the instructional leadership model are able to support educators in their daily teaching, even though only few female educators are allowed to become school leaders.

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Instructional leadership is essential for school principals as they deal with numerous challenges daily in their performance of their duties. School principals are expected to deal with management duties, such as building, maintenance, educators' and learners' welfare and discipline as well as budgeting. They are also held accountable for profound involvement in teaching and learning, ensuring instructional leadership and school enhancement as their main task. At the same time, principals are required to deal with piles of paperwork that also need special attention (Taole 2013:76). Once principals bear in mind that the major purpose of schooling is teaching and learning, no matter how busy they are, they will not lose focus.

Besides, school principals are faced with new demands, more complex decisions, and additional responsibilities than ever before (Mestry 2017:258). They always deal with various administrative and management functions, to mention a few, providing resources for teaching and learning, managing educators' and learners' discipline, resolving conflicts, and dealing with unexpected issues (Mestry 2017:258). However, instructional leadership guides principals on how to improve teaching and learning. It explains what the principals are supposed to do or what is expected of them. The principals are to focus mainly on defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and developing a positive school climate. This concept allows school principals to supervise educators directly by monitoring, evaluating, managing, facilitating, and supervising teaching and learning. They are also demanded to be accountable for the success and failure of learners, communicating the school vision and mission, providing instruction resources, and creating a warm climate. This model allows the principal's unity to 'interact with learners as they supervise and facilitate instruction and through assessment as well.

Through instructional leadership, principals influence, motivate and support educators' efforts to be lifelong learners to change their instructional practices (Mestry 2017:261). In such schools normally educators work harder to assist learners to achieve their goals. Those educators enjoy being at the workplace because they enjoy the fruits of their work. In that atmosphere, the principals can focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Learners benefit from their performance increases and their achievement is improved. Educators are able to teach at their best, while learners are able to learn at their utmost

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(Mendels 2012:55). The vision that all learners can accomplish at high levels is frequently instilled educators and learners.

As mentioned earlier, according to the concept of instructional leadership, the role of females as instructional leaders is to influence educators' productivity and the learners' performance. Female principals can radically influence the improvement of teaching by directly supporting educators by providing them with programs and learning materials for teaching. Therefore, female instructional leaders are expected to create a common culture based on cooperation to encourage productivity and positive relations among, educators, and learners (Masry-Herzallah and Arar 2019:1396).

Despite their effort in the field of education, women are still underrepresented in top leadership positions at schools. Even though nowadays, according to Esa and Peng (2013:274), most women are highly educated, few are found in the field of leadership positions. However, women's leadership at school plays an essential role in the development of the expected human capital (Si-Rajab, Madya and Musa 2019:928). Diez Gulierrez, in the study carried out (2016:343), also emphasises that in about seven studies reviewed it was reported that a very low percentage of females in school leadership positions at all educational levels is represented. On the other hand, some authors in their studies discovered that low female representation in school leadership positions is more related to structural aspects of the society and culture that originated from the authoritarian patriarchal worldview that was orally transmitted from one generation to the other (Oyeniran and Anchomese 2018:153). This transmission is rooted in society which is complicated to change people's mindsets (Diez Gutierrez 2016:344). For a long time, it has been believed that leadership is for males, so it seems that altering people's mindset toward leadership will take some decades.

1.2 Background to the Study

1.2.1 The Role of Instructional Leadership

For the past five decades until the date, instructional leadership has been a critical aspect of school leadership. It has been researched, worldwide, by researchers (Taole 2013:76; Jun 2014:240; Heaven & Bourne 2016:20; Gruickshank 2017:116; Choi and Gil 2017:1;

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Mestry 2017:259; Esa, Muda, Mansor and Ibraham 2017:18; Kiptum 2018:93; Garcia-Martinez, Diaz-Delgado and Ubago-Jimenez 2018:13; Seobi and Wood 2018:2; Hussain, Ahmad and Batool 2018:78; Ismael, Don, Husin and Khalid 2018:136; Wieczorek and Manard 2018:4; Feye 2019:1; Si-Rajab, Madya and Musa 2019:928). Although in almost all the schools the number of female educators is more than that of their counterpart male educators, female educators are underrepresented in leadership positions, (Esa and Peng 2013:274; Diez Gutierrez 2016:343; Mestry 2017:265; Shaked, Glanz and Gross 2018:5). It is this incidence that seems to cause a researcher to investigate the why and how of this trend of undermining females' contribution in leadership as the central problem of the study that needs to be explored and rectified. This trend seems to be all over and poses a serious challenge to female educators who have leadership potential (Diez Gutierrez 2016:343). Although the focus of this research is on female instructional leadership, the literature on the role of instructional leadership and females in leadership was reviewed to contextualise the study.

In countries such as Pakistan, Malaysia, Kenya, Hong Kong, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Mexico, Spain, Washington DC, the United States, and Australia, to mention few, research on instructional leadership has been carried out at various schools, in the primary and high schools. According to Hussain et al. (2018:78), the principals have an essential role in instructional leadership. In Pakistan, for instance, instructional leadership is one of the most widely researched topics. Instructional leaders coordinate the stakeholders, educators, parents, and learners. They do this by developing a good relationship between r and the stakeholders too. This model develops the positive attitude of educators as well as learners. Furthermore, instructional leadership is the type of leadership that has critical effects on the performance of learners. It is therefore the role of the principals as instructional leaders, in Pakistan, to work for school betterment and learners' accomplishment (Ismail et al. 2018:136). Besides, instructional leaders are expected to encourage and support educators by allowing them to learn new skills and knowledge to meet the academic needs of the learners. The school leaders are to show interest in the teaching and learning the procedures of the school. This is done by inspecting the educators in the classrooms and assisting them to upgrade instructions by setting the schools' objectives giving direction, and by assessing instructions (Malaysian Education

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Ministry 2014:934). It is the role of the instructional leaders to motivate the educational improvement and progress of the learners. Ensuring instructional time is another role of the principal in Pakistan. Educational leaders must implement scholarly standards to keep up high standards at all levels. It is their grave responsibility to provide motivating forces to teaching and learning for learners' success (Hussain et al. 2018:79).

Although the instructional leaders in Pakistan were made aware that they are required to put more focus on teaching and learning activities, it seems that they still exert their energy on managing school daily activities. They keep on playing traditional roles at schools and pay less attention to teaching and learning activities (Ismail et al. 2018:136). As a result, there is a need to carry out more research on the role of principals as instructional leaders.

In the case of Malaysia, the belief that instructional leadership is a key factor in learners' academic achievement was stressed by the Ministry of Education (MOE). Hence, the Malaysian Quality Standards that are introduced by the Inspectorate and Quality Assurance specify that principals in Malaysian schools serve as instructional leaders. They are expected to lead the implementation of the school curriculum and to create a learning atmosphere that encourages a hardworking and cooperation among learners (Esa et al. 2017:20). The authors went on to state that even in the Malaysian Education Quality Standards, for example, wave 2 (KPM 2017), the role of school principals as instructional leaders is to show by examples what is expected of others concerning instructional activities. This can ensure the success of all three waves in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 21st Century 2013-2025. Some researchers like Hoy and Hoy (2003:27) underpinned that instructional leadership is essential in the sense that the primary purpose of the school is the teaching and learning process. All other activities that take place at school are serious ones. They are aspects that support the main function. As a result, principals as instructional leaders are to prioritise the quality of teaching and learning, which is the focus of schooling.

To show the importance of the instructional leadership in Malaysia, the School Management Division, Ministry of Education (MOE) (2004) has drawn seven key areas that instructional leaders have to master. The areas are as follows: i) curriculum

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management, co-curriculum and Student Affairs, ii) school management that includes administration, finance, services, and posts, iii) provision of teaching and learning facilities, iv) relationship with parents and community, v) school advancement, vi) teaching and instructional leadership and vii) educational research. The need to focus on instructional leadership is emphasised in the Executive Summary of E-10, Malaysia's Education Development Plan, MEDP (2013) which explains the impact of instructional leadership (Si-Rajab et al. 2019:928).

In the case of Kenya, secondary education is considered as the most essential stage in the basic education of a child. It is at this level that learners are expected to show their knowledge and skills in applied subjects and academics large. This stage is important as it is where the children's foundation is laid. It is the last stage before tertiary education where children will be trained for the work or employment. Leadership by itself is for the improvement of the school management and raising the standards of education at that school. Besides, the quality of education, according to Kiptum (2018:92), relies on the principals as instructional leaders when using their ability, in the first place, to direct, control, and guide both educators and learners in their daily tasks. The instructional leaders are required to motivate all the stakeholders at school, and to take care of school policies, rules, and regulations.

In Hong Kong, China, according to Jun (2014:240), instructional leadership, is regarded as vital which is why now China is busy with reforms regarding principals as instructional leaders. In the changes of a policy context, Chinese principals are faced with an accountability context (Lee and Pang 2011:332). In that curriculum reform, the aim is to improve the quality of teaching and learning which is associated with the capacity for an instructional leadership role (Ministry of Education 2001). Despite their hard-working curriculum reforms, the Chinese principals are faced with some challenges. The fact that instructional leadership is originated from western countries confuses the principals they do not know how the practices could suit the Chinese design (Yin, Lee and Wang 2013:15). Jun (2014) went on to state that other researchers, in China, (Liu 2010:197; Lee and Pang 2011:339; Walker, Hu and Qian 2012:380), including herself, are dealing

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with research related to Chinese instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement.

Ethiopians also have seen the importance of instructional leadership. Recently, the government of Ethiopia has made various educational reforms that are intended to focus more on learners' academic achievement (Feye 2019:2). In 2007, the country launched what is called "General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP). One of its components is the School Improvement Programme (SIP) which focuses on four domains of the school namely, i) improving the teaching and learning ii) creating a conducive learning atmosphere, iii) enhancing community participation in school affairs, and iv) improving school leadership. Ministry of Education (MOE) (2007) states that since overall school performance depends on the qualities of instructional leadership, the program (SIP) might assist in learners' academic achievement. However, MOE (2013) has indicated that principals improve schools worldwide, though most school principals seem to fail to play their fundamental instructional leadership role.

Currently, educational reforms, in instructional leadership, are also taking place in Spain and Mexico (Garcia-Martine et al. 2018:12) as well as in Washington DC (US Department of Education). In the United States of America (USA) also recent policy discussion on expanding instructional leadership, for the improvement of management and standards of education, is in progress (Kiptum 2018:93). However, in the US, although about 85% of elementary school educators are females, there are 58.9% of females who hold principal positions. In high schools, only 28.5% of females hold the principal-ship. In superintendence positions 24% of females, hold superintendence jobs (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young and Ellerson 2011:99). The percentage of female principals increased in recent decades at a very slow pace (Marczynski and Gates 2013:707; Hill 2016:1988). In the cases where females are employed in leadership positions, they are promoted at late ages, with the demand for more experience and with more education than males (Shaked et al. 2017:5). Although females try to demonstrate leadership in public roles, attention is always given to the fact that they are females, so much that they are frequently criticised for using female leadership approaches (Grogan 2014:7;

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Kowalski et al. 2011:102). Consequently, females continue to be underrepresented and under-valued as leaders (Marshall and Wynn 2012:885).

The government of Lesotho according to Maime (2011:1) has formulated and implemented the policy documents gender equality. However, females are still facing challenges in educational management and leadership positions even today. Based on the foregoing, it appears that most authors think females encounter various challenges of gender stereotypes, discrimination, prejudices, and cultural beliefs that males are superiors while females are subordinates (Maime 2011: 2). Those beliefs seem to be strong among the Africans, even worldwide. Using a sample of five (5) female primary schools principals and four (4) deputy principals from Leribe District, Lesotho, the study showed that organisational factors and educators' negative attitudes toward female leaders are some of the factors that hold up the effective school management and administration.

Furthermore, this study revealed that female principals in primary schools are competent and do possess the necessary skills to manage the schools effectively (Maime 2011:3). Maime (2011:4) is convinced that the necessary support of management and leadership styles they use can become successful in transforming schools into an institution of teaching and learning. Maime's study shows that Lesotho also is concerned about the instructional leadership of females in learners' academic achievement. The issue of females in leadership top positions has a matter of concern worldwide (Maime 2011:3).

Lesotho is a tiny, independent, and mountainous kingdom with a population of about two million and an annual growth rate of 2.1% per annum (Preliminary Census Report 2016). It is situated in the Southern part of Africa. The country covers a total land area of 30, 355 square kilometres. It is completely landlocked and surrounded by South Africa. This small country depends mainly on the South African economy for its trade and remittances that are sent home by many migrant labours and domestic workers who have flooded South Africa for employment (Letsatsi 2009:1). Lesotho's prominent feature is the mountains that cover over two-third the country and have peaks rising to 3482 metres above sea level. Only 10 percent of the land area is cultivated. The major ecological zones of the country, therefore, are mountains, foothills, and lowlands (Kingdom of Lesotho 1987). It

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also has population dynamics, which have a bearing on education accessibility and equity (Sebatane 1988:3).

Sebatane, Chabane and Lefoka (1992:4) state that before Lesotho's political independence from the colonial rule, the Department of Education of the then Basutoland Government used to produce an annual report on Education. Those reports highlighted the major events and issues in the education system during the given year, such as development in syllabus and curriculum changes. Virtually nothing was said about the actual teaching and learning processes in schools. The measuring stick was external national examinations. The school that performed well was regarded to be a hard-working one. There was no empirical evidence on the school performance, which constituted to have good teaching leading to good examinations results.

After the country's independence (1966) the system of annual reports on Education continued for a while and reporting became more erratic as officers trained under the colonial government were being replaced by younger ones. At the same point reports were, replaced by bulletins public had by the Ministry of Education (Kingdom of Lesotho 1986:5). There was no information on actual classroom activities provided. The current main method of collecting information from schools is through annual statistical returns whereby principals complete standard forms eliciting statistics relating to the schools' properties, learners and educators. The information is compiled by the Ministry of Education and Training, then produced it into the annual publication, Education Statistics, by the Government's Bureau of Statistics (Sebatane et. al (1992:6).

Traditionally, females are minors and subordinates in Lesotho. Their authority is subject to that of males. Meanwhile, most school educators are females. It is of interest to establish whether female educators are less authoritarian approach than their male counterparts since the man is a symbol of authority in African society. There is subjective evidence that in urban schools, run by female principals there is more emphasis on order and learning activity than is the case with other schools (Sebatane et. al 1992:6).

Ntho in her study carried out in (2016:4) states that the country of Lesotho is counted among the few countries that can boast higher female than male literacy rates, compared

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with many other countries where the opposite is the case. Formal education in Lesotho is a joining responsibility among the government, the church and the community. Therefore, the education system is classified into three main categories according to level and type. The structure of the education system in Lesotho follows the usual format of primary level (seven years) preceded by three years of integrated early childhood care and development (ECCD), or pre-primary education (targeting children aged 3-5). Secondary education (five years), and tertiary education provided by colleges and universities, the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for skills development at the post-secondary level.

All local laws and by laws in Lesotho are consistent with the Constitution as the supreme law of Lesotho. Hence, chapter 3 of the Constitution, Section 28 presents the “Provision for education” as one of the principles of state policies in an endeavour to make education available to all and encourages authorities to adopt policies, aimed at securing that (MOET 2019:16). The Education Act 2010 is the statute that governs and regulates the administration of schools, educators and all other matters relating to education in Lesotho (MOET 2019:17; Morai 2021).

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is concerned about instructional leadership that focuses on learners’ academic achievement. Hence, MOET established Lesotho Education Quality for Equality Project (LEQEP), which aims to improve basic education, and seeks to address in the attainment of educational goals by targeting the poorest and least performing schools, largely located in poorly serviced, remote mountain areas of Lesotho. This became effective in May, June and July 2016 respectively and closes in 2021 (MOET 2019:5). As already mentioned, that the purpose of the project is to improve basic education, one of the components is to improve teaching and learning environment so as to enhance learners’ academic achievement. As a result, this component continues the reform on curriculum and classroom service delivery, which is initiated nine years ago, in 2011, by the MOET.

Furthermore, the enhancement of teaching and learning is hoped to provide learners with a quality basic education in primary and secondary schools. This can be reached by (a) strengthening primary school teaching and learning, (b) implementing a new curriculum

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and assessment support in Junior Secondary schools, and (c) the new Lesotho Model for teaching at the junior secondary school level. The aim of this component is to assist create a young population with confidence and strong foundations in literacy, numeracy and reasoning skills (MOET 2019:8).

Another component is strengthening school accountability for learners' learning by (a) school improvement planning, (b) provision of school grants, and (c) strengthening the capacity for reporting and monitoring of results. This component aims to enable learners to learn more effectively as well as training of school principals whose role is instructional leadership.

Kaphe (2017:77) investigated the managing curriculum change in secondary schools in Maseru. This study is somehow equivalent to instructional leadership as the managing curriculum is the role of instructional leadership. Using the sample of six principals from Maseru secondary schools, the study shows that most principals delegate the instructional leadership to the heads of department and the deputy principals to manage selection of teaching and learning materials, lesson plans and monitoring lesson presentations. Moreover, the study reveals that most principals concentrate on managerial administration roles.

Since democracy in 1994, in South Africa there has been a substantial policy shift from school leadership and management to instructional leadership. In 1997, the country came up with the amendment of the South African Schools Act that increased the principals' accountability. The Act broadly stated that the school principals have to account for learners' outcomes (Republic of South Africa 1996:9). Now South African government is in transition to transform the education system. In South Africa principals are expected to manage and implement other daily school activities (Taole 2013:75). Although the school principals perceive themselves as managers and not as instructional leaders (Taole 2013:78), the South African government, through the Department of Basic Education has been conscientising them to change this attitude and consider themselves as both managers and instructional leaders (Republic of South Africa 2015:1).

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During the apartheid era, in South Africa, the school principals' role was that of managers and administrator. At that time, teaching duties was not part of principals' task. They were not even teaching, instead, they were only supervising instructional process through class visits (Millar 2014:1). With the introduction of school-based management system, which came to existence in 1996 (Department of Education 1996), principals started to be more accountable for the academic performance of learners at their schools (Taole 2013:75).

Apart from performing managerial duties, principals are expected to teach. In 2009, the Department of Education (DoE) conducted the research and the findings showed that the school management has to be trained so that the body may be capable to implement the new curriculum in which principals were expected to be instructional leaders. Another finding was that unless principals teach, they would not be able to support and supervise teaching and learning (Taole 2013:76).

South Africa like all other countries, worldwide, is concerned about instructional leadership for the improvement of learners' academic achievement. Hence, it included it in its Action Plan. The South African Department of Basic Education's Action Plan for 2019 visualises school principals who act as leaders to ensure that teaching and learning in the school is effective and it takes place in accordance to the national curriculum (Republic of South Africa 2015:9). In that Action Plan the school principals are also supposed to have insight into their role as instructional leaders whose responsibility is to see to it that there is harmony, creativity and a sound work ethic within the school and beyond (Republic of South Africa 2015:9).

South Africa also came up with the National Development Plan (NDP) that foresees a schooling system with highly motivated educators and learners by 2030. The NDP also envisages school principals who effectively provide administrative and curriculum leadership at school (Republic of South Africa 2011:8). In short, the principals' responsibility is to guarantee that there is warm environment in their schools for teaching and learning (Hompashe 2018:1). Briefly, the role of school principals as instructional leaders is to put more emphasis on instructional leadership than on administrative management issues. Besides, in the Department of Basic Education's Annual Performance Plan (DBE 2014:14), it is stipulated that principals are accountable to

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monitor teaching and learning, that is, to act as instructional leaders for delivery of curriculum.

In South Africa, principals are being held accountable on what learners are taught and what they learn. Both the success and failure of learners is the responsibility of school principals. Repeatedly principals are expected to develop their skills in instructional leadership to allow them to guide educators and motivate learners. School principals are demanded to manage teaching and learning in the way that leads to learners' academic achievement (Millar 2014:2).

South Africa has shown the interest in instructional leadership that can improve learners' learning. In South Africa, there are recent movements within education that have interest in instructional leadership (NEEDU 2012:19). In this country, instructional leadership is regarded as the most aspect of change and school improvement (NEEDU 2012:19). Furthermore, the report of South Africa's National Education Evaluation and Development Unit's (NEEDU 2012:19) on instructional leadership in South African schools recommends that it would be better for principals to be accountable for leading curriculum delivery for the purpose of quality teaching and learning. Indeed, school principals, worldwide, are expected to act as managers as well as instructional leaders who can improve instruction and focus on learners' outcomes and academic achievement.

All the steps that were taken by South African government showed the seriousness about instructional leadership that brings a change and demands for improvement in learners' academic achievement (Taole 2013:75). Consequently, the role of the South African school principal, according to Botha (2004:240), has changed intensely from management and administrative duties only to instructional leadership is added and considered as the most important one.

Although the government of South Africa, through the Department of Education has introduced a school-based management system through school governing body (SGB), a challenge remains that the principals' instructional leadership role is not given attention it deserves (Taole 2013:76). The fact that in South African context, NEEDU calls for principals to exercise instructional leadership implies that principals have not yet acted as

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instructional leaders as expected. As a result, there is still a need to carry out the study on school principals as instructional leaders.

Growpall (2015:1) investigated the role of principals as instructional leaders in Pinetown District, KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, in two schools, one primary school and one secondary school. Using a sample of two (2) school principals, four (4) heads of department and four (4) educators, his study reveals that effective instructional leadership can be a catalyst for enhancement of academic performance of schools. Apart from that, a study by Mestry (2017:260) in Ekurhuleni District of Gauteng, in South Africa, shows that although numerous studies on instructional leadership emphasise how essential it is for principals to be effective instructional leaders, most principals leading South African public schools lack a comprehensive understanding of their instructional leadership role. Growpall (2015:19) research also indicates that principals require guidance or training in the phenomenon instructional leadership, because it seems that many them do not regard themselves as instructional leaders (Van Rooyen 2010: 92).

1.2.2 Females in Leadership

In this section, it is the researcher's intention to explore the experience and perceptions of many people towards females' leadership in general. The focus is on females who occupy positions of power that are recognised and rewarded in observable ways. Globally and in the continent of Africa, there are many educated females, but there are fewer female leaders. This remains a challenge. A good number of authors have noted that females' contribution in leadership is undermined even though they make momentous impact on national economies (Gipson, Pfaff, Mendelsohn, Catenacci and Burke 2017:33). Many women are owners of flourishing businesses. Some of those females support their husbands who become millionaires (Gipson et al. 2017:34). Hence, many authors research on the leadership style of women. The researcher noted that in the workplace, the common perception is that leadership or management is mainly for males.

Numerous organisations are aware of the importance of encouraging women leadership in their departments, such as department of health, Alberta Health Services, in Canada, for instance. This department had encouraged females in medical leadership within the

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organisation (Grant 2016:15; Female Physician Leaders in Alberta Health Services 2018: 8). Although the females are admitted in a large number into the workplace they are still far in top-level positions, their increasing number is holding mid-level leadership positions (Hejase, Haddad, Hamdar, Massoud and Farha 2013:28). The article went on to state that for those females who succeed in reaching leadership positions, they are further subjected to comparison with their male counterparts regarding their leadership styles. This means there should be ways to increase the number of women in leadership positions.

There are different factors that might cause females' underrepresentation in leadership positions. It might be organisational culture, traditional gender roles and women's perceptions and competencies. In Finland, in Europe, equality between males and females is regarded far developed. In this country, both males and females are well educated. However, there is still a salary gap between women's and men's earnings, and the number of female leaders is unpredictably low (Hejase et al. 2013:29). Females are underrepresented in almost all spheres of life. This can be seen in the political leadership even in the developed countries. In the United States (U.S), for instance, since the independence to date, the U.S has never elected a woman to the presidential office. Moreover, out of 535 seats in the United States Congress, females occupy only 104 seats (Gipson et al. 2017:34).

Furthermore, the underrepresentation of females in senior leadership positions is worldwide. Across the globe women hold less than a quarter of senior leadership positions in corporations, together with a third of businesses or having no females at all in the senior roles (Grant 2016:56). Therefore, internationally females are underrepresented in high-level leadership positions.

Gender stereotyping and discrimination are some of the contributing factors in females underrepresented in top leadership positions globally (Gipson et al. (2017:35). Worldwide gender stereotypes are culturally shared beliefs that dictate expectations about female and male and how they ought to behave. For instance, women in general are expected to have a soft heart, whereas men are required to be tough (Gipson et al. 2017:36). Despite the huge number of women at workplace, their number in top-level positions

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remains low for decades. It seems that in this world dominated by males as decision makers, females face a variety of challenges that prevent their progress in high leadership positions. The society discriminates the females either consciously or unconsciously (Hejase et al. 2013:30). This behaviour becomes worse in the situation where women are discriminated by other women. For instance, in most cases if a group of people needs to elect a leadership committee and, in that group, there is one male and the rest are females, that male will be assigned the highest leadership position by females. Other females will be elected at the low leadership positions. This seems to be a general public's attitudes about the top jobs' leadership positions.

In spite of their ability and qualifications, worldwide, women are still facing massive challenges in the place of work that prevent them from occupying top-level positions. The idea that men are breadwinners, while women are the home-caretakers is still maintained to a large extent. Although females play important role in the economic growth of their countries, they are still not given the opportunity to top board level positions as they should (Hejase et al. (2013:36). Moreover, the article went on to state that there is a lot of discrimination towards the females in the workplace, especially when it comes to salary, promotion and advancement opportunity to higher level in leadership positions. As a result, only a few females are represented at their organisations' board of directors and managers (Hejase et al. 2013:37).

Many employers hesitate to employ females. One of their reasons is that when women become pregnant, they will have to be given maternity leave and be away from the work. In this manner, their production will be negatively affected due to the absence of a leader. Hence, they hesitate to put them in higher level of leadership positions even if they demonstrate some qualities of leadership. Moreover, the employers are afraid that during their pregnancy women might not perform well on their daily duties (Hejase et al. 2013:48).

Despite gains in every profession, females remain underrepresented at all levels of leadership. In congress, on corporate boards and in the nation's colleges and universities, male leaders outnumber female leaders by considerable margins (Ho and Hallman 2016:54). Although the number of educated women is increasing, at the workforce over

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five decades, the proportion of males is still larger than that of females in top leadership positions. Globally, the number of males in top leadership dominates the number of females in that leadership. For, instance, in the court of law, in religious institutions, in corporate boardrooms, in the hall of congress and tin the colleges and universities top positions. Therefore, women must be advised on how to stand up, step up, lean in and make their voices heard. The leadership gender gap is significant, persistent and systemic (Ho and Hallman 2016:53).

Females are much less likely than males to be regarded as leaders. In 2015, only 5 per cent of the companies in the Standard and Poor's 500 indexes had female chief executive officers (Catalyst 2015:6). Of course, leadership gap is not confined to business. In the non-profit sector, females are more likely to be in leadership positions, but they remain underrepresented. For example, in a 2015 Massachusetts study, only 21 out of 151 non-profit organisations had boards with at least 50 percent females (Boston Club 2015:9).

Meanwhile, females make up only one in five members of the United States (U.S) Congress, and just six States (New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island and South Carolina) currently have female governors (Centre for American Women and Politics 2016:13). But the leadership is not confined to business and politics; unions (Bryant-Anderson and Roby 2012:63), religious institutions (Christ 2014:87), the legal profession (Rikleen 2015:88), academia (American Council on Education 2012:13) and many other institutions also reveal this gap.

For Asian, black and Hispanic women, the problem is even more serious. Fewer than 3 per cent of board directors at Fortune 500 companies are females from these groups (Catalyst 2015:8). This disparity is also found at the staff level. Asians, black and Hispanic females make up 17 per cent of employees S&P 500 companies but fewer than 4 per cent of executive officials and managers (Catalyst 2014). In the legal profession, where only 8 per cent of equity partners are people of colour, females account for just 29 per cent of Asian equity partners, 33 per cent of black equity partners and 24 per cent of Hispanic equity partners (Rikleen 2015:76).

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Achieving gender parity in leadership is, first and perhaps most important, a matter of fairness. Leaders are powerful, so when females are excluded from top leadership ranks, they are denied power to make a difference in the world. It can be argued that leaders enjoy high status and privilege, and leadership is one area that opens doors to other opportunities that further intensify the benefits of leadership. In most organisations, the top leaders are also the most highly compensated and leaders and supervisors tend to have higher salaries than employees who are not in leadership roles (Ho and Hallman 2016:150).

For employees, females' leadership may offer another benefit. Previous studies have shown that a study of businesses operating during the Great Recession found that female CEOs were less likely than male peers to lay off staff. The difference was significant; workforce reductions were more than twice as frequent at male-owned firms as at female-owned firms-14 per cent vs. 6 per cent and more employees were affected (Matsa and Miller 2014:73). Retaining staff can lead to lower short-term profits, but it can also preserve employee morale and reduce future hiring and training costs (Matsa and Miller 2014:120). Other research shows that firms with more females in leadership roles may have smaller pay gaps between males and females who have similar work experience and arrive at the firm under similar circumstances (Tate and Yang 2015:122). Moreover, the more females on the board, the more likely a firm will adopt a full range of friendly policies (Cook and Glass 2016:111).

It is therefore essential for all the businesses to look closely at the challenges often females encounter when it comes to the leadership level, especially the top one. Thus, businesses are to clear a way for capable and dynamic leaders, especially females who have a lot of energy and a strong personality. The ones who can bring changes and making progress at the place of work (Veihmeyer and Doughtie 2016:6). Females need to be encouraged to own their careers. They should not wait for someone to tap them on their shoulders or to prove that their performance is good. They must look around and see all the opportunities around them.

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1.2.2.1 Global perception of female leadership

Globally, leadership roles, according to Subramanian, Irudayaraj and George (2016:15), have traditionally been held by males. Therefore, the characteristics of leadership were perceived as masculine and authoritative in nature. Hence, women face more challenges when aspiring to attain top leadership positions.

Although males and females exhibit different leadership styles due to their different characteristics, when it comes to top leadership positions females are expected to show males' qualities. This public expectation is challenging and unfair to females if they are not accepted as they are (Subramanian et al. 2016:15). The authors went on to state that females' leadership style is interpersonally oriented, whereas males' leadership style is task oriented. However, for females' leadership to be accepted, they are expected to adopt transactional style of leadership (Subramanian et al. 2016:16). Hence, females struggle a lot when it comes to high ranks, because they are transformational leaders by nature. Transformational leadership mainly focuses on individuals' emotions, values, standards, long-term goals and ethics (Subramanian et al 2016:16).

Males and females have different behaviour, namely, argentic and communal behaviours respectively. Argentic behaviours are often characterised as dominant, aggressive, forceful, ambitious, self-confidence and independent. Communal behaviours are characterised as interpersonally sensitive, affectionate, gentle, kind, nurturing and sympathetic. The main challenge females are facing is that when performing a leadership role, they tend to reduce their feminine traits for them to manage their role (Subramanian et al. 2016:16).

There are wide range gaps in views about females in leadership. There are few females in high political offices as well as in top executive business positions. The low number is caused by the structural barriers and expectations from these positions. Gender discrimination is another factor of women underrepresentation in top positions in corporate world, in politics and business (Parker, Horowitz and Igielnik 2018: 240).

In the study carried out by Parker et al. (2018; 242), it was discovered that males and females are equally capable when it comes to some key qualities and behaviours that are

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needed for leadership. The public perceive that in both business and politics, majority of females are far better than males when it comes to being empathetic and compassionate. Hence, females propose that there should be equal number of males and females in top leadership positions. Females perceive gender discrimination as a major reason why females are underrepresented in high political offices and top executive positions in business. They also see it as obstacle for females who are seeking top leadership positions in politics and in the corporate world.

Although the number of educated females keep on increasing, they are still discriminated by the policies and the society when it comes to senior leadership positions. According to the (2018) Report compiled by Irish Management Institute (IMI); females encounter various challenges in progressing into top leadership positions. It seems that females occupied a high percentage of positions at the lowest level of leadership, even though many of them are highly educated. The major concern is that their proportion is decreasing at each level of seniority positions. Since females are the ones who suffer discrimination of being denied top positions, they must rise to challenges that are not encountered by most males globally. The report went on to state that an estimated 60% of global college graduates are females and 40% are males (DECD), but the high ranks are still occupied by males. Globally, females made up 16.3% of CEO positions in 2015-2016 and, as a snapshot of the world's largest companies, held 5.2% of CEO positions at S&P 500 companies.

1.2.3 Females in Instructional Leadership

In this section, the discussion was on female instructional leadership. Instructional leadership role in learners' academic achievement is one of the essential aspects of leadership, even though it has not received much attention from either policy-makers or researchers in Lesotho and South Africa**.** The viewed literature revealed that not enough research has been conducted on the role of the female principals in learners' academic achievement in South Africa (Ginya 2012:12). Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and van Rooyen (2009:16) contend that there is very limited research and literature on managing teaching and learning in South Africa.

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Most of the studies, which investigated the role of the principal in learners' academic achievement, were conducted in Western countries and there is not much conducted in Lesotho and South Africa (Sebatane, Chabane and Lefoka 1992:6; Ginya 2012:19). Literature on school instructional leadership in developing countries is scarce (Masuku 2011:12). However, there seem to be a consensus between the international and local literature that managing teaching and learning is viewed as one of the indirect methods used to achieve high learner outcomes.

Among the models of educational leadership, instructional leadership regards the process of teaching and learning as a central role of educational organisations. Instructional leadership directs educators in pedagogy and focuses on the leadership of instructions. It is of assistance because it targets the top priority of the school, learners' achievement (Bush and Middlewood 2013:16, 27). The role of today's principals has consistently changed. Vedavathi (2017:55) points out that before 1980s principals were demanded to manage and administrate schools they oversaw. In 1980's principals are required to effectively manage, lead and provide vision to improve instructions for learners' academic achievement (Brown 2012:1). From that era, this shifted and more emphasis regarding principals was on academic instructional leadership.

Throughout the world, school principal-ship has been the subject of hundreds of studies over the past 58 years (Jawas 2014:30; Smith and Andrews 1989:1). Like in other African countries, the central role of the principals in Lesotho and South Africa has been viewed, variously, as building managers, administrators, change agents and instructional leaders (Tefera 2016:2; Wilson 2013:1). During the last three decades, this belief had been changed and the principals were regarded as instructional leaders accountable for the academic achievement of learners (Tefera 2016:2).

This indicates that the direct responsibility for improving instruction and learning rests in the hands of the school principals (Jawas 2014:7). Hence, they provide a school culture and climate where change is linked to the best knowledge about learners' academic achievement (Kelley 2011:13). The fundamental purpose of schooling is learners' academic achievement. Therefore, it is the responsibility of school leaders to create learning organisations for learners' achievement (Jawas 2014:7; Lineburg 2010:6).

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Despite the increasing number of women at schools, their capability to being given leadership roles are still low and questionable (Paustian-Underdahl, Waker and Woehr 2014:1129). Throughout history, various people were convinced that leadership is a traditionally masculine activity. Globally in education institutions women leaders are fewer than their counter-parts men (Shaked et al. 2017:5). However, in countries such as Britain, Australia, India and the United States of America the number of females in leadership positions in education has increased (Matheri 2015:9).

She points out that regardless of their educational and other advances women still face major obstacles in entering senior positions even in society (DFID 2000). The document continues to argue that in South Africa although teaching is dominated by women, they are still under-represented in positions of education management. According to Matheri (2015:14), the major challenge might be gender inequality, which is mostly experienced by developing countries, Lesotho and South Africa are included. In most countries in Africa, few legal structures support gender equality according to Matheri, in Kenya, for instance. A report carried out by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consumption for Monitoring Education Quality (2010) indicated that less than 15% of secondary schools in Kenya were administered by female principals.

In almost all the schools in Lesotho and South Africa, the number of female educators is more than that of males, but in most cases, males are the ones who become principals of the schools (Zulu 2016:34). Makau and Tanui (2014:15); Paustian-Underdahl, Waker and Woehr (2014:1130) regard female leadership as better than male ones in that women are more likely than men to adopt collaborative and empowering leadership style, while men's leadership styles are that of more command and control behavior which in most cases lead to resistance of workers. In African communities, men are regarded as breadwinners, while women are regarded as homemakers or caretakers (Eagly and Wood 2012:12). Subsequently, this might be one of the contributing factors in hesitating to accept women's school leadership.

Researchers have demonstrated that men dominated top school instructional leadership positions, which is against Lesotho and South African education policies (Nzoka and Oridho 2014:92). Although the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996,

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Section 9 (3) of the Bill of Rights stipulates that, “The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex…” women are still few in school leadership positions. Those who try to be brave enough to take such positions suffer gender discrimination resulting from societal and cultural stereotypes (Zulu 2016: vii).

One of the practices of the principals as Zulu (2016:1) points out is to improve instructions for learners’ academic achievement. Due to their caring nature women, principals can create a protective environment needed for learners. Therefore, female principals are successful instructional leaders (Oboegbolem 2013:13). However, Schmidt and Mestry (2015:112) and Letele (2009:54) reveal that most countries in Africa practice patriarchy. Therefore, Lesotho and South Africa are not exceptional, as they are still clouded by a pandemic of gender bias against female instructional leaders.

According to Zulu (2016:2; Shaked 2017:5) women, principals continue to experience oppression of class race, and gender. For this practice, Naidoo and Perumal (2014:178) put blame on Apartheid policies in the Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 as well as the extension of University Education Act of 1959. The authors note how that affected allocation of infrastructural and financial resources amongst different racial groups and genders. In turn, traditional gender stereotypes also affected the policies, since they also support race, culture, and ethnic discrimination against women in one way or the other. The attitude might be influenced by so-called “culture.” In African culture, women are regarded as subordinate, as weak ones, and as people who cannot lead because they are unable to control their emotions.

Due to qualities that women possess, such as gentleness, cooperation, caring, sensitivity, empathy, and collaboration, they can be good instructional leaders. According to Naidoo and Perumal (2014:190), it has come to their realisation that certain females have managed to courageously take principal-ship positions, but they face their leadership differently compared to that of males, as they experience challenges and demands that are sometimes beyond their power (Zulu 2016:2). However, women as instructional leaders, because of their qualities, they still succeed in improving learners’ academic achievement (Zulu 2016:5).

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Females in most cases are confident in their capabilities to work. In their own families, they are the ones who are more involved in planning and managing everything in the family. Women can take care of their families, children, and even husbands, but when it comes to the workplace, they are considered to be unable to lead. Various women are highly educated, but held low leadership positions if any. Most females are hard workers by nature. They often become successful leaders who manage to improve learners' academic achievement. They are achievers and committed to their work. Hence, numerous women are successful instructional leaders. Many women are successful instructional leaders in Lesotho and South Africa, even though the literature does not say much about them. It just talks about principals in general, mostly in the primary schools (Shaked, Glanz and Gross 2018:20). This somehow might discourage novice female principals who are passionate to take on instructional leadership in high schools.

Although several researches have been carried out in this area, the question of role of female (instructional) leadership is yet to be answered. In this context, this study attempts to review and analyse the past literature on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement.

1.3 The statement of the Research Problem

In almost all the high schools in Lesotho and South Africa, the number of teaching females is greater than that of their male counterparts. Even in the universities or teachers' training colleges, the number of males who are being trained is still low. For instance, in Lesotho College of Education (LCE) that offers training courses for primary and secondary school educators with a Diploma in Education Primary (DEP) and Diploma in Education Secondary (DES) majority are females. Furthermore, in National University of Lesotho (NUL) Faculty of Education is dominated by females as shown below:

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Table 1: Number of males and females enrolled in the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and Lesotho College of Education (LCE) in Lesotho, 2013 to 2015

Enrolment by Institution			**Enrolment by Institution and Gender**		
Year	**2013/2014**	**2014/2015**	**Female**	**Male**	**Total**
LCE	**4130**	**3536**	**2388**	**1148**	**3536**
NUL	**9554**	**9239**	**5812**	**3427**	**9239**
Field of Study (NUL)					
Education			**4333**	**2020**	**6353**

Source: Council of Higher Education-The Higher Education Statistical Bulletin 2014/2015 (July 2017).

As indicated by the table that in the institutes where the educators can be trained in Lesotho, females are more than the males, even in South Africa same thing applies. The tables below show the enrolments in South Africa.

Table 2: Number of students enrolled in public HEIs by gender and qualification type, 2016 to 2017

2016				
Qualification type	**Male**	**Female**	**No Info**	**Total**
Occasional Students	7 375	12 439	6	19 820
Undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas	114 694	140 296	0	254 990
Undergraduate Degrees	212 410	317 942	9	530 361
Postgraduate Below Master's level	34 578	57 285	3	91 866
Master's Degrees	27 704	29 584	2	57 290
Doctoral Degrees	11 936	9 573	1	21 510
Total	**408 697**	**567 119**	**21**	**975 837**
2017				
Qualification type	**Male**	**Female**	**No Info**	**Total**
Occasional Students	8 462	12 994	2	21 458
Undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas	121 302	155 157	0	276 459
Undergraduate Degrees	222 147	333 734	11	555 892
Postgraduate Below Master's level	37 719	63 727	4	101 450

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Master's Degrees	28 023	31 127	3	59 153
Doctoral Degrees	12 412	10 159	1	22 572
Total	**430 065**	**606 898**	**21**	**1036 984**

Source: HEMIS 2016 & 2017

Table 3: Number of students enrolled in public HEIs by gender and major field of study, 2016 to 2017

Major field of study	2016			2017		
	Male	Female	No Info	Male	Female	No Info
Business and Management	117 001	147 931	2	121 755	157 174	2
Education	45 434	131 550	2	50 007	145 103	3
All other Humanities and Social Sciences	87 407	151 119	9	92 867	159 945	13
Science, Engineering and Technology	158 854	136 520	9	165 436	144 677	3
Total	**408 697**	**567 119**	**21**	**430 065**	**606 898**	**21**

Source: HEMIS 2016 & 2017

Table 4: Number of students enrolled in public HEIs by gender and attendance mode, 2016 to 2017

2016					
Mode of attendance	**Male**		**Female**		**No Info**
Contact	293 454	**46.0%**	344 528	**54.0%**	19
Distance	115 243	**34.1%**	222 591	**65.9%**	2
Total	**408 697**		**567 119**		**21**
2017					
Mode of attendance	**Male**		**Female**		**No Info**
Contact	302 325	**45.8%**	357 625	**54.2%**	20
Distance	127 740	**33.9%**	249 273	**66.1%**	1
Total	**430 065**		**606 898**		**21**

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Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016 & 2017

Table 5: Number of graduates from public HEIs by gender and major field of study, 2016 to 2017

2016				
Major field of study	**Male**	**Female**	**No Info**	**Total**
Business and Management	24 144	32 218	2	**56 364**
Education	10 051	32 056	1	**42 107**
All other Humanities and Social Sciences	15 419	30 057	4	**45 480**
Science, Engineering and Technology	29 150	29 971	4	**59 125**
Total	**78 764**	**124 302**	**10**	**203 076**
				2017
Major field of study	**Male**	**Female**	**No Info**	**Total**
Business and Management	24 592	33 178	2	**57 772**
Education	10 646	33 787	1	**44 434**
All other Humanities and Social Sciences	16 106	31 033	5	**47 144**
Science, Engineering and Technology	29 897	31 684	1	**61 581**
Total	**81 241**	**129 681**	**9**	**210 931**

Source: HEMIS 2016 & 2017

Table 6: Number of graduates from public HEIs by gender and qualification type, 2016 to 2017

2016				
Qualification type	**Male**	**Female**	**No Info**	**Total**
Occasional Students	-	-	-	-
Undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas	20 270	33 019		53 289
Undergraduate Degrees	35 772	58 137	6	93 915
Postgraduate Below Master's level	14 816	25 395	2	40 213
Master's Degrees	6 292	6 569	1	12 862
Doctoral Degrees	1 614	1 182	1	2 797
Total	**78 764**	**124 302**	**10**	**203 076**
2017				
Qualification type	**Male**	**Female**	**No Info**	**Total**
Occasional Students	-	-	-	-
Undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas	20 674	34 752		55 426

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Undergraduate Degrees	36 627	59 487	6	96 120
Postgraduate Below Master's level	15 989	27 385	3	43 377
Master's Degrees	6 205	6 746		12 951
Doctoral Degrees	1 746	1 311		3 057
Total	**81 241**	**129 681**	**9**	**210 931**

Source: HEMIS 2016 & 2017

The number of males who are being trained as educators is not even half of the females. However, in many schools, males are the ones who have been placed in an instructional leadership position (Mestry 2017:265). Female principals present only the minority of all instructional leaders. Regardless of the policies put in place by Lesotho and South African governments to implement gender equality, gender imbalances are still prevalent, where only a small number of females are appointed to leadership positions in the field of Education (Diko 2014:117; Naidoo and Perumal 2014: 190).

As observed by the researcher, the trend, in most high schools in Lesotho and South Africa, is that majority of instructional leaders are males yet the majority of educators are females in almost all the schools. In Mohale's Hoek District, for instance, out of twenty (20) high schools, there are only eight (8) schools that have female principals. In Motheo District in Bloemfontein, out of thirty-three (33) secondary schools, only six (6) are run by female principals.

After their appointment, female principals in Lesotho and South Africa experience challenges in school instructional leadership as compared to males and this is unjust as females are also capable when it comes to leadership. (Zulu 2016:2). In those two countries, the issue of gender disparity still poses challenges and tensions for female principals in their instructional leadership role. As in many other African countries, in Lesotho and South Africa women are given this position in most cases are expected to adopt the authoritarian style of leadership (Sebatane et al. 1992:6).

In the twenty-first century, women are still underrepresented in educational leadership, and their low percentage in school leadership roles has not changed significantly during the past decades (Kruger 2008:158; Marczynski and Gates 2013:7230; Diez Gutierrez 2016:343; Irish Management Institute 2018). Thus, in this study, the researcher

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investigated the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in Lesotho and South African high schools.

1.4 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research is to investigate the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools in both Lesotho and South Africa. This is a comparative study of the roles of female principals in the improvement of learners' performance in Lesotho and South African high schools.

1.5 Research objectives

The above-stated purpose of the study necessitated the formulation of several objectives. They are as follows:

Main Research Objective

1.5.1 The role of female principals as instructional leaders in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement in the selected Lesotho and South African High schools.

Sub-Research Objectives

1.5.1.1 To investigate the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perception of the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

1.5.1.2 To analyse how female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement.

1.5.1.3 To explore heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

1.5.1.4 To determine how effective the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools is.

1.5.1.5 To evaluate how instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture.

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1.6 Research questions

The study, in consideration of the above objectives, will attempt to answer the following main research question and sub-research questions:

Main Research Question

1.6.1 What is the role of female principals as instructional leaders in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement in the selected Lesotho and South African High schools?

Sub-Research Questions

1.6.1.1 What is the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perception of the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

1.6.1.2 How do female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement?

1.6.1.3 What are heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

1.6.1.4 How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

1.6.1.5 How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

1.7 The Assumptions

The researcher's assumptions are as follows:

1.7.1 Through the assistance of a literature review the researcher will be able to identify the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

1.7.2 Lesotho and South African high school female principals will share their perceptions of their roles as instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

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1.7.3 Lesotho and South African high school female heads of departments (HODs) will be able to share the perceptions they held about the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

1.7.4 Female principals in Lesotho and South Africa will be open to sharing the challenges they experience in learners' academic achievement.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Lesotho and South African governments will profit from the study as most female principals will regain the confidence to provide instructional knowledge that will lead to learners' academic achievement in high schools. The results of the study will add to the body of literature on female instructional leadership of high schools. The study will add to the body of academic knowledge by detailing the criteria necessary for effective instructional leadership regarding the role of female instructional leaders. It will also be relevant to other female principals as well as those who seek to take on the high school instructional leadership positions. The research might provide solutions to the problems associated with learners' academic achievement in the affected areas. The results of the study will create awareness among female instructional leaders regarding instructional leadership in their schools. The study results will recuperate the understanding of the roles of female instructional leadership.

The study will contribute to knowledge by revealing the extent to which the role of female instructional leadership can enhance learners' academic achievement at high schools. Likewise, teacher training institutions and in-service bodies might use the results of the study to develop training programmes that can enhance the capacity off female instructional leaders to develop effective instructional leadership skills hence produce better-equipped graduates for leadership (Mutuku 2018:15).

Apart from that, other stakeholders can use some ideas when they do up-date on instructional leadership. The policy-makers like the government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), and South Africa through the Department of Education (DoE) also can use it to monitor and provide the essential leadership. The future researchers on instructional leadership can also make use of the study to design

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their own design approaches to their studies that can assist in the enhancement of knowledge on instructional leadership. Lastly, the study will be used as a benchmark for further research.

1.9 Justification of the Study

The researcher has shown interest in this study because in many Lesotho and South African high schools men are the ones who held the position of instructional leadership in a great number, yet female educators are more than the male ones in almost all schools. There is contact between Basotho and South Africans in every sphere of life. The researcher was hoping that the study would be a revelation for Lesotho and South African females who qualify for the position of principal-ship but have developed an inferiority complex. The research was intended to show female strengths over their male counterparts.

Although Lesotho is landlocked by South Africa and is the only neighbour, each country has its own education system and school curriculum. However, it was possible to get similarities and differences in both countries regarding the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. Furthermore, some Basotho, from Lesotho, pursue their studies in South African high schools and tertiaries. After the completion of their studies, some of these Basotho remain and work in South Africa due to the high rate of unemployment in their home country.

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The map below shows how Lesotho is entirely surrounded by South Africa:



Source:gg[90408778] www.gograph.com

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

1.10.1 Role

The word “role” refers to the expectations that others hold for the behaviour of individuals who occupy the legitimate positions. Ordinance governs the expectations for the behaviour of individuals in those positions (Schuermann 2010:87; Hernandez 2013:7). In this study “role” means a part played by females as instructional leaders in learners’ academic achievement.

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1.10.2 Instructional Leadership

According to this study, leadership means a process in which an individual is able to influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal for the benefit of the organisation. The term instructional leadership describes the role of the principal in the quest for excellence in education (Vedavathi 2017:55). Instructional leadership according to Paine (2002:2) is the supervision of all the activities leading to the improvement of instruction, activities related to morale, improvement of human relations and the provision of direction and resources. Hoy and Hoy (2003:2) and Makau and Tanui (2014:7) view instructional leadership as a critical role for all principals. It is viewed as a set of instructional leadership efforts such as defining the school mission, managing instructional programme and promoting positive school learning climate (Tefera 2016:8). For this study, instructional leadership is defined as practices that have the potential to improve educator instruction, teaching and learning, and assessment abilities for learners' academic achievement.

1.10.3 Academic Achievement

Hoy and Hoy (2003:244) define academic achievement in terms of achievement tests, which are meant to measure how much the learners have learnt in specific content areas. It is a degree in which learners master a standard academic goal for the respective academic year. Marishane and Botha (2011:85) point out that academic achievement involves learners' grades and percentages in academic content areas. It is result of learners obtained because of conducting classroom instruction through the influence of principal instructional efforts (Tefera 2016:8). In this study academic achievement will be viewed as the degree to which learners are able to accomplish a standardised academic goal, in other words, individuals perceive learners' performance or competence in terms of standards of excellence.

1.10.4 Comparative study

Comparative study is a research methodology in the social sciences that aims to make comparison across different things with a view to discovering something about those things that are being compared (Thomas 2016:37). According to Maree (2007:73) the

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comparative research does not basically mean comparing different or the identical things, but it also involves seeking analytically for similarities and differences between the cases under study.

1.11 Delimitation of the Study

In Lesotho, in the Mohale's Hoek District, the study focused on five (5) high schools only out of twenty (20) high schools in that district. The study was also conducted at five (5) high schools in South Africa, only in one district, Motheo, which is in Free State Province. The study was only limited to investigating the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in high schools. Only female principals and heads of department were investigated.

The map below shows the physical boundaries of Lesotho and South Africa



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Source: Copyright ©2018 http://www.mapsofworld.com

1.12 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the perceptions of women principals of ten high schools in Mohale's Hoek District, Lesotho and in Motheo District, which is situated in Free State Province, South Africa. Therefore, the results of this study apply on ten female principals interviewed and on ten heads of department (HODs) who answered open-ended questionnaire.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter outlined background to the problem of research study, its statement and the associated research questions to the study. The purpose and specific objectives, as well as the justification and significance of the study were outlined. Attention was also paid to the definition of the key terms, and outlined the assumptions, delimitation and limitations of the study.

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CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on liberal feminist theory and instructional leadership theory in articulating the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. The appraisal of these theories is of value in that they assist in gaining insight into these principles key to understanding the relevance of studying the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. The study adopted the conceptual framework of instructional leadership as presented by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) which is one of the most widely used in research (Hallinger and Wang 2015:4).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Liberal Feminist Theory

Among different feminist theories, namely, Marxist feminism, liberal feminism, social feminism and radical feminism the researcher adopted the Liberal Feminist Theory (LFT). It is because it focuses more on issues such as equality in the workplace, in the political rights, and in the education in general. The varieties of feminism had begun to emerge some time in 1960s (Samkange 2015:1172; Lewis 2019:1). Liberal feminism's main goal is to cater for gender equality in all spheres of life, such as equal payments, equal access to education, equality in human rights and equality to better working conditions.

Liberal Feminist Theory was chosen in this study because it argues that equality can be accomplished through legal means and social reform. It is relevant for the study because it leans towards an equality argument with men. As a result, it will assist the researcher to find out why in most high schools, females are fewer than males in instructional leadership positions. Educated female educators like male educators can be good instructional leaders if they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills (Oyeniran and Anchomese 2018:150). Liberal Feminism argues that equality can be accomplished through legal means and social reform. The whole society, especially, in the patriarchy society where the important decision is taken by males the social reform must take place, so that females too are involved in decision-making. The only thing that

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might help is to support the females with the legal laws that can motivate the society to understand that principal-ship does not need authoritarian or masculine, but education on leadership skills. The goal of liberal feminist theory is to reform the present practices in a society. Besides that, liberal feminism has established its primary focus on achieving equality of opportunity and legal rights between the sexes. This focus is on individual men and women getting equal opportunity. Liberal feminist theory is basically based on the belief that females are rational beings that can make the same decisions as males; hence, they are to be treated equally by the society and under the legal law (Talbot 2015:259; Benschop and Verloo 2015:101).

Liberal feminist theory rejects oppression and discrimination of both groups and individuals (Samkange 2015:117). In this theory people are to be judged based on their merits, but not on their membership to a group. Thus, this theory fights against discrimination on leadership based on gender (Talbot 2015:260-261; Benschop and Verloo 2015:102). On the other hand, the focus of liberal feminist theory is on individual women and men that they get the same opportunities to improve their lifestyles (Benschop and Verloo 2015:101). The major concern in liberal feminism is equality and is against any stereotypical expectations towards women and men, masculinity, for instance, in the gender hierarchy. For this theory stereotype is a block for the individual's freedom of choice hence they are to be replaced by equal opportunities if females and males have equal qualifications and work-experience (Benschop and Verloo 2015:102).

The study has chosen a liberal feminist theory, which is derived from liberal theory, because it emphasises the role of the individuals over that of others, which is the role of female instructional leadership in this study (Ruiz 2004:5). Liberal feminist theory is applicable for the study as it challenges the traditional views concerning masculinity and femininity. It focuses on the differences in roles that males and females carry on in the family, at workplace, in professional context and in public live as evidence of unfair treatment (Ruiz 2004:7). For liberal feminists, the key issues remain securing equality of opportunity in education and the workplace as well as equal rights to pay and sexual equality in all areas of life. The liberal principle of individual free choice is paramount. In

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the realm of cultural production this means an end to discrimination against women in the production reception of texts (Eagleton 2003:111-114).

Liberal feminist theory is in line with the research as it encourages equal opportunities in development for women. It overcomes the existing social and cultural barriers, which is done through reform and by providing equal access to women in education and training as well as in management positions. It mainly focuses on women's development (Chopra and Muller 2016:20), which is the focus of the study that women as instructional leaders like men can play an important role in learners' academic achievement as long as they are empowered and trained.

Liberal feminism puts individualism and female's quest to be equal with their male counterparts as centre. It ignores the struggle and experiences of those on the margins. Therefore, this theory is for the voices of marginalised women to be heard and for the validity of their experiences of everyday life, oppression and resistance for programmes for liberation (Wearing 1998:165). The theory is more appropriate for the study because it focuses on equality of access and opportunity, different socialisation practices, gender, stereotyping and discrimination (Scraton and Flintoff 2013:97).

According to Awed and Eldon (2012:10) liberal feminist theory stresses that women should maintain their roles as wives and mothers, and attain equality with this structure. This can be accomplished by allowing women to have access in education and being given equal opportunities to pursue their career, and management position at schools. Liberal feminists regard differences between men and women as socio-economic and cultural constructs rather than the outcome of an eternal biology. They stress the need for equality of opportunity for women in all spheres (Barker 2012:291). Liberal feminists stress that there is a fundamental difference between men and women, and that women are integrally more peaceful and caring than men. Hence, they can play essential role as instructional leaders in schools, particularly in learners' academic achievement. This theory assumes that equality for women can be achieved by giving them access to all the opportunities even in instructional leadership.

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Liberal feminist theory is used to explain gender inequality. This is inequality between women and men and such inequality has contributed to women having less access to power, lower social status and generally limited opportunities than men. It is concerned with equal rights and freedom of the individual, both men and women. It is also against gender prejudice that can be altered through empowerment and education of women (Samkange 2015:1173-1174). Liberal feminists include all those who campaign for equal rights for women within the framework of the liberal state, arguing that the theoretical basis on which this state is built is sound but that the rights and privileges it confers must be extended to women to give them equal citizenship with men (Freedman 2001:5).

Like many gender theories, feminists begin with the assumption that gender inequality exists; then they go about explaining inequality in a variety of different ways. Liberal feminism suggests that inequality between men and women is deeply rooted in the manner that existing institutions, including government, treat women and men in a different way. When these institutions limit the chances for women to compete with men in economic and political arenas, they create inequality. Liberal feminist theory is of the opinion that men and women are to be provided with equal rights.

Thus, liberal feminist bases their arguments for equality on the similarities between men and women; because they are all basically the same, they all deserve the same basic rights (Ryle 2015:23). The methods liberal feminism prescribes for achieving equality are to gain and ensure the basic rights that give women the opportunity to compete with men, their counterparts. Therefore, during both the first and second waves of the feminist movements, liberal feminists worked for the right to an education, to be employed and to be free from discrimination in the workplace. The assumption under liberal feminism is that once these barriers are removed, the attitudes of men and women will become increasingly similar (Ryle 2015:24).

As cited by Ryle (2015:24) liberal feminists often pursue changes in legislation, which made gender discrimination within any educational institution. This brings a kind of changes in government policies, which lead to widespread and substantial effects on the lives of men and women across the globe. This theory holds that men and women are essentially the same and any sense of difference is created by laws and other societal

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structures that prevent women from having access to the same opportunities as men, like in leadership position in education (Ryle 2015:68).

Liberal feminist theory enables females to play their instructional role as it strongly emphasises that men and women deserve equality in all opportunities, respect treatments and social rights. This theory is an approach to attaining equality between men and women (Ghorfati and Medini 2015:8). Therefore, women who qualify to be in leadership should be given the opportunity like men to demonstrate their abilities in learners' academic achievement. What must be looked at in the election of instructional leader is a person's ability to perform the duty, not gender as it is the case in most Lesotho and South African high schools. There should be no discrimination or gender bias. Men and women are to be treated equally in the eyes of the law as well as in the society. According to Ghorfati and Medini (2015:9) one of the main focuses of liberal feminist theory is that an individual woman should be able to determine her social role as free as a man. It aims at bringing equality between women and men in all spheres of life, be it at workplace and professional opportunities.

The main strength of liberal feminism is that it is depicted as focusing on individual rights and on the concepts of equality, justice and equal opportunities; females are presented as being prevented from achieving equality with males by certain social barriers. It is argued, therefore, that specific legal and social policy changes are the necessary tools for rectifying females' inferior (Jackson and Jones 1998:253). It should be noted that liberal feminist theory proves that women are capable to play essential roles the same as men.

As a result, women should have the same rights, education and work opportunities as men. Both men and women should be treated in accordance with their talents and efforts. In addition, women must obtain equal opportunities and rights in leadership positions in the field of education. The law should reflect that human beings are intrinsically equal. This stresses the importance of women's rights and equality with men in the public spheres, which includes workplace and education (Robb 2015:4-5). I hope that using this theory will assist the Department of Education, in Lesotho and South Africa, not to treat

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men and women differently under the law, but to allow females to apply their knowledge and skills in learners' academic achievement.

According to Enyew and Mihreti (2018:59) liberal feminism's goal is to avoid women's oppression and subordination to achieve gender equality. This is the focus of liberal feminist theory. This theory has become the most dominant and the underpinning for other feminist groups. The authors went on to state that liberal feminist theory believes that the purpose of gender inequality is to create the opportunity to lower access for women to education and employment, civil rights and in leadership positions.

Therefore, this theory opens the way forward for females to take school leadership as long as their qualifications allow them. Both men and women are worthy to be given equal opportunities in leadership. The difference between females and males is to be based on the concepts of equality, justice and equal opportunities. Legal and social policies should be changed in the way both females and males are accommodated.

In this theory Women are expected to have the same rights with men, including the same education as well as employment opportunities. Women supposed not be treated as inferior to men. The fact that women are different from men does not mean they are not equal. In its central assumption liberal feminist theory maintains that there should be equality between females and males. The main source of females' discrimination and subordination is a set of customary and legal constraints. They are an obstacle on females' recognition to educational leadership. Females' oppression and marginalisation must be mitigated through the use of educational policies and legal laws. Since female subordination is rooted in the African culture whereby boys as they grow up were treated in the way that gives them power over girls, females themselves find it difficult to accept that they are equal not subordinate to males. Hence, most females have no courage to be in any leadership positions.

Lesotho and South African laws and educational policies are supposed to have the prominent strategies to mitigate females' subordination, oppression and underrepresentation in school leadership positions. Realistically, things are taking different direction. Society is doing what is at the back of people's mind, that is, leadership

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position is for males not females. Both Lesotho and South Africa have enacted and adopted various national, regional and international human rights convention. Furthermore, Lesotho and South Africa have adopted different policies to overcome gender discrimination in all spheres of life. Both countries have education and training policy that promote gender equality. However, females are still few in education leadership positions.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

2.3.1 Instructional Leadership Theory

Instructional leadership theory was used to conceptualise the research. It was utilised as the lens to interpret the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools. The reviewed literature pointed to the role of instructional leadership as an essential instrument in facilitating an instructional programme for achievement of learners' outcomes (Ginya 2012:5). Instructional leadership theory has been connected to educators' growth and development, learners' achievement and improvement of school climate (Hussain, Ahmad and Batool 2018:77). The purpose of the conceptual framework is to assess how much the role of female instructional leadership can contribute in learners' academic achievement. To answer research questions, the study has to find out the roles of female instructional leadership as viewed by literature and participants during the interviews and as some of them answering open-ended questionnaire.

The study adopted the conceptual framework of instructional leadership as presented by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) which is one of the most widely used in research (Hallinger and Wang 2015:4). This framework consists of three aspects characterising this leadership role, classified into ten instructional leadership functions, namely, the aspects of defining the school mission incorporates two functions, such as framing the school's goals and communicating them. The instructional leader is responsible for clarifying the school goal and to focus on learners' academic progress and its dissemination to the educators and for aspect of managing the instructional programme, which may include

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the following three functions: coordinating curriculum, supervising and evaluating instruction and monitoring learners' progress.

This aspect focuses on the instructional leader's role in controlling and coordinating the school's academic programme. The third aspect of development of a positive school learning climate incorporates the following five functions: promoting educators' professional development, providing incentives for productive educators, protecting instructional time, providing incentives for learners and maintaining high visibility of instructional leadership (Shaked, Glanz and Gross 2018:3).

The study has also chosen to use instructional leadership theory, which has its empirical origins in studies undertaken during the late 1970's and 1980's of schools in poor urban areas. This theory is emerged in the United States (US), around 1970s, as evidence accumulated that leadership is to see to it that there is a positive learner learning outcomes (Bush 2015:487). Instructional leadership theory is more focused on teaching and learning and on the direction of influence, rather than its nature and source. It helps instructional leaders to be more active participants in teacher learning and development (Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe 2008:34). It concentrates at managing teaching and learning as the core activities of educational institutions (Bush and Middlewood 2013:16). The theory is essential for the improvement of learners' academic achievement (Hallinger and Lee 2014:90). It places principals at the centre of leadership functions related to the teaching (Murphy 1990:169).

Instructional leadership theory is relevant to the study as it is defined by Mutuku (2018:27) as such activities that include coordination and organisation of work, at school, for effective and efficiency of teaching and learning. Those activities may also include goal emphasis and the use of discretion on decision-making as well as the use of power given to a school leader. Instructional leadership also ensures a full use of school resources for the benefit of school academic enhancement. The instructional leadership role is complex and dependent on personal, contextual and organisational factors (Hallinger and McCary 1990:112). Effective instructional leaders use a wide array of approaches that integrate reflection and growth to build a culture of improvement (Blasé and Blasé 1999:34). They

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value educator input about instruction and understand that improving schools is a journey of learning and risk-taking (Fullan and Miles 1992:24).

In fact, instructional leadership theory is relevant to the study, because in addition to performing the traditional managerial tasks, instructional leaders are responsible for guiding educator instruction and overseeing educator implementation of the curriculum. Furthermore, the theory enables the principals to provide educators with relevant professional development opportunities and instructional resources.

It also allows the instructional leaders facilitating instructional collaboration among them, and being knowledgeable about subject matter and teaching strategies (Barth 1990:256; Crow, Hausman and Scriber 2002:78; Stein and Nelson 2003:98). Instructional leaders recognise the conditions that need to be developed in their schools so that educators may facilitate learning activities. They allocate time and multiple opportunities to enable educators to gain a deeper understanding of the main ideas in a curriculum (Robison 2006:187).

As a matter of fact, instructional leadership theory considers a school vision that concentrates on learners' learning as more important element (Smith 2016:68). In this theory instructional leader is expected to work directly with educators for continual improvement in their teaching. This practice often leads to learners' academic achievement. The principals are the most important people to influence educators in instructional practices by guiding learning opportunities and through educators' assessment (Smith 2016:68).

The vision in this theory is to be a learner-centred vision for the school. It is the vision that guides learner learning in their daily basis. Hence, the school vision must be taken into consideration by all stakeholders, namely, educators, parents and learners. The principals must ensure that they focus on the learner-centred vision so as to improve teaching and learning. Instructional leadership theory always takes learner learning and achievement as a school priority.

Nevertheless, instructional leadership theory is relevant for the study because it focuses on the core process and goals of education, which is teaching and learning that lead to

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learners' academic achievement (Daniels, Hondeghem and Dochy 2019:111). On the other hand, instructional leaders who seek to gain the commitment of educators, parents and learners to the betterment of the school and learners must clearly articulate the vision (Daniels et al. 2019:111). They also need to use the instructional leadership theory as a useful instrument in creating a conducive and effective teaching and learning environment (Manaseh 2016:58).

The concept of instructional leadership emphasises the enhancement of instruction and put more emphasis on how educators engage in activities that influence learners' achievement. Hallinger (2003:329) states that although there are several conceptualisations of instructional leadership, the most common conceptualisation is the one, which is, defined instructional leadership using the following three dimensions: (1) defining the school mission, (2) managing the instructional programme and (3) developing the school learning climate. Besides, Hallinger (2003:330) delineated these dimensions into ten (10) instructional leadership functions.

Defining the school mission is delineated (a) in framing the school goals (b) communicating these goals (Hallinger 2003:331; Brolund 2016:42). The functions (c) coordinating the curriculum, (d) supervising and evaluating instruction, (e) monitoring the student process comprise managing the instructional programme (Hallinger 2003:334). The third dimension, developing the school learning climate, is defined in the following functions: (f) protecting the instructional time, (g) providing incentive for educators, (h) providing incentive for learning, (i) promoting professional development and (j) maintaining high visibility (Hallinger 2003:336).

Furthermore, instructional leadership theory is pertinent to the study because it is centred round the school principal who is given a grave responsibility in management and administration. This theory is a top-down approach to school leadership as it mainly focuses on the instructional leaders (principals) and their daily tasks in supervising, evaluating and monitoring instruction (Aas and Brandmo 2016:94). Hallinger (2003:340) perceives principals as leaders who work closely with educators in the improvement of teaching and learning in their schools. As it was mentioned earlier this approach remains crucial because it focuses on the core process of schooling. Hallinger et al. (2017:222)

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have reiterated that instructional leadership makes a difference for the quality of teaching and learning. It strongly influences the process of teaching and learning (Daniels et al. 2019:114). Hence, today many scholars pay a lot of attention to it.

In instructional leadership theory, the instructional leaders are expected to create a clear goal that focuses on learners' learning since the main goal of education is to assist learners to achieve their goal, learning. It is also the role of the instructional leaders to ensure that educators and learners understand the school goals that they need to accomplish, particularly school academic goals (Rashdi and Khamis 2017:282). If they achieve the set goals, they are rewarded by the instructional leaders (Rashdi and Khamis 2017:286).

Furthermore, instructional leadership theory has been thought traditionally as one of the modes to communicate high expectations for educators and learners, supervision of teaching and learning methods, monitoring assessment and learners' progress, coordination the school's curriculum, creating a supportive work environment and promoting a climate for learning (Hallinger and Murphy 1985:16; Purkey and Smith 1983:12).

Hence, instructional leadership theory relates of the process of instruction whereby curriculum is the centre of interaction between educators and learners. This theory allows the principals as instructional leaders to support educators in their collaboration to improve teaching and learning (Murphy 1990:5). Instructional leadership theory helps the principals to move from their traditional management practices to instructional leadership level that focus more on teaching and learning. This practice leads to developing levels of educators' performance as well as learners' academic achievement (Hejres 2017:2).

Worldwide, parents send their children to schools that perform well. This means there is high demand to develop school results that requires the principals to be more focused on quality teaching and learning to produce the expected results. This is also happening in Lesotho and South Africa. Parents who afford the payment of fees send their children to well performing schools (Waters and McNulty 2005:4).

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The concept of instructional leadership theory is applicable to the study because it is concerned about the improvement of educators' performance and learners' academic achievement. This role of improvement has to be played by the principal as instructional leader (Hejres 2017:3). In instructional leadership theory principals, as instructional leaders need to focus more on curriculum, quality teaching and learning rather than on management and administration tasks (Hallinger and Lee 2013:9; Hallinger and Wang 2015:10). Likewise, this theory allows principals to demonstrate their effective leadership as they play an instructional role in a classroom, which will result in an impact on learners' academic achievement (Hejres 2017:13).

Instructional leadership theory is a generic concept that demands aligning the leadership around the activities of the schools. It is through a theory that the principals as instructional leaders can enhance the quality of teaching and learning as the core activity of the education (Mitiku 2018:2). For that reason, it refers to a leadership style that encourages best practices in teaching and learning. The principals as instructional leaders are held accountable for the learners' academic achievement. Henceforth, they support the achievement of learners by actively monitoring curriculum (Cayetano 2011:18).

Sometime in the 1980s, the school principals were expected to deal mainly with management and administration issues. Nowadays, as instructional leaders, school principals are expected to exert their energy and spent more time in promoting best practices in teaching and learning for learners' academic achievement (Hallinger 2011:271; Neumerski 2012:310). In fact, contemporary school principals must perform management and administration as well as seeing to it that teaching and learning are effective to improve learners' academic achievement (Grant 2021:6). This additional responsibility remains a challenge to principals as they should be deeply involved in educators' development in their teaching and in learners' success in their studies (Shaked et al. 2017:1).

Hallinger et al. (2016) in their meta-analysis examining 40 data sets drawn from 28 studies, have indicated a small but statistically significant effect of gender on instructional leadership, where female principals revealed more active instructional leadership than

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male principals (Hallinger et al. 2016:457). In addition, Shaked et al. (2017), in their qualitative study carried out in Israel, when comparing male and female principals the findings showed that female participants more often than their male counterparts, reported possessing instructional expertise and attention to relationships. These according to the authors are the two capabilities that are necessary for instructional leadership. Their interest on that study was on how gender can shape instructional leadership. The data was collected through 59 semi-structured interviews with 36 female principals and 23 male principals from Israel (Shaked et al. 2017:1). Hence in this study the researcher investigates the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

2.4 Summary of theoretical and conceptual frameworks

This chapter reviewed liberal feminist theory and instructional leadership theory. Liberation feminist theory emphasises that there should be equality between females and males in all spheres of life, whereas instructional leadership theory acknowledges that the principals should see to educators' professional development and learners' academic achievement.

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CHAPTER 3 – REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1 Introduction

The researcher's purpose in writing a literature review is to outline existing knowledge and thoughts on a given topic to the readers. This chapter is devoted to a review of literature concerning the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. Strategies that can be utilised to enhance the role of female instructional leadership will be developed.

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 How Lesotho and South African high school female principals perceive their role as instructional leaders.

It seems that now the world has begun to recognise the presence of females in school leadership. The female instructional leaders contribute to the schools' advancement, especially, in challenging situations that stand in their ways. Female principals can influence directly educators' commitment and indirectly learners' learning process as well, even those who have learning challenges (Oyeniran and Anchomese 2018:147). Due to their gentleness females can create an environment and academic support, which gives special attention to learners, as these learning conditions are somehow like that of their actual life at home. Hence equality between men and women must be practiced as they both possess good leadership traits even though they differ.

With their leadership female principals could bring a significant contribution to learners' daily learning like males do, which in turn can positively influence the school enhancement (Zulu 2016:3). In most cases female leaders own abilities like being caring, patient and attentive as well as building good relationships among other people . In this regard, female principals' role as instructional leaders is to motivate, inspire, encourage and influence all the stakeholders so as to reach schools' destination, namely, learners' academic achievement (Esa and Peng 2013:274).

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3.2.1.1 Managing teaching and learning process

The fundamental role of female instructional leadership is to focus on curriculum, instruction and assessment that lead to learners' academic achievement (Mestry 2017:261; Glanz and Shaked 2018:3). In the South African and Lesotho context the role of the principal is to manage the curriculum throughout the school, to assure that lessons take place effectively, to inspect the learners' performance regularly through internal assessment and examination results (Mohd, Machar and Mallum 2020:301). The female instructional leaders must monitor the work of the HODs at least quarterly, especially to check their work plans and to ensure that HODs monitor the work of educators within their teaching areas (Ginya 2012:16; Mokoqo 2013:121. They are to arrange a programme of class visits that can be followed by feedback to educators (Ginya 2012:18). The female instructional leaders have to use most of their time managing teaching and learning since it is the core business of the schools. In this case, it is certain that female instructional leaders are also experts like male instructional leaders when it comes to school leadership.

They are expected to exert more energy into the instructional leadership, rather than spending most of their time on administrative work. The South African government assigned the principals the mandate to see to it that learners' academic achievement is their main role by decentralising the management power to the School Management Teams (SMTs) led by the principals (Ginya 2012:19). In their management of teaching and learning the instructional leaders are to influence learners' academic achievement in various ways in the school.

3.2.1.2 Accountability

The issue of leadership in schools has been a major cause for concern, not only in Lesotho and South Africa, but at a global level. The principals are held accountable for leading schools in which learners succeed to reach high levels of learners' academic achievement (Gill 2018:1). The principals are completely accountable for the success or failure of their schools they manage. Therefore, female instructional leaders are held accountable for giving direction to learners' academic achievement, by the Department

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of Education (DoE), educators, parents as well as learners. If male principals cope when held accountable for learners' success, what could prohibit female principals to do the same?

The principals as the accounting officers need to have the capacity to interpret and communicate the policies from the Department of Education, which is the external body, fosters learners' academic achievement. They are supposed to be representatives of the DoE. The female principals continuously involve stakeholders in the issues that could affect learners' academic achievement (Ginya 2012:20). Education system in South Africa has shown a greater necessity for accountability in school leadership. Based on The South African Schools Act, Act No.84 of 1996, a school principal has a central position in the process of developing effective school leadership (Firmaningsih-Kolu 2015:32).

The female instructional leaders are regarded to be accountable for the learners' academic achievement (Mokoqo 2013:36). Lineburg (2010:2) emphasises that since 1980s researchers have suggested that principals, as instructional leaders, are the ones who see to the effectiveness of the schools through their actions. For learners to be successful in their study the female principals' role is to ensure a learning environment that is orderly and focused on high but achievable academic goals (Allie 2014:4). It is the duty of the instructional leader to develop norms and practices for educators and the whole school (Mokoqo 2p13:41).

Maponya (2015:18) states that it is the principals' responsibility, as instructional leaders, to provide the necessary resources so that the schools' academic goals can be achieved. They are also demanded to ensure that the schools' instructional programme coheres with the curriculum and set high academic standards. Thus, the female principals are to possess knowledge and skills in curriculum and instructional matters so that the educators perceive that their interaction with the principals lead to improved instructional practice. Hoy and Hoy (2003:2) and Mestry (2017:262) view instructional leadership as a critical role for all the principals.

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3.2.1.3 Facilitate instructions

The main role of the female principals is to facilitate and initiate instructions. The female instructional leaders if they would like to achieve a main goal of school, which is quality education, have a role to prepare design, direct, implement and lead educators to achieve school objectives (Bendikson, Robinson and Hattie 2012:2). To improve learners' academic achievement, the female principals need to develop a productive and useful working environment for educators. As the highest leadership in the school, the female leaders need to have the capacity to manage and supervise the elements of the school and divide time of each activity very well, more especially instructional leadership. The primary role of the female leaders in the school is to provide instructional leadership to educators and could motivate them in carrying out their daily duties efficiently and effectively.

However, in the school where the female principals are to play the role of educator, leader, facilitator, innovator, manager, motivator and administrator there is learners' academic achievement (Supriadi and Yusof 2015:123). The quality of the learning process in schools, which is facilitated by the female instructional leaders, is meant to improve academic achievement. The female principals need to have teaching skills to make a difference in teaching and learning (Gobena 2014:1). In fact, the major responsibility of the female principals is to facilitate effective teaching and learning with the intention of improving learners' achievement (Moffitt 2007:13).

3.2.1.4 Country's educational goal

The main role of female instructional leaders is to pay attention to the country's educational goals by producing the required human resources for the development of such country. In fact, there is no country that can have an ensuring future without well-trained worker resources (Donkor and Asante 2016:66). Hence, the goal of education in Lesotho is to produce the type of graduates who can compete locally and world-wide in workforce. It is also to assist many learners to further their studies within the country, even abroad. Lesotho's educational goal is also to focus on quality education for all. The improvement of school administration and management is another goal. This is done

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through ongoing training of different groups, such as Advisory School Committees, Management Committees and School Boards. Furthermore, Lesotho Educational goal aims to provide opportunities to develop competencies and education programmes, social and cultural values (Wolhuter, Jacobs and Steyn 2017:88).

Since 1949 the role of instructional leader in South African schools has moved from manager to multi-faceted leader as it was proposed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Before that era, in most parts of the world, the role of the school administrator consisted primarily of administration and management activities (Harris, Jones, Adams and Cheah 2018:3). So now the principals are regarded as the key agents for change in school improvement in South Africa (DBE 2014). According to South African context the primary role of the principal is instructional leadership, to manage teaching and learning in collaboration with the School Management Team (SMT) which was formed in 1996 (1996 South African Schools Act). According to this Act the principals are expected to be accountable, primarily for learners' academic achievement (Ginya 2012:14). Therefore, it is the role of the female instructional leaders to have the ability to influence learners' academic achievement as a goal of Department of Education (DoE). It is certain that what male leaders could do, even females could.

3.2.1.5 Improving quality of education

Female instructional leaders have a challenging and most crucial role of improving the quality of education in schools. Firmaningsih-Kolu (2015:7) indicates that the principals are most important individuals in schools. They have most potential of sustaining and improving learners' performance and achievement (Makura 2022:13). They must form strategies that can be used to improve teaching and learning that may lead to the improvement of school results and learning that has conducive environment (Abid, Saghir and Ayesha 2018:62; Gobingca and Makura 2016:735). Female instructional leaders are very essential and play a vital role in the process of improving learners' academic achievement to the desired level (Shaked, Glanz and Gross 2018:4). They do this by leading educators as well as learners as they play their part in teaching and learning (Abreha 2014:3).

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In the case where the principals see to it that there is instructional excellence and continuous improvement there is learners' achievement (Allie 2014:9; Siamoo 2013:4).

The female principals are to ensure that activities such as learners' growth and achievement, school climate, educator and learner motivation are monitored and assessed regularly with the aim of improvement (Hoy and Hoy 2003:3; Ogecha, Waweru and Njuguma 2013:175). There is a need for the female principals to improve a quality of education as it provides learners with the ability to pursue actively their growth and well-being (Yadav 2016:2). Besides, quality education enlightens and develops children for the betterment of the society (Yadav 2016:2).

3.2.1.6 Providing instructional leadership

The main female principals' role is to provide effective instructional leadership to improve learners' academic performance. The instructional leaders have critical effects on the nature of the educational institution and on learners' performance. Hence, the objective of school principals is to develop school towards improvement by motivating and supporting educators in their teaching and by training learners to work for their achievement (Abid, Saghir and Ayesha 2018:79). In general, instructional leadership is defined as strategies and actions carried out by the principals and other school leaders that support, strengthen and bring coherence to teaching and learning within the schools (Hallinger and Wang 2015:105).

During 1970s and 1980s instructional leadership was becoming more firmly rooted in the role of school administrators. The principals were demanded to be accountable and improve schools but still required to function as instructional leaders (Hallinger 2005:2). At that time there was little discussion of instructional leadership as a function to be shared among the principals, deputy principals, heads of department and educators (Hallinger 2005:3). As time went on, according to Donkor and Asante (2016:65), the role of instructional leadership had to be taken seriously. The instructional leaders had to ensure that learners perform to the expected standard. They had to change poor performance to the good one. The female principals had to provide education with the resources required for learning to take place.

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They were also required to supervise and evaluate educators in a regular basis. It also became the role of instructional leaders to develop the spirit of teamwork with and among educators (Heaven and Bourne 2016:2). Furthermore, instructional leadership demanded principals to direct teaching and learning in the classrooms. They had to make sure that educators base themselves on curriculum in their teaching. They also had to see to the development of curriculum when the need arises. Instructional leaders are expected to form a central part of the teaching and learning process that might create an instructional environment that enables learners to achieve their academic goal (Donkor and Asante 2016:66).

The female principals must provide Instructional leadership because it is an effort to improve teaching and learning for learners, which is core activities of schooling. This involves guiding educators, managing effectively and addressing daily challenges faced in teaching and learning (Brazer and Baner 2013:650). According to Glanz and Shaked (2018:2) instructional leadership is to reflect the effort put by principals in promoting learners' academic achievement. It is the principals' role to manage instructional leadership in the manner that it harmonises with their school vision.

Instructional leaders are the one who manage staff and resources and motivate the behavioural traits of educators that influence learners' performance (Kiptum 2018:94). It is the principals' core role to supervise to improve classroom management. The instructional leaders serve as team leaders who evaluate and assess improvement in instruction and the quality of learning achievement (Kiptum 2018:94). With knowledge, application and the development of methods in instructional leadership the principals can improve commitment and motivation in the school among educators and learners (Kiptum 2018:94). Instructional leadership allows female principals to focus their energy on learners' academic achievement by being responsible for developing educators' capabilities as well as issues such as building maintenance and budgeting (Kiptum 2018:94).

According to Gumus, Bellibas, Esen and Gumus (2018:1) in their study that took place from 1980 to 2014, the results of their study indicated that there has been increasing interest in the following leadership models in educational research over time: distributed

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leadership, instructional leadership, teacher leadership and transformational leadership. Hence, it is the focus of this study to deal with the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. The instructional leader is a type of leader who pays considerable attention to the teaching and learning aspects of schools. It is the one who provides direction and strives to improve instructional practices (Gumus et al 2018:5).

In the study of Gill (2018:1) that took place in Washington, in which 12 new principals participated in the study. It is the principals' role to be instructional leaders who improve instruction (Gill 2018:2). Instructional leaders are defined to be successful principals, by most stakeholders. Hence, they are expected to create effective teaching and learning environment, which is more suitable for educators and learners (Gill 2018:3,7).

Gill (2018:11) indicates that instructional leadership requires principals to determine schools' instructional needs and lead the schools towards effective instructional improvement for the success of learners at schools. In all the schools it is critical that each learner and each school has a principal who is willing, capable and prepared to improve learners' academic achievement successfully (Gill 2018:17). The principals are expected to be proficient instructional leaders who can lead schools towards improves learners' achievement (Gill 2018:19). Gill (2018:31) contends that a search of the instructional leadership revealed that the expectation for principals to be instructional leaders is a recent issue that has come to researchers' attention in the last twenty-years. It is during this period the following researchers have proposed various theories of tasks that influence instructional improvement: Smith and Andrews, Weber and Sergiova.

3.2.1.7 Trust and high expectations

The female instructional leaders are the ones who communicate trust and high expectations, for learners' academic achievement, to educators. The principals can do this by establishing a standard of excellence in teaching and by assisting educators meet the required standards (Masuku 2011:134; Mestry 2017:262). This type of leadership is expected to have vision and courage to provide the framework that might help educators to maintain a positive attitude towards their work as professionals. Once the educators feel they are trusted and respected by their principals they collaborate freely and become

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fully engaged in their daily duties. More importantly, the instructional leaders' high expectations are to be held with the necessary support so that they can be met by both educators and learners (Masuku 2011:135; Brolund 2016:43). In the school where people communicate well with one another, the degree of trust among them becomes the school culture (Masuku 2011:62). The trust creates an atmosphere that becomes a culture of teaching and a learning, which leads to learners' academic achievement (Maponya 2015:28).

3.2.2 How female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement

The main purpose of female instructional leaders at school is to enhance learners' academic achievement. Hence, the female principals who consistently communicate expectations for high performance indicate that this constant expression of their philosophy is linked systematically to positive results in school and learners' achievement. Achievement can be understood as learners' learning for curriculum expectations demonstrated at a given time (Soehner and Ryan 2011:274). The female principals work hand in hand with parents and learners since their influence must be given special attention, because it is significantly related to learners' achievement (Soehner and Ryan 2011:274). Therefore, they are supposed to be given a chance to also be in high leadership positions as male leaders.

3.2.2.1 Accountable for success of learners

Although the female principals are accountable for the operations and management of the building, they are primarily responsible for the success of all learners. Since the current call is for the female principals to be specifically accountable for the learners' performance, they always see to it that they monitor and supervise educators (Soehner and Ryan 2011:276). There is no doubt that female principals have the greatest influence in learners' achievement. In their indirect interactions with educators and the learning environment the female principals manage to influence teaching and learning. They also influence instruction indirectly by developing a school mission that provides an

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instructional focus for educators throughout the school. This creates a school environment that facilitates learning (Soehner and Ryan 2011:279).

3.2.2.2 Conducive environment

It is the responsibility of female principals to ensure that the learning environment is conducive for both educators to teach and learners to learn. Besides, school leaders' purpose, at the most fundamental level among others is to provide a climate that allows all learners to learn. (Soehner and Ryan 2011:279). Sometimes female principals encourage interaction among educators, learners and parents and consider it as essential. The proper delegation of roles and responsibility to staff members contributes in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement.

According to Rigby (2014:620) and Mestry (2017:257) one of the major roles of female principals is to enhance learners' achievement and to maintain educators' satisfaction. The principals can improve the teaching and learning environment by creating conducive atmosphere at their schools (Kiat, Tan, Heng and Lim-Ratnam 2017:70). Creating positive school climate and motivating educators and learners is the role of female instructional leaders. Managing resources also can enhance understanding of instruction and assessment. Female principals supervise the curriculum across the schools. They also monitor the work of heads of departments through inspection of their work schedules and portfolios. They evaluate learner performance by analysing internal continuous assessments and examination results. Female instructional leaders ensure that heads of department monitor the work of educators employed in their learning areas. They also arrange a programme of class visits followed by meaningful feedback to educators (Menstry 2017:258). Due to their capability, they ought to be to be put in leadership position with a numerous number so that male leaders do not dominate female leaders.

Female school principals play an important role in the teaching and learning environment. Mestry (2017: 261) went on to state that the central role of the principals is curriculum, instruction and assessment so that both learner performance and learner achievement are enhanced. Instructional leadership is crucial, without it there is no effective teaching and learning even though both educators and learners know their duties at school. To

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strengthen the importance of instructional leadership Mestry (2017:261) defines it as those actions that school principals take and/or delegate to others, for the purpose of promoting growth in teaching and learning. This is the main aim of female principals, which may lead the school to educate all learners to a level of high achievement.

On the other hand, instructional leadership influences relationship that motivates, enables, and supports the educators' efforts to vary their teaching skills and gain more knowledge on the subjects they teach (Mestry 2017:261). The principals can also use instructional leadership to create the atmosphere that allows her to collaborate harmoniously with educators. This might shape the school in the way that it becomes a workplace whereby there is shared goals, educator collaboration and whereby everybody is fully committed to her or his work (Fatonah and Abubakar 2020:131). In such atmosphere that is conducive, educators feel free and use all the available opportunities to learn. As a result, quality education and achievement take place (Mestry 2017:261). It can also be argued that instructional leadership is a tool that can be used to assist the female principals to inspire and empower educators to improve teaching and learning for both educators and learners (Mestry, Koopasammy-Moomsammy and Schmidt 2013:52).

As the researcher has already mentioned that the female principals among all other are to focus on curriculum matters, instruction and assessment if they really wish to improve learning. They are to be careful that they give less time to management issues. Learning can be enhanced at the school in which the female principal makes a room for curriculum development, instruction and assessment practices are continually changing for the good of learners. At the schools where the principals are ready to monitor learner progress, protect instructional time, provide incentives to both educators and learners, achievement is a norm (Mestry 2017:262).

Another role of the female principals that enhance learners' academic achievement is the application of the dimensions that address the following instructional leaders' capabilities: i) the meeting with educators that discusses learners' needs; ii) discussion on performance results with educators and learners limiting possible interruptions of classroom instruction; iii) encouraging educators to make use of classroom time effectively; iv) recognising learners who exhibit academic excellence; v) providing clear

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expectations and appropriate rewards for educators; and vi) providing recognition of assemblies, office visits and communications to parents (Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam and Brown 2013:449). Another strategy female principals may utilise is to motivate educators as well as learners. They can also demonstrate their trust in both learners and educators. Good and open communication can also be used as weapon to the enhancement of learners' academic achievement by principals (Mestry 2017:262).

3.2.2.3 Balancing daily duties

Female principals try to find the way they balance their various daily duties at school. They are always in touch with the curriculum. Once there are alterations regarding their leadership in curricular issues, they are ready to find ways of introducing it to educators. Hence, this results in high academic standards of learners in such schools. Although in South African schools some learners do not perform as they are expected in international tests such as Science Study and Trends in Mathematics, in their schools, female principals try to support educators in the way that there is improvement of results in regard to the above-mentioned subjects (Menstry 2017:259). Although in some cases the female instructional leaders lack confidence and the necessary skills to engage in productive and respectful conversations with educators about quality teaching and learning, they address important concerns related to educators and learners' performance such as teaching approaches, remedial programmes for weak learners, learner assessment and effective use of available resources at school (Mestry 2017:260; Agu and Okoli 2021:63). The female leaders could just do as male leaders do because they both are human beings.

There is growing evidence that in South Africa that the female principals are for the view that learners' performance can significantly improve if leadership is taken care of (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and Van Rooyen 2010:70; Christie 2010:696). Menstry (2017:260) asserts that numerous researchers on instructional leadership put more emphasis on the significance of principals who balance their duties to the extent that they exert their time and energy on instructional leadership. Once instructional leadership role is clearly understood by female principals this can affect learners' performance in a positive way.

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3.2.2.4 School Assessment

Female principals can enhance learners' academic achievement through school assessment. This can be done by monitoring schools' practical assessment procedures. Where assessment is monitored it has effect on how educators teach and how learners learn (Amua-Sekyi 2016:1). The number of examinations written by learners per year can assist in learners' academic achievement (Ginya 2012:28). Assessment enables educators to judge how well teaching and learning activities are integrated (Amua-Sekyi 2016:2). In the case where learners are given tests and examinations more often, they become highly motivated in teaching and learning. Such learners often achieve their goals, because as time goes on there is a lot of competition in learning among them. The female instructional leaders are supposed to see to it that there is enough time for examining students' achievement on a regular basis. They also need to work with educators to analyse learners' assessment results and other behavioural challenges (Abreha 2014:29). Female principals are to monitor learners' progress (Ginya 2012:28; Abreha 2014:3) as it can assist them to determine the level of learners' academic achievement (Amua-Sekyi 2016:2).

3.2.2.5 Short- and Long-Term Planning

In most cases, females turn to be well organised, hence they believe in planning their work. They also could influence people who work with them to do the same. They use different strategies that allow them to have a clear short and long-lasting plan. Since women are better planners, they are more likely to use strategies that include series planning (Nancy and Naples 2015:1). Women often use strategies that include short and long-range planning and evaluating data in making decisions and thus have been rated as better planners (Gobena 2014:1).

3.2.2.6 Providing incentives

Providing various incentives such as good working conditions, praise and material awards is a strategy the instructional leaders can use to motivate educators to develop their teaching. Praising educators in front of their colleagues can encourage other educators to improve their work. Appreciating educators' performance provides an incentive for

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improvement and continues growth (Lineburg 2010:18). Tangible awards can be provided to both educators and learners as a way of motivating them, especially because incentive can act as energizer that can sustain behaviour (Heaven and Bourne 2016:6).

3.2.2.7 Persistence

Although female principals face some challenges in their leadership, they still manage to improve learners' results. Female principals in most cases are employed to lead in remote and disadvantaged places, in schools with limited resources and infrastructure. These are rural schools where most people are uneducated and lack interest in their children's education. Those leaders struggle a lot in the academic achievement of learners in their schools. This in most cases demands them to work harder than their male counterparts who oversee accessible schools (Naidoo and Perumal 2014:16). Some studies indicate that even in this hopeless situation female leaders can bring changes. This gives them chance to demonstrate one of their qualities, commitment, to the teaching and learning (Hayes 2013:18; Makau and Tanui 2015:4; Makura 2022:13). Female instructional leaders even in this situation manage to improve learners' performance.

3.2.2.8 Leadership skills

Lack of formal training for principals to be and those at work is one of the challenges female instructional leaders in Lesotho and South Africa experience. In developing countries lack of formal training for school leaders makes them feel nervous and less confident in their instructional leadership (Masuku 2011:11). Masuku indicates that this has become a major challenge for many African countries, such as Zimbabwe. The rapid social change in developing countries such as Zimbabwe has had an impact of the instructional leadership development process in high schools.

The principals seem to have faced with complex challenges concerning their role as instructional leaders. Therefore, the strategies that could be used by female principals to overcome instructional leadership challenges need to be developed. This might encourage women to take instructional leadership positions as capable females who acquired leadership knowledge and skills. As they demonstrate their leadership skills, they might be able to overcome prejudices they face in this leadership and assist in

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learners' academic achievement. They can also develop confidence that they too can lead the instruction. Women tend to lack confidence that they can fit in principalship position, they underestimate their own capacity for the position (Coleman 2012:120; Spiller 2012:16). The dominance of males in leadership roles contributes to women struggle to feel comfortable as principals (Sayce and Lavery 2016:4).

3.2.3 Perceptions of heads of department (HODs) regarding the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement

The researcher decided to involve heads of department in the study because they too are regarded as instructional leaders who support the main instructional leader-principal (Department of Basic Education 2016). This is practised because most principals in so-called "township" and rural schools are too occupied with the daily challenges of keeping their schools functioning (Seobi and Wood 2016:1). Heads of department, according to policy guidelines (Department of Education, Republic of South Africa 2000, 2002), are positioned as instructional leaders to unload principals who seem to be overloaded by daily school functions as I have mentioned earlier. Hence, HODs perform the direct instructional leadership in their department as they attend to the details of curriculum delivery in the subjects belong to their department (Bendikson, Robinson and Hattied 2012:16). In contrary, the principals supervise and manage all the subjects done in school.

3.2.3.1 Influence school outcomes

Heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement is to influence school outcomes and how their practices are reconciled by the school curriculum (Masuku 2011:12). The principals are to manage the curriculum with the intention of bringing about quality teaching and learning for learners' academic achievement.

3.2.3.2 Elevating professional development

Consequently, the female heads of department's (HODs) perception is that the female principals are supposed to pay attention to the programme of educators' improvement

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regarding learners' academic achievement. This can be used as a tool to improve their instruction by allowing them to attend relevant trainings that assist them to improve their content, skills and methods of teaching for the achievement of learners at their schools (Maponya 2015:28). Developing educators' profession through in-service trainings affects the classroom instruction and learners' achievement. Hence, it is always the role of the principals to back-up the improvement efforts of the educators to motivate them to focus on the main purpose of schooling, that is, success of learners (Joyner 2005:2). Besides, the female instructional leaders are expected to demonstrate the appropriate qualities of leadership that might assist educators improve learners' academic achievement (Johdi and Hatta 2011:6).

Elevating professional development is a key to improving learners' academic achievement. Instructional leaders need to ensure that there is a continued improvement of the educators' pedagogical skills for educators' professional growth (Siamoo 2013:37). It is the role of the female principals to make educators aware of professional development opportunities (Lineburg 2010:14). The instructional leadership can also invite motivational speakers to workshop educators on how to cope with daily stress. Inviting supervisors also can be influential if they come to school in a regular basis. The female leaders can also encourage healthy relationship collaboration among educators. Professional development can improve educators' teaching, knowledge and skills (Lineburg 2010:25).

3.2.3.3 Support to educators

The female instructional leaders are to play an important role of supporting educators by supervising and evaluating instruction. This could be done by monitoring classroom instruction through various informal classroom visits. Support could be used as a tool for motivating educators to control school quality (Johdi and Hatta 2011:5; Maponya 2015:2). The fact remains that it is difficult to discuss learners' achievement without considering the role of instructional leadership (Beachum and Dentith 2004:279; Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson and Hann 2002:34; Fullan and Hargreaves 1996:120). Therefore, keeping instructional leadership to administration levels only, not sharing responsibilities among the educators in some form of delegation and support may hinder them to contribute their

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main knowledge and influence on learners. The fact that educators are the most important figure to learners is undeniable. They work closely to one another for the learners' academic success in their schools.

Therefore, the female instructional leaders' support is of assistance to them as educators, as it encourages and motivates them (Cuban 2003:77). Furthermore, the principals must give educators the opportunity to decide that they want to improve learners' academic because they are the centre of the instructional improvement (Moswela 2014:50; Wilson 2013:2). In the end of everything that can be done by the female principals, only the educators themselves can change and improve their instructional practice in the classroom. Hence, the educators' support by the female principals and self-regulation are critical to learners' academic achievement (Hoy and Hoy 2003:3; Kruger 2003:206).

3.2.3.4 Instructional support

Consequently, the female principals are to consider their instructional support to educators as a tool to improve their instruction by allowing them to attend relevant trainings that assist them to improve their content, skills and methods of teaching for the achievement of learners at their schools (Nzoka and Orodho 2014:94; Makura 2012:281). In-service trainings affect the classroom instruction and learners' achievement (Donkor and Asante 2016:69). Hence, it is always the role of the female principals to support the improvement efforts of the educators to motivate them to focus on the main purpose of schooling, that is, success of learners (Joyner 2005:2).

The supportive female principals have the responsibility to prioritise, align, assess, monitor and learn. They can place learners' academic achievement as a priority in their daily routine. With the organised instructional schedules, the educators find different ways that lead to learners' achievement (Joyner 2005:4; Jaure and Makura 2021:1698). Usually, educators work hard for the success of their learners if they are given a proper training and support.

They can be willing to do what is necessary to improve learners' achievement. Once educators are convinced that a particular educational strategy is effective with learners, they do not hesitate to use it. If female principals provide the educators with regular

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feedback on learners' progress, they feel motivated because they want learners to grow and improve in their learning. In this way they enjoy fruits of their daily work (Joyner 2005:7). Moreover, supported educators can deal with anxiety and sometimes to cope with failure. The female principals as instructional leaders are in a good position to assist and encourage educators to improve learners' educational achievement, which is another way of demonstrating their support to educators.

3.2.3.5 Improving the standard of learners' academic achievement

Globally, instructional leadership has become a core responsibility of principals (Park and Ham 2016:369; Kaparou and Bush 2016:898) to promote learners' academic success. It is only through instructional leadership the principal can promote learners' academic achievement (Shaked, Glanz and Gross 2018:2). The main role of female instructional leaders is to improve the standard of learners' academic achievement to the level demanded by Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in Lesotho and Department of Education (DoE) in South Africa. It is the female instructional leaders who supposed to guide educators and learners with a view to creating successful school in which learners perform to the standard put by the Ministry of Education (Abreha 2014:2).

The female principals are to promote teaching and learning that lead to higher levels of learners' academic achievement. Although the female instructional leaders' role is to undertake administrative and management duties and less teaching, they must focus on the effective instructional activities so as to ensure successful expected outcomes.

They have to be more involved in instructional programmes of the school (Abreha 2014:5). Learners' academic achievement is the major business of all the schools; as a result, it is that all the female principals are to exert their energy and time into improving instruction (Mokoqo 2013:3). As instructional leader one must see to it that there is interaction between the leader and educators aimed at learners' academic achievement (Mokoqo 2013:38). The main role of instructional leaders is to facilitate the improvement of teaching and learning. Hence, there is a link between principals' instructional leadership and the learners' achievement (Hallinger and Wang 2015:572).

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3.2.3.6 Communicating school vision and mission

One of the roles of instructional leadership is to build and sustain a school vision (Shake, Glanz and Gross 2018:2). It is the role of female instructional leaders to articulate and communicate school vision and mission to all stakeholders (Mokoqo 2013:58). Defining a school's vision and mission, learning goals and high expectations regarding teaching and learning could assist in the academic achievement of learners (Abreha 2014:3). In the context of South Africa, the School Governance Body (SGB) oversees drawing the school's vision and mission (SASA 1996). Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the instructional leaders to analyse, interpret and communicate the school's vision and mission to all the stakeholders. This is meant to accomplish the goals of the school (Ginya 2012:27).

The female principals are expected to be good communicators of the schools' vision and mission to allow all stakeholders to contribute positively towards the improvement of learners' academic achievement. Therefore, according to Maponya 2015:19), for this to be effective the female principals are required to be skilled communicators in one-on-one, small group and large settings. They are also expected to articulate a vision and culture of the school that lead everyone in the same direction. The instructional leaders are expected to attempt to pursue a vision that educators support and provide direction whereby the school leadership explains the vision (Mokoqo 2013:36,39). The female principal is expected to be visionary and be able to deal with various situations.

3.2.3.7 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

The female principals are to ensure that there is consistent instructional supervision and evaluation of instructions. (Ginya 2012:28). This might assist in monitoring the teaching and learning process in school. Sufficient departmental supervision and engagement of the instructional leaders in classroom supervision can help in learners' academic achievement (Nzoka and Orodho 2014:94). The impact of the instructional leaders on learners' academic achievement is significant. They are the ones who play a key role in supervising and evaluating teaching and learning. School principals are tasked with the responsibility of being effective instructional leaders (Gordon 2014:5). Through

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supervision and evaluation, they promote effective teaching and learning that influence learners' academic achievement (Mokoqo 2013:64).

Supervision and evaluation of educators' performance by the instructional leaders can improve classroom instruction. Informal visits to the classroom can assist the principals to observe teaching strategies that are being used and assess their effectiveness. The visits can give the principals opportunities to talk with educators regarding instructional methods (Lineburg 2010:11; Mafuwane 2011:20). This strategy motivates educators to do a lot of research in their teaching subjects and to be well prepared for their classes. Consequently, educators who produce good results enjoy their work. Supervision and evaluation create a climate at school in which educators openly and critically discuss the feelings of respect and trust increase as well as the opportunities for educators to express themselves freely (Lineburg 2010:13). The presence of instructional leaders may be by walking around and informally visiting classrooms, this can be another way of supervising and evaluating teaching. In the school where educators are allowed to be creative in teaching, they succeed to reach the schools' goal, learners' achievement.

3.2.3.8 Guidance and counselling

In various schools nowadays many learners lost their parents either through divorce or death. Therefore, guidance and counselling strategies are to be effective as learners require constant guidance and counselling. If this is offered at school, it may have led to learners' academic achievement. Even for the learners who have parents' guidance and counselling is a best way that the female instructional leaders can use to improve learners' academic achievement (Nzoka and Orodho 2014:95).

3.2.3.9 Adapting to gender differences

Instead of females wanting to adopt the authoritarian style of leadership approach to resist patriarchy, Tingery (1993), as stated in Growe and Roslin, suggested some ways of adapting to gender differences. Tingery (1993) suggests that the adoption of a positive attitude towards the differences that bring about the realisation that males and females communicate differently. Once the differences are acknowledged, females will be in the

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right frame of mind to communicate with the opposite sex (Zvisinei 2022:2). The coping techniques, as proposed by Morojele et al (2013) may be of assistance to females.

3.2.4 How female instructional leadership is being implemented effectively in Lesotho and South African high schools

The focus of instructional leadership is to improve the effectiveness of instruction at their schools so as to increase the achievement of learners (Mutuku 2018: xiv). For principals to check their effectiveness repeatedly, they should know what, when, how and why to initiate, create culture of high expectation instructional alteration, create culture of high expectations for achievement and support in teaching and learning. Instructional leaders are the ones who influence teaching and learning for learners' academic achievement.

3.2.4.1 Capability to care

One of the qualities of females is caring therefore female instructional leaders can take care for educators and learners. As a result, they use a combination of effective leadership and management. They are aware that they cannot be successful in management without effective leadership (Zulu 2016:1). The quality of caring which is given to most women is the one that contributes to the effective leadership of females. Without a caring leader effective leadership is impossible. The female principals are expected to ensure that the school environment is safe to allow for effective teaching and learning in the classroom (Zulu 20161). The author went on to state that effective instructional leaders are those who are lifelong learners, ensuring continuous professional development. It is only through continuous learning the school leaders stay informed about the educational policies and practices (Zulu 2016:2). Female principals are effective leaders of their schools (Oboegbolem 2013) in Zulu 2016.

3.2.4.2 Gentleness

Usually, female instructional leaders do not apply authoritative, because they do not have a sense of control. Hence, they do not apply authority and power to their subordinates. Truly speaking, females are very uncomfortable with the notion of leadership with authoritative connotations that reflects a commanding structure, at work, to their followers.

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Females in their leadership make sure that they satisfy their people in their leadership and management. They create the situation that allows both parties to work for the common good of the school. Thus, their leadership is productive, effective and innovative (Esa and Peng 2013:274). This type of leadership demonstrates and is influenced by females' upbringing. Females' instructional leadership plays an essential role in learners' academic achievement in school. In their schools they produce the individuals who have grown emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and physically (Esa and Peng 2013:275).

3.2.4.3 Parental involvement

Female leaders connect the school to parents and the community. Parents are involved in their children's discipline and learning. Parents are informed once their children misbehave or show signs of misbehaviour. They work hard for the development of learners. Although female leaders have very little direct impact of learners' achievement, they are often perceived as accountable for learners' academic achievement. Female principals indirectly contributed to learners' success by encouraging educators to be committed in their daily teaching activities (Esa and Peng 2013:276; Krasnoff 2015:3).

3.2.4.4 Improvement in teaching and learning

Female leadership is highly effective because they ensure that there is improvement in teaching and learning. They focus even on learners' individual learning needs. They are concerned about the quality of teaching and learners receive. This is done by checking educators' capacity to consistently deliver high quality lessons that assist students to grasp all the information that develop their skills and acquire knowledge (Wyatt 2017:31; Sudrajat and Abubakar 2020:428). Promoting professional development is a basic focus of female instructional leadership. They are concerned about their role as instructional leaders. Hence, they contributed to learners' performance in their schools by establishing highly effective processes that identify learners' needs (Wyatt 2017:31; Krasnoff 2015:3). Female principals' essential role is to be instructional leaders who can develop a team of educators who deliver effective instruction to every learner (Krasnoff 2015:1).

Effective female leadership has essential role of being instructional leaders capable of influencing educators to deliver effective instruction to every learner. Although female

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principals are not as close as educators to learners, they can improve learner achievement (Krasnoff 2015:2). Female instructional leadership has more impact on learners' academic achievement whereby principals focus on motivation and improvement. This type of leadership focuses on curriculum and instruction to enable educators to teach at their best and learners at their utmost (Krasnoff 2015:3). Effective female principals improve learners' academic achievement by focusing on the quality of teaching and learning. At their schools they encourage continual professional learning. They also support educators by providing instructional support.

Effective female principals improve instruction in their schools. They see to it that teaching and learning are improved repeatedly. Although they spend time in the classrooms to evaluate instruction, they work together with HODs who are experts in different subjects done at a particular school. HODs make close observations what is going on, what is working and what is not working. Thereafter, they discuss what they have found with educators. In most cases effective female instructional leaders encourage collaboration among educators to improve instruction. Where educators work, teach and assist one another learners succeed in their studies.

3.2.4.5 Providing feedback

Female instructional leaders provide feedback to guide educators so that good and effective instruction can take place. Their view of principal-ship centres on instruction, which is one, that seems to have gained currency in recent years. The female principals have a little bit from building management or some other administrative issues. This knowledge and understanding that instruction is the main responsibility of their work have made them aware that they have essential role to play in learners' academic achievement (Mendels 2012:54). The author went on to state that the emergence of research has found the link between school leadership and learner achievement. Hence, effective leadership is most essential because it contributes a lot in learners' academic achievement. The influence of female instructional leaders to classroom instruction also contributes in learners' teaching and learning. Although the female instructional leadership does not make its impact directly, its indirect workings have a statistically significant effect in learner achievement (Mendels 2012:55).

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3.2.4.6 High standards

In the first-place female leadership develops a school-wide vision of commitment to high standards and the achievement of learners. Those female principals assist in defining the vision to all the educators, parents and learners. Their instructional leadership seems to be effective because among others they have and express high expectations for educators, parents and learners. In that they include clear and public standards which is a key to achievement (Mendels 2012:55). They ensure that there is good instructional atmosphere in that all learners can learn. They see to it that all learners achieve at high levels. Usually, effective female principals specify that the vision is not negotiable, in this way at their schools the vision has been securely planted (Mendels 2012:55).

Female instructional leaders often set high performance expectations that influence both educators and learners to work together (Esa and Peng 2013:275; Krasnoff 2013:3; Wyatt 2017:31). In this case the two parties create a time for teaching and learning. They can design and manage the teaching and learning programme. Female leaders are effective because through HODs they monitor performance. Repeatedly they check with HODs how learners from each department perform. This practice influences all the educators to be fully committed. Another way of monitoring performance is giving of incentive to both educators and learners every year. Both parties feel that they are recognised by being rewarded as achievers their focus is learners' achievement, which means they have no discrimination towards learners. They put learners ahead of everything at school (Esa and Peng 2013:275).

3.2.4.7 Hospitable climate

Creating a climate hospitable to education is another way of showing how effective female principals are. Effective female principals ensure that there is safety and orderliness. They see to it that at schools, there is atmosphere that is conducive that helps educators as well as learner to feel supported. Female instructional leaders ensure that the educators work collaboratively, not in isolation from one another. Educators are encouraged to assist one another among themselves and to offer guidance for the improvement of instruction. They work hard at creating the working atmosphere among educators and

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learners (Mendels 2012:55). At their schools there is a sense of staff and learner safety. There is also a sense of respect for all members of the school community.

Overall, the effective female instructional leadership has a vision for the school and encourage educators to help one another with classroom skills. They are also a guide for the better instruction (Mendles 2012:58). Besides, the effective female instructional leaders manage the learning environment and provide support and guidance for other school leaders, such as deputy, HODs and educators to assist them to improve quality teaching and learning that lead to learners' academic achievement (Bendikson, Robinson and Hattie 2012:4).

3.2.5 How instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture

For the better understanding of how female instructional leadership affects the school culture, the researcher decided to briefly define the word "culture" the way it will be used in this section. According to Dimmock and Walker (2005:11-12), "sociologists define culture as the values held by members of a given group that distinguish it from other groups." They went on to state that:

> *"The culture refers to the whole way of life of the members of a society or a group. It includes how they dress, what and how they eat, marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies, leisure pursuits and works of art. It is displayed and expressed through language, thought and action. It is also expressed through physical objects, such as works of art, books, icons, monuments and museums, and through social interaction such as how people relate to one another, make decisions and share experiences. It is the last of these - social interaction – that is perhaps of most significance for educational leadership."*

At school also culture plays an important role of binding people together, principals, educators, non-teaching staff, learners and parents. This takes place through a shared and common understanding of an accepted way of life. Hence, each school has its own culture, which is different from other schools. The culture in each school contains its own unique patterns of behaviour (van Deventer 2016:66). For that reason, the (female)

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school principal of each school, as instructional leader, must make it a point that she influences all the stakeholders to be influenced by their school culture. The concept, school culture is very important, because it is the way that must be followed by all stakeholders if they would like to achieve their main school goal, learners' academic achievement. Henceforth, a culture of each school has to be studied in terms of its own meaning and values (Dimmock and Walker 2005:9).

Each school has its own way of dealing with the same curriculum given to all schools by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in Lesotho, or the Department of Education (DoE) in South Africa. Each instructional leader tries to find ways of ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning at school, which always leads to learners' success. In education, culture is to be used for enhancing teaching and learning to meet the learners' needs (Smith 2016:72). That is where the culture of teaching and learning of each school plays its integral role. The stakeholders and the place where the school situated have a lot of influence in the formation and living according to school culture. Each school's own way of handling issues is different from other schools depending on people who work at the school and the place the school is situated. Besides, culture of the school is not static it rather keeps on changing with time and space, it needs to be improved (van Deventer 2016:65). It is therefore essential for female instructional leaders to build a great school culture that influences learners' achievement (Smith 2016:72).

According to Xaba and Janson (2014:121) and van Deventer (2016:64) culture is defined as the behaviour of people within a society and the meaning people attribute to such behaviour. It is a complex phenomenon that includes an organisational expectations, experiences, philosophy and values that hold it together. Culture develops over a period and becomes assumptions that are taken for granted and operate unconsciously and unexamined in the minds of people (van Deventer 2016:62). These fundamental assumptions in the organisations are not openly discussed; however, they subconsciously influence people's behaviour (van Deventer 2016:63). Hence, Bush and Middlewood (2013:53) call culture an intangible world of values and attitudes. Furthermore, culture relates to the informal aspects, not to the formal element of the

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organisations. Values and believes reinforce the behaviour and attitudes of all the stakeholders at school (van Deventer 2016:64).

3.2.5.1 Defining and communicating school culture

It is therefore the role of the female principals to define and nurture a school culture that encourages the educators and learners to be fully committed in their daily work (Mokoqo 2013:54). The process of improving the school culture is regarded as the key leadership role of female instructional leaders (Mokoqo 2013:3). The culture prevailing at schools if it is explained clearly, it will be accepted by all the stakeholders in the manner that might assist them to positively collaborate in teaching and learning (Mokoqo 2013:55).

Masuku (2011:39) defines school culture as a tool demonstrated through leaderships that are encouraged between educators and learners, as well as between learners, by approaches to teaching and learning. School culture is about the behaviour and relationship of educators and learners. How they cope in school daily tasks. It is about the interaction between instructional leaders and educators, as well as between learners and educators, as they try to achieve school goals. Although each school is unique culture reflects the values and beliefs that are shown by the principals, educators and learners in the particulars school (Masuku 2011:62).

The female principals are the ones who supposed to demonstrate in actions a belief that all learners can achieve their study. By so doing they will be developing a school culture in which educators and learners alike respect hard work and academic success (Hoy and Hoy 2003:2). In fact, the major responsibility of the female principals is to create school culture which is conducive to effective teaching and learning with the intention of improving learners' achievement (Moffitt 2007:13; Johdi and Hatta 2011:1; Abreha 2014:3). So hardworking, which leads to the success of the school should be part of school culture, which must be instilled to all stakeholders by the female principals.

The school culture influences the academic performance of both educators and learners if it is conducive. Each school has its own culture, which is to be embraced by all the stakeholders if they wish to have a sense of belonging. According to Heaven and Bourne (2016:20), culture is important because it distinguishes a school from others. Therefore,

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the instructional leader who keeps on reminding the stakeholders about this wins them and manages to provide them with a sense of organisational identity. Since each school has its own specific culture, the leaders must play their role of reinforcing in all the areas to improve the academic standards of their schools.

Literature studies show that the school culture can be that one of embracing cooperation and respect for educators. It can also create an atmosphere of freedom where the stakeholders are free to express themselves and to be creative without continual scrutiny (Sufean 2014:139). This attitude can increase both educators and learners' performance. It can also build a high level of support for the school and its culture (Daniels et al. 2016:118; Heaven and Bourne 2016:20).

3.2.5.2 Developing school culture

The instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture in the sense that the leadership style employed by school leader is complex and plays a fundamental role in developing the culture in the school. Through their instructional leadership principals are assigned the responsibility to deal with various issues within the schools (Mokoqo 2013:3). Among them they are expected to create in inviting culture of teaching and learning that consequently have a positive impact on learners' academic achievement (Lucas and Valentina 2002:3) in Mokoqo 2013:1). Henceforth, in this section the study discussed how instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture. On the other hand, what female principals can do through their instructional leadership to develop a school culture conducive to learners' academic achievement was discussed. This is dealt with because leadership plays a significant role in building positive school culture (Smith 2016:71). School culture is extremely important for each school because every time when one comes into any school, the culture of that school is immediately evident. School culture is a primary indicator of the efficiency of the school. Each school has its own culture that is composed of various intangible phenomena, to mention the few, assumptions, values, perceptions, beliefs patterns of behaviour and behavioural norms (Schan as cited in Shaftz, Ott and Yang 2011:338; Heaven and Bourne 2016:20; Daniels et al. 2019:118). Therefore, female leaders are essential in guiding these beliefs, values and behaviours of their school for betterment of teaching and learning. In addition,

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this style can create a positive school culture and increase educator satisfaction as well as learner performance (Smith 2016:66). Thus, instructional leadership of female principals and school culture are intertwined. It is very difficult to separate the two.

The female instructional leaders are to create a school culture that focuses on the importance of instruction that is learner-centred. This might help learners to achieve at higher-than-expected levels if much emphasis is on enhancement of teaching and learning. Apart from that, female principals are to place high levels of expectation upon both educators and learners (Smith 2016:72; Daniels et al. 2019:118). In the case where instructional leaders ensure that educators are supported and protected their perception of job satisfaction and the feeling of support is increased. To be cared for is the good feeling enjoyed by every individual. As a result, when a leader shows a genuine concern for educators' workload and their time, they develop a feeling of belonging and perform well (Heaven and Bourne 2016:20; Smith 2019:72).

3.2.5.3 Adequate resources

It is also the role of female instructional leader to improve academic standards, which is the focus of education. This must become a culture of the school. As Heaven and Bourne (2016:20) stated one of the various roles of the instructional leaders is the enhancement of academic standards interwoven with their ability to allocate resources in the manner that would maximise educators' performance and learners' achievement. Likewise, the female instructional leaders must see to it that they supply adequate resources for teaching and learning. The culture, which ensures that the places of instruction are for the most part conducive to teaching and learning process, is the one needed at school. Adequate resources also are to be available to improve the teaching and learning environment with the aim of enhancing academic standards. The female instructional leaders have essential role in the reinforcement of the school culture if they wish to increase the academic standards.

In the school where a leader succeeds to influence stakeholders to understand a school culture, such school becomes a school with positive culture, where all share of what is essential. Thus, in that situation there is a shared care, concern and commitment to

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improve the academic outcomes for all learners (Heaven and Bourne 2016:20; Daniels its al. 2019:118). Instructional leaders are to make people feel that even the most difficult challenges can be tackled productively**.** Besides, instructional leaders are expected to instil the culture of hope that is to convey a sense of optimism and an attitude of never giving up in the achievement of high standards. The attitude is the one that can help in developing a culture of greatness and assist stakeholders to be persistent in their daily duties. Female instructional leaders supposed to play a major role in the daily interactions within their schools and the culture that they desire to create (Heaven and Bourne 2016:20).

Instructional leadership of female principals is essential in school culture because they are the ones to guide educators and learners. This can lead to high academic performance as it is associated with the culture of teaching and learning. The process of improving the school culture, as supported by Daniels et al. (2019:118), is regarded as the key instructional leadership role of the principals intending to effect change on several processes, including the learners' academic achievement. Thus, it is realistic that all the initiatives of female instructional leaders are to convert into enhancing the culture of teaching and learning (Mokoqo 2013:3). Instructional leadership and culture are regarded as related concepts, in the sense that leadership influences the formation of culture (Heaven and Bourne 2016:20). The two concepts are also considered as intertwined processes, as one concept cannot happen to the exclusion of the other (Mokoqo 2013:4). Researchers like Heave and Bourne (2016:20), emphasise that instructional leadership could have positive impact on teaching and learning environment. It can also have processes leading to improvement in learners' performance and academic achievement.

School culture has been seen as an element that pervades and influences all aspects of a school. Culture is regarded as element that links explicitly and implicitly to all the functions of a school organisation. Hence, Sufean (2014:138) posits that at school instructional leadership has been considered as the most essential type of leadership, which is closely linked to what is termed "professional culture" in schools. The author went on to state that instructional leadership is considered as the main function of education,

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learning in the classrooms that also constitute the major elements of a school culture (Sufean 2014:138).

3.3 Summary of the Review of related literature

Unlike in the previous chapter where the study reviewed two theories, this chapter reviewed the literature, which is relevant to the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. Accordingly, the role of female instructional leadership contributes a lot in learners' academic achievement in high schools. The literature reviewed in this chapter highlights the unique role that female instructional leaders have in instructional leadership.

The next chapter explores the research methodology of the study.

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CHAPTER 4 – METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was utilised during the research. Of the particular importance is the focus on the study's research design, sampling of the participants, data collection and analysis as well as the limitations. A qualitative research design was chosen Rich data were collected from participants by means of semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire regarding liberal feminism. The section also reveals how the researcher conducted all the interviews and distributed open-ended questionnaires and how data were analysed and interpreted.

4.2 Research Paradigm

In this study the concept paradigm serves as the lens through which the researcher examines the methodological aspects of the research to determine the research method that will be used throughout the study as well as how the data will be analysed (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:26). A word paradigm according to Kuhn 1962 in Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:26) means philosophical way of thinking. As a matter of fact, for this study, research paradigm denotes a particular worldview that constitutes a researcher's values, beliefs and methodological assumptions. In the field of education, the term research paradigm is used to describe a researcher's worldview.

This worldview is the set of shared beliefs that informs the meaning or interpretation of research data. A research paradigm explains researcher's beliefs about her or his world. Paradigm is essential as it provides beliefs that influence what is to be studied and how the results of the study are to be interpreted. The research paradigm helps a researcher to choose methodology and methods in the research process. Even in this study the paradigm assisted the researcher to choose the correct methodology and method of dealing with the role of instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement.

Broom and Willis in their study carried out in (2007:17) define a paradigm as a system of beliefs about the nature of the world when applied in the research setting. Kuhn 1970 in Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:26) defines a research paradigm as the set of common beliefs

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and agreements shared between and about how problems are to be understood and addressed. Research paradigm according to Guba 1990 can be characterised by the way scientists respond to three basic questions on ontological, epistemological and methodological questions.

The research paradigm according to Alghamdi (2015:78) is a systematic investigation where data are collected and analysed. The research paradigm is also defined as the researcher's basic set of beliefs that guide the researcher throughout the development of the study (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:5). Levers (2013:3) describes the research paradigm as a system of ideas or worldview used by the researcher to generate knowledge.

The research paradigm is essential because it influences what should be studied and how the results of the study should be interpreted. Therefore, it is essential for a researcher to state the paradigm in which she or he is locating her or his study (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:26).

Creswell (2009:7) and Maree (2012:21) recognise constructivism, positivism and interpretivism as the three paradigms. Hence, this study was guided by an interpretive paradigm and a liberal feminism. The researcher sought to understand and interpret the meanings the subject is making of the context (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:33). Interpretive paradigm according to Pulla and Carter (2018:9) is a research paradigm, which is associated with qualitative research. The interpretivism invites a researcher to find out the in-depth meaning and tries to understand the human behaviour, human interactions and society. As a result, the researcher has to attempt to develop the meaning behind the understanding of participants' lives subjectively. In the social science the researcher observes a phenomenon and tries to understand the participants' interpretations that they have already made.

A strong interpretive tradition, according to Broom and Willis (2007:24), emerged in the social sciences in the 1960s and 1970s. Phenomenological research design is part of the interpretivist tradition and is associated with the following authors: Berger and Luckmann (1967), Geertz (1973), Glaser and Strauss (1967), Lofland and Lofland (1984) and Rubin and Rubin (2005). Although interpretive research paradigm gathered its momentum in the

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late 1960s, it originated at the Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s. Before 1960s most social scientists were using research methods that were largely quantitative and based on a positivist paradigm. Later on, in the field of social sciences the interpretive paradigm was used by many researchers with the qualitative research methods. Thereafter, there was a rapid movement from positivist paradigm to the interpretive paradigm, which led to the development of qualitative methods (Broom and Willis 2007:24).

In this study, interpretive paradigm is used as the interpretive research that aims to interpret human behaviour and social phenomenon. It therefore needs a focus on gaining empathic understanding of participants' feelings and the meaning that they give to their everyday life. The purpose of the interpretive paradigm is to gain deeper understanding of the individual behaviour. It therefore allowed the researcher to find the answers of research questions through the use of semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire. It also enabled the researcher to investigate how the participants perceive the role of the females as instructional leaders because the study leans toward an equality.

The researcher has chosen interpretive research paradigm because it is found to be a research method that produces the desired outcomes of the research. This type of research paradigm was able to interpret the participants' behaviour and their in-depth understanding of their life experiences. Interpretivism assisted a researcher to understand the participants' behaviour in the context of their physical and social environments (Pulla and Carter 2018:10; Miskoro, Bandara and Fielt 2015:2). The paradigm allowed the researcher to gather subjective information, which is based on personal opinions, interpretations, beliefs and assumptions. Interpretive research paradigm is more suitable in qualitative research particularly with methods such as grounded theory, ethnography, constructivism and phenomenological approaches (Pulla and Carter 2018:11). Thus, this study used the phenomenological approach to collect data and analyse it.

Interpretive paradigm research is more appropriate than others to this study because it is qualitative study that seeks to understand the participants and their personal interpretations of their experiences (Pulla and Carter 2018:11). In this study the context

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of the participant's experience is viewed in a holistic manner. Therefore, the researcher considered the impact of the participants' environmental issues when investigating their experiences. Furthermore, interpretivism allowed the researcher to be deeply involved in the gathering of data and was also flexible and sensitive to follow the views and thoughts of the participants during the interviews so as to gain in-depth understanding of the experiences. To maintain the integrity of the phenomena that is being studied, efforts are made by the researcher to get inside rather than from an outside perspective (Pulla and Carter 2016:11).

The researcher used the interpretivist paradigm in understanding the phenomena through accessing the meaning that participants assign to them (Munkvo and Bygstad 2016:5). This entails studying the subjective meanings that participants attached to their experiences (Makura 2014:45). In the case of this study, the researcher sought to understand the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement as they perceive it and as it is perceived by the heads of department (HODs), who work closely with the female principals.

Interpretive paradigm was much influenced by phenomenological basis as the researcher continued to find deeper understanding of the participants. This type of a paradigm assisted a researcher to explore human thoughts and actions within their context (Miskon, Bandara and Fielt 2015:2). Interpretivists always treat people as research participants and not as objects. Interpretive research allowed the researcher to conduct a study in participants' natural settings. Thus, the interpretive researchers can use a case study, grounded theory, ethnography, life history and phenomenology (Riyami 2015:412).

Using the phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to obtain personal contact with participants and easily attained their in-depth views. Having such in-depth experience led to deeper understanding into the phenomenon being studied. Furthermore, the interpretivists collect qualitative data through various methods. Interviews, for instance, that allowed the researcher to investigate and prompt the hidden views from participants and their values, thoughts, perceptions and feelings. Open-ended questionnaire also allowed the researcher to collect rich-data as the participants had

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enough space on the prepared sheet to express their opinions and views concerning the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement in particular.

As it was already mentioned that in this study an interpretive paradigm was used to serve as the lens or organising principle by which reality is interpreted (Maree 2012:48), the participants were free to interpret their experiences, views and perceptions regarding their real world. Since the central attempt in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of the participants' experiences, the researcher's approach was that one of being subjective not objective. This paradigm was suitable for the study because it allowed the researcher to interpret the meanings that the participants gave to their views and experiences (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011:17). Hence, an interpretive researcher commenced with individuals and set out to grasp their interpretations of the world around them (Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:18). The interpretive paradigm questions the concept that research is value-free, and that the researcher had no influence on data collection and interpretation (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011:15).

There is a harmony and a correlation among qualitative research approach, interpretive research paradigm and phenomenology research design, because three of them study participants' experiences at their natural environment. The three also demand the researcher to be subjective, to be part of the participants to make of the phenomenon studied. That prevented the researcher from being bias when collecting data hence the study is based on liberal feminism.

The researcher discusses, in the following section, the ontology, epistemology and methodology of the study. The term paradigm, according to Crotty (1998), in Riyami (2015:142), was first termed by Thomas Kuhn who introduced it as an overall historical research framework. On the one hand Bogdan and Biklen (1998), as cited in Mackenzie and Knip (2006), define a paradigm as a "loose collection of logically related assumptions or concepts that accommodate thinking and research. On the other hand, Guba and Lincoln (1999:108), in Riyami (2015:412), the following three questions that help to define a paradigm: firstly, the ontological questions ask, what the nature of the knowable is, or what the nature of reality is. Secondly, the epistemological question asks what the nature

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of knowledge and relationship are between the knower (the inquirer) and the known or the (knowledge). Thirdly, the methodological question asks how the knower can go about obtaining the knowledge. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) in Alghamdi (2015:78) each research paradigm is constituted the following components: ontology, epistemology and methodology. Since the paradigms are encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define the nature of enquiry for researchers, the researcher dealt with three dimensions: ontology, epistemology and methodology, as is the case in this study. As stated by Krauss (2005:759) epistemology has close connection between ontology and methodology. The researcher started by identifying the ontological assumptions that informed the epistemology, which in turn informed the methodology (Riyami 2015:412).

4.2.1 Ontology

The ontology of the study is rooted in the fact that realities are multiple and socially constructed rather than "set in stone" Broom and Willis 2007:25; Riyami 2015:413). Ontology refers to the study of the nature of reality, where a single phenomenon can have multiple interpretations and there is no basic process by which truth can be determined (Riyami 2015:413). Dammak (2010:5) views ontology as a belief that people are creative and actively construct their social reality. Ontology also refers to the assumptions people make about the nature of being in existence or reality (Brooke 2013:430). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:27) define ontology as a branch of philosophy, which is concerned with the assumptions the researcher made to believe that what is being studied makes sense and is real.

In Lesotho and South Africa, for instance, although in almost all the schools a number of female educators is more than that of their counterparts, males the understanding of the society is still that males are the ones who are supposed to take the school leadership. At the same time in the schools where females are principals, they are expected to use authoritarian style of leadership. The society believes that females are weak to be principals of the schools, and they cannot be leaders of males in the schools where there are few males. Those male educators have a feeling that as African men they cannot be instructed by females as the understanding in African society is that females are children.

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That belief has blinded the society so much that female principals are given a tough time, more especially, by educators in their leadership. This study is going to end the discrimination between males and females as it is focused on equality.

The very nature and essence of the social phenomenon in study should also make sense. Likewise, ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of existence or reality. Ontology investigates the researcher's underlying believe system about the nature of being and existence. Hence, in each study, it is essential that the researcher locates her study in a particular research paradigm. In this case the ontology assists the researcher to conceptualise the nature of reality and what the researcher believe can be known about that reality (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:27).

Pham in her study of (2018:3) showed that in ontology a single phenomenon may have multiple interpretations rather than a truth that can be determined by a process of measurement. Hence, in this study the participants' views, experiences and perceptions were considered as the reality or truth. In this case the researcher tended to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in study and its unique context. Hammersley (2013:10) highlights that ontology assists the researcher to comprehend the different ways of perceiving and experiencing the participants' world through diverse context and cultures. At the same time, this understanding helps the researcher not to be bias in studying people with their own interpretations of their world.

Ontology can also demonstrate the assumptions the researcher makes about the reality and how the researcher perceives the reality (Alghamdi 2015:78).

The ontology of a paradigm used in this study is illustrated as the image the researcher gained about social reality (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:50). The ontology of this study concentrated on the assumptions that are made about the nature of a social reality and what compose the social reality (Neil and Koekemoer 2016:16; Dean 2018:3). Ontology also refers to the assumptions people make about the nature of being in existence or reality (Brooke 2013:431; Pham 2018:3). The following are the assumptions of the study: Through the assistance of a literature review the

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researcher will be able to identify the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

Lesotho and South African high school female principals will share their perceptions of their roles as instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

Lesotho and South African high school female heads of departments (HODs) will be able to share the perceptions they held about the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement.

Female principals in Lesotho and South Africa will be open to sharing the challenges they experience in learners' academic achievement.

The researcher was, therefore, able to identify, through this study, the meanings that the participants attributed to the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. This study also investigates how female instructional leadership is being implemented effectively in high schools and how instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture. The researcher was, therefore, able to identify, through this study, the meanings that the participants attributed to the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. This study also investigates how their role affects the culture of the school.

4.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology, in this study, is a philosophical or ideological term that refers to the understanding of the nature of knowledge (Broom and Willis 2007:17). It also refers to the relationship between the knower and the known (Riyani 2015:412), participants cannot be separated from their knowledge. Thus, there is link between the researcher and the participants. Epistemology according to (Dammak 2010:5; Brooke 2013:430) refers to the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the known. It tests whether the truth is subjectively built and gradually understood through experience. Dammak 2010:2) defines epistemology as the nature of knowledge, how what is known is known, what participants know about the phenomenon studied. Epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge, with the nature of the relationship between the knower and

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what is known. Therefore, there is relationship between the knower and what is known. The two cannot be separated.

Epistemology in research is used to describe how people come to know something; how people know the truth or reality (Cooksey and McDonald 2011:101). Epistemology is concerned with the bases of the nature of knowledge and how knowledge is acquired and how it can be communicated to other people. It concentrates on the nature of participants' knowledge and understanding that the researcher (knower) could obtain to expand insight in the field of her research (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:27). This concept centres on the knowledge collecting process and how to be understood. It can also refer on how the theory of knowledge is built in social reality. Epistemology focuses more on the possible way of gaining knowledge about social reality (Alghamdi 2015:78).

A study by Levers (2013:1) showed that epistemology is the study of knowledge. It is the way of comprehending and explaining how the researcher knows what is known. Epistemology investigates the relationship between the knower and the knowledge. Hence, in this study the researcher is the knower, while the participants are the knowledge. They are the ones who experience what the researcher wishes to study. It also asks what, how the knower knows the world (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:49). In this study the participants were the ones who revealed to the researcher their views, opinions and perceptions regarding the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. Levers (2013:3) perceives epistemology as about how a researcher makes a meaningful sense of the social world.

On one hand, Denzin and Lincoln (2005:21) reveal that epistemology has subjectivism. This subjectivism is the belief that knowledge is always filtered through the lenses of language, social class, ethnicity and gender. On the other hand, epistemology is all about how the researcher had come to know the truth or reality (O'Neil and Koekemoer 2016:6). Epistemology focuses mainly on what people think and do, the kind of challenges they encounter and how they deal with them. Therefore, the researcher has become to know what she knows about the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement through the interaction between her and the participants during the semi-structured interviews and as they answer open-ended questionnaire.

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4.2.3 Methodology

Methodology of this study reflects how the researcher came to know the world, or gain that knowledge. It includes limitations that the researcher came across and assumptions made by the researcher. Methodology according to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:28) refers to data gathering, participants, instruments and data analysis. Thus, in this study before the choosing of the methodology, the researcher looked for the one that would obtain the desired data. Furthermore, the researcher sought the knowledge that would enable her to answer the research question. Thus, contributed to the existing knowledge, or what other researchers have discovered (Miskon, Bandara and Fielt 2015:1; Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:26). The methodology of a paradigm as stated by Alghamdi 2015:78) refers to the most appropriate way of collecting data, knowledge of a social reality.

Crotty in Scotland (2012:9) defines a methodology as a plan that influences the choice and the use of particular method. It is an approach to a study that deals with the why, what, how, when and from where data is gathered and analysed. Since this study is grounded in interpretive paradigm, a qualitative research approach was regarded as most appropriate. Hence, Denzin and Lincoln (2005:3) and Creswell (2014:8) define qualitative research as an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world, which implying that to make sense of the meaning people make of phenomena, things are studied in their natural settings.

Whilst, the researcher's interest was to understand how the role of female instructional leadership is perceived, she created the opportunity for participants in this study to share their feelings, views and experiences towards it. Since the study is correlated to the participants' lived experiences, they were able to express their feelings and ideas freely and clearly, both in actions and words. Nevertheless, the qualitative methodology was regarded as most appropriate in helping the researcher to get in-depth information about the meaning the participants attributed to their perceptions about the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. Therefore, the researcher was able to capture the range of feelings and perceptions of the participants in their real-life situation (Tuli 2010:102).

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Leedy and Ormrod (2012:94) and Mertens (2015:18) state that qualitative research approach, interpretive research paradigm and phenomenology research design were typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view. The researcher's purpose of studying participants in their natural setting was to create a logical story as in this study. That allowed the qualitative researcher to examine social meanings by observing and describing the participants who lived the experience as they share it. As a result, multiple meanings are constructed by participants through their personal experiences. A qualitative researcher is concerned with understanding those processes and cultural and social contexts that shape behaviour pattern (Wagner, Kawulich and Garner 2012:56).

Methodology recognises the particular practices used to accomplish knowledge of it. Consequently, interpretive researchers tend to use various methodologies such as ethnography, case studies and phenomenology (Dammak 2010:6). Hence, this study has chosen to utilise phenomenology research design. This method is used by qualitative researchers to find better ways to deepen their understanding of the phenomenon in study (Dammak 2010:6)The study used interpretive research paradigm, which aims at exploring and understanding the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement as the study dwells in liberal feminism. For this reason, during the semi-structured interviews and through open-ended questionnaire the researcher began with individuals to understand how the participants perceive their social world. The approach used in this study made the researcher see herself as a participant in the situation she investigated. In short, the researcher was not detached from the situation under study.

4.3 Phenomenological Research Design

Among the four of the major qualitative research designs namely, ethnography, phenomenology, case study and grounded theory, the researcher decided to use phenomenology (Astalin 2013:119). A phenomenological research design was employed in this study to attain in-depth information on how both female instructional leaders and heads of department perceive the role of female principals in learners' academic achievement in high schools. The phenomenological research design assisted the

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researcher to comprehend better the social phenomenon of the role of female instructional leaders, in its natural setting with an emphasis on understanding the views and experiences of the participants (Astalin 2013:120). The design explored the meanings and intentions that underlie everyday actions regarding the role of female principals in learners' academic achievement (Khan 2014:299).

Qualitative research approach is an umbrella term used to refer to the following theoretical perspectives design as (Creswell 2009:50; Hancock et al 2009:19; Astalin 2013:118) state: i) action research, ii) narrative, iii) case study, iv) phenomenology, v) content analysis, vi) grounded theory and vii) historical research. As indicated in the previous section a phenomenological research design was employed in this study as it enables the researcher to search for a series of evidence to get possible answers to the research question (Haradhan 2018:7). Phenomenology displays irreplaceable opportunity for portraying the lived experience of participants. This methodology permits the detecting of phenomena from the perspective of how people interpret and attribute meaning to their existence (Frechette, Bitzas, Aubry, Kilpatrick and Lavoie-Tremblay 2020:1).

As a method within interpretive research paradigm, phenomenological research design emphasises the essential of personal perspective and interpretation. It also added strength to what was discovered by the previous researchers in the search on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement (Frechette et al (2020:2). The phenomenology offered the researcher the opportunity to investigate, principals and heads of department (Grant 2021:7). This research design allowed the researcher to recognise the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement.

The researcher gathered data during the moments when the female principals and heads of department were sharing their perceptions and experiences regarding the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in Lesotho and South Africa. This was enabled using phenomenological research design, which is aimed at attaining greater insight about participants by investigating them in their natural environment (Qutoshi 2018:216). Furthermore, this research design enabled the

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researcher to use the participants through which the information about the research problem was collected.

The phenomenological research design enabled the researcher to investigate the existing real-life situation of the participants and provided the basis for the application of ideas. This method as Pathak (2017:1720) stipulates, is an approach to explore people's daily life experiences. It is the type of method, which is usually used with the study about people's life experiences of a particular concept or phenomena experienced by one or more persons. Pathak (2017) defines a phenomenological research design as a study that attempts to comprehend people's understanding and perceptions of a particular phenomenon, while Qutoshi (2018:215) stipulates it as an intellectual commitment in interpretations and meaning that is used to comprehend the social world of participants at a conscious level.

Lester (1999:1) commenting on the phenomenological research design posits that the purpose of this method is to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are…perceived by the individuals in a situation. It is the best plan for answering the research question. Hence, the researcher chose this method to answer the research problem. In fact the phenomenological research design gave rise to impressive and absolute description of an event and thus, it gave the researcher the ability to view and understand the truth about the research problem.

A phenomenological research design seeks to acquire deeper understanding and insight of the dynamics in a specific situation. This method allowed the researcher to collect information about the role of female instructional leadership at high schools in Lesotho and South Africa as the study is focused on liberal feminism. The phenomenological research design also attempts to comprehend how participants make sense of their experience (Haradhan 2018:8). Using this method, a whole range of the subject's life (Qutoshi 2018:215) regard to the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement was studied and the knowledge was widened. A phenomenological researcher examines subjective phenomena (Tuffour 2017:52). For instance, a thoughtful understanding of the meaningful aspects of having a conversation

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during the semi-structured interviews and the kind of contact experienced through the questionnaire may be of value to the researcher and participants.

Finally, the researcher decided to use phenomenological research design because it considers the meanings of experience and describes the social world (Haradham 2018:8; Pathak 2017:1719). The researcher intended to use phenomenological research design as it is a design of inquiry that originates from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher, according to (Creswell 2014:215; Qutoshi 2018:15), describes the lived experiences of people about a phenomenon as described by participants.

4.4 Qualitative Research Approach

The researcher utilised a qualitative research approach along with a phenomenological research design to conduct this study. In this study, qualitative research informs an interpretive account of the participants and it encompassed several characteristics that strengthen the research itself (Khan 2017:8; Dzimiri and Jita 2022:1). The theory of liberal feminist fits in the context of this study as the focus is on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. It leads to a qualitative research approach, interpretive research paradigm and phenomenological research design. The study was carried out through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire as the primary methods of collecting data from the few selected participants (Goldkuhl 2012:4; Astalin 2013:118).

Qualitative research approach is an activity that takes place where the participants are allocated. The activity can take place at their workplace in the case of both the female principals and heads of department, as done in this study. This approach is more appropriate for the study because it is made up of a set of material practices that make the participants' world visible to the researcher. These practices changed the world in which the research was carried out by turning it into a sequence of interviews, conversations, recording of the information, as it was collected, and answering open-ended questionnaire (O' Neil and Koekemoer 2016:1).

At this stage, the qualitative research approach included a naturalistic approach to the situation. It gives the imperative of looking at variables in the natural setting in which they

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are found. Hence, in the process of qualitative research approach interaction between the researcher and the participants is indispensable. Therefore, research was carried out in the participants' real-life situation. The researcher went to the schools, and tried to make sense of, and interpret what was shared concerning the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in accordance with the way the participants perceived it (Khan 2014:298; Harris and Trnavcevic 2020:137).

Furthermore, the methodology helped the researcher to reach in-depth understanding of the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at the high school level. The researcher has drawn qualitative research approach to capture the voice and perception of the participants regarding their experiences concerning the role of female principals (Oyeniran and Anchomese 2018:148).

A qualitative research approach is concerned with establishing answers to the "why" and "how" of the phenomenon in question, unlike quantitative. Due to this, qualitative research approach is often defined as being subjective, not objective, and findings are gathered in a written format as opposed to numerical (Goldkuhl 2012:4). This approach seeks to understand a given research problem from the perspective of the local population that it involves. For the purpose of this study, the researcher has decided to use this approach to gather rich information from the participants regarding the role of female instructional leadership. The approach assisted the researcher as it is a systematic scientific inquiry which pursues to build a holistic, largely narrative to inform that researcher's understanding of a social phenomenon (Goldkuhl 2012:4; Astalin 2013:118).

The qualitative research approach shows an interaction, recurring relationship between data gathering and data analysis that alternate continuously and influence each other. It was through in-depth semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire that the series of feelings and perceptions of the participating female principals and heads of department were obtained during this study. The interest centred on the perspectives of participants, in everyday practices and knowledge regarding the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement (Astalin 2013:118).

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Omona (2013:172) views qualitative research as the approach that stresses that people are complex and unpredictable human beings and are different. Hence, it emphasises a phenomenological model in which multiple realities are rooted in the subjects' perspectives. The researcher uses this approach with the belief that there are multiple realities represented in participant perspectives and that context is critical in providing an understanding of the phenomenon being investigated (Benoot, Hannes and Bilsen 2016:3).

As mentioned earlier in chapter 1, the research aimed at investigating the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools in Lesotho and South Africa. To reach the outcome, a thorough qualitative style of research appeared to be the best choice as it permitted the researcher to interact closely with participants in a gentle manner and to observe and interpret their social world (Oroma 2013:171). The qualitative research approach indeed studies the research phenomena in their natural setting and involves the collection of variety meanings in participants' lives. Moreover, the approach was noted by other researchers as the most effective method that could be used in answering the research question that guided this study (Oroma 2013:172).

In furthering the above argument, Oroma (2013:172) observes that a qualitative research approach allows the researcher to learn at first hand, about the social world that s/he would be examining by the means of involvement and participating in that world and focusing upon what the individual participants' say. In this approach, therefore, the method of data collection was open, flexible and not strictly systematised. This enabled the researcher to collect all the information that answered the research question. The focus was truly on the quality and depth of information as the aim of this study was to find out and describe the depth of opinions, values, attitudes and experiences of the female principals as instructional leaders as well as heads of department on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools in Mohale's Hoek, Lesotho and in the area of Bloemfontein, in Motheo District of South Africa.

The qualitative research approach assisted the researcher to develop her themes and structures, beginning with details and later moving to more general principles. This process made the researcher work on the information until she came up with a series of

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themes (Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie 2017:1609). The themes were also built up from the researcher's working with participants. The themes, however, had to be checked frequently against the collected data. This termed inductive-deductive way of reasoning because throughout the process of research, the researcher used complicated reasoning techniques.

The researcher intended to conclude the discussion on qualitative research approach by briefly exploring its values as observed by Omona (2013). According to Omona (2013:172) a qualitative research approach is advantageous in the sense that the knowledge and experiences from the participants, in this case the female principals and heads of department, enables the researcher to derive meaning from the study. The research, thus, enabled the researcher to develop concepts, understanding and insights from patterns in the data, owing to the approach's use of an inductive form of reasoning (Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie 2017:1612).

4.5 Comparative Research

Comparative study is a research methodology in the social sciences that aims to make comparison across different things with a view to discovering something about those things that are being compared (Thomas 2016:37). According to Maree (2007:73) the comparative research does not basically mean comparing different or the identical things, but it also involves seeking analytically for similarities and differences between the cases under study. In this study there was comparison between two neighbouring countries, namely, Lesotho and South Africa, concerning the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in high schools.

4.6 The Population and Sample

4.6.1 The Population

Murphy (2016:2) and Majid (2018:3) define a population as the set of elements about which the researcher would like to draw conclusions. It can also be defined as the group of elements or persons to which the researcher wants to make inference. The population is the entire pool from which a sample the research problem is concerned is drawn. It may

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also refer to entire group of people, events or objects for the researcher to use to draw conclusions about the subjects in study (Kenton and Scott 2020:1; Bhandari 2020:1). Population is the universe of units of analysis from which a sample could be drawn. It is the collection of specified groups of people. Population should often be defined cautiously to allow the researcher to select the sample of study.

This unit in qualitative research does not need to be the same as the unit from which information is collected. (Van Rijnsoever 2017:4). Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie (2017:1610) stretch the definition of a population to include the largest group of potential participants of a qualitative study, that is, the entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained (Taherdoost 2016:18). The population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions. It is the larger group to which one hopes to apply the results.

The population of the study consisted of the female principals and heads of department (HODs) at five high schools in the Mohale's Hoek District, Lesotho and another five high schools in Bloemfontein, in the Motheo District, South Africa.

The researcher intended to come to a deeper understanding of participants in the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in high schools. Therefore, only part of the total population, which is the sample, was used.

4.6.2 The Sample

The total number of people targeted by the researcher to inform the study is a sample. The sample is viewed as a portion of a population or universe (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2015:1). The sample size used in qualitative research approach, according to Dworkin (2012:1319), is often smaller than the one used in quantitative research approach. The main reason is that this approach is often concerned with gaining in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in study. This is more inductive in its process. Data for this study was collected from ten (10) female principals and ten (10) heads of department (HODs) of which 6 of them were females and 4 males from ten high schools. This permitted the researcher to get in-depth information from participants (Vaseleiou, Barnett, Thorpe and Young 2018:2).

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In qualitative research approach the sample size is encouraged to be small enough to allow the researcher to gain in-depth and new understanding of the phenomenon under study. Hence, Morse (2000:3) posits that if the participants are few in the study, data that is gathered from each person is more useable. In this approach quality of data is more important than quantity. In qualitative research approach the level of structure of questions during the interview sessions influences the richness of data collection. Thus, the researcher decided to use open-ended questions to produce richer data (Ogden and Cornwell 2010:1059; Asiamah et. al 2017:1607). There is a reason or justification for why the sample of individuals would provide the best information to address the research question. In other words, a selected group of ten female principals and ten heads of department, from the totality of the population, was chosen because it is likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher was investigating (Check and Schutt 2012:104; Majid 2018:3). The total sample from which the data were collected is twenty (20).

4.6.3 The Sampling Procedure

In the case of this study, the sample was purposely selected and several participants were interviewed to make it possible for the use of phenomenological research method. Purposive selection is a type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected based on the researcher's judgement about which ones will be the most useful (Babbie 2014:200; Creswell 2014:189). Therefore, sampling in this study is purposive, because the researcher sought the views and opinions of selected female principals and heads of department (Flick 2009:123); Maree 2012:79). In choosing heads of department the researcher was assisted by the school principals. The researcher decided to collect data at five (5) out of twenty (20) high schools in the Mohale's Hoek District, in Lesotho and at five schools out of seventy-eight (78) high schools in Bloemfontein, in Motheo District, in South Africa. In all those ten high schools' instructional leaders are females.

The researcher considered the issue of convenience when she selected the participants. Participants' selection based on convenience has been defined as a strategy to collect information from those who were accessible to the researcher (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green,

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Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood 2015:536). For the sake of convenience, and since the researcher resides in the Mohale's Hoek District and studies in Bloemfontein hence why she selected participants at such places. For that reason, the selected participants from both countries were able to give the information-rich needed by the researcher in connection with the role of female instructional leadership at high schools, in learners' academic achievement.

Sharma (2017:749) views sampling as a technique employed by a researcher to select scientifically a comparatively smaller number of individuals from a population to serve as a source of data of the study. As mentioned earlier, sampling in this study is purposive, because the researcher sought the opinions and views of selected female principals and heads of department. As with all qualitative research sampling a small sample was selected to allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the concept, the role of female instructional leadership (Ames, Glenton and Lewin 2019:9). On the other hand, (Bhandiari 2020:3) explains sampling as a key aspect for understanding the kind of information that can be obtained during this part of the assessment.

A purposive sampling allowed the researcher to select the high schools and their female leaders and heads of department, who were in the position to provide essential information concerning the role of female instructional leadership in relation to formal learning in high schools (Kenton and Scott 2020:2). The purposive sampling in this study, according to Sharma (2017:751) is known as selective, judgemental and subjective sampling that reflects a group of sampling technique that often rely on the judgement of the researcher as the one who selects the participants in study. It is one of non-probability sampling that can provide a broad range of non-probability sampling techniques for the research to draw on.

Etikan et al (2016:2) has the same idea with Sharma (2017:751) in the use of purposive sampling, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find individuals who are in the position to give the researcher the information basing themselves on their experience and knowledge. The researcher purposely selected ten female instructional leaders (principals) and ten heads of department from five Lesotho high schools and five South African high schools for interviews and distribution of questionnaire in the case of

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heads of department. Those female principals found to be more appropriate because they have been in that position of leadership for a longer period as instructional leaders. The heads of department were deliberately chosen because they work closely with the female principals than all other educators. They are also a bridge between the principals and educators.

The research participants were chosen because they were the ones who had direct experience of the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement and therefore suitably gave their experiences, meanings and interpretation of the phenomenon in study. Due to their availability and willingness to participate, the participants were able to supply the researcher with information-rich on her topic as they communicated their experiences and opinions in a reflective manner (Etikan 2016:2; Rijnsoever 2017:5). The total sample from which the data were gathered is twenty.

Taherdoast (2016:23) and Majid (2018:3) define purposeful sampling as a strategy in which particular people or events intentionally chosen to provide essential information that might not be acquired from other choices. In this method the participants are included because they have information rich. Purposive sampling is selected to collect enough information from a small sample, to get a better and true picture of the participants' world (Taherdoost 2016:23). Usually, in this non-probability sampling the participants are chosen at the judgement of the researcher. This allows the researcher to get in-depth information.

4.7 The Research Instruments

Open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data on this liberal feminism study. Thus, open-ended questionnaires were given to the heads of department, while semi-structured interviews with the female principals as instructional leaders, were held first.

4.7.1 Semi-structured interview

In this study, the researcher adopted semi-structured interviews as the female principals could answer the questions in their own words. This data collection technique is

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advantageous as it typically consists of a dialogue between the researcher and the participants (O'Keeffe, Buytaert, Mijic, Brozovic and Sinha 2016:1911 and Dzimiri and Jita 2022:1). It enables the researcher to get in-depth information as she asks follow-up questions, probes and comments. Furthermore, this method allows the researcher to explore participants' thoughts beliefs and feelings concerning the phenomenon in study. Through open-ended questions the researcher was able to gather personal and sensitive issues from the participants (DeJonckheere and Vaughn 2019:1).

Additionally, interviewer was able to explore further by asking more questions that enabled her to dig out more information (Weller, Vickers, Bernard, Blackburn, Borgatti, Gravlee and Johnson 2018:2). Since the role of female instructional leadership in learning is a decisive concern, a semi-structured interview was more relaxed for the participants, particularly because the questions that were asked were opinion-seeking ones. Another advantage of semi-structured interview is that it unfolds as an interviewer asks interviewee questions. This is somehow easier for the participant. At the same time, it allows the interviewer to unfold the meaning of participants' experiences to uncover their real world (Adams 2015:493).

According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019:2) semi-structured interviews are predominantly used in qualitative research as appropriate method for data collection and analysis. The semi-structured interviews as observed by Adams (2015:494) enables the topic, all the questions are more flexible worded. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to collect the first-hand information from key participants' perceptions and experiences related to the topic of study. This concept permits the researcher to use semi-structured interviews in a qualitative research approach to collect new and rich information.

The interview according to Babbie (2014:281) is a commonly used method of collecting data in qualitative research. This method is typically characterised by the researcher by asking questions orally and by recording the participants' responses. The interview is a face-to-face interaction. It can be either between two or more people who have a specific purpose in mind (Kumar 2014:176). Interviews are classified into three categories, namely, structured interviews, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews. A

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structured interview is based on a pre-determined questionnaire that has a particular sequence of questions, all asked in the same order and in the same manner to all the participants. In this category the interviewer remains neutral. This allows the collection of comparable information from many participants. However, structured interviews limit the flexibility as the interviewer must stick to the pre-set questions during the interviews (Edwards and Holland 2013:2; Denscombe 2014:286).

As opposed to the rigid approach in structured interviews, unstructured interviews are open-ended and allow for greater flexibility and freedom in terms of the organisation of the interview content and questions (Alshenqeeti 2014:40; Kumar 2014:176). Unstructured interviews, however, require a high level of skill from the researcher who discusses several topics with the interviewee rather than asking a question and waiting for a short response (Kumar 2014:177; Oun and Bach 2014:254).

In contrary, in semi-structured interviews, the researcher prepares and uses an interview guide. It supports data by allowing the interviewees to expand on their answers (Alshenqeeti 2014:40). As a result, the researcher decided to use semi-structured interviews for the collection of data. On the other hand, semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to learn more about how the female principals perceive their role as instructional leaders and how heads of department perceive the role of instructional leadership. During the interviews the researcher was able to ask follow-up questions that brought clarification on certain participants' answers. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to learn how female principals' opinions and attitudes were formed.

The researcher adopted in-depth semi-structured interviews as the female principals answered the questions in their own words. This data gathering technique was advantageous as it gave the researcher flexibility when asking questions. It also enabled the researcher to get in-depth information and provide a chance for the interviewer to find reasons for given answers (Marshall and Rossman 2011:157; Mouton 2001:105). The role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement is a critical issue. Therefore, semi-structured interview was easier for participants, especially because the questions that were asked were opinion seeking ones (Roulston 2007:287; Maree 2012:87).

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4.7.2 The open-ended questionnaire

In this study the open-ended questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. The open-ended questionnaire was carefully designed and questions were purposefully formulated to determine the heads of departments' knowledge and skills on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement. The open-ended questionnaire, according to Kumar (2011:145), can be defined as a list of written questions or statements employed to collect information from participants. This instrument is regarded as one of the universal tools to collect data. In the open-ended questionnaire participants read the questions on their own, interpret what is expected of them, and then jot down their responses (Peterson 2000:30). The fact that there is no one to clarify questions, the questions were made clear. Lastly, the open-ended questionnaire was drawn in the way that the participants might feel as if someone was talking to them as they move from one question or statement to the other (Kumar 2011:146).

According to (Peterson 2000:30; Brim 2007:187; Kumar 2011:148) the questionnaire can include both open-ended and closed questions depending on the current study. Questionnaire can be used in both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. In this study, open-ended questions allowed all the participants to answer freely using their own words. Hence, the researcher decided to use open-ended questionnaire in this study since this matched with the research design adapted to this study, qualitative method. This instrument was advantageous because it allowed a wide range of responses at minimum expenses of finance and time. The open-ended questionnaire, for this research was convenient as it permitted more thoughtful answers.

4.7.3 Pilot testing

A pilot testing determines whether a research instrument for data collection serves the purpose of the research (McMillan and Schumacher 2006:202). Thus, ensures that the semi-structured interview questions and the open-ended questionnaire would serve the research that was conducted the researcher was engaged in a pilot study with selected female principals and heads of department before the actual interviews and answering the questionnaire. Since seeking permission is an essential part of any research project, the researcher first went to the schools and requested the principals to allow her to pilot

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semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire on the phenomenon, the role of female instructional leadership, with the female principals and heads of department respectively. The pilot study had a role of ensuring that semi-structured interview questions and the open-ended questionnaire were understood and to the point, and that the research instrument as a whole function well. This technique permitted the researcher to take note of questions that might make the participants feel uneasy (Lapan and Quartaroli 2009:87; Hutter and Bailey 2011:149).

Thereafter, the researcher met the participants and explained the time that was required for participation. She gave them assurances on confidentiality and described the intended use of the data. The researcher asserted that the participants' views were kept anonymous. Trust was also established with the participants to know their perceptions, believes and feelings (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011:64; McMillan and Schumacher 2006:334). The researcher encouraged the female principals and the heads of department to freely share their experiences concerning the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement during the interviews and as they were answering the open-ended questionnaire. The participants were provided with sufficient information about the study and the procedures during the semi-structured interviews (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011:70). The female principals and heads of department were also free to respond to the questions and ask for clarifications where necessary during the semi-structured interviews and the female HODs were also free as they answer the open-ended questionnaire.

4.8 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process involved visiting schools in the Mohale's Hoek District, Lesotho and in the Motheo District, South Africa. With the permission of Lesotho and Free State Department of Education, the researcher contacted the female principals of the purposely chosen high schools after she has decided on the research questions that were answered by interviewees. Those questions were open-ended, general and focused on understanding the central phenomenon in the study (Creswell 2012:163). The researcher also, with the assistance of the principals, identified the heads of department who can best answer those questions based on one of the purposeful sampling procedures. In

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such meetings the researcher explained the aim of the study as well as the purpose of the semi-structured interviews for female principals and open-ended questionnaire for heads of department.

Furthermore, interviews were guided by the interview schedule that was drawn in advance. In this study, the female principals were interviewed and their responses were recorded, while the HODs were given open-ended questionnaire. The researcher distributed questionnaires physically to ten (10) heads of department in the ten Lesotho and South African high schools. She then explained the purpose of the study and requested them to be fully engaged in the completion of the open-ended questionnaire, which was collected after eight weeks. The researcher conducted the collection of information in this manner because she sought to obtain a true reflection of the participants.

Before the researcher went to the interview site, she wrote letters to participants and then made appointments with them. She later introduced herself when she reached the place of interview and held discussions with the potential participants she identified for the study. She also asked for permission from the interviewees to take part in the research. Subsequently, the researcher obtained permission from each participant to interview them during the semi-structured interviews and to tape record the interviews. Participants were informed that participation is voluntary and that their responses are confidential. The researcher also stressed that the data collected were used for research purposes only.

4.9 Data Analysis Techniques

This section focuses on how each research question was answered using data from semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire in this liberal feminist study. The five sub-research questions were answered through a series of semi-structured interviews with the female principals and open-ended questionnaire that was answered by the heads of department (Bryman 2012:291). A thematic analysis was adopted in this study. The researcher examined the data to extract core themes that were distinguished both between and within transcripts (Bryman 2012:578; King and Horrocks 2010: 165). Coding, one of the main elements of the identification of the themes, was used through

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each transcript (Bryman 2012:568). This enabled the researcher to link the process of making sense of data collected from participants with the research questions that provided the starting point, and with the literature relating to this study, as well as with the theoretical ideas that was used by the researcher (Bryman 2012:579; Sharan 2009:170).

Only data that were part of an answer to the research questions were used. The researcher, therefore, took information that speaks to the research questions and indicates something significant to the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in high schools (Atkins and Wallance 2012:219).

1. **What is the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perception of the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?**

The researcher sought answers to research question 1 by soliciting the views of the female principals on their role as female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement at high schools in Mohale's Hoek District, Lesotho and at Bloemfontein in Motheo District, South Africa. This was done using semi-structured interviews with the female principals. Question 1 was answered by the female principals only. The themes that emerged from the participants' answers were grouped together and explained.

2. **How do female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement?**

The semi-structured interviews with female principals and open-ended questionnaire that were given to heads of department (HODs) answered questions on how female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement. In fact, this study is liberal feminism. Other questions were revolved around the key construct. These were asked for the researcher to answer the above research question based on the participants' experiences, views and responses. The themes that emerged from the answers of different participants were identified.

3. **What are heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?**

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In answering research question 3, in the questionnaire, the researcher asked HODs of selected high schools to share their perceptions of the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. Thereafter, the researcher coded, reduced and interpreted the collected data. She then grouped the emerging themes.

4. How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

The researcher focused on the participants' answers to questions that were asked during the semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire to answer the above research question 4. The researcher read answers from open-ended questionnaire and listened attentively to the recorded views of the principals regarding the effective implementation of female leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools for learners' academic achievement. Those views were then considered when the researcher organised, coded and categorised the collected data.

5. How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

The participants were asked, through open-ended questionnaire and during the semi-structured interviews, to discuss how instructional leadership of female affect the school culture. The question was answered by the female principals and heads of department from each school. Thereafter, the researcher coded, reduced and interpreted the collected data. She then grouped the emerging themes.

4.10 Ethical issues

Neuman (2006:129) and Mertler and Charles (2008:203) define ethics as what is or is not legitimate to do, or what moral research procedure involves. The researcher is bound to confidentiality. As a result, permission to conduct the research was sought from the Faculty of Humanities in the Department of Post Graduate Studies: Education. A letter seeking consent to conduct the research at high schools was written to Lesotho and Free State Departments of Education.

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Moreover, permission was also sought from the female principals of the high schools where the research was conducted. With the permission of the female principals' interviews were audio-recorded for the accurate transcripts. The interviews were conducted in a way that allowed the participants, their freedom and the researcher to get in-depth information. The heads of department (HODs) were also conducted by the researcher to ask for their contribution in this study through open-ended questionnaire. Participation was voluntary no one was forced to participate in this study (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport 2011:63). Finally, for ethical issues, the researcher used letter codes for the reporting instead of using the participants' names.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the choice and advantages of the qualitative method that was used in the study. It also outlined the research design, paradigms, population and sample. The methodology utilised by the researcher to collect and analyse data on the role of female instructional leaders was discussed. In this study reasons for making use of semi-structured interview and open-ended questionnaire were elaborated. The chapter concluded with a discussion on pilot study, data collection and analysis procedures as well as ethical consideration to the study.

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CHAPTER 5 – PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present, analyse and discuss data from the semi-structured interviews conducted with ten principals, and open-ended questionnaire with ten heads of department. The researcher mixed semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire responses in the report on results to interpret the correlation and contradiction between the two. The interview questions and open-ended questionnaire were analysed using a thematic approach. The study utilised a qualitative research approach and phenomenological research design to determine and describe the depth of the participants' experiences. The data consisted of open-ended questionnaire, recordings and notes taken during interviews were used as an attempt to report on the valid findings. In this study, the participants' actual words are typed in italics. As mentioned earlier for ethical issues and to differentiate between the responses of the participants, letter codes LP1, LP2, LP3, LP4 and LP5 were assigned to Lesotho principals, while SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4 and SP5 were assigned to South African principals. Heads of department were given the following letter codes: LHOD1, LHOD2, LHOD3, LHOD4 and LHOD5 for Lesotho, whereas South African were given the following: SHOD1, SHOD2, SHOD3, SHOD4 and SHOD5 (cf.4.10 on p.91). These letter codes were utilised to protect the participants' identity and reputation.

5.2 Data Presentation and analysis/interpretation

The study investigated the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools. This is a comparative study of Lesotho and South African high schools, in particular, female principals in the Mohale's Hoek District of Lesotho and Motheo District of South Africa. The presentation, analysis and discussion of the research data in this chapter were guided by five research questions:

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5.2.1 Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perceptions regarding theier as instructional leaders

In this study, the participants were asked to give their perceptions on the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement in their Districts. Data was also gathered through semi-structured interviews. The themes for research question 1 emerged as data were coded and sorted out to identify similarities and variations in the information collected from face-to-face interviewed participants. The following themes were identified: managing teaching and learning process, accountability, facilitating instruction, country's educational goal, improving quality of education, providing instructional leadership, trust and high expectations.

5.2.1.1 Managing teaching and learning process

The findings of the study showed that managing teaching and learning process was perceived by the female principals as their role, as instructional leaders. Participant LP1 disclosed that according to her understanding the main purpose of schooling was teaching and learning. Hence, as a principal, she used different strategies that allow her to effectively manage teaching and learning process at school she is leading. Firstly, as a principal, she felt, it was her responsibility to make sure that curriculum was correctly and faithfully followed.

Secondly, it was also her duty to give a clear direction that was easily understood by all who were expected to take it, namely, educators and learners. Participant LP1 justified that, *"At our school, we use various teaching methods but among them all, we prefer discovery method whereby learners are allowed to be hands on and actively participate in class. This is more learner-centred than when educators use Mug and Jag Theory on learners. This theory states that learners go to class empty minded and educators feed the information to learners. We prefer discovery to Mug and Jag Theory, because as learners discover things for themselves, it is not that easy for them to forget what they have discovered themselves."*

Thirdly, in the school annual plan, as the principal, she included planning for daily teaching and learning. Before re-opening of the school, she checked whether the

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professional books were up-to-date. Thereafter, she kept on checking if teaching and learning was handled according to what was written in the educators' professional books: *"I make sure that their professional books are always as they are expected. I always check their day-to-day work in classrooms thus even conduct classroom visits."* She also concurred that, *"As a principal, I ensure that when educators come to my office regarding the resources, I give them what they need. I never let them down for I gather all the resources that I think are needed for teaching and learning process."*

Finally, she mentioned that, as the principal, she also encouraged the educators to sacrifice for the betterment of learners by offering extra-classes for them to catch up with the syllabus. Words of encouragement were also spoken to learners by female instructional leader. *"I encourage educators to conduct extra classes so that learners could catch up on what they struggle with. I also encourage learners to participate in regional fairs, such as, English and Science fair. This would help learners improve as they have the opportunity to be challenged by learners from other schools. Finally, they will pull their strings together and work hard."*

According to participant LP2, it was her responsibility, as instructional leader, to lead in a school environment in the way that allows teaching and learning to take place and be successful. She further explained that since schooling was meant to change learners' lives for the better, it was her role to ensure that learners acquired quality education. According to her where teaching and learning process was managed, definitely, learners performed well. The participant went on to state that for classroom setting, she encouraged educators to use discovery method. "*This method is the best as learners seek information for themselves hence, they do not easily forget it".*

Moreover, the participant indicated that she encouraged educators to put into practice peer to peer education whereby learners were grouped in relation to their performance. The participant also indicated that, *"Although we have got a siren alarm for educators to always manage time, as a principal, I sometimes go all around the schoolyard to check if educators and learners are in class as instructed by the timetable. At some point I conduct classroom visits to observe what educators and learners normally do while in class."* Another point was that teaching and learning was managed by checking educators'

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professional books every fortnight: *"I take their professional books to check whether lesson plans and record of work done are followed accordingly."*

The findings also indicated that it was the female principals' role to manage teaching and learning by facilitating and managing curriculum. Participant LP3 asserted that according to her understanding, instructional leadership as the ability to facilitate and manage curriculum effectively was her role as a principal that she couldn't overlook in any way: *Instructional leader in the school environment is the one who gives direction to the educators on how effectively the work is to be done. Therefore, as a principal I am the one who delegate and await the educators to execute their work as planned collaboratively."* This was the way this principal managed teaching and learning process at this school.

Participant LP4 stated that according to her experience, to manage teaching and learning process effectively, she guided educators by giving them instructions that they had to follow and carry out throughout the year: *"I provide educators with the guidelines on how teaching and learning has to be carried out."* She further averred that she encouraged educators to be punctual when going to classes. The principal also checked learners' exercise books to see if educators marked them. Besides, she encouraged educators to avoid absenteeism because learners might also do the same. The principal also managed teaching and learning process by checking the professional books of educators more often as this helped educators to keep them up to date.

Participant LP4 cited that, *"I regularly, check the professional books of educators (scheme of work, record of work done and the lesson plan) to ensure that they are still going as planned."* The participant went on to state that. *"More often what I also check is how the educators assess learners. For instance, at our school we give learners weekly and monthly tests, so after going through all the books I sign as a proof that I have done checking. Furthermore, in the educators' professional books, I observe how educators conduct teaching and learning in class and make recommendations where necessary."*

The findings also revealed that it was the female principal's role to manage teaching and learning process. Participant LP5 articulated that as a principal to manage teaching and

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learning process, she was in control and led in the way that showed educators direction on how better teaching and learning were to be handled. *"It is my belief that I have to always lead by good examples so that educators also inherit and adapt how they ought to operate."*

The participant further explained that another way that she used to manage teaching and learning was to take educators' attendance in every class: *"If I realise that there is something wrong especially with daily attendance of educators, I normally ask for the daily report that is used by educators to sign when they enter and leave the classes they teach. This helps me to find those educators who do not come to school on daily basis; I deal with them in this manner because their absence affects learners' academic achievement."* The participant went on to explain that she also has a way of dealing with learners' attendance. *"As for learners also, serious measures are taken if a learner does not come with a solid proof as to why he or she was absent."*

This worked best for the school, as the principal explained, because both educators and learners attended classes as expected of them. It was in rare cases that either an educator or a learner was absent from class or school. According to the participant, the principal utilised various strategies in managing teaching and learning process. One of the strategies she uses, as an instructional leader, was recurring staff-meetings and one-to-one meeting in which they discussed learners' progress. Participant LP5 stated that, *"Since it is my role as a principal to manage teaching and learning process, I see to it that we have regular staff meetings whereby we discuss how we can help learners to achieve their goal of schooling. I also conduct one-to-one meeting with the educators and discuss learners' progress monthly. This is done after the continuous assessment. I also conduct classroom visits to check what educators do in class with the learners."*

From the participant SP1's responses it was noted that she made a follow-up on how teaching and learning was conducted. She strengthened this point as she professed that, *"There is only one way and that is by following the curriculum. Each subject has its own number of activities and number of formal tasks to be covered."* The participant *also manages teaching and learning process* by having and communicating clear goals of the school.

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Apart from that, another role of the female principal as part of managing teaching and learning was to monitor educators' work, their lesson plans and progress in class. She also had to see to it that there were adequate resources for educators to carry out their daily duties. *"It is my responsibility to see to it that resources are distributed evenly among all the stakeholders. Moreover, as a leader, I must evaluate teaching and learning as it is the main priority that promotes quality education."*

The collected data showed that managing teaching and learning process was of assistance as it brought about changes that led to learners' academic achievement. Participant SP2 indicated that her instructional leadership was all about bringing a change in educators' way of teaching. She went on to mention that her style of leadership made the educators and learners work hard for quality education. The change she talked about was in line with things that were beneficial for the school: *"With my little knowledge I think that as an instructional leader I have to… somehow instil something in educators and learners so as to bring about the necessary changes at school."*

The participant also pointed out that there was another way of managing teaching and learning she used as a principal: *"Although we are the experts in the field of education, whenever there is a problem that is beyond our understanding, I call subject advisors from the Department of Education to assist us."* The participant further stated that she also encouraged educators to feel free to share with here the challenges they encountered in teaching and learning. Her intension was to assist them in their daily struggles. This was a support she daily gives to them with the hope that this led to learners' success. *"I use to tell the instructors that they should be open to share their struggle with me to enable me to come to their rescue on time. In that situation I sit with the heads of department and solve the educators' problems."*

During the semi-structured interviews, the participant revealed that she managed teaching and learning by making it a point that all the educators and learners complete syllabus on time and that they have adequate time to revise for examinations. This practice, according to participant, is of assistance, because it gave learners the opportunity to fill the gaps here and there. It also allowed educators to weigh the information acquired by learners during the teaching and learning. Participant SP3 argued

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that, *"I always encourage educators and learners to complete the syllabus as early as possible. If the work plan indicates that by end of September, we ought to have completed the curriculum, by conducting extra classes, we finish a month before. This helps prepare learners up until they are fit to sit for final examinations."*

The participant asserted that a good management of teaching and learning process also included planning. She denoted that at the beginning of the year in the staff-meeting, they planned on how to handle the syllabus in the way that allowed them to touch everything contained in it and finish on time: *"It is all about managing curriculum of which cannot be managed without proper planning. There must be plans on hand so that one is able to monitor and support the curriculum. This could help learners to obtain quality education."*

In this school the principal managed teaching and learning process by giving learners tests and feedback as quick as possible. Participant SP4 posited that, *"Assessing and giving feedback to learners is always what I encourage educators to do." The participant also encourages learner centred method of teaching and learning I also encourage educators to use learner centeredness approach so that their (learners) shortcomings can be easily recognised and assist them on time."* She went on to clarify that teaching and learning activities are moderated and approved by the subject specialists from the Department of Education: *"This helps to overcome all the challenges and complexities encountered in teaching and learning process."* Participant also declared that it was a leadership's responsibility to see to it that a leader gave clear instructions on the way-forward. "*In this case vision and instruction about curriculum issues and day to day running of the school are addressed by the leader."*

Participant SP5 asserted that in the school governance, they had School Management Team (SMT) that assists in the management of teaching and learning process. The participant mentioned that in their school, different subjects were held accountable by heads of department. Hence, the heads of department are the ones who made sure that educators attended classes. As per the scheduled timetable SMT also conducted classroom visits to evaluate how educators do their duties thus helped where necessary: "*The learners at our school are well disciplined; they regularly attend classes because they know the consequences of poor attendance. This makes teaching and learning much*

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easier. As a result, there are many parents who flock here at the beginning of the year asking that their children be admitted. Unfortunately, we have a certain number of learners we can admit as first years." When listening to the principal one learned that the process of teaching and learning was well managed at this school. Hence, educators and learners were able to behave the way they are expected. In general management was effective at this school.

The above participant was aware of the important role played by the female principal in managing teaching and learning process. Participant SP5 went on to state that although she tried her level best as a leader, it was somehow challenging to put educators and learners under a control. *"Managing teaching and learning process is difficult in the sense that even though we work hard to offer our assistance as a team, sometimes as a principal I pick up that one of the educators performs badly in a particular subject. I take immediate measures to redeem the situation."*

The participant also asserted that all the educators were given a chance at the beginning of the year for self-evaluation, based on their last year results. They were supposed to look unto what went wrong and why it went wrong and what needed to be done to improve. *"The exercise helps educators to name the learners' problems, they have identified."* A problem that was often mentioned by the educators is that, *"it seems that during the examinations, learners do a very quick job and fail to answer the questions correctly."* She went on to argue that sometimes at later stage, she still picked up that even after having different sessions, there is no improvement at all. According to her this showed that when solving the problem, they did not find its underlying cause. *"I therefore always advise the heads of department that if there are about six educators teaching the same subject, they should be put together. Then the subject be divided into different topics, educators then choose the topics they are best at. In this way we achieve better for every educator is able to do what he or she excels at."*

Moreover, participant SP5 emphasised that managing teaching and learning process was one of the principal's roles. She purported that in every term, educators are monitored fortnightly. To make this easy for School Management Team (SMT), she asked the team to sit and have a look at educators' files to ensure that most of the time they were nice

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and neat, and the work was well done. *"Actually, my interest is on what the learners are being taught than what is in the file. Therefore, my SMT knows exactly that after every two weeks, they collect educators' files thus check learners' work either quality or quantity."* The participant further stated that an educator who was unable to get to the sectors of teaching scheduled for a week, he or she was required to provide an extra time to further teach. *"We schedule our work per week, fortnight, monthly and quarterly."*

Furthermore, participant SP5 justified that it was not wise to rely on what the Department of Education told them to teach as their learners were not island. After the completion of their studies, they will end up at the institute of higher learning. *"If we rely on what the expectations are, we start failing the learners for they have a right to be taught. Besides, there are prescriptions from the Department of Education that educators have to teach learners and provide them with the good quality. "However, our experience is that, to go out there to meet others in higher education is beneficial for them."* As the school they worked hard to put their learners at the same level of learners who attended school in town.

Moreover, they persistently did it because so far, they experienced that it gave their learners the opportunity to be admitted in the universities of their choice: *"If I take learners from my school and learners who attend school in town, there is a huge difference between us. The Department of Education knows that we are a school that teaches English Second Edition, yet we have learners in town who speak English in their homes as their first language. So, all these learners are going to end up in one university and in there, they will be put at the same level. Therefore, we normally prepare our learners in the manner in which they will be able to face the world. We do not depend only on what we are told to teach them by the Department of Education, we go beyond prescriptions."*

In connection to what was discussed in the previous paragraphs, the participant averted that, indeed, it was the role of the female principal to manage teaching and learning process at school: "*My understanding of instructional leadership is that, as a principal I have to provide guidance to the educators. Hence, I ensure that the instructions and prescriptions that come from the Department of Education are implemented appropriately."* The participant had a strong feeling that she had to do this because the

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educators looked up to her to make sense of what the Department of Education actually requested.

5.2.1.2 Accountability

The collected data had revealed that without accountability there would be no effective teaching and learning. Hence, accountability was regarded as strategy that could be used by female principals as instructional leaders to enhance learners' academic achievement. The first witness to this matter was the participant LP1 who openly shared on accountability. At some point they even used role play whereby learners were held accountable for the parts in a play. Participant LP1 discussed that, "*This method of teaching works best for us because learners never forget what was role played."* The principal averted that, *"At some point we opt for group work whereby different types of learners are put together to assist one another."*

Accountability was a major trait to be considered in leadership positions. Principals were accountable for all activities happening in schools. Although most of duties were done by educators but still, principals were held accountable. Participant LP2 professed that, *"It is my responsibility as the female principal to ensure that teaching and learning become effective no matter what. I have to ensure that educators perform their duties as expected and that learners are actively involved in their work."*

It was a principal's responsibility to ensure daily running of the school. The principal was held accountable for all the daily activities at school. It was also the principal's duty to ensure the effectiveness of instruction. Participant LP3 outlined that, *"Being a principal is a great responsibility that needs to be handled with care. Everything is now on my shoulders; it is my role to ensure the daily operating of the school."*

Being accountable entailed helping educators and learners to achieve a common goal. This common goal could be achieved when the principal thoroughly explains what the mission and vision of the school. Participant LP4 professed that, *"It is my duty to inform and interpret to educators and learners of what our mission and vision are. When they know all these, they are able to work towards achieving the same goal."*

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Accountability was a vital ever. It helped the principal, educators and learners to balance their duties. A principal assigned tasks to all the subordinates. Participant LP5 made a point that, *"Be accountable is a huge responsibility. As a principal, I have to ensure that there is smooth running of the school."*

During the interviews the participant revealed that the principal is accountable for everything that takes place at school. Participant SP1 defined accountability as the assistance to strengthen the culture of the school intact. When a principal was able to monitor and control educators and learners, the school culture was forever kept. It was the principal's responsibility to monitor educators and to control learners' behaviour. The participant asserted that, "*As a principal, I make sure that when a problem arises, I look for a strategy that can be used to solve it. I avoid dealing with the problems alone; hence I involve other parties. In some cases, I involve heads of departmentor School Management Team."*

Being accountable contributes in the day to day runningof the school and to ensure the effectiveness of instruction. Principal SP2 went on to state that it was the principal's duty to assure that this school was well taken care of. She averted that, *"It is my responsibility to provide educators with all the resources that are necessary for teaching and learning become effective."* According to the participant, it was also the role of the principal to see to it that learners reach their success: *"Moreover, learners' success is in my hands and it is my duty to see to it that learners acquire quality education."*

Participant SP3 asserted that, *"I think we need to intensify proper monitoring and control. That is the only thing that let us down as leaders and managers. We turn to lose our focus but if we can have proper monitoring and controlling also if we could have proper management so that everyone on board know when something happens, there are consequences."* The principal added that the tool which works best for them was analysis. She also made sure that the heads of department monitored curriculum coverage because most learners were exposed to things they did not know. The heads of department ensured that the curriculum for every term was covered, because at the end the examiner is going to use examination guidelines to set the question papers. In the

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cases where the curriculum was not covered it was impossible for learners to perform well.

Participant SP4 indicated that as a female principal, it was her responsibility to make sure teaching and learning is effective. She went on to state that she tried to create a warm welcoming environment, which allowed educators and learners do their work freely: "*This contributes to the school performing well as I have created a room for development. Learners' success is also my responsibility hence I make sure that they do well at the end of the term.*

Data collected from the participants showed that the heads of department and School Management Team (SMT) were responsible for certain subjects. Both parties, control and monitored educators' files and then give the principal the feedback on educators' progress. However, beyond that the principal also stepped into the classrooms more especially on subjects that are not doing well. Participant SP5 claimed that, *"I sit there to observe how the educator conducts teaching and learning with the aim of helping where there are weaknesses. Even if the subject is doing well, I visit such class as it is my duty to ensure that learners acquire quality education."*

She went on to emphasise that after issuing of results, every educator became accountable for his or her own subject. she conducted one-on-one session whereby she had a word with educators, for instance, if the educator has entered marks for other subject, but only one subject had no marks, she interrogated him or her: "*Such educator ought to explain why the learner has no marks. He or she will have to give a learner another chance to write. If a learner fails to write, a parent has to be called and be told about his or her child's behaviour. In the mean time I need the minutes of that meeting not only an explanation. These are ways I held my educators accountable for their work."*

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5.2.1.3 Facilitate instruction

Facilitation of instruction, according to Lesotho and South African high school, female principals are considered as a role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. This is clearly stated in the evidence given by almost all the principals in their responses during the interviews. Participant LP1 stated that she delegated duties to heads of department, class teachers and monitors. Apart from that, she personally frequently did classroom observation to evaluate and supervise how teaching and learning was conducted: *"I do not deny the fact that heads of department give me weekly reports on educators' progress, but I have made it my routine to check them by myself. This helps to better understand on how I have to assist the educators in their daily struggle in teaching and learning."* The principal further stated that she also monitored educators' progress by checking educators' and learners' attendance because if there is poor attendance, the results wouldn't be good. She did this exercise to assist both sides to achieve good results.

The principal emphasised that, *"I support the educators by providing workshops for them to see to it that they have the knowledge that is up to standard. The quality of work that they give to learners is of high standard. Educators make learners aware of the quality of the tasks submit. The problem with the learners is that sometimes they are lazy to do the homework. When they arrive at school in the morning, they submit a copy of work written by one learner (they make copy and paste)."* It seemed that at this school the principal in collaboration with heads of department, educators and learners did facilitate instruction. Hence, teaching and learning took place smoothly.

The findings of the study also showed that the principal used different strategies to facilitate instructions. Participant LP2 asserted that at school all educators were involved in decision- making. They normally had the staff meeting every first Friday of the month: "*We (principal and educators) together discuss the challenges that hinder teaching and learning from being effective. Supervision is done through checking professional books and conducting classroom visits. I record what I have observed and sit with educators for some recommendations on their strengths and weaknesses."* The principal reasoned that, *"Whenever there is a problem, I am always ready to help."* The fact that educators

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were part of school decision-making helped the principal to facilitate instruction. This female principal used humanitarian style of leadership that assisted her to be aware of both sides of a human being, strength and weakness.

Data provided by participant LP3 revealed that the principal visited educators in class to observe how they conducted teaching and learning, thus helped them where necessary. Whenever they went for workshops, they brought their reports to the principal so that she also knew how the workshop benefited the school. *"I also make sure that my presence is felt at school by helping educators and learners to reach the common goal."* The principal posited that she regularly made a follow-up on learners' academic achievement. Sometimes she asked the educators to bring learners' exercise books to her. *"I only require for three books, the top learner, the middle and the lowest and I always monitor how an educator does the work. As for learners I encourage them to think critically and be observant so that they achieve success in their academic journey."*

She went on to state that she persuaded learners to work in collaboration and help one another and to consult their educators where they did not understand and to use the mini library. Moreover, she encouraged regional competitions in all the Grades to help learners and educators to realise their strengths and weaknesses. The principal seemed to be close to the educators and learners in the way that she was able to support them in various ways to fulfil their daily duties. The follow-up the principal motivated the educators and helped them to take their work seriously.

Participant LP4 emphasised that, *"I am fully aware that it is my role as a principal to try by all means to be positive to educators and be supportive to them in many ways."* Hence, she provided them with the money for workshops and field trips. She also supplied them with teaching and learning materials so that they became motivated and teach learners in a manner that will bring about fruitful results. The participant confirmed that, *"Heads of department supervise and evaluate instruction. They compile educators' files concerning their progress and bring them to me. At the end of every week, they come and report educators' progress."* The participant also indicated that along the week they did classroom visits thus checked educators' professional document to ensure that the work

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was well done. The principal asserted that, *"I am always ready to provide what is needed for teaching and learning."*

It was indicated by participant LP5 that instruction could be affected by several things if those in charge are not aware. Hence, she used various way to facilitate instruction. She elucidated that she always tried to intervene whenever educators have problems with learners or parents. Sometimes educators themselves quarrelled but she never took sides, instead she supported them. She even made sure that they were taken care of: *"I always act quickly whenever there is a report that there is a challenge, like we have private hostels. Whenever, educators responsible for private hostels encounter a problem, I become part of them thus help them to come up with the solution."*

The participant continued to say, "*With the help of the heads of department I am able to conduct supervision and evaluation. Weekly they bring reports in relation to what they observed from the educators. Some other days, I conduct classroom visits to see how they teach learners. I recurrently check their professional books to ensure that the work is done accordingly."* She went on to elucidate that with the help of the heads of department she was able to conduct supervision and evaluation. Weekly they brought reports in relation to what they observed from the educators. *"Some other days, I conduct class visits to observe how they teach learners. From time to time I check their professional books to ensure that the work is done as it is expected."*

The findings of the study showed that, as the way of facilitating instruction, the principal conducted supervision and evaluation by monitoring and controlling. Participant SP1 reasoned that, as the female principal, she did what was mentioned through the heads of department to educators. Thereafter, she wrote a report of their findings and gave feedback to the heads of department. She also gave support to both educators and learners by supplying them with whatever was needed to carry out teaching and learning processes.

The participant went on to state that, *"Afternoon classes are conducted to assist learners achieve better in subjects they struggle with. Some of the subjects are English, Mathematics and Natural Sciences. As for Grade twelve learners, educators conduct*

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weekend and holiday classes so as to give them all the necessary support for them to achieve better." Based on this observation by the participant, the researcher was of the view that the principal tried everything in her power to promote learners' academic achievement. It was her dream to see to it that every learner is becoming successful.

Participant SP2 was also of the opinion that it was the responsibility of instructional leaders to facilitate instruction for learners' performance. The participant asserted that with supervision, it was not that easy to rate educators' trustworthiness towards their daily duties. Hence, she encouraged the learners to be always in class so that when the educator was not around, she could keep them busy with something. For supervision, they had time-tables that always guided them all. Everyone knew where he or she should be at a particular time. They also helped us as administrators to facilitate instruction. As a principal she used different ways of facilitating instruction: *"I prefer to be out of the office and visit classrooms so as to evaluate how teaching and learning is taking place. Apart from that classroom visit I always stand outside the classroom where I cannot be easily seen, then, I listen to educators as they teach and to learners' responses to the educators' input. Thereafter, I enter into the classroom to complement such educators, because they are also aware that my intention is not to spy against them, but to support them."*

Furthermore, participant SP2 emphasised that as a way of facilitating instruction she encouraged lots of extra classes after school and on weekends. For this to be effective, as the school they informed parents about whatever steps they took for their children to become successful. Even though some learners failed to give their parents the letters, they were given and parents come to school demanding answers. *"I also encourage them to rapidly give tests to learners. Educators are advised to copy strategies used in other schools thus come and implement them here."*

The participant made a point that in their school, in most cases, they were helped by monitoring and controlling programme. Every second week of the month, those who are in the positions of School Management Team (SMT), Post Level and Subject Advisors must receive the personal files of the educators and work-books of the learners to ensure that they are marked. *"What is often monitored is whether work schedules are followed and if assessment is done. Therefore, we monitor using the programme that we have. It*

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is not running that smoothly but we are sitting on it." From this principal one learns that there are different ways that can be used to facilitate instructions. One also observed that each principal knows her educators and how to deal and support them in their daily duties. It seemed that facilitating instruction depended on different cultures.

Participant SP3 in agreement with participant SP2 denoted that they work hand in hand with their School Management Team (SMT). It started with educators who reported and gave all the evidence to heads of department. Then, the heads of department monitored the educators and gave the report to the deputy principal. The deputy principal was the one who monitored the heads of department and gave feedback to principal: *"In most cases, I have one- on-one contact with my SMT."* At this school when it came to facilitation of instruction there was a sharing of work, from low to higher level, as mentioned above. At this school, the Maslow leadership theory was effectively adopted and applied by the school leadership. The principal went on to present that the mind-set had be straight for both educators and learners: *"I highly become supportive when learners have willingness to learn. As for educators, I fully support them in caring out the teaching and learning process as it is our priority to see them succeed in life."* The participant also stated that the functional time table must be there. *"When talking of the functional timetable, I mean a clear timetable without hiccups thus must allow learners to attend classes at a stipulated time during the day. This is done so that learners could achieve in all levels."*

The findings also showed that facilitating management was of assistance in schools for learners' academic achievement. Participant SP4 affirmed that School Management Team (SMT) played a role of monitoring of teaching and learning. SMT reports to the deputy principal who also reported to the principal regarding the entire school progress. The principal further evaluated that, *"Each educator develops subject improvement plan after identifying challenges. This document commits educators to specify activities and dates. The implementation of this tool is monitored by heads of department per subject."* She further justified that the heads of department conducted classroom visits to evaluate teaching and learning. This was done to ensure that the lesson plans were implemented and that they were relevant to the topics being taught. The heads of department also

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wanted to make it a point that moderation of activities which was task and moderation of assessment process were executed.

Participant SP5 made a point that when they had any activity being academic or sports, there was always somebody who is responsible for that particular activity. The committee held the meeting with the responsible person. Once the date has been set, it happened and the SMT got a report, giving how the budget was used, mentioning whether it was successful or not: *"If the one in charge of a particular activity encountered a challenge, analysis is made and discussion commences on what could be done."* She further stated that, *"As a principal, I supervise and evaluate instruction by having a look at educators' lesson plans and record of work done weekly. I also conduct classroom visits to evaluate how educators conduct teaching and learning."*

5.2.1.4 Country's educational goal

The findings of the study showed that both Lesotho and South Africa have educational goals that give guidance on what was expected by the government concerning education at high school level. Hence, the main role of female instructional leaders was to pay attention to the country's educational goal by producing the required human resources for the development of such country. It was also indicated that the female principals' educational goal was in line with that of each country. According to the findings the principals' goal, as instructional leaders, was to achieve learners' success through hard work, perseverance and dedication. They aim high at promoting schools' reputation so that their schools may be well known all over and across the country. This was proved by the evidence given by the following participant:

Participant LP1 articulated that her top goal, as a principal, was to make sure that the school achieved the better academic standard by allocating resources needed to promote learners' growth. *"My instructional goal is to monitor educators' work. I do this by checking their lesson plans that ensure that useful resources are available whenever they are needed."* Moreover, the participant emphasised that the school's goal is to produce learners who are able to stand on their own, who are also able to produce for themselves

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rather than waiting to be employed. *"It is this school's wish that all learners obtain good grades every year, pursue their dreams and become successful."*

The participant carried on stating that their goal was to model learners to become what they want. At their school they admitted all learners without looking at the grades. It was their belief that they could bring the best out of all learners. Lastly, the participant asserted that, *"Since I came to this school, my major goal is to see our school flourishing, producing good results and also producing learners who can keep well when it comes to facing the world. I want them to conquer the world and make us proud out there."*

Participant LP2 posited that the school's educational goal was to provide quality education to learners. To help them overcome different challenges they encountered on their journey as they still had a long way ahead of them. *"Furthermore, the school's goal is to produce learners who will become good citizens of this country who are always accountable."* The participant made a point that, *"My goal is to make sure that this school develops and grows. My main goal is producing good quality results by ensuring that educators and learners are focused on what is experienced of them."* She also averred that her goal was to see the school performing well and producing multiple professionals from learners. It was stated that her biggest goal was to see learners become successful and she did everything in her powers to make sure that her wish became true.

For participant LP3, it was her goal to maintain good standards of educational results of both educators and learners. It was also to see that learners become successful and responsible citizen. She went on to declare that the school's educational goal was to be a school that answers to the needs of a community in which we are located. *"We are situated in the area where most of the residents rely on farming. Hence, one of the subjects we offer is Agriculture, we want all learners to be self-reliant. We also want to pave a way for them so that they may go to any institutes of higher learning of their choice."* The participant indicated that her dream, her goal and her desire for the school was overall success in terms of results, the culture of the school and everything that concerned proper efficiency of the school. *"I want to see all learners succeeding and living luxurious live."*

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Participant LP4 claimed that the school's goal was to obtain hundred percent pass rate. It was the principal's desire that the school produce those learners who were able to withstand challenges over there. The school wanted its learners to become responsible citizens who fight against corruption in the country rather than promoting it. The participant declared that, *"My goal as a principal is to see the school's excellence. I want this school produce quality results of which learners could be able to go to different institutions of higher learning when departing from here."* She also averted that her instructional goal was to improve instruction so that all learners achieve good results. In addition, the participant confirmed that, *"My goal is to evaluate educators more often to promote learners' academic performance so that they become successful in life."*

It was obvious from the participants LP5's evidence that her goal was quality education, better understanding of learners of which was in most cases, demonstrated by quality results and performance. It was also stated that it is her wish to model and discipline learners so that they become responsible in future. Participant LP5 declared that, *"My school is really concerned about the academic excellence. It is this school's dream and desire to the best performing high schools alongside the country. Its goal is to produce good quality results so that after Grade twelve learners go to different careers of their choice."* The participant emphasised that her goal as a principal was to first keep the school where it was academically right now. It was her desire to keep it right there and to be at the top also every year.

Data indicated that principals could go to the extent that enables learners acquire quality education. South African principals also explained what their heart desires were. Concerning this the participant SP1 professed that, *"My goal is to achieve good results at the end of every year. I work very hard for the success of learners so that they can face the world with a better perspective."* She also emphasised that her primary goal was to see that there is quality teaching and learning taking place to promote excellence in this school. the principal's desire was excellence in academic achievement and in extra-curricular activities. She would like to see every learner from her school being successful.

The participant went on to state that, *"Our school's educational goal is to teach, assess and give feedback to learners, to parents and to the Department of Education. Lastly, the*

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Department of Education, as the employer, requires feedback whether there is effective teaching and learning at school." From what the principal shared it seemed it was beneficial to involve all the stakeholders in learners' academic work especially those who would contribute in the development of the school. For instance, parental involvement was the best. Even involving giving reports to the Department of Education is beneficial as it always helped with issues relating to education.

Participant SP2's goal was to work towards achieving best results. She was also aiming to equip every educator with managerial skills that promote teaching and learning. During the interview she reasoned that as a principal she was the one who supposed to see to it that their school was a school of excellence: *"Educators' daily task is to teach learners but it should not end there."* She went on to state that her goal was in line with the country's educational goal in the sense that this school must stand out and learners had to be motivated to achieve their goal of going to institute of higher learning. Educators on the other hand, dad seen to it that their school obtains top results because the Department of Education allows them to have well done farewell for matric learners annually.

The participant further emphasised that, *"My motto for this school is that, 'We compete for the best.' This is my goal for this school. We should not back-down because we are from the township but we ought to step out and compete with other schools in town. We are all doing the same syllabus and have the educators who were trained at the same place with the ones who teach in schools that are allocated in town. So why should our school's results be less?"* She also argued that in general, their goal was to have the best practices, to take, in the first place, their educators, their learners and then their school to the great heights and become the school of excellence.

The principal justified that, *"This school's goal is that we have to think beyond the textbook, think beyond what is expected of us in class. Our educational goal is to prepare our learners to be good leaders in future. The educators must spill over into learners' homes whereby they are entitled to learn primary education from their parents. They have to carry this primary education along with them, life-long, because here at school are going to the secondary education where we are going to teach. The two have to go hand in hand."* She went on claimed that her educational goal was also influenced by her

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primary education where she was taught by her parent, complement each other. So, parents must not be excluded from the equation. For they play an important role in their children's lives. *"Though parents sometimes have less knowledge as they are not all educated, they are the integral part of their children's education that is why the school has to work hand in hand with parents."*

Participant SP3 clarified that an instructional leader's priority was to achieve the performing school holistically. As a result, her goal was to ensure that learners achieve their goal of performing well. She did not get tired of reminding educators that she wanted to bring the best out of the learners and that they take responsibility of the preparation of their future. The participant went on reasoned that her goal about the school is to be the best performing female principal in the province because not many principals are females: *"I think I am amongst the few so my desire is to become the most outstanding principal who produces excellent results. As I have already mentioned, my goal is to lead the school into a bright future."* The participant denoted that, "*The School Management Team and I strive to see to learners' performance beyond their potential. It is our wish to see them pursuing their studies and becoming successful and being the responsible citizens."*

During the interviews, for the current study, participant SP4 revealed that the goal of her school was in line with that of the country's educational goal. Their school's goal was to implement the goal of the country. Hence, their goal was to maintain an excellence standard of teaching and learning. As the principal, she did this by empowering educators and enabling them to transfer education to learners. For this goal to be effective the principal made sure that there was discipline at school. Educators' class attendance and learners' attendance thoroughly checked.

Besides, in each class there was a register monitored by responsible learners, which was collected at the end of the day and checked. There were measures taken for poor attendance of both educators and learners. The participant went on to posit that, *"This school's educational goal is to offer quality education so that learners become successful, pursue their dreams and live happily after the completion of their studies*." Furthermore, participant SP4 denoted that, *"When observing my administration and management I may say that my goal is to prioritise teaching and learning."* All in all, the principal wished that

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each learner reached his or her full potential and that educators support learners in their struggle to accomplish their goals.

In addition, participant SP5 indicated that her wish, as the principal, was to ensure effective teaching and learning to take place for the development of the learners and the school in general. She also outlined that it was her desire to produce quality results, which allowed learners to fulfil their dreams, which was in line with that of the country's educational goal. The participant mentioned that her observation was that at present the school has moved from what it used to be while she was a learner there. Now, as a principal, she worked hard to take it there, to make it the school of excellence as it used to be.

Participant SP5 stated that, *"When I was attending school here, this school was in a particular manner; it was governed and managed in a certain way, the learners were well disciplined. They were always in their uniform and respectful. They were intelligent and took part in extra-curricular activities and they were excelling. As a result, my wish for this school is to see exactly that. My wish is to see this school performance being good by learners performing beyond the school's expectations. I want our learners to be competitive. It is also my goal to produce learners who will be able to cope with tertiary life."*

The participant averred that the school's educational goal and hers did not differ that much. She also mentioned that her school is a Catholic school so obviously with the education of learners. Therefore, they also want to instil in the learners the moral values and sense of spirituality. They were not only focused on education but on human touch also, showing love to others and being empathetic. Educational goal therefore was to educate learners holistically, that was, on all spheres of life, and that learners should know that God existed.

It seemed that it was every principal's goal to be among the best performing schools across the country. It was a dream that all learners become successful in whatever their plans are. The principals seemed to dream big of their learners' future and started working hard so as to assist the learners to reach their full potential. They ensure that educators

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pave the way for learners so that they may fulfil their heart desires. It was indeed every principal's goal to achieve success.

5.2.1.5 Improving quality of education

The findings of the current study indicated that improving quality of education was one of the strategies that can be used to determine the effectiveness of the female instructional leadership. This was witnessed by the following participants during the semi-structured interviews: Participant LP1 posited that in her school she encouraged educators to improve themselves academically. When they improve their knowledge and skills, they would be able to help learners in many ways. *"Nowadays, life is full of challenges, so with the knowledge educators have, make a positive effect on learners' life due to the advices they are given.*"

Participant LP1 went on to purport that they had laptops that were used by both educators and learners for researching. The laptops helped them to discover new knowledge and information of which they were not familiar with. There was also open debate for educators amongst themselves to strengthen one another. The part that I played here is that, when I had information that I was certain that they could benefit from it, I shared with them according to the participant all these were put into practice while trying to implement the principal and school's goal that was in line with that of the country educational goal.

The principal posited that, *"We normally send educators to workshops whereby they exchange ideas with other educators. We also invite specialist educators who are experts in their fields so that they help our educators. The educators benefit from all these as they are not kept in the dark but are always updated of any of the changes regarding teaching and learning."* She went on reasoning that at some point, they even invited counsellors and motivational speakers for their educators. They all knew that challenges are everywhere. So being counselled brought a relief to educators for they were able to cope in class to teach according to the country's educational goal.

Participant LP2 classified that they tried to improve the quality of teaching and learning activities. Although as the school, they tried their best, they faced a problem that their school was day schooling whereby some of the learners stayed far away from the school.

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It was difficult for learners to come to seven o'clock study session, especially in winter. However, in summer they tried to ensure that by that time every learner was ready to study. There were ten educators in all, but they divided themselves into groups to monitor the learners. This study session became of a good benefit as learners perform much better than before.

The participant further stated that they also encouraged learners to speak English because almost all the subjects were taught in English as one of the official languages. For those who lived nearby, if they were willing to go to evening study they were allowed to do so. There were two educators who stayed at educators' rented houses to monitor them: *"The challenge we face concerning the evening study is of the learners who have the tendency of coming to evening study just to charge their cell phones, not intending to study, but those two educators manage to monitor them. The main challenge is that the school is situated at the remote rural place."*

The participant also reasoned that, *"As I have already mentioned that our school is a little bit in a rural area, if there is a delay of something like teaching materials, as a principal, I feel compelled to take initiative to ensure that instruction takes place effectively. For instance, one time it happened that there was a delay in delivering of books for Grade Eight learners, mind you, at that time teaching and learning had to take place. I therefore had to supply educators with data so that they may do a little bit of research and teach learners."* Improving quality education, according to the principal, seemed to face some challenges that slows it.

Furthermore, participant LP2 declared that, as administrator in the school, she wished the Board Members would make sure that the little amount of money the school had was budgeted. This made it possible for educators to be engaged in different workshops. Especially because the workshops were proposed by the Ministry of Education, while others were from different subject associations. The school ensured that educators attended the workshops for educators to be aware of developments and changes in the field of education. Participant stated that, *"As a principal, I make sure that educators attend workshops of which they gain important information on teaching and learning. The workshops keep the educators up-to-date on what is happening in the field of education."*

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Attending of workshops, according to the participant, enabled educators improve day-by-day. Workshops educators attended contributed a lot in learners' academic achievement because they learnt of new strategies to enhance instruction.

According to participant LP3 there was no other way of avoiding the improvement of quality of education since it was the main aim of formal education. She also added that for that to materialise educators needed to be motivated and be supplied with teaching and learning resources. The participant specified that, *"As a way of improving quality education, I ensure there are adequate resources at school. I have noticed that this motivates educators, hence, they work hard to see that learners are given quality education. On the other hand, learners are also motivated as we have different types of learners namely, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. All these types of learners are well cared for. This makes me happy because learners' academic performance increases."*

Participant LP3 went on elucidated that in as far as learners were concerned, they gave them incentives. They also invited ex-students from different, colleges, universities and workplace to come and inspire them. Moreover, they invited learners in their meeting to discover from them what they expected from their educators. *"As for the educators I assist them to go to training workshops to be empowered. I also invite motivational speakers to inspire both educators and learners."* The participant asserted that, as a principal, she improved the quality of teaching and learning activities through monitoring educators, checking of lesson plans and the record of work done regularly to check whether the educators went to class prepared. She also made sure that there were adequate resources to boost educators' morale of teaching and learning.

It was clear that participant Lp4 tried to find ways that improved quality education. One of them is to encourage educators to attend workshops. She asserted that, *"As a principal, I financially support educators to go to school related workshops. These workshops help educators academically. They enable the educators acquire quality training on how instruction is to be conducted. I encourage educators to go for workshops for them to renew their knowledge and skills."*

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The participant affirmed that she sent educators to different workshops to learn new ideas and skills used in education because changes were made frequently. The workshops helped educators to be up to date. she also provided the necessary teaching and resources for learners to get quality education. She did not want learners who obtain a mere pass but she needed learners who obtained good grades. The school works in collaboration with educators, parents and learners to achieve success.

Participant LP4 went on to explain that, *"The use of teaching aids could also help to improve learners' academic achievement. When learners have visualised something, they do not forget it that easily. Even if what was seen is no longer there, the picture has remained in a learner's mind."* She further averted that the educators at some point improvised, but at the same time the school provided the teaching materials that could not be improvised by educators. Science teaching materials were complicated thus could not be easily improvised so the school came to educators and learners' rescue.

As per participant LP5 it was obvious that she improved quality education through encouraging educators to join forces and help each other. She argued that she encouraged educators to work collaboratively to achieve success. For them to succeed in life, they needed each other; she advised them to unite and be one. She usually made them aware that they should avoid being mastermind. This attitude assisted the educators to freely help one another whenever the needed arises. *"I have observed this as a strategy that empowers and strengthen educators, even the new ones right from the start are able to adapt themselves to this our style of working. Hence, our quality of education is stable and improves every year."*

Participant LP5 also denoted that the learners were given the opportunity to enter competitions regionally and nationally. They competed on subject quizzes, English debates and extra-curricular activities like sports. There was prize-giving ceremony that started in 1978 and their school was still keeping it. Learners compete from the academic excellency to non-academic activities. As for educators, they had retreat: *"Every three years we take a week away from school and stay in quite place where there are motivational speakers and people who advise us of our personal life (marriage counselling and teach us how to budget)."* She further stated that if they did not go to

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retreat, they made social gathering where they made sure that their level of stress was relieved. They also had motivational talks recurrently. Apart from that, they took trips and went across the border as a way of motivation when trying to deal with their personal issues.

The collected data showed that participant SP1 also was among the principals who worked hard to ensure that there was improvement of quality education at her school. This was stated in her declaration that she encouraged educators to interact with other educators from other schools. Here they were able to learn of near ideas, knowledge and skills. This worked best for this school because, as the principal, she had noticed a lot of improvement in learners' academic achievement. *"What I like most about the educators is that, they do not hesitate to ask for help when they are stuck. This has become part of us (educators)."* Participant went on to state that, *"There is nothing important than educators attending their classes regularly, teaching, assessing and giving learners feedback on time. This is the main focus of teaching so I ensure that everything is done perfectly."* This simply meant that education needed someone who was dedicated and determined to perform all the duties at school.

The findings indicated that participant SP2 also saw the importance of improving quality education. According to her, quality education was the one that attracted parents and their children to choose a particular school. No one wished to send his or her children to the school that performed badly. Hence, the principal of this school was interested to send educators to the workshops to refresh their skills and knowledge. There was no doubt that in such school learners get quality education. The participant emphasised this by pointing out that, *"To improve quality education in this school, I encourage educators to attend workshops. This is where they are given quality training on how teaching and learning is to be conducted. In return they are able to give learners quality education of which it is the main focus of schooling."*

Participant SP2 went on to affirm that they tried to give learners tests as many as possible so as to check their level of understanding. If learners did not perform well, they were given another chance to write the same test(s). This was repeated for several times until all the learners were on the same track. According to participant, she made sure that

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there were adequate resources at school thus encouraged learners to partake in extra-curricular activities.

Furthermore, participant SP2 emphasised that she had made changes ever since she came to this school. She looked at the results and tried to place the best educators where they were best suited. She mentioned that sometimes educators could love subjects but when it came to teaching them, they were not perfect. What she did was that she called up a meeting and made suggestions that they ought to make changes in subjects they teach even though it was not easy. For instance, a person who was teaching Life Orientation in the previous year was no longer teaching the following year. Perhaps, she changed a person who was teaching Mathematics and Literacy.

The participant argued that she made changes with the hope that there would be improvement in the learners' academic achievement. Participant SP2 clarified that, *"The important question I ask myself when looking at the results is, 'Does this educator cope with the subject?' I ask this question because in most cases, when an educator does not cope with the subject, he or she fails to pass content to the learners and as a result, results become poor."* To strengthen the point, she further elaborated that, *"Therefore, I work with the educators to ensure that everyone is placed in a subject he or she is best at. I also work hard in descriptive by visiting classes to check how educators enter and leave the class, how the educators manage to teach and how disciplined learners are. Discipline is my concern because it is only when learners are well disciplined that teaching and learning could be effective."*

Participant SP2 further disclosed that, the fact that, she was not an authoritarian leader, helped her to improve quality of education for she involved educators in decision-making, on how to take their school to the next level. The participant stated that she always came up with ideas. She went extra miles to find what educators could do to improve their knowledge and skills. For now, as mentioned by the participant, educators were still demotivated, but she always told them that they should not give up and that everything will be fine.

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On the other hand, participant elucidated that nowadays parental involvement was gone in high schools for parents leave their children under educators' care. Parents needed to be encouraged to partake in their children's education. This might bring a huge impact on the side of learners, the school and the entire community. As instructional leader, she wanted them to make a positive change and never give up on the negative things that keep on influencing our school." The principal was able to make it a point that all learners passed because of her genuine love she had for all the learners. Female principals were hard workers and had motherly… that compel them to come to the assistance of each learner. Hence, in most cases, at the school led by female principal learners perform well.

Participant SP3 indicated that there were various ways in which education could be improved. Amongst them she mentioned provision of positive environment and gave the following evidence: *"Provision of positive environment could lead to improvement in education. When teaching and learning take place within a friendly environment, educators and learners feel free to do all the activities that would help them in their academic journey. In this environment, learners are also free to seek help from their educators either school related or personal matter that may hinder learning."* Participant SP3 went on to indicate that at school there must be proper systems and plans in place. This had to be done to find proper support from Department of Education. Furthermore, if the deputy and heads of department had plans on how to monitor educators' progress, educators could be fully committed in the work as they know that there were hawkers looking at them.

Education is the important aspect in life. Nowadays, without education one would never survive. It was the principal's responsibility to ensure that learners acquired quality education. Participant's SP4 indicated that, *"I try by all means to improve quality education in this school. I allow educations to improve their knowledge and skills through workshops and by interacting with educators from other schools."*

Improving of quality education helped learners to develop different skills and acquire knowledge. This helped them to fulfil their heart desires of going to colleges and universities of their own choices. With the help of a principal, quality of education would be perfect. Participant SP5 elucidated that, *"It is my desire to see every learner succeed*

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in life. As a principal, I encourage learners to study hard and encourage educators to go to school related workshops. This is where they become skilful and knowledgeable. Lastly, they become updated about changes in the field of education. It makes them excel in the teaching."

5.2.1.6 Providing instructional leadership

Providing instructional leadership was the main objective of every school principal. Leadership always showed the direction on effective teaching and learning. It was the responsibility of the principal to ensure that all the stakeholders do their part in formal education. It was the principals who should encourage parents to see to it that they are involved in their children's education. The educators and learner too were looking up to the principal to support them in their daily duties, teaching and learning. This is clearly stated by participant LP1 during the semi-structured interviews: *"In my instructional leadership, I give educators and learners a clear direction of the school's objectives. I guide educators and show them a way in the time of struggle. I regularly remind and guide parents on how to support their children in their learning. I stand by educators and learners because I know that to be successful, we have to use a strategy of collaboration."*

Participant LP2 also saw how essential it was for the principal to provide instructional leadership. She showed that she had good communication skills with different types of characters. Another strategy that she utilised as part of the provision of instructional leadership was to act immediately when she realised that teaching and learning is not handled in the way it should be. As a principal, she was easily approachable, so in most cases, educators and learners were able to share with her their personal problems. *"This helps me to be proactive and respond on time to the prevailing situation that might hinder teaching or learning."* Another way that the participant used was to help educators and learners whole heartedly because she knew if she hesitated, their academic performance would decline.

The findings also denoted that provision of instructional leadership made educators and learners find a good path to take. So did support educators and gave them advice on teaching and learning where necessary. According to participant LP3 as a leader, she

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had to set good examples regarding teaching and learning hence the educators follow her good deeds. This made her proud as it led to the development of learners' academic performance. Participant LP3 cited that, *"I try to encourage educators to work in collaboration to build one another. I tell them to ensure that there is effective communication between them and learners for effective teaching and learning. I make sure that their professional books are all up-to-date. I also conduct classroom visits to evaluate how they teach."*

According to participant LP4 provision of instructional leadership was crucial. Without it, educators and learners would not know the way forward. She noted that indeed, she provided light in the darkness. Whenever educators failed to understand what to do, she was always there to come to their rescue: *"I never waver to help them because I do this for the betterment of learners."*

About provision of instructional leadership participant LP5 reasoned that she realised that professional leadership was needed in schools, and it had to be the excellent one. She put more effort in helping educators on how to manage teaching and learning. *"I do this because it is my wish that learners acquire quality education and be successful."*

Participant SP1 also saw the importance of the provision of instructional leadership. She emphasised that her trustworthiness could contribute to this role. She professed that to allow herself to provide instructional leadership, she learned that leadership went hand in hand with trustworthiness. It was important to earn educators and learners' trust if she would like them to listen to what she ought to say to them. Since she has experienced this, it was easy to show educators a good path in their teaching as they trust her. Participant SP1 affirmed that, *"In order to enhance learners' academic achievement I often request to have meetings with educators so as to find the problems they encounter in a classroom. Moreover, I ensure that there are adequate resources for educators to progress teaching."*

According to participant SP2 provision of instructional leadership involved interaction with parents. She mentioned that she encouraged educators to involve parents in their children' learning as they played a vital role. Even when they had parents' meeting, she

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always made an emphasis that it was good for parents to be part of their children's education. Participant SP3 pointed out that, *"To ensure that instructional leadership is effective there has to be unity among educators, parents and learners. When these three parties join hands in making sure that instruction is successful, my task as a leader becomes easier."* Moreover, even educators' tasks are being made easier as parents encourage their children to do their work. The participant professed that she was glad that her instructional leadership has uplifted the name of the school that everyone wished to know who the intelligent and smart woman was.

Participant SP4 insisted that in her instructional leadership she employed what one thinks dictum. She involved educators, parents and learners in decision making. She did this to satisfy the three parties so that learners' achievement would be reached. Ever since she considered democratic leadership style in her leadership, teaching and learning improved day to day.

According to participant SP5, an instructional leader had to set good example to everyone at school. An instructional leader had exercised good leadership skill that would help the effectiveness of instruction. She posited that, *"I exercise good leadership skill that helps me solve the problems we encounter here at school. Hence, this makes me be a wise and effective instructional leadership ever."*

5.2.1.7 Trust and high expectations

The findings of the study showed that trust and high expectations could be used as a tool to determine how effective female instructional leadership was. Although it was not everybody who was trustworthy, all people would like to be trusted. The same thing applied to the field of education. Therefore, it was worthwhile for principals to show trust to the educators they worked with that went together with high expectations. This was meaningful because as human beings we wish to impress our leaders at work by demonstrating our strengths. Therefore, the role of the leader here was to express her expectations and to show trust to her subordinates that they could implement what was expected of them. The following witnesses expressed the importance of a leader who state high expectations and show trust to the educators.

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Participant LP1 articulated that, "*No one can have expectations towards someone whom he or she does not trust. Hence, at school, I always expect educators to help learners discover their potentials, for there are those learners who are brilliant but not aware of that."* She added that, *"I also expect educators to have a good rapport with learners because this helps learners to easily approach them where they failed to understand. Furthermore, learners will be able to feel free in class and voice their opinions."* According to what the principal was sharing it seemed that what was being practised at this school allowed teaching and learning to be more effective.

Participant LP2 stated that luckily her school has experienced educators who know how to pass content to learners. Educators had respect towards her thus fully supported her in every step she took in developing the school. Hence, she trusted them for she realised that their presence made a huge difference in the school. She went on argued that most of the educators in the school started teaching in 2006 and others before that. Educators had experience for they were from other schools. It was true that there was a new young blood Geography educator who was willing to do his work. He was dedicated and wanted to bring the best out of his learners: *"Since he is the only Geography educator in this school if there is a need I allow him to go to nearby schools to ask for a help from other Geography educators. I also encouraged him to join Geography Educators Association with the hope that he will be guided."*

The participant asserted that she always trusted and expected educators to perform well regardless of the environment and challenges they came across at school. She explained that their school was situated at the area, which is somehow traditional, learners liked traditional music. They were also interested in circumcision school especially boys. When coming back from the initiation school, their behaviour changed for the worst. The principal further stated that she was not working alone in this case of what seemed to be practised at the place where the school is situated: *"So, it is my trust and expectations that educators become experts and handle every learner's behaviour regardless of his or her culture and tradition. By so doing teaching and learning would become effective. No matter how much influential the environment is but the school's purpose has to be served."*

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In addition, participant LP3 made a point that she trusted educators because they were all qualified and can work in collaboration towards achieving the same goal. It was the participant's expectation that educators work tirelessly so that learners could obtain good results. It was the educators' responsibility to build one another other than acting upon one's weaknesses. The participant indicated that, *"I do not trust them wholly though there are some educators I do trust. Even in my absence, they do their work, which means they are not affected by my presence and absence in any way. I trust in them because when the results are out, they are able to analyse and compare them with the previous results to determine where they need to improve. Other educators never make a follow-up on their performance; hence, I do not trust them."*

She further stated that every year when the results were out, particularly for JC and LGCSE, they compared the results from five years and the newly published one. This exercise assisted them to determine whether they were still moving backward or forward. Educators were always willing to do more where the results are not good. This motivated and encouraged the educators to improve the rate and standard of results at their school.

On the same note, participant LP4 explained that, *"My level of trust on educators are supported by their performance. If they perform well, it is them that I can trust them.* She further emphasised that she came to realise that educators were dedicated in their work. Basically, she somehow trusted in her educators because they were a little bit showing the progress. They were trying their level best to ensure that learners acquired quality education.

The participant emphasised that, *"I expect educators to ensure that learners are educated morally, spiritually, socially and intellectually. After the completion of their studies, learners should have special skills that will help them in future."* She also stated that she expected educators to turn learners to be good Christians and interactors who will be able to interact well with people around them. It is her expectation that learners get quality education so that they may obtain good grades and further their studies in universities of their choice.

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Participant LP5 affirmed that she trusted educators so much that she did not even realise when they were not doing well until the learners laid complaints of their educators relaxing. *"In this school learners know that they have the right to education, so when educators relax, they report them, especially monitors."* The principal made an emphasis on how she trusts and what she expects of the educators concerning learner's academic achievement. She averted that, *"I really expect the educators to be fully committed to their work. That is why I always talk to them individually to discover challenges they face in their classes."*

The participant also indicated that she knew educators so much that she even realised when one had long face. She did not hesitate to approach him or her to find out the problem and solve it. She did this because she knew that when one was stressed, focus is easily lost: *"I am convinced that the educators who are free from stress put more effort in enhancing learners' academic achievement rather than focusing on their personal matters. Hence, we have the motivational talks so that educators are kept on their toes as their peace matters most to learners"*

According to Participant SP1, the fact that all educators were qualified, she trusted them and had expectations that they were able to assist learners to perform well. This gave her the assurance that the educators had the capabilities to deliver content to learners. She also emphasised that, *"I have proven that educators are trustworthy because I often delegate them duties. They have shown delegation to their work. They are all qualified educators who have knowledge and skills needed for teaching and learning."* The participant's response during the semi-structured interview showed that for learning to be effective it has to be enhanced and assessed. In this way learners will be reinforced. This strategy created trust and high expectations.

She strengthened this point by saying that, *"I always expect educators to teach learners, give them the feedback on time and award learners of their excellence. If a learner has done well, a mere pat on the shoulder can make wonders because this could result in creating learners who trust themselves and aim high."* Such school will become the world of trustworthy and success. Indeed, it was good for the principal to work in the way that she ended up having trust in the educators. This enabled the principal to plan and

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organise what had to be done that led to development of the school, which led to learners' academic achievement. Where there was trust and high expectations, educators were able to exercise the plans made by the principal through delegation. This allowed the educators to perform all the duties assigned to them.

During the interviews, participant SP2 emphasised that, *"I want to be honest, and most of educators are really dedicated. Some days back, I spoke with someone from the union and he told me that in his experience some educators tend to give up and be reluctant to do their work*." The participant went on to state that in the old days when they were beginner educators, they would go and make preparation books; someone oversaw them. He made it a point that after checking their preparation books he signed.

She went on to state that practice for them was demanding but motivating at the same time. It also helped them to be faith to their work and it made their work easier and enjoyable. At the end the participant realised that after she has done what was expected of her, she felt trusted by her principal. The participant also explained that now things have changed to an extent that as instructional leaders they no longer have that authority on educators. She further stated that, *"I never lose hope on them but I try by all means to convince them that everything is going to be alright. I repeatedly told them how I trust them; I even show my trust by delegating some responsibility to them. I look into all possible solutions to make sure they are dedicated to their work. Hence, I trust them for they never disappointed me."*

Furthermore, participant SP2 clarified that her expectation is that educators ought to make self-introspection. Hence, she always told the educators that they should not act as if they knew everything. She encouraged them to make a room for acquiring new knowledge and skills. The participant often advised the educators to be open and honest with themselves, if for some sound reasons they failed to do what is expected of them, they should let the principal know, so that together they seek a solution: *"Our school is classified as one of the best schools, which means as school we have to retain this reputation. Most of the time, I encourage the educators not to give up when learners seem to fail but to use different methods of teaching so that all learners pass."*

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The participant also claimed that with their Grade eight and nine learners, it was a serious problem when it came to Mathematics throughout the country. To solve the problem but now they had brought final year learners from one university to help learners with Mathematics on weekends. *"It is my desire for all learners to pass and the Department of Education expects at least sixty percent pass rate. We came together as one and try to reflect on our weaknesses as the school then brought the experts from outside to help us. This has brought the improvement on learners' academic achievement."*

Data provided by participant SP3 revealed that being a good leader, she tried by all means to show trust to the educators. She also put before them her expectations towards teaching and learning. For educators to reach high expectations she supported them in their daily duties by supplying them with all teaching materials. Apart from that she kept on checking with heads of department how the educators perform. If there was any challenge that prevented them to perform as they were expected she attended to it immediately. The educators were all trustworthy, because every educator honoured functional time-table. The principal also explained what she did to improve learners' performance.

She indicated that, *"At present I am striving to have the high performance by providing good results with good analysis. Like our district is saying that each school must get ninety percent pass and fifty bachelors, this is the highest performance we must always obtain."* In what the principal shared, she stated that there was no other way to get good results except hard work, and commitment of educators. She also made a point that she was the one who saw to it that there was trust and high expectations at her school.

In agreement with the above participants, participant SP4 explained that she highly trusted educators and believed they did their duties as delegated to them for they show commitment in teaching and learning. She had discovered that as she was monitoring their daily duties and from the reports she often got from heads of department. *"Educators' trustworthiness is revealed by the learners' good and quality results. Every year we have learners among top hundred, I am therefore proud of the performance of learners."* The participant averted that she often articulated her expectations to educators towards teaching and learning. She found it helpful as human beings easily forgot their daily

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duties. She also claimed that she expected the educators go over and above their job description. She also expected them to love and care for every individual learner. *"My expectation towards them is to treat learners equally irrespective of their background. I also expect the educators to conduct themselves professionally and quality work ethics."*

The participant SP5 was of the view that at school trust and high expectations were perceived to be one of the roles of female principals as instructional leaders. She connected what she was going through with what was once mentioned by her mentor: *"One of my mentors once made me aware that trust and high expectations are important tools that can be used if I wish to have learners who perform well."* The participant further averted that from that time on she made sure that she showed trust to educators, she also told them what she expected of them when it came to teaching and learning. As journeying with them she learned that what she needed to do was to check frequently how the work was done. *"Once I see that the spirit goes down, I find ways of motivating and of uplifting them."* She emphasised that she played her role of reminding them her expectations and of showing how she trusted them. From this she had learned that human beings enjoyed being trusted and to be supported at the same time.

This participant clarified that educators needed to be supported by their principal for them to remain trustworthy and reach her expectations. This kind of support could be shown by checking whether educators are still doing their daily work in the way they were expected. The participant also justified that she expected each of the educators to perform at a particular standard. They had a saying at their school hundred percent pass rate was good, but if it was not of quality, it did not serve any purpose. As school, they were not on hundred percent pass rate but focused on the average. When the averaged of the subjects was high, this showed the quality of results. *"For every educator to perform well, we set our own standards. Hundred percent pass rate that lies in the average of thirty percent is not good enough but hundred percent rate that lies in the average of fifty percent we take as bonus."*

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5.2.2 How female principals enhance learners' academic achievement

The participants were asked to comment on how female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement. While analysing data the researcher came up with various ways in which females can improve learners' academic achievement. As data were coded the following themes emerged: accountable for success of learners, conducive environment, balancing daily duties, school assessment, short- and long-term planning, providing incentives, persistence, leadership skills.

5.2.2.1 Accountable for the success of learners

Principals took full responsibility to see to it that learners' academic achievement was enhanced. Participant LP1 declared that indeed, it was her responsibility to ensure that learners were given quality education. Therefore, she monitored educators frequently by checking their professional books. This helped her to familiarise herself with what educators were doing with the aim of assisting them where they needed help. She went on to state that, *"I provide a conducive environment for learners so that they can feel free to learn and ask questions where they failed to understand."*

In most cases, principals were held accountable for learners' success. Principals, as instructional leaders, had to see to it that educators did as expected. Learners' success in their studies was the full responsibility of the principal that she needed to pay the special attention to the teaching and learning. Participant SP2 averted that, *"As a principal, I make it a point that I am accountable for learners' success. I ensure that learners get quality education because my monitoring is firm, fair and supportive."*

Participant LP3 indicated that learners' success laid on her shoulders. Hence, she made sure that educators went to class prepared and that they went to class as per timetable. She even ensured that there were adequate resources as they were a form of motivation to both educators and learners. When educators had adequate resources teaching and learning became effective, and learners acquired quality education and pursued their dreams.

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During the interviews, the participants revealed that it was the principal's duty to ensure that learners acquire quality education. Educators had to be pressurised to perform their duties as learners' future laid in their hands. All these could be possible if the principal was determined to do her work. Participant LP4 emphasised that she exerted her effort to the work assigned to her as a principal even though it was full of challenges. *"Most of time, at the beginning of the process of any change that takes place at school i start the journey with few educators. The rest follow later on when they realise that there is a progress."* The participant further explained that she ensured that educators became committed to their work in the way that learners could acquire quality education. Learners also were not left behind; they were encouraged to take their work seriously by playing their role fully as part of stakeholders who supposed to play a big part.

Principals were considered to be the most important people in the school community. They were held accountable for the learners' success. The whole community put the trust in principals that as instructional leaders they were able to influence both educators and learners to work hard for school's better performance. Participant LP5 professed that being given the responsibility of principal-ship was a tough work that needed to be handled with care: *The fact that I am a leader in this school, I work hard to see to it that learners acquire quality education. The community is looking out and expecting the best out of me"*

When the principal was accountable for learners' academic achievement, time was not wasted. Educators were dedicated and worked hard due to the pressure the principal exerted to them. Participant SP1 declared that, *"No time is wasted in this school, education is priority here. Hence, I always observe how teaching and learning is handled."* The participant went on to state that at their school she had qualified educators, but her experience had taught her that without any follow-up, teaching and learning could not be as effective as it was expected. Hence, she ensured that educators and learners spent their time on their schoolwork.

Participant SP2 explained that w*ith the help of heads of department she ensures that educators are fully committed in their work. "Each Friday heads of department bring me reports regarding educators' progress."* As a principal, she also conducted classroom

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visits to ensure that educators did the work accordingly. *"If ever I find anything suspicious about any educator, then I take serious measures against him or her."* She explained that she did this so as to show the educators that the school was not a playground where they could do as they wish.

The findings of the study showed that the principals as leaders were given the responsibilities to be the supervisors. They had to see to it that educators do their work in the way that leads to learners' success. They were also expected to create the atmosphere that allowed teaching and learning to take place. In the process they were also held accountable for learners' success though they had lots of responsibilities. Participant SP3 asserted that, *"I am a leader with lots of duties on my lap. I do compromise to see to it that learners acquire quality education."*

The collected data indicated that in fact the principals were meant to multi-tasks. Above all, they were responsible to see to it that learners succeeded in their learning. No matter what, learners' success was the results of educators' hard work and dedication. Participant SP4 posited that, *"As a principal, I do not deny the fact that I have a lot of work to do. Learners' achievement is what I value more than anything else. Hence, I try by all means ensure that they obtain high grades."*

Participant SP5 articulated that every term when their results came out, they did analysis of results according to specific classes. Where educators shared a subject, difference could easily be spotted when comparing the results. Having a look at the results, they were able to see what educators are capable of. *"From time to time in a quarter, skills sharing sessions are conducted, knowledgeable educators share with us the tactics they use to keep learners on the right track."* They had every term skill stream. Sometimes, as a principal, she allowed educators to visit different classes to learn how well other educators disciplined learners. At the beginning of every week, they attended morning sessions to discuss the plan for the week. *"As a leader I need to… all the changes that are to be implemented so as to give direction. I also encourage the educators to attend workshops that assist them to advance with time."*

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5.2.2.1.1 Responsible for learners' success

Data provided by Lesotho and South African heads of department showed that, as instructional leaders, the female principals could enhance learners' academic achievement by being accountable for success of learners. Participant LHOD1 strengthened the point by saying that, *"The principal empowers educators by enabling them to take a full responsibility at their work areas by providing incentives for learning. She provides with computers, tablets and field trips."* The participant further justified that, *"The principal improves the instructional knowledge of educators through delegating and making educators to account on duties they are assigned to."*

The collected data indicated that instructional leaders assigned tasks to heads of department who made a hand over to educators. Being given responsibility implies that one was trusted. Participant LHOD2 said that*, "Our principal made a rational duty weekly for an individual educator. She delegates duties to the educators every week."* Furthermore, the participant reasoned that, *"The principal holds educators accountable for the results of their respective subjects and of all the duties delegated to them."* The participant also added that educators are monitored by the heads of department thus are held accountable of their work: *"It is her routine to call upon heads of department frequently so as to know the school's progress."* The participant critically discussed that, *"Our principal engages with educators on their subject results. She sees to it that educators draw up and follow-up their Subject Improvement Plans (SIP).*

According to participant LHOD3, their principal was accountable for the learners' success. She used different strategies at school. The participant articulated that since it was the principal's duty to ensure that learners became successful in life, she worked hard to see that it happened. She supervised and evaluated instruction in such a manner that educators felt her presence. *"The principal leaves the educators with no choice but to work hard, as a result, learners' academic achievement increases."*

Participants LHOD4 averted that it was the principal's role to ensure that learners were given quality education. The participant went on to state that at their school the principal worked through them as heads of department. The participant perceived heads of

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department as supporters of the principal by doing all the work assigned to them by her: *"We monitor educators' progress on daily basis and give her the report on how they progress. The work becomes easier for us because from day to day we interact with educators hence we are able to spot their strengths and weaknesses faster."*

As indicated by participant LHOD5 the principal was the one accountable for learners' success. Hence, their principal did her best to see that indeed learners became successful. The principal ensured that there was availability of resources necessary for teaching and learning. *"Our principal does her work perfectly and she never let educators complain about her as she is always fair. She is indeed, accountable."* The collected data indicated that, like Lesotho heads of department, South African heads of department supported their principals in leadership by ensuring that all under their authority were accountable. This strengthened the point that their principals were accountable. In South African high schools too, the principals tried to be responsible for the success of learners, which was the main purpose of schooling. According to participant SHOD1, their principal worked hard to ensure that learners became successful in their learning. The principal monitored educators regularly.

She also frequently checked educators' professional books to inspect whether educators did their work as expected. This seemed to pressurise educators to be dedicated in their work, because they were certain that the principal kept on inquiring of their progress. The participant also made a point that, *"Our principal sets a clear direction to the staff thus share her ideas and understanding of the school and its goals."* Based on this participant's responses, it was evident that the principal delegated duties to educators. For instance, some educators became class-teachers, while learners were assigned the tasks of being school prefects and class prefects.

In agreement with participant SHOD1, participant SHOD2 made an emphasis that their principal made frequent classroom observations. She did this to ensure learners were given the relevant content and to monitor educators and learners' attendance. "*Educators and learners knowing that the principal checks attendance list, they come to class as per the timetable."* Classroom observation seemed to motivate educators and learners to attend classes as expected in this school.

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The findings denoted that to show her accountability in learners' success, their principal invited counsellors for both educators and learners. This created a conducive atmosphere during the teaching and learning sessions. This was evidenced by the participant SHOD3: *"As the way of helping educators and learners our principal invites counsellors. Her motive behind is to help them release stress. Moreover, the counsellors were able to help educators and learners on how to overcome challenges they face concerning the process of instruction."* The participant further stated that educators and learners went to class with a clear mind. Resultantly, teaching and learning also became effective.

Participant SHOD4 revealed that there was no doubt, their principal was accountable in the sense that she supported educators in their leaching and learners in their learning. This was a great support because in a normal situation everyone would like to succeed in whatever he or she did. The participant went on to explain that the fact that their principal worked hard to work towards learners' academic achievement helped them as head of department to succeed in their daily duties: *"Our principal strives hard to ensure learners' success. She encourages educators to conduct remedial classes so that learners can have extra time to learn and ask questions where they do not understand. This helps learners who are left behind to catch up. Definitely, the overall performance increases."* This gave a hope that learners' academic achievement was the focus of this female principal.

According to participant SHOD5, it was the role of the principal to make it a point that learners completed their studies on time and with good results. The participant witnessed that their principal was fully aware of this responsibility; hence she often monitored educators' progress: *"It is the duty of a principal to ensure that learners become successful. Consequently, she regularly monitors educators' progress as she wants to be certain that they do their work as expected.* The participant asserted that their principal also checked educators' professional books to ensure that learners are given relevant information.

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5.2.2.2 Conducive environment

The findings showed that in Lesotho and South Africa, education was highly valued by the citizens. The Ministry of Education and Training, in Lesotho, and the Department of Education, in South Africa, was so determined for each ensured that quality education was delivered to learners. Hence, the principals as instructional leaders showed their commitment wherever they were given the responsibility of overseeing the school. Participant LP1 declared that as a principal she tried to provide a friendly environment for everyone at school. She treated educators, parents and learners with care and respect: *"Before me all the stakeholders are all even, no one is better than others. This is good because it reduces tension and promotes love and unity amongst us all. Everyone enjoys being at our school because it is where they find peace of mind."*

It was indicated that participant LP2 was of the view that where there was conducive environment, there was a possibility to enhance learners' academic achievement: *"In reality, I enjoy it more when we become siblings at school, no one should feel left out. I work tirelessly to ensure that there is oneness in this school."* Hence, whenever, there were conflicts either between educators or learners, the principal intervened to assist them to solve the conflict. In most cases, the principal preferred a peaceful environment where there was unity and peace because the results were always fruitful.

According to participant LP3 it was her duty as a leader to ensure that everyone was safe at school. Educators and learners felt to challenge the principal in the development of the school, because every step she took she considered them. *"This makes us relax as we are certain that no bad shall befall us. Our only focus is on teaching and learning of which is a success."*

Participant LP4 elicited that, *"As a principal, I do everything in my power to ensure that the environment is conducive here at school. I make everyone feel welcomed."* The principal opened a room for discussion whenever educators and learners were not satisfied with the services provided at school. She used democratic style of leadership to enhance learners' academic achievement. As a result, the environment was often conducive.

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The study showed that the principal's priority was to ensure that there was conducive atmosphere at school. Her reason of taking care of the environment was to allow the smooth running of daily teaching and learning. Participant LP5 reasoned that, *"My priority is to see educators and learners being at peace. I like it more when they consider the school as their second home where they are valued and respected."* It was the principal's wish that educators and learners continue to collaboratively work as this also contributed in creating a conducive atmosphere. Furthermore, participant SP1 averred that, *"I create safe and conducive environment for teaching and learning to take place. Having a look at our school, lately, the environment is not really conducive we have a lot of substance abuse, gangsters and vandalism in this school. Recently, we have discussed that in order for us to achieve excellence we have to make the environment safe for educators and learners."* The principal asserted that conducive environment was good for instruction. Educators and learners felt free to make any contributions that develop the school. In this school the principal allowed free movement whereby everyone was involved in decision-making. At this school there was a peaceful atmosphere that enhance learners' academic achievement.

The participant SP2 was of the view that conducive atmosphere was essential for learners' success. For teaching and learning to take place the atmosphere should be friendly between educators and learners. She explored the issue as follows: *"When educators and learners are within a conducive environment, they are able to do their best."* She further explained that she made sure that they were safe and sound as well as happy because they were able to work hard while in a good mood. Educators and learners valued their harmony more than anything else on earth.

Participant SP3 made a point that, *"I work hard to ensure that the environment is friendly and welcoming. I do whatever it takes to motivate them by providing incentives to both educators and learners."* She wanted them to feel valued and appreciated. In this environment educators and learners worked harder to accomplish their dreams.

According to participant SP3, there had to be a friendly and welcoming environment for teaching and learning to take place. The principal emphasised that teacher and learner relationship was of importance, it allowed learners to perform well and fulfil their dreams

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about their future. This situation assisted educators also to enjoy their profession when they saw learners having the opportunity to further their studies. Educators always worked hard to make it a point that learners dream big. The participant averted that, *"As a principal I do whatever it takes to motivate both educators and learners by providing them with incentives. I do this because I learnt that human beings feel good when their work is appreciated."* They normally worked hard in the situation where their hard work was valued. They have wide range of opportunities to pursue their studies at the higher education.

Participant SP4 indicated that, *"A warm welcoming environment is always needed for teaching and learning to achieve its main purpose, learners' academic achievement."* The principal witnessed that in this type of environment, educators and learners were free to bring along changes that develop the school. Apart from that, it was the responsibility of the principal to allow changes to take place. This could be successfully done by supporting all the stakeholders and making follow-up. If at school educators, parents and learners were involved in its development, there would be no resistance. Automatically, this led to conducive atmosphere, no one complaint about the things the principal did as part of school development.

Furthermore, participant SP5 asserted that teaching and learning environment had to be peaceful for it to be effective and successful. In most cases, the principal ensured that there was always peace in the campus. *"I try by all means to immediately attend to anything that I sense might cause disturbance at school. I also invite counsellors to motivate and inspire educators and learners. This habit helps me to maintain conducive environment."*

5.2.2.2.1 Friendly environment

The findings indicated that a conducive environment was one of the contributing factors that female principals as instructional leaders could use in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement. A conducive school atmosphere was said to improve learners' attention and focus. At school when learners felt safe, they are to pay attention and be focused on what they were being taught. Participant LHOD1 concurred that, *"It is well*

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when the environment is conducive for teaching and learning. The school's academic performance increases gradually as learners are focused only on their studies. As a result, the school roll also increases because parents feel there is a need to their children to this school."

Participant LHOD2 responses showed that the goal of their school was to develop an environment that motivated both educators and learners to work hard for the better performance of the school. A positive and friendly environment created a good platform for learners. Before a principal could expect excellent academic achievement, she had to see to it that they were protected. Learners ought to be free while they were within the school campus. The participant also made a point that*, "In this school, there are free movement. Educators and learners perform their duties without any fear. It is good because the school's performance is outstanding."*

In schools where the environment was conducive, there was room for changes and development. When educators and learners were given a chance to bring about changes at school, the school began to grow. Participant LHOD3 indicated that, "Educators and learners are allowed to bring ideas to the table. *This is done with the motive to bring along development as people think differently."*

Conducive environment fostered good behaviour. Whenever learners thought of misbehaving, they considered the environment they were at. At the school where the environment was conducive, learners thought twice before acting in a strange way. Participant LHOD4 asserted that, *"Creating the conducive atmosphere has helped us to well discipline the learners. They never go astray but stay on the line at all the times."*

Warm welcoming environment influenced educators and learners to work hard. When they were within a safe environment, their focus was only on making teaching and learning be a success. Participant LHOD5 reasoned that, *"The environment is friendly hence it allows educators and learners to stay focused on their work. Good quality results are to be obtained due to hard work, dedication and perseverance."*

Conducive environment enhanced good academic achievement. When the environment was conducive educators and learners felt free to do their work. The productivity became

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appetizing. Participant SHOD1 clarified that, *"Provision of a warm and a friendly environment allows education to be a success. Educators and learners work towards achieving success."* Furthermore, the participant indicated that the principal supported the staff members, and thus created conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning.

It was a principal's responsibility to create a positive and a welcoming environment. This allowed educators and learners to work hard to achieve success. Participant SHOD2 posited that, *"Our principal works hard to create a warm environment here at school. she likes it more when the educators and learners are happy so she makes sure that we have a smile on our faces."* A conducive environment was important and good for teaching and learning. Educators and learners, were able to work hard to achieve success. They managed to focus on their work as the environment allows them. Participant SHOD3 elucidated that, *"In this school, our principal tries hard to create a positive environment. She has achieved her objective of creating a welcoming environment which allows learners to achieve what they planned.*

It was the role of a principal to go to all the angles in providing a conducive environment at school. when the environment was friendly, it allowed parents to make regular visits at school, this would assist them to know of their children's progress. Participant SHOD4 made a point that, *"Our principal has created a warm welcoming environment. It is interesting because parents feel free to come to school and inquire of their children's progress." The* participant emphasised that indeed, it was every school's dream to achieve success no matter how hard situation was. Where there was oneness, success could easily be attained. Besides, a conducive environment fostered excellent results.

Where the environment was friendly educators and learners feel at home. They feel relaxed hence stayed focused on their work rather than wasting time. Participant SHOD5 argued that, *"In this school educators and learners are free to learn and bring changes. They spend most of their time doing their work and they achieve success."*

5.2.2.3 Balancing duties

Data collected have shown that principals, as instructional leaders, were fully aware that it was their responsibility to enhance learners' academic achievement. Hence, they

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strived to achieve success by improving teaching and learning. In the first place they ensured that all the stakeholders balanced their duties for school achievement. Participant LP1 emphasised that, *"I plan how we are going to work with educators. Normally, at the beginning of every year, I do allocation of different duties."* Educators at this school were assigned various tasks, such as classes and subjects to teach. They were also given a responsibility on extra-curricular.

Participant LP2 indicated that, *"In most cases, I break large tasks into smaller. I do this because I want heads of department, educators and learners to manage their work for it to be perfectly done."* The normal practice here was that at the beginning of every year the principal in collaboration with educators made annual plan. The plan was about what was going to be done and how it be implemented. Hence, all stakeholders were able to balance their duties throughout the year. Moreover, participant LP3 made a point that as a principal she ensured that educators and learners were not overloaded with work. She made sure that duties were well balanced, each educator taught two subjects only in different classes. Learners on the other hand, were not given a lot of tasks that would prohibit teaching and learning to be effective.

There is a saying "united we stand, divided we fall." If educators and learners could stick on these words, academic achievement would be a success. The sharing of duties and responsibility was a sign that indicated the balancing of duties. Participant LP4 asserted that, *"Educators and learners seem to be sharing the responsibilities among themselves. No one appears to be overloaded with work; hence, the performance is excellent."* Balancing of duties promoted transparency as every educator and learner reported their feedback on the duties assigned to them. Everyone became accountable for the task delegated to him or her. Participant LP5 averted that, *"There is transparency in all the duties done at school. the sharing of duties brought transparency in this school. each focuses on the duty assigned to him or her."*

Participant SP1 emphasised that, *"I organise motivational sessions for educators and learners so as to increase moral which seems to be low. Educators are requested to join subject-orientated workshops to see to it that there is quality teaching and learning. One of the topics discussed in one of the workshops was time management that I hope it will*

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help them to use their time profitably." When educators were treated with care and respect, they were able to balance the duties as there was oneness. This made their duties easier because tasks were being broken and shared. The participant went on to state that, *"There is unity which allows the sharing of duties and responsibilities among us. It works well for us because the results are excellent for, we have a common goal to achieve."*

The collected data showed that balancing of duties brought about a peaceful working environment. Educators and learners worked hand in hand to bring about success. This reduced conflicts and enhance female instructional leadership. In this school educators and learners joint hands, they balanced duties, hence, were working towards achieving success. Participant SP2 stated that, *"In general, I want all educators to buy in because in doing so they make their subjects valuable and learners pass them with a high rate. This would create competition among both parties (educators and learners). As a result, learners' performance would be excellent. Moreover, my motive behind is to instil good values in educators and learners do that even in my absence they do what is right."* From what the principal has revealed, it seemed that in her leadership and management she gave both educators and learners a life lesson. That it was good to take full responsibility in whatever was put before one and that success was achieved by only those who worked hard.

It was good when educators and learners share duties and responsibilities. All the assigned duties were easily performed when there was teamwork. Participant SP3 declared that, *"To balance duties is the most important aspect ever. I try by all means to motivate educators and learners because what they are doing is excellent. The sharing of responsibilities assists them do the work fast and produce good results."*

The findings indicated that it was indeed interesting at school when there was unity because the work became easier. Educators and learners shared the tasks among themselves. Participant SP4 elucidated that it was interesting to work with educators and learners of this character. One enjoyed working with such people because they were one, they therefore were able to help one another here and there.

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Working in collaboration helped in balancing duties. At school where educators were faithful to their work and involved parents in their children's education, learners' performance improves. Participant SP5 purported that, *"I love what I see in this school, the environment is healthy. Educators, parents and learners have shared their duties and responsibilities in developing the school. I consider myself blessed to have such characters around me."*

5.2.2.3.1 Sharing of duties

Lesotho and South African heads of department considered balancing duties as the role of female instructional leaders. It was therefore beneficial to balance duties at work. Balancing duties assists the principal, educators and learners to achieve their set goals. Most importantly balancing of duties was essential because the duties were performed perfectly. Participant LHOD1 made a point that, *"In this school we share various responsibilities amongst us. It is imperative because it saves time and energy and the work becomes absolutely perfect."*

Balancing of duties was a way of promoting unity within the school. This was vital because where there was oneness the work was done quickly and appropriately. Apart from that, the academic achievement became outstanding. There was this saying that, "United stand but divided they fall." Participant LHOD2 purported that, *"We try by all means to be one in this school, hence, we work believe in working together towards achieving the same goal. sharing of duties assists us to climb a ladder to success. It allows each individual to do his or her part perfectly. There is no part of work that suffers. At the end of the day everything that should have done is perfectly done."*

Where the duties were balanced the environment created a conducive atmosphere for everyone at school. This environment allowed teaching and learning to be effective. Participant LHOD3 reasoned that, *"The environment of this school is peaceful. The sharing of work has done wonders, the principal has her tasks and same goals for heads of department, educators and learners."*

As the principal, one ought to share the responsibilities among educators and learners. Educators were given the responsibilities to be class-teachers and taught. Learners held

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accountable of their classes by being monitors and monitresses. Participant LHOD4 asserted that, *"Educators and learners have their different duties. Educators as class-teachers assign learners (monitor and monitress) to watch over the class in his or her absence."*

It was essential that educators and learners built a rapport between them. In this case, the sharing of work became easier. Educators managed to focus on teaching when learners were able to focus on learning. When these two parties do their work perfectly, the academic performance became excellent. Participant LHOD5 argued that, *"It is good that educators and learners work hand in hand. This has many opportunities of effective teaching and learning. It also demonstrates how female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement."* In most cases, the principal shared duties with the heads of department. The principal delegates part of her duties to the heads of department and to the educators through HODs. This allowed daily work to be easily and well done. Participant SHOD1 averted that, *"The fact that our principal shares her duties with the heads of department, assists her to monitor educators and learners' progress. It is through dedication that at the end of the day, all the involved parties are able to complete their duties."*

Balancing duties built teamwork. The more educators shared duties the more they knew one another better. They were able to spot their strengths and weaknesses. Participant SHOD2 reasoned that, *"Educators work collaboratively, they teach their specialist subjects. This helps educators to master their subjects. This sharing of duties is the best ever because the work is perfectly done."*

Breaking of large tasks into smaller one was the best as the work produced was of the high quality. Where the principal, head of department, educators and learners worked together, the school's academic performance would improve. Participant SHOD3 indicated that, *"There is this time of the year when the principal calls a meeting for allocation. This is where educators are given the classes they ought to teach. The work is perfectly done because there is a sharing of duties."*

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Balancing of duties helped educators to implement what they planned at the beginning of every term. At the end of every term when they evaluated their work, they always found that they had done everything they planned to do. Participant SHOD4 elucidated that, *"When educators planned their duties, they are able to draw the timetable."* To balance duties helped educators to set objectives they wanted to achieve. Educators were able to plan what they needed to accomplish at the of every term. Participant SHOD5 asserted that, *"Indeed, balancing of duties assists educators and learners to achieve the objectives they have. Looking at the time and days they have, they are able to plan what to do next."*

5.2.2.4 School assessment

From the collected data it was apparent that school assessment was another way the female principals as instructional leaders could use to enhance learners' academic achievement. This was evidenced by the participant LP1 when she posited that f*or* learners to improve in their learning areas educators needed to give them tests frequently and assess them. There were different strategies that educators could use in the assessment of learners. One of them was to allow learners to compete among themselves. This could be done orally in different ways, such as competing in debating in different subjects, especially the challenging ones: *"In English, learners can be given the opportunity to debate in different topics, while in Mathematics they compete in fast addition, multiplication and subtraction; whereas in Science they can also compete in different complicated topics. They can also compete in spelling and grammar writing, in note taking and in summarising passages. As for Mathematics and Science they can be given short and regular tests."*

The participant denoted that, *"I regularly check whether learners are assessed or not. Learners ought to be assessed frequently, either by being given weekly or monthly tests. I have to ensure that learners were given tests, and marks are compiled and put on the notice board so that learners could spot their strengths and weaknesses as compared to others' work. Every educator has to undergo this exercise; no cheating is allowed because as a principal when time comes, I check the notice board."* What can be sensed as a major concern from the principal was that learners needed to be given chance to apply the acquired knowledge and skills. This could also help educators to know how far

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they had gone during teaching and learning and the percentage learners had grasped. At this school assessment was taken care of.

Participant LP2 concurred that teaching and learning was a little broad. In a school they had inadequate staff of which was a case for many schools. Therefore, as the school they invited outsiders (educators from other schools) to come and help with certain subjects. *"Even our educators go out to help other schools and this widens their knowledge and skills. This assists them to improve and deliver quality education to learners."*

The following evidence was noted in the responses of the participant LP3 who saw school assessment as one of the roles of female principals. The participant specifically focused on the fact that school assessment if handled well it contributed to learners' success in their studies: *"I do consider assessment as the main purpose of schooling. Hence, I keep on checking learners' assessment records. Whenever educators assess the learners, I keep the records for myself and later use them for monitoring. Each learner's performance is recorded so that we check whether there is any improvement or not. When the learners show improvement, it shows that an educator has also improved."*

The data provided by participant LP4 denoted that their principal worked hard to make sure that assessment was done regularly as it assisted in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement. The participant elucidated that, *"As a principal, I work tirelessly to ensure that educators and learners are frequently assessed. This is meant to help strengthen educators and learners' weaknesses."* She went on to state that assessing educators helped determine which subject each educator was good at. She usually gave educators a chance to exchange subjects every year according to one's major subjects.

Participant LP5 justified that as she mentioned earlier, they have continuous assessment. They had two major examinations for the internal classes in June and December so that they did not waste much time during the year. *"For learners in the final year, we have one examination only in the interest of time. We also make sure that educators teach learners from the first day until they write external examinations. No one is allowed to shift."*

During the interviews, for the current study, participant SPI revealed that assessment was taken care of at school and it was important because it helped both educators and

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learners. Participant SP1 affirmed that, *"As a principal, I encourage educators to regularly give tests to learners. Mostly, I encourage weekly and monthly tests to check whether learners understand concepts after being taught a wide range of content."* According to the principal, this wasa good way of assessing learners because they were able to know their learning capabilities.

Participant SP2 explained that, *"Frequent assessment helps educators to easily identify learners who struggle. Learners themselves are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This gives them the opportunity to try to work harder. Most of the time I advise educators to assess learners from time to time."* The participant further explained that ever since they put this strategy into practice, every single day learners' academic achievement keeps on improving. *"I am delighted because all I am longing for is learners' success."*

The findings of the study indicated that the school assessment was the most important role of the female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. Participant SP3 justified that the tool that worked best for them was analysis of results. During their extended hour programmes and weekend classes, there was a pre-test before teaching. Educators made the analysis of the pre-tests. Learners were taught and after that were given the post-test to diagnose whether they had heard what was taught in the lesson. *"Comparing the pre-tests and post-tests, indicate whether we are still taking the right direction or whether we need to do some implementations that can be tried."*

Participant SP4 presented that the educators were continuously expected to assess learners thus identify learning challenges. Educators had to implement intervention strategies to assist learners as it was their responsibility to see that learners perform well. *"As the principal I make sure that everything is perfectly done."* The participant emphasised that, *"Educators are evaluated and given necessary training to enhance their skills. Learners are also evaluated and assisted through remedial work and counselling."*

Participant SP5 posited that they had continuous assessment where they made sure that every educator tested learners' capabilities. Without assessing learners, educators would never know whether learners understood concepts or not: "*I also check educators'*

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professional books to ensure that they do the work as expected. I conduct classroom visits to evaluate how educators teach."

5.2.2.4.1 School evaluation

The collected data showed that the Lesotho and South African heads of department were also aware of how their principals dealt with school assessment. In their responses they had shown how helpful and important the school assessment was in their daily duties. The heads of department also indicated how learners benefited from the assessment. They denoted how the school assessment enabled the female principals to make sure that teaching and learning in their schools was based on the school curriculum. On the other hand, the heads of department specified how their principals supported them about the implementation of the assessment.

They designated that in each school there was a plan concerning school assessment. They plainly stated how the plans made their daily duties easier. The activities revolving school assessment, according to the heads of department, were a kind of motivation to them. Such activities kept on reminding them that there was a duty to be performed at a particular time. Participant LHOD1 concurred that, *"Our principal monitors educators' progress through classroom observation by reviewing their lesson plans. She even makes suggestions prior to actual teaching where possible thus evaluate results by offering constructive feedback."*

The data provided by participant LHOD2 denoted that the regular classroom visited by the school principal helped educators to always teach learners relevant topics and went to class prepared. This is emphasised by the participant when saying that, *"Indeed, the principal pays regular visits to classrooms to observe educators. She takes that opportunity to monitor the rate at which educators usually assess learners thus ensures that learners are taught relevant topics."*

Participant LHOD3 averted that, *"School assessment was considered to be one of the tools that can be used by the female principal as instructional leader to enhance learners' academic achievement."* The participant emphasised that their principal encouraged educators to frequently give learners tests. According to participant LHOD3, it seemed

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that at this school the principal made use of assessment as a helping tool in the enhancement of learners' success in their studies.

According to participant LHOD4 it seemed that their female principal was assisting them as educators, to be faithful to their work. The fact that she monitored their progress, helped them to be committed to their daily duties. They seem to take their time preparing learners for tests and preparing questions for tests on time. The participant declared that, *"The principal monitors educators' progress by making sure that at the end of every month tests are given and marksheets are filled."* This motivated many educators to make it a point that they teach and see to it that learners had understood well what was taught: *"What is done by our principal also helps us as heads of department to do our part faithfully. Every time when the principal realises that a particular educator does not implement accordingly, whatever is agreed upon, as a head of department am the one to answer for that. The monitoring done by my principal makes me to be watch out."* This participant seemed to be highly motivated by their principal who showed responsibility in her work.

Participant LHOD5 revealed that their principal paid frequent class visits to check whether the content taught was based on the school curriculum. On the other hand, the principal kept on checking if the teaching methods used by the educators helped learners to comprehend the given information: *"Our principal conducts regular visits to check whether educators deliver relevant content to learners. She also checks if the teaching methods used help learners to grasp the content accordingly."* The findings showed that at this school the principal worked hand in hand with heads of department, which was accepted and helpful to them. What was practised here seemed to be good and working, particularly because a deputy principal and heads of department were closer to the educators. As a result, they were in a better position to monitor educators much better than the principal. The deputy principal and heads of department knew educators better. They knew each educator's strength and weaknesses, things that each can do better. Participant SHOD1 outlined that, *"Our principal's monitoring is through the assistance of the heads of department and deputy principal's reports on educators' progress." Since we work closely with educators, we are able to give a true picture, to the principal, of how the educators*

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perform. This style makes it easier for our principal to guide us on how to assist educators, in our different departments, where they seem to be weak, and how to encourage them to go on doing their best."

The participant SHOD2's responses indicated that their school was well organised and up to date. The responses showed that seriousness of the school principal. He did everything in her power to ensure that a learner was taught accordingly. In this way there was a proof that at this school assessment was well done by all the educators. The participant made an emphasis that, *"Our school is one of the best performing schools. The principal has deputies who report to her weekly on how teaching and learning is carried out. She has also installed camera monitors in her office, which shows what happens in the classrooms. Deputies do classroom visits daily. So, the deputy principals make sure that they do work delegated to them because if not, the principal will notice that and takes immediate action."* This principal was indeed serious and tough about the growth of the school and learners' academic achievement. No wonder why this school performs well.

From participant SHOD3's responses, it was inferred the school has heads of department and deputies who did moderation of tests and examinations. It was pre-moderation and after-moderation, the reports were written and submitted to the principal. The participant also revealed that this way of dealing with the tests and examinations made their work doable as heads of department. Every educator was knowledge on how to handle tests and examinations. As a result, all the learners perform well as their educators prepare them well. The fact that the educators knew that the tests and examinations they had prepared will be moderated made them give proper and challenging tests and examinations.

The following evidence was noted in the responses of the participant SHOD4 who witnessed that at their school assessment was regarded as something very important. As the school they had formal and informal assessment done throughout the year. The style seemed to give almost all the learners the opportunity to pass and go to another class on the following year. Their Grades twelve also did well every year due to educators' hard work. According to participant SHOD4 the learners at this school were highly motivated,

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knowing very well that at the end of their studies were going to pass well and go to the universities of their choice. As a result, they had good predictions about their future: *"Class tests and other informal assessment are done throughout the year. This determines learners' level of understanding." Every year as the school we have a good number of learners who have the opportunity to further their studies in various colleges and universities.*

In addition, even in this school according to participant SHOD5's responses it sounds like the school principal works harmoniously with deputy principal and heads of department. Their working together bore good fruits as learners were able to perform well every year. The faithfulness of the deputy principal and heads of department helped a principal to be up to date on how assessment is handled. The strategy the principal used had transparency; it can be difficult for education to elude it. The participant evaluated that, *"The principal receives monthly report from deputy principals and heads of department on educators' progress. The report includes learners' daily activity books, educators' preparation and assessment of learners' work."* The participant showed that the principal and other administrators take assessment seriously in this school. The monthly report was of the assistance to the principal as it gave her a clear picture concerning learners' assessment of their work, whether there was improvement or not. If there was something wrong the principal picked that quickly and came to the educators' rescue before it was too late to meant.

5.2.2.5 Short- and long-term planning

The findings indicated that short- and long-term planning could assist Lesotho and South African principals to enhance learners' success. It was revealed that at the beginning of every term it was important to have a plan as it gave direction throughout the year. It would also be good that such plan was well known and understood by the stakeholders. In the plan there should be various ways in which educators' knowledge and skills can be improved. This helped in the enhancement of learners' academic achievement. Participant LPI indicated that, *"To improve learners' academic achievement, as instructional leader, I encourage educators to use learner centred approach. I prefer this method of teaching because educators are able to recognise learners" weaknesses*

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easier." The participant went on to state that the method allows learners dig information for themselves, and educators only act as facilitators. It was good because when learners discovered for themselves was not easily forgotten.

According to participant LP2's responses, educators' workshops were organised at different levels to help them to refresh their knowledge and skills. The participant emphasised that, *"As for the enhancement of learners' academic achievement, there are workshops organised for educators at the regional and national level. Therefore, as instructional leader, I make it a point that I always pay travelling expenses for the educators to attend such workshops. I find the workshops helpful and meaningful as they provide them with new skills and techniques on how to effectively conduct teaching and learning."* The principal considers the workshops as important tool to be used to enhance learners' academic achievement.

There were several activities that were found in the short- and long-term planning. Those activities contributed a lot in effective teaching and learning. For the short- and long-term planning to be easily implemented all the stakeholders were involved. Each party had its role to play for the achievement of learners' formal education.

Participant LP3 explained that she encouraged educators to go for field trips whereby learners saw what they were being taught in class. The participant went on to highlight that cooperative learning was one or the best methods educators and learners use. Most importantly she encouraged the educators to go for learner centred approach so that learners could actively participate. Technology was allowed in class if they were to research on something. There was also behavioural management of which was the principal key for when learners were not well-disciplined teaching and learning could not be successful. The principal emphasised that, *"If there is a need for educators to buy some teaching materials, the school helps them with what they need. There is no need for them to search their pockets. We point out the mistakes that the educators do so that they may improve for the better as there is a saying that, 'People learn from their mistakes."*

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During the interviews, for the current study, participant LP4 purported that she always plead to the educators to use learner centred approach so that learners discovered information for themselves rather than been spoon fed. This would help them develop critical thinking skills. As the school they allowed all learners to interact with learners from different schools, work in collaboration as other learners mostly prefer peer-to-peer education. This worked for them because learners became skilled and knowledgeable, and their performance was also boosted. The principal also concurred that, *"Educators' knowledge and skills are improved by having staff development whereby educators are given a chance to motivate."* The principal on the other hand presented that, *"Educators go to workshops that help them to be advanced with time. They discover a lot on how to tackle different stakeholders at school. In the out skirts we look for schools that perform well so that we may pay a visit and observe how they conduct teaching and learning."*

Planning was essential because it influenced one to implement it at the stipulated time. The study revealed that the workshops educators were allowed to attend were of assistance as they gave them the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills in their teaching. Participant LP5 asserted that, *"At our school educators are not denied to attend any workshop that is of the Ministry of Education and Training. Even if there are workshops that are not school related, I allow educators to go and seek new ideas on how life is outside there. This helps them to teach learners more about what life is all about.* The principal also emphasised that she encourages educators to further their studies so as to improve their knowledge and skills. The following data confirms her argument: The participant responded that, *"This strategy also enhances learners' academic achievement in the sense that learning takes place smoothly where there is discipline."*

The findings also denoted that as part of long and short planning, the principal encouraged educators to make it a point that teaching and learning atmosphere was always conducive. This allowed learners to do their work freely, to be cooperative and to demonstrate their creativity. Participant SP1 showed that she always supported educators in their struggle to create conducive environment as she was convinced that without it, it was difficult for teaching and learning to take place. Participant SP1

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emphasised that, *"I always advise educators to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning. Learners have to feel at home while at school. I kept on reminding educators that the more learners feel at home is the more they are going to be actively involved in their schoolwork in general.* She went on to state that, *"A conducive environment allows a room for development, either on educators or learners' side. This is good because even learners' academic achievement increases daily."*

Participant SP2 affirmed that in the school plan she made a room for parents to be involved in their children's learning and achievement. The principal seemed to be pleased in the way the educators involve parents in their children's education. The participant also gave evidence on how important it was to care for learners' well-being, to develop learners holistically. The participant explained that, *"In this school we employ many strategies that would help learners' performance increase. Apart from using teaching and learning strategies, I encourage educators to involve parents in their children's education. Parents' contribution in learners' academic achievement says a lot as it motivates learners' inner being."* She went on to argue that when learners are physically, mentally and emotionally satisfied, their performance became outstanding. she also stated that what she shared is her true experience as a principal.

As per participant SP3 multiple teaching strategies are used in her school with the aim of improving learners' academic achievement. She professed that most of the time she encouraged educators to use the teaching methods interchangeably because there were different types of learners in every class. Educators often used learner centred approach and peer to peer approach. *"Learner centred is the best method as learners discover information for themselves. Peer to peer is beneficial as learners are able to share the information from the educators with other learners. This method helps learners to understand a concept ever more."*

During the semi-structured interviews participant SP4 noted that in a regular basis educators were given the opportunity to upgrade their existing knowledge and skills. She discovered that this was of assistance to the educators as they were able to give learners latest information: *"Training is offered through workshops so that the educators upgrade their knowledge and skills. Educators are also encouraged to further their studies."*

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Educators of this school were blessed as they were encouraged to pursue their studies. By so doing the principal enabled them to have a proper education that made them feel confident in their teaching and learning. Consequently, they were in the position to produce good results that led to learners' academic achievement.

According to participant SP5, discipline was the best strategy in enhancing learners' academic achievement. She affirmed that, *"I try by all means to discipline educators and learners. As we speak, the environment is so peaceful here. It allows a room for changes when needed. It also allows creativity in the side of educators and learners outstanding."* She continued to state that when learners are disciplined, teaching and learning become effective at all the time.

5.2.2.5.1 Short and long-term goals

It has come to the Lesotho and South African heads of department realisation that it was essential to have short and long-term plan at their schools. They also had seen how such plans worked for them as administrators. They realised that their principals' hands were full of plans regarding learners' academic success. Concerning short and long-term plan, participant LHOD1 made a point that, *"Our principal encourages educators to use strategies that engage learners to critically think outside the box. Those are questioning skills that prove learners to check their level of understanding of a concept."* The participant went on to emphasise that, *"Technology is advised to be used in the classroom. Also, behavioural management is one of the strategies the principal utilises to promote learners' academic achievement."*

Participant LHOD2 also asserted that, *"She assures that teaching methods and strategies are effectively used."* Furthermore, it was stated that meetings were held regularly to assess teaching and learning progress. In addition, subject improvement plans were used to set clear goals by educators and principal executed those plans.

As per participant LHOD3 the principal encouraged educators to use learner-centred approach than teacher-centred one during teaching and learning. She complemented that, *"Our principal encourages educators and learners to work in collaboration."*

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Participant LHOD4 said that their principal conducted regular meetings with the staff members on how they could improve for the better. She also assisted them on how to help learners more effectively. In the same point the participant purported that, *"Long term goals are set build on by short term goals, such as, daily assessment leading to formal assessment."*

Participant LHOD5 articulated that, *"Our principal encourages educators to use learner centred approach and criterion referenced tests to check the learners' level of understanding."* Moreover, the participant claimed that the principal ensured that educators went to class on daily basis as per one's timetable and that they were ever ready for classes.

The South African heads of department also were of the view that their principals make use of short- and long-term planning to enhance learners' academic achievement. According to heads of department, strategies such as weekend class attendance, learners-centred, assessment and evaluation, multiple instructional methods were utilised as short- and long-term planning at their schools. Participants SHOD1 emphasised that their principal encouraged them to conduct extra classes on weekdays even during the weekends. Their principal also encouraged cooperative learning and educators often to use learner centred approach as it will help them to spot learners' strengths and weaknesses.

Participant SHOD2 made an emphasis that her principal used various strategies to improve learners' academic achievement. She stated that, *"She persuades educators to use learner centred strategies which is conducive for the learners."* She added that, *"Motivating and encouraging educators to go extra miles is her top priority. She even promotes punctuality, so educators and learners follow the lead."* The participant also emphasised that their principal used timetable to visit different classes. To show the importance of the timetable the participant said that, *"It gives the direction of day-to-day classes. It allows the principal visits educators to see how they conduct teaching."*

According to participant SHOD3, the principal persuaded educators to teach, assess and evaluate learners. It was presented that she also requested for peer teaching and learning

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amongst learners and that learners had to be grouped according to their abilities. The participant went on stated that the principal allocated mentors for learners**.** Moreover, it was indicated that progressed learners were taught by the School Management Team (SMT).

Participant SHOD4 averted that, *"Our principal ensures that educators are evaluated and are given necessary training to enhance their skills. There is also a counsellor to help learners who are academically struggling."* On the other hand, the participant presented that, *"The principal uses teacher-student interaction, use of video-visuals and hands on demonstration (interactive learning). Moreover, she regularly requests meetings with the heads of department so that they can bring along report about educators' progress."* The participant went on outlined that their principal encouraged educators to do subjects improving plans to make sure that they dealt with challenges that learners had. She also mentioned that it is their principal's culture to ensure educators and learners' commitment so that academic performance can be improved. *"The principal also makes it a point that educators do their best on monitoring."*

In conclusion, participant SHOD5 defined that, *"Physical environment of the school is well managed thus allows the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Our principal uses support intervention approach to educators and learners. She also uses multiple instructional methods."* According to this participant, the principal encouraged educators to conduct extra classes. Apart from that, all educators were advised to use learner centred approach. It was also evidenced by a participant that on Mondays and Wednesdays the principal meets with educators for morning briefing. It was also indicated that the principal regularly involved and engaged them on the importance of being committed towards learners' work. Moreover, it was also stipulated that educators are scheduled on one-to-one appointment.

The above data had revealed that all the schools had short- and long-term planning for teaching and learning. Those plans were meant to assist educators and learners to achieve their goals concerning instruction. This was another strategy used by the female principals to enhance learners' academic achievement.

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5.2.2.6 Provision of incentives

Provision of incentives seemed to be another way that was utilised by the Lesotho and South African high school female instructional leaders to enhance learners' academic achievement. Sometimes as human beings, people needed a kind of motivation to do their best, especially when the spirit of work seemed to be going down. Many principals were aware of this, and they had taken care of. The collected data had shown that a good number of principals did the awarding of incentives very careful. They assured that those who were given incentives did not rely on them, they could work hard even without them.

Participant LP1 made a point that, *"Although I use incentives in order to motivate educators and learners to encourage them to insert effort in their work, I do it in the way that they still work without them. I do this because it has come to my realisation that incentives can be good and bad because educators and learners, while awarded they work harder; on the other hand, some relax and become proud that they are brilliant. As a result, their performance deteriorates. In some cases, if learners are bound to be awarded, when it does not happen, they tend to forget that the main purpose is to assist them to work harder and achieve their goal of being at school. Incentives are excellent but at some point, they do not serve the purpose at all."* According to the evidence given by this principal it seemed that it was wise to frequently remind educators and learners the main purpose of awarding those who performed well. This helped them to pull up their socks, work harder. Competition for all educators and learners had been high as everyone was striving to win an award. By so doing the culture of the school never came to extinction.

The findings of the study showed that the principal used incentives to motivate educators and learners to work produce the best result. Participant LP2 claimed that at their school they did believe in the use of incentives because they motivated educators and learners to do much better than before. They awarded the best performers concerning their obtained grades. At their school even the monthly tests were taken seriously as best candidates were also awarded. *"The learners are given gifts like stationery to arouse their interest in learning as other parents hesitate to support their children in their studies. The educators whom the learners do well in the subject they teach are given some awards for*

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them to be motivated." The participant concurred that to motivate and encourage educators to exert more effort when teaching learners, they awarded them. For instance, learners who had completed and did well in their Junior Certificate (JC) and Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) were awarded at the end of the year after the results were published. "*Those educators whom the learners managed to get high grades in their subjects they teach are acknowledged of their hard work. I also ensure that there are adequate resources for educators to use so that they feel motivated of the career path, they have chosen. The more they become motivated is the more they work even harder."*

Participant LP3 posited that incentives were good and reliable, especially because they often reminded their learners the main reason why they awarded the best performers. *"Providing incentives is good and reliable."* Incentives made all educators and learners to put more effort on their work knowing that their hard work was acknowledged. *"With the help of their educators, the learners try by all means to maintain the standards thus this creates healthy competition among the learners as everyone is striving to be among the best performers."*

Data provided by participant LP4 indicated that at their school they were fond of the using incentives as they played important role. They created competition among learners and subject educators. *"Almost all the educators strive to have good grades in the subjects they teach so as to get incentives. Learners on the other hand, compete to be one of the best candidates and this boosts learners' academic achievement."* Furthermore, as part of motivation, annually, they gave best performing learners' stationery because some of the parents did not afford to buy their children stationery. The educators and learners of this school had experienced and were witnesses that hard work remunerates.

Participant LP5 pointed out that the use of incentives had become a culture at their school. It performed wonders in their school for both educators and learners. *"Due to the giving of incentives educators and learners are highly motivated and committed to their work."* The school produced quality results as learners competed among themselves and this boosted their morale in learning. Provision of incentives has also assisted learners to work hard as individuals and as groups. *"As individuals, learners flock in the library, every*

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time there are learners studying silently in there. At break there were groups of learners in discussion in the classrooms and outside." When a principal realised that some years back, she decided to divide the library into two rooms. The first room was used for reading, while the second one was for discussion. This worked very well, there was no disturbance, learners were well organised.

According to participant SP1 indicated that, *"I strongly believe in the use of incentives as they boost the morale of learners and it creates that platform for the competition. As a result, the entire school ends up with an understanding performance for everyone strive hard to be the best performer."*

Participant SP1 further indicated that incentives worked well for her school. They motivated both educators and learners in the sense that educators worked hard for learners' success and learners too worked harder for their achievement. She stated that, *"I highly believe in the use of incentives for both educators and learners. Incentives play a vital role in teaching and learning. Educators and learners' morale in education is boosted by the incentives because they are a form of motivation. Educators are given certificates of appreciation to acknowledge them. Learners are awarded trophies, stationery and certificates with the aim of motivating them to work harder and achieve their goal of getting high credits."* According to what the principal shared incentives seemed to work well at this work. They encouraged all the stakeholders to work hard and achieve their goal of learners who performed well and were able to further their studies to higher education.

Participant SP2 affirmed that, *"I love incentives because when I was at high school, there was an educator who made me believe that incentives promote best performance. This was proved because her learners were all striving to be the best. I buy trophies thus issue certificates of appreciation to the best performers. I use different ways of distributing incentives, like giving them in the presence of other learners. Sometimes I call the students to the staffroom and ask educators to give them a round of applause when each receives his or her award. This creates a lot of competition hence the school's performance is good it is because of the incentives for they make learners feel good and appreciated."* The principal further stated that at her school incentives compelled learners

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to compete in all the subjects as each one would wish to be known as the best performer. As a result, the educators too were forced by learners' attitude to perform well in their teaching subjects.

To evidence a participant SP2 pointed out that, *"Incentives are indeed a part of motivation. I like them because they create competition among learners. Every learner strives hard to win the prize. In doing so the academic performance is boosted. As for educators' incentives are the best also because every teacher works wholeheartedly to ensure that his or her subject is performed well so that he or she can get incentives. As a result, learners' academic performance becomes excellent. What I like the most about the giving of incentives is that they help educators to know one another's capabilities. They use this knowledge to enhance learners' academic achievement by consulting those whom their subjects are always performed well."* What was shared by the participant SP2 during the interviews gave a light that where incentives were used well, they contributed a lot in learners' performance. This brought about unity and good relationship among educators themselves.

Participant SP3 indicated that in every workplace, nobody was happy with the salaries, but was always good when someone was showing interest and going extra miles to be given something as a form of motivation to show appreciation for what they did. This was good for empowerment and self-esteem. The participant added that if educators and learners were given incentives, they would want to do more: *"As for educators, we always give them academic performance awards. We award top ten learners, top five performers in every subject whereby we give them certificates and trophies. This creates competition among learners and school performance remains excellent."* In short, the giving of incentives seemed to have created harmony and cooperation among the principal, educators and learners. It also created hospitable and peaceful atmosphere at school.

Data provided by participant SP4 showed that at her school they made use of incentives with the purpose of motivating both educators and learners: *"We use prize-giving ceremonies whereby best performers are acknowledged for their hard work. Learners are awarded with trophies and certificates of excellence. This motivates the learners for everyone is willing to be among the best performers one day."* Participant SP4 posited

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that she believed that incentives were a better way of motivating educators and learners. Therefore, she tried to ensure that there was always a prize-giving day. She emphasised that she liked it more when other learners watched the hard workers when they were given their prizes. According to her this arouses every learner's interest in education; hence they worked hard and competed.

Participant SP5 reasoned that they used incentives for both educators and learners. For the whole school when the third term ended, they worked on the results to see who has achieved seventy-five per cent and above. Those learners were categorised into gold and silver. The top achievers got packages including stationery and school bags. As for matriculates' top achievers got certain amount of money as their prize for every distinction they had. *"Last year, we gave out a huge amount to those learners who performed well. All these are done after the opening Holy Mass in the presence of the priest."* She went on to present that the educators were expected to perform at ninety per cent pass rate with the average of at least forty-seven per cent for them to qualify for the incentives. They would then get presents. *"However, the Department of Education has what we call District Awards whereby schools are given trophies depending on how well the subject is passed. Educators got certificates, money, vouchers and trophies."*

5.2.2.6 Reinforcement

The findings revealed that the idea of providing incentives, as a method of motivation, was witnessed, supported and enjoyed by both Lesotho and South African heads of department. The principals motivated the educators and learners by giving them some incentives. They also supported learners by awarding those learners who were dedicated to their daily work. Participant LHOD1 articulated that, *"Our principal does believe in the use of incentives for they help improve learners' performance. The school provides tablets for learners to do their assignments. A certain amount of money of the school is deducted from best performing learners."* Similarly, the participant went on presented that their principal believed in the use of incentives. This was proved when she said, *"To some extend at the end of the year, best performers from each class are awarded."*

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In most cases, instructional leaders believed in the use of incentives in improving learners' academic achievement. They just awarded them in relation to their performance as the way of arousing their interest in learning. It was in the rare cases that they did not rely on them. According to participant LHOD2 the principal used both positive and negative reinforcement depending on the situation. She even respected all the educators and has a good relationship with them. It was explained that she promoted competition among learners by reinforcing the best performers. Therefore, in this case, every learner strived to become one of the best candidates.

The participant outlined that, *"The school through its office provides with books and stationery to motivate learners. They receive them at the assembly for every learner to eye witness it. This is done to arouse learners' interest in learning as many strive to work hard and receive awards."* According to what was revealed by the participant LHOD2, the principal partly believed in the use of incentives. Sometimes to show appreciation, she bought pens and pencils for good performers. She also issued certificates at the events such as English fairs. The participant showed that it was not always the case to award but at some point, their principal motivated them so that they can do better.

It was obvious from participant LHOD3's response that the principal believed in the use of incentives. She stated that, *"Yes, our principal usually encourages educators to offer incentives to the best performing.*" To strengthen that the principal believed in the use of incentives, the participant went on to state that, *"Indeed, our principal creates competition among learners by awarding the best performers."* Additionally, the participant articulated that their principal encouraged learners to work hard by awarding the best performers. She went on stated that as for educators, the principal awarded those whose subjects were mastered. The participant also presented that their principal empowered educators by awarding them with the certificates of appreciation, thus, instilled teamwork amongst learners also who were awarded because of their good performance. *"Our school also hosts annual competitions where best performers are awarded. This is meant to arouse learners' interest in learning."*

The findings also denoted that principals' highly believe in the use of incentives for learners' motivation in the academic achievement. As per participant LHOD4, there is

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several remuneration or motivation given to hard workers and best performers such as certificates. Likewise, the participant added that, *"Not only learners are appreciated of their hard work but educators are also motivated with certificates of appreciation to acknowledge them of their hard work and dedication."*

Participants LHOD5 showed that their principal highly believed in the use of incentives. The participant's examples concerning how female principal as instructional leader enhanced learners' academic achievement include: *"Yes, top achievers are given diamonds. There are also braai and picnics for best performers. Certificates of excellence are also awarded in prize giving."* The participant also said that their principal believes in incentives as she considered them to inspire and motivate learners: "*Hence, she keeps on giving different types of incentives to educators and learners."*

It was noted from the participants' responses that principals often awarded incentives to the educators and learners to motivate them to perform their daily duties better. The principals awarded top achievers on the side of learners and to educators who work hard in improving learners' academic achievement.

According to participants SHOD1's responses, it is obvious that their principal partially believed in the use of incentives. This was justified by the following response: *"Our principal does not necessarily rely on the use of incentives though learners are appreciated of their hard-work."* On the other hand, the participant stated that, *"The principal does not believe in the utilisation of incentives, she only provides motivational speakers to arouse educators and learners' interest in teaching and learning."* The participant went on to state that although their principal does not usually believe in the utilisation of incentives, she still motivated learners by frequently making them aware that they should always work hard for their success.

Evidence from participant SHOD2 suggested that her principal relied on the use of incentives. She commented that, *"Yes, our principal believes in the utilisation of incentives to improve learners' academic achievement. The incentives are also given to educators."* Similarly, the participant complemented that certainly, their principal seemed to believe in the use of incentives. If learners performed well, she awarded them certificates of

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excellence. Educators were also motivated in the sense that certificates were allocated to those whose subjects were passed well.

Participant SHOD3 emphasised that when the educators have done well, the principal made them feel valued by giving them incentives thus motivated learners also. The participant also affirmed that their principal did not really believe in the use of incentives, but she did appreciate learners' performance through certificates awarding. Additionally, the participant reasoned that even though their principal partially believed in the use of incentives, she felt that educators should be motivated as they sacrificed their money and time when coming for extra classes.

According to how participant SHOD4 presented herself, it was obvious that the principal was fond of empowering educators. It was indicated that she made them feel appreciated by acknowledging their strength and giving them praises when they have done well. Moreover, it was stated that she encouraged them to do more to achieve better than before. The participant outlined that, *"Our principal believes in the use of incentives in motivating educators as well as learners. This works best for the school performance as it creates competition."*

It was obvious from participant SHOD5's response that the principal did believe in the use of incentives. He posited that, *"Absolutely, learners' academic performance is incentivised. When the Grade 12 learners have a level of 7 in their final year, they receive incentives from school the following year. Learners in lower Grades are made aware of this and are encouraged to work hard."*

In relation to what was shared by the Lesotho and South African heads of department, most of the principals believed in the use of incentives. As stated by the heads of department, the principals seemed to believe that incentives are the best way to enhance learners' academic achievement. The principals saw the necessity of acknowledging educators and learners' hard work as this created constructive competition among educators and learners. Although the principals believed that giving incentives was a good way of motivating educators and learners, among them there were some who turned

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out to partly believe in the utilisation of incentives. Data revealed that in both Lesotho and South African high schools few principals did not really rely on the use of incentives.

5.2.2.7 Persistence

Collected data has shown that persistence was another strategy that could be used to determine the effectiveness of the female instructional leadership. This fact was witnessed by the participant LP1 who affirmed that she had been a principal for twelve years. She plainly stated that her experience as a leader in that school has been tough. It was tough at first because some of the educators, particularly male educators did not want to take instructions from a female leader. The male educators would refuse to cooperate, and they also asked her challenging questions to test her knowledge and capacity as leader. Despite her persistence, she managed to tolerate and pass their test.

She presented that*, "However, as time went on things have changed from the worst to the better. The male educators are now beginning to realise that females could also be leaders thus can be observed but before they wanted to know on what capacity I can observe them. As from now, they take me as a leader not a female and I am proud of that and grateful too."*

Based on the participant's experience, people perceived leadership as males' duties only. However, it was proven that females could cope in leadership. No matter hardships and challenges females go through they can withstand them. Their qualities help them a lot. According to what the woman has encountered there was no doubt that she was helped by some of female qualities, such as patience, tolerance, gentleness and sympathy, thus supportive.

Participant LP2 elucidated that she has been in that school for a long time ever since 2006. However, she was not new in leadership because this is her second year of being a principal. In her experience she discovered that leading the school was somehow difficult and challenging. The participant further explained that the former principal was an elderly male whereas she was a young female. Therefore, her colleagues were not pleased to have a young female principal. *"In actual fact, dealing with different characters of elderly people is tiring, learners are much better. Although I am having a tough time, I*

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think all along I have been helped by my persistence, since I believe that persistence is the mother of success." She further argued that one of her colleagues was the acting principal before her arrival. Now it feels like she has taken his position. Although it was not that easy, she still coped.

The participant also stated that, *"I have another challenge of an educator whom we have the same qualifications who seem to hesitate to take instructions from me, but I told myself that it is a matter of time I just need to be patient with her. It is a bit challenging to be around these kinds of people, but with God's grace and persistence I will manage."* According to this participant, leadership required a lot of persistence as it has many challenges that must be faced. This principal can be compared to the saying that, 'Strong walls just shake but they never collapse.'

Participant LP3 made a point that her leadership experience has been challenging for many years as she has been in the school for eighteenth year then. It has been challenging in a sense that the government fails them. She complained that the government did not provide the school with the learning materials needed. Educators appeared to be demotivated when they ought to teach learners who had no books in their hands. Learners were also not willing to learn as their educators' spirit is down: *"My experience has never been good here because teaching and learning does not take place as expected. This hurts a lot."* The participant went on to present that another challenge is the School Board (school governing body) that turns out to have forgotten its role: "*The school is at rural place; hence, the community poses some problems here and there. The parents do not seem to know their role in their children's formal education."*

The findings of the study indicated that participant LP4 argued that although she has been in the school since 1995, she had been acting as a principal from 2016 to date. She went on to state that in her experience, for many reasons, it was not that easy to lead the school in which she has been an educator before she became a principal. She posited that, "*My colleagues have high expectations from me that one day I will do things in the way that we use to discuss while I was still among them as an educator. As an educator, we were demanding many things from the principal and now they are doing the same thing to me. All along I have been helped by my persistence."*

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Participant LP5 asserted that she first came to the school in 1993 as an educator. Then she was appointed as a deputy principal in 2003 and became a principal in 2006. When she first became a principal, it was tough for her because there was a lot of resistance from her colleagues, parents, the community and the church. The church members particularly were not happy that their school is led by someone who did not belong to their church: "*Even though the by-laws of the school state that the school has to be led by a member of the church or someone who understands the church's doctrine, I fully understand it. As for the community, parents and colleagues I think my social background was the contributing factor for their doubts."*

The participant went on to state that she could say that the dust was down. Everybody seemed to understand where she was coming from and where she was going. The lady seemed to have a vision regarding the school. Due to her effective leadership as instructional leader in this school, the results of learners were stable and kept on improving. The participant averted that, "*Many parents flock at our school asking that their children be admitted. The educators on the other hand enjoy their work because they see the fruits of their hard work. As I have already mentioned learners at this school are highly motivated, because at the end of their studies they all pass, none of them fail."* Like other female principals who were interviewed, this one also evidenced that what carried her along was persistence, otherwise it would be impossible for her to bear the challenges she came across.

The South African female principals also were asked to give their opinions on how they can enhance learners' academic achievement as instructional leaders. They also shared experiences as leaders, the challenges they encountered in their leadership especially at the beginning, after their appointment as principals. In this case, almost all of them were helped by their persistence. Participant SP1 emphasised that she has been an educator for about twenty-one years at the present school. She was then appointed as a principal recently. Since that time, she has faced many challenges from the educators. Some of them found it difficult to take instructions from her. It was like they were saying: "who is she whom we can take instructions from her?" She further stated the main problem was that her predecessor was a male. Therefore, they found it difficult to be given instructions

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by female: *"At the beginning I was somehow annoyed but as time went on, I got use to and they too seemed to accept the fact that I am now their leader."*

Participant SP2 averted that she has been in the school for almost twenty-four years now. As for leadership experience in the beginning, it was a bit challenging because before her there were two men in this leadership position. Learners used to behave differently towards males and females. They normally, especially boys, give females a tough time, even at their homes they did the same. Hence, in her leadership she was consistent with learners, with educators and she always wanted to be in authority and do what is expected of her as a leader of the school. *"I was not intimidated by the fact that I am the first lady to be a principal in this school. I am concerned about the future of the learners we are having at our school. I work hard for their academic achievement. Repeatedly, I persistently check whether they are being taught the correct topics. In collaboration with the educators, I make sure that the learners' behaviour is under the control."* The principal's response showed that she did not underestimate herself at all. She was confident that even though she was a first female leader at this school she could help learners to become successful. She also seemed to believe that persistence was the mother of success. It looks like she did not allow herself to be discouraged by the challenges she faced.

Participant SP3 made a point that, *"I have been at this school for nine years now. For two years I was appointed as a head of department. Ever since that time I was promoted to be a deputy principal. In this position where I am acting principal it has been three years. The experience had been bittersweet because I had to fill what we call bigger shoes than my actual size. I feel this way because the previous principal was known to be a hard-working person."* Based on this observation by the participant, I am of a view that the previous principal was a hardworking man. Even though she was a female, she was able to sustain leadership and management in this school. She also indicated that it was not that simple, but as a woman with power and good leadership skills she was still showing the direction.

Participant SP4 claimed that although this is her fourth year in the principal-ship, she has been at the school for fourteen years as an educator. Her experience at the beginning

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and now has been tough but great at the same time, because the educators were always on her side to assist learners to achieve their goals. For her this was a great support because the main purpose of schooling was teaching and learning. *"The educators also support me to put learners under the control and discipline them if necessary. Overall, the educators are cooperative. Challenges are everywhere but the fact that unless we face challenges there will be no success always gives me hope and energy to do what is expected of me as a leader, no matter what."*

Participant SP5 asserted that she has been a principal in her school for four years then. When she talked about her experience at that school as a leader, she said that in the previous two years, she was a principal in another school. her experience was that, being a principal was a tough job more especially being a female. She further stated that there are challenges from educators, parents and learners. If one was a female, people were always expecting failure rather than success: *"It is like females are only bound to become educators or are expected to be nurturing or mothering rather than leading. If one is not standing up for it, it would not last."*

She also claimed that, *"If the school is certainly made of males, they have a certain kind of feeling towards a female. In the beginning, they would try by all means to get closer in many ways. Others wish to befriend me. I have experience this in both schools."* According to this principal's experience, it seemed that it will take a longer time before people's mind set about school leadership change. On the other hand, being a principal was tough and challenging. It only needed someone who had among the qualities of leadership, persistence, which was mostly common among females.

5.2.2.7.1 Perseverance

The heads of department were also aware of the importance of persistence that was practised by their female principals and how it contributes to the enhancement of learners' academic achievement. Participant LHOD1 articulated that, *"No matter what challenges our principal faces, she never gave up. At first, she was undermined by male educators due to her femaleness. They did not want to be given instructions by a woman because they had a belief that only males are meant for leadership positions.* The participant added

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that, *"The woman took over the leadership from the male principal who had been in the school leadership since its establishment. After the struggle of some years, at present everything is normal and the males and females have realised that she has power and the required qualities of leadership."* From the participant's opinion it seemed that the principal persisted until the situation at school was conducive, she did not surrender.

According to participant LHOD2, it was not that easy for this female to take over as the principal. She noted that it was not that easy for their principal to take the leadership position. The presence of a male acting principal made the incoming female principal afraid that she was taking his position even though she overpowered him. *"Now our principal seems to have told herself that she too has leadership skills hence, she started believing in herself. Until now she is still the principal and a motivated one."*

Participant LHOD3 made a point that it was somehow challenging to be a female principal. She has seen that life became difficult daily. The participant emphasised that only because females were tough, they never give up that easily. At one stage it was discovered that the community was against the female being a leader. At last, they realised that not only men were meant to be in higher positions in leadership but also women. They, therefore, accepted her after a long struggle. This showed that the mind-set of the African society needed to somehow change and look at the school leadership in a different way.

The participant is pleased that they had a female principal who seemed to love her work and was always committed. When appreciating the persistence of their principal participant LHOD4 emphasised that, *"Before the arrival of the female principal educators and learners seemed not to take their work seriously. Ever since her arrival, things have changed for the better. She moulded educators' and learners' behaviours even though it was not an easy task. The performance of the school is not yet perfect but we are getting there as this female principal appears to be so determined and is giving a clear direction."*

Participant LHOD5 pointed out that at first the community disliked their female principal due to her denomination. Hence, they even brought up her personal life saying that she was not fit enough to lead the school. She never backed off because she wanted to prove

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them wrong but in fact, it was not an easy task. Today the school is among the best schools countrywide and is due to her efforts she pulled.

The collected data revealed that the South African heads of the department also witness how their principals' persistence helped them to enhance learners' academic achievement. Participant SHOD1 declared that being a female leader is challenging. The males and even females from this school did not want to be given instructions by the female. *"Most of my colleagues totally undermined our principal at the beginning, but her love for this school kept her going, she never looked back. At present everything is cool; they now listen and obey her orders."*

Participant SHOD2 averted that their female principal's leadership was rather tough at first. This was caused by the situation of the school being multicultural. Although there were educators and learners of different nationalities, the principal was able to handle them all. Even as a female, she was the best hence she encouraged the educators and learners not to discriminate one another and she also treated them equally.

The data provided by participant SHOD3 indicated that due to the qualities acquired by their principal, persistence among them, she was able to cope in whatever challenge she came across. The participant rose the point that, *"It has not been long since she became a principal. It is only a year with some months. Ever since she became a principal there were challenges here and there, but at some point, leadership was fine on her side. The previous principal was a male but this female works tirelessly to fill in the gap and she is coping."*

Participant SHOD4 justified that it is the second year of their principal being a leader. Ever since she became a principal, everything has been great because educators and learners show cooperative participation. The participant went on to say that, *"Being a principal is challenging but it is good when a leader is able to overcome challenges and not dwell on the past. Our principal easily let go of the past and move on, that is why she enjoys her leadership."*

On the same note participant SHOD5 showed that although it is not the first time for their principal to be in the principal-ship, it was still a bit tough for her to handle some educators,

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males in particular: *"It is not her first time being a principal here; she is an experienced female principal. In actual fact, being a female principal is a bit challenging. Most of the people have the wrong mentality about females that they are fragile. It is true that they are, but it does not prevent them to be in school leadership, especially because females are good in parenthood."* The participant went on to emphasise that fortunately their principal was not shaken by any storm that came her way for she had a lot of persistence and tolerance.

5.2.2.8 Leadership skills

The findings indicated that acquiring good leadership skills was among the strategies that could be used by female principals as instructional leaders to enhance learners' academic achievement. The collected data revealed that most of the female principals possess the following quality traits in their leadership: confidence, self-esteem, caring, honesty, conscientiousness, energetic, compassionate, empathetic, intelligent and curiosity, genuineness, supportive, forgiveness, sympathetic, kindness, integrity, consistent and reliability, inspiring and always down to earth.

Participant LP1 presented that her role, as a principal, was to ensure that there was effective teaching and learning. For this effective teaching and learning to happen, she ought to set a good example. She felt she also ought to teach at least one class so that she knew exactly what is going on in different classes. This helped her to understand better the challenges educators and learners came across while teaching and learning were in process: "*I have to make sure that parents partake in their children's education. I also have to ensure that there are enough resources for educators to carry out teaching and learning."*

Participant LP2 asserted that if the school around the area was successful, she saw it as an improvement in the community around the area*. "I think that this would positively affect all the nearby residents."* The development growth and success of the school according to this participant laid in the hands of the principal but she achieved it with the support of the community. Educators were the most important people ever because they helped her as a principal to process teaching and learning.

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The participant further clarified that the school was structured in a rural area where elderly people did not see the necessity of formal education. The principal has to instilled in them that nowadays life depends on how much one was educated so that they may support their children throughout their academic journey. *"It is our role as the school to ensure that when learners leave this school, they are ready to face life challenges. I am sure that this will make the entire community aware of the importance of formal education in their children's lives."*

According to participant LP3, her role in teaching and learning was to provide realistic goals through motivation and guidance. In doing this, the set goals of the school were revealed. It is also her responsibility to see to it that there are teaching materials in the school even though the government failed to help them. It was also her responsibility to find the ways in which the school could have teaching materials that improve learners' academic achievement. She further stated that, *"Even in this situation I am looking for the ways in which I motivate and guide educators on what to do for the success of the school."*

Participant LP4 made emphasis that it was her role, as a principal, to observe educators. To even check their professional books so as to see if they are still doing the work as expected. *"It is my role to see that teaching and learning is more learners centred than educator centred. It is also my responsibility that learners are given weekly and monthly tests and thus marked on time."* As pointed out by the participant, where learners were given tests regularly and were also given the feedback on time, educators were able to monitor learners' progress. *"I ought to make sure that learners' work is monitored and evaluated."*

During the semi-structured interviews, participant LP5 revealed that she was one of those leaders who were serious about learners' academic achievement such that she put an extra effort looking at their work: *"We have a continuous assessment which I look into more often to evaluate teaching and learning."* The participant also mentioned that she did not stand learners' absenteeism but rather she went the extra mile that she even visited their homes to check what their problems were.

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She further stated that she is *also a human being with empathy.* Even when parents delay to pay learners' tuition fee, she never sent them home. *"I let them come to school like everyone else as, until the payment is made. I want them all to be on the same page*." According to this participant to send learners home when they owed the school, caused inconvenience. When the learner came back, may be after a week or two, he or she wanted to catch up and be at the same level with those who remained at school while he or she was at home waiting for school fees. On the other hand, educators battle a lot; they did not know how to fill the gap.

It was also discovered that South African female principals were of the same view that leadership skills contributed a lot in learners' academic achievement. Leadership skills were the ones that assisted all the stakeholders to achieve their goal, learners' success. Participant SP1 affirmed that, *"As a leader, there is nothing important as regular monitoring and control. We may have the best system in place but if we do not monitor and control them, it is as good as nothing. I want to constantly and regularly monitor and control teaching and learning which is primary at the school."* The participant emphasised that monitoring and controlling were essential, because people failed to do as they please, everything. Even if the school could have best educators alongside the country, if they were not monitored and controlled, teaching and learning would not be as effective as it should be. The two were amongst important tools to be used by the instructional leaders.

Participant SP2 presented that her role, as the principal, was leadership, hence, she needed to check with herself regularly concerning the skills she put into practice daily. One of them was to be consistent and reliable. She believed she had to often check whether teaching and learning is taking place as it is expected. *"I have to keep myself posted with regards to the latest curriculum."* The principal on the other hand, reasoned that s*ometimes when she gets a chance, she accompanies the educators to* their workshops in various subjects to learn what is being discussed. "*As a leader of the school, I attend workshops, because it is all about teaching and learning, dedication, hard work and perseverance. This gives me the opportunity to practise what was discussed first, so that I can spill it out to the educators and learners."*

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Data provided by participant SP3 indicated that leadership has to be clear and straight forward. This could contribute to learners' performance. The core business was to exercise good leadership skills to educators and learners so that they follow on principal's footsteps. *"In this way, the academic performance would be excellent."* The participant further stated that, *"I try by all means to show support and empathy to the educators and learners' tool. This motivates them to be dedicated to their work."*

In addition, participant SP5 purports that principal always played a vital role in teaching and learning. She believed it would be good for the principals to teach, at least few subjects. Even if a principal did not teach, she ought to know what happened in the classroom. In those days there was a challenge of educators coming to school and doing the opposite of what was expected of them in class. Being a principal and not knowing what was happening around was not wise, because there will be no ways to help learners acquire quality education.

The participant further explained that it was her role to ensure that the environment was conducive for educators and learners. It was also her duty to see to it that all the resources needed were available at school. Most importantly, she mentioned that she ought to make sure that learners were fully supported, even those who lack support from their parents should have the opportunity while they were at school. She wanted them to feel there was a difference between being at home and being at school.

Lastly, the participant posited that, *"Whenever we have new educators who join our staff, I always take time to introduce them to code of conduct. It might happen that they are unable to adjust this school's situation more especially because of the workload or with learner discipline. Therefore, I help them adapt the way we operate and I make them understand the work they are expected to do within the stipulated time."* It was also mentioned by the participant that nowadays, teaching is not about being in class only, it is also about being observant of everything concerning learners. *"I therefore engage educators to know their learners more than anyone else. This knowledge assists educators to easily help learners with their learning and to be familiar with learners' background."* This meant, it was the role of the principal to assist educators to know learners beyond classroom.

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5.2.2.8.1 Headship skills

The findings from Lesotho and South African heads of department revealed that when a principal exercised effective leadership at school, she attained sustainable leadership. Having good leadership skills was all about enlisting and guiding educators and learners. It was to help them achieve the set goals in a school. Participant LHOD1 concurred that their principal used her power effectively, whatever she did was for the common good of the school: *"In addition, she leads us through examples. By so doing as educators, we feel compelled to do things in the way that we are expected."*

It was revealed by the data collected from participant that among the skills the principal can used was to be open, firm and fair in her leadership and management. This enabled her to frequently remind educators and learners of what the school's vision and mission statement were. In doing so, a principal was exercising good leadership skills. Participant LHOD2 asserted that, *"To show that she has got good leadership skills, she reminds us of the vision and mission statement quarterly. This helps us to work towards achieving our common goal of which is successful."*

Furthermore, a principal could accomplish success only when she was able to exercise honesty and integrity in a school. When manipulation was forbidden, the principal, educators and learners were able to have peace of mind. Participant LHOD3 posited that; *"Our principal is always honest with us. She never gives us a chance to even question her character. This shows that she is an excellent leader. We are proud of her."*

A lot was expected of the principals, but unfortunately there was no place for them to be trained. They acquired knowledge and skills as they came across some challenges in their administration and management. Which meant they are taught by their daily experiences. Hardships of life were a good way of learning for them. They were the ones who assisted in the problems faced by educators and learners. Participant LHOD4 emphasised that, *"The challenges our principal faces on daily basis have made her become a good leader. She is able to solve our problems. Indeed, she is acting like a mother to us. The leadership she employs makes us to exert more effort to our daily duties."*

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Good communication skills signify good leadership skills. When a principal has good communication skills, educators, parents and learners cherish and respect her. Participant LHOD5 pointed out that, *"It is good to have a leader like our principal. She is often calm, she never shouted at anyone even if she is angry. She is able to control her emotions. Since her arrival she showed us nothing other than her goodness."*

Earlier on, heads of department mentioned that it was important for female instructional leaders to consider leadership skills as one of the tools to be put into practice. Support of all stakeholders would contribute in the principals' wish to attain a long-lasting leadership. Showing support to educators, parents and learners said a lot. In that situation educators felt free to teach learners. Parents also considered that their children would get the support they needed. Participant SHOD1 stated that, *"Our principal is supportive of educators and learners. She stands by them no matter what, either it is personal or school related matters."*

Good leadership skills are acquired through hard work and dedication. Principals could not acquire them when they were not determined to work. Ups and downs of life were a good experience when it came to leadership skills. Participant SHOD2 justified that their principal there was always busy with her work, running up and down within school yard. Her presence was always felt by all in the campus. She worked hard to ensure that learners acquired quality education. *"Although she comes across some challenges on her leadership and management, she easily overcomes for she has good leadership skills."*

Principals, according to participant SHOD3, were supposed to be kind and warm hearted as they work with people of different characters. They must be observant in everything they say to educators and learners: *"Our principal has got a soft heart for us. She has consideration and a root of motherhood in her. She never suspended learners for no good reason but solve the problem."* The participant also emphasised that the power of discipline, work ethics and professionalism were often shown by their principal. According to her observation, their principal has values like, mutual respect and equality in her leadership skills.

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Good leadership skills according to participant SHOD4 go together with being smart and clever. If a principal was able to exercise good leadership skills, the school would flourish and have many learners enrolling annually. The participant affirmed that, *"One thing I have recognised from my principal is that she is intelligent. The way she runs this school leads to success nothing else. She is determined and dedicated."*

It was best when a principal exercised good leadership skills at school. The school's academic performance became excellent. Participant SHOD5 elucidated that, *"Our principal is indeed, perfect in her leadership. All she does is to lead with good examples. This school's academic performance is outstanding ever since she came to this school."* Besides, the participant further stated that the principal provided a holistic support to educators and this motivated them so much in their daily work. The support helped them to enjoy their work even though teaching was demanding. This unwavering support they get from their female principal gave them a new understanding that teaching was a work of heart. The participant emphasised that, *"Because of the principal's support, as educators, we enjoy our work to the fullest. We do not hesitate to sacrifice our time if there is a need"*

From the above data it was revealed that there are many quality traits women used in their leadership. Hence, in most cases they were successful in their leadership. They work hard to make sure that their schools appear among the well performing schools.

5.2.3 Research question 3: What are heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

In the following section, the participants were asked to share their perceptions of the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. There were various roles mentioned through interviews sessions and questionnaire. Eight themes related to research question 3 were discerned from the participants' responses. The researcher structured the following: influence of school outcomes, elevating professional development, support to educators, instructional support, improving the standard of learners' academic achievement, communicating school vision and mission, supervision

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and evaluation of instruction, guidance and counselling, adapting to gender differences. Data were arranged according to the above-mentioned themes in an attempt to address the sub-question 3 that sought to examine the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement as perceived by the heads of department.

5.2.3.1 Influence school outcomes.

To influence school outcomes was perceived by both Lesotho and South African heads of department as one of the roles of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. Indeed, it was the duty of instructional leaders to support educators in learners' academic achievement. The principals could communicate with educators through heads of department on how teaching and learning is progressing. Every now and then the instructional leaders encouraged educators to influence learners to work hard to fulfil their dreams. This was witnessed by participant LHOD1 when saying that, *"My principal provides all the resources needed thus provide a conducive learning environment. Ensure that educators attend workshops, there are computers, with internet resources and modern textbooks."* In addition to that, the participant clarified that the principal even included educators in decision-making. She also supported educators during difficulties either personal or school related issues.

Participant LHOD2 purported that their principal never hesitated to provide money when it came to taking learners to different educational trips like English and Science Fairs. The participant stated that the principal fully supported English and Science Clubs. She emphasised that, *"The principal wishes to provide opportunities for all learners to display and improve their talents so as to develop themselves morally, spiritually, intellectually and physically."* Allowing learners to take the trips and mix with learners from other schools made them to see the other side of the coin.

According to participant LHOD3, the school's main goal was to deliver quality education to learners so that they may become successful and pursue their dreams. His response has shown that his principal was always supportive no matter what. It was stated that she asked educators to draw departmental budgets in advance for the next academic year so that preparations could be made on time. It was also revealed that the principal provided

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with all the resources that could be helpful to educators and learners success of the school.

Participant LHOD4 asserted that their school's educational goal was to produce best academic results while in process offering quality education to learners. The participant further reasoned that, *"My principal is aware of the importance of her visible presence in school clubs, such as, English and Science Clubs, and giving of financial support to educators to buy requirements in the department and attending of workshops."*

As per participant LHOD5 it was obvious that the principal offered remuneration, such as, going out for trips outside the country, at the end of the year. The participant purported that, *"My principal inspires and motivates learners by allowing them to go for trips so as to rewind thus be happy and mingle."* This showed that their school's educational goal was quality results and better understanding of educational curriculum by educators and for learners' achievement.

From the above data, that Lesotho principals were bound to good quality education as indicated by Lesotho heads of department. The principals dream big of the Basotho generations, all they wish was the learners become successful and fulfil their dreams. As revealed by Lesotho heads of department, the principals influence the school outcome in different ways. They boost the morale by ensuring the availability of resources, motivating educators and learners and by offering financial support on school related issues.

It was evident from South African heads of department's responses that the principals have influence in school outcome. The principals have set goals that have to be achieved in the end. This was evidenced by the participant SHOD1 as stated that, *"Our school's educational goal is to obtain hundred per cent pass rate with the quality results."* She went on to posit that, *"Our principal supports the educators by attending departmental meetings where educators are discussing the curriculum coverage. She also visits learners in different Grades to encourage them to study."* To strengthen what she shared previously, the participant added that, *"Indeed, the principal involves herself in school matters. As for learners, she invites motivational speakers to inspire them. As educators we are also*

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encouraged to collaboratively work hard to ensure that teaching and learning become effective."

According to participant SHOD2, the principal ensured the availability of appropriate teaching and learning materials. Additionally, the participant reckoned that their school's educational goal was to strive to be a safe place of excellence where learners could achieve their full potential to make positive contribution as responsible and respectful citizens. From the participant's response it was stated that the school aimed at hundred per cent pass rate. She purported that, *"At our school we believe that no learner should be left behind. We work together as educators to build the learners to be better people in the society."*

The findings denoted that head of department perceived the role of the female principals in learners' academic achievement was to influence school outcome. Participant SHOD3 reasoned that their school's educational goal was to achieve optimum results through any subject and to improve the school holistically. She further stated that their school's other goal was to ensure that every learner succeeded in life. The learners had to work hard because the school expected hundred per cent pass rate, not only from Grade 12 learners but from all Grades. The participant reckoned that, *"The principal makes sure that there is price giving ceremony at every term to celebrate for educators whose subjects are passed well."* She further elucidated that, *"Our principal supports educators by holding grades ceremony every term whereby educators account for their results. She discusses with the educators the problems they encounter in the classrooms thus find alternative solutions."*

Furthermore, data provided by participant SHOD4 showed that their principal plays her role very well in learners' success in their studies by putting more focus on school outcome. The participant stated that, *"Basing ourselves on our school goal we work hard to assist learners achieve the best of themselves, academically and otherwise."* She further made a point that they had workshops as the heads of department, if they found out that educators needed support, the principal arranged the meeting with learning facilitators from the Department of Education to make sure that the educators got help. She added that, *"As educators, we see to it that all the learners reach their full potential.*

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By so doing we enjoy assisting learners to achieve their dreams." The participant then went on to outline that their principal has an open-door policy towards educators for them to discuss problems they face: *"Our principal has a ready-made examples and suggestions for educators. Moreover, she easily gets to the bottom of any matter and understands both educators and learners."*

As per participant SHOD5 their school's educational goal was to collaboratively work hard to ensure that teaching and learning is effective. *"Our school goal is to produce quality results and to be well known country wide."* On the other hand, she clarified that, the principal worked with the educators in setting direction towards learners' academic achievement. Since educators needed to develop their knowledge and skills, the principal has allowed a platform to grow. It was indicated that she supplied with all the resources required to process instruction.

The findings have shown that both Lesotho and South African school principals influence both educators and learners through their heads of department. From what the South African heads of department their principals also were fully engaged when it came to influencing school outcome. Like the Lesotho heads of department, the South Africa heads of department response positively to the principals' influence, because they ensured that all the resources were available whenever they were needed. There was also remuneration thus in both countries, principals solved problems when it came to learners' academic achievement.

Based on the findings, all the schools were determined to prosper and shine. It was witnessed by both Lesotho and South African heads of department that all the schools' goal is somehow the same, that is, success and good quality results are what every school mourns for.

5.2.3.2 Elevating professional development

The findings indicated that to elevate professional development was one of the female principals' roles as instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. To elevate professional development, a leader has to make a follow-up on duties that helped learners' performance. Participant LHOD1 emphasised that, *"All my principal does is to*

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make a follow-up on duties she assigns to educators. Our principal ensures that learners get what is best for them to allow them to fulfil their dreams."

As a good way of elevating professional development, a leader ought to take a good care of people under her authority. In saying this, it meant a principal must know what educators and learners needed for effective teaching and learning. This would be of assistance as it could promote a healthy and friendly environment for instruction to take place. Participant LHOD2 uttered that, *"Our principal is careful when it comes to supplying educators and learners with the materials they need. She also makes sure that the decision she takes, paves the way to the effectiveness of teaching and learning."*

The data denoted that if the school leaders would like to experience learners who perform well, they needed to let educators and learners explore. The educators had to be given a chance to frequently make discoveries that will be beneficial to learners. Educators and learners were to be advised to interact with other schools to learn of good things that improve their studies. Participant LHOD3 stipulated that in most cases, their principal encouraged educators and learners to go extra miles in their teaching and learning. Learners were made aware that for instruction to be effective a larger was their responsibility, educators were there to coach them to learn: *"Moreover, I have noticed that we are all gifted, what each one of us needs to do is to discover his or her strengths and weaknesses. If this exercise is recurrently done, there will be improvement in learners' formal education. Hence, our principal keeps on advising educators and learners to go out and interact with other schools to learn more."*

In most cases, it was a principal's duty to encourage educators to further their studies. This is another way of elevating professional development. This also gave the educators the opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills on how to deal with teaching and learning. Participant LHOD4 asserted that, *"My principal does encourage educators to improve through pursuing their studies, because they will learn a lot and become effective in their teaching. In this way they are able to explore on several matters; their teaching is perfect."*

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Principals were always expected to ensure that teaching and learning was effective, no matter what. The principals were supposed to fund educators when they have to attend workshops. It was their responsibility to fully support educators for valuable instruction at school. Participant LHOD5 made a point that, *"My principal does whatever it takes to ensure that she finally supports work related workshops. Her wish is that educators excel in their teaching, that is why she never fails them at any point."*

It is the principal's role to stay focused on what the objectives of the school entailed. As instructional leader, the principal had to focus on achieving long term goals. Participant SHOD1 indicated that, *"Regularly, we revise the school's objectives of which are of the short term and goals of which are of the long term. We revise the overall …so that we know them by heart. In this way they are easily implemented daily."* The participant emphasised that the principal is faithful in conducting departmental meetings. *"The principal calls up departmental meetings to discuss different issues concerning the ways on how educators can be upgraded."* Where there were improvement educators found better ways on how to tackle their teaching to bring about success. *"Moreover, our principal works hand in hand with the heads of department for the betterment of educators."*

For the principal to elevate professional development at school, she had to set boundaries between educators and learners. There had to be a gap between them for effective discipline and respect at school. The principal had to be friendly but firm in her management. Participant SHOD2 articulated that, *"The principal has to set boundaries between educators, learners. She communicates with them frequently but there is a limit in order to create principal-teacher relationship and principal-learner relationship."*

According to this participant, their principal incorporated educators in all matters pertaining school that they could learn and improve holistically. It was also indicated that she encouraged educators to meet with educators from other schools to share ideas for everyone was gifted differently. Furthermore, it was emphasised that the School Governance Body played a vital role to ensure that educators were being upgraded. She invited motivational speakers to come and inspire both educators and learners. The participant also confirmed that *"Our principal improves the quality of education by*

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mentoring the staff and by keeping up with educational policies and development within educational sector."

With the aim of elevating professional development, a principal had to collaboratively work with educators and learners. This would in a school achieving success because of teamwork. In a team educators shared tasks among themselves and assist one another where they struggled. Participant SHOD3 reasoned that*, "In this school there is unity. We work towards achieving a common goal. The principal always motivates them that they have indeed captured her heart. The way they are dedicated, gives a hope that there will always be success in this school."*

The findings revealed that as a principal, one ought to manage obstacles and distraction that would hinder the process of teaching and learning. A leader had to be a problem-solver and resolve whatever conflict arose at school. It was so, because the life at school was full of challenges, one after the other. Participant SHOD4 professed that their principal tried her level best to drive away all the obstacles and distraction at school. Discipline was what she taught the educators and learners even though conflicts arose here and there. The participant further reasoned that, *"Our principal never wastes time, but solves problems within the blinking of an eye because their presence, whether they are between educators themselves or between learners, they disturb instruction."*

Professional development was also elevated by encouraging parents to partake in their children's education. Learners whose parents were involved in their learning usually score higher marks and obtained good grades. This implied that parental involvement was vital. Participant SHOD5 elucidated that it was their school's routine to let parents be involved in their children's learning: *"The principal makes sure that parents are valued and respected. This allows them to continue to support their children's formal education in the way that leads to learners' academic achievement."*

5.2.3.3 Support to educators

The findings showed that education in both countries was highly valued. In Lesotho, the Ministry of Education and Training encouraged quality education that leads to learners' academic achievement. In South Africa, the Department of Education also encouraged

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schools to work hard for learners' success. In both countries teaching and learning was taken care of. There were clear policies on the principals and educators' roles to ensure that learners acquired quality education. All these were great support to educators. However, it remained the role of the female principals to ensure that whatever expectation was implemented accordingly.

The female principals were always supportive to educators. Participant LHOD1 asserted that, *"Our principal emphasised on teamwork and joint decision making."* The participant denoted that this resulted in problems being easily solved and unity drove educators to be committed to their work to achieve the set goals. The participant added that, *"She moves from class to class during teaching and learning process. She does this to ensure that educators together with learners never skip classes and to make assurance that learners are taught as expected."*

In being supportive, female principals always ensured that there were adequate resources. The participant indicated that the principal took care of the smooth running of instruction. Participant LHOD2 explained that, *"Our principal makes sure that teaching aids are always available, to mention the few, photocopying machines and papers used are always available. She ensures that teaching and learning are run smoothly. All these are done for the success of learners."*

In showing support, female principal opted to reinforce learners and facilitate instruction. The instructional leader supplied educators with teaching materials for the effective teaching and learning. Participant LHOD3 made an emphasis that, *"Our principal usually tells educators that she gives incentives, such as books, calculators and pens, to learners so as to motivate them to work harder."* She also affirmed that, *"She facilitates teaching and learning by doing regular check-up in classrooms and follow-up on assessment and evaluation of learners."*

Female instructional leaders strived to ensure that teaching and learning was effective by supporting educators who dealt with learners from different backgrounds. According to participant LHOD4's responses, the principal was ever ready to support educators financially and in other ways that could lead to the improvement of learners' academic

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achievement. He concurred that, *"Our principal financially supports academic works."* The participant also indicated that, *"The principal ensures that educators do not complain of teaching and learning resources. She also encourages learners to always work hard and that they do not have to rely on their educators' input only, but rather make new discoveries."*

Participant LHOD5 asserted that their principal conducted regular meetings with heads of department to have shared decision making thus monitoring educators' progress. As a way of supporting educators, the female principal always made them feel free. The participant also purported that, *"Our principal always let the educators and learners at their comfortable zone at all the times."* The participant also made a point that, *"The principal provides us with all the resources needed to carry out the learning process. She even does her duties with all the love and dedication.*

Education in South Africa is highly valued. The Department of Education was so determined to see learners succeed. This influenced the female principals to put more effort in supporting educators so that they did not get to disappoint the Department of Education. Principals ensured that educators become dedicated on their work since this led to learners' success. Most of the time, the principals exerted pressure on them.

According to heads of department, the South African female principals showed their support to educators by facilitating instruction. Participant SHOD1 argued that the female principals facilitated teaching and learning in various ways. He appreciated the fact that his school was run by a female principal, because from her he learnt that females were good in supporting those under their authority: "*Through heads of department, she monitors class attendance of educators. This always motivates me as a person. It helps me to feel good about myself and my profession as an educator. It tells me how important my work is, and makes me to do it properly. Because of my principal's support, now I have learnt to be faithful to my daily duty. Every time I make sure that when it is time to summit our lesson plans and scheme of record of work done, I enjoy being the first one to submit."*

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Participant SHOD2 elucidated that, *"Our principal is always visible when there is a need to assist. She conducts classroom visits not with the aim of spying but to encourage and support teaching and learning."* The participant went on to indicate that the principal did proper monitoring and controlling on daily basis whereby heads of department gave feedback of their monitoring process. They also handed over reports of meetings that they held as heads of department. The participant articulated that, *"Our principal conducts regular meetings to control and check the curriculum coverage. She checks record of work done every week and lesson plans on daily basis."* Here it seemed that in showing support, the principal showed herself at school so that educators could feel empowered. The presence of the principal was felt whether she was there or not. It looked like her visibility made a huge difference as educators and learners became committed to their work.

According to participant SHOD3 the principal supports the educators by facilitating teaching and learning through mentoring programmes. It was emphasised that she did this by holding meetings regularly to give direction thus holding educators accountable. Moreover, in supporting educators, the principal tried her level best to ensure the improvement of learners by facilitating instruction. The participant asserted that, *"Our principal encourages educators to frequently conduct subject advisor and to improve plan to enable themselves to deal with the challenges that learners have."*

Furthermore, the above participant stated that, to show the support, female principals, encouraged educators to go extra mile in their work in multiple ways. Participant SHOD3 elucidated that the principal encouraged educators to conduct remedial classes. She built on prior knowledge and experiences of educators by making connections across the subject area and supporting a holistic worldview to make learning more meaningful. The participant explained that, *"Our female principal tries by all means to make learning relevant in reflecting the real world and the ways children learn at home and in the community."*

Participant SHOD4 also complemented that the principal persuaded educators to teach learners with passion by using learner centred approach. The principal also provided educators with everything they needed including resources. The participant concurred

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that, *"The principal supports instruction by working closely with the School Management Team (SMT). That is the deputy principal and the heads of department (HODs) to support and monitor the improvement of learners' academic achievement."*

As a way of showing support, participant SHOD5 also indicated that the principal works with School Management Team (SMT) and with the heads of department to help educators in their teaching. Additionally, the principal supported the educators by ensuring the availability of resources. The participant also disclosed that the principal supported the educators by providing all the necessary resources and by always monitoring them. The participant professed that, *"Since effective teaching requires competence, confidence and comprehension, our principal provides support in all accords in order to meet set goals.* She went stated that, *"Our principal gives courage to educators by supporting them in everything they do in developing the school."*

5.2.3.4 Instructional support

The findings showed that instructional support was perceived by heads of department as one of the roles of the principals as instructional leaders. According to heads of department it was the responsibility of the principals to ensure that learners achieved their academic goal. Being supportive to educators and learners was the best tool in boosting learners' academic achievement. Enhancing and motivating educators and learners resulted in fruitful results. The principals ought to support the two parties, educators and learners, no matter how difficult the situation was. They also ought to encourage unity so that challenges encountered would be easily overcome. Instructional leaders had to empower educators in such a way that they build each other rather than acting on one's weaknesses that could lead to destruction of individuals.

Both Lesotho and South African heads of department were aware of their principals' instructional support. Instructional support could only be provided by a principal who possessed good communication skills. The way a principal spoke with educators and learners kept the school going. Participant LHOD1 made a point that, *"Our principal has good communication skills. She is able to communicate with people of different characters."* The participant went on to state that, *"Our principal always meets with the*

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heads of department to discuss learners' needs but at some point, she directly meets with educators. The principal provides with all the resources needed, including books, equipment, technology and money for workshops." The participant also added that their instructional leader ensured that both educators and learners put learning at the centre of their daily activities. It was her role to see to it that the school performed best at all the times.

It was obvious from participant LHOD2 that their principal ensured that educators do their work. She checked upon them on daily basis. Moreover, it was outlined that she even made effort to plan academic activities with the educators: *"Indeed, our instructional leader is the best influencer when it comes to learners' academic achievement. She does not end with only checking on how the work is done; she even gives words of encouragement to educator who seems to struggle with his or her duty."* Data showed that a principal who was able to provide instructional support to educators was excellent. Educators and learners were able to perform duties through her guidance. The participant further discussed that, *"Our principal is light in the darkness. Her ways of performing tasks never cease to amaze me. She is able to provide and help us with all our needs while at school."*

According to participant LHOD3, the principal is always there to provide educators with materials that facilitate teaching and learning as it was her role to ensure that educators do their work. The findings indicated that it was good when a principal was able to provide a light to educators and learners. Instruction needed guidance here and there as changes were made from time to time. The participant further reasons that, *"Indeed it is interesting to have someone like her as a leader. She is able to provide educators with all the necessary information we need to make instruction successful."*

The findings also denoted that instructional support was needed in school for learners to perform better. Principals in schools were meant for management so in this case they were important. Participant LHOD4 posited that, *"Her instructional support is the best ever. She never gives us a chance to complain but she provides teaching and learning resources on time."* The participant further evaluated that, *"Fairly, she encourages educators to teach to their best but should not spoon-feed learners. On the other hand,*

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she persuades learners through their educators to work even though there is no motivation."

When a principal provided instructional support, this helped educators to stay in line. The principal's instructional support helped educators to put more effort in their work. Hence the academic performance increased. Participant LHOD5 elucidated that, *"Our principal supports us academically. She has a good heart and she easily forgives no matter what."* The participant further posited that," *Our principal has been a quality performer in her role to enhance good academic achievement in this school. This is shown by making sure those educational obstacles in both practical and non-practical subjects are not available."*

As it was stated right from the beginning of the analysis of this sub-theme by both Lesotho and South African heads of department that their principals, were very supportive when it came to teaching and learning, participant SHOD1 articulated that, *"The principal encourages that teaching and learning be conducted at all the time so as to achieve good results."* Data showed that success was obtained only when the principal, educators and learners worked as a team. The principal's instructional support would strengthen the team even more. After all success was achieved when all the subordinates worked towards achieving the common goal. The participant went on to emphasise that, *"At all the times our principal is with us through thick and thin. She encourages us to work cooperatively to achieve success, nothing else."*

It was the principal's duty to develop and communicate the school's vision and mission statement. Through a principal's instructional support, educators were frequently reminded of what was expected of them. Participant SHOD2 indicated that, *"Our principal gives educators and learners the support they need. From time to time, she reminds educators and learners of what the school's vision and mission entails."*

The findings in this study, showed that it was important to have a principal, in school, as she was able to provide instructional support. She was the one responsible to see to it that adequate resources for teaching were available. Participant SHOD3 posited that, *"Since I came to this school, the principal has always been supportive to us. She makes sure that the resources are adequate for learners to acquire quality education."* It was the

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principal's duty to develop and communicate the school's vision and mission statement. Through a principal's instructional support, educators were frequently reminded of what was expected of them. The participant further indicated that, *"Our principal gives educators and learners the support they need. Frequently, she reminds educators and learners of what the school's vision and mission entails."*

Provision of instructional support was the best for educators and learners. It gave them a good path to walk on. Instructional support also motivated educators and learners. Participant SHOD4 purported that, *"In this school, the principal is supportive, she never let us down at any cost. She clears the path for us and guides us on how we are supposed to conduct teaching and learning. She works tirelessly to see to it that teaching and learning take place as planned."* The participant also justified that their principal ensured that every learner received quality education, through effort and initiative of all the relevant stakeholders at school: "*Availability of the necessary resources is important in ensuring effectiveness of instruction. She does her best to ensure that everything is in the right place when needed."*

Date showed that principal was a hand on in a sense that she encouraged educators to attend meetings, workshops and other related courses that supply them with updated information. It was also indicated that she constantly motivated learners to work hard. It was said that she even dedicated her efforts by encouraging learners to conduct discussion sessions thus persuaded educators to provide extra classes. Instructional support is the best. It gave educators and learners a way to follow. Instructional support boosted educators and learners' morale in education. Participant SHOD5 declared that, *"It is good to have a leader like her. Through the ups and downs of this school she stands with us. She is with us even academically."* In answering the open-ended questionnaire, the heads of department indicated that it was the principals' duty to ensure the smooth running of the school. They had to ensure that teaching and learning took place as planned so that learners can achieve good results. The participant mentioned a point that, *"The principal leads by good examples. She has a hands-on approach on the curriculum and finds ways together with the strategies to improve teaching and learning experience."*

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The above data showed that the principals were supportive to the heads of department by ensuring that instruction took place as planned. It was revealed by the preceding findings that in most cases, principals' way of influencing educators is indirect. Although it was indirectly, the principals also showed a support to the educators. This was done through the heads of department, who worked closely with the educators. Heads of department exerted pressure on educators to perform their daily duties. Furthermore, heads of department were accountable to see to it that educators did their work as expected. The principals were there to first facilitate and examine that the work was done accordingly. This helped the heads of department to feel they were not alone in this responsibility, but they were supported by their principals who were always on their side. This formed a chain (principal, educators, learners). The principals as hawkers stayed at the rooftop and watch how teaching and learning is conducted. They (principals) then gave praises and recommendations where necessary. In fact, the principals were the ones responsible for learners' performance. That was why they must put much influence on heads of department who exerted that pressure on educators. The educators also become influential to learners, in the end quality results were produced.

5.2.3.5 Improving standards of learners' academic achievement

In accordance with question 3, the researcher further asked the participants open-ended questions about improving the standards of learners' academic achievement. The data provided by the participants indicated that the principals worked hard to make it a point that, in the first place, they assisted educators to improve their knowledge and skills, in various ways. This was evidenced by LHOD1, as justified that, *"The principal organises workshops by resource person, for instance, she invites subject specialist knowledgeable about subject matters. Subject educators are also allowed to join different associations for different subjects whereby they empower each other."*

Moreover, participant LHOD2 affirmed that educators attended workshops which helped them increase their effectiveness. The experts on different subjects were invited to provide educators with the information on how to improve teaching that automatically improved learning. The visits of experts brought a change to learners' performance. The participant further asserted that, *"As educators we are now able to guide our learners on*

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how to solve problems and deal with complicated topics. We are also introduced on how to help slow learners to boost their pace. This brought satisfaction to our work, we feel confident when we teach, because now we are able to handle different characters of learners with different problems."

According to participant LHOD3, workshops were regarded as important for educators' improvement. Their principal allowed educators to attend workshops organised by subject advisors in the district. She also encouraged them to improve their educational qualifications by pursuing their studies. The participant stated that, *"Indeed our principal gives us the opportunity to attend workshops that assist us to conduct teaching and learning accordingly. Two of us are now doing part-time studies as we are encouraged by our principal. Since the commencement of their studies there is improvement in their teaching. Hence, the standard of learners' academic achievement has improved."*

Besides, participant LHOD4 added that educators were given the opportunity to go to workshops. During the workshops there were opportunities to chart with educators from different schools. It was where they gathered more ideas concerning teaching and learning. The participant asserted that, *"I discovered that many of us benefit a lot from our interaction with our colleagues. The principal also invites resource person to come and provide educators with information and inspire them."*

In addition, participant LHOD5 evaluated that their school often held workshops, motivational sessions and heath talk to improve and develop knowledge educators already possess. Similarly, the participant emphasised that, *"Our principal encourages educators to attend workshops offered to them by the school. She even persuaded educators to associate themselves with educators from other schools so that they may learn from them."*

Participant SHOD1 denoted that educators were improved by conducting team building workshops whereby they helped one another in different ways. This was mostly done at the level of school related workshops organised by the Department of Education. Sometimes educators who pursued their studies used their suitable materials for teaching. The participant stated that, *"Among materials that I use for my studies there are*

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some which I am able to use as a reference for my classes. The workshops that are organised by the Department of Education are profitable, almost all the educators are able to improve teaching and learning through its use."

As per participant SHOD2 it was obvious that the principal did everything in her power to ensure that educators became skilled and knowledgeable. He clarified that, *"Our principal conducts trainings for educators through workshop."* The participant added that in fact, they were encouraged to attend workshops and meetings with the Department of Education. Their principal also used pulpit speakers to enhance the knowledge of the staff.

Apart from that, participant SHOD4 explained that their principal frequently invited subject advisors to conduct workshops. It was indicated that this female principal even supported her colleagues whenever they cried to her of school related matters. Participant SHOD5 professed that what participant SHOD4 said is true. To strengthen her argument, she said that*, "The principal encourages educators to attend workshops to empower themselves."*

Additionally, participant SHOD3 declared that their principal empowered educators by requesting their training, thus, arranging different advisors. She went on to state that their principal encouraged educators to attend workshops on content, knowledge and skills relating to their major subjects. *"The principal allows educators privilege to attend workshops and provides teaching materials to educators."*

5.2.3.6 Communicating school vision and mission

Communicating school vision and mission was regarded by the heads of department as the role of female principals. In their responses to open-ended questionnaire heads of department evidenced that the principals did everything in their power to make sure that school's vision and mission statement were not easily forgotten. Participant LHOD1 elucidated that, *"Our principal empowers both educators and learners to always remember of what is expected of them. This is done through staff meetings and classroom visits to discuss what needs to be done in order to keep the vision and mission always existing."*

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The findings of the study revealed that it was instructional leader's responsibility to encourage educators and learners to regularly check the vision and the mission of the school. By doing so, they put themselves in a good position to know what was expected of them and to always work hard to achieve success. Participant LHOD2 explained that, *"The principal instils a sense of attainment of success in learners by reminding them of what the foundation of this school is (school vision and mission statement)."* Therefore, in this case, a principal ought to communicate a clear vision and mission and set clear goals to the entire school.

As per participant LHOD3, their principal ensured that the school's vision and mission were placed in an open space where everyone can access them. Moreover, it was indicated that she tried that the objectives and goals in the mission statement were achieved by always encouraging those who led the assembly to discuss the vision every day. The more they saw and communicated it, the more they dwelled in educators and learners' hearts.

According to participant LHOD4 the school's vision and mission statement were attached on the walls of the school building where they were seen by almost everyone. The participant made a point that, *"At my school new incoming educators and learners are made aware of the school vision and mission statement."* This, according to the participant, she maintained the unity of the school by having a common goal as educators and learners, parents also were not excluded. This witnessed that success could be attained only if there was unity and hard work within the school.

The findings of the study revealed that every school's goal, vision and mission should be observed by all the stakeholders. It was because at school the two were the ones that give direction on what to do and how to do it. Checking regularly whether as the school all were on the right track, was essential as all will be doing one thing and taking the same direction. Concerning the role of female instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement as perceived by heads of department, participant LHOD5 averted that, *"My principal puts the vision and mission statement where they can be accessed easily. For instance, they are put in the office, in the staffroom and notice boards."* The participant

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also confirmed that their principal constantly reminded educators and learners of the school vision and mission whenever there were gatherings.

The South African heads of department like Lesotho heads of department perceived the communication of school vision and mission statement as one of the roles of the female high school instructional leaders. They observed that their principals always ensured that the school's vision and mission statement did not come to extinction. On the same note participant SHOD1 consolidated that their principal made it possible for them to revisit the vision and mission of the school more often. *"Our principal makes an effort that vision and mission statement is displayed in each classroom for educators and learners to frequently visit."* The participant emphasised that their principal reminded them of the expectations in this school that they were to fulfil what was written on the vision and mission statement.

From participant SHOD2's response was that at the beginning of each year the vision and mission is communicated and interpreted. This was done to ensure that it was well understood by all. In addition, the participant commended: *"The principal shows commitment to the school vision and mission. Furthermore, she implements new value and vision for the school them just as closely as she expects everyone to follow."*

Participant SHOD3 declared that their principal ensured that there was cooperation into our day-to-day activities. She also requested deputies and heads of department to give reports on how the vision and mission were taken care of. The participant also emphasised that, *"Our principal ensures that each classroom has a copy that states the school's vision and mission. She also monitors and controls educators and learners so as to deal with teaching and learning in the way demanded by the school vision."*

The following evidence was noted in the responses of the participant SHOD4 who saw that the availability of school vision and mission was helpful for the stakeholders. It reminded educators, learners and parents what they had to do and how they were expected to do things at their school: *"The school's vision and mission statement are available and evaluable. They are available in the school administration office for all the people to access them."* Participant SHOD5 added that, "The vision and mission statement were plugged on a notice board where they could be accessed by everyone

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who came to our school premises." This was great help because it kept on reminding educators, learners and passers-by about the identity of the school.

5.2.3.7 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

The findings of the study denoted that supervision and evaluation of instruction was regarded, by the head of department, as a tool that could be used to enhance learners' academic achievement. They also indicated that female instructional leaders did their best to ensure educators commitment towards learners' academic achievement. Heads of department emphasised that female instructional leaders do everything in their power in assuring learners' success. They were the strongest, persistent and passionate leaders ever. In most cases, it was the duty of the principals to check, monitor and evaluate educators' work regularly. Instructional leaders were given the responsibility to pave the way for educators and learners by showing them the good direction to follow.

The findings showed that Lesotho heads of department (LHODs) perceived supervision and evaluation of instruction as one of the roles of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. Participant LHOD1 said that, *"The principal ensures that as heads of department we mentor the work of educators under our departments."* She further stated that the principal also conducted classroom observation and normally took time to have authentic conversation with each staff member to listen to their thoughts and ideas. The participant also indicated that, *"Through the principal's supervision and guidance, educators are able to explore and apply different skills."*

The participant further stated that their instructional leader was precise, determined and dedicated. This helped educators and learners to be serious about their work. The participant confirmed that, *"There is only a clock book in each classroom to ensure that educators observe time management thus complete their duties within the stipulated time. Classroom monitoring educator observation and checking all the students' exercise books are ways she uses to enhance learners' academic achievement."* Lastly, the participant complemented that their principal made sure that every educator went to class prepared by checking lesson plans on daily basis. She tried to gather resources needed by educators.

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Lesotho heads of department participant were convinced that supervision and evaluation of instruction were the role of the female principals. LHOD2 asserted that, *"Our instructional leader supervises and evaluates instruction by working hand in hand with HODs. Classroom visits are conducted. She even checks educators' professional tools like assessment books and record of work done."* This participant supplemented that their principal supervised and evaluated instruction through observing and analysis of classroom observation. She also provided feedback that guided and encouraged educators to improve their way of teaching.

He reckoned that, *"Our principal asks educators to be at school from seven in the morning every working-days. She also encourages them to give learners weekly and monthly tests. She does not hesitate to conduct regular checking of lesson plans."* The participant added that their principal made sure that educators had planning (scheming) and checked lesson plans regularly when they go to class. She made a follow-up to see to it that educators selected appropriate teaching and learning approaches hence employed appropriate assessment method.

According to participant LHOD3, their principal did her evaluation on certain in-sequential days. However, it was indicated that she made a follow-up on decision made and targets set. It was also stated that she supervised and evaluated instruction by using combination of low and high order questions, probing and handling learners' responses. The participant commended that, *"My principal asks for mark sheets to ensure that learners are given tests and assignments."* The participant also purported that, *"The principal ensures that instruction is evaluated and learners are assessed in order to spot their strengths and weaknesses. She even checks whether learners' work is well marked."*

The participant further affirmed that their principal usually checked the educators' professional books, like schemes and record of work done and preparation books. She ensured that educators had schemed for the quarter, whether they had schemed the topics that appeared in the curriculum. Thereafter, she monitored their work to check whether they are still focusing on what they had schemed for. The participant added that, *"Our principal goes to the extent of making classroom visits, checking learners' feedback*

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relating to the school's perspective towards the way they conduct teaching. In this case, all the educators become dedicated to their work as they do not want to be disappointed."

Participant LHOD4 concurred that, *"Our principal conducts classroom visits, checks upon scheme, plan book and register. She ensures that tests are fairly marked and recorded in the school records."* The participant seemed to fully supports LHOD2 in relation to how their principals supervised and evaluated instruction. Besides, the participant posited that their principal regularly checked and monitored educators to see how they were progressing. In our case as educators their principal did regular monitoring of educators' attendance and monitors weekly, monthly and quarterly tests. The participant also justified that*, "Our principal makes sure that there is monthly assessment given to learners as a way of evaluation and assessment tool for a certain period of time."*

According to participants LHOD5 the principal regularly checked educators' professional documents (lesson plans, attendance registers, scheme and record of work done, and learners' codes). It was also indicated that she made sure that educators and learners attended classes and that learners' work was marked. It was also mentioned that even if the principal was not at work, educators never hesitated to do their work. It was what made their female principal to work collaboratively with the HODs to monitor educators' progress. Thereafter, the HODs called up meetings with the educators in their department.

The participant went on to explain that, *"We do regular checking of lesson plans, scheme and record of work done. The heads of department conduct classroom visit to evaluate and supervise instruction. They give feedback, to the principal, on how they observed the educators. At some point our principal also pays educators visits in their classrooms to observe them. Thereafter, she sits with an educator and share her observation on educator's strengths and weaknesses. She then makes recommendations on how to further improve."* The participant further claimed that the principal also collected learners' exercise books to check whether they were being marked. In doing so all educators became committed in their work because they know that they could be visited at any time. This strategy worked well at this school and assisted to enhance learners' performance.

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The data above indicated that the Lesotho principals work closely with heads of department. The participants were able to show that the principals had multiple ways of showing dedication towards educators' work by checking the professional books. This helped to ensure that educators were loyal towards their work thus helped them to be organised. Furthermore, it was articulated that they monitor educators and learners' attendance as it assisted with being on the same level.

The data provided by the South African heads of department showed that they too perceived supervision and evaluation as the role of their female principals that helps in learners' success. Participant SHOD1 explained that, *"Our principal ensures that educators attend classes on daily basis, she also evaluates educators' performance."* The participant supplemented that the principal did her work through heads of department as they were the ones who managed educators' progress. The participant also reasoned that their principal delegated the work thus evaluated it as well. It was also specified that educators stayed in classrooms while learners rotated. The principal ensured that learners never wasted time when exchanging classes or periods. Moreover, it was stated that classroom leaders were requested to give the register to educators to sign at the end of every period.

As indicated, principals put all the effort to ensure that educators did their duties. There were some tactics the South African principals used to show that they were passionate about their work. Participant SHOD2 posited that, *"Our principal supervises and evaluate instruction through the School Management Team (SMT)."* Participant added that their principal supervised and evaluated teaching and learning through school improvement plan. She even ensured the curriculum was covered thus promoted environment that fosters learners' achievement.

According to participant SHOD3's response, their female principal made sure that educators performed their everyday duties and that they took responsibilities in everyday activities. It was emphasised that whenever learners faced challenges in life, she always referred them to the school counsellor. Furthermore, she presented that their principal conducted head of department and School Management Team meetings to control what was happening on the ground level.

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Participant SHOD4 responses were a bit similar to that of participant SHOD2. The participant stipulated that, *"Indeed the principal works very closely with the SMT in supervising and evaluating instruction. Once a month, heads of department deliver progress reports to the principal. Our principal daily moves from one classroom to another to evaluate educators."* The participant also complemented that the principal worked well with the SMT to regularly evaluated and supervised teaching and learning. Supervision and evaluation at this school seemed to have a positive contribution in learners' academic achievement. In most cases, consistent supervision and evaluation turned to be a motivation for the educators.

The findings showed that the heads of department perceived supervision as one of the female instructional leaders' roles in learners' academic achievement. According to the heads of department instructional leaders had to ensure the effectiveness of instruction no matter what. Female principals had to show educators the right path thus, made a follow-up to ensure that educators did their work as it was planned.

5.2.3.8 Guidance and counselling

The findings revealed that heads of department (HODs) perceived guidance and counselling as one of the roles of the female principals. Heads of department showed that in the field of education there was a need for guidance and counselling because there were many learners who come from various families with different backgrounds. As a result, they were difficult to be handled. They too sometimes found it impossible to relate among themselves. Therefore, it was well for principals to look after educators and learners by helping them deal with emotional conflict and personal problems. At the time when an educator or a learner was stressed up, it was difficult for teaching and learning to take place. Where guidance and counselling were put in place, school's academic achievement rose to higher levels.

Participant LHOD1 had a strong feeling that a principal took full responsibility when it came to guidance and counselling at school. This participant was of the view that there were different ways in which the principal took care if the emotional conflict and personal problems of both educators and learners. The participant said that, *"The principal portrays*

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love for this school. She invites counsellors to school trying to solve our problems as educators and learners. Indeed, she shows a great concern for us. She does all these so that we could all stay focused on what we are here for. She actually wants the best out of this school."

Participant LHOD2 explored the importance of guiding and counselling in their daily experience, as educators and learners, with the following specific example: *"Our principal takes a good care of us. Counsellors come here; they help us solve our emotional conflict and personal problems. We have the love of this school as we also have recognised that we are loved."* The participant went on to state that, *"Being counselled makes one be relieved form whatever was loaded in him or her. It also enables us to cope with daily stress and capable to do our work in the manner in which we are expected."*

Participant LHOD3 emphasised that their principal was supportive towards educators and learners. She made sure that both educators and learners were usually in a good mood on daily basis. In proving this point, the participant confirmed that, *"Indeed, our principal shows concern upon us and she sympathises with us in whatever problem we have. Moreover, she even invites counsellors to come to help us relieve our stress and to motivate us."*

One of the participants, participant LHOD4, opined: *"Ever since my arrival in this school, the principal used to physically and emotionally support educators and learners. Even at present she still does*. The participant added that although their principal did not invite people from outside to counsel and guide them, she herself did it: *"We are thankful to have such a caring and loving principal like her."*

In relation to the above-mentioned issue, participant LHOD5 evidenced that their principal took good care of educators and learners' emotional needs. Participant elucidated that their principal invited counsellors to help them deal with emotional conflict and their personal problems: *"Our principal even invites motivational speakers to guide and show us a way out in achieving what we want. This kind of support helps in the achievement of learners' academic achievement, especially because most of the time we do the work with a clear mind."*

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According to the findings it seemed that South African heads of department had the similar opinions with the Lesotho ones that they too were emotionally and personally taken care of by their principals. Participant SHOD1 indicated that their principal liked a warm environment. She tried to ensure that everyone in the surrounding was peaceful. The participant averted that, *"Our principal enjoys seeing us happy at all the time. She prefers on to one discussion whereby as educators we become open."* The participant went on to state that, *"After having this open discussion with her, we (educators) feel freed from the problems we previously had. Hence, we become more active in class. This is the way our principal offers counselling and guidance."*

Participant SHOD2 complemented on what was said by participant SHOD1. The emphasis was made that, "*Our principal conducts one to one discussion with the educators quarterly inquiring of their problems. She also encourages educators to have one to one discussion with learners to find out if they have problems that could affect their learning."* Participant SHOD2 emphasised that at some point their principal invited counsellors to help and free them from stress as they were able to counsel, guide and motivate an individual.

Data revealed that participant SHOD3 also evidenced that their principal too saw the important of inviting counsellors for educators and learners as well. The participants said the following words to stress what was practised at their school concerning counselling and guidance: *"Our principal make it a point that she invites counsellors quarterly, which means we (educators and learners) begin every term with fresh minds and motivated as well. This allows the learners to be active in their learning and empowers educators. As a result, academic achievement actually becomes perfect as our focus is only on teaching and learning."*

During the semi-structured interviews, it was justified by the participant SHOD4 that even though the principal not usually invited the counsellors, she made sure that educators and learners have the whole mood. As stated by the participant, being in the whole mood helped an individual to focus. She evaluated that, *"Our principal here employs affiliate leadership style; she cares a lot for everyone's feelings. Hence, she is able to uplift those*

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who seem to be down hearted." In this way she manages to guide and counsel us in our emotional conflict and personal problems."

Participant SHOD5 critically discussed that their principal valued their feelings. She always liked to see ever-smiling faces. She therefore took an initiative to invite counsellors to assist educators and learners to help them in their problems either emotional or personal. The participant went on posited that, "*Guidance and counselling help learners to self-introspect themselves. They also assist learners to be aware that to fail a class is not the end of the world. Guidance and counselling ignite the spirit of hard work, patience and never giving up. Hence, our principal does not hesitate to invite counsellors for she wants learners to be focused in class."* Definitely, this made teaching and learning effective.

5.2.3.9 Adapting to gender differences

Adapting to gender differences could also be one of the roles of female principals in instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement as perceived by the heads of department. Males and females were equal even though their power, abilities, a way of thinking and a way of doing things differ. Due to their different qualities males and females communicate differently; hence, their management and administration should be different. Women must be encouraged to take high positions in leadership as they too possessed many leadership skills. Participant LHOD1 purported that, *"Males used to be more educated than females. In these recent years, things have changed even though people make it a tradition that males have to occupy higher positions than females. I do not go with that because our principal is a female but she is so excellent when it comes to leadership skills."*

Participant LHOD2 added that most of the time the number of the female educators were found to dominate that of males in schools, but still males were considered to possess more power than females. Unfortunately, women were denied exercising their power: *"In this school, we have a female principal. This does not bring any change because she is perfect. She does wonders when it comes to managing the entire school. Indeed, we are satisfied to have her as our leaders."*

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From what participant LHOD3 said, it was clarified that males and females had to be considered the same in terms of leadership. In actual fact, gender did not have to be a problem when it came to leadership. Participant LHOD3 presented that*, "Having a female as a leader on my side is the best because they even exercise their motherhood at school. Our female principal is able to show educators and learners a way where there is none."*

Participant LHOD4 evaluated that it was not good to compare males and females. Both possessed outstanding leadership skills even though they did exercise their power in different ways. *"We have a female principal here; she never ceases to amaze me. Her leadership skills are good. She tries by all means to push educators either males or females to do their duties. As educators we seem to be at home with her, which means we are pleased to have her because in years to come we foresee a lot of improvement in our school."*

Participant LHOD5 exclaimed that the principal regardless of being a female worked tirelessly hard to bring the best out of the learners. The power she was exercising was beyond; she was excellent. The example the participant gives is as follows: *"Indeed, having her as the principal works best for both educators and learners. She is able to make a room for both males and females. She relates well with sexes, males and females".* The participant further stated that their principal's leadership skills were good in a sense that she worked hard to ensure that learners acquired good quality education. It seemed that she accepted herself as a female leader. She was fully aware of her capability.

South African heads of department were also aware of adapting to gender differences that must be practised by their principals as part of their leadership role. Participant SHOD1 clarified that, *"Regardless of being a female, our principal's overall performance is outstanding. She has that power and willingness to make things happen her way."* In addition, the principal seemed to have that motherliness and felt compelled to assist educators and learners to do their work freely. She exercised her good leadership skills of which brought about good quality results of a female leader.

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Participant SHOD2 asserted that males and females were equal; the only difference was their way of doing things. In most cases women had good leadership skills; this helped them in modelling the behaviour of educators and learners: "*When there is something wrong, they are able to correct any mistake as they have good means of approaching people of different characters.*

Furthermore, participant SHOD3 outlined that, *"Despite all, males and females are equal and are all human beings. However, from what I can tell, women have a lot of perseverance. In spite of challenges, they come across, they are able to stand on their feet."* The participant also explained that when learners misbehaved, the principal found the root cause of the problem and gave learners second chance. They showed their parenthood even at school. Hence, they showed their parenthood even at school, they were able to achieve all their desires because they were not short tempered.

Data indicated that often females were preferable to be leaders at schools because they were full of humanity. They were able to spot some of the things of which males could not easily recognise. Participant SHOD4 reasoned that, *"In showing my principal's humanity, I may say that she is able to notice needy learners among the roll we have of which men would not sometimes see."* The participant added that the needy are taken care of. They too as educators and learners of the school were assisted whenever the need arose: "*According to my observation, our principal comes to our rescue since this helps all the learners to concentrate on their studies."*

Participant SHOD5 emphasised that it was in rare cases that women became leaders, they were neglected due to their softness and that they were fragile. In actual fact, females were outstanding people of different characters because of the quality traits they possessed. The participant stated that, *"Our principal's calmness helps her to overcome all the challenges she encountered. She is so persistent and a quick problem solver."*

5.2.4 Research question 4: How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

The participants were asked to give their views on the effectiveness of the female instructional leadership in high schools concerning learners' academic achievement. As

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data was being ceded and sorted out to identify similarities and differences in the information collected from the participants the following themes emerged: capability to care, gentleness, parental involvement, improvement in teaching and learning, providing feedback, high standards, hospitable climate.

5.2.4.1 Capability to care

The findings showed that the principals were able to take care of the educators in all spheres of life. They also revealed that female instructional leadership played an important role in the education of young people especially at high school level. As a result, as female leaders they worked hard to manage the schools. Their instructional leadership seemed to be effective due to their hard work, commitment and their management and leadership. Their faithfulness also seemed to have a greatest contribution.

Participant LP1 explained that educators as human beings needed to be acknowledged, especially by their leader, in whatever they do. She clarified that, *"What I have realised is that educators do not hardly need financial support as such. They only need to be appreciated whenever they have done well. Moreover, we are able to take one's personal issues much seriously that we provide full support."* The principal went on to emphasise that she was concerned about the whole person when it came to educators. She was fully aware that whatever affected the educators whether it was at their homes or at work if it was not taken care of, it affected teaching and learning.

She claimed that, *"Whenever an educator has a patient at home, I give him or her time to go and take care of the patient. I do that because I am a human being who knows what it feels like to leave a patient behind and go to work. Such an educator is unable to focus on work."* The participant went on to explain that there were different ways in which educators could be supported at school. Not only financial support was meaningful to educators, but also appreciation and acknowledgement of their efforts said a lot: *"As a leader, I make it a point that whenever educators come to me to share their challenges, I give them time to listen."*

It was a principal's duty to take a good care of educators and learners. There were many ways in which a principal could take a good care of educators and learners. Participant

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LP2 posited that, *"The most important role I play is to value and respect educators and learners. I never give them a chance to complain about me, I treat them equally. I have noticed that they enjoy working with me as I do not prefer favouritism".* As a way of caring for educators and learners a principal ought to consider their feelings. When educators and learners' feelings were taken into consideration, they came to recognise that they were valued. This allowed educators to do their work in the way they were expected. Learners also were free to learn and produce good quality results.

In most cases, a principal had to ensure that educators and learners were doing their work in good conditions. It was a principal's duty that the environment be conducive for everyone. Participant LP3 professed that, *"I create a warm and welcoming environment whereby educators and learners are free to do their daily duties. They worry about nothing while they are in the school campus as they know that whatever they are in need of will be provided on time."* The participant also commented that educators and learners felt relaxed and at home, because the school had become their second home. They seemed to be highly motivated so much that by mere looking every morning they had a good reason to come to school.

A principal had to consider educators and learners' matters seriously, either school related or personal. This said that a principal had to know educators and learners through and through. Participant LP4 asserted that, *"At the beginning of every year I communicate with educators and learners. I try to find out what they are going through. Knowing their problems assist me to guide them on how to deal with them. I find this necessary because if as a principal I overlook the challenges they are experiencing, teaching and learning is in a risk of being prohibited."* From what was shared by this principal it seemed that principals had a tough time. In their management they had to consider a person. They spend most of their time solving problems of educators and learners.

In schools, educators and learners had to be valued and acknowledged. Their presence at school made a huge difference, because without them there would be no school. Participant LP5 declared that, *"Educators and learners are precious to me. Their happiness and peace come first because they are able to bring joy to this school. I now have acknowledged their hard work and perseverance."*

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Educators and learners had to be respected and well taken care of. The two were special and important in the development of the school. Participant SP1 purported that, *"I treat my educators and learners with care and respect. I put them before everything as they are special creatures in this school. I make sure that there is smile on their faces, no matter the situation is."* Supporting educators and learners was the best when it was done by the principal. The support on school related issues and the personal one was necessary and demonstrates how effective the female instructional leadership was. In this way both educators and learners would feel that their presence was highly valued. To strengthen the point, the participant said, *"I support the educators and learners at any cost regardless of the situation. This makes them love and cherish me of my good deeds, I am proud of them."*

The following evidence was noted in the responses of the participant SP2 who saw the importance of the effectiveness of female instructional leadership. She specifically focused on how it was being implemented: *"I empower my educators in such a way that encourage them to further their studies. Currently, there is a school leadership qualification for post level-2 educator. Even since I came back, it is now the fourth educator who undergone this training. This morning I told the other two educators that next year it is their turn so that they too gain experiences as School Management Team (SMT)."*

She further clarified what the Department of Education did, when one was given promotion, they left one thus threw him or her in a deep end so as to swim. The participant further stated that, *"But now they have realised that post level-2 educators need to be trained. Therefore, I encourage the educators to go for it."* She added that there were also bursaries for part time studies next year. She also encouraged all the unqualified educators who have degree but not teaching qualifications to take this opportunity: *"I persuade them to apply and improve their skills because things are changing, hence, they ought to move with time."*

The participant stated that on the other hand, she always encouraged learners to work hard to fulfil their heart desire. Most learners were not interested in farming, but she encouraged them to opt for it while one could not succeed academically. For those who

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had shown capability to further their studies, she motivated them to work harder so that at the end their dreams become true: *"At the same time, I ask educators to talk a lot about different careers to help learners to choose the careers that will give them peace and joy."*

It was interesting when educators and learners were treated in a manner that they felt at home while at school. It was good when there was peace at school because teaching and learning become effective. During the interviews participant SP3 professed that it was her duty to ensure that educators and learners are safe and sound. She did everything in her power to make sure that they were always showered with happiness no matter what.

Taking care of educators and learners was a principal's responsibility. It was good when relationship among the principal, educators and learners. This made daily work easier and doable. Participant SP4 asserted that, "I *have a good relationship with educators and learners that works best for me as I am able to take good care of them."*

In the process of being a leader, a principal ought to care for educators and learners. Their school related even their personal issues had to be well taken care of. Participant SP5 purported that she supports the educators and learners in the problems they come across. She does help them with their personal and school related issues, this had a positive aspect as their school's performance improved every year.

5.2.4.1.1 Ability to care

The evidence given by the participants indicated that the principals often invited different people who could assist the educators to be highly motivated at their work. It was good when a principal took a good care of educators and learners. The environment was peaceful where educators and learners were always happy. Participant LHOD1 professed that, "Our principal cared for educators and learners in the way that allowed the smooth running of teaching and learning. The environment was friendly to maintain educators and learners."

In taking care of educators and learners, a principal had to employ affiliative leadership style. This was whereby she had to take into consideration educators and learners' feelings. Participant LHOD2 outlined that, *"The most important thing is that, our principal*

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considers our feelings. She values and acknowledges everyone at school. it makes us happy because we realise that she is determined." The participant further averted that their principal invited counsellors and motivational speakers to inspire educators and learners: *"She even encourages educators to always attend workshops thus persuade learners to be involved in extra-curricular activities."*

It was the principal's responsibility to ensure that educators and learners were well taken care of. This would even increase the roll of the school as parents would learn that children were well taken care of. Participant LHOD3 specified that, *'I am a witness that the school roll increases annually. This is due to the way the principal treats educators and learners."* The participant added that, *"The principal uses self-motivation for both educators and learners thus make learners to realise the capabilities and potentiality.*

The findings indicated that a principal had to often check with educators and learners and inquired of their well-being. The regular check-ups made educators and learners felt the principal's tender care and love. Participant LHOD4 reasoned that, *"The love and care we receive from our principal is unconditional. She checks us on daily basis to inquire if we are still good. This puts smile on our faces as we realise that she cares for us."* The participant further claimed that their principal planned the tasks to be undertaken daily, weekly, quarterly and annually: *"She is able to control learners, solve problems and manage conflicts. This is another way of showing her care towards us."*

It was good to had a caring principal who was able to uplift educators and learners. A caring principal was the best because many learners prefer such schools. Participant LHOD5 argued that, *"Our principal is the best, she is able to uplift our spirits whenever they are down. She keeps us happy; it is every learner's dream to attend school here."* The participant also presented that, *"Extra classes are given to learners who wish to do so. They are given the full support by the principal."* On the other hand, the participant asserted that, "She encouraged educators to conduct remedial classes for those learners who seemed to slowly grasp and internalise information."

A token of appreciation that educators and learners were longing for was love and care. The principals' way of approaching educators and learners count a lot. Participant SHOD1

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asserted that, *"The love she has for educators and learners is everlasting. She takes care of them as if they are her biological children. This is a great achievement."* Besides, participant emphasised that their principal encouraged educators to go extra miles by conducting extra classes. It was stated that the principal also encouraged educators to involve learners in extracurricular activities.

Caring for educators and learners had to be a priority to principals. A principal had to value and respect their presence at school. participant SHOD2 reasoned that, *"Educators and learners learnt a lot of respect from the principal. Their behaviour is good, the principal praises them every now and then."*

When educators and learners were respected and loved in a school, the academic performance improved. When educators and learners were treated with care and respect, the roll of the school increased. Participant SHOD5 made a point that, *"Our principal treats us well, cares and respects us. She never fails us at any cost. Due to the way she treats us, numerous learners keep enrolling to this school."*

The findings indicated that to have capability to care needed to be practised by all the female principals. This was of assistance for her as a human being and for educators and learners. Caring was a gift given to all the mothers. Where the school principal was a female, it was expected that she led and managed with care even though she had to be fair and firm. Hence, in a school where the principal took care of all the stakeholders, there was harmony and success. In such schools, education was valued because the principal was determined. Participant SHOD5 outlined that, *"Our principal is loving and caring. We feel relaxed whenever we are at school because there is always peace."*

5.2.4.2 Gentleness

The findings of the study revealed that high schools led by female principals were entitled to the best performance. Women re strong thus persuasive. They were able to speak their minds when not satisfied. Moreover, they did not enjoy favouritism but prefer fairness. Female principals were fond of being somehow gentle. This was one of the strategies they used to win the stakeholders, educators, parents and learners. Participant LP1 concurred that, *"All I do in my leadership is within my power. I exercise good leadership*

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skills that satisfy every individual here at school. What I know is that I am an influential person full of dedication and commitment. She explained that with the humbleness she possesses, she outsmarts educators, parents and learners. *She* hatched plans for the school and made sure that they were implemented properly. So being a female leader was not a problem what matters was determination.

Participant LP2 made a point that being a female did not affect her leadership at any cost. She was able to do all the duties in making teaching and learning became effective like a male principal could do. She had good communication skills, which helped her solve any problem that arises within the school campus. *"My femaleness has no bad effect but only good results come from my leadership."*

During the interviews, for the current study, participant LP3 indicated that the female principal's gentleness contributes a lot in their leadership. It enabled the leader to be supportive to educators and learners: *"At some point, I realise that male educators hesitate taking orders from a female but in a smart way. I do everything in my power to ensure that I become the best leader."* The participant emphasised that the most interesting was that educators and learners were so supportive. They uplift her spirit by working tirelessly towards achieving success.

Participant LP4 claimed that, *"I strive hard to be a good leader, therefore, all my wishes come true. Even if I can be angry at an educator or a learner, I let go of the past and focus on the present. I am a professional leader who is able to handle matters in a good manner."* She emphasised her conviction towards educators and learners how they liked her character. she had indeed become their role model: *"I also recognised that they have inherited all my good deeds because everyone is peaceful."*

Participant LP5 presented that she was always down to earth, but influential when it came to learners' academic achievement. Furthermore, she exercised good motherhood roles. Ever since she became a principal, she had never sent learners home for tuition fee: *"I understand the world we are living, that as parents we struggle, therefore, I sympathise with them. The community and educators are impressed with my character so I get the support that makes me become a successful leader."*

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The findings indicated that gentleness was one of the qualities possessed by female principals. This quality helped in solving the conflicts that often arise at the school, either between educators themselves or learners. To provide evidence, participant SP1 mentioned that, *"I treat educators and learners equally because I prefer fairness. When there are conflicts at school, I solve them without taking any side. I am a strong woman who is fully committed and dedicated to her work."* She further explained that her gentleness helped her overcome challenges she came across in the school. Her character and femaleness helped her become a successful female instructional leader.

Participant SP2 evaluated that her femaleness made her become a successful leader ever. She was highly respected by the community, educators and learners because she had humanity. She always managed to stand on her feet no matter how hard the situation was, females did not easily give up, they had got perseverance and gentleness so she was. *"Indeed, being a leader does not rely on whether one is a male or a female, they are both given leadership qualities even though they are different."*

Participant SP3 observed that being a strong, calm and patient female leader helped her in her leadership. They assisted her to be gentle when she dealt with educators and learners. This helped the two parties (educators and learners) to support her in her leadership by doing their daily duties faithfully. Due to the mentioned characters, she had earned a lot of respect from her counterparts: *"Both educators and learners enjoy being in the campus because they feel at home. They never miss classes because the environment itself motivates them."*

According to participant SP4, due to her gentleness she was able to influence educators and learners to had a positive mind. The participant reasoned that, *"Despite my femaleness I am a gentle and firm leader. I never make decisions in haste because I prefer long lasting leadership."* She also possessed leadership skills that made the entire community, educators and learners to respect her and felt her presence in the schoolyard. *"Regardless of being a female leader am influential to learners' success because it is my duty to make sure that they succeed in life."*

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Participant SP5 purported that despite being a female, she had all the quality traits that made her a good leader. Educators and learners had realised her peaceful face and warm heart. She enjoyed being at school because she was well respected. *"Educators and learners are also committed in their work because they realised my determination."*

5.2.4.2.1 Tenderness

The collected data showed that gentleness was one of the qualities possessed by female instructional leaders. This quality assists them in their leadership and management. With this character they manage to win their subordinates, educators and learners. Thus, teaching and learning took place professionally. Participant LHOD1 stated that, *"This only has to do with good leadership skills, because our principal is a strong and influenced person with commitment in fulfilling the school's vision. At our school goals are oriented, and good communication skills help to install trust, motivate and empower educators and learners."* With all the love and dedication female principals possess, they were able to do day-to-day activities in the way they were expected.

One of the qualities demonstrated by most females, in their leadership, was gentleness. This was evidenced by participant LHOD2: *"I think what matters here is the qualities demonstrated by a leader, rather than a sex. Like now, our principal is a female who is able to do everything according to the plan. Goals are set, monitoring supervision and management of school activities are properly implemented."* According to what was shared by the participant it seemed that being a female in most cases allowed one to practise gentleness that helped educators and learners to be at home with their principal's management and leadership.

The data provided by the participant LHOD3 indicated that female principals' leadership is superb due to their gentleness: *"Although many people believe that in order for one to be a good leader one has to be tough, it seems that what I have experienced from my female principal is totally different."* The participant learnt that gentleness worked very well and no one at work could say no to a leader who used this quality in her leadership. This was the participant's own experience. The participant complemented that, *"Being a female principal does not affect her instructional leadership in a negative way, but rather*

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in a positive one. She is able to perform her duties effectively, instructing educators and learners just like a male principal can do."

Female principals' way of communicating said it all about their gentleness. Participant LHOD4 reasoned that, *"My principal's excellent skill in communication makes it easier for her to work as a leader. Her being a female does make her leadership the best."* The participant went on to clarify that although at her arrival at their school some of male educators did not want to take orders from her, she did not mind. Instead, she looked for other ways of doing what she expected them to do. Even after that, she kept on treating them with her gentleness. The fact that due to the common understanding in the society that women were as delicate as children, gradually, women in leadership convince the society that this was a myth, not the truth.

On the same note participant LHOD5 indicated that female principals' gentleness helped them in conflict resolution. At their school they consider their principal as the best female leader who did not hold grudges but treated them with care and respect like a professional leader. This was shown by some incident made by educators. *"She never got crossed but helped us solve our problems as educators."* The participant indicated further that, *"Her gender does not affect us in a negative manner. She is so perfect that we all wish to be like her. Indeed, she is our role model."*

Although female principals were gentle, they never stand for favouritism. They were always competent. Participant SHOD1 argued that, *"Our principal gives instructions without favour that is what I admit about her."* The participant added that the principal's gender said nothing because her leadership skills were excellent. She was a strong woman who was determined thus ambitions also.

Female principals' gentleness assisted them to earn whatever respect they deserve. Participant SHOD2 complemented that*, "Our principal is a good leader. The fact that she is a female makes no difference, she enjoys respect from both males and females' staff and even from the learners and their parents. She is so strong that she copes despite the challenges she encounters as a female leader."* The participant further emphasised that no matter how gentle female principal was, one's determination and dedication conquer

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all. It was obvious from his response that gender was nothing compared to how a determined a person was. He justified that their principal's instructional leadership was assessed based on the knowledge and understanding of the instructions going on, not her gender.

Participant SHOD3 made a point that their principal was not affected by the fact that she was a female. She was able to separate her gender from her leadership and management. She still received support like her male counterparts. This gentleness helped female principals achieve a lot in their leadership. The participant added that it was obvious that the principal ensured educators' commitment by continuously motivating educators, conducting regular meeting to check learners' performance. Similarly, the participant averred that, *"Our principal motivates the team and influences them positively. She continuously motivates them towards achieving the ultimate goal."* apart from that, the participant articulated that, *"I generously believe that females in every leadership position need to work harder than their counterparts. In this case, I believe my principal brings an A game always."*

Participant SHOD4 revealed that their principal was strong and had a powerful persona. She did not let her femininity influence her decision-making. She was also kind and understanding. According to this participant being gentle at some point helps female principals to possess good quality traits. The participant confirmed that, *"Gender really does not make much of difference. It does not define a person's leadership qualities. Instructional leadership comes from an individual irrespective of gender."*

Participant SHOD5 affirmed that, *"Our principal's gender says nothing as she has got all the qualities of being a leader."* The gentleness of female principals helped them attach good leadership skills. The participant went on to state that being a female did not matter when one had good leadership skills. He also emphasised that their principal was an effective leader that had turned out to be his role model even though she was a female.

5.2.4.3 Parental involvement

Parental involvement can also contribute to how female instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement. Participant LP1 stated that at their school they invited

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parents of learners to come to school. In that meeting an educator, a parent and a learner came together to discuss the learner's progress. They also use extra-curricular activities as learners needed to refresh their minds. Although she stated that incentives are two sided, bad and good, they were needed to improve learners' academic achievement.

Participant LP2 reckoned that parental involvement was one of the best ways to improve learners' academic achievement. As mentioned earlier that some of the ways turned one to take education for granted, so they ought to partake for their children's success. There was too much of absenteeism for parents did not mind when their children did not attend school. She further stated that when learners were given assignments, parents were asked to sign at the end with their number written also. The participant complemented that, "Contact details helped us make a follow-up when learners did not come to school as expected. I encouraged learners to listen to radios, read the novels and use their phones to research rather than spending the rest of their time in social media."

Participant LP3 also involved parents in their children's education to enhance learners' academic achievement. In her evidence, she felt there was a need to involve parents in their children's education for some were not fully committed in their children's work: *"As one of the school policies, we asked parents to sign after their children have written the assignments. We call parents often to school to make them aware of their children's progress, particularly, for those learners who seem to be struggling a bit."* According to the principal it seemed that parents needed to be made feel their importance in their children's academic journey. Their involvement can contribute a lot in the improvement and achievement of learners' formal education.

Data had revealed that if parents were involved in their children's formal education this can led to enhancement of learners' academic achievement. Participant LP4's evidence had proved the above statement as she evaluated that she had to put much influence on parental involvement with the hope that learners would be somehow motivated in their learning. Once they did that as a school, parents responded positively. They seemed to realise that they had to play a vital role in their children's formal education. *"As the team (educators and myself), we created the atmosphere that is conducive for everyone,*

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including parents and learners. That practice assisted learners to feel free to approach their educators whenever they needed understanding."

Participant LP5 asserted that a*ccording to* her understanding and how she perceived things, learners needed motivation among all. They required the educators' attention regarding their performance. The educators also needed to be motivated for them to be fully committed. She had recognised that, as human beings, they appreciated being acknowledged*. "Apart from that I have started making the educators aware that their task would be easier if they make room for parents in their children's teaching and learning. I have seen this style working, particularly because most of the time children would like to impress their parents. Therefore, they try by all means to be faithful to their schoolwork. The fact that I master the above strategies, learners' academic achievement is superb."* From this principal the involvement of parents in their children's education was marvellous, it had a great and positive contribution. Parental involvement also made the educators 'work light and enjoyable.

Data collected from the South African principals also showed how female instructional leadership was being implemented effectively. Participant SP1 indicated that parental involvement played an important role in children's academic achievement. Therefore, as a principal she advised parents to be there for their children because their presence motivates learners. She also made parents feel appreciated whenever they are at school, and she did encourage them to partake in any activity at school.

Participant SP2 professed that, *"Parents are said to be first educators of their children. They help shape and model children's behaviour before they come to school."* Therefore, in most cases, the principal influences educators to let parents be part of their children's learning. This was wonderful because the parents knew their children better than anybody. As a result, they would be good influencers in their children's academic achievement.

Participant SP3 articulated that involvement of parents in their children's formal education is best for learners' academic achievement. Indeed, parents played an important role at school. They saw to it that learners go to school neat and tidy. They bought their children

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stationery and helped them in all the possible ways that their learning became successful. The participant added that, "*I also encourage parents that they have to support their children if they want them to be successful in life."*

Participant SP4 specified that what she had learnt was that when educators and parents worked in collaboration, learners performed well. In most cases, when parents helped learners academically, emotionally and physically, their performance became outstanding. Hence, as a principal, she involved parents in their children's education. She emphasised that she had noticed that parents' presence said a lot regarding learners' academic achievement.

Participant SP5 made a point that, *"I advise educators to frequently have open discussion, with learners' parents, concerning how learners are progressing."* The participant was convinced that this helped a lot because even parents at home could easily assist their children. They could even ask for help from others with the subjects the learner was struggling with. This was the strategy she used to enhance learners' academic achievement: *"It works wonderful for me because I see a lot of improvement in daily basis."*

5.2.4.3.1 Paternal and maternal involvement

The Lesotho and South African heads of department are also of the same opinion that involvement of parents in learners' education contributed a lot in learners' academic achievement. The participants' evidence was as follows: Participant LHOD1 articulated that, *"Our principal considers parental involvement as the bridge to learners' good performance. Parents in this school are given a lot of care and respect regardless of their status."* The participant emphasised that parents were made to feel they were highly appreciated because they played an important role in learners' academic achievement. Without them educators' duties would multiply but parents are there to meet educators half way.

Participant LHOD2 asserted that, *"The principal once told educators that some other goals are difficult to reach without parents' assistance. Educators seem to have a listening ear because they try by all means to make parents feel valued when they have visited*

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our school." The principal often encouraged parents to partake in school activities like being members of the School Board as this would help them to be familiar with all the activities around the school.

According to participant LHOD3, the principal, during parents' meeting encouraged parents to seriously be involved in their children's learning. If parents showed much interest in their children's education, this boost learners' morale as they were aware that even their parents value their education. Therefore, academic performance also increased. This was the reason why parental involvement is crucial in learners' academic achievement.

Participant LHOD4 indicated that, *"Our principal has made the school a second home for learners. Parents are considered to be part of the school as they are allowed to partake in school activities."* It was indicated that even at home parents became good influencers when it came to their children's work. Parents seemed to be aware of the importance of education in their children's lives. They provided them with enough time to study: "*Not time only, they even make sure that the environment allows their children to be more focused on their school work."* The participant also indicated that their principal had the ability to identify slow learners and those with special needs. She also encouraged parents to be involved in their children's education.

Participant LHOD5 reasoned that it was well said by their principal that involving parents in their children's education results in good performance. When parents were involved in their children's education, educators' duties were reduced and lighter because they were able to influence their children to work hard in their studies. Parents played an important role of disciplining their children, while educators' work is to model behaviour and teach.

Participant SHOD1 presented that their principal respects and values parents' presence in their children's formal education. Every time when parents came to school, they were taken into consideration. This made them had more interest of partaking in their children's learning. Learners also felt at ease when their parents supported and motivated them.

Participant SHOD2 defined that, *"Involving parents in their children's learning is the best ever. Our principal once told us that if we (educators) really wish to see learners'*

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academic performance increasing, parents have to support learners." The participant emphasised that learners ought to be supported either financially or emotionally or physically. Parents' involvement made a huge different to learners hence they work hard in other subjects to achieve success. Participant SHOD3 evaluated that, *"My principal once said that parental involvement creates a conducive environment for learners. They are able feel at home even when school."* In actual fact, parental involvement boots learners' academic achievement. Their learning even became easier as they learn while at home and at school.

Participant SHOD4 clarified that, *"From the principal's evaluation report it was indicated that learners whose parents support score good grades. This is true because such learners are stress free; their focus is just on their learning. It was also confirmed by the principal that such learners are well disciplined. I am the witness to what lies said by the principal because learners with careless parents struggle to work do their work perfectly."* The participant presented that their principal encouraged teamwork amongst them as colleagues. She even persuaded educators to go extra miles thus, involved parents in their children's education. She emphasised that their principal encouraged all these because she wanted educators to realise that they were not alone.

Participant SHOD5 elucidated that, *"The principal showed the importance of having parents as part of us. There is the saying that education is a three-legged pot. I fully agree because educators, parents and learners have to come together to ensure learners' success. Parents play their part; educators also have their own part and learners' work is to learn."* The participant went on to articulate that their principal was a pro-active person who led by good examples. She even encouraged educators to conduct extra classes on weekends. In most cases, the principal ensured that parents were not left out but involved in their children's education. The participant further stated that their principal played a vital role, thus led by good examples to inspire educators and learners. She also created a supportive environment where people can grow, thrive and live-in peace with one another.

Overall, based on information shared by the principals it seemed that the support of parents to their children concerning their studies, gives them energy and love of their

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being at school. It also helped the school administration to be able to discipline and assist learners to focus on teaching and learning. Parents' support in their children also made them to work hard for their success and look at their future with confidence.

5.2.4.4 Improvement in teaching and learning

Improving teaching and learning was one of the main duties of instructional leaders. Hence, principals had to ensure that there is the implementation of teaching strategies that assisted learners to be taught in a way that they reached their goals. Once educators and learners were aware that their principals observed how teaching and learning were carried out, they both developed a habit of hardworking that often led to learners' academic achievement. As evidence, participant LP1 posited that, *"As the principal, I improve teaching and learning through encouraging educators to employ different teaching strategies in class. The exchange of these strategies helps learners understand the concept better. We also have different types of learners so using multiple strategies assists educators to cater to our learners. In this way, the academic achievement of learners improves."*

Participant LP2 justified that got different strategies. What she has recognised was that learners lacked motivation from their parents and they were not themselves motivated at all: "*We try by all means to motivate them, even though it is somehow challenging. There is a volunteer in this school who teaches learners Life Skills, that they should know who they are, and what they want to achieve in life".* Some of the learners had joined English Club whereby there was "spelling bee" competition for them to improve their vocabulary. The learners were also introduced to debate sessions, which helped them with critical thinking. *"The main purpose here is to improve their English which is one of the formal languages."*

Participant LP3 made a point that, *"In improving teaching and learning, I advise educators to attend workshops. The workshops help them be up to date on any changes that occur in this field of education."* The participant explained that the workshops also assisted educators to develop new skills and acquire knowledge from the professionals. She

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financially supported them when they went to the workshops because it was part of their job description.

The provided data showed that educators' knowledge and skills were improved by having staff development whereby educators were given a chance to motivate one another. For instance, if certain educators' subjects were performed well at all the times, they shared with other educators the skills they applied so as to obtain the outstanding performance. During the sharing other educators took notes. Participant LP4 concurred that, *"I try by all means to improve teaching and learning. I make sure that there are adequate resources for instruction to take place. This motivates and boosts educators and learners' morale in education. Thereafter, the academic performance becomes excellent and this makes me feel delighted."* Even parents did not hesitate to bring their children in this school because it had good reputation countrywide. Educators and learners also contributed in improving instruction for they worked hard.

Participant LP5 submitted that she encouraged educators to cater for all learners in class both fast and slow learners. Learners were given activities that challenged fast learners also there were activities for slow learners. The practice motivated learners as they realised, they were taken care of. They were not neglected regardless of whether they were slow learners or not. In this case teaching and learning became effective because no learners were left behind in class.

Participant SP1 articulated that to improve learners' academic achievement, she involved as many stakeholders as possible, for instance, by involving Department of Education and parents to help them: *"As for now we are working with the organisation called COLAMBA, which assists the school with leadership programmes. Motivational speakers are invited as well as pastors to inspire learners as they face many challenges out there."*

According to participant SP2, most of the time, as the principal, she advised educators to use cooperative learning. This helped learners because they sat in groups, brainstormed ideas and had final say on what was to be written. *"Cooperative learning helps learners to gain self-confidence and it also boosts their self-esteem. As a result, learners' academic achievement increases for they are able to be independent in their learning.*"

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Participant SP3 reasoned that being a leader reckoned that teaching and learning could be improved in instances whereby educators frequently met with learners' parents. Parental involvement was the best because parents were the ones who were able to satisfy their children financially, emotionally and physically. When learners were stress-free, they were able to learn without any distractions. Therefore, teaching and learning became successful.

Participant SP4 argued that learners' academic achievement could be improved by making a list of classes. They also made some improvement by networking with schools that were performing well to learn on how they operated. The participant further asserted that, a*s a principal,* I encourage all the educators to create a warm welcoming environment. "*In most cases, parents prefer to send their children where there is peace. This is what we experience at this school; the atmosphere is friendly for parents to inquire of their children's progress."* To improve teaching and learning participant SP5 concurred that at their school there were those learners who were motivated by watching award-giving ceremonies. Although it was the participant's wish that many learners could attend the ceremony, only few were allowed by the Department of Education. She perceived that it would be good for learners to see how the universities treated the top achievers, and the sponsors and the media such as newspapers, radios, television and magazines gave such learners attention. Since people who went there always returned highly motivated, the participant used to take some of the youngest educators to go with her so that they too learnt good things done at the award-giving ceremony.

The participant affirmed that, *"With all learners, it has been two years now that we have put the strategy of using brilliant learners to help those who struggle. This works best as most learners prefer peer-to-peer education*." She also encouraged educators to go a milestones and conduct weekend and holiday classes. Since she put this into practice there was a huge development in learners' success: "*For matriculates, they do a sleepover at school whereby they help one another during the weekend. Particularly, we do not expect educators to be present but those who wish to help always show up.*"

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5.2.4.4.1 Enhancement in teaching and learning

The collected data revealed that Lesotho heads of department also are of the same opinion that the improvement of teaching and learning is of importance for learners' academic achievement. Participant LHOD1 stated that their principal encouraged them to reinforce learners: *"Positive reinforcement is the best ever because it creates competition among learners. Every learner strives to win the prize. This improves teaching and learning because even the slow learners work hard to get the prize."* The reinforcement seemed to motivate those who got prizes and those who failed to receive presents.

To show how female instructional leadership was being implemented effectively, participant LHOD2 purported that their principal encouraged educators to use learner-centred approach. She encouraged this approach because learners were able to discover new concepts and ideas by themselves: *"Such information is not easily forgotten by the learners. In this type of learning, educators are there to facilitate teaching and learning. Hence, instruction becomes effective."*

The findings of the study indicated that as a way of improving teaching and learning, the principal encouraged educators to attend school-related workshops. These workshops helped educators gain new knowledge and skills. Participant LHOD3 affirmed that, *"Educators are also made aware of the changes in the field of education. The more they upgrade are the more teaching and learning become effective."*

Furthermore, participant LHOD4 elucidated that to improve teaching and learning, their principal encouraged educators to conduct remedial classes. These kinds of classes, most of the time were conducted for those who were left behind to catch up. The participant went on to explain that it is because of those remedial classes that all learners were on the same page. Indeed, remedial classes were beneficial for all the learners.

Participant LHOD5 argued that according to his observation, although commitment went hand in hand with motivation, even if there was no motivation, educators still tried hard to help learners become successful. The participant revealed that their principal encouraged heads of department and educators of the underperforming subjects to come up with

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strategies to improve their teaching. In the end, the principal made a follow-up check whether everything was done accordingly. The participant further defined that their principal encouraged educators to conduct morning study sessions for learners. Moreover, educators also encouraged learners to willingly come to weekend study: *"Learners are taught to be independent other than relying on educators. This works best for this school because the results are excellent every year."*

According to SHOD1, the principal in most cases advised educators had remedial classes to boost learners and to frequently assess learners, weekly, monthly, and quarterly. Assessment was a tool that helped educators to realise whether learners understand concepts or not. Even learners were able to recognise their strengths and weaknesses when they were assessed from time to time. Those learners who struggled try by all means to pull up their socks. The participant also added that, *"Our principal even encourages educators to conduct remedial classes for slow learners so that all could be on the same level."*

Likewise, South African heads of department, as explained by participant SHOD1, agreed with observation by Lesotho heads of department. Thus, participant SHOD2 posited that: *"As a way of improving instruction, our principal conducts classroom visits. She does this so as to ensure that educators and learners attend classes as per timetable and to check whether learners are given relevant information in relation to their standards.* According to the participant, it seemed that checking class attendance motivated both educators and learners to be faithful to come to classes for the teaching and learning process to be effective.

Participant SHOD3 justified that their principal advised that educators organise prize-giving ceremonies quarterly for best performers. This was done in the form of subject competitions either on educators' or learners' sides. *"Ever since our school put this strategy into practice, educators and learners are somehow motivated and every educator and learner work hard to win the prize."*

Data provided by participant SHOD4 indicated that their principal tried her level best to improve teaching and learning. She made sure that there were adequate resources; she

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never gave educators a chance to complain. What the participant has noticed was that when the resources were available, educators were somehow motivated and their teaching became interesting.

Lastly, participant SHOD5 professed that most of the time, the principal encouraged educators to go for workshops where they gained new knowledge and skills. The participant went on to state that the principal even ensured that there were adequate resources so that teaching and learning could effectively take place. Moreover, she has created a peaceful environment for both educators and learners.

5.2.4.5 Providing feedback

The findings of the study showed that providing feedback was another way of showing the effectiveness of the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools. At the place where feedback was given on time; it became a motivation to the subordinate. Apart from that whatever was supposed to be implemented was done on time. As the principal, it was good to provide feedback, to educators, on things done. This helped educators to know about their progress. Participant LP1 professed that, *"As the principal, I have learned that it is best to give educators feedback on time as it keeps them on track. They are able to know of their progress and that is through me."* Furthermore, the participant indicated that she assigned heads of department to overlook and monitor educators and report back to her. She did this because she was unable to focus on many things alone. In fact, she was someone who believed in the delegation. The heads of department appear to be working harmoniously with educators for they always bring satisfying feedback.

According to participant LP2, it is essential to provide educators with feedback on time. This gave them a chance to self-introspect and evaluate their progress. The participant indicated that he has seen how essential it was to always provide feedback to educators. It was somehow a motivation because it showed them their progression. It was wise for a principal to check upon educators regularly. Knowing how educators were progressing is the best because even when they made mistakes, they will be easily made aware. Participant LP3 outlined that, *"I have discovered that it is necessary to frequently check*

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with educators. Once they lose focus, I am there to show them the way. I monitor and give them feedback." According to this participant's response, the principal asked for departmental budgets on time so that the educators could get all the materials to make teaching and learning become effective.

There are several ways a principal could provide feedback to educators. Educators may be assigned duties so that a principal could call upon a staff meeting to report progress. Participant LP4 asserted that, *"Normally, I assign duties to educators, I then call a staff meeting to report a progress."* At some point, a principal uses heads of department as the intermediates. They were given the task to monitor educators and give them immediate feedback. Participant LP5 claimed that heads of department meet her halfway. *"They monitor educators' progress and give them feedback on how they are progressing. Another feedback is given to the principal, as an instructional leader."*

Similarly, South African female principals perceived providing feedback to educators as a good practice and support at the same time. It is the principal's duty to check educators' professional books and to provide feedback. After checking the professional books, it was wise that the principal gave feedback on how she saw them. Participant SP1 asserted that, *"I check educators' professional books more often. Wherever I come across a mistake, I call such an educator and show her the correct path."* Classroom observation, according to participant SP2, was one of the principal's responsibilities. After conducting a classroom visit, a principal offered feedback on how she observed the teaching and learning. The participant explained that she did conduct classroom visits. Thereafter she gave educators feedback, and praised them where they did well. Above all, she strengthened their weak points because she needed them to improve for the better.

A principal was responsible for making a report on annual performance. It was her duty to tell the school about its performance. Participant SP3 averted that as a principal, she hosted a meeting at the end of every year with the educators in which they discussed the overall performance of learners within a year: *"I give them the feedback on how the results were analysed for them improve for the following year."* Moreover, the findings of the study showed that a principal was responsible for offering the progress report quarterly. It was her duty to report to educators whether she was satisfied with their teaching or not.

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Participant SP4 outlined that, *"No matter what, I make sure that I give educators feedback regarding their performance. I do this quarterly because I want them to improve where they lack skills."*

When there were any school activities like English debate and Science fair competitions the principal gave feedback on how they performed. Participant SP5 indicated that, *"When the learners have gone for English debates and Science fair competitions, educators report to me. Thereafter, I make announcements at the assembly on how the school performed."*

5.2.4.5.1 Delivering feedback

The Lesotho heads of department were asked to give their opinions on how female instructional leadership was being implemented in their country. Their responses, in some cases, were similar, while in the other cases they revealed different opinions. The collected data indicated that as a way of providing feedback to educators, a principal ought to be well organised, loud and clear. This helped educators to easily grasp the information well. Participant LHOD1 argued that, *"In providing the feedback, our principal is well-organised. By the time when she provides us with the feedback, one can sense that it is a well revised piece of work."*

In providing feedback, a principal ought to have good communication skills. Her way of conveying messages had been good even when the message was negative. Participant LHOD2 posited that, *"Our principal is the best ever. If the feedback she has to convey is negative, she has her own way of saying it. She never makes us feel bad at any cost."* The participant further affirmed that their principal evaluated educators that helped improve individual teacher quality. She again offered instructive feedback thus pointing out weaknesses and suggesting ways for improvements.

As revealed by the participant LHOD3, one of the principal's duties was to evaluate and monitor educators' progress and give them feedback. She had to give feedback on time to enable educators to go through self-introspect. The participant purported that, *"Our principal evaluates and monitors educators' progress more often. She provides us (HODs) with immediate feedback to give educators."*

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It was not always the case that a principal performs duties by herself. At some point, she delegated some of the duties to the heads of department. The HODs report to the principal who in turn reported to the educators. Participant LHOD4 asserted that, *"At some point, the principal assigns us tasks to monitor and evaluate educators' progress. We then report to her how we have observed their teaching. Thereafter, she analyses our reports and gives educators the feedback."*

The principal was fully aware of the importance of observing while teaching and learning take place. Although her office has a pile of work, this did not prevent her to do it on time, she would rather find other ways. She asked the heads of department to do classroom visits and provide immediate feedback to educators. Participant LHOD5 made a point that, *"Due to the fact that our principal is busy, she asks us to observe educators on her behalf and provide them with immediate feedback."*

The provided data showed that after the publication of the results, the principal in this school, analysed and evaluated the results. She then gave educators feedback on her analysis and evaluation. Participant SHOD1 justified that, *"It is a routine in this school that after the publication of results the principal analyses and evaluates the results. Thereafter, she gives the feedback that has become a motivation on our side".*

In most cases, the principal called the staff meeting whereby she gave brief information about what was going on in the school. Being up-dated regularly, helps educators to think beyond on how to develop the school in the way that learners' success could be accomplished. Participant SHOD2 professed that, *"Our principal calls staff-meeting to give us feedback on any school-related issues. She addressed us about the happenings in the field of education."*

Whenever there were competitions in schools, principals were responsible to announce the results at the assembly. She had to brief educators and learners on how the competition went. Participant SHOD3 evaluated that, *"In this school, the principal gives us feedback regarding the competitions, either we won the battle or lost. In the case when we were defeated , she encouraged us to work hard to achieve what our heart desire."* The participant went on to state that feedback at their school was a tool for motivation.

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Every time when they listened to their principal sharing with them whatever information, her words were so powerful that everyone saw the need to improve.

The findings revealed that in cases when the educators had to go to workshops, the principal appointed those who ought to attend. When they came back, she inquired them to write a report on what was discussed in the workshop. Then she analysed the information, pointed out the main points, and briefed all the educators. Participant SHOD4 uttered that, *"Our principal appoints educators to attend workshops. Thereafter, she asks them to brief her so that she can spot the main ideas and brief other educators."*

It was of assistance that a principal has a profitable way of conveying information. The provision of feedback was good as it kept educators up to date on what happened in the field of education. It was also helpful because it made educators own all the decisions taken by the school at all levels. Participant SHOD5 averred, *"Our principal gives us feedback on every matter that needs to be revised in this school. Her way of conveying information is excellent and motivating."*

5.2.4.6 High standards

The findings showed that working towards high standards was another way of demonstrating how effective the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools was. It was therefore an instructional leader's role to encourage educators to work hand in hand so that learners can achieve success. In both countries, according to the findings, it seemed that in a school where instructors are valued, they felt motivated and hence worked even harder than it was expected. Determination was said to be inherited from the principal to educators and from educators to learners. Lesotho female principals and heads of department mostly presented that the principals expected educators to deliver quality education to learners and hence be committed to their work. The South African female principals and heads of department also had similar responses.

The collected data revealed that vision and mission statement gave direction towards high standards as expected by each school. Participant LP1 averted that, *"Our school's mission statement is to create a culture of effective teaching and learning applicable in*

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real-life situations. Whereas the vision entails success through hard work, cooperation and harmonious relationships, the mission statement and the vision are made so that a school knows where it is going. They both encourage educators and learners to work towards achieving the same goal." She further affirmed that the vision and mission statement of the school were formulated departmentally. From the department, they brought different ideas to the staffroom whereby they consolidated the ideas and formed a single idea. Board members and parents were not involved, only the educators were there. However, she felt that they had to be part of decision-making in formulating the vision and mission statement. Still, they presented it before the School Board though it was not part of its formulation. The principal also asserted that, *"After the formulation mission and mission statement were written down, they were photocopied and put up on the notice board in the staffroom for educators to keep reminding themselves. As for learners, they were pinned on the notice board for every learner to see what the school's expectations are. I also trust the heads of department often discuss the vision and mission statement."*

Participant LP2 posited that the vision and mission of their school were to provide learners with relevant skills and abilities in their everyday lives; to develop the attitude so as to adapt and utilise thus have a relevant influence on education. The principal also cited that the copies of vision and mission statement were posted on windows of the office and the staff room for everyone to access them. The other copy was even placed on the notice board for learners to easily access them whenever they want to revise them. They were put at many places so that they could be instilled in their minds as well as in their hearts.

The principal further stated that, *"The vision and mission statement are communicated to the parents during the parents' meeting so as to remind them of the purpose of the school in which they brought their children."* She also averted that, *"We also have the school prospectus which is updated annually. We do not only update financial records, even the laws and rules that govern the school are regularly updated."* The principal concurred that, *"The school's vision and mission were formed around 2007. The school is founded in 2006, at that time the situation was abnormal, there were no educators, and learners were taught by the inspectors from District Education Office. In September 2006,*

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the first educators were employed. In the following year the vision was formulated by the principal and the educators looking at the community the school is situated."

The data provided by Participant LP3 showed that the vision and mission statement was the backbone of each school. This was evidenced by the participant as she emphasised that their school's mission was to improve the quality of life in the village in which they are located, and the surrounding villages through education. Particular attention was placed on improvement of examination results to enable the entry of their products into schools and instructions of their choice. Their school vision was as follows: *"'Through the provision of quality education that answers the needs of the community, we shall be the school that makes a difference to the community in which we are located."*

The participant further stated that to achieve what was expected of them by the vision and mission, they were strict with discipline and disciplinary measures pertaining to schoolwork and regular attendance by both educators and learners. The participant went on to justify that, *"In our school, we constantly remind our learners of the vision and mission statement at the assembly. We display vision and mission on the notice board, in the staffroom and in the principal's office."* Mission and vision are put on the notice board to allow everyone to easily access them, talking of the visitors, all learners and the community as well. During gatherings like farewell, the principal always talked of the vision and mission thus how far they were with it. She further elucidated that, *"Our school's vision and mission statement were formulated in the collaboration of the School Board (SB) where we thought we must have a common goal. All the stakeholders were involved; they were asked to give their opinions on how they would like to see the school functioning."*

Even Participant LP4 was of the same opinion that the focus of each school was based on its vision and mission statement. She also presented that the vision and mission statement of her school was formulated even before she could come to school. From what she has learned ever since she came there, they were both formulated concerning types of learners from the school and the entire community. She further cited that, *"This school's vision and mission statement define that we are a school that provides opportunities for all learners to display and improve their talents so as to develop*

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themselves morally, spiritually, intellectually and physically." The participant went on to state that, *"The school vision and mission are placed on in the staffroom for educators to always check on and remind themselves what is expected of them. They are both pinned up on the notice board for learners and parents to regularly visit whenever they feel like."* The importance of vision and mission at our school was proved by the fact that it was also available in the principal's office so that she always reminded herself.

To the contrary, participant LP5 professed that since her arrival at that school she has never seen a written vision and mission statement, but she has been thinking of meeting all the stakeholders to arrange for drafting both. The participant went on to state that. The school's educational goal was to produce good quality results which she thought the school vision and mission statement should revolve around it: "*We are aiming to always be among the three best performing school country wide. As a principal I influence educators to be fully committed in their work. The most interesting is that learners in this school do their work willingly without being pushed."* She went on to clarify that indeed, the school's educational goal was to help learners reach their full potential so that they may fulfil their heart desire by going to universities of their choice.

The findings of the study indicated that the fact that the principal has seen the importance of the school's vision and mission statement, she recently renewed them. The participant said that it was difficult for them to put the high standard without the vision and mission. Participant SP1 noted that, *"I stated that I am still trying to put in new systems as a principal. When I took over as the principal, the school's vision and mission of this school were old and were no longer in existence. Then I started drafting a new vision and mission statement of the school. Therefore, in this case, we are still busy as we are from the School Governing Body (SGB), we are also from the educators and we still have to meet learners concerning the school's vision. It has not yet been adapted so far the vision is that, 'We want our school to provide a caring and superior holistic education responsive to the need of the individual and also embracing diversity as we know that all learners are not the same. Also, to uphold the values identified by all the stakeholders to build a tradition for the school."*

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The participant averted that the vision they are trying to formulate now has started with Senior Management Team (SMT) of the school. The team made a draft of the vision and it was taken to the School Governing Body (SGB) for them to make their inputs. Then it was taken to the whole staff and educators also made their input. Therefore, they still have to go to Representative Council of Learners (RCL) so that they also make their input. Thereafter, it will be adopted as the final draft of the school vision. This will be followed by the formulation of the school's mission statement. The principal went on to posit that, *"Our plan is still on the values stated on the vision of the school. Some of the values they came up with are compassion, honesty, dedication, integrity, dignity and respect must form part of the values as a start and later on they will add more. So, these values will be posted everywhere on school buildings for everyone to see. They may be written on the walls or even stones."* From the principal's responses if everyone could abide by the values, learners' academic achievement would be superb.

Participant SP2 evaluated that their school's vision and mission is not to haunt the image of teaching and learning; it is to make all learners realise the importance of education. It is difficult because their learners' parents are failing and thus the community leaders. The principal emphasised that, *"Our vision is that our learners after leaving this school fit in the outside world and we ensure that it happens as we even invite entrepreneurs to teach them entrepreneurial skills.* The principal justified that their school's vision and mission statement had to be changed. They were formed by the previous principal together with her School Governing Body. Therefore, she was still onto that one too. The first and the second vision and mission changed that was why they were there even now. *"Things keep on changing out there, so we also have to go with time and be up to date and make a vision that brings change."*

The participant was also concerned about the legalising of dagger, which learners think it is the good thing. She specified that her vision, as a principal, about those learners was that they be able to differentiate between right and wrong. The participant went on to argue that, *"Continuously, at the assembly we speak of the vision and mission statement of this school. In any meeting we hold with educators, before we could start, I always tell them to take two minutes of their time to revive what our vision and mission statement*

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are. The vision and mission statement are clearly communicated to both educators and learners so that all could know what is expected of them."

During the interviews, participant SP3 revealed that there at school they endeavoured to produce accountable, creative, morally sound learners with balance lifestyle. As the school they wished to have learners who can make informed career choices that will enable them to become worthy citizens and role models of the entire community.

The principal reasoned that, *"This school was established in 2008 and I arrived here in 2010. What I know is that the principal, educators, parents and learners were involved in the formulation of the vision and mission that I think now they need to be revisited."* She also claimed that they always addressed the vision and mission statement during parents' meetings. They made quotations so that this vision and mission statement was going to be displayed all over the school compound so that everyone could be familiar with them. The participant's main concern was that if they kept them in the office, no one would know them, and be abide by them.

The participant went on to state that their school mission statement was as follows: *"To instil accountability in learners;* to have *broad relevant curriculum that caters for the range of careers, fundraising and project act; questioning the required critical thinking; religious education and Christianity; successful community role models."* She further evaluated that she allows for diversity, she also monitors and supports progress: *"There are stipulated ways of doing certain things. Allowing diversity implies that, I also expect learners to perform beyond their potential. My aim of facilitating and monitoring teaching and learning is to see to it that learners acquire quality education."*

Participant SP4 emphasised that she based herself on vision and mission statement to effectively implement her instructional leadership: *"Our school's vision aims to educate learners in a stable and safe environment. Providing learners with the opportunity to reach their full potential thus allow them to make a meaningful contribution to the community and to become balanced citizens."* She went on to state that the mission statement of the school was as follows: *"The school gives its learners excellence education so as to assist them to overcome the life challenges."* The participant went on to purport that they

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incorporated the vision and mission statement into day to day running of the school so that they could remain in the hearts of educators and learners. The participant also posited that the school vision was formulated fifteen years ago: *"Although I make use of the vision and mission statement, I am not sure on how both came to be, I think it was formulated looking at the life challenges."*

On the same point, not participant SP5 posited that as a principal, she wished for a school that produced adults of the nature that would be good citizens. As the school, they wanted learners to become citizens in a sense that they are religious, respectful, dignified thus can sympathise with other learners and help them out. They should not be educated machines. They teach learners to always share what they have with others rather than accumulating in the riches. *"We wish to produce adults whom we will later be proud of."*

The participant presented that, *"Actually, towards the end of every year I sit with different committees, School Management Team, Disciplinary Committee and Safety Committee. Then we came up with programmes and projects that will be followed the following year. All the committees came up with different programmes and projects that were followed the following year. All the committees came up with different programmes and we put them together. Like when the safety committee realises that learners are on drugs, they set a date and invite the experts to come and tell learners that the abuse of drugs is of no use."* The participant elucidated that to enable themselves to put a high standard, every year the school always had a time to revise the vision and mission statement. All the stakeholders took part in revising the vision and mission. When it was formulated, there was a consultation with educators, parents, learners and the community they served. Everyone's opinion was taken into consideration when forming the vision and mission statement.

5.2.4.6.1 Extreme standards

Most of the Lesotho heads of department emphasised that the principals expect educators to work hard so that learners could accomplish their dreams. The following evidence was noted in the responses of the participant LHOD1 who saw the importance of keeping on high standards all the time. She specifically focused on the fact that

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educators are the ones who supposed to exert their efforts to their daily duties for learners' achievement. She mentioned that educators were expected to take full responsibility and do what is expected of them.

She went on to state that educators had to be punctual thus know how to manage time. Educators were also expected to put extra effort when it came to the classroom teaching and management*: "Educators are expected to take responsibility and know what is expected of them, that is, to assume full responsibility of teaching all lessons allocated to them."* The participant also emphasised that the principal has many expectations towards educators. He affirmed that, *"The principal expects educators to work tirelessly hard; teach learners and encourage them to take their studies seriously."*

In addition, participant LHOD2 indicated how their principal had high expectations when it comes to learners' performance: *"The principal's expectation is hundred per cent positive results. Her expectations towards the educators' contribution in learners' academic achievement, is to assist them to achieve outstanding results thus go beyond everyone's expectations."* The participant added their principal had granted the responsibility to see to it that all learners obtain good grade in every subject. She achieved this by encouraging educators to arrive earlier at school every day so as to give themselves the opportunity to assess learners by giving them weekly and monthly tests.

Participant LHOD3 on the other hand, disclosed that their principal trust and have high expectations of them. The participant pointed out that, *"Of course, the principal expects educators to develop competence which enable learners to apply knowledge and acquired skills to address different conditions. Situation which is effective and functional communication, problem solving and scientific contribute in instruction."* The participant stated that the principal expects educators to give quality education to all the learners so that they may fulfil their heart desire and to be able to contribute to the development of the economy of their country after the completion of their studies.

The findings showed that the trust and high expectations of the principal were somehow motivating educators since they gain confidence because of the good results they produced. Participant LHOD4 commented that, *"Indeed, our principal is supportive, she*

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does not only expect us to produce quality education, as educators we are achievers because she assists us to reach high expectations of parents and the Minister of Education and Training." The participant added that the principal expected and made room for the educators to make suggestions on how to improve learners' academic achievement. She also expected them to be supportive and thus unite to produce good quality results.

According to participant LHOD5's response, the principal made sure that every educator, has a subject massively contribute to learners' academic performance. If not then, there were meetings to discuss what can be done at the department level to eradicate the problems. The participant made a point that, *"The principal expects the educators to contribute in developing the school. For instance, implementing strategies that are meant to improve learners' performance."*

As mentioned earlier that the South African heads of department too observed their principals' trust and high expectations towards educators' contribution in learners' academic achievement. Participant SHOD1 stated that it was the goal of their school to maintain good grades and ensure learners welfare. The school's dream was to bring the best out of the learners so that they may fulfil their hearts desire. The participant affirmed that, *"Our principal expects educators to teach learners and encourage them to work hard."* In addition, the participant averted that, *"The principal's expectation is hundred per cent positive results."*

Participant SHOD2 was of the same opinion with the above heads of department that his principal's effectiveness, in instructional leadership, was sometimes shown by trust she has on them which is shown by having high expectations. He commended that normally, a leader had high expectations towards someone whom he or she trusted. He went on to state that, *"Our principal expectations towards educators' contribution in learners' academic achievement is to achieve outstanding results and go beyond that."* The participant went on to argue that, *"Here expectations are that educators have to work with School Management Team (SMT) so as to produce responsible citizens under the leadership of our principal."*

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The data provided by participant SHOD3 showed that it was good for educators to know the principal's expectations that were based on the Department of Education plan and expectations about learners' performance. As human beings, it was true that educators know their duty but sometimes it was good to have a leader who keeps on reminding them. Like in their school, the principal did not get tired of reminding us (educators) that educators who were dedicated to their work were the ones needed by the school: *"Our principal ensures that as educators we are fully committed to our daily duties by checking regularly whether there is a peaceful working environment. I think this is helpful as it allows educators to join hands and leads to the increase and stable learners' performance."* The participant added that, *"Every day when I enter the school compound, I recall how I am trusted by my principal and I make it a point that I should not disappoint her. Now as I speak, I am aware that this has become a motivation for me. Every time when I see the learners, I also recall my principal's expectations that as educators we should bear in mind that we are at school to help learners achieve their goals, and complete their studies successfully."*

Participant SHOD4 explained that their principal encouraged them to teach learners orientation so that they may have a clear picture of what they are learning about. Participant SHOD4 emphasised that, *"Our school's educational goal is to ensure that the curricular and materials are relevant to the needs of the learners and the entire community."* So likewise, the participant further stated that the educational goal was to provide learners with relevant knowledge and skills by enhancing their abilities to think logically and analytically.

Moreover, participant SHOD5 revealed that their principal expected heads of department to ensure that educators were assessed and developed academically and socially into being better citizens. The participant complemented that, *"Our principal expects us as heads of department to always support educators by making sure that they are fully committed to teaching and learning so that good results can be produced."* The participant maintained that the principal untiringly reminds the heads of department to assess and develop educators in their academic and social interaction with themselves and with learners too.

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5.2.4.7 Hospitable climate

The collected data showed that hospitable climate can be used to ensure the effectiveness of the female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in both countries. The participants evidenced that hospitable climate allowed a room for changes and development. It was a warmth and friendly environment whereby everyone within the surrounding was respected and valued. Participant LPI emphasised that in creating a hospitable climate she used a consideration method. She also empathised with parents and learners. The principal was able to sensitise when parents could not afford to pay school fees. Even in that situation she normally encouraged children to come to school until their school fees was paid. She emphasised that, *"The entire community admires me for having a warm heart. This allows parents to communicate with me when they have financial problems and I give them time to sort out their problems."*

On the same note participant LP2 indicated that all she does was to involve parents and learners in any school activity. This according to the participant made them feel valued, appreciated and loved. She allowed learners to do extra-curricular activities. Parents who were able to make available themselves also participated in extra-curricular. Some of them acted as coaches, while others were supporters. Other parents were nominated as the members of the School Board so that they be aware of all the happenings in the school. The participant indicated that, *"The fact that I create the opportunity for parents and their children to work together assists in learners' academic achievement. This brings closeness between parents and their children. They feel motivated and there is always peace.*

Participant LP3 asserted that normally during parents' meeting, she inquired of whether parents were satisfied with sources learners were provided with at school. When there were some who feel that they were not satisfied, the principal tried by all means to find the root cause of the problem. Thereafter, she corrected all the mistakes because the school was in need of parental involvement for it to enable the effectiveness of the female instructional leadership. *"It could be a huge lose if parents go away from their children so I treat so we treat them with care. The climate itself makes parents feel they are partners in their children formal education. Some of the parents are free to come to school and*

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give their opinions on how learners' education can be developed. As a principal also the climate makes it easier for me to perform my daily duties."

According to participant LP4, she ensured that there was hospitable climate at school that helped in the smooth running of teaching and learning. The principal specified that in most cases, she encouraged collaboration between educators, parents and learners. As these parties team up, learners could enjoy being in school even more because they would consider the school as their second home. *"Parents are important in their children's learning because they are able to work closely with educators and to satisfy learners with what they need and whom they want. Definitely, such learners are stress free, they are able to learn without any destruction."*

Participant LP5 denoted that she preferred a warm and welcoming environment that allows educators to do their work and learners to learn. The principal worked hard to ensure that the environment was friendly as for educators and learners to find inner peace, she invited counsellors to motivate them. She did this so that the educators and learners could be stress free. *"The hospitable environment makes teaching and learning effective and leads to excellent academic achievement."*

Participant SP1 articulated that, *"Where there is unity, success is easily attained. I try by all means to encourage educators and learners to work collaboratively because I prefer a peaceful and welcoming environment."* To strengthen her argument, the principal gave an example of yearly welcoming ceremony for Grade 8 learners and a farewell for Grade 12 learners. Consequently, according to what the principal shared learners from different primary schools were interested to be part of the school. Hence, their enrolment increases annually.

Participant SP2 professed that, *"My priority is as the principal is to promote warm welcoming and friendly environment that would motivate educators and learners. Educators and learners are free to do all the activities that help in the development."* According to the participant, educators and learners are well disciplined, hence, this result in the environment being conducive for everyone. She further stated that there were

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always conflicts where people have made a cluster, but she managed to solve them and created a peaceful environment.

Participant SP3 elucidated that there was oneness in her school of which results in an outstanding performance. At this school educators and learners teamed up, developed friendship and worked hard to achieve success. The environment was hospitable for everyone, educators, parents and learners. This made the community happy because they have noticed that they were well respected and taken care of.

According to participant SP4 educators, parents and learners have joined hands in attaining success. The environment allowed all to contribute in the development of the school. "*Working together helps learners to achieve success because educators work hand in hand with parents. The school makes parents feel at home, they are involved in the decision making."*

Participant SP5 indicated that, *"Creating a hospitable climate at school is the best way of achieving the set goals and the objectives of the school. Hence, I strive to ensure that there is hospitable climate".* One other thing that assisted her is that educators and learners were well disciplines, they were able to differentiate between right and wrong. She further started that what was mentioned above helped in the achievement of learners' academic achievement.

5.2.4.7.1 Welcoming environment

The heads of department also see the importance of hospitable climate in teaching and learning. This was indicated by the participants in their observation. Participant LHOD1 considered hospitable climate as the atmosphere where learners felt valued and respected was some kind of motivation. In that situation learners were able to learn and ask questions where they did not follow. The participant concurred that, *"The atmosphere here is so friendly, as educators we are able to work hand in hand to ensure that learners acquire good quality education."*

The participants' responses showed that participant's LHOD2 was of the view that having a friendly environment allowed learners to be flexible and boosted their morale in

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education. Learners were supposed to consider the school as their second home where their peace generated. The participant claimed that, *"Our principal provides peace and positive environment for educators and learners. This helps learners to be active when it comes to their work."*

Positive environment enhanced high completion in schools. A school where learners were not bullied was the best because day-to-day learners enjoyed their studies. Participant LHOD3 emphasised that, *"There environment in this school is so peaceful to the extent that learners are eager to complete their term at school."*

Hospitable climate at school allowed educators, parents and learners to work together. Parents felt free to engage themselves in their children education hence it was a good thing when parents involved themselves in their children's education. Participant LHOD4 made a point that, *"The provision of positive environment encourages parents to be part of their children's education. It is of the best as parents are the ones who play a vital role in modelling learners' behaviour."* Educators were just there to polish on what parents have already started.

Friendly environment contributed in learners' behaving well. Educators had the power to nurture and model learners' behaviour so that they in future become responsible citizens. Participant LHOD5 articulated that positive environment helps learners' discipline, learners' behaviour even before educators could intervene.

Participant SHOD1 averted that positive environment enhanced school attendance for both educators and learners. She stated that working and being within a peaceful environment motivated all: *"While we are at our homes many of us seem to miss school because we really enjoy being here."* Peaceful environment encouraged learners to perform in a manner that they were expected, in the first place, by their parents and the school. Participant SHOD2 evaluated that, *"This school is excellent as learners feel free to do whatever that is good for improving their standard of learning."*

Participant SHOD3 declared that the principal acknowledged their diversity; cooperated with stakeholders and enhanced excellent teaching and learning environment. The participant went on to state that hospitable environment prohibited unpleasant behaviour

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of learners. Participant SHOD4 affirmed that working and being in a positive environment helped educators and learners felt free and reduces stress." *We are all free because we have an assurance that being in the campus, we are safe and sound."*

The findings revealed that hospitable environment was preferred by all learners. Participant SHOD5 averted that having a hospitable climate increased the school roll. *"Many of the learners prefer to come to our school because they know that they will be safe , respected, valued and given quality education. On top of that, they will be free from any prejudice."*

The above data indicate that majority of Lesotho and South African heads of department likewise perceived that the principals expect educators to do their level best to see to it that learners acquire quality education. This was the way they demonstrated how effective their instructional leadership was as female principals.

5.2.5 Research question 5: How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

The following data addressed research question 5 which asked the participants to share their experiences and views on how instructional leadership of female instructional leaders affect the school culture. The researcher was able to structure the themes in accordance with the responses given by the participants, the principals during the semi-structured interviews, while the educators through open-ended questionnaire. The following themes emerged from the collected data: defining and communicating school culture, developing school culture, adequate resources.

5.2.5.1 Defining and communicating school culture

During the interview session and through open-ended questionnaire, participants revealed that defining and communicating school culture was another way of showing how instructional leadership of female principals affects the school culture. According to participant LP1, this strategy helped the stakeholders to perform their duties that contribute in learners' academic achievement. They frequently defined and communicated their school culture in different ways. Sometimes they used the assembly

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as a forum to define and discuss their school culture. At other times they communicate their school culture with the teaching and non-teaching staff. They pass school culture to different stakeholders, namely, members of the School Board, educators, parents and learners. *The participant added: "For instance, if our rules say learners must cut their hair twice a month, letters are written to the parents to inform them so that they too can help us in taking the responsibility to ensure that learners cut off their hair as expected."*

The participant LP1 went on to justify that it was their school culture to celebrate their success: *"When learners (LGCSE) have managed to obtain good grades, it calls for the celebration so that other learners who come after those good performers could be motivated and put more effort on their studies.* The participant mentioned that although it was a practice in the district level that all learners who fell under top ten were given incentives by District Education Manager, as the school they also celebrated and awarded them to show that they acknowledge them.

Furthermore, the principal emphasised that it was their school culture to celebrate their school's Patron Saint every year. *"It is also our school's culture that learners arrive at school before seven in the morning so that at seven o'clock they begin to conduct study session. Moreover, it is this school's culture that every girl has to go under pregnancy tests quarterly so that we could be aware of what situation we are in."* The participant went on to state that another culture of their school was that all learners succeeded in their studies. Hence, every year there were many learners in top ten. In a school it seemed that the principal took care of school culture, she kept on maintaining, defining and communicating it. She appeared to be determined because she did everything, she could to see to it that everybody was faithful to the school culture.

The collected data indicated that the principal *keep on reminding educators and learners that their school culture is to have good results every year. During parents' meetings the principal reminds the parents too.* However, as mentioned earlier, parents and learners in this community were not motivated. They had different beliefs and norms of which they think were more important than schooling. The principal also explained that there was a clash of school culture and the community one. As leadership of the school, they faced

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difficulties of boys who went to circumcision, the school in which almost all the boys went every year to be circumcised.

Participant LP2 stated that, "*Although we keep on encouraging parents to take their sons to circumcision during the school holidays so that when our school opens, they are able to attend, parents keep on taking them even before schools can be closed."* The major problem was that when the boys came back from circumcision, to school, it was difficult to discipline them. Hence, they had dropouts of about five boys. *"It hurts most because most of the parents cannot afford to pay school fees for their children, but they manage to pay fees for the circumcision school."* She further explained that the culture of their school is that all learners complete their studies. *"We are still looking for the ways to further interact with the community elders through parents' meetings. We planned to show them the necessity of formal education and that we do not undermine the way they look at life."* The school's culture was to produce excellent results, but the community appeared to be a barrier.

Participant LP3 affirmed that as a principal she always told educators, parents and learners that they should always work together for learners' academic achievement. The participant emphasised that the attitude towards their school must also change, as there were certain things that they had to be valued in their school; they should always be constant with what they do. Some of these things were written, while others were not. The culture of their school had always been positive.

Participant LP3 added that as a school they encouraged learners to always practise English speaking for them to be fluent: *"Everyone knows that when he or she comes into our school, especially learners are expected to speak English. It is rooted because learners try by all means to speak English all the time when they are in the school campus. As a principal, I do not get tired of reminding them how important it is for them to learn English by speaking it since it is one of the official languages yet it is not their mother tongue (first language). This culture helps them to be fluent in English and to feel at home when they are among English speakers."*

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The findings showed that at this school the principal communicates the school culture to all the stakeholders at different levels. Participant LP4 confirmed that the culture of their school was that they work hard to achieve excellence. It was also their determination and commitment to do their daily work in the way that allowed them to produce good quality results at the end of every term. Hence, they frequently communicated school culture: *"To parents the school culture is communicated through parents' meetings. As for educators it is communicated during the staff meeting, for heads of department the school culture is communicated during the departmental meetings, while for learners it is at the assembly."*

During the interviews participant LP5 denoted that defining and communicating school culture helped both educators and learners to be conscience and do their work basing themselves on what was expected of them. This was how learners at this school managed to achieve their goal, academic achievement: *"The school's culture is to obtain quality results. Educators and learners are so determined that they ensure this excellence." Learners conduct seven o'clock study session every morning on weekdays. They also have a habit of coming to study and discussion during the weekend."* It was the school's culture to celebrate learners' academic achievement every year.

The data provided by participant SP1 indicated that all the stakeholders were responsible for learners' academic achievement. This was influenced by the female principal who frequently remind them about the school culture. By so doing the principal reminded them to deal with teaching and learning basing themselves on school culture. The participant asserted that, *"Our school culture is communicated by meeting all the stakeholders and involving them in what is done at school. Speaking of the school culture entails all the good things that need everybody to play his or her role. One of the cultures of our school is that all the parties should be involved learners' academic achievement. "*

Participant SP2 reasoned that due to the integrated school culture, it was not easy to explain it. Some years back at this school, only learners of one culture were admitted, but now the school admitted learners from all the cultures. This has become a challenge to the management of the school. Since 1994 when schools in town opened, the community took their children to the schools of their choice. As a result, as a principal, she had to

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fight for survival: *"As we were fighting, we went on formal settlements and there we started marketing our school, inviting learners. It did not end there because it was only one language used for teaching and learning, but later on we introduced another one as our home language."* Therefore, when they speak of culture, they were integrated and the principal was proud to say that they are colour-blind. *"I think this is the reason why our school is over flowing now for we are multi-cultural but when we admit new learners, we preach the culture of the school."*

The participant went on to state that the culture of their school was to produce good results, not only that, but also well-disciplined learners: *"We do this by making sure that all the educators are punctual for classes and learners are inside the classrooms during the lessons."* The participant further explained that the multi-culture has become a motivation among educators and learners. This made her work easier, because every time when she invited ideas on how to develop the school, many different ideas came up: *"As I have already mentioned that in our school we have learners from different cultures, we have introduced the culture of accepting our diversity among educators and learners. This works very well and assists us in our daily duties. Instead of giving me a trouble it enriches us as individuals."*

The findings showed that the school principal hammered a lot on conscientising educators and learners that they fully belong to their school. She made it a point that she regularly reminded educators, parents and learners that the school was at that place for their benefit. This reminder made all the stakeholder work hard to ensure that every year learners perform well. Participant SP3 affirmed that *"Working and allowing diversity, self-development, working extra miles, trying to include the vision and mission statement of the school and making sure we are able to use it and sense of belonging can contribute in the effectiveness of our school culture. Learners in this side are from poor backgrounds and some stay alone so the culture of this school is to help them have sense of belonging."*

According to participant SP4, she kept on reminding the stakeholder the school culture that they should work in collaboration for the success of learners. The principal seemed to use different strategies to make the culture alive. Fortunately, educators and learners seemed to be taken this seriously. Parents also made their part as the school expects

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them. *"Our culture is education comes first. Great emphasis is placed on the process of education, planning, implementation and assessment as important. Class attendance by both educators and learners is highly taken care of at this school."*

Participant SP5 justified that every year after learners have applied as the school, they have what they call orientation. On that day they expected a parent and a new intake learner to be present. Then they explained what their school was all about, from uniform, school prayers, Holy Mass, extra-curricular activities, festivals and lastly what happened regarding teaching and learning. They did all these so that parents could have a clear picture of what the school was expecting from learners, so that they allowed their children to partake in all the activities. Furthermore, the participant stated that, *"We want parents to understand that this school feels pity for the needy. Hence, sometimes we ask learners to take part in helping needy learners either at home or at school. This school's culture is to take care of other people in every way we could."*

5.2.5.1.1 Explaining and sharing school culture

Heads of department also are not exceptional; they did not hesitate to give their witnesses on how instructional leadership of females affected the school culture. They explained how important it was for their principals to define and communicate the school culture. Participant LHOD1 averted that the school's culture was that learners had to use discovery method in their learning. They wanted learners to be independent, hence, educators acted as facilitators. At their school there was a free consultation when learners did not understand a particular topic. Another culture was morning and afternoon study sessions. The participant went on to state that, *"Our school's culture is communicated in multiple ways. Among them the assembly is the best place because everyone is present."*

Participant LHOD2 discussed that, *"Although the community and learners are not motivated, it is our culture to produce good quality education. We try by all means to make learners aware of the importance of education."* The principal further indicated that, "Our school was situated in a rural, hence, one of the cultures was discipline. Due to the fact that learners went to circumcision school discipline was somehow difficult but they still

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managed to control learners. The school culture was communicated by interacting with parents and asking for their help.

In addition, participant LHOD3 emphasised that their school culture was to work hard to achieve success. Determination and commitment towards learners' academic achievement are one of their school cultures. The participant emphasised that, *"The school culture is communicated in various ways, as for parents we conduct parents' meetings. In the case of educators, the school culture is communicated through the staff meeting. At the assembly the school culture is communicates to educators and learners too."*

Participant LHOD4 reasoned that, *"The fact that the school is situated in a rural area seems to make educators and learners believe that they are never meant to perform well. It is this school's culture to ensure that learners acquire quality education."* The participant averted that it is their wish to erase the mentality educators and learners have regarding education. Apart from that, there were school rules that learners come to school earlier, but there was a challenge for other learners had to travel long distances from their homes to school. The school's culture was communicated during parents' meeting and through the assembly.

The findings indicated that it was their school culture to produce good quality results. Educators and learners fulfilled the wish of producing quality results through their hand work, dedication and commitment. It was the school's culture to appear among the three best performing schools countrywide. Learners in school were independent, they conducted study sessions on their own, no one pushed them. They only approached educators where they failed to understand. Participant LHOD5 posited that, *"We communicate our school culture by the time parents come to school asking that we admit their children. This is where we tell parents about our expectations as the school so that they can decide whether they bring their children at school or not."*

Participant SHOD1 asserted that it was the culture of their school to attain the good results through hard work. Educators and learners were punctual, therefore, teaching and learning was of the high standard. Educators and learners came to school every day and

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this showed that there was good attendance. The school culture was communicated at the assembly where everyone was present.

Participant SHOD2 made a point that, *"Our school culture is to work hard and produce good quality results. As educators, we do not waste any time for teaching and learning, every chance we get we teach."* To show how committed educators are at this school, teaching and learning took place even during the examinations. Learners were the ones who took initiative by calling educators to class, if not, the educators also made it a point that when the learners completed the paper, they availed themselves. *"Our principal in collaboration with the educators communicate the school culture through parents' meeting and at the assembly."*

The collected data denoted that at this school the principal, educators, parents and learners worked together for the effective teaching and learning. In this way it was easy to communicate the school culture. Participant SHOD3 purported that they were indeed, trying hard to develop the culture of the school. There was a lot of improvement to be done, with the help of educators, parents and learners' great things could be achieved. *"The culture of teaching and learning is really a problem it has to be revisited frequently. We work hard to maintain the school's culture."*

Participant SHOD4 justified that education was the priority in their school. They focused on teaching and learning more than any other things. They planned, implemented and strategiesed the ways in which they could improve teaching and learning and make it become excellent. Normally, at the assembly they communicated their school culture, the expectations from both educators and learners.

Participant SHOD5 evaluated that, *"The school culture is that educators and learners go to school as expected. Instruction is not distracted in any way. Teaching and learning are not taken for granted."* Educators involved parents whenever they faced problems with learners with the aim of strengthening the bond. Usually, educators told parents of their expectations at school and at the assembly the principal kept on reminding educators and learners of what they needed from them.

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The above data indicated that instructional leadership of female principals affects the school culture in a positive way. Since in most cases, females were orderly they made sure that what was agreed upon was put into practice. They were able to remind all the stakeholders the culture of the school. Hence, they made it a point that they define and frequently communicated school culture. Female principals also tried to find ways that helped the school to involve stakeholders in the development of the school culture. They were also able to influence the stakeholders to look for adequate resources that assisted in the communication of their school culture. The collected data showed that each school has its own culture that made it unique from other schools. It was discovered that there were cultures that were somehow similar that were found in almost all the studied schools.

5.2.5.2 Developing a school culture

Data that was collected from the principals showed that developing school culture was another role of the female principal. It was also crucial to maintain and keep on reminding the stakeholders (educators, parents and learners) about the school culture. According to what was discovered from the participants, each school culture was unique and put into practice in different manners. If the culture of the school was frequently developed, it became the responsibility of all the stakeholders to see to it that it was taken care of. It is the school culture that made it different from other schools. This was illustrated in the segment below.

According to the data provided by participant LP1, the school culture was observed by all the stakeholders at this school. Although the principal, as instructional leader, was always expected to take initiative in the development of school culture, in the case of this section, it was also the responsibility of educators, parents and learners. Participant LP1 averted that, *“Although we are still facing difficulties in conducting the study sessions, we want learners to effectively use their spare time for studying. Although parents support is not so strong, they try what they can do. The learners also try, but struggle a lot to notice the efforts we are pulling. As for teaching, it was our culture that when an educator is free, he or she goes to learners to schedule when to meet for school classes.”*

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Moreover, developing school culture was appreciated by participant LPI, that learners were expected to be in class no matter whether an educator was absent or present. Educators had to be observant when it came to time management. They ought to abide by the time table, if it said forty minutes of teaching, an educator has to strictly go for forty minutes not less or more than that. She went on presented that, *"It is our school culture that our learners gather information from different sources and not rely only on their educators. Learners should also try by all means to consult their educators, even the ones who do not teach them to seek help. They are also expected to conduct peer to peer sessions whereby they assist one another."*

The participant LP2 indicated that the culture of their school was affected by the boys who leave the school for circumcision at any time when they feel like. The problem was that when they had completed the business concerning circumcision, the education regulations allowed them to come back and continue their studies. The main problem…. was their uncontrolled behaviour. They claimed themselves to be men who could not be under the control of women. They also did not expect uncircumcised male educators to discipline them. They were unruly, they made it difficult for the female principal to put them under the control as they influenced other learners who tried to abide by the school rules and regulations. The most interesting part is that no matter what challenges females encounter they overcome them. She pointed out that she made strong rules and regulations that would even lead to dismissal if the boys misbehaved *"The culture of teaching and learning is affected by boys who go to circumcision school before the completion of their studies. When they come back to school they want to be treated as mature men who cannot be disciplined like all other students yet they have not yet reached maturity."* Girls also face a serious problem as they also go to the initiation school though their behaviour was controllable.

Furthermore, the community in general was a bad influence to this school, many girls become pregnant at early stage. At this juncture, some decided to drop-out from school either getting married or staying at home, while those who remained in school were not as effective as it was before during the teaching and learning. *"The situation is so tense that it is difficult for effective teaching and learning. This issue of early marriage and*

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pregnancy repeat itself more often. Even taking part in extra-curricular activities is a challenge to the learners. All their doings result into ineffectiveness of education."

The finding showed that it was not all the educators who came to the field of education because they love teaching. It seemed that there were some who decided to be educators to have the means of income. This sometimes revealed some bad attitude towards the handling of teaching and learning. Teaching was a noble profession, it was a work of heart, which meant it needed people who were able to sacrifice for learners' academic achievement. Only sacrificial lamb could bear all the challenges of teaching and learning.

Participant LP3 indicated that the problem caused by educators who came to the field of education for their benefit, was the lack of commitment to their work that normally leads to poor performance. Participant LP3 denoted that, *"Although we try our level best, our positive school culture is deteriorating. This is caused by the young educators who come to school demotivated. They do not seem to have passion in teaching and learning. It is like they have been forced to take this profession, either by other people or circumstances."* The participant further explained that educators who had been at this school for long, were concerned about educators who seemed to drag their feet when it came to giving their work priority. She too as the principal had a great concern about the prevailing situation at school. *"We are trying hard to assist them to adapt to what we use to consider as the culture of this school, to be a school of excellence, where everybody works hard for the success of learners."*

In addition to what was said by the above participant, participant LP4 explored the issue of developing school culture with the following detailed examples: *"It is the culture of this school to arrive at school on time, and it is highly appreciated by the educators and learners. Educators take turns to ensure that learners come to study every morning on time. Since some of our learners walk a long distance from their homes to school, I often encourage them to get up earlier for them to have the opportunity to morning study. Those who exert their effort are advantageous, especially because most of our learners come from remote places where there is no electricity and conducive place to study."*

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The participant further stated that although it was not easy for all the learners to come to morning study, they were assisted mostly by the strategy they used. They kept on motivating learners to come to study by showing them the positive side of attending the school-arranged study. The principal elucidated that, *"I frequently inspire educators to encourage learners that persistence is the key to success. It is my desire to instil hope in educators and learners that success results from hard work and that they can perform better."* Lastly, she emphasised that, *"Punctuality seems to work best for this school for learners' performance is gradually improving. It is my wish to retain this culture as long as I am in the leadership and management of the school."*

Participant LP5 expressed the same concern regarding the importance of development of the school culture. She further emphasised that as the principal she made it a point that the school culture was understood by all the stakeholders. Which meant they also participated in its development: *"The culture of the school is to produce quality results and to become top one country wide. The culture is maintained through dedication towards the schoolwork. As a result, learners are motivated to study even on their own because they realise that educators want the best out of them*." What was vital about the culture at this school was the involvement of parents in their children's education. It seemed that the school has played an important role of making parents aware that learners' education is effective when they partake. *"Parents also play their role of paying fees on time and of buying materials used by their children to further their studies."*

The principal went on to state that*, "Our school culture is well understood by all the parties (educators, parents and learners). They strive to do their level best to ensure that the culture of this school is obtained."* The participant added that what maintained their culture was that it was communicated to all the stakeholders. *"It is communicated in different ways for parents to know exactly what the school needs. On the first day that parents come to this school asking us to admit their children, we tell them our expectations towards their children's learning. Educators always communicate the school's culture during any staff meeting. Learners too, at the assembly are usually reminded about it."*

During the interviews, for the contemporary study, participant disclosed that the culture of the school was learners' academic achievement. Hence as the school they focus more

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on the quality of teaching and learning. For the effective learning as the principal also ensured that educators and learners' attendance was taken into consideration. Participant SP1 made a point that, *"The culture of the school is to always achieve quality results. Educators and learners always have to be punctual. The quality of teaching and learning has to be of a high standard. The work the learners submit has to be of good quality. There has to be hundred percent of attendance either an educator or a learner and have to actively participate in class activities."* Based on what the principal said, the researcher noticed that the principal's wish was to bring the best out of learners. Hence, she encouraged both educators and learners to be actively involved in their work so as to achieve success of which was the culture of the school.

Participant SP2 explained, in agreement with participant SP1 that the culture of their school was to supply learners with excellence education throughout their studies. The principal was fully aware that as instructional leaders she has a role to play for this to materialise: *"The school's culture is to collaboratively work hard in providing learners with quality education. To achieve the set objectives, as a principal I build a good rapport with the educators. I tirelessly encourage educators to improve teaching and learning for I often offer them training."*

Moreover, according to the participant, learners in this school displayed good manners and etiquettes; hence, they were able to bring the culture of the school to life. She purported that, *"Maintenance of discipline contributes a lot in learners' success. We really try to make it happen, that is why we are working hard, not wasting time for teaching and learning."* The participant added that another strategy that they used to accomplish quality education was to teach learners until the last day of writing tests and final examinations. *"It has become our culture that even when our learners are writing the tests and examinations, afterwards teaching and learning takes place. We really promote the culture of teaching and learning in this school."*

In accordance with question 5, the researcher further interviewed participants about development of school culture. The collected data indicated that educators and learners try their level best of following the school timetable. Participant SP3 stated that "*The culture of teaching and learning at the moment in school is observed but it needs*

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improvement here and there. All the time we make it a point that during teaching and learning there are no learners roaming around, all the learners are in their respective classes. The same thing applies to educators; they are always found where they are supposed to be, either in the staffroom or in class. This contributes a lot in learners' academic achievement. It is true that there are some issues that need to be revisited so that we all are on the same page."

The principal went on to explain that for effective teaching and learning she supports educators and learners too: *"For the culture of teaching and learning to be effective I support the educators in their daily activities. I also help learners to ensure that they take their studies seriously by keeping themselves busy with their studies. Although everybody at school knows what I mentioned, there are some challenges that I encounter. As a principal I expect all the educators to be fully committed to their work but there are some who seem to track their feet."*

The participant was of the view that developing the school culture was of assistance as it helped all the stakeholders to be focused. The school culture seemed to be a backbone of or a guide to learners' academic achievement. Participant SP4 concurred that, *"Out culture is to bring education before everything. Focus is placed much on teaching and learning, planning, implementation and assessment. Class attendance is also crucial for both educators and learners for school performance to be excellent."* The principal also asserted that, *"Educators and learners are expected to implement what was planned by those in charge of the school. This is done to make sure that teaching and learning is effective."*

In addition, participant SP5 indicated how essential it was to develop the school culture for the success of learners' education. Participant SP5 clarified that, *"We maintain the culture of the school that learners have to come to school and attend classes as per time table. We ensure that learners are taught without any distractions. For instance, if there are interviews to be conducted in this school, they take place after school or during the weekends. We never take learners' time of learning for granted."*

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The participant also disclosed that they were strict about the educators and learners' absenteeism. She made it a point that educators went to class well prepared to avoid disturbance. *"We are very strict when it comes to what needs to be done in class. If a learner does not do the work, either class work or homework, the parent is involved. Absenteeism is not entertained at our school. If a learner is absent, we need the concrete proof as to why he or she was not at school on that day. The educators too need to report their absence and give sound reasons of preventing them to come to work."* So, absenteeism was not entertained at this school at all.

5.2.5.2.1 Nurturing school culture

The findings of the current study showed that it was good to develop the school culture as this made educators and learners aware of what was expected of them. It also allowed them to improve teaching and learning. Participant LHOD1 explored that developing of the school culture has made a positive impact on the school's overall performance. She mentioned that, *"It is the culture of the school that educators act as facilitators. We give learners a chance to derive information on their own to become more skilled and knowledgeable."*

The findings showed that developing the school culture created the environment that fosters hard work and perseverance. Educators and learners worked hard to ensure that they abide by the culture of the school. Participant LHOD2 emphasised that they try harder to develop and maintain the culture of the school. The school was situated in the rural area, as a result, teaching and learning was affected in different ways. For instance, girls experience early pregnancy, whereas boys go to circumcision school at an early stage. *"We make it a point that as the leadership and management of the school we do not get tired of fighting against this behaviour. We hope one day it will come to the end; the society will understand the importance of formal education over informal one. The school culture is not yet attained due to the mentioned challenges, we come across."*

It was vital to develop the school culture as it encouraged teamwork, communication and innovation skills. In fact, the school culture promoted a healthy environment for teaching and learning. Participant LHOD3 uttered that, *"In some instances, the school culture is*

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destroyed by the educators. In this school, there are these educators who seem to be demotivated. It appears as if they are forced to come to school. We try hard to motivate them as this also affect learners."

The school culture must be developed in every school regardless of whether in rural areas or urban. The school culture kept learners in hands while at school. Participant LHOD4 reasoned those educators have the belief that learners in rural areas have limited knowledge and skills. She went on to state that it was wrong to think in that way, because each learner could acquire knowledge, it only depends on the foundation given to the learner at basic education. Learners in rural areas if they were given a good foundation at the beginning of their schooling, they could also excel like urban learners. *"Therefore, it is the school rule that learners come to school every day, for morning and afternoon study is conducted. Neatness and tidiness are one of the school cultures."*

The collected data showed that the participant LHOD5 was aware of the importance of developing the school culture. She explored that it was interesting when the school culture was understood by the educators, parents and learners. In this way it became reality as it was practised on daily basis. *"It is school's culture to produce good quality results, the parents support their children in every aspect. They fully understand what the school needs and what is best for their children. This works best for school because working as a team produces excellent results."*

When educators and learners respected the school culture, the academic performance became outstanding. The school culture also maintained educators and learners' attendance. Participant SHOD1 reported that, *"Educators and learners seem to abide by the rules and regulations and the culture of the school. The attendance is awesome and is a good influence of the school culture."* School culture, according to participant SHOD2, was the important aspect ever. Without the well-developed school culture, a school has no future ahead. She further asserted that "*It is our school culture to work hard and to produce good quality results. It is also the culture of the school to respect everyone and to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning."*

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The findings denoted that keeping the school culture intact was important as it maintained good results. When the school culture was practised, it led to warm welcoming environment and excellent results. Participant SHOD3 made a point that, *"The school is trying hard to maintain its culture because we want the best out of the learners. We do this because we wish that they become responsible citizens of the country."* The results showed that in this school quality education is highly valued because it was among ones of the school culture. It was considered as the priority. Participant SHOD4 proclaimed that, *"It is this school's culture that learners' education be put before any other things. Education goes together with discipline and healthy environment that allows teaching and learning to take place. This is how we handle instruction in our school and accomplish learners' success."*

Developing the school culture helps in its identification, hence, the study sought to investigate how instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture. School culture differentiated one school from another, it was inherited and passed from one generation to the other. Participant SHOD5 concurred that, *"It is the school culture that learners be given quality education. We are able to provide them with this kind of education because they are well disciplined. They are also willing to learn as they are smart and clever."*

5.2.5.3 Adequate resources

Another way that instructional leadership of female principals can affect the school culture is adequate resource. The following evidence was given by the participants during the semi-structured interview sessions. Participant LP1 indicated that the instructional leaders ought to ensure the schools' effectiveness by supporting educators by providing them with all the resources they need. Provision of resources helped in the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Educators and learners were motivated when there were adequate resources at school. The participant made a point that, *"I do everything in my power to ensure the availability of resources. I never want to fail educators and learners because I know the importance of having adequate resources. The performance is excellent due to the fact that they get everything they need."*

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The findings indicated that if the principals wish to perform well, there has to be the accessibility of resources. It was important that principals gather all resources beneficial in teaching and learning. Participant LP2 professed that, *"I know it is my responsibility to ensure the obtainability of resources at school. I ensure that they are there, no matter what because I do not want to sabotage instruction at any cost."*

Participant LP3 asserted that they made sure that where possible they provided educators with the resources, they needed to progress teaching and learning. For instance, they sometimes asked the school to buy certain textbooks that were not available at school. The educators asked for financial support when they took field trips with learners or when they took learners to learning competition with other schools. The principal emphasised that, *"I have seen the importance of having adequate resources. It motivates educators and learners to do their daily duties with enthusiasm. The availability of resources also widens educators and learners' horizons. So as instructional leader I take it as my role to see to it that teaching and learning materials are available at school for our learners to acquire quality education."*

The best way to produce good quality results was by providing the school with adequate resources. When there were enough resources, educators were able to do their work without any delay. Participant LP4 indicated that, *"It is important that I provide adequate resources so that teaching and learning be effective. It is my wish that learners be given quality education. I make that wish come true."* The participant further stated that it was every principal's desire that schools produce good quality results. To achieve success, there must be the availability of resources in schools*. I" make sure that whenever educators need resources, they are there. I never give them a chance to complain about me that i am ignorant. I satisfy their needs."*

Providing teaching and learning resources in schools was said to motivate educators and learners. It was a principal's duty to make sure that there were adequate resources in a school. Participant LP5 reasoned that, *"I am certain that I ought to ensure the accessibility of resources in school. I make sure that everything is in place and I plea with educators to improve where necessary."* It is wise for the principal to gather teaching and learning resources on time. When the resources were available, educators were able to plan

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ahead of time. The participant emphasised that, *"I do my work on time, I plan in advance. In the process, I ensure that resources are there for the educators, because I do not want to prohibit the educators from doing their work. There are some cases when we have no access to some resources. I therefore ask educators to improvise where possible."*

Participant SP1 indicated that making use of the resources that were provided at school was beneficiary. One of the resources they had was the Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) programme. Making use of the programme assisted in promoting academic achievement in the school. As far as Mathematics was concerned the school has programmes that assisted learners to score good marks in Mathematics. The principal further asserted that, *"It is my responsibility to see to it that there is quality teaching and learning. I am the one who is supposed to provide resources, motivate educators and learners. If there are no resources, teaching and learning probably fails. In supporting educators, the availability of resources and empowering educators are the vital aspects that go hand in hand with monitoring educators' progress."*

From the shared experience of this principal one learns that there were various ways in which principals could motivate educators and learners. Apart from that, educators felt motivated when there were adequate resources at school. This gave them power and they performed the duties with dedication and devotion. As for learners, they were being motivated when their hard work was being acknowledged either verbally or with some tangible things. Learners also felt good about their school. The availability of teaching and learning resources in schools was the sign of excellent academic achievement. The utilisation of resources also said a lot. The resources would be adequate but not used appropriately. Participant SP2 asserted that, *"As a principal I ensure the availability of resources. it is also my responsibility to see to it that the resources are used in a good manner."*

Adequate resources contribute in learners' academic achievement. Educators and learners were motivated by the availability of the resources in schools. The interest in teaching and learning was boosted. Participant SP3 confirmed that, *"I have recognised that the availability of resources is a good motivation for educators and learners. So, I try my level best to ensure that there are enough resources at school."* The principal went on

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to state that, *"We encourage and allow educators to attend workshops to improve their skills. Where there is a problem, we invite subject advisors to come and help with the closing of the gaps where learners seem to be struggling."*

Provision of teaching and learning resources was the best way to enhance learners' academic achievement. Educators became dedicated to their work once they come to recognise that the principals value their teaching. Participant SP4 declared that, *"I value educators' work more than any other thing. Hence I work hard to ensure the availability of resources so that their teaching be effective."* The participant further articulated that, *"Provision of necessary materials needed for such an improvement. It can be by ensuring that educators perform their duties as per their daily timetables."*

It was a necessity that teaching and learning resources be available in schools. This helped instruction to be effective as educators and learners used the resources to broaden their knowledge. Participant SP5 outlined that, *"As a principal I am held accountable for the availability of resources. I never make a mistake because I have realised the importance of the resources from educators and learners. With the availability of resources learners' academic achievement is good."*

5.2.5.3.1 Sufficient funds

It was the principal's duty to ensure that there were adequate resources at school. she ought to ensure that educators never complained. Participant LHOD1 emphasised that, *"Ever since my arrival at this school, the principal has been supportive. She is able to provide the resources necessary for teaching and learning."* Availability of resources at school helped educators to perform their teaching perfectly. Educators were dedicated to their work when they realised that the principal answered to their needs. Participant LHOD2 asserted that, *"What I have recognised is that educators are able to work hard when the resources are available. The principal never fails them."*

Adequate resources in schools, boosted educators and learners' morale in education. When the principal ensured the availability of resources the school's academic performance increased. Participant LHOD3 pointed out that, *"The principal tries by all means to gather all the resources needed in teaching and learning. So, educators and*

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learners are motivated therefore the academic performance becomes excellent." In most cases, principals went to any extend in ensuring that there were adequate resources at school. they work hard, tirelessly for their schools. Participant LHOD4 posited that, *"Our principal pulls all the strings together to ensure that there are adequate resources for teaching and learning. She is determined that she does not want educators to complain of her not doing her work."*

There are some instances whereby the resources could be improvised. Some of the principals did encourage educators to improve some of the resources where necessary. Participant LHOD5 purported that, *"She provides the needed resources in this case whereby the resources can be improved, she asks educators to do so."* The participant further presented that their principal provided with all resources to educators so that they may teach learners without being prohibited by challenges. She also encouraged educators to attend different workshops where they were able to learn more of what teaching and learning entailed.

Adequate resources were said to contribute to learners' academic achievement. Educators and learners were motivated by the availability of resources. Educators and learners were committed to their work when they realised that they were being taken care of. Participant SHOD1 pointed out that, *"When the resources are available at school, educators and learners try their best to work hard to do their best to work hard to achieve success."*

When teaching and learning was available in schools, instruction became perfect. A principal had to ensure that the resources were not misused by educators and learners. Participant SHOD2 clarified that, *"When the resources are there, I have seen that educators strive hard to give learners quality education. Our principal also monitors the way these resources are used." From* participant SHOD2's response the principal supported both educators and learners. She ensured that there were adequate resources to carry out the teaching and learning process.

In most cases, the school with adequate resources performed well as compared to those which lack resources. The availability of resources motivated both educators and

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learners. Participant SHOD3 posited that, *"What I have realised is that educators and learners are able to work only when there are resources. This school's academic performance is good due to the fact that they are dedicated to their work."* Without teaching and learning resources, instruction was impossible. A principal ought to make sure that there were resources at school. when the resources were there educators became committed to their work. Participant SHOD4 averted that, *"I am a witness that when the resources are not enough, the academic achievement is impossible. When the principal came to realise that the performance is not good, she began to go all over to look for resources now the performance is excellent because the school has adequate resources."*

It was necessary for the school to have enough resources because educators and learners were able to do their work. Participant SHOD5 clarified that, *"In this school their work is perfectly done because there are adequate resources. Our principal makes sure that educators and learners are satisfied at all the times. Indeed, the availability of resources seem to motivate both educators and learners."* In addition, participant SHOD5 claimed that their principal improved the quality of teaching and learning by supporting educators with the needed resources. Every year after the publication of results she called up a meeting to analyse the performance and made improvements where necessary.

From the participants' responses, a leader must pull strings together to achieve success. Moreover, instructional leaders ought to ensure that there are resources needed to conduct teaching and learning. Leaders can be persuasive when it comes to educators.

5.3 Data Discussion

The results of the study resemble the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement in both countries, Lesotho and South Africa. The collected data show the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perceptions of the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement, how female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement, perceptions of heads of department regarding the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement. Moreover, the results indicate how effective the female instructional leadership is in

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Lesotho and South African high schools and also show how instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture. The researcher on the other side gives a credit to female principals for their excellent leadership. From the researcher's experience parents who help their children with school-work bring about fruitful results.

5.3.1 Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perception of the role of instructional leaders

5.3.1.1 Managing teaching and learning processes

The outcome of the research shows that Lesotho and South African female principals do manage teaching and learning process. Although they do the same job, they do it differently (Esa & Peng 2013). In Lesotho principals regularly check educators' professional books to ensure that the work is perfectly done. Moreover, at every school there is a siren alarm for educators and learners to manage time. Staff meetings are continually conducted with educators to discuss learners' progress monthly. Classroom visits are also conducted. Lesotho' female principals' priority is to make sure that educators acquire necessary resources so that teaching and learning could become a success (Kiptum 2018).

According to Lesotho principals, teaching and learning process was managed through checking the signatures of educators' daily attendance. The daily attendance of educators is done to allow principals easily identify educators who dodge classes. In fact, educators' absence negatively affects learners' academic achievement. On the side of learners, serious precautions are taken against those who poorly attend classes. The checking of daily attendance seems to have minimised absenteeism of educators and learners (Agu and Okoli 2021).

It was indicated that Lesotho principals manage teaching and learning process through checking educators' professional books (Scheme and record of work done, lesson plans and attendance registers). The scheme and record of work done are checked a week before re-opening of the school. Lesson plans are checked on daily basis to ensure that

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educators go to class prepared and that they teach according to the plan and they also record exactly what was taught. The checking gives the principals the opportunity to check educators' capability and creativity (Onamu 2016).

Furthermore, Lesotho principals manage teaching and learning process through conducting staff-meetings. It is where the overall progress of instruction is evaluated and analysed. During the meeting educators can share ideas that strengthen teaching (Chukwuemeka and Okoli 2021). All the educators share with others in the subjects they excel. In such meetings sharing on knowledge and skills dominate other points. It is in such meetings where at the end all the educators feel like they have refreshed and are ready to start anew to be productive and creative.

With the provided data, the researcher noticed that South African principals monitor educators within two weeks. The School Management Team (SMT) makes it easy by checking educators' files and reporting back to the principals (Julius, Milondzo, Samson and Seema 2015). Moreover, educators are given a chance once a year to do self-inspection and self-evaluation regarding previous results. This helps educators to notice their strengths and weaknesses. Thereafter, they improve for the better. Although it was indicated that there are prescriptions from the Department of Education on how to teach learners, South African principals are regarded to be the best as they even go beyond the provided prescriptions. In this way South African learners can acquire quality education. In the end learners can go to any colleges and universities of their choices to fulfil their heart desires (Agu and Okoli 2021).

The researcher discovered that South African principals ensure that educators and learners complete the syllabus on time. The completion of syllabus in time gives both educators and learners time to revise. Revision at school is a critical and essential period for all the educators and learners too because it gives them an idea of what was learnt and acquired knowledge pertaining each subject (Khan, Asimiran, Kair & Alias 2020). Assessing learners is crucial because it assists an individual educator to measure the information acquired by learners. Hence, providing immediate feedback by educators helps them to make self-introspection at an early stage (Ekau 2016).

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5.3.1.2 Accountability

The researcher draws a conclusion that as indicated by the Lesotho and South African principals, accountability is of the best on both educators and learners. When educators and learners are assigned a particular responsibility, they are expected to implement it accordingly. Accountability makes educators and learners value their work and feel proud about their school to the extent that they own it (Charles & Shirley 2004).

As indicated in the preceding findings, Lesotho principals delegate duties to heads o department who in turn assign some work to the educators. Delegation results in people being dedicated to the duties assigned to them as they know that responsibilities are on their shoulders (Maureen 2019). As a result, they work hard to avoid failure. The researcher found out that Lesotho principals are open-minded and firm. They can tell educators and learners of the schools' expectations. This means that both educators and learners work towards achieving the common goal of which is success. Lesotho principals can give an excellent interpretation of what the school's vision and mission statement are. Both educators and learners have an idea of what the school's short goals and long term are (Kiptum 2018).

As indicated by Lesotho principals, accountability helps in balancing daily duties at school. When an educator or a learner is assigned a task, he or she makes sure that the work is perfectly done. Therefore, being accountable is a huge responsibility ever. Educators and learners are so cooperative that their principal has no chance to complain about them not performing their duties. They try their level best to make life at school to be lived harmoniously (Nor hayati, Mohd, Noor, Mohd 2017).

The researcher found out that in South Africa, principals delegate duties to School Management Team (SMT), who give tasks to heads of department. Heads of department assign work to educators who also give some tasks to learners. With heads of department's assistance educators can do their daily work smoothly (Julius, Milondzo, Samson and Seema 2015). In fact, delegation works for everyone where it is handled appropriately. Even though South African principals use delegation method, they still make a follow-up on how the work is done. They do this because in the end when things

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do not go as planned, they will be responsible for all the mistakes. Most importantly, the study found out that in South Africa educators are held accountable for the subjects they teach. This makes educators to work hard hence it somehow creates competition among educators of which leads to excellent academic achievement (Onamu 2016).

Reflecting on the results of the study, South African principals are held accountable for the effectiveness of instruction. They try to create a friendly environment that allows the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Paul and Kumari 2017). Since principals are held accountable for learners, they ensure that instruction becomes effective. Indeed, the academic performance is excellent. Moreover, South African principals are held accountable for day to day running of the school. They ensure that instruction becomes effective. Hence, they provide educators with teaching and learning resources (Chukwuemeka and Okoli 2016). South African principals are certain that learners' success lies in their hands. They work hard to ensure that learners acquire quality education.

5.3.1.3 Facilitate instruction

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals facilitate instruction. The truth is that even if people could do the same thing, everyone has his or her own way of handling issues. In saying this, the researcher means that the principals could facilitate instruction but differently (Kiptum 2018).

As indicated that Lesotho principals facilitate instruction through delegation process, educators and monitors are assigned tasks. Monitors report to educators, while educators report to heads of department, who finally report to the principal. In facilitating instruction, principals conduct classroom visits to monitor how teaching and learning is done. In addition, to check whether leaners are being taught content relevant to the syllabus. Moreover, staff meetings are held by the principals to inquire how educators are progressing (Agu and Okoli 2021).

The researcher discovered that Lesotho female principals do facilitate instruction. The instructional leaders do facilitate instruction through delegating duties to educators and learners. They assign educators classrooms to teach and to oversee a particular class to

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see to it that there is order. Thereafter, the principals conduct classroom visits to ensure that educators perform their teaching as expected. This is where they become facilitators as they are able to assist educators where they meet with challenges (Abid, Sighr and Ayestra 2018).

The researcher found out that Lesotho principals are open-minded and firm. They can tell educators and learners of the schools' expectations. This means that both educators and learners work towards achieving the common goal of which is success. Lesotho principals can give an excellent interpretation of what the school's vision and mission statement are. Both educators and learners have an idea of what the school's short goals and long term are (Kiptum 2018).

The study found out that in South Africa, principals facilitate instruction through the help of School Management Team (SMT). SMT reports to heads of department, while heads of department report to the deputy principal. South African principal also do classroom observations to ensure that learners are taught as expected (Julius, Milondzo, Samson and Seema 2015). South African principals encourage educators to go extra mile, conduct extra class and weekend classes. This would even help those who are struggling, extra classes would assist them to catch up and work hard to achieve good results also (Onamu 2016).

Based on the observation by the participants, the researcher draws a conclusion that in South Africa, the principals facilitate instruction through the School Management Team (SMT). SMT is responsible for the day to day running of the school. SMT also reports daily activities to the deputy principals who in turn reports to the principals (Julias 2015). The outcome of the research shows that South African principals also facilitate instruction by checking educators' professional documents. Those are lesson plan books, attendance register, scheme and record of work done. Lesson plans and attendance register are checked daily. The record of work done is checked once in a quarter (Heaven and Borurne 2015).

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5.3.1.4 Country's educational goal

It is evident from the reviewed literature and data collected from the participants that each country has its educational goal. In Lesotho and South African high schools each school has its own educational goal, which is in line with the country's educational goal, even though they are common.

The researcher noticed from the data provided by the participants that Lesotho principals' educational goal is to produce learners who after completing their studies be self-reliant; learners who will be productive to their communities. Lesotho principals' biggest educational goal is indeed to see learners being able to conquer the world other than struggling to earn their living (Agu and Okoli 2021).

The researcher found out that Lesotho principals' country-wide educational goal is to bring about changes in schools and in the country at large. Their wish is to make development that would result in good academic performance. Their greatest desire is to produce quality results. They are aiming high for learners because they want them to go to colleges and universities of their choice (Uchendu, Ekanem and Jonah 2013).

Moreover, Lesotho female principals are fond of keeping the culture of the schools entertained throughout the country. Their biggest dream is to help learners achieve the success they are looking for while they are in school. The instructional leaders want to see learners, after the completion of their studies, being able to attend to all their basic needs. Hence, they strive to improve learning standards across the country (Tinus 2020, Carnen and Felipe 2016).

The researcher also discovered that it is every Lesotho female principal's wish to produce good quality results and to provide learners with good quality education. This would help learners fulfil their heart desires hence become good and productive citizens for this entire country (Heaven and Bourne 2016). It was indicated that in Lesotho female principals' wishes to make their school develop, prosper and grow. All this are achieved through obtaining good quality results and by keeping the schools' culture intact (Norhayati, Mohd, Noor and Mohd 2017).

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The study found out that, South African female principals' educational goal is to provide learners with quality education. To always provide feedback to learners, parents and to the Department of Education (Leiva, Montecinos, Carmen, Aravena and Felipe 2016). In South Africa, the Department of Education is determined and fond of learners' academic performance as it always inquires of feedback to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

The researcher draws a conclusion that South African principals' educational goal is also to maintain excellent standard of teaching and learning, even to model learners' behaviour for them to become productive in the future. Principals and School Management Team (SMT) work together (Julius, Milondzo, Samson and Seema 2015).

The researcher found out that South African principals work with School Management Team (SMT) to ensure that learners succeed. It is the country's educational goal to see learners further their studies and become responsible citizens of the country. In this case, South African principals ensure that learners acquire quality education. Learners are expected to perform beyond their potential (Tinus 2020).

In South Africa, the country's goal is to think beyond the textbook. South African female principals aim at preparing learners to be good in the future. The education they give learners helps them overcome challenges they come across in their daily life. The primary education that South African female principals give to learners assists them to view the world differently (Agu and Okoli 2021).

5.3.1.5 Improving quality of education

The researcher discovered that Lesotho and South African female principals have different ways of improving quality education. Even though things are done differently but one common goal is to improve quality education (Nor hayati, Mohd, Noor and Mohd 2017). Principals from both countries work hard to ensure that this happens.

With data provided by the participants, the researcher realised that Lesotho female principals improve quality education through monitoring educators. Their professional documents are checked regularly (Aziz, Muda, Mansor and Ibrahim 2017. This makes

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educators dedicated to their work as they know that principals make a follow-up on their progress (Kiptum 2018). Moreover, it is indicated that Lesotho female principals ensure the availability of resources in school as a way of improving education. This results in educators and learners being motivated (Kiptum 2018). Hence, their morale in education is boosted as they came to realise that principals take care of their needs.

The researcher discovered that Lesotho female principals encourage educators to go for workshops to improve their knowledge and skills. On the other hand, these workshops help educators be aware of changes made in the field of education (Hvidston, Mckim and Melt 2016). As a result, quality education is improved because educators are always up to date, hence are able to provide relevant information to learners (Abid, Sighir and Ayesha 2013).

As indicated, Lesotho female principals improve education through the provision of incentives to both educators and learners. Educators are incentivized with the aim of making them feel valued and appreciated (Kiptum 2018). As for the learners, they are given incentives as a form of motivation. Provision of incentives is seen to promote competition among learners and this contributes to improving quality education. The study also found that South African principals conduct classroom visits to observe how educators discipline learners. Teaching and learning are effective only when learners are able to listen to what educators instruct them to do.

The outcome of the research shows that South African female principals frequently call educators to meetings. They do this to find the challenges educators encounter in classrooms which prohibit effective teaching and learning to take place (Abid et al 2018). South African female principals call up meetings with educators to ensure that there are adequate resources for teaching and learning because if not, educators will say it (Kiptum 2018).

Furthermore, educators are encouraged to improve their knowledge and skills so that their teaching becomes effective. South African female principals also ensure that educators go to class as per timetable so that learners do not find a chance to complain that they are not taught or to misbehave. Hence, it is specified that South African high

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schools find proper support from the Department of Education. They also strive to ensure that quality education is improved (Duan and Yu 2018).

Reflecting on the results of the study, both Lesotho and South African principals work hard on improving the quality of education in their countries. They do this because they want education to be valued worldwide. Moreover, improving quality education would be an inspiration to those who do not feel there is a need to be educated.

The outcome of research indicates that to improve quality education, educators are advised by the principal to conduct morning study sessions for learners. Learners' academic performance increases because when learners fail to understand a concept, they approach their educators for help.

Furthermore, Lesotho principals encourage educators to go for workshops to improve their knowledge and skills. The workshop keeps educators up to date on what changes are made in the field of education.

As indicated by the preceding findings South African principals employ a democratic leadership style to improve quality education. They involve educators in decision-making, and give educators a chance to bring ideas to the table. In this way, nothing becomes complicated for them as they work as a team to overcome challenges they come across when teaching.

South African principals encourage parental involvement. They are certain that education is a three-legged pot. To achieve good quality education, parents ought to be involved in their children's education. Parental involvement makes it easier for educators to conduct their teaching. At home parents encourage their children to do their homework and to work hard.

5.3.1.6 Providing instructional leadership

Reflecting on the results of the study, the researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals are best at providing instructional leadership. They lead by a good example, so educators and learners inherit all the good deeds from them. The

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principals guide and support educators in making teaching and learning effective (Onamu 2016).

It was indicated that Lesotho female principals have good communication skills which help them provide effective instructional leadership. They have even rendered the skills they possess to educators and learners. Copying of the good deeds by educators and learners from principals is beneficial, they inherit long life experiences. The study found out that Lesotho principals possess good communication skills. As a leader one has to master this skill as she interacts with different characters. Moreover, a principal has to be approachable to an extent that educators and learners be open when asking for assistance. Although the principals are supposed to be approachable, they still need to protect their dignity as leaders and be diligent in their relationship with educators and learners. When principals master these quality traits, the schools' academic achievement would rise to higher levels (Leiva et al 2016).

Lesotho principals support instruction by giving educators advice in their teaching. They are able to provide the light where there is darkness because they have got quality traits. The problems that educators encounter in the field of education; female principals are there to solve them (Agu andOkoli 2021). This makes the schools' academic performance be excellent. Lesotho female principals never fail educators but provide instructional support at always. The outcome of the research shows that principals are accountable for learners' success. In this case, they become wise even when delegating duties to educators. They give precise instructions on how teaching and learning are to be conducted. This is done because the Lesotho female principals are aware that if learners fail to perform well, they are being blamed (Khan, Asimiran, Kadir and Alias 2020).

The researcher noticed from data provided by the participants that South African female principals are good at providing instructional leadership. All South African female principals encourage teamwork as this promotes a friendly environment (Abubakar and Sadrajat 2020). Provision of instruction helps educators and learners be focused on their work resulting in good academic achievement.

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According to South African principals, provision of instructional support goes hand in hand with parents' involvement. Principals encourage educators to let parents partake in their children's education as they play an important role (Teba-Teba, Makura and Thabane 2021). South African principals can give educators support they need because they value education more than any other thing. The researcher discovered that even though principals have to offer instruction support, there must be unity in schools. Joining forces results in easily overcoming challenges encountered in the field of education (Bala 2016). In providing instructional support, South African principals use democratic leadership style. They include educators in decision-making because the main aim is to support educators (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

5.3.1.7 Trust and high expectations

The researcher discovered from the data provided by the participants that Lesotho and South African principal have trust and high expectations from the educators. Trusting totally believes that someone would do the right thing at always. Trust results in educators working as a team, sharing ideas and this makes them strong as they want to achieve a common goal (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

The researcher found out that Lesotho female principals trust educators to an extent that they even delegate duties to them (educators). Lesotho educators as indicated by the principals are dedicated to their work, for they are well-trained educators. Moreover, Lesotho educators have a lot of respect when it comes to their principals. They are even supportive in a sense that they can help principals to well develop the schools (Khan et al 2020). Lesotho educators' dreams and wishes are high about the learners; they indeed, want to bring the best of them.

Reflecting on the results of the study, Lesotho female principals highly trust educators. Since educators are well experienced, they can deliver content to learners. Lesotho educators can support principals in every step they take in bringing about changes in schools (Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018). Even when new educators arrive it is the culture of Lesotho educators to welcome them and to help them internalise the place. This the reason the principals having trust in educators.

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As indicated by the proceeding findings, Lesotho educators are trustworthy, and the principals fully trust them. What is interesting is that educators do their daily duties as expected by their principals. The principals work hard in building a good rapport with educators. They never pushed to do their duties they are never pushed to do their duties but are willing to do their daily work (Shaked and Glanz 2018).

As indicated by the preceding findings, South African female principals highly trust the educators, because they have on assurance that every educator is qualified. South African educators are said to be devoted to their duties. Even if educators come across challenges, South African principals can encourage educators by telling them to never lose hope. In this country educators are fully trusted because they value education. They are aware that learners' future lies on their hands, so they are willing to help them fulfil the dreams and live happily ever after (Chukwuemeka and Okoli 2021).

The study found out that even South African female principals trust educators. The principals have a belief that educators are qualified and that they are able to give learners quality education. In South Africa, there is time when educators do self-introspection to find challenging subjects. They do not act as if they know everything, but they consult their principals and colleagues (Fatonah and Abubakar 2020).

5.3.2 Research question 2: How do female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement?

5.3.2.1 Accountable for the success of learners

The outcome of the research shows that Lesotho principals are held accountable of learners' success. Although Lesotho principals hardly teach, learners' success is their responsibility (Terra and Berhanu 2017). They ought to ensure that educators do their work so that learners would acquire quality education. The principals should pressurise educators to make all these happen (Abid, Sighir and Ayesha 2018). The researcher discovered that in Lesotho, principals are held accountable for the success of learners. In this regard Lesotho principals are determined and dedicated when on duty call. They absolutely know that learners' future lies in their hands. Hence, they become good influencers to educators that the work be perfectly done (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

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Moreover, in Lesotho, principals are regarded to be important, and the community is looking onto them. The community and parents put their trust in principals because they are perceived to act as guards in schools. Principals work hard to continue satisfying the community because it supports the success of their children's education (Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018). It was indicated that Lesotho principals have a lot in their plate. Regardless of the situation they work hard to ensure that learners acquire quality education (Kiptum 2018). Principals influence educators to perform their duties as expected. Even though they cannot always go to class to teach, they make sure that educators do their best.

The researcher noticed that South African principals are responsible for learners' success. Although principals have a pile of duties awaiting them, they ensure that learners succeed in their learning (Kiptum 2018). Since South African principals value education, they ensure that learners obtain good grades in every class (Abid et al 2018). Based on the observation of the participants, the researcher is of the view that both Lesotho and South African principals always held educators responsible for learners' success. The female principals are there to monitor educators in their work as expected (Daniels, Hondeghem and Dochy 2019; Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

The study found out that, educators, having known that all the responsibilities of ensuring learners' good performance is on their shoulders, they work hard. They ensure that learners are actively involved in their learning (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). The female principals are there to monitor educators' progress. They ensure that learners are taught the right content and that educators do their work as expected (Mestry 2017).

According to South African principals, no time is wasted. Educators are committed to their work due to the pressure the principals exert on them. South African principals consider educators to be their priority (Duan, Du and Yu 2018). They make sure that learners spend most of their time on schoolwork rather than roaming about.

The outcome of the research shows that in South Africa, principals are considered to see to it that learners are given quality education. On the other hand, they are held accountable of learners' success (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021) yet they have lots of

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responsibilities. It is said that they compromise to influence educators to teach in a manner that assist learners acquire quality education (Kiptum 2018).

5.3.2.2 Conducive environment

With the data provided, the researcher noticed that Lesotho principals ensure educators and learners safety. Educators and learners are made to feel welcomed while they are at school. Lesotho principals' priority is to provide a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning (Chukwuemeha and Okoli 2021). Lesotho principals value educators and learners' spiritual, physical and intellectual well-being (Zakaria and Daud 2009; Tinus 2020).

As indicated by Lesotho principals, a conducive environment helps discipline learners. In a school where the environment is friendly, learners behave well. They think before they could misbehave. In the first place, they think of the consequences that might befall them. Although among the learners there are naughty ones, in the warm, welcoming environment most of them stay disciplined (Mestry 2017).

The study found out that Lesotho principals can provide the conducive environment for learning. A conducive environment helps educators and learners to feel free and focus on their work (Paul and Kumari 2017). As a result, the schools' academic achievement improves. Parents are willing to send their children to school hence they prefer children's safety more than any other things.

It was indicated that a conducive environment creates a platform for learners. In schools, the principals ought to promote a friendly environment to attract learners. They also have to create a room for development then enhance the schools' academic achievement. When educators and learners do that work without any fear, they bring about a change in schools (Lim, Teo and Khine 2003). Whereas Lesotho heads of department indicated that Lesotho female principals stimulate unity in the school compounds. When there is unity, every single person feels free to do whatever that uplifts the school (Tinus 2020).

The study also found out that South African principals' wish is to value and appreciate educators and learners. Their motive is to keep them (educators and learners) safe and

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sound. When the environment is conducive, teaching and learning become successful (Paul and Kumari 2017). In most cases when educators and learners are free, they are able to come up with changes that develop the schools.

Moreover, South African heads of department elucidated that their principals in providing the conducive environment ensure that respect is earned for both educators and learners (Tinus 2020). The more educators are respected is the more they become competent in their teaching. If a learner feels somehow neglected at school, such a learner becomes passive in class. This leads to deteriorating performance hence that is why respect must be earned by both educators and learners (Onamu 2016).

With data provided, the researcher noticed that Lesotho and South African female principals prefer safe environment for teaching and learning to take place. They encourage educators to influence learners to always have the environment cleaned as well as the classrooms (Chukwuemeha and Okoli 2021. Learners are advised to provide with an ample space to allow the free movement for educators (Tinus 2020).

Reflecting on the data provided, South African principals are conscious about conducive environment for learners. They indicated that a pleasant environment allows teaching and learning to flourish. This is due to the fact that conducive environment promotes the spirit of teamwork. In this situation, educators and learners can work towards a common goal (Duan et al 2018).

As indicated in the previous sections, South African principals have a capacity to put a smile on educators and learners' faces. They make educators and learners consider schools as their second homes. Sometimes they even forget that they are at school, they feel as if they are at their homes since they admirably internalised their schools' culture. South African principals like it most when educators and learners feel relaxed while at school campuses. They prefer both educators and learners who feel secure so that they may stay focused in their daily work (Tinus 2020).

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5.3.2.3 Balancing daily duties

The researcher is of the view that it is good to balance duties at school. This helps in such a way that educators are not overloaded with work. Sharing of responsibilities and duties also can contribute in balancing of duties, in the sense that at the end of the day each individual educator will have taught all the classes assigned to him or her, will have given learners a piece of work and marked it (Kalliath and Brough 2008)

Lesotho principals discussed that they plan in time. Before the schools open, allocation of different duties is done. This allocation assists educators to know all the duties they are supposed to do while at school. Allocation of duties also helps to share duties and responsibilities equally. Another point is that allocation of subjects assists educators to plan on time for the subjects they teach (Fatonah and Abubakar 2020).

The researcher is of the view that Lesotho principals balance duties with the aim of promoting transparency. When an educator is given duties to do, they are done well because he or she will have to answer if anything goes wrong. Balancing of duties makes educators to be accountable for the tasks assigned to them (Wijaya and Suwandana 2022). So, they seldom make mistakes of may be forgetting to perform their duties. Moreover, balancing duties helps principals to evaluate educators' work easily.

The researcher found out that as said by South African principals balancing duties promotes unity. The sharing of responsibilities shows that there is oneness within the school (Boateng 2020). Unity results in good academic achievement. When educators are not overloaded with work, they are able to work hard in giving learners quality education. South African principals declared that balancing duties helps in duties being thoroughly done within a short time. It is essential to always balance duties as they are perfectly done. South African principals seem to motivate educators by acknowledging their efforts and dedication to their work (Agu and Okoli 2021).

5.3.2.4 School assessment

Following the results of the study the participants professed that Lesotho and South African principals do rely on school assessments. Educators and learners are both

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assessed (Kiptum 2018). The rating helps educators in professional growth. As for learners, they are able to recognise their strengths and weaknesses. Indeed, frequent assessment assists educators to determine whether their teaching is effective or not. For educators, the assessment also helps educators to make sure that learners are taught with the aim of targeting learning objectives (Ekau 2016).

The researcher found out that assessment is beneficial to learners also. It helps learners to put more effort into their studies (Ekau 2016). Moreover, assessment is a form of motivation for learners, as they can see when not performing well hence, they work hard so as to achieve what they desire (Ekau 2016; Khukwuemeka 2021).

As indicated in the preceding findings, Lesotho principals more often encourage educators to assess learners through weekly and monthly tests. Moreover, principals advise educators to put learners' marks on the notice board so that everyone could see. This would help those learners left behind to work hard as their peers will ask them why t poorly they have done in written tests (Agu and Okoli 2021). The study found out that Lesotho principals work hard in ensuring that educators and learners are frequently assessed. It was shown by Lesotho principals that assessment is important. Assessment helps the principals to determine educators' strength and weaknesses (Ekau 2016). Therefore, the principals give educators a chance to teach the subjects they are good at (Abid et al 2018).

With data provided, the researcher noticed that, indeed, Lesotho principals consider assessment essential. They encourage educators to give learners tests more often. They seem to be convinced that assessment helps to test learners' abilities in their learning (Ekau 2016). When it is done frequently, learners can notice where they struggle, hence, they work hard to achieve success. Ever since the implementation of this strategy, the schools' academic achievement seems to improve with a high speed (Gobingca and Makura 2016).

The study found out that as indicated by the principals, educators are evaluated hence are given special trainings to enhance their skills. Furthermore, it was stated that educators employ remedial work and counselling strategies to assist learners (Sklaridis

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and Lopez 2014). It is the responsibility of South African educators to ensure that learners perform well. South African principals also mentioned a point learners have to be assessed continuously. It is educators' duty to discover learning challenges that prohibit learners from performing well (Dejere et al 2019).

The outcome of the research shows that South Afrcian principals see the importance of assessment. In South Africa, principals frequently assist educators through monitoring them. In this case, principals can easily identify area where educators struggle (Ekau 2016) in their teaching. As a result, principals help educators to solve the problems they encounter during teaching and learning.

Furthermore, South African principals assess learners indirectly and that is through educators. Educators are advised to check learners' level of understanding either within a week or a month. Assessment is of assistance as it helps learners know where they should pull up their socks. In addition, it helps educators to test how effective their teaching was. In the end principals encourage educators to employ various strategies in teaching (Fatonah and Abubakar 2020).

Based on reviewed literature and data collected from the participants, Lesotho and South African principals have multiple ways how to conduct assessments. They make sure that learners are assessed so that they may spot where they are weak and try to work harder (Khan et al 2020).

5.3.2.5 Short- and long-term planning

The researcher noticed from data provided by the participants that Lesotho principals, usually advise educators to train learners' minds. This helps them think critically and solve school related issues so easily. Educators are influenced to employ the strategies that would help learners be active minded (Onamu 2016). Moreover, helping learners to think critically assists them to determine their learning capabilities. In this situation educators are being able to identify slow and fast learners. Slow learners would be assisted so that they may be on the same level with fast learners (Gobingca and Makura 2016).

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Lesotho principals as indicated by the heads of department, encourage educators to work as a team so as to achieve success. It is of the benefit because educators do not master all the subjects, there are those they are best at. This would give them a great opportunity to reveal their talents on the subjects they master the most, hence, learners' academic achievement (Abubakar and Sudrajat 2020).

The results of the study further indicated that Lesotho principals mostly influence educators to use learner centered approach when teaching learners. This method indicates that learners must discover information on their own. The educators only have to work as facilitators. As learners are the ones that put more effort into their learning, they do not easily forget what they have learned to do easily (Khan et al 2020).

As indicated in the literature, South African female principals also utilise multiple strategies to enhance learners' academic achievement. Mostly those female principals encourage educators to conduct extra classes. This helps to complete the syllabus in time so that they can have plenty of time to discuss and ask questions that they do not understand (Gobingca and Makura 2016).

When it comes to teaching strategies, South African female principals advise educators to use cooperative learning and learner-centred approaches. Cooperative learning is the best because learners have different ways of learning. Other learners understand better when some learners explain concepts to them (Coimbra 2013), hence the method is called peer-to-peer learning. As for the learner-centred approach which Lesotho principals also prefer, the reason is that it helps learners develop critical thinking skills. Acquisition of this skill helps learners become quicker problem solvers. The learner-centred approach also helps learners become independent. it implies that they gather information for themselves rather than waiting for educators to come and explain everything to them. Overall, the learner-centred approach helps learners become open-minded and to think of the best (Gobingca and Makura 2016).

The results of the study and the reviewed literature revealed that both Lesotho and South African principals have short- and long-term planning for their schools. They engage

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themselves in deep thoughts on implementing strategies that are meant to boost learners' academic achievement (Abid et al 2018).

It was indicated that Lesotho principals encourage educators to employ cooperative learning when teaching. This learning strategy enhances communication skills as learners do work in groups. This method also helps individual learners to be accountable, even though they work in groups, but it is their responsibility to ensure that the work is perfectly done (Hoidston, Mckim and Mette 2016). In addition, Lesotho principals encourage educators to mostly utilise learner-centred approach in their teaching. In this method, educators are expected to be facilitators. Learners dig information for themselves, educator are there to help them improve their knowledge and clear up the misconceptions they have. Learner-centred approach is the best as it is not that easy to forget what learners themselves have discovered (Gobingca and Makura 2016).

The researcher found out that in South Africa, principals highly encourage educators to attend workshops. In fact, workshops are meant to improve educators' knowledge and skills. As a result, become skilful and knowledgeable hence they can provide good quality education for learners. These workshops also keep educators up to date on any of the changes made in the field of education (Abubakar and Sudrajat).

The researcher also discovered that children's education in South Africa is taken seriously. In some cases, when there is a problem concerning particular subjects, of which the principals and educators are unable to solve, subject advisors come to their rescue (Duan et al 2018). This is not found in Lesotho; the principals are the ones to struggle on how to help educators in such cases.

5.3.2.6 Providing incentives

Reflecting on the results of the study, the researcher is of the view that most of the Lesotho principals as indicated by Lesotho heads of department believe in the use of incentives. As stated by Lesotho heads of department only few of the principals partly believe in the use of incentives though they still offer them. Incentives are regarded to motivate learners so that they work harder. Moreover, incentives are best at creating competition among learners of which results in good quality results (Mestry 2017).

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As indicated in the preceding findings, Lesotho heads of department explained that the principals award learners in different ways. Best performers are always incentivised so that those left behind may feel the need to concentrate in their work whole-heartedly so as to win a prize. Learners are given different gadgets like books and tablets to help them carry out their learning process. At some point it was stated that the schools take responsibility in paying the fees of those learners with outstanding performance and to give them certificates of appreciation (Kiptum 2018).

Apart from being given materials, learners are sometimes taken to picnics for braai. This helps them to revive so that they may begin their learning with the boosted spirit. Those learners who did not perform well are highly motivated. As they all strive to be the best candidates, the academic performance on the other hand is boosted (Aziz et al 2017).

The study also found out that as stated by Lesotho heads of department, two of the principals seemed to partly believe in the use of incentives. Even though those two principals partially believe in the utilisation of incentives, they feel there is a need that learners be motivated. As explained by Lesotho heads of department, the principals offer learners incentives just to show appreciation and to encourage them to do better (Jeffry and Dickison 2013).

Lesotho principals indicated that incentives are a good way of motivating learners. Incentives pressurise slow learners to work hard to win a prize. On the other hand, those learners incentivised have that eagerness to work harder. Most of Lesotho principals highly believe in the use of incentives even on the side of educators. When educators are given incentives, they feel valued; hence, they work hard to ensure that the performance is outstanding (Tinus 2020). The study found that few of Lesotho principals seemed to partly believe in the use of incentives. Even though they are not that much into offering, they still appreciate learners for their hard work. Incentives do promote competition among learner as everyone strive hard to win the prize (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

When it comes to South Africa still there are believers and non-believers regarding to use of incentives. South African heads of department evaluated that the principals in their

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country highly believe that the more learners are incentivised is the more they work even harder (Ekau 2016).

The findings of the study revealed that South African heads of department indicated that not only learners get incentives but also the educators are awarded. The giving of incentives helps them to gain strength that makes their teaching becomes a success. Furthermore, according to educators, incentives open the door to quality results at the end of every academic year. This makes every educator strives hard to ensure that his or her subjects are passed well. In this manner, awarding promotes healthy competition among educators. In South Africa learners are awarded in all grades to boost their morale in education. It is also found that at some instances principals partly believe in giving of incentives. On the other hand, they do believe that learners need to be motivated so that they can improve their achievement (Leiva et al 2016).

The researcher discovered that most of South African principals highly believe in the use of incentives, only few partially do. In South African high schools, incentives are said to boost educators and learners' morale in education. Highly performed learners are given trophies and certificates of appreciation. Moreover, best performers in all grades are awarded so that they become more interested in that schoolwork (Jeffrey and Dickison 2013). As a result, schools' result in having good performance.

Based on the observation by the participants, the researcher is of the view that Lesotho and South African principals see things eye to eye. Most of the principals do believe in the use of incentives whereas others partly believe in them (Uchenolu, Ekanem and Jonah 2014).

5.3.2.7 Persistence

Based on the participants' views, it is of the researcher's view that Lesotho and South African principals have a lot of persistence that carries them along in their leadership and management. Regardless of the situations they encounter, they keep going, they never give up. They can withstand whatever challenges they come across (Wijaya and Suwandana 2022).

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The researcher discovered that Lesotho female principals have hardships in their leadership. their femaleness makes them be underestimated. Even though they were undermined, they never lost hope. They showed that they are courageous and brave. They did not let males overpower them at any cost (Mutarubukwa and Mazana 2017).

It was indicated that at present, things have changed for better. Males and other people in the society have recognised that females can also become leaders at high positions. Females possess qualities that make them withstand challenges they come across in leadership positions (Johnsen, Maznevskei and Chncider 2010). Female principals have patience, love, tolerance and are sympathetic and supportive.

The outcome of the research shows that not only Lesotho female principals suffer in leadership but also South African principals. To be a female leader is indeed challenging. Due to their perseverance and dedication, they afford to become the most outstanding leaders. This could be effective only when society can change its mind set that authoritarian style of leadership is not the only style to use; but all the leadership styles are of good use when utilised accordingly. Integration of the four leadership styles, democratic, autocratic, affiliative and coaching; this combination of leadership styles seems to perfectly work out. There is a need for the society to be conscientised that other leadership styles, like democratic, affiliative, and coaching can do in the principal-ship (Asha and Danielle 2017).

Female principals are gifted so much that even if there be a boring and unhappy environment, they can generate long lasting peace. Their generosity helps them become good leaders who can keep the name of schools intact. Despite the difficulties South African principals come across, they always held their head high, instead of being discouraged they are encouraged. The challenges moulded them and made them become the strongest and powerful leaders ever (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

The researcher draws a conclusion that indeed females are born with outstanding traits that make them flourish in leadership positions. Males have now accepted that even females possess the power and qualities to lead. Hence, their leadership become

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successful because they are persistence in whatever they do (Ali, Zakuan and Ahmad 2019).

The study found out that Lesotho heads of department praise their principals of having persistence. It was said that no matter how challenging it is, Lesotho principals keep moving. Regardless of being female principals, they never step back, but fight a peaceful war for their schools' success. It was indicated that some male educators undermine female principals and hesitate to take any instruction from them. Leadership position is not meant for a particular gender it is the position that can be occupied by any educator who has leadership qualities. It is interesting currently because males have realised that females also have good qualities to become leaders of their schools (Mutarubakua and Mazana 2017).

According to Lesotho heads of department, it was not easy for females to take leadership positions. At first life at school was difficult for them from day to day (Johnsen et al 2017). Due to the fact that females do not give up easily, they are able to tolerate any hardship they came across at the beginning of taking their leadership. This has made them be the most outstanding people. Worse enough, even the communities in which their schools situated were against the females being leaders. The main problem is that for many passed years school leadership was in the hands of males, even though they were minorities in the field of education. It seems that currently the society, especially African one, started to realise the importance of letting females occupy higher positions at workplaces.

As indicated by Lesotho heads of department, female principals can change learners' lives for the better. No matter what challenges they encounter, they can stand by the learners and support their learning (Lopez and Sklaridis 2014). Lesotho principals as indicated by the heads of department are devoted and dedicated into their work.

The outcome of the research found out that being a female principal is challenging as said by heads of department. The study denoted that, in most cases, males become hesitant to take instruction from the female principals. Male educators look down upon female principals because they have a belief that females are fragile, therefore, they

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cannot occupy high positions (Mwaniki and Guantai 2018), like being a school principal. The common understanding is that one needs to be tough to be a school principal. In the current study, the heads of department revealed that females by nature are able to withstand challenges they come across. According to heads of department, this is the sign that among females, like amongst their male counterparts, there are some who can be brave.

As indicated by the heads of department, even experienced principals still meet challenges at work. It is said that no matter how many years a person has become a principal, there are still ups and downs. Most of the people had the mentality that women are born to be failures. The female principals, of the studied schools, have proved them wrong by showing their generosity, consideration, fairness and firmness in their leadership (Sklaridis and Lopez 2014).

5.3.2.8 Leadership skills

The results of the study and the reviewed literature reveal that Lesotho and South African principals have good leadership skills. They exercise good leadership skills in their leadership hence they become successful in every plot they hatch (Azis et al 2017).

The study found out that Lesotho female principals also exercise good leadership skills. As said by Lesotho female principals, development growth and success in schools is their responsibility. They exercise their power in a good manner to educators as they are the ones who work hard to ensure effective teaching and learning. With their leadership skills, principals are there to supervise and evaluate instruction (Esa and Peng 2013). The outcome of the research indicates that it is the responsibility of Lesotho female principals' role to set clear goals in their leadership. it is their role to check educators' professional books to be certain that the work is perfectly done. In addition, Lesotho female principals are empathetic, they exercise their motherliness even at school (Esa and Peng 2013). They do not suspend learners whose parents cannot afford to pay tuition fee because they are parents who know how difficult it is for other parents (Shaked and Glanz 2018).

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With the data provided by Lesotho heads of department, Lesotho principals can exercise good leadership skills. Lesotho principals are said to lead with good examples. They are able to show educators and learners a good part to take (Daniels and Anie 2019). They are also able to guide educators and learners by giving the direction where and when seems to be lost. It is interesting because in most cases, they succeed in their mission.

Heads of department evidenced that Lesotho female principals have good leadership skills. They lead by telling educators and learners what to do by reminding them what is written in the school vision and mission statement (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). The female instructional leaders keep on reminding educators and learners what is expected of them, which is done quarterly. It is of a great benefit because learners' academic performance improves regularly.

The outcome of the research shows that Lesotho and South African female principals as indicated by the heads of department possess good leadership skills. Their femaleness does not affect their leadership; instead, it makes them to be the most outstanding creatures (Kerry and Charol 2017; Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018). Moreover, with data provided by the Lesotho heads of department, the researcher came to notice that principals" visibility says a lot. Educators become truly focused in their duties with the fear that the principal is around. Furthermore, Lesotho principals as indicated help in modelling learners because they practise their motherhood wherever they are (Ahmad and Leong 2013; Hussin and Zaid 2013). Female principals are also said to have good observation skills of which helps improve academic performance as everyone becomes dedicated.

The outcome of the research also shows that South African heads of department also praised their principals. South African principals can exercise their professionalism, they also possess good work ethics that help them influence educators to do their work with the aim of achieving success (Teba-Teba, Makura and Thabane 2021).

The outcome of the research shows that South African principals are determined in having everlasting leadership. They can show support to educators, parents and learners. They stand by them no matter how hard the situation. The female principals have no time to rest, they spend most of their time developing the schools (Ismael, Noor and Nyasha

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2018). Although they come across many challenges, they outsmart them with their excellent leadership skills.

It was indicated that South African female principals have good leadership skills, which help their schools, develop and flourish. Leadership plays an important role in teaching and learning. Although at some point South African female principals do not go in class to teach, they are aware of what is happening around the schools. This makes… easier their leadership as they can know which steps to take in making teaching and learning successful (Norhayati et al 2017). Moreover, as part of their leadership, female principals ensure that environment is conducive for everyone who allows effective teaching and learning. In actual fact, South African female principals exercise good leadership skills that help learners teach their full potential (Leiva et al 2016).

Reflecting on the results of the study, South African principals have good quality traits. They are warm hearted, kind and can sympathise. They consider educators and learners' feelings the most (Bala 2016). Moreover, they are observant when it comes to supervision and evaluation of instruction. Their character is never questioned because they do whatever it takes to exercise good leadership skills.

5.3.3 Heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leaders

5.3.3.1 Influence school outcomes

The results of the study and the reviewed literature revealed that as the way of influencing the school outcome Lesotho principals stay supportive of educators. Educators are encouraged to prepare departmental budget in advance so that when the academic year starts, they are catered for. The encouragement that educators get from the principals keep them going (Abid et al 2018).

According to Lesotho heads of department, female principals' major goal is that they deliver good quality education to learners through the educators. Lesotho female principals' wishes is to give learners a chance to reveal their talents with the aim of helping them develop morally, spiritually, physically and intellectually. Indeed, Lesotho female

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principals are optimistic in assisting the Basotho generation become successful (Nor hayati et al 2017).

It was indicated that South African principals influence the school outcome by making educators accountable for the subjects they teach. The strategy they use pressurises educators to work hard because they wish that their subjects be passed well (Norhayati, Mohd, Noor and Mohd 2017). This creates competition as every educator strives hard that his or her subject is well performed. The researcher discovered that as justified by the heads of department, the South African principals' main goal is to achieve hundred percent pass rate with good quality results (Kiptum 2018). In short both countries are longing for success.

From the participants' information, the researcher draws a conclusion that the Lesotho and South African female principals influence the school outcome in different ways. The motive behind is the same (Aziz et al 2017).

The results of the study show that Lesotho female principals are the good influencers of the school culture. As stated by Lesotho heads of department, Lesotho principals never waver to support the schools financially. Whenever there are educational trips like English and Science Faire Competitions, learners are well catered for (Chukwuemeka and Okoli 2021). Furthermore, Lesotho principals are supportive of the educators at always. They can inquire educators to draw the departmental budgets in advance, before the opening of the schools. The budget helps the principals to prepare of what is needed on time (Khan et al 2020). It is done in advance because the principals want teaching and learning to be effective. The researcher found out that, Lesotho principals' visibility say a lot. Educators and learners become dedicated to their work because the principals are watching daily activities at school. In this way teaching and learning become effective and academic performance is excellent (Fred and Singh 2021).

As indicated by South African heads of department, the principals do positively influence the school outcome. There is a prize giving ceremony at the end of every term. The ceremony is held to acknowledge those educators whose subjects are performed well (Jeffrey et al 2013). It is a kind of motivation because educators strive harder to produce

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good grades. The outcome of the research indicates that South African principals influence school outcome through heads of department attending workshops. Heads of department conduct the workshops when they discovered that educators struggle, they come to their assistance. The female principals also make engagements with learning facilities from the Department of Education to ensure that educators get help (Carnen and Felipe 2016).

5.3.3.2 Elevating professional development

According to Lesotho heads of department (HODs), principals elevate professional development by making a follow-up on duties assigned to educators. This is done to ensure that learners acquire quality education so that they may fulfil their heart desires. Moreover, Lesotho principals encourage educators to improve their studies and be up-to-date (Onamu 2016; Fatonah and Abubakar 2020). The researcher discovered that in elevating professional development, principals revise the schools' objectives from time to time. This helps educators and learners to remember what is expected of them to remember what is expected of them. Revising of the school's objectives helps educations to stay focused on achieving the common goal (Heaven and Bourne 2016).

The study found out that as a way of elevating professional development, South African principals encourage teamwork. When educators work in collaboration, learners' academic achievement become excellent (Khan et al 2020). This is due to the fact they can strengthen one another's weaknesses. Nowadays, learners are too forward. They spend most of their time on internet. There, they learn many things. It is advisable that they learn through internet as they discover new concepts. So, educators must always be prepared for what is coming their way (Onamu 2016). Hence principals from both countries influence educators to improve their standards so that they can answer to learners' needs properly. The principals wish good for everyone; they do not use favouritism (Abubakar and Sudrajat 2020).

With data provided by the participants, the researcher is of the view that Lesotho and South African principals like it more when educators further their studies. Each year brings about a change, so principals become proud when educators are always up to date for

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learners are moving fast in adapting changes (Abid, Safhir and Ayesha 2018). This is done so that both parties could be on the same page. With data provided, Lesotho principals have their ways of elevating professional development of educators. Educators are given that chance to explore and make new discoveries that would make instruction be effective. Educators are encouraged to go extra miles in their teaching so as to challenge learners. It came into Lesotho principals' recognition that educators are differently gifted. Hence, the principals allow them to interact and share the beneficial information (Gobingca and Makura 2016).

At some point educators are even encouraged to further their studies. Educators, when perusing their studies gain new knowledge and acquire new skills. This helps them to improve their way of teaching. The exploration assists them become good educators whose teaching is perfectly done. Indeed, this is a good way of elevating professional development (Abid et al 2018).

The study found out that the Lesotho principals are fond of supporting educators financially. Whenever they attend school related workshops, each school sees to it that there is money for transport and lunch. The principals' wish is to develop educators, to help them gain new knowledge and skills that would benefit them in their teaching. Lesotho principals' desire is that educators be excellent in their teaching, therefore, they never disappoint them (Leiva et al 2016).

According to South African heads of department, South African principals encourage teamwork among educators and learners. Success is achieved through joining hands. Educators help to strengthen one another's shortcomings. They work towards achieving the common goal of which is success. South African principals do motivate and acknowledge educators' efforts and dedication towards their work (Hvidston et al 2016). The outcome of the research shows that it is the principals' role to become creative and solve problems at school. South African principals try hard to solve the conflicts within the school (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). They prefer that educator be professional for them to be developed for the better. Discipline is what South African educators master; they can act professionally no matter the situation.

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5.3.3.3 Support to educators

It was noticeable from the literature reviewed and data provided by the participants that Lesotho and South African principals do everything in their power to support the educators. Principals do whatever it takes to ensure that educators get resources that would make teaching and learning become successful (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). The more educators are supported, the more their morale in education. Having supportive principals is a form of motivation to educators. Educators feel they are taken care of (Dejere 2019). Hence, they become attached to their teaching. They do this because they do not want to disappoint the principals because they show their full commitment towards educators.

The study also found out that the principals in supporting educators use democratic style of leadership (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). Lesotho and South African principals value educators' opinion because it was noticeable that opinions bring about fruitful results (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho principals never let educators struggle in their presence. Lesotho principals are able to support educators either financially or personally. They become great problem solvers to educators' school related issues. Lesotho educators are satisfied by the way their principals support them (Dijere 2019).

Lesotho principals do not give educators a chance to point fingers at them. They make sure that teaching and learning materials are available whenever educators need them (Kiptum 2018). In schools there are printers and photocopying machines for educators to set questions and print them. Teaching and learning become effective because there is no time to be wasted as resources are available at school. With the data provided, the researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho principals are ever ready to support educators. They support them financially and in every way that could lead to the improvement of schools. Teaching and learning resources are available (Uchendu et al 2013), the principals encourage educators to explore. The reason behind is that when exploring they can learn more on how to tackle their way of teaching.

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The outcome of the research shows that South African principals do support educators too. South African principals never give educators a chance to complain about them, they provide them with adequate resources (Charles and Kiptum 2018). Provision of resources is the motivation to educators and learners. They become motivated and work hard to achieve success. Reflecting on the results of the study, South African female principals encourage unity and joint decision-making. Where there is oneness, problems are easily solved, hence, unity promotes that the educators be committed towards their work. Educators and learners can achieve set goals within the schools just because the principals stand by them no matter what (Norhayati et al 2017).

The researcher discovered that South African principals support instruction through educators. They encourage educators to conduct remedial classes as they help those who are left behind to catch up. South African principals can make learning meaningful (Duan et al 2018). They can go to any extent to support educators because learners' future lies in their hands. As indicated in the proceeding findings, South African principals also support educators by their presence at school. their visibility says a lot because educators seem to gain strength and confidence in them. As a result, they become dedicated when doing daily duties assigned to them. Hence, instruction always becomes effective (Fred and Singh 2021).

5.3.3.4 Instructional support

There are two departments in Lesotho and South Africa that take care of educators. In Lesotho, the Ministry of Education and Training takes good care of teaching and learning services. In South Africa, the Department of Education is responsible for teaching and learning services. Both departments ensure that teaching and learning are effective by supporting schools in various ways, be it training principals and heads of department. The school visit is another strategy used by the two departments to ensure that teaching and learning is taking place as expected (Kharisma and Pirmana 2013).

The researcher is of the view that Lesotho principals as indicated by heads of department encourage teamwork. Educators are free to bring ideas to the table. This results in the development of the schools because educators are involved in decision-making (Kiptum

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2018). Whenever problems arise, they solve them within the blinking of an eye as educators have unity (see things eye to eye). They can help one another, no matter the situation because they have humanity (Agu and Okoli 2021).

Lesotho principals have the gadgets that help teaching and learning be effective. This is done to ease educators' work because schools own photocopying machines and computers to design questions they monitor (Kiptum 2018). Lesotho principals never give educators a chance to complain about anything as there is always stationery. Having computers and photocopying machines help educators to assess learners when the need arises (Heaven and Bourne 2016). Moreover, Lesotho principals are able to accommodate educators and learners in school and let them be in their comfort zone. They provide a conducive environment for everyone (Aziz, Muda, Mansor, Ibrahim 2017). Educators and learners are free and given a chance to make a room for development. This results in the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

The researcher draws a conclusion that in South Africa, the Department of Education is longing to see learners succeed. The pressure the Department of Education exerts on the principals influences them to work hard. They also influence educators to do their work because the Department of Education visits schools more often (Norhayati et al 2017). Furthermore, the study found out that South African principals facilitate teaching and learning differently. They monitor class attendance, check professional books and conduct classroom visits. They do this to support educators and discover their weak points and help them (Leiva et al 2016).

As indicated by Lesotho heads of department, the researcher is of the view that Lesotho female principals support instruction. It is the principal's role to check that educators go to class well prepared and that learners come to school on time. The principals ensure that there is the availability of resources to ease instruction. They support instruction because they wish to see learners become successful in life (Khan et al 2020). Lesotho principals are said to check educators on daily basis to check if they do their work as per the timetable. They even plan academic activities with educators, they never leave them behind. The reason is that they are the ones who are supposed to execute the plans hatched (Onamu 2016). The researcher found out that Lesotho principals provide

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necessary materials for educators to use. Principals are there as facilitators on the side of educators Kiptum 2018). They encourage educators to teach learners in such a way that they discover information for themselves. The principals advise educators to work as facilitators. In this way, learners can put more effort into their studies as they know that educators are there to facilitate, not to spoon-feed them.

The outcome of the research shows that South African principals can provide instructional support. They encourage educators and learners to attend classes according to the timetable. It is because they want the best out of learners. They work determinedly to see to it that educators and learners do not skip any class (Aziz et al 2017). The study found out that South African principals are hands-on. They do not sit there and watch how the educators do the work, but they too do the work. They even encourage educators to attend workshops to be skilled and knowledgeable. According to participants, this is the way the principals support instruction by motivating educators and learners of their hard work (Norhayati et al 2017).

5.3.3.5 Improving the standard of learners' academic achievement

The results of the study and the reviewed literature revealed that Lesotho and South African principals pull all the strings together to make sure that educators' level of learning is improved. Both countries' female principals use the strategy of workshops and regular meetings as they are considered helpful in helping educators upgrade to the next level (Abid, Saghil et al 2018; Abubakar and Sudrajat 2021).

The study found out that workshops and regular meetings assist educators as they come across new ideas that build and help them in making teaching and learning prosper. They take in a piece of new knowledge and add it to the existing one. This helps the educators become knowledgeable and skilful. It also assists them in always be up to date regarding any changes that could be made in the field of education (Abid et al 2018).

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals encourage educators to academically improve themselves. The more they become skilful and knowledgeable the

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more they give learners quality education (Abid et al 2018). Moreover, when they further their studies, this assists them to be in facing challenges with confidence and changes made in the field of education. The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals could go to any extent to improve the standard go learners' academic achievement. The principals pay the expenses for educators to attend workshops. This is where they master their teaching (Hvidston, Mckim and Mette 2016). Most importantly workshops help educators to be up-to-date on changes in the field of education.

The outcome of the research shows that Lesotho principals improve the standards of learners' academic achievement. That is through the provision of teaching and learning resources. When schools have adequate resources, teaching and learning become effective (Kiptum 2018). Educators and learners can get all the information needed to make teaching and learning successful.

In improving learners' academic achievement, Lesotho principals encourage learners to work hard. When learners put more effort into their work, educators are motivated. Educators, on the other hand, work harder than before in ensuring that learners acquire good quality education (Kiptum 2018). Lesotho principals are good in influencing learners' academic achievement (Norhayati et al 2017). Lesotho principals conduct regular classroom visits trying to improve learners' academic achievement. They monitor class attendance and listen to educators' teaching so that they may praise and make corrections where necessary. When educators are shown the weak points, they improve for the better. As a result, the standard of learners' academic achievement is improved (Aziz and Muda 2017).

The researcher discovered that South African principals held educators accountable of learners' success. Since educators are certain that learners' success is in their hands, they work hard to improve themselves for the better. Therefore, they can offer quality education to learners (Kiptum 2018). In the end, the standard of learners' academic achievement is improved (Abid et al 2018; Kiptum 2018). South African principals seem to encourage educators to improve their standard of teaching. When they have improved themselves, it is easy to improve the standards of learners' academic achievement (Abid

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et al 2018). With the principals' influence, educators work towards improving themselves so that they excel when teaching learners.

5.3.3.6 Communicating school vision and mission

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals are aiming to achieve hundred percent pass rate. They have a belief that every learner is capable of scoring good grades. They work hard to accomplish this goal. This is run, but principals are trying hard to make it happen (Norhayati et al 2017). Furthermore, Lesotho and South African principals can persevere. They remind educators and learners of what the school's vision and mission statement are. This helps educators to always remember their duties and responsibilities. In the end they achieve success because hard work pays (Khan et al 2020).

The researcher draws a conclusion that as stated by Lesotho and South African heads of department, the principals can communicate a clear vision and mission with their schools. This helps educators together with learners to have a clear picture of what is expected of them at the end of every term. They work hard towards achieving the set goals (Jeffrey and Dickison 2013).

Both Lesotho and South African principals ensure that they frequently remind educators and learners of what the school vision and mission entails. The more the vision and mission are communicated is the more they are instilled in the hearts of educators and learners (Nimwegen, Bolen, Hassink and Thijssens 2008). As a result, they become devoted and dedicated to their work. hence, in the end learners' academic achievement becomes excellent. The researcher found out that Lesotho principals' aim at producing good results. They even wish to produce learners who are self-reliant after the completion of their studies. Educators work together with learners to achieve this common goal. Lesotho principals want to have products that will be able to make their choices when they have to go to universities (Agu and Okoli 2021).

As indicated in the proceeding findings, principals make sure that the schools live by the vision and mission statement. More often educators are reminded of what the schools' vision and mission statement entails. This helps them to stay focused because they have

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the set objectives that they must achieve (Heaven and Bourne 2016). Lesotho principals try to ensure that learners become responsible citizens. They give learners opportunities to reveal their talents. Apart from that, they help learners develop themselves morally, spiritually, intellectually, and physically (Paul & Kumari 2017).

According to South African principals, it is the schools' wish that learners reach their full potential academically and otherwise. Their focus is on assisting learners to achieve their heart desires. It is South African principals' dream that they acquire good quality results. This is achieved through revising the school's vision and mission statement. They live by the school's vision and mission statement, and they achieve what they want.

5.3.3.7 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

Based on the observation of the participants, the researcher is of the view that in supervising and evaluating instruction, the principals use multiple ways. According to Terra and Berhanu (2017); (Kiptum 2018), in Lesotho principals make sure that educators and learners master time management. They conduct classroom visits to observe educators and check if learners are marked whenever they are given assignments or classwork. Lesotho principals ensure that educators go to class prepared. Hence, provide with useful to enhance teaching and boost educators and learners' morale in education (Coimbra (2013). Moreover, lesson plans are checked on daily basis to ensure that learners are given information relevant to the topics and that the selected teaching are appropriate to what is going to be taught Lesotho principals can make a follow up to make sure that the methods of assessment educators employ help learners improve (Hvidston, Mckim and Mette 2016).

It was evident from Lesotho heads of department that in supervising and evaluating instruction, the principals join hands with the heads of department. It is indicated that Lesotho principals are best at classroom to check learners' progress (Hvidston et al 2016). Hence, they give immediate feedback so that educators may have to improve where there is a need. It was presented that the principal uses a combination of high and low order question. This helps to check learners' level of understanding. Furthermore, the questions cater for both fast and slow learners.

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The study found out that Lesotho principals supervise and evaluate instruction through the heads of department. Since principals are somehow busy, they delegate some duties to the heads of department (Mestry 2017). So, HODs work as watchdogs, they pay attention to all the activities performed by the educators. They are observant when doing their work because they ought to report the happening to their principals.

The researcher discovered that as stated by the heads of department, South African principals do their work through heads of department. They opt for this because heads of department are the ones who know educators better as they meet them more often. The principals evaluate educators' performance regularly (Kiptum 2018). When the evaluation is done, they can spot educators' strengths and weaknesses. Hence, this improves learners' academic achievement (Coimbra 2013; Terra and Berhanu 2019; Hvidston et al 2016).

The outcome of the research shows that South African principals work hand in hand with School Management Team (SMT). South African principals and SMT supervise and evaluate instruction (Milondzo et al 2015). They both see to it that educators and learners do their work as expected. As a result, teaching and learning become effective.

Like Lesotho heads of department, South African heads of department stated that their principal do check their professional books regularly to ensure that the work is perfectly done (Terra and Berhanu 2019). Likewise, they monitor class attendance, and this contributes in educators finishing the syllabus within the stipulated time. In this way principals make sure that educators go to class with proper lesson plans.

In South Africa the heads of department clarified that in supervising and evaluating instruction, educators are stationary while learners move from class to class. In addition to ensure that educators attend classes on daily basis, classroom leaders are given orders to request educators to sign on a register at the end of every period. Therefore, when an educator skips classes, he or she must explain as to why that happened (Hvidston et al 2016). South African heads of department justified that the principals supervise and evaluate instruction through School Management Team (SMT). Among the duties of SMT, being responsible for quality teaching and learning is one of them

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(Milandzo et al 2015). the other one is that they are responsible for daily management of the school. Hence, principals have trust in them.

Both Lesotho and South African principals seem to realise the importance of supervision and evaluation of instruction. They have taken serious measures to ensure that supervision and evaluation are conducted. This shows that all they want is that learners could get quality education. Hence, acquire good grades that would allow them to go to colleges and universities of their choices.

5.3.3.8 Guidance and counselling

The results of the study and the reviewed literature revealed that Lesotho and South African female principals are excellent on giving educators and learners guidance and counselling. Although at some point, they do it indirectly, they take a good care of educators and learners' feelings (Khan et al 2020; Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

The study found out that, Lesotho female principals show their love in schools. They ensure that educators are well taken care of. They are highly concerned of educators and learners' well-being (Aziz et al 2017). Hence, they invite counsellors to come and have a talk with them thus motivate them as well. at some point, Lesotho female principals require one to one communication with educators to hear from them and try to solve their problems. They also encourage educators to have an open discussion with the learners to find if they have any problem. It is best to provide guidance and counselling as they help educators and learners are stress free.

The outcome of the research shows that Lesotho principals are good at guiding and counselling educators and learners. They guide educators and learners by showing them the right direction. Principals never let learners go astray in their presence. Fortunately, because they are females, they have motherly love, patience and tolerance towards and learners (Kerry, Robinson and Charol 2017).

As indicated in the preceding findings, it is not always the case that principals invite counsellors. They act as counsellors for educators because whatever problem they have, they report to them. Hence, principals encourage educators to become learners'

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counsellors because they report their problems to them. Learners feel free to talk to educators about their problems because they consider them as their parents (Terra and Berhamu 2017).

It was indicated that South African female principals like to see educators and learners with happy faces at all the time. South African female principals likewise invite counsellors to come to guide, motivate and empower educators and learners. At some point, they prefer one to one session with educators in search of what their problems are. After this open discussion with the principals, educators feel free and motivated; hence educators also help learners in their daily struggle in learning. According to how the participants stated, the principals do this entire quarterly to ensure that minds are cleared (Grant 2021).

The study found out that in South Africa, at some point counsellors are invited quarterly. It is done quarterly because principals' desire is to see educators and learners starting every quarter with fresh minds. When this happens, the weight on their shoulders is weighed down. Hence, the learners' academic achievement improves for the better. Even educators become stress free, so teaching and learning turn out to be effective (Abid et al 2018).

The researcher discovered that the South African principals consider educators and learners' feelings. When it happens that they do not invite counsellors, they fill the space and do the work. Their desire is to see educators and learners always live harmoniously. They avoid to see them stressed, because all they wish for is quality education and excellent academic performance (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

5.3.3.9 Adapting to gender differences

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals are able to adapt to gender differences. When it comes to leadership, men do not have to dominate women, they must be equal (Wijaya and Sawandanos 2020). There must be no discrimination because both genders have leadership skills even though they exercise them differently. What should matter most is the qualifications not gender.

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Reflecting on the results of the study, the researcher concludes that was said by Lesotho heads of department, men and women are to be treated equal. In the past men were considered as the only ones to be at higher positions than women because they were said to be powerful. In this 21st Century that belief by the societies does no longer exists. Women are put at higher positions; hence, their leadership is also excellent (Mutarubukwa and Mazana 2017).

Moreover, comparison of gender as indicated by Lesotho heads of department, has to come to an end. Females are good as they have quality traits that make them become successful in their leadership. Lesotho female principals make learners acquire good quality education in their leadership.

The researcher discovered that the high schools in the Mohale's Hoek District there is a school which produces excellent results. This has turned the good academic performance to be its culture (Robinson and Charol 2017). Indeed, this school strives hard to be among the best country-wide and this is happening. The school is a good example that women are capable of being put in higher leadership positions (Rassidy, Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018).

The study found out that in Lesotho only a few schools are led by females. Women are denied a chance to be at higher leadership positions at high school level (Pounder and Coleman 2002). In most cases, females are given the opportunity to occupy leadership positions in the kindergarten and primary schools (Ukimera and Trnavcevic 2002). This is heart-breaking because females also have their quality traits that would make them the best leaders ever (Robinson and Chard 2017).

As stated by South African heads of department, South African principals regardless of being females exercise good leadership skills, which lead to the success of the schools. This shows that men and women are equal but cannot exercise their power in the same way. Females because of having motherhood role can model educators and learners' behaviours. They are patient and tolerate difficult situations until they happen (Soklaridis and Lopez 2014).

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Reflecting on the results of the study, even in South African high schools, female principals are scarcely found. Males seem to have overpowered women in leadership positions (Surbramanian 2016; Robinson and Chard 2017. Men and women must be considered the same. They both have different quality traits that can make them become perfect leaders (Shaked and Granz 2018). The discrimination of gender in higher leadership positions must come to an end. Females have equal rights as males also do, there should be no gap between them (Ali, Zakuan and Ahmad 2019).

5.3.4 How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

5.3.4.1 Capability to care

Reflecting on the results of the study, Lesotho principals have tender love for educators and learners. To express their tender love, they have provided a conducive learning environment. Educators and learners regain their happiness at school. when the environment is good for learning to take place, the academic performance is excellent (Khan et al 2020). The study found out that Lesotho principals employ affiliative leadership style in caring for educators and learners. Lesotho principals consider educators' feelings. Their motive behind is to keep educators and learners happy at all the times. Indeed, Lesotho principals are determined to work with people of different characters (Fatonah and Abubakar 2020).

Lesotho heads of department discussed that Lesotho female principals use self-motivation for educators and learners. In addition, educators and learners are given a chance to have a word with counsellors and motivational speakers at school as principals take initiatives to invite them. Most importantly female principals are indeed caring, for they always want the best out of learners (Robinson and Charol 2017). Moreover, schools' rolls in Lesotho increases annually because the principals are known to be good ag caring. Hence, parents do not hesitate to send their children to such school because they are certain that there is care there (Ntekane 2018).

As for South African principals, it was indicated that they care for educators and learners' well-being. This shows that they have unconditional love. At all the times they make sure

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that educators and learners are happy. Indeed, they make them feel at home and uplift their spirit (Mestry 2017). Moreover, South African heads of department mentioned a point that in showing that South African female principals care for learners, they encourage educators to go extra miles and offer learners extra lessons to promote good performance. Additionally, educators are advised by those female principals to involve learners in extra-curricular activities because they are recreational (Abubakar and Sudrajat 2020).

It is apparent from the literature reviewed and data provided by the participants that Lesotho and South African principals have the capability to care for educators and learners. The fact that females are meant for nurturing and ensuring that everyone at home is in a good mood, even at school they do likewise (Esa and Peng 2013).

The researcher noticed from the data provided by the participants that Lesotho female principals are full of love. They value and respect educators and learners. Due to the way they treat educators and learners, schools enrol many learners every year. Parents feel free to send their children at school because they know that their children are in good hands (Ntekane 2018). Even educators having seen that the principals care for them, they put more effort in the duties assigned to them. This results in schools performing well.

The study found out that South African principals can support educators and learners. The support is not selective, but they help them with school related issues and the personal ones. South African principals prioritise education so they remove obstacles that might hinder it. In return, this has made educators and learners to value and respect their principals. Therefore, they work hard to achieve success because they do not want to disappoint their principals (Fred and Singh 2021).

5.3.4.2 Gentleness

The results of the study and the reviewed literature revealed that most of the female principals are good advisors to learners as well as management. Moreover, they can set good examples in terms of behaviour. Their dress code is always more presentable as compared to their subordinates (Rassidy, Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018). Hence, they as

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female principals humbly approach educators and make them aware of the good dress code without making any fuss. All the above qualities resemble Lesotho female principals. They seem to be concerned about the dress code, since in some cases, it might make learners focus on educators' appearance instead of focusing on what is being taught.

Lesotho female principals are said to have excellent leadership. Nothing is impossible for them as they are so determined, strong and persuasive in whatever they do. They can empower both educators and learners to always do their best (Rassidy et al 2018). Therefore, this proves that female principals' instructional leadership affects the school culture in a positive manner. They can protect and develop the culture of the school. They can do everything in their power to ensure that teaching and learning become a success (Kerry and Charol 2017). It was also found that Lesotho principals are found to be committed to their work. Indeed, women are meant for nurturing (Esa and Peng 2013). They can answer to learners and educators' daily needs for effective teaching and learning. This shows their full commitment which results in good quality results.

With the data provided by the participants, the researcher noticed that Lesotho female principals are the best. They are influential, dedicated and committed towards their work. They can outplay educators and learners. Although they are influential, they are humble and always down to earth (Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018). They never raise their voices on educators and learners. This indicates that they have what is called self-respect. Being females has nothing to do with leadership as it comes from oneself. Females can do all the duties that males can do to make teaching and learning effective and successful. Lesotho female principals have good communication skills which help them solve problems in schools. Being a female principal brings about good results (Dejere et al 2019).

As clarified by South African heads of department, South African female principals are also preferable in every leadership positions. They are strong and able to work hard at any situations. South African female instructional leaders do not let their femininity influence their leadership in a negative way (Kerry and Charol 2017). Moreover, gender does not really describe a person's leadership traits. South African female principals are determined towards learners' academic achievement. They act as learners' foster parents

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as they can take a good care of their needs (Ahmad and Leang 2013). Their femaleness results in good academic achievement for they always help educators reach learners' educational needs (Kerry and Charol 2017). South African heads of department stated that being a female does not count at all, only a person's perseverance, dedication, and good leadership skills count (Kerry and Charol 2017). They mentioned a point that South African female principals have earned a good reputation due to their hard work.

According to South African principals, as females they are strong and powerful no matter the situation. When they are angry, they cool down first, they do not take decisions in haste. Since they need long lasting leadership, they exercise good leadership skills (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021. They are the best influencers when it comes to learners' academic achievement. The love they show to educators and learners is unwavering.

5.3.4.3 Parental involvement

The researcher draws a conclusion that indeed, parents are the firs educators to their children. Without parents' foundation in modelling the children, educators would struggle to discipline learners well at school (Teba-Teba 2016; Teba-Teba, Makura and Thabane 2021). Educators' duty is to further polish where parents have already started with a good foundation. Furthermore, Lesotho and South African parents are always there for their children's education. According to Teba-Teba et al 2021, parents ensure that children are given adequate time to deal with their studies. At some point parents help their children with reading and the given assignment. If it happens that parents struggle to help their children, they seek help from those who are capable, including some family members (Teba-Teba 2016).

When parents involve themselves in their children's formal education, they make it easier for educators. They stand a good chance to influence their children to do their work and give them enough time to study at home. In this manner teaching and learning become a success, because three parties (educators, parents and learners) share responsibility in teaching and learning (Ntekane 2018; Teba-Teba et al 2021). Therefore, the researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho principals are fond of parental involvement. Parents are considered to be the first educators of their children (Teba-Teba 2016). Lesotho principals

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showed that parents shape and model their children's behaviour before they go to school. educators are there to model them by giving them quality education (Teba-Teba 2016). It is true that parents know their children and are good influencers in their children's lives (Ntekane 2018).

The study found out that South African principals consider parental involvement to be the best. They raised a point that learners whose parents partake in their learning are able to score good grade (Magwa and Mugari 2017). It was discovered that parents in South Africa can support learners financially, physically and emotionally. Hence, they can perform well at school.

The study revealed that South African female principals see the importance of parental involvement. They highly advise parents to partake in their children's education (Magwa and Mugari 2017; Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). Learners become motivated when they come to realise that their parents care for their education. As a result, learners can perform well in class and score good grades (Ntekane 2018); Enemuo and Ongnwe 2020). There is indeed a huge difference between learners whose parents partake in their education and those whose parents do not. Lesotho heads of department consider parental involvement as a ladder learners must climb to accomplish success. Since parents are considered important, they are given enough care and respect (Magwa and Mugari 2017). They are made to feel that they are accepted at school wherever they want to inquire of their children's progress.

The researcher discovered that, when the principals analysed and evaluated the reports, they noticed how beneficial parents are. They came to realise that learners who gain support from their parents score good grades than the others (Ntekane 2018). It was also found out that those learners whose parents partake in their education are well disciplined (Teba-Teba 2016). Those learners with no support struggle in their learning and at last, they drop out of schools (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

5.3.4.4 Improvement in teaching and learning

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals do improve teaching and learning. Even though their motive behind is to improve teaching and

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learning, their ways of doing it are different (Kiptum 2018; Moureen 2019). It is vital to recuperate instruction so that learners could be provided with quality education. The researcher found out that Lesotho principals encourage educators to employ diverse strategies in their teaching. This could help learners to understand the concepts better (Aziz, Muda, Mansor and Ibrahim 2017). In schools there are various types of learners, namely, auditory learners, visual learners and kinaesthetic learners. Employing of multiple strategies would help cater for each type of learners.

The study also found out that Lesotho principals encourage educators to attend school related workshops. The workshops help educators to share good ideas and acquire new skills and knowledge (Norhayati, Mohd, Noor and Mohd 2017). Moreover, workshops are said to assist educators to be up to date regarding. Furthermore, the researcher discovered that Lesotho principals ensure the availability of resources in their schools. This is the best way of improving teaching and learning. Educators and learners' morale in education is boosted when they come to recognise that the principal is determined (Abid et al 2018). As a result, educators work hard to deliver quality education to learners. Therefore, learners also pull all the string in obtaining good grades.

The study found out that Lesotho principals encourage educators to use different teaching methods. The emphasis is made that, using teaching methods inter-changeably helps learners to understand a concept even better (Gobingca and Makura 2016). It was indicated that learners are not the same, there are fast learners, middle learners and slow learners. As a result, using of different teaching methods caters for all learners (Gobingca and Makura 2016). As indicated by Lesotho heads of department, Lesotho principals can organise prize giving ceremonies. It is done in the form of acknowledging educators and learners who did well in each subject. It is a form of motivation for both educators and learners. Hence, it creates competition because educators and learners all struggle to be the best (Carroll 2013). As a result, the schools' academic performance rises to higher levels.

The researcher found out that in South Africa principals encourage educators to use cooperative learning. This method of teaching is good because learners are able to help one another through discussion. Using this method helps learners to believe in

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themselves and become confident at the same time. The study also figured out that South African principals encourage parental involvement in learners' education. It is good to involve parents in their children's education because they are first educators in their children's lives (Enemuo and Onyenwe 2020). Parents are the ones who know their children better than anyone else. When parents partake in their children's education. Learners can score good grades as they get all the support they need from their parents (Ntekane 2018).

As for South African principals, they make sure that there are adequate resources of teaching and learning. When the resources are available, educators are motivated and their teaching become excellent (Kiptum 2018). Even learners' morale in education is boosted when they come to realise that their education is highly valued. Therefore, the schools' academic achievement become outstanding.

5.3.4.5 Providing feedback

The researcher noticed from the data supplied by the participants that Lesotho and South African principals never hesitate to provide feedback. Provision of feedback, according to Leiva, Montecinos, Carmen, Aravena and Felipe (2016), is important as it helps educators to adopt new knowledge and leave all the misconceptions they have. It helps keep educators on track and assist educators to avoid mistakes.

The researcher discovered that providing feedback is said to motivate educators as they can spot the strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, provision of feedback fosters personal and professional growth. Hence, it creates hospitable climate where educators are free to be corrected when they have made mistakes (Lim, Teo, Wong and Khine 2003; Sudrajat and Abubakar 2020). Therefore, it is beneficial for principals to give educators feedback so that they may know their right and wrong doings (Leiva et al 2016).

According to Lesotho principals, provision of feedback on time helps educators to do self-evaluation. After classroom visits are conducted the principals give educators immediate feedback. The reason behind is that when educators receive feedback on time, they can strengthen their weak points. As the result they become perfect (Kiptum 2018).

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According to Lesotho heads of department, the principals must be organised, loud and clear. In this way the message they convey would be straight forward. Before they could even plan to give feedback to educators, they must revise it more often so that they could be fluent. Ever since they practised this strategy, at all the times, they are fluent and confident when standing in front of educators and learners (Leiva et al 2016). The study found out that Lesotho principals have trust and confidence in themselves. Even when the message they pass in negative, they can hold themselves. They never make educators and learners to feel weak or bad at any cost. Their manner of conveying information is excellent (Mutarubukwa and Mazanz 2017).

It was indicated that South African principals prefer to give educators feedback often cheeking their professional books. This gives educators a chance to make correction before going to class. In instances where they have done well the principals sing praises for them (Aziz et al 2017). It is the principals' role to monitor and evaluate educators' progress. The most interesting part is that they can provide educators with immediate feedback. This helps educators to evaluate themselves and to make improvement where necessary. This works best for the entire schools because it calls for excellent teaching and learning (Mestry 2017).

The researcher discovered that in South Africa, the principals after the publication of results evaluate and analyse them. It has turned out to be a habit and they give the feedback of results analysis to educators and learners. The feedback influences educators and learners to work harder (Agu and Okoli 2021). In South Africa, principals are held accountable to announce results of any sort at the assembly. Particularly the competitions, principals must brief educators and learners on what happened basing themselves on the reports provided by the educators. Either the schools won the battle or lost it, the principal must be positive as educators and learners get courage from them (Heaven and Bourne 2016).

The study found out that South African principals appoint educators to attend the workshops. On their return, educators are asked to write a report about the happenings discussed in the workshop. Thereafter, the principals analyse the report, and then brief other educators of the benefits of attending the workshops.

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5.3.4.6 High standards

Based on the light of the discussion, the researcher is of the view that female principals from both countries' goals are somehow similar (Abid, et al 2018). They all have a dream to bring the best out of learners so that dreams could come to reality. The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals' education's goal is to provide learners with knowledge and skill that will help them in future (Charles 2018; Abid et al 2018). It was found from the preceding findings that there are long and short-term goals in schools and usually assists educators and learners take their work more seriously. The long and short-term goals can help in predicting the schools are going in future. When the school aims high, the results become excellent hence this makes education to be valued (Charles 2018).

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals have high standards when it comes to their schools. Democratic form of leadership assists principals to do their work smoothly as they do not make decisions on their own but include stakeholders (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021). The results of the study revealed that Lesotho principals valued their subordinates' opinions and take then into consideration. As indicated, School Governing Body (SGB) and heads of department are included in the formation of the vision and mission statement of the school. Educators are also involved as vision and mission statement would only come to life because of their hard work (Grant 2021).

In this regard, it is vital to formulate the school's vision and mission statement because they path a way for educators and learners to work hard. Educators and learners also know exactly what is expected of them hence they exert their effort in their duties. The vision and mission statement provides educators and learners with profitable skills and knowledge by allowing them think analytically and logically (Fontonah and Abubakar 2009). It was indicated that the school vision and mission describe the entire motive of every school. This implies that by reading every school's vision and mission, one could tell that the school's desire is to work hard to assist learners succeed and fulfil their dreams (Agu and Okoli 2021).

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The study found out that the school's vision and mission statement are made known to all educators, learners and visitors. They are put on the notice boards for everyone to access and read them. At the assembly also educators and learners are often reminded of what the school's vision and mission are all about. They are discussed on daily basis so that they become instilled in the hearts of learners (Heaven and Bourne 2016). With the provided data, the researcher discovered that even South African principals formulated their vision and mission statement democratically they included the School Management Team (SMT) and School Governing Body (SGB). This implies that they take other people's ideas into consideration because no one is perfect (Milondzo et al 2025; Luhalima and Mulovhedzi 2021).

As per vision and mission statement formulated by South African principals, the biggest desire is to give learners quality education. Their vision and mission statement are well established in such a way that they become live for everyone to see. Hence, in South Africa education is highly taken into consideration (Nimwegen, Bollen, Hasink and Thijssens 2008; Duan et al 2018).

Reflecting on the results of the study, Lesotho principals expect educators to contribute in the developing of the schools. The principals influence educators to work hard so as to produce good quality results (Heaven and Bourne 2016). It is interesting because learners do their work willing without being pressurised. In this way learners are able to reach their full potential. Hence, they obtain good grades that give them a chance to choose their careers. According to South African principals, educators have to be dedicated towards their work. It is always the case that they outsmart learners and that they teach beyond the textbooks. This makes learners become creative and quick problem-solvers either personal of school related (Agu and Okoli 2021).

5.3.4.7 Hospitable climate

From the argument of the ten participants, the researcher concludes that Lesotho and South African principals indeed provide hospitable climate for teaching and learning to take place. Principals can allow a room for changes when it comes to the field of education (Agu and Okoli 2021). In schools, principals can provide welcoming environment in school

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where learners are free to learn. Learners prefer schools that are open and friendly because such schools help them develop morally, spiritually, physically and intellectually (Paul and Kumari 2017).

The study finds out that hospitable climate allows principals and educators to be creative and bring in new ideas on the table of which will help schools prosper. Furthermore, hospitable climate results in unity, which again leads to superb academic achievement (Zakaria and Daud 2009). Hence the researcher draws a conclusion that, Lesotho and South African female principals can provide a hospitable climate in school as per heads of department provided data. As indicated, hospitable climate allows schools to improve for the better. Indeed, a friendly environment calls up for good quality results (Paul and Kumari 2017).

With data provided by the participants, it was indicated that, Lesotho female principals can promote a warm and welcoming environment in schools. Lesotho female instructional leaders are well known by creating a friendly environment where educators collaboratively work with learners by helping them acquire quality education (Kiptum 2018). It was also stated that a friendly environment boost learners' morale in education as they are allowed to do all the activities that benefit them to succeed.

Most apparently, the researcher found out that positive environment reduces the rate of dropouts as indicated by Lesotho heads of department. Lesotho female principals as instructional leaders are good at making learners feel at home. They allow learners to consider the school as the comforting zone, as the second home where there is always harmony (Ahmad and Peng 2013).

The outcome of the research shows that South African female principals can create a positive working environment. Educators and learners become motivated when living in such environment. To prove it, when learners are at school, they never miss their homes because their peace is generated at schools (Oyeniran and Bonjah 2018). Moreover, hospitable climate ban unpleasant behaviour in schools. Educators and learners think twice before acting or jeopardizing their chances of being at school. Hospitable climate

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encourages good behaviour of which contributes to the success of learners (Heaven and Bourne 2016)

The researcher discovered that Lesotho principals encourage unity between educators, parents and learners. Parents and educators are both important in the moulding and developing of the children (Magwa and Mugari 2017). The principals create a hospitable climate for these three parties because there is a saying that “Education is a three-legged pot.” In this case learners feel free to learn and produce good results.

According to South African principals, it is their wish to promote a warm welcoming environment. They do this to motivate educators and learners and to make them feel free. Their wish has come true because educators and learners are free to do all the activities that develop the school (Tinus 2020). the good point is that the hospitable climate creates a room for teaching and learning to become effective.

5.3.5 How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

5.3.5.1 Defining and communicating school culture

The researcher is of the view that Lesotho and South African principals have their own ways of defining and communicating the school culture. Each school has its own way of handling things likewise; every school has the culture that makes it unique from other schools. School culture entails of all good happenings within the school (Duan et al 2018; Ntekane 2018).

From the argument of the participants, the researcher discovered that Lesotho female principals have different ways in which they define and communicate their school culture of which make them be different from other schools. As indicated the instructional leaders use an assembly as a forum to talk of the school culture. This is done because principals are aware that everyone attends the assembly, so they take that opportunity. The

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principals make sure that, parents, board members and other stakeholder are made aware of what the culture of the school entails (Mestry 2017; Enemuo and Onyenwe 2020).

The study also found out that, morning study is every school's culture. Even though some learners ought to travel long distances before reaching their schools, educators encourage them to get up early so that they too get the opportunity to have morning study sessions. In most cases, learners are encouraged to come to school and study because most of them are unable to study at home due to conducive atmosphere. As result, the academic achievement of learners improves thus it is every Lesotho female principal's dream to obtain good quality results. Moreover, Lesotho female principals have a good habit that learners speak English at school since teaching and learning is done in English in almost all the subjects. Perseverance, dedication and determination bring about success. As it is said by the participants, among the school cultures every school has a culture to celebrate success as this motivates both educators and learners (Xiaoju, Xiangun and Kai 2018).

The researcher discovered that it is the culture in Lesotho high schools that learners discover information on their own. Principals in Lesotho encourage educators to teach learners to be independent. Educators still do their work but at the juncture they work as facilitators. Learners are free to consult educators where they struggle. This learning strategy is good as it promotes learners to attend morning and afternoon study sessions. Although schools' culture is communicated differently, the common goal is success (Abid et al 2018).

The culture of Lesotho schools is to provide learners with quality education. They try to show parents and learners how important education is (Ntekane 2018). First, in Lesotho high schools, principals have maintained discipline. Disciplined learners can work hard to achieve the schools' set goals and objectives. It seems that the principals face a challenge of learners who go to circumcision school before the completion of their study (Tinus 2020). It is a country-wide problem, the heart-breaking is that when they return, they are out of hands. Hence, they are difficult to discipline (Tinus 2020; Fred and Singh 2021).

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With the provided data, the researcher noticed that South African principals also have their own way of defining communication their school culture. They involve the stakeholders in school activities. In South African schools there are different parties involved in learners' academic achievement. Those parties work in collaboration in helping learners achieve their goal of furthering their studies to the higher level of education (Teba-Teba and Makura 2021).

Reflecting on the results of the study, South African educators' culture is that they put education before all other things. They value education to an extent that can plan and implement ways in which teaching and learning can become successful (Duan et al 2018). Modelling learners' behaviour is also one of South African female principals' cultures because they intend to produce learners whom after the completion of their studies will contribute in the development of the country.

As indicated by SHOD, South African principals' culture is to work tirelessly to produce good results. It is well said that they have no time to waste, every chance they acquire teaching and learning takes place. Teaching and learning are practised in South Africa. Principals with educators and implement strategies that improve teaching and learning (Gobingca and Makura 2016). As a result, teaching and learning become effective.

It is South African high schools' culture that educators and learners attend school as expected. In this country education is valued and it is not taken for granted. Distractions that hinder teaching and learning are avoided. To achieve all these, parents are involved as they are the best influencers when it comes to their children's education (Enemuo and Onynwe 2020).

5.3.5.2 Developing school culture

The researcher discovered that Lesotho and South African female principals develop school culture in a way that suits them best. Developing the school culture is a way of predicting how far schools can go. It is all about planning and implementing strategies that would bring about success in schools.

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In this regard, Lesotho female instructional leaders show that their school culture of which is obtaining success is well understood by educators, learners and parents. This eases the work because parents sent their children to school knowing exactly what is expected of them and learners. Educators as well work towards what the culture of the school entails of, hence, they put more effort. Learners also work hard to ensure that they keep the school culture intact. Indeed, the three parties work hand in hand in maintaining the developed school culture.

The study found out that South African female principals' school culture is quality teaching and learning of a high standard. They encourage educators and learners to manage time so that teaching and learning could be effective. South African principals' wish is to bring the best out of learners by motivating and supporting them throughout their academic journey.

Developing of the school culture is a good start because the culture keeps the school's reputation intact. The school culture is said to promote excellent performance in high schools (Xiangun and Kai 2018). It also helps learners to behave in a manner that helps them become responsible citizens of the country (Tinus 2020).

The researcher found out that Lesotho principals are fond of learners who make discoveries for themselves. In Lesotho high schools, it is a culture that educators become facilitators more than being dictators. This is a good way of learning because learners do not easily forget what they discovered on their own. Learners approach educators only where they do not understand (Abid, Sighir and Ayesha 2018).

Moreover, Lesotho principals' culture is to work hard towards achieving success. It seems that teaching and learning is because there is high rate of pregnancy and early marriages (Tinus 2020). But the principals try hard to control this behaviour. It seems that Lesotho principals managed to control behaviour of learners because there is high completion in high schools.

According to Lesotho principals, developing the school culture promotes the environment that fosters success. Educators and learners abide by the schools' culture because they know the consequences (Xiaoju et al 2018). Since other schools are situated in remote

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and rural areas, the schools' culture is not easy to maintain. Girls experience early pregnancy and this is not only the case for rural schools but also the urban ones. Even the boys go to circumcision school at the early age. Lesotho principals try hard to stop this behaviour that hinders young people to achieve their educational goal.

The researcher discovered that South African principals consider schools' culture important. A conducive environment leads to intact school culture and allows the effectiveness of instruction (Tinus 2020). Moreover, school culture leads to learners being well disciplined as it results in learners' succeeding in their plans. South African principals want the best out of learners and that in future they become responsible citizens. It is the researcher's view that South African principals wish to bring the best out of learners by providing them with quality education. It is South African principals' culture that the young generation be educated so that they become responsible citizens (Yadad 2017)..

The researcher discovered that South African principals can maintain their culture. Learning is strict in South Africa; it is taken seriously. Educators and learners go to class as per timetable and the attendance is good. . When an educator or a learner is absent, a concrete proof is needed that explains as to why he or she was absent.

5.3.5.3 Adequate resources

The researcher discovered that Lesotho and South African principals never let educators suffer at any point. They make an assurance that there are adequate resources for teaching and learning to take place (Heaven and Bourne 2016). When there are adequate resources at school, educators become motivated and become dedicated to their work. It was obvious from the data supplied by the participants that Lesotho principals do their best to ensure the effectiveness of education. They provide with necessary resources for teaching and learning (Kiptum 2018). This boosts educators and learners' morale in education as they recognise that they are well taken care of.

Moreover, Lesotho principals are seen to take the responsibility for enhancing learners' academic performance. They support educators and learners financially when there are school competitions, such as Science fair, English fare, and school trips. In preparation for all these educators and learners work hard to ensure that they do not disappoint their

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principals (Agu and Okoli 2021). The researcher discovered that South African principals provide necessary resources for teaching and learning to take place as expected. They also ensure that educators do their duties according to day-to-day timetables. Availability of the resources is crucial for both educators and learners. South African principals value education to an extent that they never let educators complain about the unavailability of resources (Esa et al 2017). The principals seem to have an understanding that it is their role to provide resources for effective teaching and learning. They also seem to be fully aware that where there are resources the work is done smoothly.

The researcher also discovered that Lesotho and South African principals showed support to educators regardless of any situation. The female principals are good at taking care of materials for teaching and learning. In this case, they make sure that all resources needed for teaching and learning are available on time (Heaven and Bourne 2018). In this way, educators' morale in their daily duties is boosted. They become motivated when they do not struggle with their teaching due to the availability of resources. In a case where the resources are scarce, resources are improvised so that teaching and learning could become a success (Kiptum 2018).

The study concludes that indeed female principals are the best when it comes to the success of learners. They do everything in their power to ensure that Ministry of Education and Training, in Lesotho, and Department of Education, in the case of South Africa, provides schools with all the needed resources (Kharisma and Pirmana 2013).

According to Lesotho heads of department, the principals are responsible for the provision of resources in schools. When the principals answer to the needs of educators, teaching and learning become a success (Shaked and Glans 2018). Moreover, educators' morale in teaching is boosted as the availability of resources is a form of motivation for them. Lesotho principals try hard to ensure that they do not fail the educators at any point (Herzallah and Arar 2019).

According to South African heads of department, adequate resources are said to be good influencers in learners' academic achievement. Educators' and learners' morale in education is boosted by the availability of resources (Kiptum 2018). In this case, because

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the South African principals have noticed it, they ensure that there are adequate resources in schools. Educators and learners on the other hand work hard to achieve success.

5.4 Conclusion

The study concludes that the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools, is to ensure that teaching and learning take place as expected. No matter how duties are done but the end, learners' academic achievement has to be excellent. Apart from that, all Lesotho and South African principals appear to be possessive and influential when it comes to learners' academic achievement. They seem to have perseverance and are dedicated to their work. This means that they spend most of their time facilitating instruction.

Even though they have a lot on their plate, they compromise and sacrifice to see to it that learners' academic achievement becomes excellent. In both countries, education is highly valued, and the principals are aiming at producing learners who will become responsible citizens in the future. These female principals have smart quality traits that help them flourish in their leadership. This promotes and enhances learners' academic performance which allows them to go to colleges and universities of their choice to pursue their studies

Since this is a comparative study, at some point Lesotho and South African principals we're able to see things eye to eye whereas they seemed to view things differently. They all have a similar goal which is attaining success hence their way of facilitating instruction goes in hand. As a way of facilitating instruction, both countries involve parents partake in their children's education. They even check educators' professional books daily to check if they are still on point and also conduct classroom visits to check how educators interact with learners in a classroom setting. Moreover, they ensure that there are adequate resources for teaching and learning to progress. In South Africa department of Education is responsible for education while in Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training is responsible. The two departments work hard to ensure that teaching and learning take place as expected.

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In fact, it is good to have female principals in schools because their leadership is outstanding at all times. They are loving, caring and hence are good for nurturing that is why where females are leaders, learners' academic achievement is always excellent. It's a wish that male leaders take a good example on how to become good leaders because the schools led by the females are the most outstanding when it comes to learners' performance.

CHAPTER 6 – SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The focus of the chapter is, to sum up, and conclude the study. The recommendations and conclusions are discussed with the purpose of empowering female educators to have the courage to take positions of instructional leadership at their schools whenever they are available. They also assist female principals to change their mindset and that of the society that principalship is the position that must be occupied by males only. In fact, the

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liberal feminist theory fits in the contextual framework of this study as it aims at promoting equality between males and females. In this chapter, the summaries of the findings are presented based on the themes classified in the previous chapter. The researcher explored the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools. This is a liberal feminism and a comparative study of Lesotho and South African female school principals. The summary, conclusions and recommendations are grounded on the research questions and the outcomes of the collected data from the participants. In this chapter, the presentation of summary, conclusions and recommendations will be based on the way themes were categorised in the preceding chapter.

6.2 Summary

In analysing the comparative study on the role of female instructional leadership on the improvement of learners' performance in Lesotho and South African high schools,the researcher gives a brief summary on all the research questions.

6.2.1 Research question 1: What are the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perceptions regarding the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

From the data provided from the participants when trying to answer the above question one, the following themes emerged:

6.2.1.1 Managing the teaching and learning process

The study indicates that the way in which Lesotho and South African female principals manage teaching and learning is excellent. The checking of professional books influences educators to always perform their duties as expected. This shows that they have good instructional leadership skills. Since they are frequently checked, they actually have no time to rest. In this case, teaching and learning become a success as educators are dedicated to their work.

Moreover, the researcher discovered that Lesotho female principals are fond of checking educators' and learners' attendance. This is done to ensure that educators and learners

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come to school and attend classes as expected. The way in which Lesotho and South African educators and learners go to school shows that serious measures are taken on them when they are absent from school.

In South Africa, female principals are perceived to manage instruction through the help of the School Management Team (SMT). The team manages the curriculum in such a way that they influence educators to finish the syllabus on time. This gives educators and learners enough time to revise. Hence, educators could easily identify those learners who are left behind.

Data from empirical studies show that education in South Africa is valued and respected as compared to Lesotho. The female principals and heads of department revealed that if education could be valued worldwide, all the children would acquire quality education. Education is the mother of all professions; therefore, it must be well taken care of. Moreover, the study indicates that education must be valued and respected as all other professions countrywide. It is with an education that people can earn their living nowadays. Without its people could struggle to study the careers of their choice

6.2.1.2 Accountability

The evidence suggests that Lesotho female principals delegate different tasks to educators and learners. The sharing of work has the most interesting part ever. When educators and learners share roles and responsibilities, a lot of time is saved. In addition, the production of the work becomes excellent because it is done with all dedication. Whenever an educator or a learner is assigned a task, he or she has to do it perfectly. Being held accountable is a sign that the principal has trust in educators and learners.

Even though Lesotho female principals hold educators accountable for learners' success, they contribute to ensuring that it happens. They create a friendly environment that allows teaching and learning to become effective. Lesotho female principals are able to create an atmosphere that allows educators and learners to bring about a change in schools. They even provide educators with teaching and learning materials to make instruction become successful.

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In most cases, Lesotho female principals work closely with heads of department (HODs). As the principals, they delegate duties to HODs who in turn assign tasks to educators. On the other hand, educators delegate tasks to learners. Indeed, it becomes a chain, the interesting part of it is that the work is excellently done. They try by all means to avoid failures that could come their way.

Even in South Africa, the female principals use the delegation method. It is said to ease the work for educators and learners as the large tasks are broken into small ones. On top of everything, South African female principals make a follow-up on how the duties are performed. This shows the perfection of female instructional leadership. As the leaders in their schools, they are the ones held accountable for all the happenings in their schools. When teaching and learning do not go as planned, they are the ones held accountable. Hence. they ensure that teaching and learning become excellent. It is wise to check if educators and learners are still keeping on the plan.

In South Africa, they found out that accountability creates somehow competition among the educators. The more educators are given responsibilities the more they work hard to achieve success. In this case, teaching and learning become a success hence the academic achievement also becomes excellent. It is, indeed, good when educators and learners work hand in hand because they produce quality results.

6.2.1.3 Facilitate instruction

The evidence shows that Lesotho female principals facilitate instruction by assigning tasks to educators and learners. Principals, heads of department and educators are allocated different tasks. HODs are given the task to become overseers to the educators and report their progress. Educators are given the responsibility to monitor learners and report to heads of department. Learners are also given the responsibility to watch over themselves and report to educators. It is good that HODs, educators and learners are held accountable of their duties because the work is excellent.

As revealed in the study, Lesotho female principals conduct classroom visits as a way of facilitating instruction. The motive behind is to check how educators interact with learners in a classroom setting. Furthermore, classroom visits are conducted with the aim of

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checking whether learners are given the content that fit their syllabus. Even the staff meetings were conducted to inquire of educators and learners' progress. It is good that educators' professional books are regularly checked as this promotes commitment towards their work. There is a need that the Ministry of Education and Training employ deputy principals are the ones responsible in facilitating instruction not the principals. Principals' duty is to be in the office and deal with paperwork.

The study indicates that in South Africa female principals facilitate instruction through the help of School Management Team (SMT). SMT reports the schools' happening to heads of department, who in return report of deputy principals. In South Africa unlike Lesotho, there are deputy principals who ensure that teaching and learning become successful. South African female principals' duty is to be in the office and deal with paperwork.

Furthermore, the evidenced shows that whenever South African female principals get a chance, they do classroom observations. Classroom observations are conducted to determine the strengths and weak points of educators. After that, the principals provide immediate feedback on how the observation went. Female principals can make educators recognise their strengths and weakness. Hence, educators are given a chance to do self-education. It is wise that educators are visited from time to time so that they could always be on a track.

6.2.1.4 Country's educational goal

Evidence suggests that the countries' goal focuses on success. Lesotho's educational goal is to bring changes in schools alongside the country. Lesotho principals are longing to make improvement that would result in excellent academic achievement. They have high hopes in learners because they try their level best to provide them with quality education.

The fact is that Lesotho female principals are striving to keep the culture in schools alive. When the school culture is kept intact, the academic performance become superb. Hence, the school's educational goal is implemented. Lesotho principals have humanity because all they wish for is the success of learners. After all they work hard to ensure that the country's educational goal does not get tarnished.

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It is evident that even in South Africa the female principals are aiming at providing learners with quality education. In South Africa, the Department of Education is taking serious measures to ensure that learners get what is best for them. Principals do their duties and the Department of Education is there to support, guide and assess educators frequently. Therefore, learners in South Africa can perform excellently because their education is taken into consideration by different stakeholders.

Apart from providing learners with quality education, they are made to be responsible citizens. South African female principals can model learners' behaviour as they expect them to be responsible citizens now and soon. In fact, South African principals' wish is to improve teaching and learning standards. School Management Team works hand in hand with them to ensure that their wishes come true. It is therefore good that the Department of Education work together with principals to bring about success for learners.

6.2.1.5 Improving quality education

The study indicates that Lesotho female principals improve quality education through monitoring educators. Regularly, educators' professional books are checked. As a result, educators become active and hence do their work as expected. They can show their full dedication to their work because they seem to love and enjoy what they are doing.

Lesotho female principals do whatever it takes to ensure that there are adequate resources. When there is the availability of resources teaching and learning perfectly take place. On the other hand, educators and learners seem to be somehow motivated when there are resources at school. This eases educators' work for their teaching to become a success. As for learners, when educators excel in their teaching, they acquire the best grades.

Moreover, as a way of improving the quality of education, Lesotho female principals encourage educators to attend workshops. The workshops are important in helping educators improve for the better. Here educators become skilful and knowledgeable as they are always updated with any of the changes made in the field of education.

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It is evident that Lesotho female principals improve quality education through the provision of incentives. Educators and learners are given incentives as a form of motivation. This promotes competition either among educators or learners. Everyone is working hard with the aim of winning the prize. As a matter of fact, performance becomes marvellous. It is good to improve quality education because learners can choose their different paths in careers.

The evidence suggests that South African female principals improve quality education through conducting meetings. This is done repeatedly to encounter the problems educators come across in class. As a result, teaching and learning become a success. The principals also call up meetings to ensure that resources are still available for teaching and learning to keep on progressing.

Furthermore, South African educators can improve themselves for the better. They are also able to strengthen one another's' weaknesses for teaching and learning to become a success. It is always the case that educators empathise with one another rather than rejoicing at others' downfall. They ought to help one another out rather than turn them into laughing stock.

6.2.1.6 Providing instructional leadership

Evidence shows that Lesotho female principals have a good manner of communicating with their subordinates. In this case, it is obvious that good communication skills work together in promoting effective instruction. It was discovered that Lesotho female principals have rendered this to educators who passed it to learners. In schools where there is good communication skills, the performance is always good. It is wise to encourage good communication skills in schools.

Additionally, Lesotho principals are the ones responsible for ensuring that learners succeed in the long run. Since they possess good communication skills, they can give educators instructions on what is expected of them. Even if they make sure that there is a follow-up on how educators are progressing, and this is a good way of providing instructional leadership.

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It is evident that South African female principals can provide good instructional leadership. They can set a clear picture of what instruction is all about. It shows that South African female principals have possessed all the quality traits that make the become perfect leaders. It is always the case for leaders to acquire the quality traits that make them become excellent leaders.

6.2.1.7 Trust and high expectations

The empirical study indicates that Lesotho female principals have trust in educators. They trust them to an extent that they even delegate duties to them. Indeed, Lesotho female principals have a belief that they have trained, skilful and knowledgeable educators. It is proven because Lesotho educators appear to have a lot of respect when it comes to their principals. Educators can follow and obey principals' orders.

Moreover, Lesotho principals are supportive of their educators. The principals and educators both work together to develop and improve schools. Their biggest desire is to see that educators succeed in life, so they make sure that it happens. They try to see to it that learners acquire quality education. It is essential to put learners' interests before everything because they can succeed in life.

Likewise, South African principals have trust in educators because they are qualified. Even though South African principals trust educators this much, they still make a follow-up on daily duties. They are serious about their work. Hence, educators are also working hard because principals pressurize them to do their work.

6.2.2 Research question 2: How do female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement?

6.2.2.1 Accountable for success of learners

It is evident that Lesotho female principals are held responsible for learners' success. Due to the fact of being certain that learners' success is, they work hard. In actual fact, they have a lot on their plate, but they put much influence on educators to do their work. Lesotho principals are overloaded with work. There is a need for the Ministry of Education and Training to give grants for the employment of deputy principals in high schools

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countrywide. This would be of great help because deputy principals would be available for the success of learners. Hence, the principals will only deal with office work and find ways that can be used to develop the school. This framework fits in the context of the study as it focuses on liberal feminism.

Additionally, in Lesotho, communities are looking up to the principals for the success of learners. Parents have trust in the principals that they are able to make it a point that educators help their children achieve their goals. Hence, they do not hesitate to send their children to school. But they are very selective, their interest is to send their children to schools that excel when it comes to the results. Parents have a belief that school is considered the second home for learners. In this regard, principals work hard to ensure that they do not disappoint the community that has trust in them. There is also a need for principals and educators to value and respect the community they serve.

Evidence suggests that South African principals highly value education. Most of the time is spent on teaching and learning. Indeed, South African female principals have no time to waste. In this case, they exert pressure on educators so that learners could acquire quality education. There is a need that educators do their work perfectly without being pushed because education is their passionate job. Educators are serious about their work. There is an inspection for the principals, educators and learners. All these are gone through to make sure that learners succeed in their studies.

Likewise, South African principals are held accountable for learners' success. Although they have a lot of work to do, they prioritize teaching and learning. They try to ensure that learners acquire quality education. So South African principals do everything in their power to see to it that instruction takes place as planned. There is a need that South African principals be advised to share their duties with deputy principals even though at some point they do.

6.2.2.2 Conducive environment

The evidence shows that Lesotho female principals can provide a conducive environment for learning. A friendly environment is best at fostering good academic achievement. Educators and learners are free to bring about changes that develop the schools. It is a

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good idea that all Lesotho high school principals provide a conducive environment for learning. A positive and friendly environment promotes excellent academic achievement. This study is aiming at promoting equality between males and females.

Moreover, it is justified that Lesotho high schools that provide a conducive learning environment perform well. A conducive environment is a good platform to good academic performance. In this case, parents sent their children to school willingly, they are sure of one thing, that is their children's safety. They know quite well that a peaceful environment fosters growth.

Conducive environment is best known by modelling learners' behaviour. In a school where the environment is peaceful, learners never go astray. Before misbehaving they think of what will happen to their future. Consequences might even force them to stay at home for good. Since learners are concerned about their future, they stay disciplined.

It is evident that South African female principals are also able to promote a conducive environment for learning. This conducive environment is best at enhancing cooperation within schools. Since the environment is peaceful, even the educators and learners are able to join hands happily to achieve success.

Furthermore, South African female principals seem to be perfect at making educators and learners feel at home while at school. South African educators and learners can perform well because the environment for learning is conducive. They are relaxed and free to bring about development that enhances good academic achievement.

6.2.2.3 Balancing daily duties

The study indicates that Lesotho female principals plan their duties in advance. The principals influence educators to always be ahead. Allocation of work to educators is done prior to the opening of the schools. This helps them to make lesson plans on time. Hence, it gives educators enough time to make the teaching aids of all the subjects. In fact, sharing of work is good because educators are not overloaded with work.

Moreover, Lesotho female principals seem to have a reason behind of balancing the duties. They have a belief that balancing of duties promotes transparency. The balancing

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of duties involves the sharing of responsibilities among educators. So, in this case, educators take the full responsibilities on the duties delegated to them. They do not give principals a chance to complain. This proves the point that balancing of duties enhances educators' accountability. It is well said that balancing of duties helps educators supervise and evaluate educators' work more easily.

It is evident that in South Africa, balancing of duties seem to promote unity. When educators share tasks among themselves, it shows that they work hand in hand. As a result, the school's academic performance becomes excellent. Balancing of duties appear to be the best way of promoting unity in schools. It is advisable that the high school keeps and enhances this strategy.

Furthermore, balancing of duties is said to safe time. The work is done within a short period of time. Also, the work is perfectly done because educators are able to stay focused in what they do. On the other hand, South African principals highly motivate educators by acknowledging their efforts.

The balancing of duties is best; it appears to be working for both countries. It promotes oneness of which results in learners' academic performance being excellent. If all the high schools implement this strategy, the schools' academic performance would increase for the better.

6.2.2.4 School assessment

The study empirical indicates that Lesotho principals indeed takes assessment seriously. As a way of assessing learners, the principals' advice educators to give learners tests frequently. Assessment helped educators to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses. After the assessment is done, educators can know the content they ought to cover once again in their teaching.

Additionally, Lesotho principals can evaluate educators' work hence provide them with special training to enhance their skills. On learners' side, frequent tests are given. In the end the marks are put on the notice board for everyone to see. This strategy appears to create competition among learners. Those who score lower marks work harder to

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compete with those who have scored higher marks. To avoid humiliation, those with lower grades seek help from educators and from their peers.

The study shows that South African principals also see the importance of assessment. South African principals seem to be indirectly assessing learners and it is through educators. Even in South Africa, the principals encourage educators to continually assess learners. The main aim is to check learners' level of understanding and to help them with the subjects they struggle with.

6.2.2.5 Short and long-term planning

Evidence suggests that in schools there are short and long-term plans. Both Lesotho and South African female principals plan every strategy before implementing it. This works best for educators and learners because they can perform well.

The study indicated that Lesotho female principals encourage cooperative learning more than any other strategy. Cooperative learning is the best strategy as it boosts learners' confidence and enhances good communication skills. Because learners work in groups, the method helps them to be accountable and see to it that the assigned task is perfectly done.

In addition, Lesotho female principals advise educators to be more learner- centred than teacher- centred. Learners find information by themselves; educators are there to help learners where they do not understand. One good thing about this strategy is what learners have discovered for themselves is not easily forgotten. This strategy influences learners to put more effort into their work hence this strategy is highly recommended.

It is evident that South African principals also use different strategies to enhance learners 'academic achievement. In South Africa, principals encourage educators to conduct extra classes. In most cases, educators can finish the syllabus on time. Hence, this gives educators and learners an adequate period for discussion. Educators are there to help learners with all their struggles. In this way, learners' academic achievement becomes excellent.

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Moreover, South African female principals encourage educators to use cooperative learning and learners centred approach. Integrating these two methods is good because learners are given a chance to make new discoveries on their own. Learners understand concepts better as educators are there to help them where they lack understanding. These two strategies assist learners to gain confidence and responsibilities for the tasks they are given.

It is good to have long and short-term planning because this leads to learners' success in schools. It is good that every high school implements short and long-term planning because learners' academic would be superb. It is also encouraging when principals have short and long-term goals as they help predict where schools are going.

6.2.2.6 Providing incentives

Evidence shows that provision of incentives enhances learners' performance. Lesotho female principals highly believe in the use of incentives, even though some partly believe in it. Incentives are some kind of motivation for learners. They influence learners to work hard as they are competing against one another. Every learner strives hard to win the first prize because only the best performers are awarded. This competition promotes good results.

Indeed, incentives are given to only the best performers. This motivates both groups, those who are given incentives and those who do not receive them. The ones who get incentives work even harder than they did before. As for those who were watching others receiving incentives, they become encouraged and eager to work hard so that one day they become like others. Learners are given different gadgets that help them in their learning. In some instances, schools take full responsibility for paying tuition fees for those learners who are dedicated to their studies.

At some point, learners are sometimes taken to picnics for a braai. This is done so that learners could refresh their minds and motivate them after working hard. Having seen that their hard work is acknowledged, they work even harder.

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The study indicated that even in South Africa there are believers and non-believers of incentives. Although some partly believe in the use of incentives still, they offer them. There is a belief that incentives boost learners' morale in education. In South Africa, learners are awarded in all grades so that they could be motivated.

Furthermore, as a way of acknowledging learners' hard work, they are given trophies and certificates of appreciation. It is indeed, a good thing that learners are given incentives as they seem to be good. Incentives enhance learners' interest in learning. It is wise that all the high schools practise this strategy because learners perform well.

6.2.2.7 Persistence

It is evident that Lesotho principals have a lot of persistence. Although Lesotho female principals encounter challenges in their leadership, they never give up. It seems that in most cases, male educators make female principals feel small, but they never let them take control over them. Lesotho female principals are persistent and strong hence they can withstand any obstacle that comes their way.

The study shows that even though at first females were underestimated, at present things have changed. Males have discovered that even females have the power to rule. They also have their own quality traits that make them become perfect leaders. Males have recognised that in most cases, high schools led by females acquire good results. Hence, they have no reason to object to their leadership style. Women are full of love, tolerance, support and sympathy. In this case, parents send their children to schools where females are leaders because they are good at nurturing.

Not only do Lesotho female principals face challenges but also South African female principals are able to promote a conducive environment even if it is an unhappy one. They can attain long-lasting leadership due to the fact that they are generous. South African female principals are not easily discouraged. No matter how persevering the challenged, they can look for a way forward. They never give up so easily therefore they fight for what they feel is good because they are strong.

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Both Lesotho and South African principals seem to be tough. They are not easily shaken. They are not easily shaken when they set goals no matter how difficult to create them, they have a lot of perseverance. They can stand and fight for what they want. There is a need that females be given higher positions at work because they appear to be outstanding in their leadership.

6.2.2.8 Leadership skills

Evidence shows that Lesotho female principals know how to exercise effective leadership skills. Because they are the ones responsible for instruction to take place, they work hard. They do not overuse their power, but they lead in a good manner that leads to success. Lesotho female principals with their good leadership skills effectively supervise and evaluate instruction.

Moreover, Lesotho female principals can set realistic goals in their leadership. Among all their duties as principals, it is also their role to check educators' professional books. This is done to ensure that teaching and learning take place as it was planned. The most interesting about Lesotho female principals is that they are empathetic. They never suspend learners whose parents cannot afford to pay the tuition fee. Since they are parents, they know and feel that pain. They give parents enough time to make a collection for their children's fees.

The study indicated that, as stated by Lesotho heads of department, principals' visibility says a lot, when the principals are at school, educators do their work perfectly because they know exactly that the principals are around. The interesting part is where they act as parents and model learners' behaviour. Hence, they are considered to have good observation skills.

It is evident that South African principals also have excellent leadership skills hence their schools develop and prosper. Leadership plays a vital role in teaching and learning. In most cases, female principals hardly go to classes to supervise educators, it is because they have good leadership skills, they familiarise themselves with the happenings within the schools.

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Furthermore, both Lesotho and South African female principals are best at promoting a conducive environment for learners which is good for learning. The most interesting part is that they can be professional when it comes to their calling (principals). They have good ethics that influence educators to do their work on time.

Exercising good leadership in schools' results in attaining success and long-lasting leadership. There is a need that all the principals to study leadership in depth so that they can be perfect leaders.

6.2.3 Research question 3: What are the perceptions of heads of department (HODs) regarding the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

6.2.3.1 Influence school outcomes

The evidence of the study suggests that Lesotho's female instructional leaders' main goal is to deliver quality education. It is the desire of Lesotho female principals to help learners reveal their hidden talents. They want to develop the whole person morally, spiritually, physically and intellectually. Lesotho female principals have big dreams about the learners. Their wish is that learners become successful in life.

Moreover, Lesotho female principals can support educators. it is stated in the preceding findings that they plan their work on time to avoid complications. Because Lesotho principals are always ahead of time, educators get enough time to prepare themselves. In this case, detaching and learning become effective. Additionally, principals' visibility in schools influence educators' commitment towards their work. There is no time to waste because educators and learners are certain that principals are watching every movement they take. In this way the academic performance becomes outstanding.

The study indicates that South African female principals influence the school outcome by giving incentives. At every term, there is a prize-giving ceremony held to motivate those who managed to obtain higher grades. Educators work even harder to ensure that learners acquire good grades on all the subjects. Furthermore, evidence suggests that South African female principals influence the school outcome by encouraging educators

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to attend the workshop. It is also suggested when educators struggle with their teaching, principals invite learning facilitators from the Department of Education to help educators.

6.2.3.2 Elevating professional development

The evidence shows that Lesotho female principals have multiple ways of elevating professional development in schools. They allow educators to make an exploration and new discoveries to enhance their teaching. Educators are even advised to go beyond the textbooks in their teaching. Lesotho female principals finally recognised that educators are naturally gifted differently. Hence, they encourage them to interact and share information beneficial to their teaching. In some instances, as a way of elevating professional development, educators are advised to further their studies. It is good that educators improve academically as they are able to gain knowledge and skills that would help in their teaching. The exploration helps educators to even enhance teaching strategies so that teaching-learning is successful.

It is evident that Lesotho female principals support educators financially. Whenever there are school trips, principals intervene to ensure that the trips are not missed. If there is a school-related workshop, they do not expect educators to use their transport but they offer money for transport. They never wish that educators miss the workshops because it is where they gain new knowledge and skills on how to teach. The evidence suggests that as a way of development, principals encourage unity among educators and learners. For success to be achieved, educators and learners must work hand in hand. Because they are working towards a common goal, they ought to strengthen each other to achieve success. South African female principals do have a habit to motivate and acknowledge educators' hard work.

6.2.3.3 Support to educators

Evidence suggests that Lesotho female principals know how to support educators. They highly encourage them to work as a team and have joint decision-making to achieve success. When there is teamwork on school premises, principals find it easy to offer that full support. As a result, the schools' performance becomes superb. Lesotho female principals never give educators a chance to complain about them. They make sure that

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they support educators as much as they could. They ensure that are adequate resources for teaching and learning to keep on progressing. In schools, there are gadgets like printers and photocopying machines for educators to use. In this case, teaching and learning become successful because educators are provided with all the resources they need.

The study shows that Lesotho female principals are ever ready when it comes to supporting educators. Lesotho female principals support educators financially for activities that develop the schools. The study also indicates that South African female principals support teaching and learning through educators. They advise educators to opt for remedial classes as they help slow learners to be on the same page with the fast learners. South African principals value education because they are aware of its importance to the young generation. The principals work hard to ensure that learners become a success as they are certain that learners' future lies in their hands. Moreover, in South Africa female principals' visibility is a support to educators. Educators regain their strength when they realise that female principals are with them through thick and thin. Hence, they work hard to achieve the set objectives.

6.2.3.4 Instructional support

The evidence suggests that Lesotho principals fully support instruction. It is the role of the female principals to check that educators do their duties as expected. To make teaching and learning successful, Lesotho principals ensure the availability of resources that fully supports teaching and learning because their wish is to see learners succeed in life. Furthermore, Lesotho female principals never miss a target, they check on educators each day. This is to endure that they have all the resources needed for teaching to progress. Lesotho female principals are hands on, they work with educators in planning academic activities. As the leaders, principals are supposed to implement the plans hatched by educators. Moreover, in supporting construction, Lesotho female principals encourage educators to use learners centred approach. This method helps learners to make discover information on their own. In this case, educators are advised to work as facilitators to help learners where they struggle.

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Evidence shows that even South African female principals can offer instructional support. They influence educators and learners to attend class as per timetable. South African female principals' desire is to give learners quality education. They work hard to ensure that educators and learners go to class as expected. The study indicates that South African principals are also hands-on. They get themselves involved in all the activities means to develop the schools. They even advise educators to attend workshops to be knowledgeable and skilful. Hence, South African female principals acknowledge and appreciate educators' and learners' hard work.

6.2.3.5 Improving the standard of learners' academic achievement

It is evidenced that Lesotho female principals are best at improving the standard of learners' academic achievement. They try to ensure that there are adequate resources for teaching and learning to take place. When there are adequate resources, educators do not become hesitant to teach. The availability of resource motive hence boosts their morale in teaching. Moreover, Lesotho principals encourage learners to work to achieve success. The moment when learners exert effort in their studies, educators become highly motivated. On the other hand, educators work hard to ensure learners get the quality education they are longing for. Lesotho female principals play a vital role in improving learners' academic achievement. They are good influencers when it comes to learners' academic achievement.

The study indicates that Lesotho female principals even make regular classroom visits as a way of improving learners' academic achievement. They check how educators interact with learners in a classroom setting and how they conduct their teaching. They do this to help strengthen educators' weaknesses and hence to praise them where they have done well. The evidence suggests that as a way of improving the standard of learners' academic achievement, they held educators accountable for learners' success. In this way, educators strive hard in ensuring that learners get what they know, and that learners' future lies in their hands.

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Additionally, South African principals exert much pressure on educators hence influencing them to do their duties. Educators are encouraged to improve themselves academically to enable themselves to improve the standard of learners' academic achievement.

6.2.3.6 Communicating school vision and mission

The study shows that Lesotho female principals are aiming at producing quality results. Their biggest wish is to produce learners who will be able to earn their living and face the world after the completion of their studies. In this case, female principals, educators and learners work as a team to achieve a common goal which is a success. Lesotho female principals have a desire that learners could acquire quality training so that they choose different career paths of their choices. Furthermore, Lesotho female principals ensure that educators and learners abide by the vision and mission statement. Frequently, principals take the responsibility of reminding educators and learners of what the vision and mission statement entail. As a result, educators and learners focused on the goals they want to accomplish.

It is evident that it is South African female principals' desire that learners reach their full potential and reveal all their talents. South African female principals are focused on seeing to it that learners acquire quality education so that they fulfil their dreams. They reach success through revisiting the school's vision and mission statement from time to time.

6.2.3.7 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

The evidence of the study suggests that Lesotho female principals have their own manner of supervising and evaluating instruction. Because principals are busy, they give tasks to heads of department. Principals are just the supervisors; they pay attention to all the activities that take place within the schools. Moreover, Lesotho female principals supervise and evaluate instruction by checking educators' professional books. They are checked regularly to ensure that the work is done properly. In most cases, lesson plans are checked daily to check if the content taught is relevant to the topic. Lesotho female principals can make a follow-up that the assessment is perfectly done and that educators employ teaching strategies that help learners improve.

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It is evidence that Lesotho female principals join hands with heads of department in supervising and evaluating instruction. The HODs are trusted for this duty because they spend most of their time with educators hence, they know them better. Lesotho female principals are good at conducting classroom visits to check how educators conduct teaching. The interesting part is that, they give immediate feedback on the performance of educators to help them improve where there is a need.

The study discovered that even in South Africa, principals work through the heads of department. South African female principals single out the HODs because they are the ones who interact with educators from time to time. As this evaluation is conducted, educators can know their strengths and weaknesses. They improve where necessary. Furthermore, even in South Africa, female principals check educators' professional books. This is done to ensure that educators do their work as expected. On daily basis, lesson plans are checked to ensure that they are proper. South African female principals also monitor classroom attendance and it is excellent. This makes the academic performance to be good.

6.2.3.8 Guidance and counselling

The study indicates that Lesotho female principals have a love for the schools they oversee. They make sure that educators and learners are well taken care of. Indeed, they use an affiliative style of leadership in their schools because they show that they are concerned about educators and learners. Lesotho female principals at some point invite counsellors to come and have a word with educators and learners. In some instances, principals do one on one conversations with educators to listen to and solve their problems. On the other hand, educators are advised to talk to the learners and identify their problems. When educators and learners get guidance and counselling, their academic performance becomes good because they are stress-free.

The evidence suggests that South African principals' wish is to always see educators happy and lively. Likewise, South African female principals invite counsellors to guide, empower and motivate educators and learners. In some instances, they prefer one-to-one sessions with educators to find and help them solve their problems. Similarly,

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educators use the same strategy to assist learners to resolve their problems. Counsellors are called to school quarterly so that educators and learners begin every term with an open and clear mind.

6.2.3.9 Adapting to gender differences

Evidence shows that males and females are different but equal. Some years ago, men were more powerful than women hence, they fit in school leadership. Not only men, but even society also used to have a strong feeling that only males can take leadership positions at school. It is interesting that in this 21st century, women have demonstrated that they too have quality traits that can be used in leadership, hence now are occupying higher positions in leadership. It is the highest time that now discrimination against gender be stopped. It is wise to put more focus on whether people who occupy leadership positions have the necessary quality traits of leadership. Furthermore, it is evident that Lesotho female principals work hard while put in leadership positions. Due to their good quality traits, being persistent, empathetic, loving and caring, learners are able to obtain good grades through their educators. Even their leadership lasts for long.

The study indicated that South African female principals could exercise good leadership skills which lead to learners being successful. This is solid proof that men and women are different but equal though they lead in different ways. Due to the fact of being a female. South African principals can nurture children perfectly and hence model their behaviour. They have patience and tolerance that make the good leaders. They are able to handle tough situations in a calm way until they pass.

6.2.4 Research question 4: How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

6.2.4.1 Capability to care

The evidence suggests that Lesotho female principals can take good care of educators and learners. They shower educators and learners with love, care and respect. Lesotho female principals treat educators and learners in a special way. Because parents have recognised the way their children are treated, they feel free to send them to school. As a

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result, many learners enrol in schools where females are leaders because of the love they have for learners. Moreover, Lesotho female principals indeed care for educators and learners. They provide a positive and friendly environment that allows teaching and learning to be effective. In their leadership, Lesotho female principals use an affiliative leadership style where they are concerned about educators' and learners' feelings. Their wish is to keep educators and learners happy at any cost. Lesotho female principals are too professional for they can work with people of different characters.

It is evident that South African female principals indeed care for educators' and learners' well-being. They ensure that educators and learners are safe and sound at all times. South African female principals endure that educators and learners feel at home while at school. When educators and learners are at school, they show happy faces. Furthermore, South African female principals are good at supporting educators and learners. Even though the support is selective, principals make sure that they support educators and learners with school-related issues. They prioritize education to avoid obstacles that may hinder it. As a result, schools' academic achievement improves regularly. Educators and learners having seen that principals care for their education; work harder.

6.2.4.2 Gentleness

The study indicates that Lesotho female principals are strong and persistence when it comes to teaching and learning. They can empower educators and learners as a result they are able to work hard. Female instructional leadership is the best as it does not even affect the school culture. Lesotho female principals are gentle and persevering when they come to learners' success. Moreover, Lesotho female principals are dedicated towards their work. Since they are parents, they are good at nurturing. They can adhere to educators and learners' needs. Lesotho female principals are determined when it comes to learners' academic achievement. As a result, learners obtain good grades which allow them to go to universities of their choice to pursue their studies.

It is evident that South African female principals have good qualities. They are dedicated and determined when it comes to learners' academic achievement. South African female principals can act as parents hence they take a good care of learners. So, parents feel at

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ease when their children's education is taken care of. Their femaleness influence educators and learners to work hard of which results in excellent academic achievement. So, in this case, the study also indicates that no matter being a male or a female, what counts is good leadership skills. It is well said that South African female principals have gained a good reputation due to their hard work. They have earned a good dignity for themselves, and this makes them respected.

6.2.4.3 Parental involvement

The evidence suggests that Lesotho female principals highly realize how important parental involvement is. They encourage parents to take part in their children's education and explain how crucial that is. Learners can even work harder when they realise that parents have interested in their education. These learners who have support from their parents score higher grades than those whose parents are negligent. Moreover, parental involvement is a ladder to learners' success. For this reason, in school parents are given a lot of care and respect because they are considered important. Whenever they visit the school to inquire about how their children are doing, they are made to feel relaxed and welcomed. This is a good way to enhance learners' academic performance.

It is evident that South African female principals are also there to encourage parents to partake in their children's education. To show that parents do support learners, they give them space and time to study. In some instances, South African parents help their children with the homework they are given to show support. Moreover, South African female principals are determined when it comes to the calling. They can encourage parents to partake in their children's education in general. Hence, they show parents the importance of supporting their children. Teaching and learning become easier with parents' support as they can satisfy their children physically and emotionally.

6.2.4.4 Improvement in teaching and learning

The study suggests that Lesotho female principals improve teaching and learning through prize-giving ceremonies. The prize-giving ceremony is done with the aim of showing educators and learners that their hard work does not go in vain but is acknowledged. Prize-giving influences educators to work hard so that their learners obtain A grades in

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their subjects. As for learners' the prize-giving ceremony creates competition among learners. Every learner strives hard to obtain good grades. This is a good way of improving teaching and learning in high schools. Prize-giving is some kind of motivation for educators and learners.

It is evident that South African female principals improve teaching and learning through the provision of resources. When there are adequate resources in school, teaching and learning become effective. Moreover, the availability of resources in schools seems to motivate educators. They become dedicated to their work. Learners have noticed that educators are committed to their duties, they also work hard to achieve success. Adequate resources motivate educators and enhance learners' morale in education.

6.2.4.5 Providing feedback

The study suggests that Lesotho female principals are organised and straight to the point. They can convey realistic message to educators and learners. The female principals make sure that they revise any feedback they ought to give to educators and learners. From the time they put this strategy into practice, they are never disappointed when standing in front of learners. Hence, they become more confident to face the audience. Even if they convey negative feedback, they can get hold of themselves. They want educators not to blame themselves whenever they fail in any school-related activity. Lesotho female principals can provide educators and learners with immediate feedback which is good for their performance. The way in which they convey the information is superb.

The study indicates that South African female principals analyse and evaluate the results after publication. Thereafter they assemble educators and learners to give them feedback about the results. The positive feedback makes educators and learners work harder. When the competitions are held, principals are the ones who give brief details of the results of the competitions. Even when educators go to work, on their return they write a summary to the principals who brief other educators.

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6.2.4.6 High standards

The study indicates that Lesotho female principals have high expectations that educators have a contribution to developing schools. The principals work hard in exerting the pressure on educators to work hard and produce quality results. Since Lesotho educators are passionate about their work, they are at all times dedicated. As a result, they obtain good results. So, the evidence suggests that South African female principals expect education to be committed to their work. Educators must always be beyond learners at any cost. Hence, outsmart them because they are more skilful and knowledgeable than learners. Having this kind of educator make learners be creative and open-minded.

6.2.4.7 Hospitable climate

Moreover, in setting high standards, South African principals influence educators and learners to live by the school vision and mission statement. South African schools' vision and mission statement is established in such a way that everyone feels and lives that way. Most importantly, in South Africa education is highly valued hence the performance is also excellent.

The evidence indicates that Lesotho female principals are good at providing educators and learners with a positive and friendly environment. This conducive environment allows teaching and learning be effective. Friendly environment promotes unity among leaders, educators and learners. This kind of environment is said to influence educators and learners to work hard because they are free and relaxed. As a result, the performance becomes excellent. Moreover, Lesotho female principals are perfect at making learners feel at home. Educators and learners are made to feel at home. They always value educators' happiness more than any other thing. When educators and learners live in such an environment, they are motivated. Where there is always peace the results are always fruitful.

The study suggests that even South African female principals are also good at providing learners with a positive and friendly environment. This kind of environment allows room for change. Educators and learners are free to bring about changes that develop the

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schools. This environment helps learners to improve morally, spiritually, intellectually and academically.

6.4.5 Research question 5: How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

6.4.5.1 Defining and communicating school culture

The evidence suggests that Lesotho female principals can define and communicate the school culture. They use the assembly as a forum when talking of the school culture. Principals take advantage to talk of educators and learners at the assembly because it is where they all gather once a day. Lesotho principals not only communicate the school culture to educators and learners but also to parents, board members and other stakeholders. When everyone knows what the school culture entails, it can easily be kept intact.

Moreover, morning study session is the culture of Lesotho high schools. This morning study affects those learners who travel long distances from their homes to schools. Learners must get up early with the encouragement from educators and parents as well. This gives them the opportunity to attend daily morning study, especially for those who are not able to study at home. In fact, this improves learners' academic achievement. While at school, female principals persistently influence educators to encourage learners to speak English. All the subjects are done in English, except Sesotho (their mother tongue) and this helps learners a lot.

It is evident that South African female principals can communicate and define school culture. They have regular meetings with the stakeholders and involve them in school activities. In South Africa, the school culture is democratically. Principals include all those who could be helpful to take part in assisting learners achieve their goal. Furthermore, South African female principals value education more than any other things. They always make sure that teaching and learning become a success. Those female principals can discipline learners so that they become responsible citizens in the future.

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6.4.5.2 Developing school culture

The evidence indicates that Lesotho female principals do know how to develop the school culture. It is Lesotho female principals' culture that educators become facilitators. Educators are taught to be more learners centred and make new discoveries for themselves. Learners only ask educators questions where they do not follow. This is found to be the best way of learning because learners do not easily forget information they searched. Furthermore, it is Lesotho female principals' culture to work towards reaching success even though teaching and learning is somehow affected. There is high teenage pregnancy and early marriage at this stage in all the schools. As a result, learners decide to drop out from school to go and take care of the baby or get married. Poor female principals work to try to control this behaviour, but time and again it is getting worse. Therefore, it is a big challenge for principals to accomplish their goal of assisting learners to success and pursue their studies.

It is evident that South African female principals wish that learners become successful. It is the culture of almost all the schools that educators and learners go to class as per the timetable. The attendance is excellent and results in good academic achievement. The most interesting part is that when educators are not satisfied with the way a learner performs, they are free to invite parents to come to school and have a talk with them. Lastly, South African female principals consider important the school culture. They take it as a guide to success as it is the goal of all schools. For this reason, they can maintain the school culture. They make sure that the environment is always conducive as it is good for the effectiveness of teaching and learning. South African female principals always look for what is best for learners because they wish them to responsible citizens in the future. Every time female principals show that motherliness without being aware, this is their nature.

6.4.5.3 Adequate resources

The study suggests that Lesotho female principals can provide schools with adequate resources. They can supply educators with the resources necessary for teaching and learning to progress. Availability of resources seem to be some kind of motivation for

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educators. They become dedicated to their work. As for learners, they work hard when they realise that educators are determined. As a result, the schools' academic achievement becomes excellent. Moreover, Lesotho female principals do care about learners' success. They can support educators and learners financially on school related trips. On the other hand, educators and learners make sure that they prepare for competitions often, so that they may not disappoint their principals.

The study indicates that South African principals are also able to provide educators with the resources for teaching and learning to run smoothly. Availability of resources is considered important for both educators and learners. They become motivated hence work hard to achieve success. Most importantly, South African female principals highly value education. In this case, they make sure that educators and learners get all they need for teaching and learning to be successful.

6.3. Conclusions

In evaluating and summarising the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools in the Mohale's Hoek District of Lesotho and Bloemfontein in the Motheo District, the following conclusions were drawn from the empirical study and are based on the following research questions:

6.3.1 Research question 1: What is the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perception of the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

6.3.1.1 Managing teaching and learning process

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals have their way of managing teaching and learning process. In Lesotho principals check educators' professional books and monitor class attendance. These are done to ensure that educators do their work as planned. Whether educators and learners come to class as per timetable is also checked daily. In South Africa the School Management Team (SMT) is there to manage teaching and learning on behalf of the principals. This is good because female principals. This is helpful because the principals have a lot of work to do so the

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SMT unload female principals from other responsibilities. As a result, principals have enough time to deal with their office work rather than going up and down.

6.3.1.2 Accountability

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals are good at making educators accountable for learners' success. Lesotho female principals delegate duties to educators hence making a follow-up that the work is perfectly done. They work together with heads of department. South African principals also use the delegation method and thereafter make a follow-up on how educators perform their duties. Because South African principals are held accountable for learners' success, they ensure the effectiveness of instruction. In South African high schools, accountability appears to somehow create competition among educators. They work hard so that they achieve the set goals in school,as a result, their academic performance come to be excellent.

6.3.1.3 Facilitate instruction

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals are perfect at facilitating instruction. In Lesotho principals delegate duties to heads of department (HODs). HODs become overseers of educators and give principals the report on how educators conduct their teaching. Lesotho female principals even conduct classroom visits as a way of facilitating instruction. In South Africa, female principals facilitate instruction with the help of the School Management Team (SMT). SMT take their reports to deputy principals. In fact, it is the duty of deputy principals to ensure that teaching and learning are successful at all times. Even in South Africa, when principals get a chance, they do classroom observation. This is to check how educators interact with learners in a classroom setting.

6.3.1.4 Country's educational goal

The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that Lesotho and South African principals have educational goals. Lesotho female principals' educational goal is to achieve success. They are working hard to bring about changes that could develop the schools for the better. All that Lesotho principals need is that learners acquire quality education. Apart from all, they are striving hard to keep the schools' culture intact. Even

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in South Africa, principals wish to provide learners with quality education. Principals do their duties, but the Department of Education is to support teaching and learning and facilitate instruction. It is South African principals' desire to improve teaching and learning standards.

6.3.1.5 Improving quality education

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals have their ways of improving quality education. Lesotho principals monitor educators' progress and they regularly check educators' professional books. Since they are passionate and love what they are doing, the performance is always excellent. Lesotho female principals make sure that necessary resources for teaching and learning are available. They even encourage educators to attend workshops so that they could be skilful and knowledgeable. South African principals improve quality education through meeting with educators. This is done to check if resources are still available and bring about solutions to the problems educators encounter in class.

6.3.1.6 Providing instructional support

The researcher found that Lesotho and South African Principals do provide instructional support. Lesotho female principals appear to have communication skills that they render to the entire school. In schools where there are good communication skills, academic performance tends to be good. Lesotho female principals are held accountable for learners' success so they influence educators. Because South African principals have quality traits, they are precise when it comes to instructional leadership. They can provide educators and learners with the right path to follow which only leads to success. Indeed, the quality traits they have make them succeed in their leadership.

6.3.1.7 Trust and high expectations

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals have trust and high expectations in educators. Lesotho principals have trust in their educators. To prove this, they delegate duties to duties to educators because they believe that they (principals) have hired trained and qualified teachers. To show Lesotho educators are qualified, they

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can be professional. They highly believe pay a lot of respect to their principals which is good because it promotes unity. Lesotho principals are hands on, they work hard to ensure that schools are for the better. Even in South Africa, principals have trust and high expectations of educators. They have high hopes that their educators are qualified. South African principals influence educators to work hard to achieve success.

6.3.2 Research question 2: How do female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement?

6.3.2.1 Accountable for learners' success

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals are held accountable for learners 'success. Though Lesotho principals work hard to ensure that learners acquire quality education, they have a lot on their plate. In South Africa, principals are held accountable for learners' success, but deputy principals are there to help. In this country, education is not taken for granted hence there is no time to waste when it comes to teaching and learning. The principals exert much pressure on educators who in turn influence learners to work hard. Indeed, hard work pays because results are always fruitful. Hence learners can go to Colleges and Universities of their choice.

6.3.2.2 Conducive environment

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals are able to provide a conducive environment for learning. Lesotho principals consider a conducive environment as a good platform for teaching and learning. The belief is that this environment is good for shaping and modelling learners' behaviours. Lesotho principals regard a conducive environment as the safest place where educators and learners feel relaxed and relaxed. South African principals also promote a conducive environment for learning. They have a belief that a conducive environment enhances teamwork in schools. This kind of environment makes educators and learners feel at ease, they consider their second homes.

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6.3.2.3 Balancing duties

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South African Principals know how to balance duties. In Lesotho, principals advise educators to always be ahead of time. Duties are balanced through the allocation of tasks which is done before the schools could open. Lesotho principals consider balancing duties as a way of promoting transparency in schools. In South Africa, balancing duties is seen to promote unity in schools. Where there is unity, educators and learners work together to achieve success. Moreover, in South African schools balancing duties is said to save time. The work is done within a short period of time since educators and learners share duties among themselves. Hence educators can stay focused as they are not overloaded with work.

6.3.2.4 School Assessment

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals take assessment seriously. Lesotho principals encourage educators to give learners weekly and monthly tests as a way of assessing learners. They evaluate educators' progress and give them special training so that they could be skilful. On the other hand, South African principals realize the importance of assessment. They encourage educators to assess learners frequently to check their level of understanding. Assessment helps educators to discover learners who understand and those who are left behind. As a result, educators help those learners who struggle.

6.3.2.5 Short and long-term planning

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South Africa have short and term planning. Lesotho principals encourage educators to use different teaching strategies to enhance learners 'academic achievement. Those are learners' centred approaches and cooperative learning as they help learners gain self-confidence and enhance good communication skills. In South Africa principals encourage educators to conduct extra classes to finish the syllabus and have enough time for discussion. Even in South Africa, principals encourage educators to use cooperative learning and learners-centred approach. These teaching strategies influence learners to make new discoveries on their

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own. This is a good way of learning because learners do not easily forget the information, they searched for themselves.

6.2.3.6 Providing incentives

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African principals are good at offering incentives even though partly believe in the use of incentives. The belief is that incentives are meant to enhance learners and boost learners' morale in education. In Lesotho, learners are given gadgets that beneficial to their learning. At some point, the schools take responsibility to pay tuition fees for those learners who perform well. Learners are sometimes taken out for picnics to freshen up. In South Africa, principals acknowledge learners' hard work by giving them trophies and certificates of appreciation. This strategy seems to be the best as it creates competition among learners. As a result, learners work hard to achieve success.

6.3.2.7 Persistence

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South Africans are persistent when it comes to their work. Even though they come across challenges, they never give up. They keep pushing until they get what they want. In Lesotho males have realized that females are also good at leadership, currently, women are allowed to be in leadership positions. In South Africa, principals are generous and are not easily discouraged. They are persevering and strong no matter the challenges they come across. Lesotho and South African principals seem to be tough. They can face any obstacles that come their way and hence find possible solutions.

6.3.2.8 Leadership skills

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals have good leadership skills. they do not misuse their power, but they use it profitably. Lesotho principals are perfect at giving educators and learners direction. They lead with good examples and they always ensure that educators are committed to their work. South African principals also exercise good leadership skills in their leadership. They are able to act professionally in front of educators and learners. Leadership seems to play a vital role in learners'

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academic achievement. Educators and learners have a clear direction of where to start because principals exercise good leadership skills over them. This is good because learners' academic performance becomes good.

6.3.3 Research question 3: What are heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

6.3.3.1 Influence school outcomes

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals are able to influence the school outcome. They influence the school outcome because they want learners to acquire quality education and hence be able to pursue their studies. It is good to influence the school outcome because educators and learners become focused and dedicated to their work. Showing support to both educators and learners really means a lot. Support can be shown in multiple ways, principals' visibility, provision of incentives, and attending workshops. When principals offer support, educators and learners become somehow motivated because they realise that they are important.

6.3.3.2 Elevating professional development

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African female principals are best at elevating professional development. They encourage educators to make new discoveries to enhance their teaching. They let educators interact with each other to share new knowledge and skills. Educators are financially supported and are encouraged to work as a team with learners to achieve success. Indeed, it is good to elevate professional development because it enhances teaching and learning. As a result, schools' academic achievement becomes excellent.

6.3.3.3 Support to educators

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals are good at supporting educators. The most interesting part is encouraging educators to work together and employ a democratic leadership style. The principals are able to provide educators with the resources necessary for teaching and learning. They are good at

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influencing educators to do their work that they even encourage them to conduct remedial classes. Most importantly, female principals seem to value educators because their presence makes a huge impact on learners' lives. It is with the help of educators that learners can fulfill their dreams. Educators, when they come to realise how female principals stand by them, they work hard to achieve the set objectives.

6.3.3.4 Instructional support

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African female principals are able to offer instructional support. Female principals encourage educators to use learners centred approach. This method of teaching is excellent because it influences learners to discover information on their own. They ensure that there are adequate resources in schools which is good because instruction becomes effective. As a way of offering instructional support, the principals partake in the activities that lead to the schools' development.

6.3.3.5 Improving the standards of learners' academic achievement

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals are able to improve the standard of learners' academic achievement. They ensure that educators never complain about them and that there are adequate resources in schools. Principals conduct classroom observations to check how educators teach and to help them strengthen their weaknesses. Most importantly educators are held accountable for learner success. This drives them to work hard as they do not want to fail learners at any cost. Moreover, they do not want to disappoint principals because they have realised that principals have their trust in them.

6.3.3.6 Communicating school vision and mission

The researcher draws a conclusion that Lesotho and South African female principals are aiming to produce quality results. Their dream is to produce learners who will be self-reliant in the future and become responsible citizens. It is good that educators and learners join hands to achieve success and it is with the influence of female principals. The female principals make an assurance that educators and learners are reminded of

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the school's vision and mission statement. This helps them to stay focused and to achieve the set goals either short or long.

6.3.3.7 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals have multiple ways of supervising and evaluating instruction. In most cases, principals delegate duties to educators. It is since HODs interact with educators more often than principals do. Moreover, female principals conduct classroom visits to check on educators, strengthen their weaknesses and praise them where they have done well. Educators are given a huge responsibility, of being accountable for learners' success. It is a good start because educators work hard to ensure that learners reach success. With the influence of female principals, educators perfectly do their work. Educators' professional books are checked regularly. This makes educators work hard.

6.3.3.8 Guidance and counselling

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals have the love for their schools. They care for educators and learners. To prove the point, they invite counsellors to come, guide and motivate educators and learners. Failing this the female principals inquire one-to-one conversations with educators to find their problems and solve them. As for learners, principals encourage educators to have a talk with learners and find solutions to their problems. This is a fresh start because when educators and learners are stressed-free; they are able to work hard to accomplish success.

6.3.3.9 Adapting to gender differences

The study concludes that it is easy for Lesotho and South African female principals to adapt to gender differences. In the past years, women were not considered powerful hence were not put in charge of leadership positions. Men were more powerful than women, hence, they occupied higher positions in leadership. Currently, the story is totally different, women have shown that they cannot be overpowered by men. They are now allowed to occupy higher leadership positions and males respect that. In terms of gender,

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they differ and when it comes to leadership, they have different quality traits that make them become perfect leaders.

6.3.4 Research question 4: How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

6.3.4.1 Capability to care

The study concludes that both Lesotho and South African female principals so care for educators and learners. They prioritize them because without them (educators and learners), principals would be unemployed. The principals show all the love and support to educators. Indeed, female are born with love, care and respect. Since parents have recognised that female principals are best parents ever, they do not hesitate to send their children in such schools. Moreover, to show that Lesotho female principals do care for educators and learners. They provide them with a conducive environment. This environment is good for teaching and learning as educators and learners are free to learn and bring about changes that could change schools for the better. The principals are found to be smart and clever as they can lead people of different characters and still make it.

6.3.4.2 Gentleness

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals are gentle and persuasive when it comes to their work. They can empower educators and learners. Both Lesotho and South African female principals are persevering when it comes to learners' success. They might be gentle but they prioritize learners' education. Moreover, Lesotho and South African female principals are dedicated to their work. Due to the fact they are parents, they can understand learners' needs. They can understand every situation that concerns a learner because they are good at parenting. as a result, learners' academic achievement becomes superb.

Both Lesotho and South African female principals have good qualities. Their qualities. Their qualities make them become outstanding leaders. Because they are able to act as parents, they enrol many learners. Parents do not become hesitant to send their children

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is such schools where females are leaders because they are certain that they are well taken care of.

6.3.4.3 Parental involvement

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals have come to realise the importance of parental involvement. When parents take part in their children's education, there is a huge difference in learners' academic achievement. Those learners whose parents support them on their education, perform better than those whose parents are ignorant. It is crucial that parents partake in their children's education as they play a vital role. Because parental involvement is considered to be a ladder to learners' success, schools consider them important. For any reason, when a parents pay a visit to a school, they are treated with care and respect. They are made to feel at home, because without them educators would begin to model learners from the scratch.

6.3.4.4 Improvement in teaching and learning

The researcher concludes that both Lesotho and South African female principals have their ways of improving teaching and learning. Prize-giving ceremonies and provision of resources are the strategies they use to improve teaching and learning. Prize-giving ceremonies are meant to motivate those who win the prizes and those who did not perform well. As for the best performers, they are motivated to work harder. Those who failed to make it are being encouraged to work harder as to obtain good grades. Moreover, provision of incentives is a form of motivation to educators. They go to class with a lot of energy as they have all what they need for teaching and learning to be effective. On the other hand, learners are somehow motivated when they realise that educators are dedicated towards their work they also work hard. This is a chain; principal satisfy educators satisfy learners.

6.3.4.5 Providing feedback

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South African principals are good at providing immediate feedback. Before they could talk to educators and learners revise the information they carry first. This helps them to gain enough confidence and trust in

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themselves. They can convey any message. They do not beat about the bush but are always straight to the point. Even if the message they carry is negative, they convey it in a good way. They avoid situations whereby educators and learners blame themselves for not achieving success. Furthermore, in times when results are publicised, they evaluate and analyse them. In them they gather educators and learners together so that they could reveal the overall performance of each year. Even when educators go to workshops on their return. They write a summary of how the workshop went. The principals are responsible for briefing educators on the main point of the working.

6.3.4.6 High standards

The researcher concludes that both Lesotho and South African female principals are able to set high standard. Their expectations are that educators must work hard to achieve success. As the principals they exert pressure on educators to work harder. The most interesting part is that Lesotho and South African principals are passionate when it comes to teaching. They are committed to their work. As a result, schools' academic achievement becomes excellent. Moreover, educators are expected to always be ahead of educators no matter what. They must be knowledgeable and skilful before they can stand before learners. When learners come to realise that educators are working hard, they also become committed towards their work.

6.3.4.7 Hospitable climate

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals are good at providing educators and learners with a hospitable climate. This friendly environment allows teaching and learning to be effective. Hence, it promotes unity among principals, educators and learners. Positive and friendly environment influences educators and learners to work harder. The performance becomes good because educators and learners can learn when they are relaxed. The female principals are good at making educators and learners feel at home. They consider schools as their second home. They consider schools as the second home where they fully regain their happiness. Educators and learners are given a chance to freely learn and bring about developments that can develop schools for the better.

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6.3.5 Research question 5: How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

6.3.5.1 Defining and communicating school culture

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals are good at defining and communicating the school culture. The assembly is found to be the perfect place whereby principals can talk to educators and learners about the school culture. This is a place where educators and learners gather every day for morning prayer services. Principals take this chance to address educators and learners on the school-related issues, especially school culture. All the stakeholders are given a light of what the school culture entails hence, the school culture is democratic. Apart from that, female principals highly value education. They make assurance that teaching and learning become meaningful and any cost. They want learners to become responsible citizens in the future and become self-reliant.

6.3.5.2 Developing school culture

The researcher concludes that Lesotho and South African female principals are able to develop the school culture. Educators are encouraged to use learners centred approach. This approach is considered as the best strategy to be utilised as it assists learners develop self-confidence. Such learners can also have trust on themselves. It is therefore, according to the culture of the school, the educators are there to support learners and to assist them with the concepts they fail to understand. Apart from that, there is a challenge which prohibits female principals from keeping the school culture intact. There is high rate of teenage pregnancy followed by early marriages. This results from learners dropping out of schools to go and take care of their new children or new families.

Moreover, it is the culture of the schools that learners attend morning study sessions. Educators and learners are also expected to attend class as per timetable. This results in academic achievement. When educators are not satisfied with the way learners attend school, they involve parents and inquire for help.

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6.3.5.3 Adequate resources

The study concludes that Lesotho and South African principals do provide adequate resources in schools. Since they value resources, they ensure that resources are available for teaching and learning to be successful. Availability of resources are some kind of motivation to both educators and learners, they work hard to achieve success because they realise that principals do care about them.

Moreover, the study concludes that educators and learners are supported financially when it comes to school related tips. In preparation, educators and learners practise hard on any competitions so that they can perform well. Educators and learners are supported in whatever way that leads to learners' success. All what principals wish for is that learners become successful in future.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Research question 1: What is the Lesotho and South African high school female principals' perception of the role of instructional leaders in learners' academic achievement?

6.4.1.1 Managing teaching and learning process

The study found out that Lesotho principals manage the teaching and learning process. They monitor educators' progress and they even check educators' professional books. In South Africa, the School Management Team (SMT) ensures that teaching and learning become successful. The study recommends that in Lesotho, female principals check educators 'professional books on daily basis if they want that learners acquire quality education Indeed, they have to see to it that all the duties though it is not that easy.

6.4.1.2 Accountability

The study substantiated that both Lesotho and South African principals delegate duties to educators. Therefore, the study recommends that the success of learners be put in principals' hands. In this way, they will work even harder and they will also be influential to educators and learners to work hard. As a result, schools will obtain good results which allow learners to go to different colleges and universities of their choice.

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6.4.1.3 Facilitate instruction

The study and the literature review confirmed that Lesotho principals delegate duties to educators who in turn report back to them. In South Africa, principals facilitate instruction through the help of the School Management Team (SMT). SMT reports the happenings to the deputy principals. The study recommends that in Lesotho, deputy principals have to have to be hired. Because deputy principals are the ones responsible for the effectiveness of instruction, they have to be there in Lesotho also. This would help principals to only deal with office work rather than going up and down.

6.4.1.4 Country's educational goal

The study confirmed that Lesotho and South Africa principal's educational goal is somehow similar. It is to provide learners with quality education. In this regard, the study recommends that principals put more effort into ensuring that learners achieve success. In this regard, the study recommends that principals put more effort into ensuring that learners achieve success. Learners' future lies in their hands so they have to strive hard to ensure that learners follow their career paths. This would help learners be independent in the future though there is a high rate of unemployment in these two countries.

6.4.1.5 Improving quality education

The study corroborated that Lesotho and South African principals have their ways of improving quality education. Lesotho principals do regular monitoring of educators' progress. In South, Africa principals improve quality education through meeting with educators to find the challenges they come across in the classroom. so, the study recommends that South African principals check educators' books from time to time. Checking educators' professional books from time to time. Checking educators' books influence them to work hard.

6.4.1.6 Providing instructional leadership

The study found that Lesotho and South African principals are able to provide instructional support. Lesotho principals seem to have good communication skills. South African principals have quality traits that help them become excellent leaders. The study

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recommends that principals keep on offering instructional support to educators. This motivates educators because they realise that they are not alone in this journey. Even learners work hard when they realise that educators are dedicated to their work.

6.4.1.7 Trust and high expectations

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals have trust and high expectations in educators and the principals' belief that they work with qualified and trained educators. In this case recommends that principals keep on trusting and have high expectations of educators. When educators come to realise that principals trust them, they become committed to their work. Moreover, educators continue to have respect for principals. If the principals keep being like this to educators, learners' performance would increase from time to time. As a result, schools would achieve success.

6.4.2 Research question 2: How do female principals as instructional leaders enhance learners' academic achievement?

6.4.2.1 Accountable for learners' success

The researcher confirmed that Lesotho and South African principals are held accountable for learners' success. Because principals are given the responsibility to ensure that learners achieve success, they work hard. In this case, the study recommends that principals be given the responsibility of being accountable for learners' success as long as they are in leadership. This is because they work tirelessly hard hence influencing educators to do their work as they are certain that learners' future lies in their hands.

6.4.2.2 Conducive environment

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals are able to promote a conducive environment for learning. They have a belief that a conducive environment is good for the effectiveness of teaching and learning as it promotes unity. In this regard, the study recommends that all the principals' country-wide practise this strategy of providing a conducive learning environment. This kind of environment is excellent for teaching and learning and hence brings about quality results.

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6.4.2.3 Balancing duties

The study corroborated that Lesotho and South African principals know how to balance duties. Balancing duties helps save time because educators share duties among themselves. In this case, the study recommends that Lesotho and South African principals balance duties in their schools as this strategy is a good one. In actual fact balancing of duties seem to be crucial as educators and learners are able to finish the syllabus on time, therefore they acquire enough time to do revision.

6.4.2.4 School assessment

The study confirmed that Lesotho and South African principals frequently assess learners even though it is not everyday job. The study recommends that all Lesotho and South African schools assess learners from time to time as this will boost learners' morale in education. They must keep learners busy by giving them tests. In the end, every learner will perform well because in the meantime educators help those who seem to be slow learners.

6.4.2.5 Short and long-term planning

The study showed that Lesotho and South African principals have short and long-term planning. This implies that they employ different strategies to achieve success. Therefore, the study recommends that Lesotho and South African principals engage in other extra strategies that may also enhance learners' academic achievement. In schools, there are different types of learners, kinaesthetic, visual, auditory, and many others. So, educators ought to employ different teaching strategies with the aim of catering to all types of learners.

6.4.2.6 Providing incentives

The study verified that Lesotho and South African principals highly believe in the use of incentives. It is a rare case that some partly believe though they still offer them. The study recommends that principals keep on giving learners incentives. The provision of incentives seems to somehow motivate learners and boosts their interest in education.

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They influence learners to compete against one another, everyone strives hard to win the prize. This is a good way of boosting learners' morale in education.

6.4.2.7 Persistence

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals are persistent when it comes to their calling. Females struggle in their leadership, but they have perseverance. In this regard, the study recommends that females be put in high leadership positions because they are strong hence, they possess good quality traits that make them become perfect leaders. They have a heart of gold; they are persistent when it comes to teaching because it is their passion.

6.4.2.8 Leadership skills

The study confirmed that Lesotho and South African principals have good leadership skills. They have quality traits that make them become perfect leaders. The way in which they exercise their leadership skills is excellent because they do not misuse their power. The study recommends that females be put in leadership positions because they excel. Their schools perform better than those led by males. Their leadership can last for long because they are persistent and persevering.

6.4.3 Research question 3: What are heads of department's (HODs) perceptions of the role of female high school instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement?

6.4.3.1 Influence school outcomes

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals are good influencers when it comes to school outcome. When the school outcome is influenced, educators and learners can stay focused. The study recommends that Lesotho and South African female principals keep on influencing the school outcome because the schools' academic achievement is good. It gives them a chance to choose career paths of their own.

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6.4.3.2 Elevating professional development

The study and literature reviewed confirmed that Lesotho and South African principals are best at elevating professional development. The study, therefore, recommends that the principals have to highly encourage educators to improve themselves academically. When educators are skilful and knowledgeable it would be much easier for them to help learners research their full potential. Hence the main aim is to enhance learners' academic achievement. So, the more they elevate professional development is the more learners' academic achievement is enhanced.

6.4.3.3 Support to educators

The study discovered that Lesotho and South African female principals are good at supporting educators. They encourage educators to work hard hence they value their presence. In this case, the study recommends that in supporting educators' female principals must consider all the sides. They ought to support educators academically and personally because if not educators would not be able to give learners quality education. Moreover, they ought to ought to apply an affiliative leadership style whereby they value educators' feelings. In this way, the schools' academic performance would flourish.

6.4.3.4 Instructional support

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals are good at offering instructional support. They encourage educators to use different teaching strategies to enhance teaching and learning. Therefore, the study recommends that educators be more learners centred than teacher centred. This method of approach is good because learners are taught how to be independent. They only must rely on educators where they are struggling. It shows that in the future, learners will be becoming responsible in future.

6.4.3.5 Improving the standard of learners' academic achievement

The study and literature reviewed confirmed that Lesotho and South African female principals do improve the standards of learners' academic achievement. Principals make an assurance that there are adequate resources in schools. The study, therefore, recommends that the female principals carry on ensuring the availability of resources.

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This assists teaching and learning become effective and academic performance also become excellent. It the principals could keep on improving the standard of learners' academic achievement, education would be of high quality globally.

6.4.3.6 Communicating school vision and mission

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals do communicate the schools' vision and mission statement with educators and learners. Their dream is to produce learners who will be self-reliant in the future. In this regard, the study recommends that high schools engage subjects which are led to practical. This would help learners to earn their living offer completing their studies. They ought to engage those subjects that could lead learners to earn their living after completing their studies. They ought to engage those subjects that could lead learners to be self-employed rather than being employed. Those are Woodwork and Home-Economics.

6.4.3.7 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

The study and the reviewed literature verified that Lesotho and South African female principals are good at supervising and evaluating instruction. The female principals delegate duties to heads of department because they know educators better. In this case, the study recommends that the principal give heads of department the duty of assessing educators from regularly. This would ease principals' duties for they bite more than they can swallow. It would be of a great benefit if they would consider it.

6.4.3.8 Guidance and counselling

The study corroborated that Lesotho and South African female principals are able to take a good care of educators and learners. They invite counsellors or have one to one conversation with educators. The study recommends that all the schools do counselling quarterly. This is because counselling motivates educators and learners. Therefore, they can begin each session with open and fresh minds. On the other hand, the schools' academic performance become superb.

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6.4.3.9 Adapting to gender differences

The study substantiated that Lesotho and South African female principals seem to have adopted to gender differences. Women are now allowed to become leaders and their leadership appear to be excellent. In this case, the study recommends that male copy good examples from women. Schools led by females perform better than those schools led by males. Males must take an advantage, approach women and seek how they manage all these.

6.4.4 Research question 4: How effective is the female instructional leadership in Lesotho and South African high schools?

6.4.4.1 Capability to care

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals are able to take good care of learners. They can shower educators and learners with love, care and respect. In this case, the study recommends that schools led by males follow what the females do in their leadership. This is because schools led by females enrol more learners than those schools led by males.

6.4.4.2 Gentleness

The study discovered that Lesotho and South African female principals are gentle in their leadership. They prioritize learners' success more than any other thing. Therefore, the study recommends that even if the female principals could be that gentle, but they still need to be firm. This is because educators, parents and learners could take advantage of their gentleness. But they do not have to be too strict because parents might take their children to other schools.

6.4.4.3 Parental involvement

The researcher found out that parental involvement is important in children's education. When parents support learners in their education, they can perform well. In this regard, the study recommends that those parents who do not support their children do so. When parents support their children in the class, they become stress-free and are able to learn.

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As a result, they would also obtain good results like other learners whose parents have been forever supporting them.

6.4.4.4 Improvement in teaching and learning

The study confirmed that Lesotho and South African female principals do improve the teaching and learning process. They opt for prize-giving ceremonies to motivate the best performers. In this case, the study recommends that both internal and external candidates be given incentives when they have performed well. This is to motivate learners, from all grades, to work harder. Prize-giving ceremony is said to create competition among learners; hence every learner works hard to obtain better grades.

6.4.4.5 Providing feedback

The study discovered that Lesotho and South African female principals are good at providing immediate feedback. Even when the message they convey is negative, they put it in a positive way. The study recommends that female principals convey the message as it is. This would help educators and learners to learn from their mistakes when they have done wrong. Principals are also encouraged to praise educators and learners where they lost direction.

6.4.4.6 High standards

The researcher confirmed that both Lesotho and South African female principals are good at setting high standards that contribute to learners' academic achievement. They expect educators to work hard to achieve success. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) employ deputy principals in high schools as some of the schools don't have one, this could to help female principals. Moreover, there has to be the effectiveness of inspection in Lesotho high schools as this motivates both female principals and educators Female principals in high school to help principals who have a lot of work in their offices so much that they hardly meet with educators. It is therefore a plea that deputy principals are employed in high schools to unload the female principals.

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6.4.4.7 Hospitable climate

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals are good at providing educators and learners with a hospitable climate. A positive and welcoming environment results in excellent academic achievement. The study recommends that the female principals persist in providing educators and learners with a friendly environment. This is because the environment promotes good academic achievement.

6.4.5 Research question 5: How does instructional leadership of female principals affect the school culture?

6.4.5.1 Defining and communicating the school culture

The study found out that Lesotho and South African principals do value education. In communicating and defining the school, principals gather educators and learners at the assembly. They also make aware Board Members, parents and other stakeholders about the school's culture. The study recommends that, principals regularly remind educators and learners of what the schools' culture is. If so, the school's culture would be instilled in educators and learners' hearts. In this case, success would be easily entertained due to working toward achieving the common goal.

6.4.5.2 Developing a school culture

The study confirmed that Lesotho and South African principals have their ways of developing the school culture. At some point there are challenges, teenage girls experience early pregnancy and marriage and drop out of school because they are scared. Therefore, the study recommends that female principals be patient and allow such learners to attend schools until they are ready to go and conceive. Most importantly, schools must invite people from health centres to come and teach learners there are contraceptives that would help them to avoid experiencing early pregnancy.

6.4.5.3 Adequate resources

The study discovered that Lesotho and South African principals have taken education seriously. They make sure that there are adequate resources in schools. In this case, the

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study recommends that principals keep on providing teaching and learning resources, the academic performance would never stop being good. Adequate resources seem to motivate educators and learners hence they influence educators and learners to work hard.

6.5 Chapter conclusion

The researcher investigated the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement: A comparative study of Lesotho and South Africa. In this study, data were critically evaluated and analysed regarding research questions. This chapter is a collection of the preceding findings and the researcher discovered that female principals are excellent when it comes to leadership positions. Conclusions in this feminism and comparative study were made regarding what the participants voiced when the interviews were conducted. The study made a discovery that Lesotho and South African principals are energetic and enthusiastic when it comes to their work. No matter what challenges may come their way, they keep moving to go regardless of how difficult it is. In the end, they achieve success. There is a summary, conclusions, and recommendations in this chapter which are derived from the data presented by the participants.

Liberal feminist theory and instructional leadership theory are used in this study. The researcher's derived theory is female instructional leadership theory. Specifically, the researcher's theory is intended to show the world that females are capable of being in high leadership positions. The theory puts more emphasis that female principals are also powerful when it comes leadership due to their quality traits.

Many of the researchers dealing with liberal feminist theory did not dwell much on the quality traits that make female leaders to excel in their leadership. As the research was conducted the researcher came to notice that women have quality traits that make them become perfect leaders ever. Their nature says a lot, it reveals whom they really are. The researcher discovered that females are good at nurturing loving, caring and supporting when it comes to learners. Hence the researcher gives credit to female principals because their leadership is just perfect.

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Research paradigm used in this study is interpretive paradigm of which ontology and epistemology were also linked. Also, phenomenological research design and qualitative research approach were used. The population was of female principals and heads of Department (both sexes) of which the sample was twenty. Then the researcher went to selecte high schools to investigate how females coped in their leadership. Therefore, she questioned female principals, as for HODs, the researcher interrogated both males and females. Semi-structured were for principals while open-ended questionnaires were for HODs. On the other hand, the researcher promised the participants that the information they breathed was confidential. After all, the conclusion of the study signified that indeed women must be put in higher leadership positions as they possess good leadership traits.

As the research was conducted, it was discovered that in South Africa most of the schools did not do Religion in their schools. But one of the schools the researcher interviewed seemed religious. Learners from that school were taught that sharing was an important thing as in life a one needs other people to succeed . So, the matriculates from that school left all their school belongings to those vulnerable. The Department of Education after knowing all that felt that it was best all schools practice being religious as many learners were made to feel like others. Even the ex-students confidentially made donations to other learners because they cared about their future. The above story changed the mind-set of the researcher, hence concluded that Lesotho principals ought to know about that practice because it was of the best.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Permission letter from Supervisors to High School Principal

Central University of Technology, Free State

Prof A.H. Makura
Associate Professor: Educational Management and Research
Department of Postgraduate Studies: Education
School of Teacher Education
Faculty of Humanities
Tel: +27 51 507 4031 | **Fax:** +27 86 620 1054 | **E-mail:** amakura@cut.ac.za
Cell: +27 72 102 1538
Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)
Private Bag X20539, Bloemfontein, 9300, South Africa

REIMAGINE CUT | **EMBRACE** | SERVANT **LEADERSHIP**

28th January 2019

To: The Principal
_____High/Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Letter of Introduction:

I, the undersigned, hereby introduces to you the bearer of this letter, **Sr Clementina N. Teba-Teba.** She is coming to you as an education researcher and a Doctoral candidate at the Central University of Technology, Free State in Bloemfontein. Her research topic reads "*The role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools: a comparative study of Lesotho and South Africa.* I kindly request your assistance regarding data she so desires to collect from your school.

I, on behalf on behalf of the Central University of Technology, Free State, therefore and hereby kindly request your office to assist her conduct the data collection exercise at your school with your assistance and blessing. My wish is that she obtains the data outside teaching time, at times convenient to all parties. The information we are seeking is purely for academic purposes and will be held in strict confidence. We also pledge to secure the consent of the selected respondents since their participation will be voluntary. We commit to abide by any conditions that you may select to set for us. Ethical approval for this undertaking has been secured.

Please feel free to conduct me on issues material to this endeavour.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Alfred H. Makura

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Appendix 2: Permission letter from Faculty Research and Innovation Committee

Central University of Technology, Free State

RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

Date: 24 January 2019

This is to confirm that ethical clearance has been provided by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee in view of the CUT Research Ethics and Integrity Framework, 2016 with reference number **[FRIC 22/18/2]**

Applicant's Name	Tebateba, C
Supervisor Name for Student Project (where applicable)	Prof A.H Makura Dr W. R. Thabane
Level of Qualification for Student Project (where applicable)	D.Ed
Tittle of research project	The role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools: a comparative study of Lesotho and South Africa

The following special conditions were set:

x	Ethical measures as outlined in the LS 262a and which have been endorsed by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee have to be adhered to.

We wish you success with your research project.

Regards

Prof JW Badenhorst
(Ethics committee representative: Research with humans)

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Appendix 3: Permission letter from Department of Education.

education
Department of Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Enquiries: KK Motshumi
Ref: Notification of research: NC Tebateba
Tel. 051 404 9221 / 079 503 4943
Email: K. Motshumi@fseducation.gov.za

District Director
Motheo District

Dear Mr Moloi

NOTIFICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR DISTRICT BY NC TEBATEBA

The above mentioned candidate was granted permission to conduct research in your district as follows:

1. **Topic:** The role of female instructional leadership in Learner's academic achievement at high schools: A comparative study of Lesotho and South Africa.

   List of schools involved: Kopanong, Moemedi, Petunia and St Bernard Secondary Schools, Motheo District. Please note that in the case of an Independent School, ie Headstart, the researcher was requested to approach the school and it governance structure directly as the power to allow research at an Independent School, is vested in the Governance Structure of the relevant Independent School.

   Target Population: 5 Female principals and 10 heads of departments (HODs) – males and females.

2. **Period**: From date of signature of this letter until 30 September 2019. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year nor during normal school hours.
3. **Research benefits:** The Free State department of Education will profit from the study as most female principals will regain confidence to provide instructional knowledge that will lead to learner's academic achievement in high schools. The results of the study will add to the body of literature on female instructional leadership of high schools. It will also be relevant to other female principals as well as those who seek to take on the high school instructional leadership positions. The research might provide solutions to the problems associated with learner's academic achievement in the affected areas. The results of the study will create awareness among female instructional leaders regarding instructional leadership
4. Logistical procedures were met, in particular ethical considerations for conducting research in the Free State Department of Education.
5. Strategic Planning, Policy and Research Directorate will make the necessary arrangements for the researchers to present the findings and recommendations to the relevant officials in the district.

Yours sincerely

DR JEM SEKOLANYANE
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 12/04/2019

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Appendix 4: Consent forms from the female school principals

Central University of Technology, Free State, Department of Postgraduate Studies, Private Bag X20539, Bloemfontein, 93000, South Africa, Tel: +277 3838 6481/+266 5896 3056

Consent form for the female school principals

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Sr. Clementina Teba-Teba, is undertaking a research study on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at high schools in Lesotho and South Africa. This study is carried out as part of my Doctoral studies (Education) with the Central University of Technology, Free State in South Africa under the supervision of Professor A.H. Makura. You are hereby kindly requested to give consent to the researcher to participate in the confidential interviews and/or open-ended questionnaire. All answers are treated as correct. I shall personally ensure that your name or that of any of your head of department is not disclosed to whosoever, and your participation will not put all of you under any risk.

The researcher is bound to confidentiality. As a result, permission to conduct the research was sought from the Faculty of Humanities in the Department of Post Graduate Studies: Education. A letter seeking clearance to conduct the research at high schools was written to, and approved by, your Department of Education. Hence, consent is sought from you in your capacity as a female principal of the high school you are leading. With your permission, I will audio-record the interaction to get accurate data. I hereby grant you freedom to withdraw from participating at any time during the course of the interviews. Finally, for ethical issues, I, as the researcher will use letter codes as an alternative to using your names.

If agreeable, kindly please sign on the spaces provided below:

I (your name): .....hereby give my consent to Sr. Clementina Teba-Teba to participate in a research study mentioned above.

Signature: .....

Yours sincerely

Sr. Clementina Teba-Teba: ..... Date: .....

Supervisor: Professor A.H Makura..... Date: .....

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RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

DECLARATION

I ..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

....
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

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Appendix 5: Consent forms from the heads of Department

Central University of Technology, Free State, Department of Postgraduate Studies, Private Bag X20539, Bloemfontein, 93000, South Africa, Tel: +277 3838 6481/+266 5896 3056

Consent form for the school heads of department

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Sr. Clementina Teba-Teba, is undertaking a study on the role of female instructional leadership in learners' academic achievement at selected Lesotho and South African high schools. This study is carried out as part of my Doctoral studies (Education) with the Central University of Technology, Free State in South Africa under the supervision of Professor A.H. Makura. You are kindly requested to give consent to the researcher to ask you to respond to the attached open-ended questionnaire. All responses are treated as correct. I shall personally ensure that your name is not disclosed to whosoever, and your participation will not put you under any risk.

The researcher is bound to this confidentiality. As a result, permission to conduct the research was sought from and granted by the Faculty of Humanities in the Department of Post Graduate Studies: Education. Permission to conduct the research at high schools was granted by your Department of Education. Hence, I request for your permission to be audio-recorded for accurate transcription. The interviews will in no way alienate your freedom to withdraw at any stage in my quest to get in-depth information. Finally, as an ethical standard, I will use letter codes for reporting your contribution instead of using your names.

If agreeable, kindly please sign on the spaces provided below:

I (your name): .....hereby give my consent to Sr. Clementina Teba-Teba to participate in a research study mentioned above.

Signature: .....

Yours sincerely

Sr. Clementina Teba-Teba: ..... Date: .....

Supervisor: Professor A.H Makura: ..... Date: .....

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RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

DECLARATION

I ..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

....
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

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Appendix 6: Interview schedule for female principals

Interview Questions for Female Principals

1. Briefly tell me about your leadership experience as a principal, and how long have you been at this school.
2. How could you define instructional leadership? (Your common understanding)
   2.1. What is your goal as a principal?
3. How do you perceive your leadership role in teaching and learning for the improvement of learners' academic achievement?
   3.1. According to your knowledge, what is your school's educational goal?
   3.2. How do you empower educators and learners as a principal so as to maximise or optimize learners' academic achievement in your school?
   3.3. How do you do as a principal to improve the instructional knowledge and skills of your educators?
   3.4. How do you ensure educators' commitment towards learners' academic achievement?
   3.5. How do you facilitate teaching and learning for the improvement of learners' academic achievement?
   3.6. What can you say about the level of trust you have in your educators regarding teaching and learning?
   3.7. What are your educators' expectations in enhancing learners' academic achievement?
   3.8. How do you monitor educators' progress in caring out teaching and learning activities?
   3.9. How do you improve the quality of teaching and learning activities?
   3.10. How do you support educators in enhancing learners' academic achievement?
4. What teaching and learning strategies do you use to promote academic achievement of learners in your school?
   4.1. How do you define and communicate your school culture?
   4.2. What can you say about the culture of teaching and learning in your school?

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4.3. What is your school vision and mission statement as an instructional leader?
4.4. How was the vision of your school formulated?
4.5. How do you define and communicate hence make sure that the school vision and mission are realized?
4.6. How do you conduct supervision and evaluation of instruction?
4.7. What is your view on the use of incentives in improving learners' academic achievement?
4.8. How do you think you can improve learners' academic achievement in this school?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

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Appendix 7: Open ended questionnaire for heads of Department

Open-Ended Questionnaire for Heads of Department (HODs)

1. Briefly tell me about your principal's experience in leadership and how long she has been a leader in this school.
2. How would you define instructional leadership? (Your common understanding)
   2.1. What do you think is your principal's goal as an instructional leader?
3. As the head of the department, how would you describe your principal's leadership role in teaching and learning for the improvement of learners' academic achievement?
   3.1. According to your knowledge as HOD, what is your school's educational goal?
   3.2. How does your principal as an instructional leader, empower educators and learners in order to improve learners' academic achievement in your school?
   3.3. What does your principal do to improve the instructional knowledge of the educators?
   3.4. What does your principal ensure educators' commitment towards learners' academic achievement?
   3.5. How does your principal facilitate teaching and learning for the improvement of learners' academic achievement?
   3.6. What can you say about the level of trust your principal has in educators regarding teaching and learning?
   3.7. What are your principal's expectations towards educators' contribution in learners' academic achievement?
   3.8. How does your principal monitor educators' progress in their teaching and learning activities?
   3.9. How does your principal improve quality of engagement of teachers in teaching and learning?
   3.10. How does your principal support educators to optimize learners, academic achievement?
4. What teaching and learning strategies does your principal use to promote high academic achievement of learners at your school?

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4.1. How does your principal define and communicate her school culture? How would you describe the culture of this school as envisaged by the principal?
4.2. What can you say about the culture of teaching and learning in your school?
4.3. What is the vision and mission statement of your school, and how was this vision formulated?
4.4. How does your principal make sure that the school vision and mission statement are realised?
4.5. How does your principal supervise and evaluate instruction?
4.6. Does your principal believe in the use of incentives in improving learners' academic performance?
4.7. How does your principal improve learners' academic achievement?
4.8. The fact that your principal is a female, how does this affect her instructional leadership?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

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Central University of Technology, Free State

EDITOR'S LETTER

From : I. Manase (PhD UKZN)

10 Laramie

Nienaber Street

Langenhovenpark

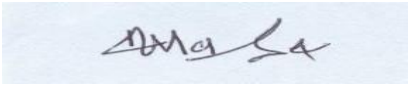
Bloemfontein

Date : 30 January 2023

Confirmation of proofreading and editing of Sr Clementina Teba-Teba's Doctor of Education thesis titled: "The Role of Female Instructional Leadership in Learners' Academic Achievement at High Schools: A Comparative Study of Lesotho and South Africa"

This serves to confirm that I have proofread and edited Sr Clementina Teba-Teba's above-noted Doctor of Education thesis. The suggested sentence and language construction changes have been attended to, and as such, the thesis can now be submitted for examination.

Sincerely,



Email: irimanase@gmail.com / Manasel@ufs.ac.z

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