

**EXPLORING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF PRINCIPALS  
IN SELECTED NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COLLEGES UNDER CHRISTIAN  
HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MALAWI**

**MSC (NURSING AND MIDWIFERY EDUCATION) THESIS**

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**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI**

**KAMUZU COLLEGE OF NURSING**

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**MSc (Nursing and Midwifery Education) Thesis**

**By**

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**University of Malawi**

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**April, 2021**

## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned declare that this thesis is my own original work and effort and has never been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for similar purposes. The sources of information used in this thesis have been acknowledged using in-text citations and reference list.

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## **CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

The undersigned certifies that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with my approval.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

Masauko Msiska, PhD (Lecturer)

**Main Supervisor**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late grandmothers Sellah Anastanzia Banda and Agness Phiri.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Instructional leadership is crucial to the success of colleges since it creates a climate that is conducive to teaching and learning. However, there is a dearth of literature from developing countries including Malawi. On the other hand, the job description of CHAM college principals directly captures instructional leadership attributes. However, it is not known whether CHAM college principals practice instructional leadership as stipulated in their job description and from literature. This study explored instructional leadership practices of principals in selected Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM) nursing and midwifery colleges using Hallinger and Wang instructional leadership model. Qualitative research approach was used. Data were collected from 6 principals through individual in depth interviews. The participants consisted of four males and two females. Three participants had served as principals for less than 2 years and the other three had served as college principals for 3 to 4 years. The data were analyzed using thematic template analysis. The study findings showed that principals in the study try to implement some instructional leadership practices in line with the model developed by Hallinger and Wang. However, principals are not able to monitor instructional program. The study also revealed that most of the principals lacked resources and experienced increased workload which hindered their implementation of instructional leadership activities. Therefore, necessary measures should be taken so that college principals can focus on the instructional leadership activities according to Hallinger and Wang (2015) model aimed at improving student learning in colleges.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	vi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	1
1.1 Chapter Overview .....	1
1.2 Introduction .....	1
1.3 Background to the Study .....	3
1.4 Problem Statement .....	6
1.5 Broad Objective.....	7
1.6 Specific Objectives:.....	7
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	7
1.8 Chapter Summary.....	8
CHAPTER TWO .....	10
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
2.1 Introduction .....	10
2.2 Search Process for Literature Review .....	10
2.3 Leadership and Types of Leadership .....	11



2.4 Leadership and Nursing .....	14
2.5 Instructional Leadership and Lecturers .....	17
2.6 Nursing and Midwifery Colleges .....	19
2.7 Instructional Leadership Practices. ....	21
2.8. Instructional Leadership Support .....	27
2.9 Barriers to Instructional Leadership.....	30
2. 10 Instructional Leadership in Different Countries.....	34
2.11 Instructional Leadership in Malawi Context.....	36
2.11.1 Education system in Malawi.....	36
2.12 Summary of Literature Review .....	38
2.13 Conceptual Framework.....	39
CHAPTER THREE .....	44
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	44
3.1 Chapter Overview .....	44
3.2 Research Design.....	44
3.3 Study Setting .....	46
3.4 Target Population .....	46
3.5 Sampling Method .....	47

3.6 Sample Size.....	47
3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Participants .....	47
3.7.1 Inclusion criteria.....	47
3.7.2 Exclusion criteria.....	48
3.8 Study period .....	48
3.8.1 Data Collection Instrument.....	48
3.8.2 Pre Testing.....	49
3.8.3 Ethical Consideration .....	49
3.8.4 Data Collection Procedure.....	51
3.8.5 Data Management and Handling .....	52
3.8.5 Data Analysis.....	54
3.9 Trustworthiness of the study .....	55
3.10 Chapter Summary.....	57
CHAPTER FOUR.....	58
STUDY FINDINGS.....	58
4.1 Introduction .....	58
4.2 Defining the Schools Mission .....	62
4.2.1 Subtheme 1: Frames the schools goals .....	62

4.2.2 Subtheme 2: Communicates school goals .....	64
4.3 Managing the Instructional Program.....	65
4.3.1 Subtheme 1: Supervises and evaluates instruction.....	65
4.3.2 Subtheme 2: Coordinates the curriculum .....	67
4.3.3 Subtheme 3: Monitoring students’ progress.....	68
4.4 Develops a Positive School Climate .....	70
4.4.1 Subtheme 1: Protects instructional time .....	70
4.4.2 Subtheme 2: Develops professional development.....	71
4.4.3 Subtheme 3: Maintaining high visibility .....	73
4.4.4 Subtheme 4: Provides incentives for teachers .....	74
4.5.5 Subtheme 5: Provides incentives for learning .....	76
4.5 Obstacles Principals Encounter when Acting as Instructional Leaders .....	77
4.5.1 Subtheme 1: Lack of resources.....	77
4.5.2 Subtheme 2: Increased workload.....	79
4.6 Chapter Summary.....	81
CHAPTER FIVE .....	82
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS .....	82
5.1 Introduction .....	82

5.2 Defining the School Mission.....	82
5.3 Managing the Instructional Program.....	86
5.4 Develops Positive School Climate.....	89
5.5 Barriers for Implementation of Instructional Leadership Activities .....	92
5.6 Recommendations .....	94
5.6.1 In Policy.....	95
5.6.2 In Education.....	96
5.6.3 In Nursing and Midwifery colleges .....	97
5.7 Areas for Further Study.....	97
5.8 Constraints/limitations .....	98
5.9 Conclusion.....	99
REFERENCES .....	100
Appendices.....	117
Appendix 1: Interview guide .....	117
Appendix 3: Consent Form.....	124

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Dimensions of Instructional Leadership.....	26
Table 2: Instructional Leadership Framework by Hallinger and Wang (2015).....	43
Table 3: 4.2 Demographic characteristics of the study participants .....	59
Table 4: 4.3 Presentation of the themes .....	61

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CHAM:	Christian Health Association of Malawi
COMREC:	College of Medicine Research and Ethics Committee
MOH:	Ministry of Health
NMNCM:	Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi
NMT:	Nurse Midwife Technician
PIMRS:	Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale
USA:	United States of America
P:	Participant

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**

### **Leadership**

Leadership is a social process in which an individual or a group influences behavior toward a shared goal (Hoy & Hoy, 2013).

### **Instructional Leadership**

Hoy and Miskel (2013), defined instructional leadership as the educational leadership which focuses on the technical core responsibilities of schools, namely teaching and learning, by defining the school's mission, managing the educational program, and promoting a positive school learning environment.

### **Christian Health Association of Malawi**

CHAM is a network of church-owned health facilities, hospitals and training colleges (Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM), 2015).

**Secondary School**

A school that is intermediate in level between elementary school and college and that usually offers general, technical, vocational, or college-preparatory curricula.

**Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi**

The sole regulatory body of nursing and midwifery education, training, practice and professional conduct of nursing and midwifery personnel in Malawi (Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi (NMCM), 2017).

**Licensure examination**

Examinations which nursing students take after they have completed their nursing educational requirements to identify persons who possess the minimum knowledge and experience necessary to perform tasks on the job (NMCM, 2017).

**Nurse Midwife Technician**

The nursing cadre with a three year diploma in nursing and midwifery (NMCM, 2017).

**Principal**

The principal of a nursing and midwifery college is the Chief Executive Officer for the College and is responsible for overall general administration of academic duties of the College under the direct supervision of the College Board Chairperson (CHAM, 2015).



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 Chapter Overview**

This chapter introduces the study on exploring instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges under Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM). It provides the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, broad and specific objectives, the significance of the study and chapter summary.

#### **1.2 Introduction**

Instructional leadership is a key to achieving student success. Some studies conducted in Africa report that learner achievement is related to principals' instructional leadership practices (Bush, Joubert, & Kiggundu, 2010; Grobler, 2013; Mestry, 2017; Motilal, 2014; Sindhvad, 2009). The studies conducted in recent years globally also reveal the effects and importance of instructional leadership in contrast with different types of leadership (Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Hallinger, 2011).

Despite clear evidence on the importance of instructional leadership, it is reported that most principals in developing countries do not fully practice instructional leadership (Firmaningsih-Kolu, 2015; Harris, Jones, Cheah, Devadason, & Adams, 2017; Walker & Hallinger, 2015). In addition, studies have shown that the available literature on leadership and leadership practices in most developing countries is still in its beginning (Hallinger, 2015; Hallinger & Bryant, 2013; Harris & Jones, 2015; Harris et al., 2017).

A lot needs to be known in terms of how CHAM college principals exhibit instructional leadership roles. Instructional leadership as a new paradigm makes principals more accountable to the performance of colleges. Principals need to constantly observe and monitor students and lecturers to enhance the quality of teaching and learning hence making colleges to be successful.

Instructional leadership practices of college principals have to be explored in terms of managing teaching and learning. Managing teaching and learning program is associated with the principal's role in working with teachers and students in areas specifically related to school vision, curriculum, instruction, and learning environment (Ahmad & Hussai, 2012; Hallinger, & Lee, 2013). In addition, some researchers claim that managing teaching and learning are primary roles of an effective instructional leader (Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz, Pashiardis & Feldhoff, 2016; Motilal, 2014). This study explored instructional leadership practices of CHAM college principals with the aim of understanding the extent to which CHAM college principals exhibit instructional leadership practices.

International literature explains that instructional leadership varies with context. For example, the international study of Hallinger and Lee (2013), showed that contextual factors affected school principals' instructional leadership, management and the amount of time allocated for management. Cansoy and Turkoglu (2018), stated that school principals have to deal with many obstacles. In view of this, the findings of this study can help to understand why instructional leadership is exhibited or is not exhibited in CHAM colleges. This is another reason that prompted the researcher to conduct this study to explore and understand in what roles and practices do the principals in CHAM colleges engage to influence teaching and learning in their colleges.

### **1.3 Background to the Study**

Instructional leadership emerged during research associated with the effective school movement of the 1980s in the United States of America (USA), which revealed that the key to running successful schools lies in the principals' role (Corrales, 2017; Hallinger, 2011; Hofman & Hofman, 2011; Horner, 2016). Hence, instructional leadership is considered as an ideal practice which is expected to be carried out by school principals globally (Finley, 2014; Ponnusany, 2010). It is observed that different studies have been carried out in this regard in the international literature and Malawi literature. In some of these international studies done in USA, Turkey and Malaysia, while it is revealed that school principals exhibited instructional leadership practices at high levels (Harris et al., 2017; McColum B, 2010; Cansoy & Turkoglu, 2018; Su, 2013;) in some of them conducted in South Africa, Uganda and Nigeria, it is revealed that school principals exhibited instructional leadership practices at low levels and faced many obstacles (Bhengu et al., 2014; Enueme, 2017; Mafuwane, 2011; Namuteb, 20019; Naidoo, 2015; Taole, 2017 ). In the one study that was done in Malawi secondary schools, it was disclosed that secondary school principals emphasize on the academic results by prioritizing effective use of time in the teaching and learning (Toprakcl, Beytekin, & Chipala, 2016). However, how nursing and midwifery college principals lead and the instructional leadership practices they actually demonstrate have not been investigated in Malawi. In this regard, this study may contribute to understanding if instructional leadership practices are exhibited or are not exhibited adequately in CHAM colleges. On the other hand, it is observed that there

are many studies examining instructional leadership according to the model determined by Hallinger and Wang (2015) in the international literature. However, it is observed that the study carried out in Malawi has focused on exploring instructional leadership according to the model proposed by Kruger. Therefore, exploring instructional leadership according to the model put forward by Hallinger and Wang (2015) within the context of Malawi is considered to fill a gap in this area.

The Government of Malawi through CHAM has been highly concerned about school leadership as a major influence of learning. This is noticeably through CHAM's care in the selection of college principals and the tasks and responsibilities entrusted to them. The job description for college principals as provided by CHAM secretariate stipulates that principals are responsible for training students, reviewing and implementing curriculum, supervision and appraisal of students and staff (CHAM, 2015). Interestingly, this suggests that principals' tasks hinge much on teaching and learning which directly relates to instructional leadership principles. According to recent studies globally (Hallinger , 2015; Horng et al., 2010; Hoy & Miskel, 2013; Mohamed & Al-Hosani, 2015; Sindhvad, 2009), principals who demonstrate instructional leadership activities are supposed to engage in framing the school's goals; communicating the school's goals; supervising and evaluating instruction; coordinating the curriculum; monitoring student progress; protecting instructional time; maintaining high visibility; providing incentives for teachers; promoting professional development; and providing incentives for learning. Despite that the job description of CHAM principals directly captures instructional leadership attributes, it is not clear whether the leadership characteristics of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals exemplify these instructional leadership practices. This

suggests the need to study instructional leadership practices of principals in order to explore and understand if CHAM principals are fully acquainted with their roles and responsibilities as instructional leaders.

When studies are examined at a broader framework, instructional leaders are supposed to take the leading role and give the top priority to improving instruction and making efforts to realize the vision of the school (Gungor & Aydin, 2019; Horner, 2016; Horng et al., 2010). However, studies conducted in Taiwan and Sweden discovered that while principals are expected to be instructional leaders as advocated in official reform documents and academic publications, principals still spend most of their time on administrative matters (Hui-Ling, Wendy, Pan Fong-Yee, Nyeu, June, & Chen, 2015; Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013). They execute a high level of indirect leadership such as the most frequently observed behavior and supporting work environment. Generally, instructional leadership tasks were perceived as of having lower importance and performance (Hui-Ling et al., 2015; Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013). Similarly, a study conducted in South Africa found that principals view themselves as managers not instructional leaders (Taole, 2017). Conversely, none of the published studies has explored whether CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals take a leading role and prioritize improving instruction and realizing their college visions or not. Therefore, it is important to explore which activities CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals prioritize when executing their duties.

Recently, a comprehensive comparative study between Israel and USA Jewish schools' instructional leadership found that in USA Jewish school principals were more inclined to performing instructional leadership practices than principals in Israel schools

(Glanz, Shaked, Rabinowitz, Shenhav & Zaretsky, 2017). Hence Israel principals, especially males, perceived themselves more as managers than instructional leaders (Glanz et al., 2017). However, efforts to highlight instructional leadership in Israel have only fairly recently become a focus of interest and expectation for principals (Glanz et al., 2017). Another study conducted in South Africa revealed that principals considered their duties to include managing learner discipline, physical resources and school finances, maintaining school grounds and buildings and attending to administrative matters (Mestry & Schmidt 2013). This shows that principals in South Africa practice both administrative and instructional leadership roles. Nevertheless, despite feeling temporarily challenged, the majority of the principals considered promoting teaching and learning in their schools to be their core responsibility (Mestry & Schmidt 2013). However, the literature about instructional leadership practices in Malawian schools is minimal and there is none on CHAM colleges. Hence, it is not known whether CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals practice instructional leadership or not. This study explored this gap, to fill this gap in the literature.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

Some international studies reveal that instructional leaders are supposed to take a leading role and give top priority to improving instruction and making efforts to realize the vision of the school (Horng et al., 2010; Hoy & Miskel, 2013; Mohamed & Al-Hosani, 2015; Sindhvad, 2009). Despite the extensive evidence about instructional leadership, however, the literature in least developed countries including Malawi remains low and is relatively under-developed. On the other hand, the job description of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals directly captures instructional leadership attributes. However,

it is not known whether CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals practice instructional leadership as stipulated in their job description and from literature. Failure to explore the instructional leadership practices of the CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals may influence the college outcomes negatively as the impact on teaching and learning is based on how the principals manage the colleges (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Enueme, 2017; McColumn, 2010; Motilal, 2014). Furthermore, it has been argued that more empirical studies are urgently needed to strengthen the research base on instructional leadership, particularly in developing countries (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013; Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011).

### **1.5 Broad Objective**

To explore instructional leadership practices of principals in selected CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi.

### **1.6 Specific Objectives:**

1. To establish instructional leadership practices exhibited by principals in defining the school mission.
2. To describe instructional leadership practices exhibited by principals in managing the instructional program.
3. To establish instructional leadership practices exhibited by principals in developing a positive school learning climate.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The college principal is a significant and powerful person in any college. It is the principal's leadership that sets the quality of the college, the environment for teaching and learning, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers, and the degree of concern for

what students may or may not become (Clabo, 2010). The results of this study may help managers, principals, regulatory bodies, employers and those who are interested in educational leadership with the instructional leadership practices from which they can make decisions and lay out programs and courses to train principals to improve their roles in colleges. The study will further provide relevant information, by identifying leadership practices so that present and future principals will aim at executing roles which will improve the effectiveness of nursing and midwifery colleges. CHAM (2015), provides job description of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals which emphasize on instructional leadership roles. The study may help the process of instructional leadership enhancement among principals in nursing and midwifery colleges and the colleges can more accurately define and seek out principals with strengths in these areas and Master of Science in Nursing and Midwifery Education can more considerably train future principals.

As it has been argued that more empirical studies are urgently needed to strengthen the research base on instructional leadership, particularly in developing countries (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013; Jamelaa, & Jainabee, 2011). The significance of the study emerges from the importance of exploring the instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi. It also develops from the scarcity of studies which investigated this issue hence the study will act as a foundation for highlighting some important and possible points of departure for future research.

## **1.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has discussed various issues relating to principals in nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi. It has shown that studies conducted internationally on school leadership have suggested focusing on instructional leadership practices of



principals in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The chapter has also shown that more studies are needed in the developing countries to understand instructional leadership. Conversely, the instruction leadership practices of principals in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges which relates to their job description is not known a situation which has led to the study.

The chapter has indicated that this study will give feedback to the managers, principals, regulatory bodies, employers and those who are interested in educational leadership as to whether principals utilize the instructional leadership practices. Identification of instructional leadership practices will also strengthen the roles of the principals in running the colleges hence increasing the student success.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This study was aimed at exploring instructional leadership practices of principals in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi. Thus this chapter presents a detailed review of the literature about principals' instructional leadership and other selected concepts. The focus of the review is to display the previous and current information about instructional leadership and concepts that may have a relationship to instructional leadership. The chapter also discusses the conceptual framework that guided this study.

#### **2.2 Search Process for Literature Review**

This review of literature started with a purposeful search for empirical studies and articles involving principal leadership and, particularly, instructional leadership. The first step involved scrutinizing electronic databases and search engines (i.e., Google Scholar, ERIC, PubMed, Jstor, Medline, Ebscohost, Ed Full Text, Google Books and Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI) using various combinations of keywords such as leadership, principal leadership, instructional leadership, nursing and midwifery, leadership practices.

The researcher electronically and physically searched various educational journals on leadership such as Educational Administration Quarterly, Educational Leadership, Educational Research Quarterly, Journal of Educational Leadership, School Effectiveness and School Improvement. Another step involved the study of reference lists in relevant review articles (Dongo, 2016; Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Leithwood, 2017; Mestry, 2017; Sebastain, Allensworth & Huang, 2016) in order to identify further relevant research. The last step involved an examination of unpublished documents relevant to principal instructional leadership. Literature within the timeframe of five to ten years was considered. However, other documents that are not within the timeframe have been used depending on the importance of the information, they are the primary source of the information.

These search efforts resulted in a considerable collection of research on instructional leadership, which forms the basis of this review. In completing this review, over 100 studies, articles, dissertations, books, book chapters, and documents have been studied. During the literature search it was discovered that not much had been published on instructional leadership in Malawi as well as in nursing and midwifery education worldwide. Therefore other related studies on the subject matter of leadership such as types of leadership and management in other education institutions have been included in the review.

### **2.3 Leadership and Types of Leadership**

Contingency theory for understanding leadership suggests that behavior of a leader is influenced by his/her traits and skills as well as characteristics of a situation in order to produce effective results. Some examples of Contingency Models include: 1) Instructional

Leadership, 2) Transformation Leadership, 3) Transactional Leadership and 4) Distributed Leadership 5) (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). Recent analysis of the worldwide literature on educational leadership support the inference that, among these competing models, instructional leadership has demonstrated the strongest empirically-verified impact on student learning results (Hallinger & Lee, 2013; Hallinger & Wang 2015; Hallinger, 2011).

A meta-analysis study done in Canada by Leithwood and Sun (2012) found that transformational leadership has small but significant positive effects on student achievement. However, the study also revealed that several of the most widely advocated models of effective educational leadership actually include many of the same practices.

Similarly, to address the concerns of instructional leadership versus transformational leadership, a study by Hallinger (2011) established that transformational and instructional leadership share some common roles such as creating a shared vision, developing a climate of high expectations and a culture for improving teaching and learning and providing professional development; the differences between the two leadership models lie in the degree to which leadership is being held by an individual (instructional leadership) or is being shared (transformational leadership) and the extent to which the leader emphasizes a coordination strategy versus an empowerment strategy. Hallinger (2011) went on to reveal that instructional leadership focuses on improving teaching and learning while transformational leadership focuses on building capacity for improvement.

Lia (2019) agrees with Doody and Doody (2012) that transactional leadership is based on the exchange of interests between leaders and members to achieve team management. Responsible leadership is based on the relationship management between stakeholders to achieve the organization's business strategic intentions. Consequently,

transactional leadership refers to satisfying the interest relationship between leaders and employees (Lia, 2019). Leaders clarify the needs of employees, negotiate with employees to set goals and stimulate employees through positive or negative behaviors. However, Doody and Doody (2012) argue that good leaders should demonstrate both transactional and transformational leadership.

On the other hand, a study done in Indonesia by Firmaningsih-Kolu (2015), revealed that instructional leadership is a situation where the principal is giving one way instruction to his subordinates, especially teachers. However, some command given to teachers leaves a second party in no doubt about the power relationship between the speaker and the person being spoken to. As a result, instructional leadership, too, can be perceived as a power based transaction leadership. Distributed leadership approach necessitates that responsibility and initiative be more widely distributed. Distributed leadership requires 4 characteristics: sense making, relating, visioning and inventing (Al-Sawai, 2013). Distributed leadership bears many similarities to notions such as shared, collective, collaborative, emergent and co-leadership (Bolden, 2011). Many large corporations have recognized distributed leadership by becoming less hierarchical and more collaborative in their leadership approach (Al-Sawai, 2013).

There are some overlaps and similarities among the leadership practices which show similarities in leadership models in different countries. Some differences occurred whereby some authors did not mention the practices that lead to successful organizations. As it is understood from these studies, instructional leadership can be considered as a powerful leadership style which can be practiced independently by principals. Despite instructional leadership being most powerful, it is observed that different models of

leadership share most of same practices. However, instructional leadership is still perceived as an important factor in student learning and in making a school successful.

Conversely, a recent study in Thailand seeking to understand the impact of Thailand's 1999 Education Reform Act on leadership and classroom practice after 10 years revealed that there is slow, uneven limited impact on classrooms and the pre/post analysis of principals' instructional leadership showed little change in leadership practice (Hallinger & Lee, 2013). This could mean that principals have not yet conceptualized instructional leadership. Despite instructional leadership being on the top of research in the 21st century, studies conducted in East Asia; Turkey, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Hong Kong found that a variety of topics on educational leadership were explored but instructional leadership constituted only a small proportion (Cansoy & Turkoglu 2018; Gungor & Aydin, 2019; Hallinger, 2012; Harris et al., 2017; Hui-Ling et al., 2015). This suggests need for research studies on instructional leadership to identify practices of instructional leadership consequently adding to the global literature. There is also need for qualitative studies to develop more in-depth descriptions and understanding of instructional leadership.

## **2.4 Leadership and Nursing**

Leadership in nursing is very important because it forms an interactive process where followers have a clear vision, are motivated and empowered to accomplish specific goals (AL-Dossary, 2010; Leithwood, 2017). However, few nursing leaders are truly motivating, as their leadership skills are formed on the basis of traditional ordered systems and practice knowledge (Doody & Doody, 2012). Further AL-Dossary (2010), explains that leadership in nursing involves providing direction and support, coordinating,

collaboration, effective communication, showing followers how things are done, guiding their way, and the course of actions.

Royal College of Nursing (2009), found that lack of agreed role definitions and role conflict existed because nurse leaders were constantly balancing different aspects of their role, while lacking skill development and formal preparation. This might bring negative impact to the organizations including colleges since unintended roles can be exhibited.

Leadership demonstrated by the nurse manager directly impacts staff's performance. Witge and Scanlan (2014), tried to understand the role of nurse manager specifically the intricate relationship that exists between transactional and transformational leadership practices in Canada. They found that the challenge for nurse managers is to execute a delicate balance of operational tasks (transactional exchange) in concert with transformational leadership behaviors. With thoughtful planning, the nurse manager can build on the benefits of contingent reward with behaviors that will elevate transactional leadership into the dimensions of transformational leadership for example, supporting and nurturing the personal growth of staff through acts of coaching and mentoring are fundamental transformative concepts evident in promoting the development of staff to their full potential. However, transactional behaviors such as conducting a yearly performance plan with each staff member can be productive in supporting staff's developmental needs. With insight and reflective practice, the nurse manager can enhance the common transactional exchange between followers and craft a more meaningful interaction represented within the dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, influential motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. However, these findings highlighted the importance of the nurse manager in establishing trust from

the onset through a series of successful transactional exchanges in building relational groundwork for future transformational practices.

The importance of nurses to be leaders and not managers has been emphasized in the literature. Tranbarger (2013), explained the principles of leadership success as setting priorities and visions, communicating them to staff, observing staff in action, personally congratulating individuals on excellent performance appraisals and sharing positive feedback. He also explained that corrective actions should be private, whereas positive reinforcement should be public. The real value for leaders comes from growth of staff and organizational success. These practices hinge much on instructional leadership.

Cummings, MacGregora, Davey, Lee, Wong, Loa, Muisea and Stafford (2010), found that health care leaders who focus primarily on using their emotional skills to understand what individual employees or teams were feeling during difficult time, building trust through listening, responding to staff concerns, supporting and investing in them and their abilities were able to achieve the common goal. In general, relationally focused leadership practices led to much more frequent and positive outcomes for the nursing workforce and nursing work environments than did other more task focused leadership styles, which included transactional, transformative, instrumental and laissez faire approaches.

Andrews, Richard, Robinson, Celano and Hallarone (2012) argue that leaders who function in an operational capacity (assistant nurse manager) were considered less transformational and rated as less satisfactory leaders. Discrepancy between a leader's self-rating and supervisee rating of the leader correlated with lower satisfaction with leadership when the leader self-ratings were higher than the ratings of the supervisee. While there is



a staff preference for transformational leadership, staff also show a preference for leaders who clarify expectations and offer recognition for employee contributions.

Commonalities found among these researchers were that they created a positive working environment and defined the organization vision. These nurse managers realized the importance of building a positive relationship with their staff. In this literature review one learns that though there was no clear role definition of nurse managers, they were able to perform some leadership roles. Although the literature systematically examining the leadership of nursing is available, there has been very little direct literature documented on how nurse and midwifery training institutions are managed. On the other hand, the documented literature focused on other leadership styles not instructional leadership. However, as staff showed preference for leaders who clarify expectations and offer recognition for employee contributions which relates much to the functions of instructional leadership, this can be looked at as a way by which nurse managers including college principals should lead.

## **2.5 Instructional Leadership and Lecturers**

Regarding their functions, the higher education institutions need to direct and guide the society. Researchers found that the roles of the school leaders in the higher education institutions are one of the important factors for the success within the institution (AL-Dossary, 2010; Mohammed, Jassim, Jassim & Abass, 2020).

Namuteb (2019), conducted a cross-sectional correlational study to analyze whether instructional leadership was among the causes of underperformance of university lecturers. The sample consisted of 341 lecturers and 35 Head of Departments (HOD's).

The study found that inadequate exhibition of instructional leadership practices was one of the causes of underperformance of head of departments at Makerere University in Uganda. The HOD's did not articulate the university's missions to the lecturers and neither did they manage academic programmes as lecturers expected. The study also revealed that the teaching climate was not promoted to the lecturers' expectations.

Conversely, Ersozlu and Saklan (2016), in a qualitative study explored the opinions related to the instructional leadership of the faculty members working in higher education institutions in Turkey. Within the scope of the study, thirteen faculty members were interviewed. As a result of the study, it was understood that the faculty members' opinions about the instructional leadership are based more generally on some ideas such as importance of using visual materials and method variety in their courses, trying to participate in the national and international activities in order to obtain a professional development, keeping in touch with their colleagues for raising the students' success level and being a role model for students through their behavior and attitudes. On the other hand, the study revealed that the excessive workload and handicaps in the bureaucratic order prevent their instructional leadership.

Generally, the studies that have been reviewed focus on how an instructional leader promotes a supportive teaching climate, with a few studies indicating how the promoted climate influences teachers' job performance. However, all the studies were conducted outside Malawi, and mostly in primary or secondary schools. This study was therefore needed to address this gap within the context of CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges. Moreover, in Malawi, the few studies on instructional leadership and leadership in general focus on the school managers at secondary schools.

## **2.6 Nursing and Midwifery Colleges**

Nursing and midwifery is the backbone of the healthcare system globally. According to Bvumbwe and Mtshali (2018), continued efforts and research to improve training of nurses and midwives will ensure improved health outcomes. Hence effective nursing and midwifery colleges will ensure provision of competence based practice among nurses.

Bvumbwe and Mtshali (2018), conducted an integrative review which examined literature on nursing education challenges and solutions in Sub Saharan Africa to inform development of a model for improving the quality, quantity and relevance of nursing education at local level. Twenty articles and five grey sources were included. Findings of the review generally support the need for strengthening education leadership in nursing and midwifery colleges. For example, it was noted that strategic leadership, networking and partnership to share expertise and best practices are critical to nursing and midwifery colleges. Furthermore, it was revealed that literature still reports lack of necessary competencies among graduates due to lack of strategic leadership to drive transformation. Hence, the way the college leaders practice their leadership can be explored.

Bvumbwe (2016) like Bvumbwe and Mtshali (2018) argues that competent nursing workforce is important for an effective healthcare system. However, concerns on the poor quality of nursing care and poor competencies among nursing students, nurses, and midwives are increasing in Malawi and anecdotal notes from stakeholders show that this is alluded to shortfalls in nursing education (Bvumbwe, 2016). One way of dealing with this issue is through understanding the role of college clinical partnership in strengthening nursing education. However, Erickson (2011); Hendrix, Matters, West and Stewart (2011),

state that college and clinical partnership requires strong and committed leadership to monitor common goals and to use resources effectively. On the other hand, Beal, Alt-White, Erickson, Everett and Fleshner (2012), state that college – clinical partnerships are challenging because there is lack of resources and poor and weak leadership.

These authors put much emphasis on leadership which is necessary to improve nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi and Sub Saharan Africa in general. Hence understanding how nursing college leadership execute their roles can improve nursing and midwifery colleges since best practices will be shared among college leaders.

Assuring and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in universities is currently of major concern. In this era of audit and accountability, there is an imperative to demonstrate and document that appropriate standards have been set and maintained in professional education. Galukande et al. (2013) found that Medical University accreditation process in Uganda uses the following standards domain; 1 Mission and Objectives of Medical School 2 Educational Programme 3 Assessment of Students 4 Students 5 Academic Staff/Faculty 6 Educational Resources 7 Programme Evaluation 8 Governance and Administration 9 Continuous Renewal. Interestingly these domains relate to instructional leadership practices. It is therefore suggested that as an effort to promote quality assurance of medical colleges, attention must be given to the activities that the leaders exhibit.

It is, therefore, of significance for nursing and midwifery colleges to have leaders with strong leadership practices to improve the colleges. Furthermore, it is also important to strengthen the leadership skills of these nursing and midwifery college leaders.

## **2.7 Instructional Leadership Practices.**

Recognizing that the responsibility and roles of the principal may differ depending upon the school setting and characteristics, researchers agree that the principal has different practices which help in managing the school effectively (Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Jawas, 2014; Turner, 2013). Therefore, it is necessary to identify different leadership practices exercised by the principals.

Jawas (2014), conducted a study on instructional leadership in Indonesian schools. The schools under the study had more than 500 students. The study revealed that instructional leaders needed to manage instruction by improving the welfare of teachers, monitoring learning hours, communicating instructional matters, providing learning resources and facilities, and building partnership with stake holders. Also instructional leaders were promoting instruction, improving instruction and assessing instruction. These leaders were combining both management and instructional leadership roles. However, in general, instructional leaders were taking part in curriculum, teachers' professionalism, learning facilities, and student learning outcomes.

Turner (2013), conducted a mixed method study that examined what effective principals do to improve instruction. The study was conducted in five more effective principals and 3 less effective principals. Like in the Jawas (2014), study, Turner (2013), identified common specific trends in practices by both more and less effective principals. Differences did still occur within the themes, but the overall intent was the same in all principals. Qualitative data was collected by on-site, semi-structured principal interviews and separate teacher focus group discussions. Analysis of the data revealed the following practices: relationship-based, providing professional development, high interpersonal

skills, visionary, decision made based on student achievement data, goal-taker, cuts down on external distracters, informal instructional presence in classroom and value informal observations over formal. These practices helped to make schools successful.

Yavuz and Baş (2010), conducted a qualitative study to analyze college principals' instructional leadership practices as perceived by school teachers. A sample of 20 college teachers were interviewed using semi-structured interviews and five themes of principal instructional leadership were identified: student evaluation, determination of the school's purpose, management of instruction, teacher support, and the creation of an environment supporting teaching and learning.

Despite this being the case, Cumming (2012), conducted a qualitative study on principal perceptions of their instructional leadership practices in an urban public school in Manitoba, Canada. The study revealed that few principals practice instructional leadership. The principals' description of their day to day activities and dealings revealed that they shared similar leadership characteristics and practices as they enacted their roles as instructional leaders, though variation existed in how they enacted each of these characteristics. The shared characteristics were collaboration, transparency, developing shared visions of learning, embedding self in teaching and learning, communication, prioritizing children's needs, engaging in personal professional growth, building staff capacity, being able to provide instructional supervision and identifying instructional and learning needs. However, there were some variations which represented the principals' responsiveness to the unique contexts of the school communities and each principal's personality and beliefs. In spite of these personal differences and the school's context, the principals shared the belief that their leadership actions have, among other

accomplishments like improved student learning, built staff capacity, and developed relationships with school partners. Only two out of five principals reported that they were actively involved in teaching and learning.

However, despite various concepts and theories of school leadership, the majority of successful school leaders are characterized by similar basic leadership practices (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson, 2010). From the above studies, the characteristics and practices which were identified are similar to some of the instructional leadership practices defined by (Hallinger, 2010). These include; supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, providing incentives for teachers, promoting professional development and maintaining high visibility. On the other hand, many principals still practice administrative roles regardless of their responsibilities in improving teaching and learning (Cooper, 2017). This might imply that cutting down administrative roles may lead to increased practice of instructional leadership activities.

Mafuwane (2011), in a study on the contribution of instructional leadership to learner performance in South Africa found that instructional leadership practices include using available data to determine instruction within classrooms, aligning teaching with standard tests, and monitoring lesson plans. In addition, some principals followed curriculum management programs and teacher assessment rubrics, along with other procedures used to monitor learning progress. It is therefore suggested that as an effort to improve instructional leadership of college principals, attention must be given to which practices must be exhibited.

Leithwood et al. (2008), in the overview of literature concerning successful school leadership, identified four basic practices of an instructional leader: helping to improve

employees' performance, understanding and developing people, redesigning the organization and managing teaching and learning programs. The literature further revealed that successful leaders are those who are sensitive to context. Therefore, the ways in which leaders execute these basic leadership practices are more as responsiveness to the contexts rather than a dictation by the contexts (Leithwood et al., 2008). This supposition brings to light the importance of examining instructional leadership practices of principals in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi.

Though the studies above were not conducted in Malawi, their relevance is clear as they specifically analyzed the practices of instructional leadership. However, the above researchers studied practices of leaders in urban schools, hence there is no basis for generalizing leadership roles from international studies into Malawian context because some nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi are in urban areas and some are in rural areas.

Despite the limitations discussed in the previous paragraphs, a number of studies have recognized consistent roles and practices of instructional leadership. These roles and practices can be found in the practices of Hallinger and Murphy's instructional leadership model. There are three dimensions of Hallinger and Murphy (1985) instructional leadership model. The first dimension is defining school mission by framing school goals and communicating the goals to stakeholders. The second dimension is managing instructional programs by supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating school curriculum, and monitoring student progress. The last dimension is promoting school climate by protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, enforcing academic standards, and providing incentives



for students. Murphy (2009), further developed the model by adding a dimension of developing a supportive network and environment. This dimension is carried out by creating a safe and orderly learning environment, providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement, developing staff collaboration and cohesion, and forging links between home and school.

The instructional leadership model by Hallinger and Wang (2015) was also further developed and has three dimensions of instructional leadership with updated job descriptions compared to the previously explained models. Basically, this model considers school principals as the main driving force of school improvement that eventually influences classroom instruction and student learning through several instructional leadership roles under the following dimensions: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger and Wang, 2015).

*Table 1: Dimensions of Instructional Leadership*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>				
Hallinger & Murphy (1985)	Defining school mission	Managing instructional programs	Promoting school climate		
Murphy (1990)	Defining mission and goals	Managing education production function	Promoting academic learning climate	Developing supportive work environment	
Hallinger and Wang (2015)	Defining school's mission	Managing instructional program	Promoting positive school learning climate		

These three models of instructional leadership show a continual development of the instructional roles of school principals (see Table 1). The dimensions and job descriptions of the Hallinger and Wang (2015) model are built on those of the previous model while simultaneously offering re-defined dimensions to be performed. This shows interconnectedness among the models and progressive development of the concept. The

linkage among the models also illustrates a more elaborate yet closely related development of the concept of instructional leadership and the roles of instructional leaders. More importantly, the practices depicted in these three models of instructional leadership are reinforced by recent empirical studies on instructional leadership (Andrews et al., 2012; Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Jawas, 2014).

## **2.8. Instructional Leadership Support**

Early studies by DeLucia (2011); Hallinger and Wang (2015), report that the first set of phenomena comprised personal characteristics of principals themselves. These included characteristics such as principal's gender, years of teaching and administrative experience, prior training, and other personal traits such as modelling. These variables have been studied by Atkinson (2013) in order to understand potential sources of influence that could be utilized through recruitment and selection as well as through preparation, training and development (Hallinger & Wang, 2015).

The level of graduate degree of the principal is a variable of interest because of the perceptions of the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of graduate programs. The educational literature of the early 21st century has accused the principal preparation programs and associated graduate degree programs for being inadequate (Petzko, 2008). Also, a study from the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute has shown that the training principals typically receive in university programs and from their own districts does not do nearly enough to prepare them for their roles as leaders of learning (Finley, 2014). On the other hand, Valentine and Prater (2011), found that although there may be other principal variables that influence effectiveness, such as personal motivation, prior experiences, intelligence, or dedication, the findings from their study reinforced the notion

that the principal's education level is associated with teachers' perception of the principal's effectiveness. Principals with greater levels of formal preparation focusing on the principalship were perceived as more capable leaders (Valentine & Prater, 2011). As a principals' educational level increased, so did the teachers' perceptions of their principals' competence (Valentine & Prater, 2011). Therefore, the findings of Valentine and Prater's study concluded that principals who had more education were considered more effective leaders by their teachers.

In addition to the level of graduate degree held by the principal, a principal's previous teaching area background (subject principal taught as a teacher) is another variable with respect to instructional leadership that merits investigation.

Mafuwane (2011), in a study on the contribution of instructional leadership to learner performance found that the responding principals indicated that it is good for principals to have advanced qualifications, but such qualifications did not necessarily assist in the improvement of learner performance. They emphasized that qualities such as the principal's commitment to his work and his/her interest in learners' performance will make a difference. On the whole, the principals hold the view that it is not the qualifications of the principal that matter but the character and orientation of the principal towards learner performance which is important. Furthermore, the same study found that the department was doing little to support the principals in the implementation of departmental policies. This made it difficult for the principals to realize the goals of the department generally and those of their schools in particular.

In Ontario, the Board Leadership Development Strategy (BLDS) was seen as a component to help guide schools in the creation of their vision and mission (Leithwood,

2017). The strategy focused on building infrastructures and assessing their impact on the teaching and learning process (Leithwood, 2017). As such school principals are encouraged to work with boards in achieving their schools' vision and mission. However, Leithwood (2017), also established that principals must be given a measure of authority within departmental guidelines, to make decisions in key areas that directly affect the instructional process.

The support that principals receive from the department of education, particularly from the circuit, district and provincial level, is important. Fink and Silverman (2014), studied school districts' efforts to develop principals into instructional leaders. They developed core strategies for developing the role of the principal as instructional leader which included nested learning communities, peer learning, principal institutes, leadership for instruction, and individual coaching as reinforcing strategic activities.

It is, therefore, of great significance for principals to have necessary preparation and adequate knowledge on instructional leadership and practices that lead to improved teaching and learning. Furthermore, it is also important for the principals to receive adequate support from authorities and to be given room to express their authorities.

Prior experiences may impact the principals' degree of knowledge about research based school leadership practices. Prior experiences such as past leadership/supervisory responsibilities, time spent teaching, and leadership preparatory experience may influence principals' knowledge (Powell, 2017). Hence the association between these prior experiences and principal knowledge of research-based school leadership practices must be examined. Some researchers have suggested that coaching plays a crucial role in a principal's success (Firmaningsih-Kolu, 2015; Harris et al., 2017). Mentoring for the

school principal has been identified as a means of increasing understanding and implementation of instructional leadership. Saban and Wolfe (2009), examined how mentoring impacts the practices of school principals. Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory was used to determine the practices implemented by principals. The survey tool also examined the number of principals who had received mentoring experiences (Saban & Wolfe, 2009). The researchers found that mentoring is an effective practice for providing professional development to school principals. Interestingly, only approximately 20% of surveyed principals had ever received mentoring experiences. According to Saban and Wolfe (2009), the two practices most positively correlated to mentoring were inspiring a shared vision and encouraging the heart. Mentoring throughout the preparatory experience provides the candidate with expert modeling (Cray & Millen, 2010). It is therefore, suggested that without necessary support in terms of mentorship, a principal maybe unable to practice leadership roles which are essential to bring out effectiveness and improvement in the school by promoting learner performance.

The above literature has elaborated the support to school principals' implementation of instructional leadership. Therefore, it is necessary to better understand why instructional leadership practices are or are not being implemented in CHAM nursing and midwifery college settings.

## **2.9 Barriers to Instructional Leadership**

Instructional leadership may be seen as something that is abstract and which does not clearly entail what it is. The uncertainty of precisely describing instructional leadership makes it difficult for practitioners to become effective at its practice (Finley, 2014). A range of definitions of instructional leadership leads to miscommunication and conflict

(Powell, 2017). Therefore, this may imply that inability of writers, researchers, and practitioners to agree on a clear and consistent definition of instructional practices creates an obstacle for leaders who seek to improve their skills as leaders. Time spent on instructional leadership activities is associated with positive school outcomes (Spire, 2015). However, non-instructional activities are slightly or not at all associated with student academic achievement (Horng et al., 2010). How school principals allocate their time to both instructional and non-instructional leadership practices influences students' achievement (Atkinson, 2013). However, some school principals often spend too much time on non-instructional leadership practices. In theory, instructional leadership includes those actions that principals take to promote teaching and learning, and all other activities in colleges are secondary to these ultimate goals (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). In practice, however, the situation is quite different (Atkinson 2013). Murphy and Hallinger (2012), are concerned that while principals have the potential to be instructional leaders, there is some apprehension for the context of the possible workload. The typical day for principals is strewn with unanticipated interruptions, non-instructional requests from teachers, discipline issues, and otherwise is so demanding that there simply is not enough time left in the day to devote to instructional leadership activities (Su, 2013). On the contrary, Darling-Hammond et al. (2010), summarize the dilemma of principals in light of today's climate of standards-based accountability and heightened expectations. These authors state that principals are not only expected to be educational visionaries and instructional and curriculum leaders, they are also expected to be: assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates

and initiatives. They are expected to broker the often-conflicting interests of parents, teachers, students, district officials, unions, state and federal agencies, and they need to be sensitive to the widening range of student needs. Similarly, Mullen and Robertson (2014), recommend that making instructional leadership the central outcome of school leadership may eventually miss the point. Given the numerous demands placed on principals daily, it is not reasonable to expect them to also spend hours in the classroom. However, Shoho et al. (2011), argue that school principals should share and divide their energy, ideas and time within the school day. Drawing a conclusion on the above discussion, it is safe to argue that instructional leadership roles and administrative roles have a common determinant (Dongo, 2016). While they both exist, they need time to be executed hence it is how the principals manage time which will affect instructional leadership practices (Ahmad & Hussai, 2012).

Many principals feel that instructional leadership is the role for which they are the least well prepared. Principals who aspire to be effective instructional leaders are hindered by issues of inadequate training. These hindrances exist to such a degree that principals who develop the skills and knowledge required to become effective instructional leaders do so because of their own preferences and values, and often at some cost to their own careers (Atkinson, 2013). In a qualitative study Mestry (2017), found that several principals lacked the necessary instructional leadership expertise and skills and found difficulty in developing strategies of coordination and control to align their school's academic mission. The study further revealed that principals delegated most of their instructional responsibilities to deputy principals and head of departments. Similarly, Phillips (2009) argues that instructional leadership is rarely used or practiced. Among the reasons



mentioned for the lack of instructional leadership or emphasis thereon, are the lack of in-depth training of principals for their role as instructional leaders, lack of time to execute instructional activities, increased paper work, and the community's expectation that the principal's role is that of a manager.

Teachers often possess more instructional expertise than principals (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). For instance, many teachers have completed at least one year of undergraduate coursework in education and subject-related fields, have proficiency in curriculum and teaching, and even have advanced degrees in their subject areas. Another challenge faced by principals has to do with the issue of autonomy on the part of their teachers and this often happens when principals engage themselves in the learning processes in classrooms (Powell, 2017). If teachers feel their principal is not as knowledgeable and skillful as they are regarding instruction, they can be adverse to the idea of being managed regarding teaching and learning (Powell, 2017). The barrier associated with lack of knowledge is related to expertise principals are expected to possess (Murphy & Hallinger, 2012).

Several researchers have demonstrated that instructional leadership is a necessity for students' achievements. Firmaningsih-Kolu (2015); Glanz et al. (2017), revealed that principals who work in environments that promote professional learning are strong leaders and prefer their role of instructional leader rather than that of administrator. On the other hand, those administrative minded principals who considered organizational tasks more important than instructional leadership tasks were in schools with weaker environments. Powell (2017), in a study about understanding principals' instructional leadership found that most principals were clear that their understanding of instructional leadership was based on innovative practices presented to them throughout their career. This in turn

portrayed their practices. Hence much information has to be sought as to which environments promote and inhibit instructional leadership practices.

Bhengu et al. (2014), in a qualitative study found that the contexts within which some school principals work seem not to be friendly to the application of their instructional leadership learning in a seamless way such as lack of resources. In addition, the results presented that the college system often causes role overload and role ambiguity by placing too many conflicting demands and responsibilities on the principalship.

Although, the practices of instructional leadership of the principals have been acknowledged, it is not known how CHAM college principals utilize instructional leadership skills in their daily work.

## **2. 10 Instructional Leadership in Different Countries**

In UK instructional leadership was derived in 1990s and Hallinger and Murphy (1985), highlight a need for prospective principals to receive proper professional training and induction before taking up leadership positions in United Kingdom (UK) schools. According to Hallinger and Wang (2015), instructional leadership is an approach that highlights the practices of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the success of students. The emphasis of instructional leadership needs to be on two key skill clusters, namely, strategies for effective teaching and learning, and the conditions that support implementation, in particular staff development and planning. Effective teachers in the UK are expected to create powerful cognitive and social tasks for their learners and teach them how to make productive use of such tasks; and the purpose of instructional leadership is to facilitate and support this approach to teaching and learning. From the above statements, it follows that in the UK, instructional leadership is not necessarily a responsibility of

principals only, in relation to teachers. It also involves the role of teachers in relation to their students. During the 1980s, policymakers in the USA recognized that principals in instructionally effective schools practiced strong instructional leadership and this prompted them to encourage all principals to adopt this role in order to make their schools more effective (Glanz et al., 2017). In spite of some criticisms leveled against instructional leadership, it became strongly identified as a normatively desirable role that principals who wish to be effective should fulfill. These principals were 'hands on' in implementing curriculum (Hallinger, 2011). In the Norwegian setting, leadership used to mean, in principle, to control the relationship between the inside and outside of an organization, with the result that as long as clear rules and regulations were followed, a leader with authority was not needed, but there was need for a gifted administrator (Freedman & Inversen, 2019). This led to the origination of in-service courses in 1970s by the education authorities in order to prepare principals for their instructional leadership roles. On the other hand, a study by Aas and Brandmo (2016), revealed that two conceptual models of leadership roles; instructional and transformational leadership cannot be traced in a sample of Norwegian school leaders.

On the whole, school principals in Norway incline towards a more administrative style of school leadership rather than an instructional style. The extent to which instructional leadership is reported (supervision of instruction, supporting teachers' professional development, setting the school goals) could not be replicated in Norway (Aas & Brandmo, 2016) compared to countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America, Nigeria and South Africa, to mention just a few.

Ward, Christie and Hoadley (2009), conducted a study in some South African secondary schools with the primary purpose of gaining an understanding of the issue of growing prominence in policy and research discussions as to how school management might contribute to improved student achievement outcomes. The study revealed that most leadership studies in South Africa indicate that the majority of principals have not received adequate specialist training, especially in financial management and instructional leadership. This implies that South African school leaders practice both managerial activities and instructional leadership activities (Bush, Joubert & Kiggundu, 2010; Taole, 2017).

The roles of the principal, as identified by Arikewuyo (2009), indicate that the Nigerian principal is not only an instructional leader, but performs both managerial and instructional roles. Principals in Nigeria rated academic and instructional activities, including curriculum development, teaching and instructional supervision, second to staff and student management, liaison, coordinating, and financial management which were considered highly (Arikewuyo, 2009).

## **2.11 Instructional Leadership in Malawi Context**

### ***2.11.1 Education system in Malawi.***

Although the government of Malawi determines national policies and national standards for assuring the quality of national education, school leaders are in charge of organizing the implementing education (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014). Thus, principals have traditionally been players in implementing government policy, rather than as initiators, innovators, or leaders (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014). The country has seen huge economic development in all

fields, which has led to an increase in the labor market and increased the need for trained and qualified manpower to lead the development of the country (Mambo et al., 2016). Hence there is a need to improve leadership practices to ensure the provision of quality education including nursing education to serve the country's economy.

A mixed method study by Kayira (2008), on management's impact on teaching and learning in Malawian secondary schools revealed that secondary school headmasters employed the following strategies in executing their duties; staff motivation, supervision of teachers by checking schemes of work, providing school based professional development activities and applying corrective measures. Similarly, the same study revealed that Ministry of Education was involved in school leadership by organizing professional development activities in different education division, inspecting and supervising schools and organizing programs to address training needs of headmasters.

Toprakci et al. (2016), conducted a study on instructional leadership in two Malawian secondary schools. A qualitative approach was used to produce descriptions and explanations of principals' leadership practices as instructional leaders. The researchers found that the most practices of instructional leadership in the two schools among others were: emphasizing on curriculum coverage and managing time for learning, recognizing students for effective teaching and learning culture, providing sufficient learner and teacher support material, parental support and cooperation, promoting professional and recognizing students and teachers achievements.

The two studies reviewed in the Malawian context identified leadership practices in Malawian secondary schools which fall under the functions of instructional leadership practices by (Hallinger & Wang, 2015) such as supervising staff, managing time for

learning and promoting professional development activities. Despite the findings relating to the instructional leadership model the study by Kayira (2008), was on general management while the one by Toprakcl et al. (2016) was on instructional leadership which used Krug model of instructional leadership. Hence these findings need to be compared with the findings from the exploration of instructional leadership practices in CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals.

## **2.12 Summary of Literature Review**

Among others, the literature review has revealed the practices of college principals in relation to instructional leadership in educational institutions. The literature has also shown that some studies have found things that support instructional leadership practices of the principals which vary pertaining to the context. Therefore, it was important to study on the leadership practices of the principals in Malawi in order to draw conclusions from the Malawian situation since studies done in other countries cannot be generalized to the Malawian context.

Instructional leadership requires some leadership practices to manage teaching and learning as the core activity of school leadership. The list of the practices has its focal points on students, teachers, teaching and learning activities, and principals. Therefore, the practices of instructional leadership are basically the activities of principals dealing with learning, teaching, and leading. This study argued that identifying instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges in Malawi might help identify variables that influence instructional leadership practices and most important practices that could be shared in these colleges in order to improve teaching and learning.

### **2.13 Conceptual Framework**

This study adapted the three dimensions of instructional leadership proposed by Hallinger and Wang (2015) described in table 2, to explore instructional leadership practices of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals. The first dimension of the instructional leadership model, defining the school's mission has two functions a) framing the school's goals and b) communicating the school's goals. This dimension concerns the principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has a clear mission and that the mission is focused on the academic achievement of students. Instructional leaders must have a vision. The mission of a school can be defined in such a way that this vision will create a sense of common purpose in the staff and students by performing various activities in the school and classroom (Cansoy & Turkoglu, 2018). The first of these, a) Frames the School Goals refers to the principal's role in determining the areas in which the school will focus its resources during a given year (Hallinger & Wang, 2015, p 28). The second b) Communicates School Goals is concerned with the ways in which the principal communicates the school's most important goals to teachers, parents, students, stakeholders etcetera (Hallinger & Wang, 2015, p 30). While this dimension does not state that the principal defines the school's mission alone, it does suggest that the principal is responsible for ensuring that such a mission exists and is communicated widely to the school's stakeholders (Hallinger & Lee, 2013).

The first dimension of defining the school's mission has several characteristics of the instructional leader's role in defining a clear mission. To begin with, the mission needs to be indicated clearly and it needs to be widely known. For instance, the principal can put the mission statement on the billboard, sign post or on notice board at the school. The goal

also needs to be focused on the academic progress. The mission should prioritize teachers' work. Fourth, the goal needs to be known and acknowledged by teachers throughout the school. Lastly, the mission needs to be clearly declared, actively supported, and exhibited by the principal (Walker & Hallinger, 2015).

The second dimension is managing the instructional program. Managing the instructional program focuses on the role of the principal in 'managing the technical core' of the school (Hallinger & Wang, 2015, p. 31). This dimension includes three leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress. Basically, the dimension focuses on the 'coordination and control of instruction and the curriculum' (Hallinger & Wang, 2015, p. 21). Although these instructional leadership responsibilities must be shared with teachers and other school administrators, the framework explains that coordination and control of the academic program of the school remains a key leadership responsibility of the principal. Therefore, the principal is required to have proficiency in teaching and learning at school and also to have commitment in developing the school. The principal needs to be highly involved in encouraging, directing, and observing teaching and learning at school (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). The characteristics of an instructional leader under this dimension includes: points out specific strengths and weaknesses of teachers, conducts formal and informal classroom observation, uses examination data to improve curriculum, leads in reviewing curricular materials, informs teachers and students of the school academic progress and meets individually with teachers to discuss students' progress.

The third dimension is developing a positive school climate. This dimension comprises several functions: protecting instructional time, promoting professional



development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for learning. It 'is broader in scope and intent than the second dimension and overlaps with dimensions incorporated into transformational leadership frameworks' (Hallinger & Wang, 2015, p. 33). Through performing of these functions, successful principals create a positive learning environment and a culture that promotes and rewards continuous learning and improvement. In order to develop a positive school learning climate, the principal should be able to: take time to talk informally with teachers and students during break time, teach students, limit interruptions of instructional time, ensure that misbehaving students suffer specific consequences for missing classes, compliment and reward teachers and students for a specific achievement, contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions, ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals and actively support the use in the classroom of skills acquired during in-service training (Hallinger & Wang, 2015).

Most of previous research using this framework has focused on principal instructional leadership quantitatively (Gungor & Aydin, 2019; Hallinger, 2012; Harris et al., 2017; Hui-Ling et al., 2015; Sebastain et al., 2016; Cansoy & Turkoglu 2018). However, this study adapted the framework by employing qualitative approach to develop more in-depth descriptions and understanding of instructional leadership (See appendix B and chapter 4). In this conceptualization, principals are perceived to know better how they perform their duties in their everyday work hence they are able to give their experiences and realities on their instructional leadership roles.

In terms of using Hallinger and Wang conceptual framework, empirical studies on instructional leadership have often focused on one or two dimensions in relation to the teachers (Atkinson, 2013; Sebastain et al., 2016). However, the quality of teaching and learning can be achieved by principals' roles under all the three dimensions that influence student achievement (Cumming, 2012; Pettiegrew, 2013). This study explores how principals create a school culture, manage instruction program and define the school mission as reflected in the objectives. The analysis of this study has adapted the dimensions of instructional leadership by Hallinger and Wang (2015) with the following themes; defining the schools mission, managing the instructional program and managing the instructional program. The subthemes of the study findings have also adapted the functions of Hallinger and Wang (2015) instructional leadership framework as follows; framing the schools goals, communicating the school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintain high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and providing incentives for learning.

*Table 2: Instructional Leadership Framework by Hallinger and Wang (2015)*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Functions</b>
Hallinger and Wang (2015)	Defining School's Mission	Framing the school's goals Communicating the school's goals
	Managing instructional program	Supervising and evaluating instruction Coordinating the curriculum Monitoring students' progress
	Promoting positive school learning climate	Protecting instructional time Promoting professional development Maintaining high visibility Providing incentives for teachers Providing incentives for learners

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Chapter Overview**

This chapter presents the processes which were followed in exploring instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges under CHAM. These include: the research design, study setting, study population, sample size, sampling method, ethical considerations, data collection tools, data handling and management and data analysis. The chapter also covers credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability of the study findings.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design for this study was a descriptive natural constructivism qualitative research approach. This study used naturalistic inquiry which is embedded in the constructivist paradigm (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). In line with naturalistic paradigm, the study followed qualitative approach. Constructivism, as understood through the work of various authors (Creswell, 2014; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) aims to carry out research in natural settings seeking to examine and understand the variety of constructions that people have within their social world. Hence, the conceptual essence of this study was derived from what the participant's meaning of instructional leadership practices was in relation to the documented dimensions of instructional leadership practices by Hallinger and Wang (2015).

Naturalistic paradigm also helped in understanding and exploring instructional leadership from within a principal's natural setting, the college. Considered as a phenomenon, instructional leadership was best looked at in its natural setting. This approach makes a qualitative study more viable as it examines the participant's experiences with more genuineness (Moule et al., 2017).

Qualitative research seeks to bring trust between the researcher and the participants through the interaction process, and that is ideal for exploring issues. The naturalistic inquiry paradigm used in this research depicts multiple constructed realities as limitless perspectives or worldviews that bring people's understanding together. The instructional leadership practices of principals are multiple, constructed, interactive and inseparable in the realms of defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and developing a positive school learning climate. This necessitates understanding that this inquiry is value bound, as detailed by Lincoln et al. (2011), and as such this methodology is described as a particularly useful approach for exploring instructional leadership practices.

Qualitative descriptive design involves the collecting of data descriptively based on the situation (Polit & Beck, 2018). Qualitative descriptive methodology as outlined by (Grove et al., 2019) was deemed appropriate for the study on exploration of instructional leadership practices of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals in that through rich description of the phenomena from participants would allow the CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals to be heard and themes to emerge and supported from the data. The naturalistic inquiry aim of understanding peoples constructed meaning of truth

and reality (Licoln et al, 2011) would help to understand how principals exhibit their leadership roles. These underpinning assumptions mean that the principal's voice is given precedence in the research.

### **3.3 Study Setting**

The study was intended to be conducted in nine CHAM nursing colleges but it was conducted in six CHAM colleges. CHAM is a system of church-owned health facilities and training colleges and operates eleven nursing colleges. Nine of the CHAM Nursing Colleges offer Nursing and Midwifery Technician (NMT) three year diploma programme while the other two offer Registered Nursing (RN) a four year degree programme. CHAM Nursing Colleges were chosen as it is where many Nurse Midwife Technicians are taught and it was likely to find more principals. However, the actual interviews were conducted to 6 principals. The other three colleges were left out because principals were promoted and got transferred to other non-teaching institutions hence the office of the principal had acting principals with less than 6 months experience on the position. Therefore the acting principals did not meet the inclusion criteria since they had only less than 6 months experience. However, those acting principals with more than 6 months experience were included in the study because the other three did not meet the criterion. The six CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges are; Holy Family, Mulanje Mission, Nkhoma, St John's, St Joseph, and St Luke's.

### **3.4 Target Population**

All principals from the nine CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges were the targeted respondents.

### **3.5 Sampling Method**

The study used purposive sampling method. A purposive sample is comprised of respondents who are likely to provide information about the phenomenon under investigation (Grove et al., 2019). In this case, the sample targeted principals of the nine colleges who had worked for more than six months on their current position since they were expected to have knowledge on instructional leadership. The sampled CHAM colleges had a total of nine principals so all of them were recruited into the study since it was a small population already. When saturation of information was achieved then the principals interviewed were adequate and sampling ceased (Lincoln et al., 2011; Moule et al., 2017).

### **3.6 Sample Size**

The intended sample size for the study was 7 CHAM college principals since the whole population was 9 CHAM college principals. However, the total sample size that the study used was 6 because some participants did not meet the inclusion criteria. Qualitative researchers have no specific rules of sample size to work with; smaller samples of 6 to 10 might be used and the researcher should aim to achieve data saturation (Moule et al., 2017; Polit & Beck, 2018).

### **3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Participants**

#### ***3.7.1 Inclusion criteria***

All principals whether acting or permanent with above 6 months experience on their current position were included. They were included in order to get rich data because the principals were expected to have knowledge as they had exercised some leadership styles.

### ***3.7.2 Exclusion criteria***

The study excluded principals whether acting or permanent with less than 6 months experience. They were excluded to avoid getting false data because they were not expected to have adequate knowledge on instructional leadership due to their limited practice of leadership.

### **3.8 Study period**

Study started in May 2019 and ended in August 2020.

### **3.9 Data collection**

Data collection in this study followed the cross-sectional method. Cross-sectional data collection method is where data is collected on more than one case and at one point in time from a pre-defined sample population (Grossoehme & Lipstein, 2016; Polit & Beck, 2018). This makes cross sectional data collection quick to perform (Creswell, 2014). Cross-sectional method was chosen since the study was done as partial fulfilment of a master's degree program hence it had a short time frame and it needed to be quick. In this study cross-sectional data collection was done through the use of same method of data collection, same tools and at specific times and places.

#### ***3.8.1 Data Collection Instrument***

Data was collected using interview guide. According to Menzies, Williams, and Zimmermann, (2016), an interview guide is a list of the high-level questions that you want to answer under each topic. The development of the interview guide was guided by the existing instructional leadership dimensions by Hallinger and Wang (2015), model as well as from the literature on instructional leadership (see appendix of the interview guide). The



interview guide had open-ended questions and it consisted of 7 questions which were covered in four sections: Section A was on Biographic questions which were used to get the information on gender, age, education qualifications and work experience of the participants. Section B was composed of questions on defining the school's mission. This section gave the information on how participants formulate and communicate the school's goals and vision. Section C gave the information on how principals manage the instructional program. Last section comprised of questions on how principals promote a positive school learning climate (appendix 1.).

### ***3.8.2 Pre Testing***

Pre-testing helps the researcher to reorganize the questions to make them more effective in yielding the required information from the research participants (Polit & Beck, 2018). A pre-test was conducted at Malawi College of Health Sciences-Zomba Campus, which allowed testing of the questions, as well as interviewing style and approach. Malawi College of Health Sciences-Zomba Campus was chosen because it also train Nursing and Midwifery Technician but it is not under CHAM. Pretesting was important because it helps to clarify the questions and style of asking questions. There were no changes to the interview guide as a result of the pilot study.

### ***3. 8.3 Ethical Consideration***

The research study must be ethical, which means that the participants' rights and the rights of others in the setting are protected (Grove et al., 2019). To ensure that this study respected participants' rights, the following are some of the steps which were taken prior to and after data collection

Before the participants were selected, CHAM secretariat was briefed on the study, because they are the authority that oversees the CHAM nursing colleges and also their permission was required. CHAM secretariat granted permission for the study and referred the researcher to the CHAM college principals (See the introductory letter in the appendices). CHAM college principals gave verbal permission. This step was important since CHAM College principals are employees of CHAM.

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the administration of Kamuzu College of Nursing which provided support letter to seek ethical approval for the study from College of Medicine Research Committee (COMREC).

After critical analysis of the research in terms of ethical considerations and applicability of the research to Malawi, COMREC granted approval for the study to be conducted (appendix 4). It was necessary to seek ethical approval from COMREC because it is a board that regulates health research studies done in Malawi to ensure that research participants' rights and values are respected.

Before embarking on data collection, the researcher discussed the appropriateness of the research methodology with research supervisors. The discussions provided some insights into the selected methodology and eliminating unintentional flaws affecting participants.

Informed verbal and written consent was obtained from every participant in the study. According to Silverman (2011), consent means that a researcher does not pressure anyone into agreeing to participate in a research project, but rather seeks to obtain participants' voluntary consent (Creswell, 2014; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The

participants were provided with necessary information about the nature and purpose of the research and the value of their contribution to the research (see participants' information letter in the Appendix section). They were made aware of their rights to participate in the study and withdraw at any stage of the data collection process. The participants were also given a chance to ask questions about the study and its inferences to them. To indicate that the participants had accepted to participate in the study, they signed a consent form. Confidentiality of information was guaranteed. The identity and the information provided by individual participants was kept confidential and anonymous by using codes. The collected data was kept securely and only the researcher and the supervisor had access to the data.

For the need of data identification and analysis, coding was developed to make sure the interview guides only revealed the characteristics needed in data analysis and not the identity of individual participants. All electronic equipment and data files were secured and would be destroyed five years from the date of the thesis submission for examination.

#### ***3.8.4 Data Collection Procedure***

Data was collected in July, 2020. The principals were visited in their colleges and the purpose of the study was explained to each one of them with the aid of a letter. Each participant was told that she/he had been chosen to participate in the study because she/he was the principal of the CHAM College. His/her participation in the study was voluntary and that he/she was free to withdraw at any time. When an informed consent had been given, the principal was recruited into the study and in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted. Each interview took approximately sixty minutes and was conducted on one to one basis with the principals. The interviewer, would tune the ordering and the depth of

probing of individual questions in order to further investigate issues raised but the questions asked of each participant were the same. All the interviews were tape recorded upon permission from the participants by an assistant whose duty was to take field notes and verification of information. According to Al-Yateem (2012); Crozie and Cassell (2016), audio recording is a valuable tool that help researchers keep records of interviews, which in turn helps them during data analysis. Hence, a tape recorder was used to record the interviews for verbatim transcription later. The transcription added notes on pause and sighs as well as exact terminologies that the principals used in answering the questions. However, Al-Yateem (2012), notes that with some interview participants, especially those in group interviews, recording makes conversations to be less chatty and more formal; however, the actions of a researcher, and the preparation for an interview and its conduct, can minimize the negative impact of recording. Consequently, this study had an alternative method of note-taking (Al-Yateem, 2012) in case the participants were not comfortable or declined to be tape recorded. To promote privacy, the interviews were done in a private room. The interview guides used identity codes and this helped to ensure anonymity and promoted confidentiality.

### ***3.8.5 Data Management and Handling***

According to Lin (2009, p132), data management in qualitative research is defined as a designed structure for systematizing, categorizing and filing the materials to make them efficiently retrievable and duplicable. Studies concerned with theory development, conceptualization and the task associated with the data management and analysis are less discrete and they are ongoing (Lincoln et al., 2011). This descriptive study employed

similar data management and analysis techniques sequentially (Lincoln et al., 2011). The first technique employed was transcription and data checking. All audio recordings were transcribed verbatim immediately following the interview and lines of the texts were numbered to aid in the identification of codes during data analysis. Once the transcription was completed, it was read back while listening to the recording and the following activities were done: correcting any spelling and other errors and anonymizing the transcript so that the participant could not be identified from anything that was said such as places and significant events. This also enhanced privacy and confidentiality. According to Lin (2009), confidentiality is the protection of data collected by a researcher. Notation for pauses, laughter, looks of discomfort were inserted. The study also employed reading between the lines technique. During the process outlined above, the researcher can begin to get a feel of the participant's experience of the phenomenon in question and can start to think about things that could be pursued in subsequent interviews (Sutton & Austin, 2015). In this study, one participant's narrative informed the next, and the interview continued until nothing new was being said and at this point data saturation was reached. Honesty, respect, building rapport and trust and use of reflective diaries was employed to ensure human rights protection. Use of diaries helped to learn from previous interviews by reviewing the diary, thus preventing the same mistakes from happening again. The data was stored in the computer for easy retrieval. An electronic copy would also provide a way to validate the date when data were entered (Lin, 2009). According to University of Malawi data storage and retention policies, data would be destroyed 5 years after submission of thesis for examination. Only the researcher and the supervisor had access to the data.

### ***3.8.5 Data Analysis***

Qualitative data from the in depth interviews was digitally recorded and prepared through verbatim transcription immediately following the interview. The data was stored in the computer for easy retrieval. Thereafter, thematic template analysis was done following six steps of Brooks, McCluskey, Turley and King (2015), as follows: firstly the researcher read through the data repeatedly in order to familiarize herself and develop deep understanding of the data. The researcher immersed in the data to the extent that she was familiar with the depth and breadth of the content. Immersion usually involves repeated reading of the data, and reading the data in an active way searching for meanings, patterns and so on (Brooks et al., 2015). It was ideal to read through the entire data set at least twice before the researcher begun coding, as researchers' ideas, identification of possible patterns was shaped as she read through. Then codes were generated including the a priori themes. Field notes compiled during an interview were used to complement the transcripts (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Coding is the identification of topics, issues, similarities, and differences that are revealed through the participants' narratives and interpreted by the researcher (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Coding was done through pinpointing keywords in the responses by hand on a hard copy of the transcript, by making notes in the margin and by highlighting and naming sections of text. Subsequently, themes were organized into meaningful clusters and new themes emerged. Sutton and Austin (2015), state that theming is the drawing together of codes from one or more transcripts to present the findings of qualitative research in a coherent and meaningful way. In this step, participants' narratives were drawn together as themes. These themes were supported by quotations from the individual transcripts to illustrate the source of interpretations. This step was followed by defining an initial coding template and applying the initial template to more data and modifying it as

necessary. The findings were then synthesized, and conclusions drawn by the researcher were also supported by direct quotations from the participants so that it is made clear to the reader that the themes under discussion have emerged from the participants' interviews and not the mind of the researcher. Another researcher was asked to identify the codes and themes on the same transcript and then discussed any similarities and differences in the two resulting sets of codes and themes. This procedure addressed the credibility of the data. Finally the report was produced. The aim of the write-up of a thematic template analysis was to tell the complicated story of data in a way which convinced the reader of the merit and validity of analysis.

### **3.9 Trustworthiness of the study**

The degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study is crucial to the usefulness and integrity of the findings (Polit & Beck, 2018). Therefore, trustworthiness of the gathered information is important to the entire process of qualitative research. Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were used to determine trustworthiness in this study (Lincoln et al., 2011; Polit & Beck, 2018). The researcher used a variety of strategies to establish trustworthiness. To ensure credibility, during data collection the researcher established rapport prior to commencing interviews and developed a trusting relationship which enhanced willingness of the participants to exchange information. Detailed field notes about the interviews included in the analysis were kept. The researcher also employed member checking by asking participants to validate whether the analysis and interpretation represented a true account of their views and experiences expressed (Lincoln et al., 2011). During an interview, the information was restated and summarized and then participants were

questioned to determine accuracy. Participants were also shared the findings after the completion of the study to critically analyze the findings and comment on them. Participants affirmed that the summaries reflected their views, feelings and experiences. Peer debriefing is another technique which was employed to ensure credibility. The researcher worked with a colleague who examined the recorded interviews, transcripts, general methodology and final report. Afterwards feedback was provided to enhance credibility. To show that the findings have applicability in other contexts, the study used purposive sampling method and the researcher included sufficient descriptive data so that readers can assess the applicability to similar contexts.

The researcher ensured the completeness and accuracy of the interviews and the data collection method was described as well as, analysis and interpretation as part of dependability of the study. This helped to show how the research would be replicated. Furthermore, the code-recode strategy was also used. The same data was coded twice, giving two weeks' gestation period between each coding. The results from the two coding was compared to see if the results are the same or different (Anney, 2014). Skeptical peer review was also employed where by the researcher was asked difficult methods, meanings and interpretation of the data. The study was presented during college research seminars and boot camps where the researcher was asked questions on the research presentation. This method provided an external check on the research. Audit trail was also used whereby an independent researcher reviewed the primary documents and coding schemes to assess whether the findings, interpretation and conclusions are supported (Lincoln et al., 2011). There is evidence that there are close links between dependability and confirmability (Lincoln et al., 2011). Therefore, both skeptical peer review and audit trail also helped to



ensure confirmability of the study findings. In addition, confirmability of the study findings was achieved by using a voice recorder for recording the interviews with the participants. The researcher listened actively and verbatim transcription of interviews was done hence participants' information was differentiated from interviewer's views. Findings of the study represent the data gathered as evidenced by inclusion of direct quotations from participants (Cooney, 2011). Description of demographics of participants also supported confirmability of the study.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has laid out research methods as well as the procedures that were used to conduct the study. It further explains how data was collected from the principals in order to explore instructional leadership practices of principals in greater detail and depth. It also explains how naturalist paradigm framed the overall design and directed the research process to explore instructional leadership practices of principals in selected CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges. The chapter also explains how the sampling technique and the research instruments as well as the data analysis of the study was done. Ethical considerations are also explained in terms of their importance in carrying out the whole research study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **STUDY FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents findings of the study on the exploration of instructional leadership practices of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals. The findings are organized under the dimensions and functions of instructional leadership, as outlined in the Hallinger and Wang (2015) model which are: Defines the School Mission, Manages the Instructional Program and Develops a Positive School Learning Environment (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). One additional theme also emerged in the final template of data analysis; obstacles principals encounter when acting as instructional leaders. The final template is shown in table 3. The chapter also compares and contrasts answers from different respondents in order to get similarities and differences in the findings. For anonymity of responses, the respondents have been labelled from P1 to P6. For the gender of respondents, M represents male while F represents female.

In total six participants were interviewed and this consisted of four males and two females. The participants age ranged from 40 to over 55 years old. Most of the participants (4) had Masters degree and two had Bachelors degree. Three participants had served as principals for less than 2 years and the other three had served as college principals for 3 to 4 years. All the participants have served in different leadership positions for more than 6 years.

All the participants had experience in teaching with a minimum of less than 5 years and a maximum of more than 15 years. The descriptive statistics below (table 4) provide the details of the selected sample.

*Table 3: 4.2 Demographic characteristics of the study participants*

<b>Biographic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	4	67
Female	2	33
<b>Age</b>		
40 – 45 years	3	50
46 – 50 years	2	33
51 – 55 years	0	0
Over 55 years	1	17
<b>Highest Education</b>		
Bachelor degree	2	33
Master degree	4	67
<b>Years of experience as</b>		
<b>Principal</b>		
Less than 2 years	3	50
3 – 4 years	3	50

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**Past college leadership****experience**

Less than 5 years	0	0
6 – 10 years	4	67
11 – 15 years	1	17
More than 15 years	1	17

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**Teaching experience**

Less than 5 years	1	17
6 – 10 years	2	33
11 – 15 years	1	17
More than 15 years	2	33

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*Table 4: 4.3 Presentation of the themes*

<b>Main theme</b>	<b>Subthemes</b>
Defining the school mission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Framing the school's goals</li> <li>2. Communicating the school's goals</li> </ol>
Managing the instructional program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supervising and evaluating instruction</li> <li>2. Coordinating the curriculum</li> <li>3. Monitoring student progress.</li> </ol>
Developing a positive school climate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protecting instructional time</li> <li>2. Promoting professional development</li> <li>3. Maintaining high visibility</li> <li>4. Providing incentives for teachers</li> <li>5. Providing incentives for learning</li> </ol>
Obstacles principals encounter when acting as instructional leaders.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of resources</li> <li>2. Increased workload</li> </ol>

## 4.2 Defining the Schools Mission

Having a clear vision and mission understood and shared by both staff and students is necessary for school success. In the Hallinger and Wang (2015) model of instructional leadership, two functions i) Frames the School Goals and ii) Communicates School Goals comprise the dimension ‘Defining the School Mission’.

### *4.2.1 Subtheme 1: Frames the schools goals*

The study revealed that some principals readily outlined their own personal vision and goals for the school, including their desires for its future performance. They were clear about their personal goals and expectations. One participant said that:

*“I can envision that you know we can do this, we can do that. I often share that vision and then we move on together with my colleagues”. (P3<sup>m</sup>)*

He further indicated that his goal is to ensure students succeed despite high competition in clinical learning areas.

Meanwhile some participants seemed to have contradicting views on setting goals as they highlighted the fact that the goals of the colleges tend to be centrally determined at the Board of governors level. The following extract confirms this;

*“Alright, at this institution there are different committees and when it comes to goals it depends on what type of a goal we want to develop, like we have education committee which has developed some goals like examination goals, and we have also the management which came up with other goals like recruitment*

*goals. So goals are developed at different levels and after they have been developed they have to be approved by the board of governors". (P6<sup>m</sup>)*

Similarly, another participant said:

*"Goals of the college are made by the board of governors, and principals like myself are there to direct people on how to implement them. For example, with your capacity and resources at hand you would want to enroll 50 students but the board would say enroll 70 students; so I follow that though I face challenges implementing it." (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

Whether created and guided by the principal only or by a collective group within the college, participants agreed that a specific plan of action helped in moving forward with leadership practices aimed at promoting college success. Principals also suggested that their schools' mission and vision help to guide their practice as instructional leaders. One participant said that:

*"Once I have goals, as an instructional leader I am supposed to follow the implementation process, engage the people to find where we can change to really make people focused to the vision of the college, to the goals of the college so that at the end of the day we can achieve the organization goals". (P5<sup>f</sup>)*

Almost all participants knew that goals are important in moving forward with leadership achievements. Some principals had an important role in creating goals while some had no specific role in framing the school's goals as goals were formulated at the board level and they even had challenges to create a better college program in order to implement the goals. From the above responses, it is manifested that some participants

have not effectively embraced instructional leadership as regards to Hallinger and Wang (2015) instructional leadership model. They were unable to effectively frame and implement goals. Principals who follow effective instructional leadership practices are expected to have obvious, knowledgeable goals and visions of what they want their schools to become (Finley, 2014).

#### **4.2.2 Subtheme 2: Communicates school goals**

In terms of the second function of communicating goals, principals encouraged the lecturers not only to acknowledge the school's mission and vision but also implement them. One participant stated:

*“First of all you are showing the team that you are leading in form of explaining to them what you want to achieve, what is your vision, then you give clear direction of what you want them to do to achieve that goal or that vision of the organization” (P3<sup>m</sup>).*

Likewise, another participant said:

*“I set goals but it is also good to share those goals with others through meetings because we can have beautifully framed goals but if you don't share we don't succeed; so setting the goals is one thing, sharing the goals is another thing, and achieving the goals together is yet another thing” (P4<sup>f</sup>).*

Unlike Principal 3 and 4 who discussed the school's academic goals with lecturers at faculty meeting, principal 1 ensured that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school.



*“Our mission and vision is displayed on the notice board, everyone passing is able to see” (P1<sup>m</sup>).*

In his argument, P1 continued to explain that the mission and vision is also found in the student handbooks for students to read. However, he narrated that the goals are not updated and that the ones reflected on the walls are the general mission and vision of the college which were developed long time ago.

The conclusion that can be made from the subtheme of communicating school goals is that those principals who are actively involved in setting goals spoke a great deal about communicating their own personal vision for the school and their personal aspirations. They were also very clear about what they wanted from the school and what they expected of staff and students. The study has therefore shown that the aspect of communicating the schools’ goals was particularly strongly supported by the respondents.

### **4.3 Managing the Instructional Program**

The second dimension of the instructional leadership model, Manages the Instructional Program, ‘focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and the curriculum’ (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). This dimension involves three functions which have been converted into subthemes: i) Supervises and Evaluates Instruction, ii) Coordinates the Curriculum and iii) Monitors Student Progress.

#### ***4.3.1 Subtheme 1: Supervises and evaluates instruction***

The responses from the principals indicated that they are rarely involved in a routine range of monitoring and supervisory practices. Despite being aware of the need to

formally evaluate and observe lecturers, principals hardly find time to do this. One participant claimed that:

*“I must admit that I don’t monitor/supervise lecturers because of the business of this office; so I really need to commit a considerable amount of time to appreciate the successes and challenges that the tutors are facing in class”. (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

Furthermore, one participant recalled his monitoring and supervisory role which he used to do before becoming a principal.

*“When we talk of supervising a lesson I have not done it as a principal yet but as a dean I used to sit in their classes”. (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

The findings also indicated that principals would like to do informal supervision of a lesson through random walks round the college but they are afraid of disturbing lessons. One participant explained:

*“Sometimes I would want to walk around the school but when I realise that lessons are in progress I don’t proceed since if you just pop in the classroom without prior notice, you will disturb the students and the class and it can take time for them to settle and they don’t know why you are there. But if I get prior consent that I will sit in your class then there is no problem but just popping in I find it disturbing.” (P6<sup>m</sup>)*

However, the findings revealed that some principals were able to supervise and evaluate teaching in a more informal way. One participant narrated:

*“I check the lesson plans and also if the tutors have their notes ready for their teaching; this is mostly done once a week (since am usually busy) just to find out if people are ready and they have notes with them. I also make sure that the tutors are also ready for the clinical teaching, they have the objectives for the students and other things that are required. For the new tutors who have just come I arrange for another lecturer to sit-in the classroom so that the new tutors would go and observe how the teaching is done, what is happening and then vice versa”.*  
(P4<sup>f</sup>)

The study findings also revealed that the principals’ inability to formally monitor and evaluate lecturers is due to lack of knowledge and skills. One participant said:

*“I think I need support on how to supervise other faculty members. You know supervising students is easier but I need supervisor qualities so that I will be able to supervise faculty effectively. This can only be attained through training”.* (P4<sup>f</sup>)

#### **4.3.2 Subtheme 2: Coordinates the curriculum**

All principals were not confident of coordinating the curriculum. The participants in this study believed that coordinating the curriculum is not the role of the principal but is the responsibility of other leaders in the college such as dean of faculty and head of departments.

*“Like two years ago actually the college did review our curriculum but it was the dean of faculty who was leading the process”.* (P1<sup>m</sup>)

Similarly another participant said that monitoring of the curriculum was the responsibility of the dean. This extract confirms;

*“The dean is the one who deals with curriculum monitoring but am not sure if the monitoring involves seeing if the curriculum covers the school objectives”.* (P3<sup>m</sup>)

Conversely, principals did not make clear who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across class levels as it was just left open in the hands of the dean of faculty and head of departments. One participant said:

*“It’s the dean who is in-charge of the curriculum in all classes, laughs! The office of the dean of faculty is really overwhelmed”.* (P5<sup>f</sup>)

Despite principals not being confident in monitoring the curriculum, some participants narrated that their classroom curriculum covered the school's curricular objectives since it was derived from Nurses and Midwives Council Curriculum.

*“The curriculum we use for NMT’s in all CHAM colleges is from Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi; so it is in line with the needs of the colleges”.* (P4<sup>f</sup>)

### **4.3.3 Subtheme 3: Monitoring students’ progress**

There was less evidence that principals are directly involved in students matters as they usually wait for feedback from those who are directly involved. One participant shared:

*“We have a designated officer who deals with students; dean of students deals with social issues, personal issues of the students. Dean of faculty deals with academic issues. I get to know if there are any issues concerning students from them since I am also a member in the disciplinary committee”.* (P2<sup>m</sup>)

The opinion above was also expressed by another participant.

*“The dean of faculty oversees all issues pertaining to academic performance of the students; I just get reports”.* (P5<sup>f</sup>)

Similarly another participant said:

*“Students’ examination results are handled by the office of the dean. Usually we don’t rely on the students results to formulate college goals rather resources are at the heart of every college work”.* (P6<sup>m</sup>)

However, P3 had a different opinion, as he said their college activities are shaped by the performance of the students especially during licensure examinations. He said:

*“Remember in 2015 licensure examinations, a lot of NMT failed. This made us as a college to analyze the whole situation and put measures to make our students pass the examinations. The objectives of the college changed and our day to day activities also changed”.* (P3<sup>m</sup>)

With regard to managing school program, participants in this study revealed that they generally do not coordinate curriculum and monitor students’ progress. Those who were able to supervise and evaluate instruction did it informally. Ironically, it is a requirement by the CHAM secretariat that principals should review and implement curriculum, supervise and appraise students and lecturers. Through this process, principals are able to obtain an overview of the quality of the teaching and learning processes. This is an expectation placed upon the principals and therefore it is part of their formal role and responsibility.

#### **4.4 Develops a Positive School Climate**

The third dimension of the instructional model includes five functions: i) Protects Instructional Time, ii) Develops Professional Development, iii) Maintains High Visibility, iv) Provides Incentives for Teachers and v) Provides Incentives for Learning.

##### ***4.4.1 Subtheme 1: Protects instructional time***

The study revealed that the role of protecting instructional time is taken seriously especially by female principals in CHAM colleges. These principals improve the physical environment of the classroom, minimize behavioural problems of students and meet the needs with respect to maintaining the instruction time. One participant claimed:

*“I have to see that at 7:30am if we have classes in session, I have to make sure that at 7:30am every teacher who is responsible for teaching that day is present and that students are in class. Everything that was supposed to be used in class whether laptops, LCD are already in class. If we have excuses from tutors who say maybe they are not going to report for duties this is the time also to make sure that the dean has already put up a mechanism so that somebody can go to teach in place of the person who said was not going to make it. And also because my overall job is to make sure that I oversee the day to day running of the college”. (P5<sup>f</sup>)*

Likewise, another participant said:

*“You actually do the sort of a roll call to see who is present so that the classes are not left without anybody attending to them. Should there be absence of any member you make sure that you find someone who will take over because you*

*don't want to waste time or to waste the hours of the students. So you ensure that you replace the member who is absent with someone who is present so that the teaching can be done". (P4<sup>f</sup>)*

However, some participants narrated that they hardly find time to protect instructional time.

One participant said:

*"I do not have time to see what students are doing outside or inside classroom. However, my colleagues do that". (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

Another participant said:

*"Every class has a class coordinator who is supposed to come up with time table and ensure that teaching and learning is done. My office is always busy; so I don't take part in that since it's the office of dean of faculty who is supposed to look into those issues". (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

In general, male participants relied on their subordinates to protect instructional time as they blamed their inability to protect instructional time on lack of time.

#### ***4.4.2 Subtheme 2: Develops professional development***

The study findings revealed that most principals in CHAM colleges did not have core responsibility for developing professional development. Those who wished to execute this role met various barriers. Consequently, there was very little discussion from principals about this function.

*"So when you identify the gaps you make a plan and invite some experts to come and teach sort of Continuous Professional Development so that the teachers have*

*the right information and they become confident in their teaching and that teaching is done effectively. But it is not easy; it needs some resources". (P4<sup>f</sup>)*

Findings also revealed that principals had plans of professional development for the lecturers but they were unable to implement them fully.

*"Of course in our strategic plan we have plans of sending lecturers for further studies, but financially we are unable to fulfil it". (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

Additionally, another participant stated:

*"We have a training plan whereby each year we are supposed to send two people to school". (P3<sup>m</sup>)*

On the other hand, it was observed that some college principals take professional development as lecturers' own initiative.

*"Lecturers have the responsibility to know which skills they are lacking and plan for continuous professional development program since it is also a Nurses and Midwives' Council requirement to do that". (P6<sup>m</sup>)*

It can be concluded that the attempts for the participation of all staff regarding professional development, giving more detailed guidance to lecturers about professional development, sharing ideas or information from in-service training, or providing support in the professional field are at very limited levels. It can be stated that school principals expect lecturers to help themselves in order to improve professionally.



#### **4.4.3 Subtheme 3: Maintaining high visibility**

It was observed that most of the CHAM college principals are visible and noticeable on the school premises and even classrooms. Therefore, there was very comprehensive discussion from principals on how they increase their visibility. One participant stated:

*“Most of the times students are in their classrooms so sometimes you just talk to them or have meetings with them just to capture what exactly is going on well, if they have any complaints, how as management we can actually workout if we are able to deal with the complaints that students are going to raise.” (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

Additionally, another participant stated:

*“Almost every day I interact with lecturers, I go greeting them, we have lunch together, so I often interact with them during lunch”. (P3<sup>m</sup>)*

Furthermore, participant 3 explained his visibility with students.

*“As regards to the students we have union leadership, we have meetings with them at the beginning of the semester, also every day we have morning reflections, we pray together it’s some sort of interactions as well”.(P3<sup>m</sup>)*

Additionally, some participants emphasized on a “team player” ability to maintain high visibility. In his view, this ability helps him work with faculty members to achieve the common goal. One participant narrated:

*“Alright, I am a team player, I participate both in extra- and co-curricular activities though sometimes I delegate to my colleagues but I can easily associate with people of all levels without making myself going maybe down to the lowest level of*

*the people but I can associate with them professionally. I am somebody who can easily be approached and naturally I interact with people". (P6<sup>m</sup>)*

While various principals ranked maintaining high visibility differently from each other, all of them hold the view that maintaining high visibility increases college success.

In view of this, another participant commented that:

*"When you are reachable by your team and students they open up to you and their issues can be sorted out quickly hence their morale for work and school is boosted leading to greater achievements". (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

However, some principals were unable to maintain high visibility because of the demand of their offices. One participant narrated:

*"I wish I could assist lecturers in classroom teaching which can also make me interact with students but the nature of my office is too demanding". (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

The conclusion that can be made from maintaining high visibility is that principals have different capabilities that they utilize in order to maintain high visibility in their colleges. The findings from the study confirm that in terms of maintaining high visibility, most principals could be viewed as active instructional leaders.

#### ***4.4.4 Subtheme 4: Provides incentives for teachers***

The findings of this study reveal that some principals were able to motivate lecturers and commend them for their superior performance in meetings. One participant stated:

*“The first thing that I often use as a motivation to all faculty members is the simple word of “Thank you” (smiles) and I suppose they are happy with that”.*

*(P3<sup>m</sup>)*

Furthermore, participant 3 believed in reinforcing good work. He said recognizing somebody’s strength was a valuable incentive.

*“I am also very good at identifying somebody’s strength and encouraging them. When they are doing good I recognise that and I reinforce that, we talk and plan how did you do it, you are doing good, where did you learn this, can you share with others as well so that we can move together, it’s a great motivation and incentive to them”.*

*(P3<sup>m</sup>)*

On the other hand, it is observed that some principals use informal ways to motivate lecturers. In this context, the activities of giving presents on special occasions like birthdays, going for retreat at the lake and home visits were mentioned.

*“At the end of the year we have staff trip to the lake including lecturers which makes them to be away from work and refresh”.* (P2<sup>m</sup>)

Similarly, another participant explained:

*“We had dinner parties with their families after our students passed licensure examinations even though we could not include everyone”.* (P1<sup>m</sup>)

According to the views of college principals, it was observed that few of the college principals were able to praise lecturers individually. However, most principals insufficiently exhibited the practices, such as honouring and rewarding them publicly or

announcing their success. On the other hand, CHAM principals try to motivate teachers through various informal activities. In this context, college principals state that they are trying to make their working environments appropriate for instruction, resolve teachers' problems, improve working environments and support teachers in the delivery of their services.

#### ***4.5.5 Subtheme 5: Provides incentives for learning***

The responses from the principals indicated that providing incentives for learning did not fall within their realm. When asked if they provide incentives for learners they referred this task to other leaders. One of the participants said:

*“Student issues are handled in the office of the dean, unless one has failed miserably that’s when I come to know the issue”. (P6<sup>m</sup>)*

Similarly another participant said:

*“I should admit that I have not done much on students’ achievement, but my faculty members could be doing it”. (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

Contrary to the above responses, principals acknowledged that motivating students would lead to improving students’ performance.

*“When students are motivated, they will work hard and pass with flying colors which should bring pride not only to the college but to the society that we serve as well”. (P5<sup>f</sup>)*

Another participant narrated.

*“For students to do well they need support from us faculty members. Some students are married and have families and when you don’t support them, their family problems affect their performance in class”. (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

The conclusion that can be made from providing incentives for learners is that principals rarely exhibit encouraging behaviors for students to excel. In this context, principals rely on other leaders to do it. However, principals realize that providing incentives to students helps to reward good performance.

#### **4.5 Obstacles Principals Encounter when Acting as Instructional Leaders**

Participants in this study described the barriers they encounter while engaged in instructional leadership work.

##### ***4.5.1 Subtheme 1: Lack of resources***

Among the most frequent views by principals was the phrase “I need adequate resources”. Principals explained that they needed financial, human and material resources in order to execute instructional leadership roles. One participant said:

*“Sometimes you really want to do something, but because maybe you don’t have the resources even human resource maybe that cannot be implemented! (Shouting with unhappy face), for example, we don’t have a human resource officer because there is no designation for that and we use our clerk. I also join in sometimes”. (P5<sup>f</sup>)*

In her argument, P5 continued to complain that her college had stayed for 9 months without funding hence some services were suffering. She also highlighted shortage of staff

and staff establishments. This was a barrier for the principals to be able to provide instructional leadership effectively.

Another participant, also felt that lack of resources was a main challenge in implementing instructional leadership.

*“The main challenge is dwindling financial base. We are coming from a scenario where by students were being supported by donors and these donors would inject money in lump sum. Now that students are struggling to pay the fees by themselves that’s a big challenge; so really I need a financial breakthrough. As an instructional leader I need resources at my disposal, resources that students can use and also resources that the faculty can use”. (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

He further wished to have partners who can provide financial support and learning and teaching materials. The study also reveals that resource constraints and delay in receiving funding hinder instructional leadership work. Participants complained about the partners’ delays in paying the college. One participant said:

*“Funds are not coming in well especially those from our partners. We stay the whole semester without funding, six months! All these create hardships in the process of providing instructional leadership”. (P3<sup>m</sup>)*

Furthermore, lack of human and material resources leads to inadequate clinical teaching. One participant explained;

*“You want people to give enough time to teach the students in the clinical area but you don’t have money to send them, maybe you have prioritized to buy food for the students, then you find that after buying food you don’t have enough*

*money to send these lecturers or clinical instructors to go and teach in the clinical area. You find that they just go there for a day or two which is not enough for the students to learn”. (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

However, the availability of funds on its own was not a guarantee to practicing instructional leadership but rather adequate knowledge and skills in instructional leadership. One participant commented:

*“Availability of funds on its own may not lead to achieving college objectives”. (P2<sup>f</sup>)*

With regard to barriers which principals encounter when acting as instructional leaders, the participants indicated that lack of support prohibits some instructional leadership activities. Due to the current lack of support for principals to carry out instructional leadership activities, it was through hit and miss approach that some principals could perform instructional leadership activities. The inference that can be drawn from the above respondents is that the practice of instructional leadership could be influenced by the necessary support given to the principals.

#### ***4.5.2 Subtheme 2: Increased workload***

Increased workload was identified as one of the barriers to the implementation of instructional leadership. Principals explained that increased workload leads to lack of time to do instructional leadership activities. Participants felt that small tasks especially administrative roles were using up their time of monitoring teaching and learning. One participant reported:

*“I feel that the big challenge I am having is that I have to divide my time between classroom issues and administrative issues. It is like there is conflict that I am needed in the classroom, I am needed in the administration area and that part is making my life a little bit difficult such that one of the areas at one point or the other suffers; so if I can have enough time just to concentrate on one area that can help”. (P6<sup>m</sup>)*

Similarly, another participant said:

*“Time is one of them, I have a couple of responsibilities. It is really hard to do hands on monitoring and supervising teaching”. (P3<sup>m</sup>)*

Another participant added:

*“...It is because of a lot of work in this office especially that people always refer their issues to this office”. (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

The principals also emphasized that administrative roles were too much. One participant claimed:

*“You know administrative roles are quite demanding. I have to attend to letters, visitors, meet partners and have meetings”. (P4<sup>f</sup>)*

Another participant added:

*“I don't involve myself much in classroom teaching activities because of a lot of work in this office especially that people always refer their issues to this office. I also have to check emails, attend meetings, phone calls”. (P2<sup>m</sup>)*

Another participant added:



*“Sometimes you come in office with a good plan but at the end of the day you find that maybe from what you planned you have tackled only one thing the rest were just things outside”. (P5<sup>f</sup>)*

Likewise, another participant shared:

*“I must admit that because of the business of this office it is very busy, I fail to monitor tutors and students”. (P1<sup>m</sup>)*

Participants agreed that increased work load is a barrier to the implementation of instructional leadership.

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter reflected on the findings of the study. The findings have been presented according to the main themes and sub-themes based on the conceptualization of the instructional leadership model proposed by (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). An additional theme that was deemed important emerged during the analysis of data and has been presented. These themes helped to address the objectives of this study and were used to consolidate the ultimate arguments of this study in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This study used a qualitative approach to explore instructional leadership practices of principals in CHAM colleges. Instructional leadership practices were examined according to the views of college principals. It is assumed that principals try to implement some instructional leadership practices in line with the model developed by (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). On the other hand, it can be stated that there is some tension when practicing instructional leadership. The tension between instructional leadership and administrative practices is evident in all the instructional leadership practices principals exhibit and the obstacles they encounter when implementing instructional leadership practices.

This chapter highlights and explains the main findings of the study as they relate to the research objectives, conceptual framework and existing literature. Also the findings are either combined or contrasted as the issues appeared from the data. Furthermore this chapter presents the strengths and limitations of this study, recommendations as well as the suggestions for future researchers.

#### **5.2 Defining the School Mission**

One of the main dimensions related to effective instructional leadership is the role of the principal in developing and communicating a shared vision and goals to the teachers and learners.

Some principals acknowledged that their core functions included defining the college mission and some created goals aimed to promote students success in a competitive learning environment. This is in line with Cansoy and Turkoglu (2018), who state that the mission and vision of a school can be defined in such a way that it will create a sense of common purpose in the staff and students by performing various activities in the school and classroom. It can be argued that some CHAM college principals are able to develop a vision which has a purpose of increasing students' success. Similarly, Hallinger and Wang (2015), indicate that the function of framing goals concerns the principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has a clear mission and that the mission is focused on the academic achievement of students. Therefore, it can be argued that some CHAM college principals are able to frame college goals according to Hallinger and Wang (2015), thereby setting direction for their staff and students and allowing the vision to serve as a reminder to the team of their purpose and goals.

However, the study findings reveal that some principals did not actively take the role of formulating goals and they had problems to implement the goals formulated by stakeholders such as College Board of Governors. These findings concur with the study conducted in Uganda by Namuteb (2019), which found that the head of departments did not articulate the university mission causing underperformance of university lecturers. While this function does not state that the principal defines the school's mission alone, it does suggest that the principal is responsible for ensuring that such a mission exists and is communicated widely to the school's stakeholders (Hallinger & Lee, 2013). For one to implement the goals that means he or she has to be involved in developing them and should fully understand them. Supporting this, Hallinger and Wang (2015), argue that the mission

needs to be clearly declared, actively supported, and exhibited by the principal. Inability of principals to formulate vision and goals could have a negative impact to the college as there will be no roadmap guiding the implementation of their activities. Furthermore, those goals formulated without participation of the principals could not be implemented effectively due to lack of clear guidance and they might not match with the available resources. Therefore, it can be argued that some CHAM college principals do not effectively practice instructional leadership. This is supported by Finley (2014), who states that principals who follow effective instructional leadership practices are expected to have obvious, knowledgeable goals and visions of what they want their schools to become. This can also affect the quality of learning and teaching in CHAM colleges. Galukande et al. (2013), in assuring and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in medical universities, found that medical university accreditation process in Uganda uses the mission and goals of medical school as standards to be assessed.

While principals ensure that the goals are communicated to all staff including students, the study also revealed that some goals are not updated and that the ones reflected on the walls are the general mission and vision of the college which were developed long time ago. Conversely, Hallinger and Wang (2015, p 28), indicate that the school goals help principals in determining the areas in which the school will focus its resources during a given year. Furthermore, their planning of their schools' activities and programmes will be in line with the vision and goals of their school (Mafuwane, 2011). This infers that the college goals should be updated from time to time. Furthermore, it can be argued that principals should prioritize the provision of a clear sense of mission, vision and goals that are up to date, shared, understood and supported by all staff and students so that they should

be able to plan on the use of resources and implementation. These arguments are compatible with the study carried out by AL-Dossary (2010), on transformation leadership which explains that leadership in nursing involves providing direction and support, coordinating, collaboration, effective communication, showing followers how things are done, guiding their way, and the course of actions. Despite being a transformational leadership, it has been stated a number of times in the previous sections that it is observed that different models of leadership share most of same practices. Therefore, some of the transformational leadership practices are similar to instructional leadership practices. However, Andrews, Richard, Robinson, Celano and Hallarone (2012), found that while there is a staff preference for transformational leadership, staff also show a preference for leaders who clarify expectations. Hence, some CHAM college principals are supposed to clarify their goals and vision to the staff and learners which will make them effective instructional leaders.

Although some principals are not actively involved in developing school goals and vision, the study also revealed that the principals hold the view that if the vision and goals of the colleges are clearly defined and communicated to everyone in the school, then learner performance will improve. Similarly, Cumming (2012), found that few principals practice instructional leadership but among the practices identified was developing shared visions of learning which improved student learning. Therefore, it can be argued that those principals who did not take an active role in defining the college mission would have poor learner performance and college success at large.

### **5.3 Managing the Instructional Program**

Most of the principals in the CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges are rarely involved in monitoring and supervising learning, coordinating curriculum and monitoring student progress. In contrast, the study conducted in Malaysia found that the principals in the sample, spent most of their time monitoring and supervising instructional practice and their practice was heavily congruent with instructional leadership (Harris et al., 2017). There is evidence about the positive impact of principals participating in and monitoring and supervising instructional practice which improves school performance (Robinson et al., 2008). It could be argued, therefore, that not taking a leading role in monitoring and supervising learning would impact colleges negatively. Supporting this some researchers claim that managing teaching and learning are primary roles of an effective instructional leader (Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz, Pashiardis & Feldhoff, 2016; Motilal, 2014).

On the other hand, using Hallinger and Wang (2015) model on instructional leadership, some respondents who manage instructional program do it through supervision and evaluation of instruction in informal ways. Their instructional leadership role include; assigning someone to sit-in classroom, checking lessons plans and using student results to plan college activities. For example, one respondent stated that her activities included checking the lesson plans and also if the tutors have their notes ready for their teaching. The aim of these observations is to give feedback to the lecturers so that they should improve their work. This is supported by Witge and Scanlan (2014), who state that leadership demonstrated by the nursing leaders directly impacts staff's performance. On the other hand, it can be argued that it is the curriculum, which includes all the learning areas at school, that brings teachers and learners together and the principal of any college

can only realize the vision and goals of the college through the curriculum and it is only through the curriculum that learners achieve good results at the end of the year. Hence CHAM college principals should put much effort in managing instructional program. Supporting these arguments, Hallinger and Wang (2015), instructional leadership model states that the principal needs to be highly involved in encouraging, directing, and observing teaching and learning at school.

The study further revealed that principals were not directly involved with the supervision and evaluation of instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress and they indicated that this is a responsibility that resides in the Head of Department (HOD's). These findings are similar to Taiwanese and Swedish principals who executed a high level of indirect leadership and spent most of their time on administrative matters (Hui-Ling et al., 2015; Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013). The inference that can be drawn from this finding is that these principals are aware of instructional leadership as a practice, but they do not necessarily regard it as their responsibility. Likewise, in this study other principals opted to delegate most of their instructional leadership activities to their subordinates. Those principals who applied the distributive leadership style expect their subordinates to ensure creating a safe and orderly learning environment, providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement and monitor the delivery of teaching. This is similar to the findings from a study done by Mestry (2017), in South Africa where the implication was that while distributed or participative leadership reduces the workload of principals, it also empowers subordinates to take on leadership positions and facilitate healthy staff relations. Conversely, principals are expected to play a great role in teaching and learning hence they are supposed to be instructional leaders. In addition Hallinger and

Lee (2013), in instructional leadership framework state that although these instructional leadership responsibilities must be shared with teachers and other school administrators, the framework explains that coordination and control of the academic program of the school remains a key leadership responsibility of the principal. However, in this study principals delegated instructional leadership activities. This can negatively impact on the students' achievement if the activities are not carried out as expected.

However, other principals merely devoted most of their time to monitoring and controlling the work of staff and learners. It is expected from the CHAM secretariat, as instructional leaders that they should undertake essential leadership functions such as training students, reviewing and implementing curriculum, supervision and appraisal of students and staff (CHAM, 2015). However, most of the principals interviewed complained of inadequate time to engage themselves in such type of activities. This is similar to the findings of (Hallinger, 2012; Hoy & Hoy, 2013), which revealed that those principals who did spend time engaging with classroom teaching and teachers on curriculum matters, struggled in balancing their administrative and management functions with their instructional duties. This implies that principals may be keen to perform instructional leadership practices but also feel tension in exhibiting these practices as the administrative roles are so demanding. However, non-instructional activities are slightly or not at all associated with student academic achievement (Hornig et al., 2010). Therefore, this entails that those colleges with principals who do not spend much of their time in instructional leadership may have reduced students' success.

In ability to manage the instructional program was associated with lack of knowledge and skills by some principals which requires the implementation of a



professional development programme to deal with this problem. Concurring with this, Murphy and Hallinger (2012), explain that the barrier associated with lack of knowledge is related to expertise principals are expected to possess. In addition, in a qualitative study Mestry (2013), found that several principals lacked the necessary instructional leadership expertise and skills and found it difficult to develop strategies of coordination and control to align their school's academic mission. Similarly, Royal College of Nursing (2009), found that lack of skill development and formal preparation hindered nursing leaders to execute their roles effectively. However, studies in the literature found that prior experiences on teaching and leadership responsibilities, coaching and modelling may influence principals' knowledge (Powell, 2017; Saban and Wolfe 2009; Firmaningsih-Kolu, 2015; Harris et al., 2017; Cray & Millen, 2010). It is therefore suggested that CHAM college principals need preparatory programs to help them gain knowledge and skills to practice leadership roles which are essential to bring out effectiveness and improvement in the school by promoting learner performance.

#### **5.4 Develops Positive School Climate**

The findings of this study reveal that college principals are visible and noticeable on the school premises. Teachers could have a talk with their college principal whenever they wanted. Principals were in their colleges except for very special occasions. This suggests that issues related to education and training could be discussed easily hence improving teaching and learning. In this regard, it can be stated that some school principals maintain high visibility which is one of the practices under Hallinger and Wang (2015), third dimension of promoting school climate. In the current study, the efforts made by some college principals are compatible with the literature. According to Sebastain et al., (2016),

instructional leadership creates the most energetic effect by providing a positive learning environment in the school. Consequently, the positive learning climate has a strong effect on classroom management, student performance, high academic expectations and student achievement (Kane et al., 2010). These findings imply that if indeed principals are accessible, this would help teachers to be motivated hence working hard in order to achieve high students performance since through performing of these functions, successful principals create a positive learning environment and a culture that promotes and rewards continuous learning and improvement.

Female CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals are able to protect instructional time as compared to male principals. In the literature, findings that overlap with this finding found that female principals were much prepared as instructional leaders and had adequate leadership experience hence being able to execute most of the instructional leadership practices (Glanz, et al., 2017). While most male principals did not take protecting instructional time as their core responsibility, they attributed this to lack of time. Conversely, Spires (2015), argues that time spent on instructional leadership activities is associated with positive school outcomes. Therefore, CHAM college principals should prioritize spending their time on instructional leadership practices.

Some principals in this study were able to provide incentives for teachers which motivated lecturers and reinforced their superior performance. They embraced practices like thanking lecturers, identifying their strengths and encouraging them. This is similar to the findings of Tranbarger (2013), who explained the principles of leadership success as personally congratulating individuals on excellent performance appraisals and sharing positive feedback. He also explained that corrective actions should be private, whereas

positive reinforcement should be public. It can be inferred that those principals who were able to provide incentives for teachers are successful instructional leaders.

The study findings also reveal that principals were not able to develop professional developments for teachers and provide incentives for learning. The findings are in contrast with what previous research has shown. Scholars report that most principals were able to develop professional development for teachers and provide incentives for learners (Hallinger, 2010; Jawas, 2014; Turner, 2013), which helped to make schools successful. In line with this, Yavuz and Baş (2010), conducted a qualitative study to analyze college principals' instructional leadership practices as perceived by school teachers. The study revealed that teacher support and the creation of an environment supporting teaching and learning were among most exhibited instructional leadership practices of principals. In line with the above studies, another study done on instructional leadership practices that promote school achievement in two Malawian secondary schools revealed that the most used practices of instructional leadership in the two schools among others were: emphasizing on recognizing students for effective teaching and learning culture, promoting professional and recognizing students and teachers achievements (Toprakci et al., 2016). This implies that most principals in this study are not able to utilize instructional leadership in regard to Hallinger and Wang (2015). Therefore, in ability to provide incentives for learners and developing professional developments for teachers can hinder the college achievements. Hence, those principals who do not exhibit these instructional leadership practices may have unsuccessful colleges since teaching and learning will not be improved. On the other hand, Ersozlu and Saklan (2016), in a qualitative study exploring the opinions related to the instructional leadership of the faculty members working in higher education

institutions in Turkey found that while principals were eager to promote professional development of teachers, the excessive workload and handicaps in the bureaucratic order prevent their instructional leadership. This is in line with this study finding which revealed that CHAM principals were unable to provide professional development for lecturers due to different challenges such as limited resources.

### **5.5 Barriers for Implementation of Instructional Leadership Activities**

Respondents narrated so many factors within the school setting that are often out of the control of the principal including administrative tasks, socioeconomic factors and inadequacy of resources. Such factors were seen to act as barriers to the implementation of instructional leadership practices.

Principals in this study described resources as a challenge to their practice. Their attempt to provide financial and human resources for carrying out college activities make it hard for principals to practice instructional leadership. From these findings it is understood that college principals have difficulties in dealing with resource challenges which use most of their time. These findings concur with the findings from a study by Bhengu et al. (2014), which found that the contexts within which some school principals work seem not to be friendly to the application of their instructional leadership in a seamless way. Therefore, un conducive contexts may lead to inability of principals to practice instructional leadership. This is supported by (DeLucia, 2011; Firmaningsih-Kolu, 2015; Glanz, et al., 2017), who revealed that principals who work in environments that promote professional learning are strong leaders and prefer to exhibit instructional leadership roles rather than administrative roles. On the other hand, those administrative minded principals who considered organizational tasks more important and not

instructional leadership tasks were in schools with weaker environments. This suggests that failure of CHAM college principals to execute some instructional leadership practices may be as a result of the uncondusive working environments. In addition, the above tasks also lead to increased work load of the principals. All principals in the study spent most of their time on administrative and other activities rather than on instructional leadership. This is supported with literature which indicates that while principals have the potential to be instructional leaders, there is some apprehension for the context of the possible workload (Murphy & Hallinger, 2012). However, DeLucia (2011), argue that it is vital that central office authorities provide the support necessary for principals to succeed. Hence, providing resources to the principals would help to improve their leadership practices. Meanwhile, in this study three out of the six respondents had clearly made plans for their daily instructional leadership activities. It did however, appear during the interviews that the principals find it challenging to work according to their plans due to other problems such as the unplanned meetings called by the departments and partners from time to time. Concurring with these findings, a study done by Su (2013), states that the typical day for principals is strewn with unanticipated interruptions, non-instructional requests from teachers, discipline issues, and otherwise is so busy that there simply is not enough time left in the day to dedicate to instructional leadership activities. The inference that can be drawn from this finding is that these principals are conscious of instructional leadership as a practice, but they do not necessarily prioritize it. Supporting this, Hoy and Miskel (2013), state that in theory, instructional leadership includes those actions that principals take to promote teaching and learning, and all other activities in colleges are secondary to these ultimate goals. In practice, however, the everyday work of principals is often in conflict

with the research (Atkinson, 2013). In this study one respondent claimed that because administrative roles were too much, instructional leadership had to suffer. Similarly Cumming (2012), in a study conducted in Canada found that only two out of five principals reported that they were actively involved in teaching and learning. On the other hand, in previous studies Shoho et al. (2011) argue that school principals should share and divide their energy, ideas and time within the school day. This implies that despite being aware of their main focus on teaching and learning, principals in CHAM colleges are unable to implement teaching and learning activities. Whilst this can be attributed to increased workload, principals also have the responsibility to control their daily activities. Principals have the responsibility to decide on what to do or not to in order to improve teaching and learning. Therefore, failure to exhibit instructional leadership practices may lead to learners and teachers losing direction and this may have a negative impact on learners' performance.

Therefore, it can be stated that the issues outlined above are important barriers to the efforts of college principals to improve learning in the colleges. Thus, it is important to consider addressing these barriers that hinder the implementation of instructional leadership by college principals. Hence, college principals should receive adequate support in implementing instructional leadership in order to increase learner achievements. This would help the college principals to execute instructional leadership roles.

## **5.6 Recommendations**

The findings from this study, along with the evidence from the local and international literature, would suggest that some principals in CHAM colleges are exhibiting some instructional leadership practices according to Hallinger and Wang (2015)

model while others do not monitor teaching and learning hence are not exhibiting instructional leadership practices according to Hallinger and Wang (2015) model. Through developing mission and goals, their high visibility, supervision, monitoring and providing incentives for teachers' principals are actively influencing and improving instructional practice. The remaining challenge, however, is to ensure that all principals in CHAM Colleges fully exhibit all aspects of instructional leadership in ways that contribute directly to college improvement. Therefore, to foster accurate instructional leadership, across all principals in CHAM colleges, necessary measures should be taken to eradicate obstacles to implementing instructional leadership so that college principals can focus on the activities aimed at improving student learning in schools.

#### ***5.6.1 In Policy***

The core of instructional leadership is to transform colleges into conducive environments where teachers and learners reach their full potential. To advance a culture of teaching and learning in colleges where learner achievement features strongly, principals are obliged to balance their administrative and managerial duties with instructional leadership roles. Hence, some decrease in the routine, administrative tasks that principals in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges carry out day to day, could provide the principals more time to focus on improving teaching and learning. College principals should not be prioritizing sourcing financial resources and trying to improve the physical conditions of the school or doing works that may lead to role conflict. Hence policies should be made in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges to guide principals to prioritize instructional leadership activities. In this context, administrative level in colleges can be restructured. Although principals could apply a distributive leadership style of college management,

they should not abandon their responsibility of promoting the teaching and learning. The principal may practice the distributive leadership style by delegating the different administrative and management responsibilities to subordinates. In this way, they will empower their subordinates to take on leadership positions while they dedicate more time to instructional matters (Mafuwane, 2011). This is supported by Su (2013), who revealed that principals can use their time more effectively by delegating certain tasks to their staff. For example, principals can delegate the task of disciplining students to vice principals and the tasks of receiving calls and emails to secretaries (Su, 2013). Su (2013), further states that principals can also improve their productivity by arranging their work environment and schedule to avoid frequent interruptions. For example, principals can keep their desks cleared of all projects except for the top-priority ones, and they should close their door when they do not want to be interrupted. Therefore, in order to support CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals when executing instructional leadership roles, the principals should have adequate staff to work with, finances and power to exercise instructional leadership.

### ***5.6.2 In Education***

Principals should also be equipped with knowledge, skills and attitude in providing instructional leadership. It is also possible to try to provide instructional leadership principles for newly appointed principals. Hence, training programs can be organized for those who are not proficient in this field in order to prepare the CHAM principals on their new roles and responsibilities to align more with the functions associated with being an instructional leader, thus, expanding and deepening this form of leadership practice. In line with this, Atkinson (2013) recommends that principals should take immediate advantage



of professional development opportunities to improve their perceived instructional leadership. In addition, professional development activities can be commenced through the active participation of college faculties, practicing principals and prospective principals engaging in exchange visits, get together, curriculum development, peer observation, and through collaborative school-based research.

### ***5.6.3 In Nursing and Midwifery colleges***

The importance of strengthening leadership in Malawi nursing and midwifery colleges specifically instructional leadership in improving learner performance has been acknowledged in this study. In order to improve teaching and learning, principals should share instructional leadership practices as highlighted by Hallinger and Wang (2015). This is supported by DeLucias (2011), who found that in order to improve instructional leadership, principals celebrate successes which provide internal and external occasions for the sharing of experience on how they perform instructional practices. In addition, the role of principals should be clearly emphasized and communicated to all principals by the CHAM secretariat and other stakeholders. In regards to this, principals should exemplify these practices as such CHAM nursing colleges would benefit from these instructional leadership practices.

## **5.7 Areas for Further Study**

1. This study reveals college principals' own views regarding instructional leadership. College principals in this study have indicated that they exhibit practices related to instructional leadership. Therefore, a multiple view on college principals' level of instructional leadership can be provided by carrying out similar studies together with teachers and parents. Whether college principals practice instructional

leadership roles efficiently can be explained with the opinions of other stakeholders.

2. The study findings and literature on leadership also suggest that instructional leadership is the most important in learner improvement. Therefore, colleges need to consider learners in this phenomenon of instructional leadership. Hence, future researchers should assess the impact of students on principals' instructional leadership practices in CHAM colleges
3. In this study it was also found that some principals exhibited instructional leadership practices while others did not. Therefore, it is necessary to compare the performance of those colleges whose principals practice instructional leadership with those who do not practice instructional leadership.
4. As suggested under the recommendations of this study on delegation, an investigation into the views of teachers with regard to principals' influence on job satisfaction of the teachers and impact on the learner performance is another area for potential further investigation.

### **5.8 Constraints/limitations**

1. Although instructional leadership practices would have been better quantified, this study did not employ quantitative method because of the small population sample of principals which was only 9 and it also wanted principals to give their experiences and realities on their instructional leadership roles.
2. Although by definition instructional leadership includes the element of student learning, this study did not attempt to examine students' ideas nor involve them as research participants. Their limited exposure and access to leadership style exercised by college

principals was the main reason for the elimination of students as research participants in this study.

## **5.9 Conclusion**

One of the major reasons for the poor academic standards of learners in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges is the inadequate instructional leadership role of principals. Instructional leadership practices of CHAM nursing and midwifery college principals is inadequate as regard to Hallinger and Wang's instructional leadership model as evidenced by the study findings hence a gap still exists in exhibiting instructional leadership practices. This study has shown that CHAM college principals are both administrators and instructional leaders. However, inadequate practice of instructional leadership leads to poor success of the colleges. Although principals are accountable for the excess of administrative and managerial tasks, there is a great need for them to take an active role on instructional leadership role, which is essential to enhance learner performance. Principals should be conversant with innovative teaching methods and encourage teachers to model them in classrooms. The principal has the ability to influence learner-learning outcomes by setting the school's goals and promoting effective instructional practices. Therefore this study might be of help in seeking strategies to improve instructional leadership practices of principals in CHAM nursing and midwifery colleges.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Interview guide**

#### **Interview guide**

#### **SECTION A: Biographic Questions**

Identification code/number:

Gender:

Age:

Highest degree attained:

What is your current role in this college?

How long have you served in your current role?

Have you ever served in any other role at your current college?

How many years of college leadership experience do you have in total?

How many of those years were as a principal?

How many years of teaching experience do you have?

What courses and grade level(s) have you taught?

#### **In depth Questions**

#### **SECTION B: Defining the School's Mission**

1. What is your aim/goal as an instructional leader?

- a) How do you use your aim/goal to improve/promote the learning in your school?
- c) What exactly do you do that results in academic improvements for students? What do you place your emphasis on?

2. What is your role in defining the school mission and vision?

- a) What is your own vision and mission of your school?
- b) How do you manage the school mission and vision?

Probe:

How do you make it known to others?

### **SECTION C: Managing the Instructional Program**

3. What are your expectations of the teachers in students' academic achievement?

d) How do you monitor the teachers' and students' progress during teaching-learning activities?

e) How do you handle students' academic results?

e) How do you improve the quality of teaching-learning activities?

f) What is your role in curriculum development, implementation and review?

g) How do you work with the teachers in relation to teaching and learning?

4. How have you supported the teachers to overcome problems with students during teaching-learning activities?

5. What, in your opinion, is the purpose of supervision and do you view supervision of the teaching and learning process as part of your responsibilities as a principal?

**SECTION D: Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate**

6. How do you create a school culture?

Probes:

a) How do you protect instructional time?

b) Do you provide incentives for teachers and learners? If yes, please explain

c) Do you promote professional development for yourself and lecturers? If yes, please explain.

d) How do you maintain high visibility?

- Do you interact with students?

- Do you cover classes when lecturers are late or not available?

7. Is there anything you would like to share about your experience when you are practicing instructional leadership? If yes, please explain.

## **Appendix 2: Information letter for principals who wish to take part in the study**

Kamuzu College of Nursing

Lilongwe Campus

Private Bag 1

Lilongwe

9<sup>th</sup> July, 2020

A Study of instructional leadership practices of principals.

### **INFORMATION LETTER FOR RESEARCH**

#### **Dear Participant**

You have been invited to take part in a research project described below. My name is Liviness Master Phiri, a master of science in nursing and midwifery education student at Kamuzu college of Nursing. As the researcher, I will explain the project to you in detail. You should feel free to ask questions. If you have more questions later, you can call me on 0999 183 465 I will discuss them with you. You must have worked at least 6 six months at this institution to be in this research project.

Description of the project: I am conducting a qualitative method research study on exploring instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges under CHAM. The purpose of this study is to explore instructional leadership practices exhibited by principals.



What will be done: you will be asked questions upon accepting to participate in this study. A voice recorder will be used for recording the interviews.

Risks or discomfort: There is minimal risk associated with participating in the study. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential. The researcher will not share your individual responses with anyone other than the dissertation committee.

Benefits of this study: The benefit of your participation is to contribute research on instructional leadership. This study may assist college principals and policy makers with research on instructional leadership. There is minimal risk associated with participating in the study.

Confidentiality: Your part in this study is confidential. None of the information will identify you by name. All of your information and voice recorder will be kept confidential. I will not share your responses with anyone other than the dissertation committee.

Voluntary participation: You are free to choose to participate or not, no one will be forced. This means that you can withdraw your participation at any point without giving a reason. You just need to inform me that you are leaving and no questions will be asked. There is no penalty for discontinuing participation.

Rights and Complaints: If you are not satisfied with the way this study is performed, you may discuss your complaints with College of Medicine Research and Ethics Committee (COMREC) chairperson anonymously, if you choose. Below are the contact details:

### **The Chairperson**

College of Medicine Ethics Review committee (COMREC),

P/Bag 360,

Chichiri,

Blantyre 3.

**Email address:** comrec@medcol.mw

**Telephone number:** 265 187 4377

**Fax Number:** 265 187 4740

**Physical address:** University of Malawi College of Medicine,

Mahatma Gandhi Campus,

Postgraduate Building Ground Floor,

Room number 822.

**Institution website address:** <http://www.medcol.mw/comrec/>

Or

**The Study Principal Investigator:** Liviness Master Phiri

**Postal address:** Kamuzu college of Nursing,

P/Bag 1

Lilongwe

**Email address:** phiri2017liviness@kcn.unima.mw

**Cell:** +265999183465

OR

**My research supervisor:** Dr Masauko Msiska

**Senior Lecturer:** Kamuzu College Of Nursing

P/Bag 1

Lilongwe

**Email address:** [masamsiska@kcn.unima.mw](mailto:masamsiska@kcn.unima.mw)

**Cell:** +265999926715

**Appendix 3: Consent Form**

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FORM IF YOU ARE TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY**

Informed consent for participants consenting to be subjects for a study titled “**Exploring instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges under Christian Health Association of Malawi**” whose results will help in identifying the instructional leadership practices which can promote students achievements.

I have read and understood the content of the information letter and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions, where deemed necessary, about the study. I have understood that the information I give will be kept confidential and will only be accessed by the researcher and/or those people who are directly concerned with the study. Now I know that I do not have to suffer any injury or harm during the research process and the information that I will give to the researcher will not be used against me in future. That is why I am consenting to participate in the study voluntarily.

.....

Participant’s Signature    Date

.....

Witness’s signature    Date



# CHAM

## CHRISTIAN HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MALAWI

P.O. Box 30378, LILONGWE 3, Malawi.  
Telephone Office: 01-755 180/404, 01-771 258 Fax: 01-775 406  
E-mail: [chamsec@cham.org.mw](mailto:chamsec@cham.org.mw)

**Ref:** RS/TI/18/02

10 October 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

### **LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR LIVINESS MASTER PHIRI TO CONDUCT THE STUDY**

I write to provide support for Liviness Master Phiri to conduct a study entitled **“Assessing Instructional Leadership Practices of Principals in Nursing and Midwifery Colleges in Malawi”** in partial fulfillment of her Master of Science in Nursing and Midwifery Education. The study is expected to inform nursing and midwifery colleges in promoting instructional leadership practices to improving student outcomes.

For any further information, please contact Mr. Saguga, the CHAM training manager on 099963994 or email: [wsaguga@cham.org.mw](mailto:wsaguga@cham.org.mw).

Yours Sincerely,

**Andrew Chikopa**  
**Executive Director**



## CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

This is to certify that the College of Medicine Research and Ethics Committee (COMREC) has reviewed and approved a study entitled:

P.03/19/2631 - Instructional leadership practices of principals in nursing and midwifery colleges under Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM) Version 3 by Ms Liviness Master Phiri

On 13-May-19

*As you proceed with the implementation of your study, we would like you to adhere to international ethical guidelines, national guidelines and all requirements by COMREC some of which are indicated on the next page for your study*

*YBNA Lombwe*

Dr. YB. Mlombe - Chairperson (COMREC)

Approved by  
College of Medicine

15-May-2019  
13-May-19

Date

(COMREC)  
Research and Ethics Committee