

The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province

by

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

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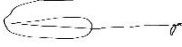
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DECEMBER 2022

DECLARATION

I, *Lebeya Regina Mashoto*, hereby declare that the dissertation titled “*The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province*”, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature 

Date 15 December 2022

LEBEYA REGINA MASHOTO

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Motheo Lwandle Lebeya, for being the wind beneath my wings and for being my greatest motivation to work hard.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to sincerely show gratitude and appreciation to the following people for their help in making my research a success:

1. My supervisor, Dr S.J. Rapeta, for his patience, guidance, and diligent oversight of this study.
2. The administration staff of the University of South Africa, for supporting me throughout my studies. May you all be blessed.
3. The Secretary of Department of Basic Education in Limpopo Province for giving me permission to conduct this study in six schools.
4. The principals of the six selected schools: I thank them for allowing me to conduct this study in their schools and also participating in this study.
5. Departmental heads of six selected schools of Lulekani Circuit for taking their time to participate in this study and the information they provided.
6. My study mate, Percy Ndhlovu. I really appreciate the motivation and moral support.
7. My mother, Maria Lebeya and my sibling Tebogo Lebeya: thank you so much for motivating me and giving me space to conduct this study.

Above all, I express my gratitude to the Almighty God for giving me the wisdom and strength to participate in this study and be successful.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents a study that explored the role of Departmental heads (DHs) in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in the Lulekani Circuit, of Mopani District in Limpopo Province. This study was guided by the attribution theory, constructive research paradigm, phenomenological research design and qualitative research approach. The purposive sampling method was used to select the participants of this study, who included six principals and six Departmental heads from six schools. Three methods were used to collect data from the participants, namely, individual interviews, observation and document analysis. In this study, these methods assisted the researcher in analysing the role of the Departmental Head in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools. Thematic data analysis method was used to analyse the collected data. The findings of this study revealed five major duties of DHs, namely, designing year plans, schemes of work and lesson plans; supporting teachers in teaching and assessing learners effectively, professional development and monitoring of teachers and learners. The findings also revealed seven challenges experienced by DHs, namely, work overload, shortage of teaching and learning resources, poor discipline of learners and lack of support by parents. The findings revealed four strategies for ensuring effective teaching and learning, namely, designing a curriculum improvement plan, teamwork strategy, professional development and parental involvement. The results of this study will guide DHs to support teachers in designing effective year plans, schemes of work and lesson plans; assist in promoting effective teaching, learning, assessment, professional development and parental involvement. In this study, effective design of a year plan, professional development, assessment of learners, teamwork, promotion of parental involvement and monitoring of teachers' work is recommended. Suggestions for further studies on the role of DHs are provided. It is suggested that this study should also be conducted in all other circuits of the Mopani District, for example, Namakgale, Nkowankowa, Khujwana, Groot Letaba, Giyani, Manómbe and Nsami. This will provide a comprehensive perception of the role of DH. This study applied qualitative approach only. For future studies the application of quantitative approach is suggested due to a greater number of participants potentially being involved providing more extensive data. Generally, this study will improve instructional leadership in schools.

Key words: Departmental heads, instructional leadership, management, learners, learning.

MANWELEDZO

Desethesheni heyi i kumedza ngudo ine ye wanulusa mushumo wa T̄hoho dza Mhasho kha u shela mulenzhe kha u bvelela ha u funza na u guda kha zwickolo zwa sekondari, kha L̄isela la Lulekani, Tsh̄irikini tsha Mopani Vunduni la Limpopo. Ngudo heyi yo endedzwa nga thiori ine vhathu vha pfa na u tshenzhela vhuḍifari, u kona u pfesesa nyimele kana tshiitei, u pfesesa na u t̄alusa zwiitei na t̄hoḍisiso ya khwaḗithethivi. Ho shumiswa ngona ya tsumbonanguludzwa ho sedzwa zwiḥwe zwithu u nanga vhadzheneli vha ngudo, vhe vha katela t̄hoho dza zwickolo dza rathi na t̄hoho dza Mhasho dza rathi u bva kha zwickolo zwa rathi. Ho shumiswa ngona tharu u kuvhanganya data u bva kha vhadzheneli, dzine dza vha, ithaviwu dza muthu nga muthu, u sedza na u saukanya maḥwalwa. Kha ngudo heyi, ngona hedzi dzo thusa muḗoḍisisi kha u saukanya mushumo wa T̄hoho ya Mhasho kha u shela mulenzhe kha u bvelela kha u funza na u guda zwickoloni zwa sekondari. Ngona ya musaukanyo wa data hu tshi shumiswa thero yo shumiswa u saukanya data yo kuvhanganyiwaho, Mawanwa a ngudo heyi o dzumbulula mishumo miḗanu mihulwane ya dzi HOD, ine ya vha u bveledza pulane dza ḥwaha, zwickimu zwa mushumo na pulane dza ngudo; u tikedza vhadededzi kha u funza na u linga vhagudiswa nga ḥdila yo teaho, mveledziso ya phurofeshinaḗa na u t̄ola vhadededzi na vhagudiswa. Mawanwa o dovha a dzumbulula khaedu dza sumbe dzo tshenzhelwaho nga dzi DH, dzine dza vha, mushumo wo ḍalesaho, t̄hahelero ya zwishumiswa zwa u funza na u guda, u sa vha na vhuḍifari havhuḍi kha vhagudiswa na u sa wana thikhedzo u bva kha vhabebi. Mawanwa o dzumbulula zwiḗirathedzhi zwiḥa zwa u khwaḗisedza u funza ho teaho, zwine zwa vha, u bveledza pulane ya kharikhulamu, tsh̄irathedzhi tsha tshumisano, mveledziso ya phurofeshinaḗa na u dzhenelela ha vhabebi. Mvelelo dza ngudo heyi dzi ḍo endedza dzi DH u tikedza vhadededzi kha u bveledza pulane dza ḥwaha dzo teaho, tshikimu tsha mushumo na pulane dza ngudo; u thusa kha u t̄uḗwedza u funza ho teaho, u funza, u guda, ndingo, mveledziso ya phurofeshinaḗa na u ḍidzhenisa ha vhabebi. Kha ngudo heyi, nyolo ya pulane ya ngudo yo teaho, mveledziso ya phurofeshinaḗa, u linga vhagudiswa, tshumisano, na u t̄uḗwedza u dzhenelela ha vhabebi na u t̄ola mushumo wa vhadededzi zwo themendelwa. Ngeletshedzo kha

ngudo dzine dza do itwa kha mushumo wa DH dzo netshedzwa. Ho dzinginywa uri ngudo heyi i fanela u itwa kha maisela othe a Tshiriki tsha Mopani, sa tsumbo, Namakgale, Nkowankowa, Khujwana, Groot Letaba, Giyani, Manombe na Nsami. Hezwi zwi do netshedza mbonalo yo fhelelaho ya mushumo wa DH. Ngudo heyi yo shumisa fhedzi kuitele kwa khwalithethivi. Hu khou dzinginywa u shumisa ngona ya khwanthethivi nga nthani ha tshivhalo tshinzhi tsha vhadzheneli vha ndeme vho dzheniswaho kha u netshedza data nanzhi. Nga u angaredza, ngudo heyi i do khwinisa ndangulo ya ndaela na kharikhulamu zwikoloni.

Maipfi a ndeme: dzi thoho dza muhasho, ndangulo ya ndaela na kharikhulamu, vhagudiswa, u guda.

NAGANWAGO

Pego ye e tšweletša dinyakišišo tšeo di nyakišišitšego seabe sa Dihlogo tša Kgoro ka go tsenya letsogo go thuto le go ithuta ka katlego dikolong tša sekontari, ka Tšhengwaneng ya Lulekani, ya Selete sa Mopani ka Profenseng ya Limpopo. Nyakišišo ye e be e laolwa ke kgopolo ya go tsebagatša, mokgwa wa nyakišišo wo o agago, sebopego sa dinyakišišo tša phenomenological le mokgwa wa dinyakišišo tša khwalithethifi. Mokgwa wa tlhwekišo o šomišitšwe go kgetha bakgathatema ba nyakišišo ye, bao ba akaretšago dihlogo tše tshela le dihlogo tše tshela tša Mafapha go tšwa dikolong tše tshela. Mekgwa ye meraro e ile ya šomišwa go kgoboketša tshedimošo go tšwa go bakgathatema, e lego, dipoledišano tša motho ka noši, go ela hloko le go ngwala. Mo nyakišišong ye, nyakišišo ye e ile ya thuša monyakišiši go sekaseka tema ya Hlogo ya Kgoro go tsenya letsogo go thuto ye e atlegilego le go ithuta ka dikolong tša sekontari. Taodišosengwalo ya taodišosengwalo e be e šomišwa go sekaseka dintlha tše di kgobokeditšwego. Dinyakišišo tša nyakišišo ye di utollela mešomo ye mehlano ye megolo ya DHs, e lego, go hloma maano a ngwaga, maano a mošomo le maano a thuto; Go thekga barutiši ka go ruta le go lekola baithuti gabotse, tlhabollo ya profesara le tlhokomelo ya barutiši le baithuti. Dinyakišišo di bontšhitše gape ditlholo tše šupa tše di itemogelwago ke DHs, e lego, mošomo o boima, tlhalelo ya methopo ya go ruta le go ithuta, kgalemo ya baithuti le go hloka thekgo ke batswadi. Dinyakišišo di utolotše maano a mane a go netefatša go ruta gabotse le go ithuta gabotse, e lego, go hloma leano la go kaonafatša kharikhulamo,

leano la mošomo wa sehlopha, tlhabollo ya seporofešenale le go kgatha tema ga batswadi. Dipelo tša nyakišišo ye di tla hlahla DHs go thekga barutiši ka go hloma maano a a atlegilego a ngwaga, maano a mošomo le maano a thuto; Go thuša go tšwetša pele thuto ye e atlegilego, go ithuta, tekolo, tlhabollo ya diprofešenale le go kgatha tema ga batswadi. Mo nyakišišong ye, peakanyo ye e atlegilego ya leano la ngwaga, tlhabollo ya seporofešenale, tekolo ya baithuti, mošomo wa sehlopha, kgodišo ya go kgatha tema ga batswadi le tlhokomelo ya mošomo wa barutiši e a šišinywa. Ditšhišinyo tša go ithuta tše dingwe ka ga karolo ya DH di tla fiwa. Go šišinywa gore nyakišišo ye gape e swanetše go dirwa ka di-circuits tše dingwe ka moka tša Selete sa Mopani, go fa mohlala, Namakgale, Nkowankowa, Khujwana, Groot Letaba, Giyani, Manómbe le Nsami. Se se tla dira gore go be le kwešišo ye e tseneletšego ya karolo ya DH. Nyakišišo ye e ile ya dira gore go be go na le mokgwa wa go ba le mohola fela. Go dira dinyakišišo tša ka moso go tla lebelelwa pele ka lebaka la palo ye kgolo ya bakgathatema bao ba ka bago le seabe go hwetša tshedimošo ye e tseneletšego. Ka kakaretšo, thuto ye e tla kaonafatša tlhahlo ka dikolong.

Mantšu a bohlokwa: Dihlogo tša Kgoro, tlhahlo, taolo, baithuti, go ithuta.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This study is aimed at exploring the role of Departmental heads (DHs) as instructional leaders. Instructional leadership emerged and developed in the United States of America during the 1950s and 1960s as a practice-based prescription rather than theory-driven construct (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). The concept *instructional leadership* consists of two terms, *instructional* and *leadership*. The term *instructional* originates from the term *instruct*, which has two definitions; to give information about how something should be done and the practice of teaching (Mestry, 2017). In this study instruction refers to teaching, which is defined as engagement with learners to enable them to comprehend and apply knowledge, concepts and processes (Huitt, 2003). The term *leadership* means to influence, motivate, inspire and give direction to others (Mestry, 2017). Instructional leadership, therefore, encompasses those actions instructional leaders take, or assign to others to enhance growth in student learning (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). According to Amy and Graham (2015) leadership refers to the ability to direct, influence, mentor, or conduct one's followers toward achieving shared goals. De Matthews (2014) asserts that leadership deals with social influence and procedures in which leaders require the voluntary participation of subordinates so that the aims and objectives of the organisation can be attained. These definitions of leadership imply that leaders possess the ability to influence others to achieve required results. An effective leader is an individual with the ability to influence, motivate and inspire others. In practice any person in an organization can exert influence over others thus engaging in leadership. A leader is, therefore, anyone who engages in these activities based on tasks and not position. This implies that any person at a school can be a leader because a person can be a leader in one situation and a follower in another (Amy & Graham, 2015).

Educators are assisted by instructional leaders to alter, restructure and reinterpret the curriculum. Instructional leaders also help educators in organising an effective instructional programme, creating a conducive school environment, exercising effective behaviour for school management and overcoming hindrances (Mazibuko,

2003). In South Africa, the instructional leaders of each school are members of the school management team. A school management team is defined as a group of educators who are school managers and work cooperatively as a team under the supervision of the school principal (Gaziel, 2007). School management teams consist of school principals, deputy principals and Departmental heads, currently referred to as Departmental heads (Middlewood, 2003). In 1980, principals had to move from being administrators to instructional leaders (Naidoo & Mestry, 2019). The Departmental Head, according to the linear structure of management, is the third level member of the school management team (Department of Education, 2000). The main role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader is to ensure that learners receive good quality teaching. This is done by making sure that teachers possess the knowledge, skills and resources they need to make learning easier. With the intention of improving teaching and learning, Departmental heads as instructional leaders regularly take part in collaborative and professional learning experiences (Burke & Krey, 2006). They acknowledge the necessity for broadening their knowledge base in curriculum, instruction and assessment and therefore participate in their own professional development activities to attain this goal (Educational Research Service, 1999).

Instructional leadership presents challenges and difficulties for all instructional leaders (Spillane & Lee, 2014). School principals, deputy principals and Departmental heads in South Africa are not always able to perform instructional leadership functions effectively because of challenges they experience at school (Spillane & Lee, 2014). In other countries, instructional leaders also experience challenges, for example, in England some teachers are resistant to change (Crow & Weindling, 2010). The major challenges of instructional leadership are lack of subject content knowledge, lack of knowledge and expertise to offer assistance and direction, and increasing task demands on educational managers (Olfos, Goldrine & Estrella, 2014). Lack of professional development opportunities for the leadership, resistance to accept pedagogical roles, lack of adequate facilities and resources, shortage of budget and low financial support, low stakeholders' involvement and absence of support from the local political leaders are the challenges experienced by instructional leaders in many schools (Hussien, 2019). The role of instructional leaders, such as the school principal and Departmental heads is, therefore, to capacitate educators with the knowledge and

skills they need to improve teaching and learning. It is important to investigate the role of Departmental heads as instructional leaders and how they can improve their competency in fulfilling this role of improving teaching and learning at their schools.

1.2. MOTIVATION FOR STUDY

This study was motivated by the poor academic performance of learners and the ineffective instructional leadership of Departmental heads at many schools in South Africa (Mohlala, 2012; Moloji & Chetty, 2011; PIRLS, 2012). Studies conducted by Mohlala (2012), Moloji and Chetty (2011), PIRLS (2012) and the Department of Basic Education (2015) revealed the consistent academic underperformance by learners is due to ineffective leadership and management at schools. In this regard, the Minister of National Basic Education, Ms. Angie Motshekga, stressed that many schools in South Africa are characterised by poor management, poor leadership and poor commitment (Department of Education, 2010). The under-performance of learners is a clear indication that little learning is taking place indicating, among other reasons, poor leadership at schools. The focus of this study is on role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader, the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks and the strategies that Departmental heads can implement to ensure effective teaching and learning. In this regard, research findings will be focused on understanding the instructional leadership responsibilities of HoDs by eliciting the competencies they need to address the challenges they face to ensure that successful teaching and learning is achieved. As an educator, I was motivated to conduct this study because of the poor academic performance of learners in Lulekani schools, which I personally believe is caused by poor instructional leadership.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The South African education system faces the problem of poor academic performance of its learners, the reason being that many learners in South Africa receive education of a low standard (Taylor, 2008). Mestry (2017), Bush (2007) and Chrissie (2010) affirm that strong instructional leadership can positively impact the performance of learners and schools on many levels. The role of the Departmental heads as instructional leaders includes providing strong academic leadership, monitoring the

implementation of an assessment policy by all staff members and managing and developing the department to make sure that it attains the greatest academic standards of excellence in all its activities (Department of Basic Education, 2016). Departmental heads should hold workshops to advise teachers on efficient teaching and assessment techniques, the use of technological devices and other resources, and how the learners' academic performance can be improved (Du Plessis and Eberlein, 2017). Similarly, Hattie (2015) indicates that Departmental heads as instructional leaders focus more on learners because they look at the teachers' and the school's impact on student learning and instructional issues. It is, however, not certain that all Departmental heads are able to perform each of these duties. According to McCarthy (2015) Departmental heads fail to understand and implement instructional leadership at school because of having insufficient skills and knowledge. According to Nkambule and Amsterdam (2018), many schools in South Africa lack proper curriculum management, which makes teachers feel unsupported and unprepared to face the challenges. Another problem which motivated this study, is the lack of content knowledge of instructional leaders. Content knowledge is the knowledge that instructional leaders need to effectively engage in critical tasks of teaching and to guide and support the teachers (Olfos, Goldrine & Estrella, 2014). The knowledge of the subject content, which is the knowledge of the subject curriculum, is very important because the Departmental heads use it to guide teachers to plan and deliver the lessons in the classrooms. Spillane and Lee (2014) revealed that there is a problem of instructional leadership in schools because department heads and principals have experienced work intensification for many years, which resulted in an increase in daily responsibilities. According to Carraway and Young (2015), Departmental heads are frequently overburdened by the everyday demands that are unrelated to improving instruction. Due to the nature of those demands, they often neglect instructional leadership tasks for many days until it becomes more difficult to implement them. Another problem of instructional leadership experienced by Departmental heads is poor discipline of learners. According to Du Plessis (2018), managing school discipline is a serious challenge for Departmental heads in South Africa (because many of them find it hard to deal with extreme indiscipline cases like school unrests).

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that directed this study consist of the following primary and secondary research questions:

1.4.1 Primary research question

How can the Departmental Head, as instructional leader, contribute to successful teaching and learning?

1.4.2 Secondary research questions:

- (a) What is the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader?
- (b) What are the challenges experienced by Departmental Head in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks?
- (c) What strategies can Departmental heads implement to ensure effective teaching and learning?

1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research was directed by the following aim and objectives:

1.5.1 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to explore how the Departmental Head as instructional leader can contribute to successful teaching and learning.

1.5.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (a) To understand the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader.
- (b) To determine the challenges faced by the Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks.
- (c) To investigate the strategies that Departmental heads can implement to ensure effective teaching and learning.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study possess critical significance for all the stakeholders of the school. It will reveal the instructional leadership role of the Departmental Head and its effect on teaching and the academic performance of learners. This will assist Departmental heads in improving their instructional leadership in their schools. The findings of this study will reveal the instructional leadership challenges experienced by Departmental heads and provide insight on how to resolve and avoid challenges in instructional leadership. The findings of this study will reveal the strategies that can be implemented to enhance and sustain instructional leadership in the schools, which will improve teaching and academic performance of the learners in the schools. The findings of this study will also aid the Department of Basic Education and policy makers in designing new policies and regulations for the improvement instructional leadership in the schools. This research will, therefore, provide pedagogic knowledge, skills and principles which will contribute to effective teaching and learning in general.

1.7 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

The demarcation of the study is the process of drawing boundaries around the area of the research topic that will be subject of the study (Babbie, 2014). The demarcation of a study refers to the establishment of boundaries of a particular problem area in which the study will take place (Hoberg, 1999:190). The aim of this study was to explore how the Departmental Head as instructional leader, can contribute to successful teaching and learning. This study was conducted in Limpopo Province of South Africa. The Limpopo Province is situated at the North Eastern corner of South Africa and shares borders with Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana (Pauw, 2005). Figure 3.1 below illustrates the various districts and municipalities of Limpopo Province.



Figure 1.1: Map of Limpopo Province (Statistics South Africa, 2012).

There are five districts in Limpopo province, namely, Capricorn, Mopani, Sekhukhune, Vhembe and Waterberg (Pauw, 2005). The province covers an area of 123 910 km with a population of 5.4 million which has increased from 4.9 million. This study was conducted in six secondary schools of the Lulekani Circuit in Mopani District of Limpopo Province. The Mopani District has 24 circuits and five municipalities, namely, Ba-Phalaborwa, Greater Giyani, Greater Letaba, Greater Tzaneen, Maruleng Municipalities (Mopani District Municipality, 2014). Lulekani is a township situated 14km outside Phalaborwa in Mopani district.

1.8 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The concept *research methodology* refers to the strategies used by researchers to reach credible understanding of phenomena (Rahi, 2017). The fundamentals of organizing, planning and conducting research are provided by research methodology (Creswell, 2014). Research methodology includes research paradigm, research design, research approach, research population, research sampling, data collection and data analysis (Rahi, 2017).

1.8.1 Research design

According to Mouton (2009) the concept *research design* refers to a blueprint or plan of action to be followed to complete the study. A research design is also described as the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy and procedure (Ram, 2010). This investigation uses a phenomenological research design to guide the study. More details are given in chapter three of this study.

1.8.2 Research paradigm

The concept *research paradigm* is described as a set of beliefs and assumptions that are fundamental on how the world is understood, it serves as a thinking framework guiding researcher conduct (Wahyuni, 2012). In this regard, a research paradigm is a set of beliefs about the world and how it should be perceived and studied. This study is based on a constructivist research paradigm. Constructivism is built on the belief that reality pertains to how individuals perceive their relative experiences and social factors (Babbie, 2014). More details of the research paradigm are given in chapter three of this study.

1.8.3 Research approach

The concept *research approach* refers to strategies and plans for conducting research that covers everything from general hypotheses to specific techniques for gathering, analysing and interpreting data (Grover, 2015). There are three types of approaches that are used in research: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research approaches (Babbie, 2014). This study is centred on a qualitative research approach. The qualitative approach emphasizes qualities of entities and processes, on meanings that cannot be measured or examined numerically or through experiments (Creswell, 2014). Streubert-Speziale and Carpenter (2014) indicate that a qualitative approach gives credibility to a variety of realities, it focuses on the perceptions of the participants, limits interference with the natural environment of the phenomenon under research, takes note of the participants in the research process and reports data in a textual style that incorporates the comments of the participants. More details of the research approach of this study are provided in chapter three.

1.8.4 Research population and research sampling

The concept *research population* refers to the group of people, objects or events possessing similar characteristics that the researcher is interested in researching (Brynard & Hanekom, 2014). The research population for this study is the Departmental heads and school principals of secondary schools in the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District, Limpopo Province. Sampling is the process of selecting representative parts of a population so that by studying the population the sample results may fairly be generalised back to the population from which the sample was chosen (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The samples of this study were selected using the purposive sampling method. The sample consists of six Departmental heads and six school principals from six schools. More details of population and sampling of this study are provided in chapter three.

1.8.5 Data collection

Data collection is the accurate and structured collection of data relevant to answering the research questions (Burns & Grove 2005) or the process of gathering the desirable information carefully, with least possible distortion, so that the analysis may provide answers that are credible and stand to logic (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006). Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, individual telephonic interviews were used in this study to collect data. An individual interview is a qualitative research method that is used to collect data by talking to one person only (Babbie, 2014). Individual interviews, observations and document analysis were used to collect data in each of the six selected schools. More details of data collection of this study are provided in chapter three.

1.8.6 Data analysis

Data analysis represents the process of inspecting and interpreting data with the goal of obtaining meaning, gaining understanding and developing empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The data collected in this study through individual interviews, observations and document analysis were analysed by means of the thematic data analysis method. This involved the breaking up of the data into manageable themes,

patterns, trends and relationships (McMillan & Schumacher, 2017). More details of data collection of this study are provided in chapter three.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following main concepts of the study are clarified with the purpose of ensuring that the research is understood by the readers.

1.9.1 Departmental Head

The term *Departmental Head* applies to appointed holders who hold responsibility for academic departments at a school and who manage particular phases such as the foundation, intermediate or senior school phase (Department of Basic Education, 2016). In this study the Departmental Head is the main focus of the study because the aim of this study is to explore how the Departmental Head as instructional leader can contribute to successful teaching and learning.

1.9.2 Instructional leadership

The term *instructional* is taken from the word *instruct*, which means to give information about how something should be done (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2011). In an educational context, instruction means teaching. The term *leadership* is described as the influence that a particular individual exerts upon the goal achievement of others (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2010). Therefore, the concept *instructional leadership*, stresses those tasks that are related to the supervision of teaching and learning, and the development of staff as crucial managerial tasks carried out at school (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2007). This term is relevant to the study because the main focus of the study is the Departmental Head who is an instructional leader.

1.9.3 Management

Management is a process characterised by a series of activities which include planning, organising, leading and control that gives the necessary direction to the organisation, so that its objectives can be achieved (Smit & Cronje, 1996). Managers such as school principals and Departmental heads, occupy formal positions and their responsibilities include planning, organising, leading and controlling. A manager fulfils the position of being a liaison officer, a leader and a ceremonial head who is

responsible for giving speeches, who directs actions, and who motivates and inspires subordinates. A manager networks with various people, distributes information, allocates resources and maintains order and development (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2010). This term is used regularly in this study because it is one of the major duties of the Departmental Head.

1.9.4 Educator

The concept *educator* means any person who is responsible for teaching, educating, training or the provision of therapy or educational intervention in schools (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2005). An educator is described as a person who is responsible for formal or informal teaching of learners at various types of educational institutions and educational levels, and includes teachers, lecturers, parents and youth counsellors (Department of Education, 1997). The term *educator* is described by the National Education Policy Act, Act No. 27 of 1998, as any person who imparts knowledge and trains or provides educational support to another person in any institution of learning (Department of Education, 1997). In this study, *educator* refers to people responsible for teaching learners at school and who are supported by instructional leaders. This term is relevant in this study because the Departmental Head is firstly an educator responsible for teaching learners as well as an instructional leader of other educators.

1.9.5 Learning

Learning is a process whereby experience is capable of creating permanent change in learners' knowledge or behaviour (Woofolk, 2010). The permanent change may be right or wrong and deliberate or not deliberate (Schunk, 2008). This definition is supported by De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes and Moors (2014), who defines learning as changing in conduct caused by transformation or experience in the organism resulting from experience. Learning occurs daily in our existence and is not only confined to the school (Schunk, 2008). Therefore, for any event to qualify as learning, the change must be created by experience, that is, by the interaction between an individual and the environment. In this regard, learning entails making certain content one's own and gaining invaluable experience, conduct and competency in certain skills. In this study, learning focuses on how the Departmental Head assists educators in learning how to promote effective education of learners.

1.9.6 Professional development

One of the roles of instructional leaders is the professional development of the teachers. Professional development is defined as a continuous process of collaborative learning that fosters the development of individuals, teams, and the school through a daily job-embedded, learner-centred, focused approach (DuFour, 2010). In-service teacher training as a continuous learning process assists and promotes instructionally effective educators. Professional development relates to in-service-training, staff development, teacher training, teacher learning, and professional learning (Trehearn, 2010). In the context of this study, professional development refers to all the activities conducted by instructional leaders which are aimed at addressing the needs of the individual educator by improving his or her knowledge and skills and thus the quality of learners' learning.

1.9.7 Collaboration

The main key of success to instructional leadership is collaboration. Collaboration is defined as the act of working together with someone or a group of individuals to create or produce something (Hornby, 2011). Collaboration can also be defined as working together jointly on a task or project (Soanes, 2002). For this study, collaboration refers to co-operation, working together, joining forces, participation and the teaming up of instructional leaders and teachers so that teaching and learning can be improved.

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study on instructional leadership will comprise of five chapters.

Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

This chapter as the orientation to the study consists of a preliminary literature review and an initial discussion of the research methodology for the empirical investigation. Statement of the research problem with related research questions and research aims will be discussed and the methods employed for the empirical investigation including specific procedures, research population and sampling, research instruments and data collection will be outlined and described.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter two gives a review of literature and the theoretical framework for the study. The theoretical framework for this study comprises the Attribution Theory developed by Fritzs Heider and refined by Bernard Weiner. This theory serves as a lens for understanding the instructional leadership role of Departmental heads, namely to provide strong academic leadership, monitor the implementation of an assessment policy by all staff members and manage and develop the department to make sure that it reaches the highest academic standards of excellence in all its activities. The literature review includes a focus on the importance of instructional leadership, the role of the Departmental heads as instructional leaders, the challenges experienced by the Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks and methods that can be implemented to improve instructional leadership in schools.

Chapter 3: Research methodology and research design

Chapter three focuses on a discussion of the research methodology used for carrying out the empirical investigation. In this regard, the research approach and research methods are explained to collect data from participants in order to answer the research questions satisfactorily.

Chapter 4: Presentation, analysis and interpretation of data

Chapter four provides an analysis and interpretation of the collected data. In this chapter the responses of the participants are presented and explained by means of tables and figures and research findings are illustrated by applicable verbatim expressions from participants.

Chapter 5: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

This last chapter serves as a synthesis of the study comprising a summary of the research findings from the literature review and the empirical investigation to engender conclusions, recommendations for improved practice and suggestions for further study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

The focus of this study on instructional leadership pertains to the role of the Departmental heads as instructional leader, with the central issue of focus being the

instructional leadership tasks they are contributing to successful teaching and learning. Based on a constructivist research paradigm with related qualitative research approach, the empirical investigation is focused on collecting data in order to answer the research questions pertaining to the role of the Departmental heads as instructional leaders, the challenges they face, and the strategies to overcome these challenges for the sake of improved teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to explore the role of the Departmental heads in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in the Lulekani Circuit of Limpopo province. The previous chapter focused on the background and rationale of the study, research questions, aims and objectives, summary of research design and methodology, demarcation, definition of concepts, significance of the study and chapter outline. The aim of this chapter is to review various literature sources to gain a better understanding of the instructional leadership role of the Departmental Head in secondary schools. According to McCombes (2023), a literature review is a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic, which provides an overview of current knowledge, allowing you to identify relevant theories, methods, and gaps in the existing research that you can later apply to your paper, thesis, or dissertation topic. This description of literature review is confirmed by Creswell (2014), who describes it as a search and assessment of the body of knowledge on the particular subject or issue that serves as the theoretical base for the investigation. Therefore, a literature review is a statement of the literature pertinent to a given field or issue that provides an overview of what has been stated and identifies the major authors. In this chapter, the literature review includes theoretical framework, conceptual framework, the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader, the challenges of instructional leadership experienced by the Departmental heads and the factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads.

2.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The aim of this study is to explore the role of the Departmental heads as instructional leaders, in improving teaching and learning in secondary schools. It is therefore essential to understand the importance of instructional leadership in schools. According to Esa, Muda, Mansor and Abraham (2017), instructional leadership has a long history aimed at improving the academic performance of learners. The role of instructional leadership was debated by school professionals in meetings,

conferences and workshops and subsequently motivated scholars to conduct studies on instructional leadership in schools (Harris, 2014). The first research on instructional leadership was conducted by Edwin Bridges in 1967, who revealed that the role of instructional leadership is to improve teaching and learning. This significance of instructional leadership was confirmed by Harris (2014), who revealed that instructional leaders provide direction, resources and support to teachers and learners to improve teaching and learning. According to Mazibuko (2003), the role of instructional leaders is to help teachers change, rearrange and reinterpret the curriculum, develop a productive instructional programme, create a conducive school environment, exercise effective behaviour for school management and overcome hindrances. Similarly, Mestry and Pillay (2013) indicate that school instructional leadership is a type of leadership able to influence the quality of education in schools, improve the learners' academic performance, manage teaching and learning materials to enhance teaching and learning, and manage the curriculum effectively.

According to Amin, Yusnita, Ibrahim & Muda (2013), instructional leadership has a positive relationship with, and contributes significantly to teachers' teaching competence. This view implies that the role of instructional leaders such as the Departmental heads is to give teachers the information and abilities needed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. This perception is validated by other researchers such as Ahmad and Ghavifekr (2014), who assert that the instructional leadership of Departmental Head and principals significantly contributes to the teaching competence of the main implementers of the curriculum in the classrooms, the teachers. The curriculum can improve the learners' learning when it is implemented by skilled teachers. The studies conducted by Hallinger (2011) and Esa, Musa, Mansor and Ibrahim (2017), on instructional leadership, also revealed that learner learning is significantly impacted by instructional leadership.

In South Africa, instructional leadership was introduced in section 16A of the South African Schools Act, Number 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The South African Schools' Act (1996) requires schools to transform from being institutions which rely on the Department of Education to being institutions which can manage themselves (Republic of South Africa, 1996). In South Africa, instructional leadership aims at influencing educators to participate in continuous learning and is put in place

to guide and support educators to improve their teaching practices (Bush & Glover, 2016). Bush and Glover (2016), emphasise that in South Africa, instructional leadership empowers instructional leaders with the ability to observe and assess the instructional practices of educators and provides feedback, guidance, support and incentives based on the performance of educators and learners. Instructional leaders equip educators with skills to succeed and align curriculum and instructional practices. The major function of instructional leaders in South Africa is therefore, to assist teachers in overcoming the challenges of curriculum implementation, attend to concerns and teachers' individual instructional needs, and develop and implement effective strategies for improving their instruction. In other words, the major function of instructional leaders in South Africa is to set the tone, motivate teachers to learn and give direction for effective teaching and learning.

Mason (2014) asserts that instructional leadership also assists the teachers to alleviate the challenges they face when implementing the curriculum. Many teachers are experiencing challenges in the adoption of the modern curriculum, particularly as it switched from a teacher-centred to learner-centred implementation strategy (Mason, 2014). Many teachers have curriculum implementation problems such as difficulty in understanding the complex curriculum, and inadequate coordination and management of the curriculum (Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2014). According to Olfos, Goldrine and Estrella (2014), many teachers have a lack of content knowledge. The concept *content knowledge* refers to the knowledge that teachers require to successfully carry out essential instructional duties (Olfos, Goldrine & Estrella, 2014). This implies that an instructional leader should lead the implementation of the curriculum by organising professional development sessions, assisting the teachers in designing instructional programmes and effective teaching of learners. Additionally, instructional leadership mediates education policy, offering guidance and inspiration while overseeing, assisting and energising all teachers (Mason, 2014). The instructional leadership process is therefore important to help advise teachers on how to plan and deliver lessons in the classroom. A study conducted by Hallinger (2012), argues that instructional leadership is a powerful, committed leadership which is aimed at effective curriculum implementation, empowering the Departmental Head with the ability to observe and assess the instructional practices of educators and providing feedback,

guidance, support and incentives, according to the performance of educators and learners.

Lastly, Osman and Mukuna (2013) describe the role of instructional leadership as encompassing the following: creation and execution of pacesetters or schemes of work, evaluation of improvements made, provision of instructional resources, conducting and coordinating staff in-service training, guiding and helping teachers take part in instructional programmes, obtaining funds necessary for instructional purposes, and gathering community feedback on school programmes. In this regard, Ahmad and Ghavifekr (2014) assert that instructional leadership activities contribute significantly to the competence of the teachers who carry out the curriculum in the classroom.

2.3. THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL HEAD AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

The Departmental heads as members of the school management team (SMT) are also involved in instructional leadership. The leaders of departmental teams who are tasked with carrying out senior leaders' visions for quality teaching and learning as well as educational policy are referred to as Departmental heads. (Department of Basic Education, 2016). The government promulgated the legislations and regulations that govern the role of the Departmental heads. The following are the legislative frameworks:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996). Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights, Section 9 (30) (c) provides for quality education.
- The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No.84 of 1996), Section 16 (1), (2), (3) as amended states that professional management of a school must be undertaken by educational leaders under the authority of the Departmental Head.
- National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996). Section 3(4) and Section 8, mandate the Minister of Education to determine national policy for planning, monitoring and evaluation, to ensure the delivery of quality education.
- Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1997) refers to the development of the skills within the workforce.
- Employment of Educators Act of 1998. The terms and conditions of employment of HoDs are set out in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM).

- The South Africa Council of Educators (SACE) of 2000. This is the coordinator and endorser of continuous professional development of educators.
- National Policy on Whole-School Evaluation, 2001, outlines the system by which the quality of education provided by the schools can be assessed.
- Resolution 8 of 2003. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), provides the framework in which to evaluate educator performance and development and enhance the delivery of quality education (Department of Basic Education, 2016).

According to Bipath and Nkabinde (2018), the role of Departmental heads is to improve communication and establish a collaborative relationship with teachers, ensuring that teachers contact parents early in the school year to explain class and homework procedures and to learn about their concerns, views, talents, interest and availability. The aforementioned legislations need educational managers who can work democratically and in participative ways to build relationships and ensure an efficient delivery of education (Department of Basic Education, 2016). Therefore, the Departmental heads possess authority legitimised by the government and their formal positions within the schools. The instructional role of the departmental heads is also emphasised by Ross (2018) who asserts that Departmental heads are responsible for ensuring a fair and reasonable allocation of teaching workloads and citizenship responsibilities among department staff. There are various roles of Departmental heads in schools, namely, management, providing incentives to the teachers and learners, promoting professional development and managing curriculum changes.

(a) Management

According to Mayers and Zepeda (2002), the Departmental Head is a manager who is responsible for the management of the department. The concept *management* refers to a process or series of activities which include planning, organizing, leading and control that gives the necessary direction to the organization, such as the school, so that its objectives can be achieved by the use of people and resources (Kaehler & Grundei, 2019).

(i) Planning

According to Hartzell (2019), the primary requirement for all other management functions is planning because it refers to the making of decisions about the goals to be achieved and activities or actions needed to achieve them. Therefore, as a manager, the first duty of the Departmental Head is to develop the department's policy with the teachers of that department in order to guide the teachers in putting the curriculum into practice (Department of Basic Education, 2016). The Departmental heads also monitor the implementation of the policy by all staff members to ensure that it achieves the highest academic standards of excellence in all activities (Department of Basic Education, 2016). During planning, the Departmental Head should protect instructional time (Hallinger, 2012). Instructional time is the time that the state, district, school or teacher provides the learners for instruction. Any violation of the time allotted for instructional activities is a failure to fulfil the school's principal goal which is to deliver education to the learners in accordance with that time. (Hallinger, 2012). It is the duty of the instructional leaders to protect the instructional time of all the subjects through better planning, buffering distractions, creating efficient procedures, eliminating free time, ensuring quick transitions, giving clear directions and having a back-up plan (Hallinger, 2012).

(ii) Organising

The second management function of the Departmental Head is called organising, which refers to assembling and coordinating human-, financial-, and physical resources, information and other assets needed to achieve organizational goals van (Kaehler & Grundei, 2019). Organising activities include specifying and grouping jobs into work units, identifying the activities necessary for achieving the objectives, carrying out plans, assigning jobs to employees, delegating authority to enable them to perform their jobs, commanding the resources needed for their performance, establishing a network of coordinating relationships, allocating resources, providing direction and assigning the right number of employees to carry out the plan (Hartzell, 2019).

The Departmental Head as an instructional leader is also responsible for the coordination of instruction and curriculum (Hallinger, 2012). Coordinating the curriculum includes assisting the teachers in developing a better school curriculum,

observing and training teachers, ordering new instructional materials and ensuring that the school curriculum meets all state guidelines (Hallinger, 2012). This function indicates that a Departmental Head is a curriculum coordinator whose job is to assist the teachers in developing a better school curriculum. According to Aubrey-Hopkins and James (2002) Departmental heads are professionals in leading positions who are exemplary to their subordinates and colleagues. Bayer (2016) emphasises that Departmental heads are occupying a most significant position responsible for promoting effective teaching as well as the success of the learners and they are the first accountable people in schools. According to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) and the South African Council for Educators (SACE), Departmental heads oversee a subject, a learning area or a learning phase (Department of Education and Training, 2016). It is of great importance for Departmental heads to be able to manage all instructional programmes effectively.

According to Sanzo, (2014), there is a need for instructional leaders to set the tone and give direction for effective teaching and learning. It calls on them to be more visible, support issues affecting parents and learners, address the concerns and unique instructional needs of teachers, and explore fresh approaches to enhance their instruction. All Departmental heads must ensure that they are visible to all the teachers and learners. The instructional leader of the school must not be office bound and invisible but should always be in contact with them (Hallinger, 2012). This will show the teachers and learners that the principal is friendly and approachable, and the principal will immediately identify where they need support and guidance. The Departmental head as an instructional leader must also create and maintain positive relationships with staff, parents and learners. To be highly effective Departmental Head should be able to foster a supportive learning environment, school and atmosphere with order and high expectations for learners and staff (Rigby. 2014). This view implies that departmental heads who have very close ties with their staff are able to share more information for improving teaching and learning (Moolenaar & Slegers, 2015).

(iii) Leadership

The third management function of the Departmental Head is leadership, which regards the HoD as an instructional leader. Leadership is the capacity to guide, direct, or

organise one's subordinates toward the accomplishment of shared goals, objectives or tasks (Amy & Graham (2015). The role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader is to explain, clarify and provide guidance in job performance and motivate the employees to contribute their optimum performance with zeal and enthusiasm (Hartzell, 2019). At the beginning of the year, the Departmental Head guides teachers on syllabi, lesson plans, homework and practical work (Department of Basic Education, 2016). Departmental heads communicate the latest ideas on approaches to the subject, applicable methods, techniques, evaluation and aids in their subject fields, and they convey knowledge and skills to the staff members concerned (Department of Basic Education, 2016). Aubrey-Hopkins and James (2002) assert that the Departmental Head is an instructional leader who acts as exemplar to the members of the department and colleagues. This implies that the leaders possess the ability to influence others to achieve the required results. As an instructional leader, the Departmental Head must establish a school climate and culture that can support efficient teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2012). The Departmental heads must start by creating a culture that encourages team work among teachers and that provides support for all teachers (Pogodzinski, 2015). To ensure that learners learn to their fullest capacity, the Departmental Head must foster a climate of warmth, friendliness, and respect for both staff and students.

(iv) Controlling

The last management function of the Departmental Head is controlling the work of all the members of the department. Controlling involves monitoring the progress and making the needed changes to make sure that organizational goals are achieved (Kaehler & Grundei, 2019). The Departmental Head must be confident that the actions of all the educators in the department are able to move the school towards its stated goals. This is achieved by setting performance standards, monitoring staff performance through performance data evaluation, comparing this performance to the established standards, identifying the challenges experienced by the employees and taking corrective actions. If all the activities are properly planned, organised and directed but there is no control on the activities by the Departmental Head, then there is a possibility that the organisation may not achieve its planned goals. The Departmental heads serve as supervisors and evaluators of instruction. In order to ensure that a school's educational mission is carried out, instructional supervision is

responsible for supervising, supporting, and empowering teachers to give learners relevant learning experiences (Brazer & Bauer, 2013). This important function includes the control, evaluation and assessment of homework and written assignments of all the subjects in their departments to keep a high standard of teaching and progress among the learners and to promote administrative efficiency within the department. All teachers in a department should be subjected to appraisal, to maintain minimum standards of competence and to enhance teaching and academic performance of learners (Mercer, et.al., 2010). According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003), the objective of teacher appraisal is to improve the teaching abilities of teachers with a view to professional development. The Departmental head should be deeply engaged in stimulating, supervising and monitoring teaching and learning in the school. Evaluation of instruction is an administrative process of assessing the performance of teachers for the purpose of helping teachers and making administrative decisions about the teachers (Brazer & Bauer, 2013). Departmental heads must take part in the agreed-upon school and teacher appraisal processes in order to review their own professional practice regularly with the goal of enhancing teaching and learning (Department of Basic Education, 2016). Departmental heads should also conduct appropriate class visits, so that they are able to evaluate how the curriculum is implemented. The Departmental heads are also responsible for controlling the administrative responsibilities of staff members in their departments, such as assessing their year plans, time-tables, lesson plans, examination schedules and analyse the papers of tests and exams. Bush (2007) indicates that Departmental heads, who are appointed on the basis of their knowledge, must always develop and improve appraisal systems and strategies for teachers in their departments.

Hallinger (2012) emphasises that the Departmental heads should also monitor student progress in their departments. Monitoring student progress refers to activities pursued by instructional leaders and teachers to keep track of learner achievement to inform instructional decisions and give learners feedback on their progress (Hallinger, 2012). The monitoring activities include questioning students to check their understanding, interacting one-on-one with learners to discuss their work, distributing, collecting and correcting assignments, and doing periodic checks with them to ensure they understand the subject matter. The Departmental heads should submit reports to

principals as required and work together with colleges and universities concerning learners' academic performance (Department of Basic Education, 2016).

(b) Promoting parental involvement

Another role of Departmental heads is to promote parental involvement by ensuring that parents feel welcome to come to school discuss their children's progress and utilise school facilities to assist their children (Department of Basic Education, 2016). The Departmental heads also meet with parents to discuss with them the progress of their children and assist in coordinating extra- and co-curricular activities related to the specific subject.

(c) Providing incentives to the teachers and learners

The Departmental Head as an instructional leader also has the responsibility to provide incentives for the teachers. The incentives are rewards for the outstanding work performed by the teachers based on how well they improve their own learners' performance (Hallinger, 2012). Provision of incentives greatly improves the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school. The instructional leader should also give rewards to the learners. The learners' incentives motivate the learners to work harder because they foster a sense of pride and achievement (Hallinger, 2012). Being successful makes the learner happy, proud and self-confident, and they are encouraged to achieve another successful result.

(d) Promoting professional development of teachers

According to Sanzo (2014), the Departmental heads also have the responsibility of conducting workshops for teachers' professional development to give them the skills they need to implement the curriculum in an efficient manner. Slegers, Wassink, van Veen and Imants (2016) indicate that Departmental heads and school principals can play a significant role in transforming teachers' instructional practices and promoting teachers' learning by creating a working condition where teachers are able to work as a team and by also giving them the relevant support. This can only be achieved when the Departmental heads and principals provide direction and support and distribute responsibility to all the teachers and other stakeholders of the school (Urlick & Bowers, 2014). Another duty of Departmental heads as instructional leaders is to mentor novice teachers and to work together with colleagues on both departmental and school-wide

activities while emphasising best practices (Aubrey-Hopkins & James, 2002). The Departmental heads affect teachers by working with them in the trenches of the classrooms and halls because of their close proximity with them (Aubrey-Hopkins & James, 2002). All the teachers are expected to develop their knowledge and skills to the maximum, so that the curriculum can be implemented effectively. The Departmental Head should, therefore, conduct professional development of teachers. Hallinger (2012) emphasises that the main objective of professional development in the schools is to capacitate educators with the knowledge and skills they need which improve teaching and learning in order to make everyone involved in the teaching-learning process more effective (Hallinger, 2012). To contribute to the updating of professional perspectives and standards, the Departmental heads should take part in departmental and professional committees, seminars and courses. The instructional leaders must also provide a positive environment which encourages and establishes the necessary development machinery for each staff member to participate in.

(d) Managing curriculum changes

According to Esa, Musa, Mansor and Ibrahim (2017), another role of the Departmental heads is to manage curriculum changes. Departmental heads play a significant role in involving teams and departments in innovations and policies that bring changes to teaching and learning (Hannay & Denby, 1994). An example of curriculum change was the introduction of new curriculum, called Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) in 2009 by the Department of Basic Education of South Africa (Department of Basic Education, 2015). The principals and Departmental heads, as instructional leaders had the responsibility of guiding and supporting teachers in implementing the new curriculum. The term implementation refers to carrying out or executing any method, design, idea, standard or policy for achieving something (Rouse, 2015). With reference to this explanation for the act of implementation, the instructional leadership functions of the Departmental heads must provide teachers with the necessary skills for implementing the CAPS curriculum.

2.4. THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

As indicated in the previous sections, instructional leadership has many advantages for the teachers and learners. Instructional leaders set and communicate academic goals, provide relevant materials for teaching and learning, support the teachers in designing teaching programmes, support learners, evaluate how the curriculum is implemented, conduct professional development of teachers and ensure a safe school environment for both staff and learners (Spillane & Lee, 2014). Despite these advantages, instructional leadership presents challenges and difficulties for the instructional leaders (Lee, 2015; Spillane & Lee, 2014). According to Spillane and Lee (2014), principals, deputy principals and Departmental heads are not able to perform instructional leadership functions effectively because of the challenges that they experience in the schools. The major challenges are lack of subject content knowledge, lack of knowledge and skills for providing support and guidance, and increasing task demands on Departmental heads (Spillane & Lee, 2014; Olfos, Goldrine & Estrella, 2014; Fink & Silverma, 2014).

2.4.1 Lack of knowledge and skills for instructional leadership

The first challenge of instructional leadership experienced by Departmental heads is lack of knowledge and skills for instructional leadership. In South Africa, poor performing schools are characterised by lack of proper curriculum planning (Department of Basic Education, 2018). McCarthy (2015) asserts that Departmental heads fail to understand and implement instructional leadership at school because of having insufficient skills and knowledge. According to Nkambule and Amsterdam (2018), many schools in South Africa lack proper curriculum management, which makes teachers feel unsupported and unprepared to face the challenges. This indicates that Departmental heads as instructional leaders may be aware of the challenges but fail to support the teachers because of their lack of relevant skills. According to Fink and Markholt (2013) there is also a lack of common standards for the professional practice of instructional leadership of Departmental heads, which results in poor lesson plans, ineffective teaching and failure to complete the curriculum. Van der Berg, Spaul, Wills, Gustafsson and Kotzé (2016) emphasised this concern by asserting that teacher support and supervision in curriculum

implementation is uneven and fragmented for many teachers. Some Departmental heads do not check the plans to ascertain whether they are relevant to the given syllabus, do not provide direction, do not evaluate, support and energise all teachers due to having inadequate knowledge and skills for curriculum planning and management (Yusof, Ibrahim & Rahim, 2017). Such schools do not plan for regular assessments to track learner progress and most teachers are also unable to complete the syllabi. Most learners' work is not corrected by the teachers and as a result learners are unable to understand why they are failing (Department of Basic Education, 2018).

2.4.2 Lack of subject content knowledge

The second challenge experienced by instructional leaders is the lack of subject content knowledge. Content knowledge is the knowledge that instructional leaders need to effectively engage in critical tasks of teaching and to guide and support the teachers (Olfos, Goldrine & Estrella, 2014). The knowledge of the subject content, which is the knowledge of the subject curriculum, is very important because the Departmental heads use it to guide teachers to plan and deliver the lessons in the classrooms. The teachers who have low levels of conceptual knowledge, will not possess clear understanding of their subject and this will result in poor presentation of lessons which will also contribute to poor performance of learners (Department of Basic Education, 2017). According to Olfos, Goldrine and Estrella (2014), instructional leaders are not able to mediate educational policy, guide and motivate, evaluate, support and energise all team members if they lack content knowledge. Usually, Departmental heads are reluctant to support teachers and provide criticism if they lack appropriate subject understanding in teaching methods (Fink & Silverma, 2014). This challenge is confirmed by Estrella (2014) who identified lack of subject content knowledge as a major challenge of instructional leadership experienced by Departmental heads. It is therefore important for Departmental heads to equip the teachers with sufficient content knowledge by organising sufficient professional development sessions.

2.4.3 Increasing task demands on instructional leaders

Another major challenge which inhibits instructional leadership of Departmental heads in many schools is the increasing task demands on Departmental heads and other instructional leaders. Spillane and Lee (2014) indicate that Departmental heads

usually experience challenges in managing and prioritizing the many responsibilities that are expected of them and the situation is worsened by the members of staff who are not committed to their work. Spillane and Lee (2014) revealed that Departmental heads and principals have experienced work intensification for many years, which resulted in an increase in daily responsibilities. The work intensification of Departmental heads includes administrative tasks, personnel management, added managerial responsibilities, student issues, dealing with outside organisations, resolving disputes and managing resources and parental involvement. Administrative tasks also distract Departmental heads from their primary goal of improving teaching and learning (Le Fevre & Robinson, 2014). According to Carraway and Young (2015), Departmental heads are frequently overburdened by the everyday demands that are unrelated to improving instruction. Due to the nature of those demands, they often neglect instructional leadership tasks for many days until it becomes more difficult to implement them.

Carraway and Young (2015), indicate that Departmental heads are not able to share their instructional roles with other instructional leaders and the shortage of staff also contributes to increasing task demands on them. Teacher shortages are commonplace because a lot of teachers leave the teaching profession each year, especially in underprivileged rural areas and in schools that perform poorly (Gurley, Anast-May & Lee, 2015). According to Darling-Hammond, Goldhaber, Strunk & Sutchter (2018), a lot of teachers quit their jobs as teachers, while others switch schools in pursuit of more favourable working conditions. Departmental heads are negatively impacted by teachers leaving the teaching profession or transferring between schools because it compels them to have more teaching periods, making it hard for them to have enough time to perform their instructional leadership tasks.

2.4.4 Challenges in maintaining high levels of discipline

Another challenge experienced by Departmental heads is the increasing poor discipline in secondary schools. Kimani (2013) asserts that schools with discipline issues are characterized by alcohol use, drug abuse, absenteeism, tardiness, cultism, insulting others, acting defiantly, bullying, stealing, marijuana use, participation protests and riots. Discipline in the school is the major function of the school management team (SMT). In terms of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the

Departmental heads as the member of school management team, is also the overall organiser, coordinator and overseer of all the activities in the school, which include managing school discipline effectively (Department of Education, 1996). Managing school discipline is a serious challenge for Departmental heads in South Africa (Osman, 2017; Du Plessis, 2018). Many of them sometimes find it hard to deal with extreme indiscipline cases like school unrests, some of which end up causing heavy losses to the school. With corporal punishment being outlawed, and the South African state being unable to put in place alternative or more effective disciplinary systems in schools, discipline continues to be one of the more serious challenges in schools (Kapueja, 2014).

2.4.5. Lack of parental and community involvement

One of the challenges experienced Departmental heads as instructional leaders is lack of parental and community involvement in their children's learning. This view is asserted by Sibanda (2017) who shows that parents of children in poor performing schools are often not involved in the education of their children. Most parents feel marginalised by teachers. In such schools, the parents believe that they are not treated fairly by teachers because they are not given regular feedback on their children's progress. This perception is backed up by McDowall and Schaughency (2017) who state that many teachers view parental involvement negatively; often classifying it as less motivating and less fruitful in terms of improving children's learning. According to Munje and Mncube (2018), many schools are preventing parental involvement by failing to develop and put into action appropriate measures that are genuinely inclusive, inviting or encouraging. Segoe and Bisschoff (2019), emphasise that active parental involvement is an essential aspect of improving learner achievement, but many parents are marginalised by the teachers. The local communities are also not involved in poor performing schools because they are not proud of dysfunctional schools and therefore disengage themselves in such schools (Department of Basic Education, 2018).

2.4.6. Lack of time to monitor and evaluate quality of teaching and learning

Lack of time to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning is one of the serious challenges experienced by Departmental heads in the schools (Dinham,

2007). Routine administration and crisis management takes most of their time and they have very little time for strategic thinking (Brown, et. al, 2000). According to Wise and Bush (1999), Departmental heads have very little time allocated to the management role.

2.4.7. Lack of leadership behaviour

Another challenge that makes the role of the Departmental head as instructional leader difficult, is the lack of leadership behaviour. This is confirmed by Robinson (2010) who indicates that leadership behaviour is made up of four distinctive characteristics, namely, experience, knowledge, personal characteristics, and values and beliefs. Personal quality is a requirement for becoming a successful instructional leader and this includes trust, persistence, good communication, flexibility, listening skills, open-mindedness, creativity, problem solving skills, and the capacity to envision (Robinson, 2010).

2.5. THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP OF DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

There are various factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of the Departmental heads. The following factors have been identified by various experts as the greatest strategies for promoting effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads.

(a) Planning

The main factor that contributes to the effective instructional leadership of the Departmental heads is effective planning (Department of Basic Education, 2018). Planning is an essential process of leadership and is articulating shared direction and coherent policies, practices, and procedures for realising high standards of learner performance (Department of Basic Education, 2018). According to Hartzell (2019), planning refers to the making of decisions about the goals to be achieved and activities or actions needed to achieve them. To ensure effective instructional leadership, the Departmental head should work with the teachers in the department, to design policies for that department aimed at realising the goals and objectives of the department and the school. The Departmental Head should help teachers design curriculum plans in

the form of year plans and lesson plans. The Departmental Head should also design an improvement plan aimed at improving the academic performance of the learners. An improvement plan is a road map that outlines the adjustments a department must make to improve the level of learner achievement and the timeline for these changes to be made (Department of Basic Education, 2018).

(b) Professional development of Departmental heads

Another factor that contributes to the effective instructional leadership of the Departmental heads is professional development. Professional development is the term used to describe the formal and informal ways that workers develop their professional skills (Gurley, Anast-May & Lee, 2015). According to Carraway and Young (2015), professional development refers to the continuous, voluntary, self-motivated, collaborative and learner-centred pursuit of knowledge aimed at promoting the learner academic performance. In the 1970s, professional development was generally referred to as *in-service training*, while during the 1980s it was called *staff development of teachers* and in the 1990's it was called *professional development*. Professional development includes workshops, conferences, advanced studies, research and development and pilot programmes.

Professional development of Departmental heads is regarded as the major strategy for improving instructional leadership in schools (Carraway & Young, 2015). This view is confirmed by Brown, Rutherford, et al., (2000) who asserts that Departmental heads require continuous professional development in order to improve curriculum implementation, understand new curriculum, support educators and improve leadership and management styles. Similarly, Carraway and Young (2015) assert that principals, deputy principals and Departmental heads need professional development to equip them with the knowledge, expertise, and attitudes needed to successfully lead the teachers to promote student learning (Carraway & Young, 2015). The primary purpose of professional development of Departmental heads is therefore, to increase the effectiveness of principals, deputy principals and Departmental heads in their support and guidance of the teachers. According to the Kennedy (2016), the principals are responsible for the professional development of Departmental heads. The principal has a duty to provide guidance to Departmental heads so that their instructional leadership practices can be improved (Kennedy, 2016). Schmidt (2000) indicates that

after participating in professional development, the Departmental heads should actively address the issue of teacher underperformance by supporting struggling teachers and mentoring new teachers within and sometimes beyond their department.

(c) Support from administration

According to Ross and Hannay (2001), support from administration also contributes to effective instructional leadership of the Departmental Head. However, Schmidt (2000) indicates that many new Departmental heads receive very little support from the administration. Due to this challenge, many new Departmental heads tend to rely more on trial and error than on skill and supportive measures put in place at the school as a way to deal with their new leadership role (Mayers & Zepeda, 2002). Aubrey-Hopkins and James (2002) indicate that if an administrator uses a distributive style of leadership, the Departmental Head can anticipate a role that will extend outside of the department. Aubrey-Hopkins and James (2002) indicate that administrators may delegate tasks to their Departmental heads as a result of being overburdened with their own work.

(d) Access to resources

In order to perform their tasks effectively, Departmental heads should have access to resources. This is confirmed by Muijs and Harris (2007) who emphasise that a successful department depends on having access to the required resources. According to Brown and Rutherford (1998), the most precious resources are materials and time, but most Departmental heads do not have sufficient materials and time. Most Departmental heads do not have sufficient time to perform their instructional roles because they are also teaching and they do not have sufficient materials due to school financial challenges (Glover et al., 1999). These challenges possess a negative impact on the response to their work and their sense of efficacy.

(e) Adequate knowledge and skills

Brazer and Bauer (2013), indicate that in order to be successful in instructional leadership, the Departmental heads should possess adequate leadership knowledge, skills and dispositions that will improve teaching and learning. This is confirmed by De Matthews (2014), who emphasises that before conducting professional development of teachers, the Departmental heads must first possess a variety of skills which form

the prerequisites for instructional leadership and the professional development of teachers. To be a great instructional leader, the must be able to support the teachers through professional development to become leaders themselves. The Departmental Head must be able to use data, including standardized and school-based assessments, to drive continuous improvement through site-based decision-making. The very best instructional leaders are also visionaries. They have a goal that they can unite a team around, a plan to assist them to achieve it and the ability to articulate their school vision and goals. A successful instructional leader is also able to create inclusive learning which provides all students with access to flexible learning choices and effective paths for achieving educational goals. The Departmental Head who is a successful instructional leader encourages risk taking and is able to make all teachers aware that failure can be the greatest teacher. They must create a supportive environment that rewards successful ideas and effort. To be a successful instructional leader, the Departmental Head must be able to say, “do as I do and not as I say.” The leaders who lead by example position themselves as tremendous role models. The most important skill that a school leader must possess is the unquenchable thirst for knowledge. The best learners always know that they will never know it all and therefore they never stop questioning and learning, therefore, Departmental heads must be lifelong learners.

Du Plessis (2013) indicates that a lack of skill is the primary reason for the lack of instructional leadership of a Departmental Head.

2.6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This section focuses on the description of the theoretical framework of this study. The term *theory* is defined as a statement that clarifies the mechanics of the world around us and frequently explains relations among phenomena (Adom, Hussein & Joe, 2018). The concept *theoretical framework* is the guide which serves as a basis for this research (Adom, Hussein & Joe, 2018). This study is guided by the attribution theoretical framework. The term *attribution* refers to the processes by which people interpret the reason behind behaviour and occurrences (Kasin, Fein & Markus, 2008). In other words, attribution is a concept from social psychology which addresses the processes by which individuals explain the causes of behaviour and events. As a

result, attribution theory relates to how people interpret their environment and how this influences their behaviour and thought processes (Kasin, Fein & Markus, 2008).

Heider distinguished between two types of attribution, namely the internal attribution and external attribution (Heider, 1958). Internal attribution relates to the fact that a person behaves in a particular manner because of something about that specific person (Kasin, Fein & Markus, 2008), for example, learners perform poorly in science because of the lack of having a positive attitude towards learning the subject. External attribution pertains to the fact that people behave in a particular manner because of the specific situation in which they find themselves (Kasin, Fein & Markus, 2008), for example, educators blame the lack of instructional supervision to them for the inability of learners to read. People make external attribution to comprehend the world around them and to look for explanations for specific events. The views of Heider about attribution theory were later expanded by Weiner, a professor at the University of California (Weiner, 2010). Weiner developed a theoretical framework that has become very influential in social psychology (Hewitt, Shantz, Mundy & Alfes, 2017). The following diagram illustrates the Attribution Theory of Weiner:

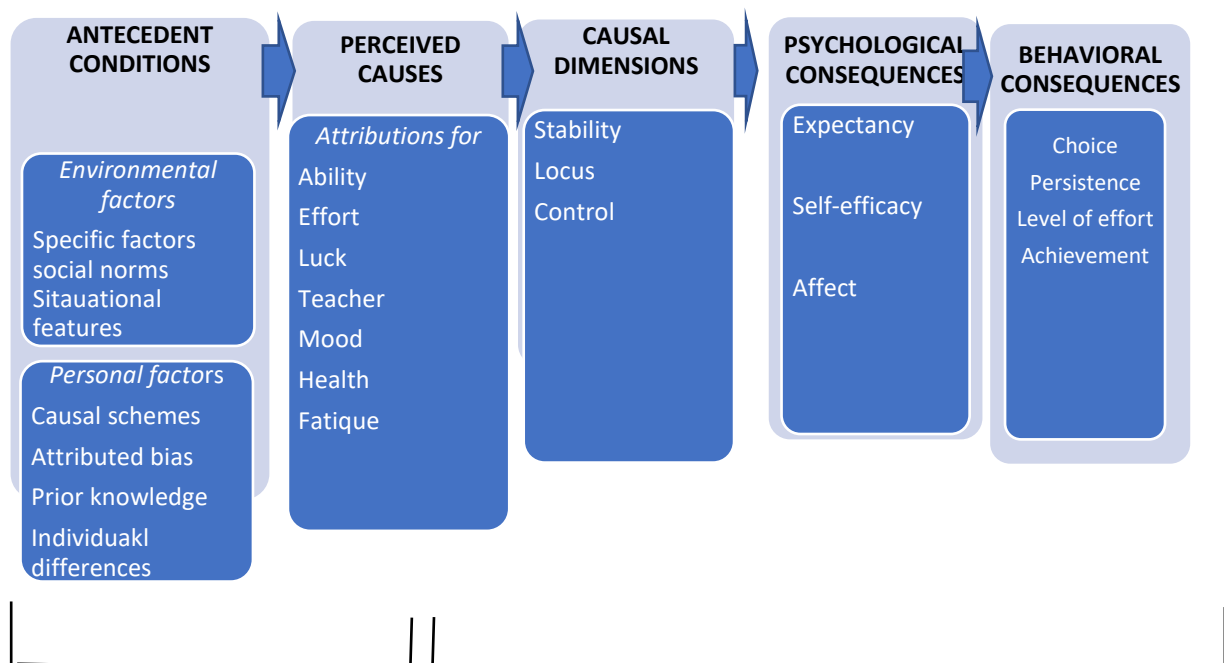


Figure 2.1: Overview of the general Attributional Process (Weiner, 2010).

According to Weiner (2017), attribution theory consists of 5 categories, namely antecedent conditions, perceived causes, causal dimensions, psychological consequences and behavioural consequences.

According to Weiner (1980), attribution theory looks at how people perceive success and failure and how this affects their way of thinking and behaviour. For instance, in schools we try to identify the root causes of learners' poor academic performance. According to the attribution theory, people seek to understand the motivations behind others' actions, that is, they attribute causes to behaviour (Weiner, 1980). This suggests that a person attempting to make sense of why a person behaved in a particular manner may attribute one or more causes to that behaviour. In schools we try to understand why the principal and Departmental heads conduct instructional leadership. According to Weiner (1974), humans desire an explanation for both success and failure, however this desire is more pronounced when unexpected results occur. Weiner (1974) shows that people attribute their successes and failures to four important factors, namely, ability, effort, task difficulty and luck. How a person feels about their abilities affects how well they perform. For example, a Departmental Head might say, "*I am a great and skilled instructional leader.*" Effort is connected to a feeling of pride and self-esteem. People feel a sense of pride in their achievements especially when they believe that it was their effort which led them to success. For example, a Departmental Head might say: "*I studied instructional leadership and did my best to empower my teachers with the required teaching knowledge and skills.*" Task difficulty is relative to individuals' ability to succeed. High task difficulty means that it is hard for me, which means I am not good at it. For example, the Departmental heads might say, "*It was very difficult to improve the performance of my staff.*" Luck or chance tasks are seen as easier and requiring less effort than skill tasks. For example, the Departmental Head might remark with, "*I was lucky to have teachers that were motivated during the professional development sessions.*"

Therefore, how people perceive why they succeed or fail affects how they approach their work in the future. It is also clear that their qualities act as an effective source of motivation, particularly with regard to performance. This shows that motivational and emotional factors greatly influence characteristics. According to the attribution theory,

there are three groups of dimensions that can be used to categorise how people explain their success or failure; locus of causality, stability and controllability.

The locus dimension refers to the perception of the cause of any event as internal or external. Attributes are classified along a locus of causality dimension, from internal to external. If a particular behaviour is attributed to an internal locus of causality, it is believed that our actions were the result of something inside of us (Shrestha, 2017). Internal attribution refers to the assumption that a person's behaviour is due to something about themselves (Shrestha, 2017), for instance, learners may perform poorly in mathematics because of the negative attitude they have towards the subject. External attribution assumes that persons behave in a particular manner because of something related to the circumstances they find themselves in (Shrestha, 2017). If we attribute the outcomes to an external locus of causality, we see it as being caused by something outside ourselves, for example, the educator who has learners that cannot read will blame the lack of instructional leadership. When success is achieved, attributions to stable factors or stable causes are more likely to lead to success; but, when failure occurs, attributions to stable causes are more likely to lower morale and future expectations.

Additionally, attributions are classified according to stability, from stable to unstable dimensions (Shrestha, 2017). In contrast to unstable causes, which can be changed, stable causes are those that cannot be changed easily, such as intelligence. For instance, a teacher might not be able to teach effectively due to a lack of instructional leadership. By offering the teacher support, an instructional leader can change the situation. Unstable attributions are linked to feelings of despair. For the stable causes, one believes that different results can be attained in future.

Whether or not a person involved has control over an event's cause is referred to as the controllability dimension (Shrestha, 2017). For instance, the cause is controllable if a person feels that they could have performed better if they had practiced more. On the other hand, the cause is uncontrollable if he or she has any reservations about their capacity. Weiner (1974) stresses that not all environmental or external attribution may be regarded as controllable. The controllability dimension is also associated with emotional responses (Weiner, 1974). Shame and guilt are the type of emotions experienced in this dimension. People who believe that they did not succeed because

they did not work hard enough often have a sense of guilt (Weiner, 1974). However, those who believe they are unworthy often have feelings of shame or other negative emotions. Additionally, attribution can be used to explain how high achievers and low achievers have different motivational levels. According to attribution theory, low achievers choose to avoid tasks that could lead to success because they believe that success is a result of high skill and effort (Heider, 2010). To avoid facing personal recrimination, teachers always attribute blame to others, and they do so whenever they feel attacked.

Despite the attribution theory's significance in education, there are some criticisms of it. According to Shrestha (2017), the assumption that everyone is a rational and systematic thinker has been one of the main criticisms of the attribution theory. This leads to criticism of attribution theory as being mechanistic and reductionist. The other criticism identified by Shrestha (2017) is that attribution theory ignores social, historical and cultural influences which shape attributions of cause. People will always try to maintain their self-image, so they will typically attribute their successes to controllable variables and their failures to uncontrollable ones. This introduces subjectivity into their analysis, which could result in an incorrect interpretation of their own or another person's motives. For academics and researchers, the translation process of taking causal attributions and transposing them onto the causal dimension has its degree of error (Shrestha, 2017). Despite the criticisms raised against attribution theory, the researcher believes that the theory will help Departmental heads, teachers, parents, community and the Department of Basic Education raise the standard of education in South Africa. The attribution theory will help the researcher investigate the role of Departmental Head as instructional leader in improving teaching and learning. The attribution theory is relevant to this study as it will give insight into the relationship between effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads and teaching and learning in schools. The researcher strongly believes that this theory is currently contributing to the transformation and improvement of teaching and learning in South Africa. It is also recommended that, as a responsible leader, a Departmental Head must watch out for actions that can negatively affect teachers, such as underestimating their needs, isolating them, denying them resources, spying on them, overburdening them, criticizing them, threatening them and preventing their development. In this study, the attribution theoretical framework will also assist the

researcher to explore how instructional leaders contribute to effective or ineffective teaching, learning and good or poor academic performance of the learners.

2.7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Instructional leadership is the fundamental concept of this study. Instructional leadership emerged and developed in the United States of America, during the 1950s and 1960s as a practice-based prescription rather than theory-driven construct (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). The concept *instructional leadership* consists of two terms, *instructional* and *leadership*. The term *instructional* originates from the term *instruct*, which has two definitions, to give information about how something should be done and the practice of teaching (Mestry, 2017). According to Huitt (2003), the term *instruction* refers to teaching, which is defined as engagement with learners to enable them to comprehend and apply knowledge, concepts and processes. On the other hand, the term *leadership* describes the influence that one person has over the accomplishment of others' goals (Mestry, 2013). According to Amy and Graham (2015), leadership refers to the ability to direct, influence, guide, or conduct, one's subordinates to accomplish shared aims and objectives or tasks. De Matthews (2014) asserts that leadership deals with social influence and procedures in which leaders require the voluntary participation of subordinates in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation. These definitions of leadership imply that leaders possess the ability to influence others to achieve the required results. An effective leader is an individual with the ability to influence, motivate and inspire others. In practice, any person in an organization can exert influence over others thus engaging in leadership. A leader is, therefore, anyone who engages in these activities based on tasks and not position. This implies that any person at school can be a leader because a person can be a leader in one situation and a follower in another.

Combining the terms *instruction* and *leadership* produces the concept *instructional leadership*. Various educational researchers and scholars have conceptualized instructional leadership in various ways (Yusof, Ibrahim & Rahim, 2017; Hoy & Miskel, 1996; Robert, 2019; Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003). Yusof, Ibrahim and Rahim (2017) describe the concept *instructional leadership* as the process of creating an atmosphere that supports teaching and learning while pursuing the academic and

social goals of the school. This description implies that instructional leadership is a type of leadership which is applied by school instructional leaders to guide and support educators to improve their teaching practices and to influence them to be involved in continuous learning. According to Hoy and Miskel (1996), the concept *instructional leadership*, encompasses those actions instructional leaders take, or delegate to others to promote growth in learning. This definition suggests that instructional leadership refers to all the activities of the Departmental heads that are aimed at empowering teachers to improve their teaching and academic performance of learners. Similarly, Robert (2019), describes instructional leadership as a style of leadership that prioritises managing teaching and learning as the primary function of educational institutions. According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003), instructional leadership happens when teachers and learners are given direction, resources and support with the goal of enhancing teaching and learning. These definitions imply that instructional leadership means setting goals, providing resources to teachers and learners, managing curriculum implementation, monitoring teaching and learning and evaluating teachers.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter two focused on the review of literature on the role of Departmental heads in instructional leadership in schools. The literature review included the conceptual framework, theoretical framework, the role of Departmental head as an instructional leader, the challenges of instructional leadership experienced by the Departmental heads and the factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads. The reviewed literature reveals that instructional leadership of Departmental heads is key to effective teaching and learning and to a successful education system. According to the Department of Basic Education (2016), Departmental heads have the responsibility to provide leadership and direction to ensure that the school's mission and vision are attained. This chapter contributed to understanding the role of Departmental heads in instructional leadership in South Africa. The next chapter will focus on the research design and methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The overarching aim with this study is to explore how the Departmental Head as instructional leader can contribute to successful teaching and learning. The previous chapter provided an overview of the literature on the role of Departmental head as an instructional leader, the challenges of instructional leadership experienced by the Departmental heads and the factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads. Chapter three provides the research design and methodology of the study.

This chapter incorporates the research paradigm, research approach, research design, population and sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis, trustworthiness and credibility of the research and the ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The concept *research paradigm* refers to a category of elementary presumptions and principles governing how people perceive the universe, which serves as a thinking framework to guide all researchers' activities during empirical investigations (Wahyuni, 2012). This definition suggests that a research paradigm is a group of principles about understanding and studying the universe. The main function of a paradigm is to create new sets of principles that guide new types of behaviour with new perspectives, social environments, and broader implications for conducting research (Morgan, 2014). In other words, a research paradigm controls and directs how the researcher should conduct the study.

There are four main research paradigms, namely positivism, post positivism, constructivism and critical theory paradigms. In this study I used a constructivist research paradigm because constructivism believes that reality is created by social circumstances and people's perceptions of it (Wahyuni, 2012). Constructivism is built on the belief that reality pertains to how individuals perceive their relative experiences

and social factors (Babbie, 2014). According to Rahi (2017), constructivism or interpretivism, is based on the belief that social factors and people's perception of those factors determine reality. This means that people have varying presumptions, experiences and backgrounds that help create diverse realities. In other words, constructivism is associated with subjectivity, social reality may change and there is a wide range of realities. In this study, a constructivist research paradigm was used to create meaning by interacting with the world through observations and interviews for improved understanding rather than the verification of the data. The constructivist research paradigm allowed the researcher to interview participants with different experiences, assumptions and backgrounds to construct understanding on the role of Departmental heads in improving learners' academic performance.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

The concept *research approach* refers to the strategies and methods for research that cover everything from general hypotheses to detailed procedures of collecting, analysing and interpreting data (Chetty, 2016). As a result, the research approach is determined by the type of the research problem being addressed. There are two main types of research approaches used in data collection, namely, quantitative and qualitative. There is also the integration of the two approaches called mixed method research approach (Creswell, 2014). This study was based on the qualitative research approach.

A qualitative approach is an investigation process for understanding a specific social or human problem that is built on constructing a complex, integrated picture with words, conveying full participant viewpoints, and taking place in a natural setting (Creswell, 2014). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2017), the word *qualitative* means an accentuation on the characteristics of entities and procedures and on explanations that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Qualitative researchers emphasise how reality is constructed, the close relations that exist between the researcher and the subject being studied as well as the circumstances that constrain inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). To better understand the situations, behaviours and thoughts of the people they are studying, qualitative researchers immerse themselves in their natural environments (Holloway & Galvin, 2015). A qualitative research approach involves fieldwork, where the

researcher physically goes to the people and the research site to observe and record behaviour in its natural setting (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research approach allows for the provision of explanatory data which is typically written or verbal words of the participants (Brynard & Hanekom, 2014).

The qualitative approach was used to explore the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader. The qualitative research approach was preferred because it gave room for the researcher to conduct the study in a way that minimised or eliminated any disturbance of the natural context of the phenomenon being investigated. The qualitative research approach was also able to give a deeper comprehension of the ways people come to understand, act and manage their everyday situations. It was a more flexible approach that allowed the researcher to clarify questions and prompt participants for further dwelling on specific themes. The qualitative research approach was also preferred because it allowed for breadth and depth of understanding using a smaller, information-rich sample size with participants that could provide insightful information immediately. The research approach determined the research methodology.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Akhtar (2016) describes research design as a structure of research or a “glue” that holds all the elements of a research project together. For that reason, the purpose of research design is to facilitate the collection of relevant data with the least amount of time, money and effort. The definition is supported by Babbie (2014) who describes the concept of research design as a technique that the researcher will use throughout the research process. Research design is also defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2017) as a category of procedures and guidelines which should be followed by a researcher when solving a research problem.

In this study, the phenomenological research design was used to explore how the Departmental Head as instructional leader can contribute to successful teaching and learning. The phenomenological research design was developed by a German philosopher, Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) (Beyer, 2018). Husserl named his philosophical method *Phenomenology*, the science of pure *phenomena* (Beyer, 2018).

A phenomenological research design sheds light on all major issues that people experience (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher's role is to provide the most accurate interpretation of the phenomena and to refrain from any pre-established framework while yet being relevant to the information.

The phenomenon that was described in this study was “the role of school instructional leaders in improving the academic performance of learners.” According to McMillan and Schumacher (2017), the role of the phenomenologists is to understand social and psychological phenomena or circumstances from the perspective of the people involved. A researcher who applies phenomenology is involved in analysing the lived experiences of the research participants who possess first-hand knowledge of the problem being studied (Beyer, 2018). In this study, the research participants are Departmental heads and school principals from six selected schools in the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District, Limpopo Province. This context of the study was selected because the researcher is a teacher at a secondary school in Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING OF THE STUDY

Rahi (2017) describes population as all people or items that one seeks to comprehend while Brynard and Hanekom (2014) define a population as a collection of objects, events or people that share some traits that are of interest to the researcher. According to the definitions given above, population refers to the entire group of people, objects, or events that the researcher has an interest in investigating. The research population of this study are the Departmental Head and school principals of six secondary schools in the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District, Limpopo Province. Sampling follows the identification of the research population for the study.

Sampling refers to the selection of a certain number of participants from a specific population as representative of the population, and a sample is a portion of the entire- or subdivision of measurements taken from the population (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). Sampling is the process of selecting representative parts of a population so that by studying the population the sample, results may be generalised fairly back to the population from which the sample was chosen (McMillan & Schumacher, 2015). A sample is therefore a group of individuals that the researcher has selected from the

demarcated research population to participate in the study. According to Babbie (2014:45), there are two categories of sampling, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling refers to any type of sampling where participants are chosen at random from a particular list of names (Babbie, 2014). There are five types of probability sampling methods, namely, systematic random sampling, simple random sampling, cluster random sampling, multi-stage sampling and stratified sampling (Babbie, 2014). On the other hand, with non-probability sampling, participants are chosen by the researcher for a specific reason rather than at random. There are three types of non-probability sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling and purposive sampling. In this study, purposive sampling was used in the selection of schools and participants. The principle used to select a sample in purposive sampling is to select cases with a particular goal in mind (Schutte & Steyn, 2015). Purposive sampling was chosen for the study because it would enable the researcher to choose the participants and schools based on the assessment of which would be most beneficial or representative (Babbie, 2014). In this study, the researcher used the maximum variation criterion of purpose sampling to select the six schools and the participants of the study. The maximum variation criterion is a purposive sampling technique used to capture a wide range of perspectives relating to the things that are of interest in studying (Creswell, 2014). Six schools were selected purposefully from the Lulekani Circuit, in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province to participate in the study. The sample of this study consisted of six Departmental heads and six school principals from six selected schools in the Lulekani Circuit. Table 1.1 depicts nuances of the research sample for this study:

Circuit	School	Principals	HoDs	Total
Lulekani	A	1	1	2
	B	1	1	2
	C	1	1	2
	D	1	1	2
	E	1	1	2
	F	1	1	2
Total		6	6	12

Table 3.1: The research sample for this study

The basic principle behind maximum variation criterion of purposive sampling, is to better understand the phenomenon by taking a holistic approach. Maximum variation criterion of purposive sampling will enable the researcher to ensure that the selected research sites will include school principals and Departmental heads of various age groups, work experiences and qualifications, who manage their schools in varying ways. All 12 members of the research sample, who include six Departmental heads and six school principals will participate in individual interviews.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

To complement the literature review, relevant data was collected by conducting an empirical investigation. Data collection is described as an accurate, methodical gathering of data that is pertinent to the research sub-problems, techniques such as focus group discussion, interviews, participant observation, case histories and narratives (Creswell, 2014). Prior to data collection, a letter for permission to conduct research in the schools was sent to principals of the schools. After permission was granted, the researcher contacted the teachers to inform them about the study, request them be participants and to sign a consent form. In this study, three techniques were used to collect the data from the participants, namely individual interviews, observations and document analysis.

(a) Individual interviews

In this study, data was collected from the participants by using structured individual interviews. An interview is a technique of data collection that permits the researcher to ask the participants questions (Rahi, 2017). In structured interviews, the same questions are asked to the participants in the same order, with the same wording and sequence. Before conducting the interview, the researcher communicated with each prospective participant telephonically, explained the research process and requested him or her to participate in the study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, individual telephonic interviews were used in this study to collect data from the principals of six selected schools. The individual interviews were conducted using an interview schedule. The interview schedule is a list of questions to guide the researcher through the interview (Creswell, 2014). It assists the researcher in asking follow-up questions for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of study (Creswell, 2014). The

interview schedule provided a structure and order for the questions, allowing for some consistency throughout interviews with various participants.

The individual interviews involved questioning, strong probing for deeper understanding of the responses, recording and documenting of responses. The participants were given the opportunity to speak freely while the researcher guided the discussion to make sure that all the questions were covered. The participants observed and gave answers where necessary. The interviews were conducted after school, to ensure teaching and learning was not interrupted. Individual interviews were preferred in this study because they allowed the researcher more time to discuss the topic in detail and to devote all attention to the interviewee.

(b) Observations

In this study, non-participant observations were also conducted to collect the data in each of the six selected schools. Non-participant observation involves observing participants without actively participating (McMillan & Schumacher, 2015). In non-participant observation, the researcher observes, listens to and notes every participant's activity and behaviour as it occurs naturally at the research site (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). In this study, the Departmental heads of the selected schools were observed during school hours. In each school, two observation sessions were conducted for one hour in different days. The aim of the observation sessions was specifically to observe how the Departmental heads performed their instructional duties.

(c) Document analysis

In this study, the document analysis method was used to collect the data. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for giving voice and meaning to printed and electronic documents by analysing, reviewing or evaluating them (Bowen, 2017). Wach (2013) defines document analysis as a research method used to thoroughly and methodically analyse the contents of written documents, to promote a fair and consistent analysis of written policies. Documents are able to give in-depth information with high veracity (Mouton & Marais, 1993). In this study, the documents that were analysed were the policy of the department, minutes of the departmental meetings, year plan of the department and class visit reports. The reading, re-reading, and

evaluation of the documents as part of the document analysis process required great care and attention. In this study, the documents analysis helped the researcher decipher meanings, gain understanding, and discover insights pertinent to the study's research problem.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

After data collection, the researcher began the process of data analysis and interpretation. The concept *data analysis* is described by Babbie (2014) as a procedure of evaluating and explaining collected data with the aim of deriving meaning, understanding and establishing empirical knowledge. According to Pandey and Pandey (2015), data analysis means to study the organized material to discover inherent facts. Data analysis represents the process of examining and interpreting data with the goal of obtaining meaning, gaining understanding and developing empirical knowledge (Wahyuni, 2012). The goal of data analysis is to describe the data in a clear manner, point out what is common and uncommon, identify differences, relationships and other consistent patterns found in the data and ultimately answer the research questions (Creswell, 2014).

In this study, the thematic data analysis method was used to analyse the qualitative data collected by means of individual interviews, observations, and document analysis. The method was used to interpret the data until the required and comprehensive data was produced. The thematic data analysis method is a non-numerical process used to examine and interpret data in order to elect meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Babbie, 2014). This involves the division of the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships (McMillan & Schumacher, 2017). In other words, it involves analysing the themes within your data collection to find meaning. Thematic analysis is particularly useful when looking for subjective information such as a participant's experiences, views, and opinions, and that is why it is usually conducted on data derived from, for example, surveys, social media posts, interviews and conversations (Crosley, 2021). In this study, the researcher followed six steps of thematic data analysis, namely; organizing and preparing raw data for analysis, read through all the data, coding of the data, generating a description and theme and interpretation.

Figure 3.1 below illustrates the 6 steps that were followed by the researcher when analysing the collected data in this study:

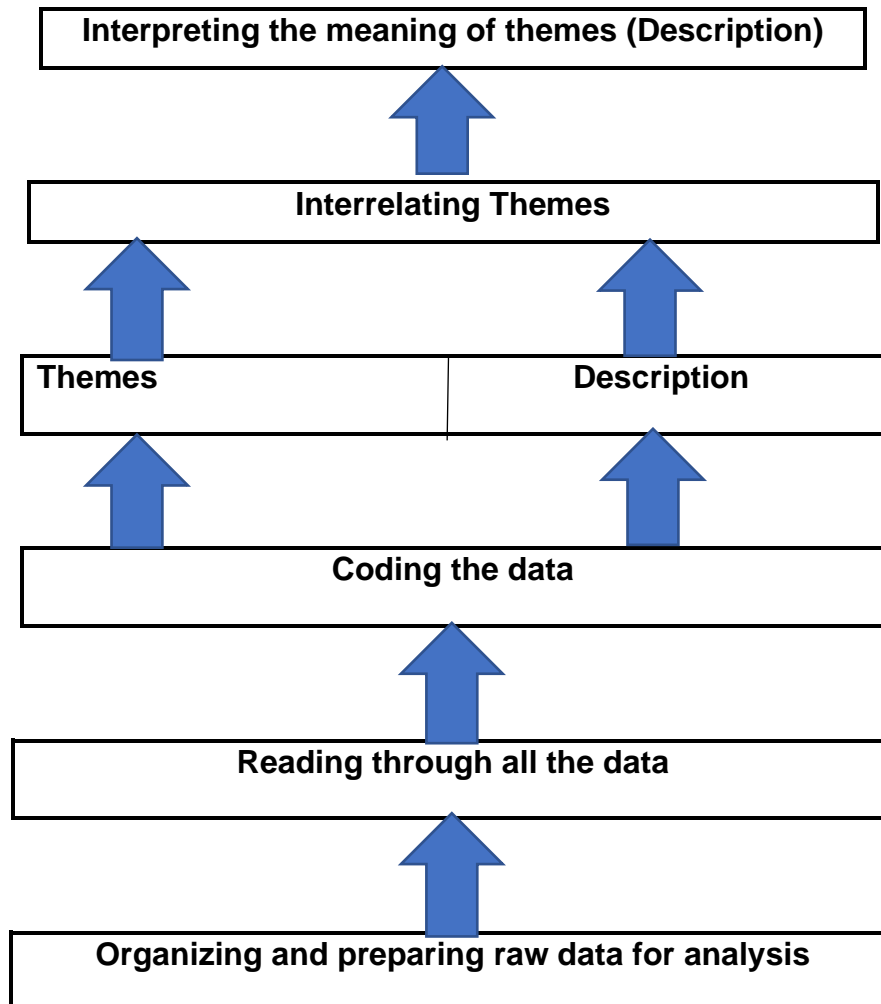


Figure 3.1: The Thematic Data Analysis Method (Creswell, 2009)

Step 1: Organizing and preparing raw data for analysis: After collecting the data, the transcriptions of the interviews were created, which assisted in gaining a better understanding of the study. In this step the data was sorted and arranged into different types depending on the source of the data

Step 2: Read through all the data: In this step, the interview transcripts were studied to obtain a general understanding of the data. The overall meaning of the data was reflected upon in order to understand the general ideas of what the participants said. Notes were written in margins and thoughts about the data were recorded.

Step 3: Coding the data: In this step, the transcripts were studied and the data's constituent pieces were given labels or names. One document was chosen and read through to determine what that document was based on. Ideas were annotated in the borders. After several transcripts have been read, all the topics were listed and similar topics were grouped together. Topics were abbreviated as codes and written next to the appropriate segments of the text. The most descriptive wording for the topics were used and turned into categories. Topics that relate to each other were grouped and abbreviated in each category. Then all the data belonging to each category was assembled in one place.

Step 4: Generating a description and theme: Description involved a detailed rendering of information. In this step, the code to generate a small number of themes or categories was used. These themes are the ones that appeared as major findings and were used to create headings and subheadings in the next chapter of the thesis.

Step 5: Interrelate themes: In this step, a narrative passage to convey the findings of the analysis was used. The themes were interconnected into a story line and additional layers of complex analysis was built. Tables to aid the discussions were also used.

Step 6: Interpretation: This was the last step of data analysis in this study. In this step made sense or meaning was extracted from the data. To deduced the meaning a comparison was made between the findings and the information gleaned from the literature and theories reviewed in earlier.

To summarise the data analysis, the interview transcripts were read and different categories were created. The categories were written in the borders of the transcripts. Topics that were the same were placed together in the same group. A list of the topics was returned to the data, abbreviated as codes and then written next to the relevant parts of the text. The most relevant terminologies of the topic were recorded and changed into themes. All the related topics of the data were then grouped together. The connections between the various categories were identified abbreviated for every category. Thereafter, all the data material belonging to each theme was stored in one place and the data then analysed. The research findings were then interpreted and

written down.

3.8 METHODOLOGICAL RIGOUR: TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Trustworthiness of the study refers to the degree of consistency and compatibility between the explanations of the phenomena of study and the realities of the world (McMillan & Schumacher, 2017). According to Polit and Beck (2014) trustworthiness refers to the degree to which you have confidence in the information and methods used to ensure the quality of a research is reliable. Brink et al., (2012) indicate that many debates have been waged in literature as to what constitutes trustworthiness, but most experts agree that trustworthiness is essential. According to Guba and Lincoln (2005) and other qualitative researchers, there are four criteria that determine trustworthiness of a study, namely, credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. These four criteria were implemented in this study to ensure the trustworthiness of research findings.

3.8.1 Credibility

According to Polit and Beck (2014), the credibility of the research or the confidence in the truth of the research and therefore the research findings, is the most important criterion. The criteria used in credibility are used to create the belief that the results of qualitative study are original, acceptable and convincing from the perception of the study's participant. In this research, the following methods to ensure the credibility of qualitative data were used:

(i) Tactics to help ensure honesty

In this study, the researcher promoted honesty to guarantee the trustworthiness of the research. Each participant was assured that they might decline from participating in the research in order to ensure that data was only collected from willing participants ready to give information for freely. The participants were encouraged to show honesty and openness. The researcher built a rapport in the beginning of the interviews, by indicating to participants that there were no wrong answers to questions asked. The participants were encouraged to give ideas and talk about their encounters without fear of losing credibility in the eyes of the researcher.

(ii) Interviewing of participants

The researcher maintained the trustworthiness and credibility of this research by:

- administering extensive interviews in normal context, to mirror natural experience;
- guaranteeing that the same interview questions were posed to all the participants;
- guaranteeing that the behaviour and responses of the participants were faithful and natural; that they did not possess unfavourable consequences on the research findings; and
- guaranteeing that the participants were not influenced by the attitude of the researcher.

(iii) Participant review or member checks

In this study, participant review and member checks were used to ensure the credibility of the study. Member checking refers to the validation by participants through casual conversations in informal settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). According to Guba and Lincoln (2005) and Schutte and Steyn (2015), member checks is the most important strategy that can be made to strengthen the credibility of the study. In this study, member checks were implemented during the interview process and also after the collection of data, in order to ensure the data's accuracy. The participants were requested to go through the transcripts of the interviews they participated in. Participants affirmed that their words reflected their views, feelings and experiences and that the transcriptions reflected accurately what they said during interviewing. Participants were also asked to listen to the tape recorder while checking the transcribed recording to ensure data accuracy.

(iv) Spending extensive time in the field (prolonged engagement)

In this study the researcher ensured trustworthiness and credibility of the study by spending extensive time in the field. Spending extensive time requires staying with the participants in the field until enough data is gathered (Brink et al., 2012). This helped the researcher to gain thorough understanding of what she was researching as well as the perspectives, customs and experiences of the participants. Spending a lot of time in the field also aided the researcher and participants in developing a strong connection, essential for collecting meaningful data (Brink et al., 2012). In this study the researcher remained in the research field until comprehensive information was gathered. The researcher remained in the field, conducting 16 interviews (each

interview lasting an hour) at four selected research sites to ensure eventual data saturation.

(v) Use of heterogeneous sample

A heterogeneous sample is a sample in which each member has a distinct value for the characteristic a researcher is interested in (Creswell, 2014). In this study, a heterogeneous sample was used to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. This heterogeneous sample consisted of participants of all genders and various age groups with different teaching experience.

(vi) Recording of information

With the permission of the participants, the trustworthiness of this study was ensured by recording data collected from the participants through interviews. Audio recorders were used to give accurate data records. Good recordkeeping helps researchers to find and share the information they need and ensures the authenticity and integrity of the information (Ross, 2022).

3.8.2 Transferability (generalizability)

The term *transferability* refers to the degree to which qualitative results can be generalised and used to different contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). In this study, the researcher ensured transferability of the study by making sure that the context of the research and the assumptions that form the centre of this study were clarified. After the publication of the findings of this study, it is the responsibility of anyone who wants to transfer the findings to a different context to make the judgement and ensure that the transfer is sensible.

3.8.3 Dependability (Consistency)

The trustworthiness of the study was also guaranteed by ensuring dependability of the study. Dependability, also called consistency, is similar to reliability in quantitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Dependability is defined by Guba and Lincoln (2005) as the quality of being able to be counted on or relied upon. Dependability guarantees that the research findings are consistent and can be replicated, which is determined by the standard in which the research is conducted (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). In this study, the effective and credible data collection and data analysis methods were used, to ensure dependability of the study.

3.8.4 Confirmability

According to Guba and Lincoln (2005), the term *confirmability* refers to the extent of which the findings of the study can be verified or confirmed by other people (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). In this study the researcher guaranteed confirmability by implementing different procedures to scrutinize the data. At the end of the study, a data audit that scrutinised every step of the data collection and analysis procedures was conducted. The data audit trail also made judgments on the potential bias and ensured that the findings were based on the participants' responses and not twisted in any way.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics is concerned with beliefs of what is morally right or wrong (McMillan & Schumacher, 2017). Babbie (2001) validates this view by affirming that ethics is a matter that is related to morality and every researcher evaluates his or her behaviour during the research process by using moral guidelines. In this study, the researcher observed all six ethical standards of research, namely, permission to conduct research, minimising participant risk, avoiding plagiarism, arranging informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, and protecting the right to privacy (McMillan & Schumacher, 2017; Babbie, 2014; Bless & Higson-Smith, 2010).

(a) Obtaining permission to conduct the study

According to Creswell (2012), before beginning research, researchers should get permission from "gate keepers" to access research or archival sites. After the research proposal was approved, the researcher applied for an ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee at the University of South Africa. After receiving the ethical clearance certificate, the researcher requested for permission from the Limpopo Department of Education to conduct research in the Lulekani Circuit. After obtaining permission, the researcher wrote letters to the principals of the selected schools requesting permission to conduct the study in the schools and outlining the objectives and procedures of the study.

(b) Informed consent

Babbie (2014) states that researchers should make sure that all participants have given their informed consent before beginning the study. In this study, the researcher ensured informed consent of the study's participants by providing them with detailed information about all the facets of the study. The researcher had a meeting with all the participants to discuss the whole project. In these meetings, the purpose, significance, as well as the benefits of being part of the study were discussed. The participants were informed that this study was part of a masters' degree study at the University of South Africa. As advised by Bless and Higson-Smith (2010), the researcher informed the participants that the research data and findings would only be used for the purpose of investigating the role of Departmental Head as an instructional leader, to ensure acceptable academic performance of learners.

(c) Voluntary participation

The ethical standards of research are also guaranteed by ensuring that the participants voluntarily take part in the study (Babbie, 2014). In this study, all the participants were notified that their participation was voluntary. The participants were given ample time to decide if they wanted to participate in the study or not. Participants were given the assurance that they might leave the study at any given time without facing any repercussions.

(d) Right to privacy (confidentiality)

To ensure the privacy and the confidentiality of the participants of this study, their names were not revealed to anyone. The researcher also made sure that all data gathered during the interview were kept in a secured place. In this regard, the hard copy of data was locked away in a cupboard. The computer that stores all the electronic data was secured with a password. Participants were assured that the data collected during interviewing was used only for the stated purpose and no outsider had access to the data.

(e) Plagiarism

The term *plagiarism* refers to the action of using someone's ideas or writing as your own without acknowledging or crediting the original source (McMillan & Schumacher, 2017). In this study all materials used in the study were acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

(f) Minimisation of risk to participants

In this study, the researcher took precautions to minimise any harm to participants. The participants were reassured that their involvement in this study would not cause them any physical harm, psychological stress or any kind of embarrassment. All participants of the study were met with, and detailed explanations were made to them. Participants were reassured that their partaking in this study would not disturb their teaching time as data collection was conducted after school.

3.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter three provided a detailed description and analysis of the research design and methodology of this study. This chapter includes the research design, research approach, population of the study, sampling, collection of data, analysis of data, trustworthiness and credibility and ethical considerations of the study. The presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research findings are provided in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is to explore the role of the Departmental Head in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, of Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province. The previous chapter presented the research design and methodology of this research, which consist of the research paradigm, research design, research approach, population of the study, sampling method, collection of data, data analysis, validity and reliability, and limitation of the study. This study was based on the constructivist paradigm because it is related to uniqueness, multiple realities and the creation of meaning by engaging the people. Constructivism or interpretivism, is based on the view that reality is designed by social factors and people's comprehension of those factors (Rahi, 2017). A *phenomenological research design* was also used to design this study. This study was guided by the qualitative research approach, which focused on the attributes of objects and processes and on clarifications that are not examined by experiments or evaluated in relation to amount, frequency, intensity or quantity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). A purposive sampling method was used to select the sample of the study which consisted of six principals and six Departmental heads from six secondary schools of Lulekani Circuit.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the data collected by means of individual interviews, observation and document analysis. Data analysis is a process whereby data is examined and interpreted so that meaning can be derived, an understanding can be gained, and empirical knowledge can be developed (Creswell, 2014). The concept *data* refers to information that has been converted into a form that is efficient for processing (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). In this chapter all the data is based on the research questions of the study. This chapter includes: research questions, presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from principals; presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from Departmental heads; presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected by observation and document analysis.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

In this study, the thematic data analysis method was used to analyse the data collected from principals and Departmental heads. This method is the process whereby the data collected is reduced to themes or categories (Babbie, 2014). The researcher started by listening to the interviews on the audiotapes many times. The data was then transcribed verbatim and grouped into codes. According to Cohen & Manion (2011), coding is the process of giving a group of data a distinguishing name to set it apart from other collected data. The researcher read the raw data extracted from the interviews several times. The information obtained from the transcripts was used to analyse and interpret the data according to the interviewee's views. All the responses from the interview transcriptions were grouped together in accordance with the questions. The codes were arranged into categories and sub-categories, which were utilised as the main topics of data analysis. All the relevant responses to a particular theme were then summarised and tabulated. The researcher followed the same procedure to analyse and interpret all the research questions and responses.

4.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The data collected was based on the following research questions:

4.3.1 Primary research question

How can the Departmental Head as instructional leader contribute to successful teaching and learning?

4.3.2 Secondary research questions

- (a) What is the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader?
- (b) What are the challenges experienced by Departmental Head in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks?
- (c) What strategies can Departmental heads implement to ensure effective teaching and learning?

4.4 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

This section presents the table of the biographical information of the participants of this study, which includes, the school, participant, gender, age, educational level and teaching experience.

Participant	Gender	Age category	Educational level	Teaching experience
P1	Female	50-60	Postgraduate	25-30 years
DH1	Male	40-50	Postgraduate	15-20 years
P2	Male	50-60	Junior degree	25-30 years
DH2	Female	30-40	Junior degree	10-15 years
P3	Female	40-50	Postgraduate	15-20 years
DH3	Male	40-50	Postgraduate	15-20 years
P4	Male	50-60	Postgraduate	25- 30 years
DH4	Male	30-40	Junior degree	15- 20 years
P5	Male	50-60	Junior degree	25- 30 years
DH5	Female	30-40	Junior degree	15- 20 years
P6	Male	40-50	Postgraduate	25- 30 years
DH6	Female	40-50	Postgraduate	20- 25 years

Table 4.1: The biographical information of the participants

4.5 THE PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

The aim of this section is to present, analyse and interpret the data collected by means of individual interviews from six principals and six Departmental heads, from six selected schools, of the Lulekani Circuit in Mopani District. The thematic data analysis method, described in section 4.2, was used to analyse the qualitative data. In this section, the principals are referred to as participants principal 1 (P1), principal 2 (P2), principal 3 (P3), principal 4 (P4), principal 5 (P5) and principal 6 (P6) and the Departmental heads are referred to as Departmental Head 1 (DH1), Departmental

Head 2 (DH2), Departmental Head 3 (DH3), Departmental Head (DH4), Departmental Head (DH5) and Departmental Head (DH6). This is in compliance with the ethical considerations on confidentiality requiring that the names of all participants as well as their places of work are not revealed in the study. In this chapter, the participants' views and feelings about the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader in secondary schools, are provided as a report which is guided by evidence predominantly in the form of quotations from the interview transcripts. This is according to the assertion of McMillan and Schumacher (2014) which emphasises that a detailed approach is necessary to obtain a complete understanding of the setting to accurately reflect on the complexities of human behaviour. The findings were categorised into the following three main themes and 13 sub-themes:

Main Theme	Sub-themes
1. The role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader.	(a) To design a year plan and to guide teachers in designing the schemes of work and lesson plans. (b) To assist the teachers in teaching effectively by using effective teaching methods. (c) To assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using effective assessment methods. (d) Professional development of teachers. (e) Monitoring the work of educators and learners in the department.
2. The challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks.	(a) Increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads. (b) Shortage of teaching and learning resources.

	(c) Poor discipline of learners. (d) Lack of support by parents.
3. The strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning.	(a) Conducting professional development or in-service training of teachers. (b) Parental involvement. (c) Designing teachers' and learners' code of conduct. (d) Collaborating with educators of other schools in developing the department. (e) Providing sufficient teaching and learning resources.

Table 4.2: Main themes and sub-themes of data collected from participants

The above three main themes are based on the three research questions of this study. The next section focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the principals by means of individual interviews.

4.5.1 Main theme 1: The role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader

Main theme one emerged from the responses of research question one. The participants were asked to explain the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader. An analysis of the findings of this study produced five sub-themes, namely, guiding teachers on subject activities such as developing year plans, schemes of work, lesson plans along with teaching and assessing; providing opportunities for professional development for teachers; monitoring the work of educators and learners in the department and submitting reports to the principal as required; having meetings with parents to discuss the progress and behaviour of their children; and participating actively in the school management team.

4.5.1.1 Sub-theme 1: To design a year plan and to guide teachers to design the schemes of work and lesson plans.

An analysis of data revealed that the role of Departmental heads is to design year plans and guide teachers in designing schemes of work and lesson plans. This finding was confirmed by P1 who responded as follows:

The DH is responsible for making a year plan of the department at the beginning of the year and submit it to the principal for approval. Thereafter, the DH must hold a meeting of the teachers, give each teacher a copy of the year plan and then show them how it must be used. The DH must also train the teachers how to make a scheme of work and lesson plan. After designing them, the teachers submit them to the DH for approval.

The quote by P1 revealed that the role of the Departmental Head in instructional leadership is to use the curriculum policy to design the year plan and submit it to the principal for approval. P1 also indicates that the Departmental Head should then train staff about designing a scheme of work and lesson plans. After designing them, the teachers should submit them to him or her for approval.

DH1 shared a similar sentiment in that he was of the view that the first main duty of the Departmental heads is to design a year plan. DH1 responded as follows:

*One of my instructional leadership duties is to design an annual year plan. I design a year plan at home before the school opens in January. When the school opens, I provide a year plan to all the teachers at our first meeting. I then explain to them how they should implement the year plan and also train them how to design the scheme of work and daily lesson plans. The scheme of work is derived from **syllabus**. The three documents are a key for the success of my department.*

The quote by DH1 revealed that the role of the Departmental Head is to design a year plan in January. DH1 emphasises that the Departmental Head should provide all teachers with a year plan and train them on how to design and implement the scheme of work and lesson plans.

The role of Departmental Head in designing a year plan and guiding teachers was supported by DH2 who responded as follows:

One of my duties is to make a year plan before the schools open in January. Before I create that plan, I have to do some research to identify the challenges that were experienced last. In fact, at the beginning of the year. When the school opens in January, I convene a meeting of teachers and provide them with the year plan. I then start to advise them about creating their schemes of work and lesson plans, using the year plan. I also ensure that we follow the curriculum policies.

The response from DH2 indicates that at the beginning of the year the Departmental Head must create a year plan for the department during the December holiday. When the school opens in January, the Departmental Head should train the teachers how to design a scheme of work and lesson plans.

Designing a year plan and guiding teachers to design the schemes of work and lesson plans was also confirmed by P4 and DH4. P4 alluded that when the school opens in January, the Departmental Head should design a year plan and then organise a first meeting of teachers to train the teachers on the implementation of the year plan and how to design a scheme of work and lessons plans. P4 stated the following:

An DH is one of the leaders who have a lot of work to do. He must prepare the effective teaching of his subject by firstly, at the beginning of the year, making a year plan. He must then convene a meeting of teachers to give them the year plan and train them how to use the year plan and how to make their lesson plans.

From the above interview quotations, it could be deduced that the first duty of the Departmental Head is to design a year plan for the department. This means that the Departmental Head must also ensure that all the teachers are provided with the year plan and trained on its implementation.

DH4 shared a similar sentiment of P4. He was of the view that at the beginning of the year, before teaching any lesson, the Departmental Head must design a year plan and train the teachers on the effective implementation of the curriculum. DH4 shared the following opinion:

One of my duties is to design a year plan and assist my teachers to design their schemes of work and lesson plans. I use the policies of the department of education to design a year plan for my department. I start to design the year plan

before we close the schools and then complete it during the December holiday. When the schools open, I give it to the principal to approve it. Then, I give it to all the teachers in my department at a meeting and advise them about compiling a scheme of work and lesson plans.

The above opinions of P4 and DH4 from school D, revealed that the first main instructional leadership duty of the Departmental Head is to design a year plan which will be used to guide all the activities of teachers and learners for the whole year. The second instructional leadership duty of the Departmental Head is to train the teacher on the effective design of schemes of work and lesson plans. Their opinions revealed that without knowledge about a year plan, schemes of work and lesson plans, teachers will not be able to teach effectively.

The perception of the first role of Departmental Head of designing a new year plan was also confirmed by DH5 who stressed the following view:

Well, one of my duties is to design the year plan for the prospective year in December. When the schools open in January, I distribute it to all the teachers of my department in a meeting. My other duty is to ensure that the teachers design effective schemes of work and lesson plans. I also assist my fellow DHs and DHs of other schools.

The perception of designing a year plan and educating teachers about the year plan, was confirmed by DH6 who asserted the following:

As DHs, we must ensure that that there is effective teaching and learning in order to complete the curriculum. Therefore, my first duty is to design a document called year plan. In December, during school holidays, I always design a year plan for the following year. When the schools open in January, I convene a meeting to discuss the year plan and how to design effective schemes of work and lesson plans. I support my teachers to always improve their schemes of work and lesson plan.

According to the views of DH6, at the beginning of each year, the DH must design a year plan for the department a week before the school opens so that, on the opening day of schools, the teachers are provided with the year plan and trained on implementing it. This will ensure that teaching and learning start on the opening day

of the school, because teachers always start a new school year two days before the opening day of the learners.

From these interview responses, it is evident that a year plan and guiding teachers in designing the schemes of work and lesson plans, play an important role in effective teaching and learning. All participants emphasised the significance of a year plan and guiding teachers in designing the schemes of work and lesson plans. Therefore, a year plan, scheme of work and lesson plan are key for effective presentation of the curriculum and academic performance of the learners.

Developing a year plan for the new year and training teachers on its implementation, before any teaching and learning takes place, affirms the standpoint of Hartzell (2019), who asserts that the first duty of the Departmental Head is to develop the department's policy and year plan with the teachers and then training the teachers in designing the scheme of work and lesson plans. Similarly, Boschen (2017) expounds that the year-long plan should be designed by the DH because it enables a teacher to see the big picture. It aligns the standards, assessments, holidays and themes, as well as larger units and lesson plans which are the backbone of teaching. According to Bright Hub Education (2008), creating yearly plans for the classroom will give you an overview of your curriculum at a glance and it can help you stay on track each month in meeting the curriculum goals that you have set for the year. The views of the participants are also in line with the views of Bendall (2009), who asserts that the scheme of work is very important for effective teaching and learning because it is an extensive plan that shows subject by subject, key stage by key stage, the outline of what is being taught and how it interlinks with the context of learning, taking into account students' prior learning.

4.5.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Assisting teachers in teaching effectively by using effective teaching methods

Sub-theme two was produced by theme one during the analysis of data related to question one. The participants were asked to explain the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader. The findings from analysed data revealed that one of the roles of the Departmental Head is to assist teachers in teaching effectively by using effective teaching methods. P1 was of the view that the DH should assist teachers in

using the effective teaching methods of English by conducting professional development sessions. This assertion is supported by the following statement by P1:

As a principal I have realised that one of the duties of the DH is to train the teachers to use effective methods of teaching English or any subject. There are several teaching methods, and the teachers need to be advised about the teaching methods which are very effective in teaching learners. The DH must conduct professional development sessions where he or she trains the teachers about the best methods of teaching his or her subjects.

P1 emphasised that the Departmental Head must ensure effective teaching and learning by training teachers on the implementation of effective teaching methods. The views of P1 indicate that an DH must have sufficient knowledge of teaching and learning. This notion is reiterated by DH1 who emphasised the role of the DHs as follows:

My other role as an instructional leader is to assist the teachers in my department to use effective teaching methods so that the learners can understand the subject content. I always conduct professional development sessions to train the teachers. I also conduct class visits to see if the teachers are teaching effectively.

The above quotation of DH1 indicates that the Departmental Head must always conduct professional development sessions to assist the teachers in using effective teaching methods. This view also implies that the DH must possess more knowledge than the teachers in order to assist them to teach effectively.

The above views of P1 and DH1 was supported by the views of P2 who stated that:

I am quite certain that the role of the DH is to support the teachers with regard to teaching effectively by using the relevant teaching methods. I have realised many times that some teachers do not possess sufficient knowledge about teaching methods. The DH is responsible for visiting classes to see the methods that they implement and thereafter assist those teachers by explaining to them the best methods that they must use in that subject.

According to P2, all teachers should be trained by the Departmental Head to equip them with more essential knowledge and skills of their subjects. P2 adds that the DH

should also conduct class visits to monitor the implementation of effective teaching to assist teachers who face challenges in implementing the teaching methods.

The role of the Departmental Head in supporting the teachers with effective teaching methods, was also supported by DH3, who confirmed that notion as follows:

I am a Departmental Head who is ready to promote teaching and learning. I try to achieve this by ensuring that all the teachers in my department, are using effective teaching methods. I always conduct meetings of my teachers, to assist them with the best methods of teaching our subject effectively. The teachers enjoy the meetings and always request me to conduct other meetings.

The above view of DH3, about assisting teachers to use effective teaching methods, indicates that the Departmental Head has an important role of promoting effective teaching and learning by always training teachers with the best teaching methods. Knowing these teaching methodologies and strategies will make the classrooms a more creative and dynamic place for learners to get qualitative education. DH3 also reveals that teachers are not against professional development sessions because they acquire more knowledge and skills in the workshops.

The perception of the role of Departmental Heads in supporting teachers in their departments, encouraging them to use the right teaching methods was also confirmed by P4 who provided the following response:

DHs are responsible for ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning which result in good academic performance of the learners. The DHs must not allow teachers to use only one method of teaching all lessons. The DHs must always support the teachers to encourage learning and create a comfortable learning environment.

The above quotation indicates that a Departmental Head is an instructional leader who promotes effective teaching and learning which contribute to good academic performance of the learners. P4 asserts that the Departmental Head achieves this by training the teachers to use relevant teaching methods which result in effective teaching and learning.

Conducting professional development to train the teachers in using various effective teaching methods was also reinforced by P5. This assertion is supported by the following statement:

The DH must firstly support teachers to use different effective teaching methods in different lessons in order to meet the individual needs of the students. The different teaching methods are visualization, cooperative learning, inquiry-based instruction or using technology in the classroom. The DH must not allow teachers to use teacher-centred method of teaching because they are not effective. The HoDs must always assist teachers to use child-centred teaching methods.

The above quotation reveals that the main duty of the Departmental heads is to provide the teachers with knowledge and skills of various teaching methods. The quote also reveals that teachers who use teacher-centred teaching methods do not provide quality education to the learners.

It is evident, from their responses, that there are several teaching methods that can be used by teachers to present the curriculum effectively. All the teaching methods are based on two categories, namely, teacher-centred and learner-centred teaching methods. It is therefore very important to train teachers to always use learner-centred teaching methods because this method allows learners to participate actively in the presentation of the curriculum.

Ayua (2017) affirms most of the findings above as they explain that, the important issue in teaching is the identification of particular positive behaviour that helps effective teaching and learning to occur, which is referred to as teaching strategies or methods. A teaching strategy is therefore an educational technique, method or plan of classroom actions or interactions intended to accomplish specific teaching and learning goals (Ayua, 2017). Similarly, Vallikat (2020) reveals that learning is a two-way process, and it is significant to employ different methods and strategies to ensure that the learning is effective and efficient, it improves the quality of education and the learner-centred approach increases student involvement and engagement. According to Vallikat (2020), there is no teaching method better than the other and what is important is the teachers have to ensure they choose the right methods of teaching from the different types of teaching methods based on the demographics of their students, the subject they teach, and the gravity of the lesson.

4.5.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using effective assessment methods

Sub-theme three emerged from theme one during the analysis of data related to question one. The participants were asked to explain the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader. The findings from the analysed data revealed that one of the important duties of the Departmental heads is to assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using effective assessment methods. P1 was of the view that the DH should assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using effective assessment methods. This assertion is supported by the following statement by P1:

...a DH has a huge role to play and is a key to effective learning in schools. One of the roles of the DH is to assist the teachers to assess the learners effectively by using the effective assessment methods at different times. At the beginning of the year, the teachers must be supported to first use diagnostic assessment in order to understand learners' strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills of a subject, before teaching.

Assisting teachers to assess learners by using effective assessment methods has been highlighted by participant P1 above as one of the duties of the DHs. According to P1, the teachers must be assisted by the DH to use diagnostic, formative, summative, and ipsative assessments to assess the learners at different times.

The role of Departmental heads of supporting teachers in assessing learners was supported by P3, who similarly responded as follows:

...The DH must always support the teachers to ensure effective teaching and learning. The DH must advise teachers to use different methods of assessing learners and they must first use diagnostic assessment before teaching. This is to know the knowledge and skills that the learners bring to the class. The DH must also advise teacher to use formative assessment during teaching and summative assessment at the end of a term or year...(P3).

The above perception of P3, reveals the DH supports teachers in implementing the effective and correct assessment of learners. P3's views reveal that the implementation of assessment may be a challenge to some teachers as some may

carry out assessments at wrong times, such as conducting a summative assessment in February or May. It is therefore important for the DHs to assist the teachers to understand and implement assessment correctly and effectively.

The perceptions of P3 are affirmed by the perception of P5 who emphasises that one of the duties of Departmental heads is to assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using different assessment methods. P5 responded as follows:

I am always advising the Departmental heads to improve the academic performance of the learners by assessing the learners effectively. I also ensure that summative assessment is not dominating many teachers. I assist teachers to use diagnostic, formative, formal, informal and summative assessment methods. The DH must also advise the teachers to use formative assessment, while they are teaching.

The above views of P5, identified the various types of assessment and revealed that all of them are important for effective learning. The views of P5 also revealed that the Departmental Head is responsible for ensuring that all teachers in the department understand the design and implementation of various assessment methods.

Similarly, DH6 shared a similar sentiment in that he was of the view that teachers need to be assisted by the DHs because some of them do not possess adequate knowledge and skills about assessment methods. DH6 said:

As an instructional leader, I always assist my teachers to assess our learners effectively. I always conduct workshops to train the teachers in my department about the implementation of the different types of assessment. All the teachers are participating in the discussions of assessment methods in order to understand how to implement all assessment methods effectively. (HOD6).

The perception of DH6 about assessment of learners as indicated above, revealed that teachers do not possess adequate knowledge about the assessment of learners by using different assessment methods. This view reveals that many teachers are not aware of diagnostic, formative, formal, informal and summative assessment methods.

The above responses from the participants revealed how teachers can discover two issues, namely, whether their teaching was effective and whether the learners

understood what they were taught by the teacher. There is only one strategy for understanding the two issues, the assessment of learners. Unfortunately, it is not easy to achieve this, because there are various methods for implementing this strategy. There is diagnostic, formative, summative, formal, informal and ipsative assessment methods that can be used by the teachers. The role of the Departmental Head is to assist the teachers in implementing a relevant assessment method.

Olfos, Goldrine and Estrella (2014) affirm most of the findings above as they explain that the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader is to lead the implementation of the curriculum by assisting the teachers in designing instructional programmes and effective teaching of learners. According to Du Four (2002), DHs must always assist teachers in using all assessment methods available to assess the learners effectively.

4.5.1.4 Sub-theme 4: Professional development of teachers

An analysis of data revealed that the role of the Departmental heads is to oversee the professional development of teachers. This finding was confirmed by P2 who responded as follows:

...one of the duties of DHs is professional development of teachers, which is used to always equip the teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills of effective presentation of the curriculum. The DHs train teachers to design a year plan, lesson plans, assessment plans, monthly tests, how to maintain discipline of learners and solve their problems).

The above quotation from P2 revealed that another duty of DHs is to always equip the teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills so that they are able to teach the learners effectively. The quotation also revealed that professional development is conducted according to the year plan and not only if there are problems experienced by teachers.

DH2 validated the above point of view by providing the following response:

One of my important duties is to conduct professional development sessions of teachers. In these sessions, I train teachers about lesson plans, effective teaching methods, practical work, how to use teaching and learning resources

and assessment of learners and also assist them to resolve the problems they are facing. All the teachers participate in the sessions.

In the above quotation, DH2 revealed that Departmental heads and curriculum advisors conduct professional development sessions in order to improve teaching and learning. DH2 indicates that all teachers attend all the sessions because they are trained about lesson plans, teaching methods, practical work, how to use teaching and learning resources, and assessment of learners.

The role of the Departmental Head in conducting regular professional sessions was also supported by DH3 who made the following statement:

One of my duties is to conduct professional development of teachers once per term. All the teachers in my department, always attend and participate in professional development to learn new knowledge and skills that will improve their performance. Professional development is also used to assist teachers to resolve their challenges.

The above quotation from DH3, revealed the importance and procedure of conducting professional development by Departmental heads. DH3 emphasised that all teachers are expected to attend the sessions, in order to acquire more knowledge and skills of their work that will be used to implement the curriculum effectively.

DH4 supported the views from DH3 of conducting the professional development of teachers, for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. DH4 provided the following response:

I am a Departmental Head and one of my duties is to conduct professional development of teachers. All teachers attend professional development sessions in order to improve their knowledge and skills of teaching and become effective teachers. I also train teachers about designing scheme of work and lesson plans, effective teaching methods and effective assessment methods. I also assist teachers to resolve all their challenges.

The above response from DH4, indicates why the DHs are expected to conduct the professional development of teachers. The views of DH4 reveals what skills the

teachers gain in professional development, such as effective teaching and assessment methods among others.

Similarly, DH5 affirmed that the professional development of teachers is one of the key duties of Departmental heads. DH5 buttressed the above notion by declaring:

As Departmental Head and instructional leaders, I am also responsible for conducting professional development of teachers, in order to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills of improving implementation of the curriculum. In professional development sessions I focus mainly on effective teaching methods, presentation of their lessons and assessment of learners.

The response by DH5 from school E reveals that the DH is conducting professional development effectively in order to improve teaching and learning. The teachers are therefore able to implement the knowledge and skills provided by the DH and learners are improving their academic performance.

According to the responses of the above participants, a teacher should not depend only on the knowledge and skills acquired at university, while he or she was a student. A teacher should be trained continuously until he or she retires from the teaching profession. This indicates that a Departmental Head should possess higher academic and professional qualifications than the teachers. This is because a Departmental Head should be able to continuously equip the teachers with new teaching knowledge and skills.

Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) affirm most of the findings above, about the role of the Departmental Head conducting professional development. Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) asserts that the Departmental Head must conduct the effective professional development of teachers, which is content focused, incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, uses models of effective practice, provides coaching and expert support, offers feedback and reflection and is of sustained duration. Similarly, Mizell (2019), reveals that professional development of teachers by Departmental heads helps educators analyse student achievement data during the school year to immediately identify learning problems, develop solutions, and promptly apply those solutions to address students' needs and can be useful if it takes place before classes begin or after they end.

4.5.1.5 Sub-theme 5: Monitoring the work of educators and learners in the department

Sub-theme three emerged from theme one during the analysis of data related to question one. The participants were asked to explain the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader. P1, P2, P3, P4, DH5 and DH6, were concurrently of the opinion that one of the important duties of the Departmental heads is to monitor the work of educators and learners. This assertion was confirmed by DH1 as follows:

My other major duty is to monitor the work of the teachers and learners in my department. When the school opens in January, I allocate work to all teachers and then start to monitor if they are performing the work. I regularly conduct class visits, check lesson plans, assessments, work of learners, teachers' coverage of the curriculum and then assist them to solve their problems. I also check if a teacher is attending meetings and workshops.

The above views of DH1 revealed that DHs are responsible for allocating work, checking lesson plans, conducting class visits, checking the work of learners and checking that teachers attend professional development sessions.

P2 also identified the monitoring of teachers' work as one of the key duties of Departmental heads. P2 validated the above point of view as follows:

Another duty of Departmental heads is to monitor the work of teachers. They ensure that teachers comply with the rules of curriculum implementation. They conduct class visits to ensure that teachers teach effectively, use CAPS documents, use teaching and learning resources, have time tables, teach correct content, and assess the work of learners timeously.

The above view of P2 of monitoring the work of teachers by DHs, reveals that DHs must always go to the classrooms to observe if teachers are using effective teaching and assessment methods. The aim of this observation is not to punish the teachers if they use ineffective methods, but rather to support them in implementing the curriculum effectively.

P3 confirms that the DHs should conduct class visits to see if there is effective teaching and learning. P3 stated the following:

At our school, the Departmental heads are responsible for monitoring teaching and learning in the classrooms. In the classroom, they check lesson plans, observe how the teachers present the lessons, check assessment of learners, check the books of learners and also check the teaching and learning resources that are used. At the end of the lesson the teachers are given feedback and assisted where they have challenges.

The above quote reveals the procedure used by the DH in conducting class visits for the purpose of supporting the teachers to improve their curriculum presentation. P3 identified all the activities that are done by the DH in the classroom.

DH5 also supported the role of a Departmental Head of monitoring the work of teachers. DH5 provided the following response:

I conducted monitoring of the work of teachers in different ways, and one of them is to check the scheme of work, lesson plans and the work of learners and conduct class visits. I first check the curriculum planning to see if they are well-designed and effective. Then I start to conduct class visits in order to observe the presentation of the lesson by the teacher. The following day, I communicate with the teachers about improving teaching and learning... (DH5).

The above quote by DH5 from School E indicates that one of the duties of DHs is to monitor the work of teachers by checking the scheme of work, lesson plans and the work of learners and conducting class visits. The aim of monitoring is to support the teacher in improving teaching and learning.

The above findings of monitoring the work of teachers by DHs, were confirmed by DH6 who provided the following response:

I am responsible for ensuring effective implementation of the curriculum, which contribute to good academic performance of learners. I always monitor the work of the teachers, by checking their curriculum plans and conducting two class visits of one teacher per term, to listen and observe the presentation of the lessons. The following day I provide the teacher with a written report and also advise him or her about improving teaching and learning.

The opinions of DH6 about monitoring of teachers by DHs, assert that the main role of the DH is to monitor the implementation of the curriculum by the teachers in order assist the teachers to improve teaching and learning.

It is evident from the participants' responses that a Departmental Head should possess higher academic and professional qualifications than the teacher in his or her department. Monitoring is an important duty of the Departmental Head in which he or she should be able to check the effectiveness of the performance of teachers. This indicates that the overall performance of the school depends on Departmental heads.

The role of the Departmental heads to monitor the work of the teachers is confirmed by Mthiyane, Naidoo and Bertram (2019) who indicate that the Departmental Head is a teacher, a subject specialist and expert, a mentor of colleagues, and a person who plays a role in the staff development and monitoring the work of teachers. According to Metcalfe (2018), the role of the Departmental Head in monitoring the work of teachers involves regularly checking teachers' coverage of the curriculum (curriculum tracking) and checking learners' work, working with teachers to improve curriculum coverage and assisting teachers with problems related to curriculum coverage.

The monitoring of teachers by the Departmental Head is also supported by Hallinger (2012), who indicates that the role of Departmental heads as instructional leaders is to monitor student progress to keep track of student learning for purposes of making instructional decisions, and providing feedback to the students on their progress. The monitoring activities include questioning students to check their understanding, engaging in one-to-one contacts with students about their work, assigning, collecting and correcting homework and conducting periodic reviews with students to confirm their understanding of the subject matter (Hallinger, 2012). According to Brazer and Bauer (2013), instructional leaders monitor the assessment of learners to ensure the implementation of the educational mission of a school.

4.5.2 Main theme 2: The challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks

Main theme two was produced by the responses of research question two. The participants were asked to explain the challenges experienced by Departmental heads

in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. As a result, the following 10 sub-themes emerged from the data: increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads, poor academic performance of learners, lack of subject content knowledge and skills for providing support and guidance, lack of school management and leadership skills, shortage of resources, shortage of resources, poor discipline of teachers and learners, lack of support by school governing bodies (SGBs), lack of parental and community involvement.

4.5.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads

An analysis of data revealed that the participants alluded to the fact that one of the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks is increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads. There were concurrent views from all the participants of the study. P1 of School A opined that the Departmental heads do not have time to conduct instructional leadership because they have huge work overload. P1 of School A responded as follows:

...The DHs do not have sufficient time for effective instructional leadership due to the workload they have. They are responsible for teaching learners, monitoring the work of teachers and learners, conducting class visits, training teachers and conducting meetings of teachers. This is their serious challenge of heavy workload.

The above opinion revealed that the work overload of Departmental heads includes, teaching, monitoring teachers, controlling books and conducting meetings. This opinion was confirmed by DH1 who provided the following response:

In instructional leadership we, the DHs, are experiencing many challenges and one of them is the work overload. I say work overload, because I am expected to teach the learners, monitor the teachers, conduct professional development or workshops, check the work of learners and support the teachers who have challenges. This is too much because I am very busy from morning until the end of the day. I'm not able to support other teachers.

The above quotation revealed that Departmental heads have the challenge of an enormous work overload which includes teaching learners, monitoring the teachers, conducting professional development sessions or workshops, checking the work of learners and supporting the teachers who experience challenges.

Participant DH2 also supported the challenge of work overload of DHs responding briefly as follows:

I have many challenges and one of them is work overload. I am overwhelmed by managerial and administrative duties. I must assist the principal, train and monitor teachers and learners, resolve conflicts and teach learners. I therefore don't have sufficient time for instructional leadership tasks.

The challenges of work overload, in the opinion above, means that Departmental heads are involved in managerial duties, administrative duties, personnel management, dealing with external agencies, conflict resolution, resource management and parental involvement.

P3 shared a similar sentiment that DHs are facing the challenge of work overload, making it difficult for them to perform their duties effectively. P3 confirmed this opinion about the lack of time experienced by instructional leadership, providing the following response:

DHs don't have sufficient time to conduct instructional leadership. They have a lot of administrative and management duties. They conduct class visits and workshops and are forced to teach learners. They always support teachers, learners and parents. They also maintain good discipline of teachers and learners. It is true that they don't have enough time indeed.

The views of P3 about lack of time to conduct instructional leadership duties, indicate that work overload forces HoDs to perform some of their duties, like professional development and meetings after working hours.

The work overload experienced by the Departmental heads was also supported by participant P4 who provided the following response:

I agree that Departmental heads are experiencing many problems and one of the problems is that they have work overload. I say work load refers to the amount of work that the DH is expected to perform. I allocate them their functions, but I have realised that each one of them have a lot of work to do. According to departmental policy, the DHs are responsible for teaching and instructional leadership, and they also have administrative duties.

DH4 also confirmed the challenge of work overload experienced by Departmental heads in the school. DH4 emphasised this strong challenge by providing the following response:

There are many challenges that I experience as DH who is responsible for instructional leadership. One of the challenges is huge overload of work. I am responsible for teaching and assessment, monitoring the work of teachers, conducting class visits, meetings and professional development sessions, attending disciplinary problems of learners, resolving the challenges experienced by teachers in teaching and administrative duties. This is too much.

The challenge of work overload was also confirmed by DH6, who blamed the Department of Basic Education for the challenges. DH6 provided the following response:

I am an experienced DH but I am facing many challenges and one of them is the large amount of work. My work overload includes administrative duties, conducting class visits, workshops, extra- and co-curricular activities and parents' meetings, assisting teachers with challenges, control the work of teachers and learners, advise the principal, teaching and assessment of learners, and maintenance of discipline of teachers and learners.

It is very clear in the above responses of the participants that the only teacher or school management team member who is facing a serious challenge of huge work overload is the Departmental Head. It is plain to see now that the Departmental Head has more duties than the principal. The Departmental Head manages the school and does administrative duties with the principal but is also solely in charge of an entire department. The researcher believes that each department of a school, qualifies to have two Departmental heads.

The challenge of the workload of Departmental heads is supported by Wood, Seobi, Setlhare-Meltor and Waddington (2015), who assert that the Departmental heads have a huge workload because their role is to monitor teachers while they are teaching, and also to provide guidance on their teaching weaknesses. The challenge of work overload is also confirmed by Daniels (2017) who indicates that there are two types of risks of work overload. Firstly, the health and well-being of employees will deteriorate and secondly, musculoskeletal disorders will appear, especially when the body does not have sufficient recovery time and they can impact the quality of the service and the performance of the company.

The challenge is also supported by Mahfouz (2018), who emphasises that due to an immense work overload, many Departmental heads experience challenges in balancing their diverse administrative duties with their curriculum leadership functions. They also find themselves working extra hours and the increasing pressures placed on them lead to a state of mental and physical exhaustion caused by their professional life. According to Feye (2019), if Departmental heads are to take the role of an instructional leader seriously, they will need to put aside administrative duties so they can concentrate on enhancing teaching and learning. This perception is confirmed by Seobi and Wood (2016), who are of the opinion that many DHs are facing huge management and administrative roles, rather than working with teachers on an ongoing basis to improve instruction.

4.5.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Shortage of teaching and learning resources

The participants were asked to explain the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. An analysis of data revealed that the participants alluded that one of the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks is shortage of teaching and learning resources. This finding was supported by DH1 as follows:

I have many challenges and one of them is the shortage of teaching and learning resources. Our school has financial problems and we are not able to buy teaching and learning resources such as overhead projectors, maps, pictures and charts and computers. Learners are sharing textbooks. It is very

difficult to teach and learn without the necessary resources because it reduces the level of understanding by the learners.

The above opinion of DH1 asserts that shortage of teaching and learning resources is one of the major challenges experienced in schools. Teachers and Departmental heads do not have overhead projectors, maps, pictures, charts and computers and there is a shortage of textbooks.

P2 shared a similar sentiment regarding the challenge of a shortage of teaching and learning resources by providing the following response:

One of our serious challenges is that we have insufficient teaching and learning resources. Teaching and learning resources make the educational process more effective and interesting and encourage active learning. The problem is that we don't have money to buy the resources. I have requested the circuit manager and district office to assist us, but they never assisted us.

DH3 supported the challenge of a shortage of resources in the schools by providing the following response:

At our school we have several challenges and one of them is the shortage of teaching and learning aids. The teaching aids are very important to us because they help us to teach effectively. Because I don't have teaching aids, I am not able to explain my subject matter clearly and it is difficult for learners to understand the subject matter. At our school, there is poor academic performance learners because of sharing textbooks.

The above view about the shortage of resources in schools, allude to the fact that there is no effective teaching and learning in many schools due to the shortage of resources. Without teaching aids. Teachers are not able to explain subject content clearly and it is difficult for learners to understand the subject matter.

The shortage of teaching and learning resources was also confirmed as a serious challenge in teaching and learning by P4 who responded to the question as follows:

The shortage of teaching and learning materials or resources is a serious challenge to DHs, teachers and learners. How can you teach if you don't have anyone of them? All of them assist the teacher with the presentation and

transmission of educational content and the achievement of educational objectives, whilst assisting the learners in acquiring knowledge and profiling different abilities and values. I am very worried about this shortage.

The above quote regarding the shortage of teaching and learning resources, revealed that many teachers are unable to teach effectively because they do not have enough textbooks, images, maps, photographs, sketches, diagrams, films and written material such as newspaper clippings or articles from scientific and technical literature.

DH6 also supported the challenge of lack of teaching and learning resources responding as follows:

I have many challenges and one of them is the shortage of teaching and learning resources. We don't get any support from the circuit, district and province. Since 2020, the teachers find it difficult to teach without teaching aids. We have written plenty of letters to the circuit manager and the district but until now they don't assist us.

According to the above opinions from DH6 there is no effective teaching and learning due to the shortage of teaching and learning resources caused by lack of support from the circuit, district and province.

My perception about the responses of the participants regarding the challenge of lack of resources, is that the poor performance of learners in many schools, is caused by the scarcity of teaching and learning resources. I therefore believe that the Department of Basic Education also contributes to the poor performance of the learners. Many studies have revealed that there is no effective teaching and learning if there are no teaching and learning resources.

According to Okongo, Ngao, Rop and Nyongesa (2015), equipment and learning materials are very significant in schooling because it is often through the use of equipment that learners are able to gain the appropriate learning experiences in school. This perception is supported by Adeogun and Osifila (2008), who emphasises that the availability, relevance and adequacy of education resource items contribute to academic achievement, while O'Connor (1997), asserts that all methods of teaching employed by teachers are largely influenced by the resources and facilities available in the school. According to Jimenez-Castellano (2008), teaching and learning

resources have a strong positive impact on school achievement because they promote high quality instruction and learning in schools. All these perceptions on teaching and learning resources indicate that non-availability of teaching and learning resources will undoubtedly contribute to poor academic performance of the learners.

The use of teaching and learning resources in teaching and learning is confirmed by Busijeta (2013), who asserts that the purpose of utilising teaching and learning resources in class is to assist the teacher with the presentation and transmission of educational content and the achievement of educational objectives, whilst aiding the students in acquiring knowledge and profiling different abilities and values. However, the purpose and role of teaching and learning resources don't only consist of making the educational process more attractive and interesting, but also to encourage students to participate in active learning, develop different skills and adopt desirable values and attitudes. (Busijeta, 2013). In the field of didactic theory, as well as in the teaching practice, the classification of teaching and learning resources into visual, auditory and audio-visual resources is universally accepted (Onassen, 2004).

4.5.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Poor discipline of learners

The participants were asked to explain the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. An analysis of data revealed that the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks is the poor discipline of learners. This perception was reinforced by P1 who alluded that there are rules of discipline or a code of conduct in the schools, but the learners do not comply with the code of conduct. P1 buttressed the above notion by declaring:

We have many challenges and one of them is the poor discipline of learners. We have rules that guide learners' behaviour, but they don't follow the rules. We still have many learners with poor discipline. These learners are not interested in learning, always come to school late, don't do schoolwork, make noise in classes, go home during break, fight in class, always disrupt teachers, smoke in the toilets, sell drugs and make noise in the classes.

The above response about the challenges experienced by Departmental heads indicates that there are codes of conduct in the schools, but the problem is that there is still pack of peace in the schools.

Similarly, DH1 confirmed that there is poor discipline of learners in the schools asserting:

We are experiencing many challenges caused by poor discipline of learners. Some learners come to school drunk and even bring the alcohol to school. During break they drink alcohol in the classrooms. After break, most drunk learners go to classes and cause many problems. They make noise, fight and play in the classes and when the teachers arrive, they continue to make noise.

The above quotation revealed that many learners are violating the rules of the school by coming to school late, making noise, fighting and playing in the classes.

That perception was reinforced by P3 who provided the following response:

Although, we have a code of conduct at our school, we have poor discipline of learners. Some learners do not co-operate, always break the rules, are always absent from school, make noise in class, disrespect teachers, smoke in public, come to school late and go home during break. Parents leave everything to the school...(P3).

The above quotation, about the violation of code of conduct, indicates that there is no peace in the school because some learners do not co-operate and they constantly break the rules, but parents do not assist teachers in maintaining discipline.

P4 supported the problem of the violation the of code of conduct by learners, responding as follows:

At our school we have many learners with poor discipline. Many learners are violating the code of conduct of the school. Some learners are bullying other learners and also teachers, do not take instructions and challenge everyone. Many teachers lose their temper and discipline them illegally. We also discovered that some parents are over protecting those children by quarrelling with teachers who punish them.

The above quotation reveals that there is poor discipline in schools caused by learners who violate the code of conduct of the school. Those learners continually bully other learners and teachers, and their parents do not support the teachers.

Participants P5 and DH5 from School E supported the challenge of poor discipline of learners. P5 buttressed this notion by declaring the following:

At our school we have a very bad status of discipline. All the classes have a code of conduct, but ill-disciplined learners are always coming to school late, have no respect, are bunking classes and they are standing behind the toilet smoking. Some parents do not assist teachers to maintain discipline but blame them for abusing their children.

The above quotation revealed that there is no peace in schools because many learners are violating school laws by coming to school late, smoking in the toilets and bunking classes. The problem is that some parents are supporting ill-disciplined learners and are blaming the teachers for abusing their children. This assertion is supported by the following statement from DH5:

At our school we are worried by the poor discipline of our learners. We are currently having a code of conduct to guide learner's behaviour, but they don't always follow the rules. Many learners always come to school late, are not interested in learning, go home during break, fight in class, always disrupt teachers, smoke in the toilets, sell drugs and make noise in the classes, they don't do schoolwork and they don't respect the teachers.

The above opinion regarding violation of school laws by learners, reveals that teachers are struggling to maintain good discipline at school. Many learners come to school late, disrespect teachers, don't do schoolwork, go home during break, fight in class, always disrupt teachers, smoke in the toilets, sell drugs and make noise in the classes.

P6 also confirmed that one of the difficulties teachers face while managing discipline is the poor discipline of learners. This conclusion implies that the students are breaking the school's code of conduct. This assertion was confirmed by P6 as follows:

At our school, we are currently having a code of conduct to guide learner's behaviour, but the learners don't always follow the rules. Many learners always come to school late, they don't do school work, they are bunking classes, they are standing behind the toilet smoking, they make noise in classes and they don't respect the teachers.

The above view revealed that teachers always implement the code of conduct but the learners still violate the rules of the school. HoD6 also supported the challenge of poor behaviour of learners.

The above responses of the participants revealed that, in many schools, there is the challenge of poor discipline of learners, which disrupts teaching, learning and academic performance of learners. According to the researcher's perception of this challenge, our communities are responsible for the poor discipline of learners

The challenge of violation of the school code of conduct is also confirmed by Geltner (2014), who emphasises that teachers should educate learners about the code of conduct, monitor their behaviour and emphasize responsibility. The breaking of school rules should not be viewed only as a negative action towards the school, but also a negative action towards fellow learners and teachers (Department of Education, 2018). According to Kelly (2020), schools should institute policies requiring teachers to contact stakeholders such as the school governing body and the parents periodically throughout the year. Liu, Sulaimani and Henning (2020), emphasise that involving parents in their children's education not only increases the child's achievement but also helps the parents to improve the behaviour of their children.

4.5.2.4 Sub-theme 4: Lack of support by parents

The participants were asked to explain the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. An analysis of data revealed it to be a lack of support by parents. P1 supported the opinion as follows:

We think and believe that our other main challenge is the fact that most parents do not support the education of their children due to the reason that most of them are working far from home. Effective learning is supposed to be a triangle of a

teacher, parent and a learner. In our situation the triangle is not working because nobody is there to assist them at home.

According to the above perception from P1, a lack of support from parents and poor discipline of learners is caused by parents who are not able to assist teachers because they are not available at home. This perception reveals that most parents are working in urban areas and their children are staying alone.

Lack of support from the parents as a challenge of instructional leadership was also confirmed by P2 who responded as follows:

Our children are not motivated to learn due to lack of support from their parents. Many parents think that teaching their children is only in the hands of teachers. Some learners are from child headed families where there is no one to guide them nor offer support in education related matters.

The above quotation reveals that many parents do not support teachers in maintaining school discipline because they regard it as the work of teachers only. The parents indicate that teachers are paid by the government to perform that duty and they are not paid to perform that duty.

The challenges experienced by Departmental heads due to lack of support from the parents, was confirmed by P4 who responded as follows:

The failure of the parents to support the teachers is one of the challenges experienced by DHs and teachers. Nowadays, some parents regard them as their enemies because they punish their children. Some of the parents refuse to come to school when their children violated a code of conduct of the school and very few parents attend parents' meetings.

The above views about the lack of support from parents, reveals that there is a poor relationship between the parents and teachers. This is illustrated by the fact that most parents refuse to come to school when their children violate school rules and they also don't attend meetings.

The lack of support from parents was also confirmed by P6 who answered as follows:

In our school, most parents do not support the teachers in managing discipline of learners. Some parents just come to school when they want to blame the teachers for mistreating or abusing their children by punishing them. Some of the parents don't co-operate, even when we call parents, the parents will not come to school. That is a serious challenge.

According to the above quotation, parents do not support teachers because they believe that teachers are their enemies. P6 emphasises that parents blame teachers for poor the discipline of their children and they don't attend meetings to discuss the problems of poor discipline.

It is very clear from the participants' responses that lack of parental involvement contribute to poor academic performance of learners. Unfortunately, there are some parents who believe that they can only be involved in their children's education if they are also paid a salary. This perception is very unreasonable and should be reviewed by those parents. All parents with children in school should therefore cooperate with the teachers in order to support effective learning of their children.

The role of parents in supporting teachers in maintaining good discipline of learners is confirmed by Garcia and Thornton (2014) who assert that the involvement of family in learning helps to improve student performance, reduces absenteeism and restores parents' confidence in their children's education. According to Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004), one of the challenges that hampers effective parental involvement is low income, leading them to work more jobs and spend less time at home helping their children with school work. This places a burden on teachers because they are expected to produce good results yet they are not receiving any support from parents (Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004).

4.5.2.5 Sub-theme 5: Lack of instructional leadership and management skills

The participants were asked to explain the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. An analysis of data revealed it to be a lack of instructional leadership and management skills. HoD2 provided the following response to the question:

Yes, we are experiencing a challenge of lack of instructional leadership knowledge and skills. I only possess sufficient knowledge and skills for the subject in my department. When I was appointed as DH, I started to struggle to be a leader of my department. I am assisted by the principal who always advise me to enrol for instructional leadership diploma at universities.

DH4 supported the challenge of lack of knowledge and skills in instructional leadership. DH4 brought the following views to the fore:

Many of us DHs are experiencing a challenge of lack of knowledge in instructional leadership. At university, we only focused on teaching knowledge of two subjects and not instructional leadership and management. When a teacher is appointed as DH, he or she starts to experience a challenge of lack of knowledge in leadership and management. I solved this problem by enrolling for a diploma in leadership and management at Unisa.

The above opinion regarding the challenge brought about from lack of knowledge of instructional leadership, reveals that if a teacher is promoted as Departmental Head, he or she should immediately study instructional leadership at any university. DH5 also confirmed the challenge of lack of knowledge and skills in leadership and management one experiences when in the position of Departmental Head. DH5, in her own words, provided the following answer to the question:

I and my colleagues are experiencing many challenges and the worst one is the lack of leadership and management skills. The challenge is that when we were at university we focused only on the subject knowledge and skills. I am currently suffering because of lack of leadership and management knowledge and skills. I then enrolled for a diploma in instructional leadership at Pretoria University of Technology. I now see improvement in my instructional leadership.

The above opinion, reveals that Departmental heads who have not yet studied instructional leadership and management, are experiencing challenges. Departmental heads can only resolve this challenge by studying instructional leadership at universities and attending professional development sessions. DH6 provided the following similar views:

Many of us are experiencing a challenge of lack of knowledge and skills in leadership and management. I am not happy because teachers complain that I am autocratic. I then realised that I am lacking leadership and management skills. I am a graduate in my subject but not in leadership and management. Then this year, I enrolled for leadership and management degree at Wits University.

The above opinion reveals that there are Departmental heads who admit that they do not possess the necessary knowledge of instructional leadership. The above view is advice to Departmental heads to ensure that they possess the necessary knowledge by registering at universities.

It is evident from the responses of the participants that many teachers are appointed as Departmental heads without the necessary qualifications. They are appointed to perform instructional, administrative and management functions, but they don't possess the knowledge and skills necessary for those duties. Those teachers find it difficult to perform their duties effectively and are therefore compelled to immediately register at universities to acquire the relevant knowledge and skills.

The views of the participants are supported by Spillane and Lee (2014), who assert that the instructional leaders may know the importance of instructional leadership but fail to understand how to be instructional leaders in a school context. Spillane and Lee (2014) also emphasise that instructional leaders may be aware of the challenges experienced by the teachers in the implementation of the curriculum, but their lack of relevant skills make it impossible for them to support the teachers. Similarly, Fink and Markholt (2013), emphasise that, due to lack of knowledge and skills for providing support and guidance, many instructional leaders are unsure of how to implement this leadership style effectively in schools. According to Mestry (2017), instructional leaders should attend continuous professional development training sessions to improve their knowledge and skills in instructional leadership. Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) recommend that the Department of Basic Education should organise developmental workshop sessions for instructional leaders to equip them with subject knowledge and leadership abilities.

4.5.3 Main theme 3: The strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning

It was of critical importance to gain opinions regarding the strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning. The researcher therefore wanted to draw judgements from the participants on what can be done by Departmental heads to improve effective teaching and learning. The participants were asked to explain strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning. After analysing the responses of participants from the interview data, the following sub-themes emerged from the transcript analysis: designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan, teamwork strategy, conducting professional development or in-service training of teachers, parental involvement, providing sufficient teaching and learning resources.

4.5.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan

An analysis of data revealed that Departmental heads can improve effective teaching and learning by designing the curriculum improvement plan. P1 responded as follows:

We have decided to implement various strategies to enhance effective teaching and learning and the first strategy is to design the curriculum improvement plan. If there is poor performance of the learners, it is very important for DHs to adjust both school curriculum and subject curriculum. We shall remove two or three subjects and replace them with new subjects. We shall also change the manner in which they are designed.

According to the above view, the DHs can improve the academic performance of learners by designing a new curriculum plan aimed at changing the subjects or the presentation of the curriculum. P3 also supported designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan, proving the following response:

In schools we are using various strategies to improve teaching and learning and one of them is to improve the curriculum of the school or the subjects that are very difficult for the learners. We have decided to improve the school curriculum by changing one or two subjects that we hope will be understood by the learners.

The above quotation that Departmental heads can improve teaching and learning by improving the presentation of the curriculum and by changing the subjects which are difficult for the learners. The strategy of enhancing of the curriculum of the school, was

confirmed by P4 who indicated that it is the key to better academic performance of learners. P4 provided the following response to the question:

The Departmental head is responsible for adjusting or improving the curriculum. DHs should design a plan to enhance the academic performance of the learners. In our school, we analyse the success of the school curriculum and subject curriculum every year in order to discover whether we need to design the academic or curriculum improvement plan.

The views about improving teaching and learning by designing a plan of improving the curriculum, reveals that every year Departmental heads should investigate whether there is good academic performance of the learners in a subject, then design a plan for improving the implementation of the curriculum for that subject.

P6 also supported the design of an academic or curriculum improvement plan to improve teaching and learning, which would result in the good academic performance of learners. P6 responded to the question as follows:

In schools, it is important to review the implementation of the curriculum and then design and implement a new curriculum plan which will improve teaching and learning. The SMT is responsible for the amendment of the curriculum. The SMT is not allowed to change the curriculum but to design strategies of improving the implementation of the curriculum. A school can introduce new subjects and remove others or make no changes.

According to the above view about designing curriculum improvement plans, a Departmental Head should always check the academic performance of the learners. If there is poor academic performance, the Departmental Head should design and implement a plan for improving the implementation of the curriculum.

According to the participants' responses, it is very important to review the subjects taught in each grade, to determine if the subjects that are too difficult for the learners should be replaced. This view implies that, at the end of each year, Departmental heads should review the performance of the learners in the past three years. If there is effective teaching of a subject, but learners find it difficult to learn that subject, Departmental heads are free to replace that subject if it is not a compulsory subject.

4.5.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Teamwork strategy

The researcher sought to draw opinions from participants on the strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning. An analysis of data revealed that implementing a teamwork strategy will be able to ensure effective teaching and learning. This finding was confirmed by P1 who stated:

At our school we also use teamwork to improve teaching and learning in schools. In teamwork teachers work together effectively to achieve a particular goal. As a team, the teachers work together without any conflict to improve teaching and learning. At our school our SMT and departments are working as teams and the DHs are leaders of those teams. All the teachers in our school are team members. We want to improve the functioning of all teams.

According to this response, P1 felt that the best strategy for improving teaching and learning, is teamwork. Moreover, P2 equally highlighted that teamwork is the main strategy for improving teaching and learning and the academic performance of learners in a school. P2 responded to the question as follows:

There are so many strategies that can be implemented to improve teaching and learning in schools and one of them is teamwork. Generally, teachers in various departments are working as the functioning of political parties. We are so divided that when we are in meetings we always quarrel and point fingers at each other. I believe that if we can be able to work as a team of a school, we shall destroy the challenges that we experience.

The above opinion reveals that teachers are not able to work effectively because they are divided and do not support each other. P2 asserts that all the challenges experienced by teachers can be fully resolved by working as a team.

P4 shared similar views on working as a team in order to improve teaching and learning and asserted that:

We can improve teaching and learning by working as a team; what we call teamwork. A team is a group of people who compete with each other but motivate each other to work together, integrate their ideas, knowledge and skills, avoid

quarrels and compete with other schools together. If we start to work as a team, we are indicating that we belong to one school.

The above opinion revealed that there is only one key to effective teaching and learning, that being teamwork. Teachers who work in teams, support each other, work together and motivate each other.

P5 also felt that teachers should use the strategy of working as a team to improve teaching and learning. P5 provided the following response to the question:

Many teachers are divided because they always compete and don't support each other. All these problems contribute to poor teaching and learning. If teachers want to improve teaching, learning and academic performance of learners they must work together in a special group called a team. A team can have more than one head and team members share the responsibility. Team members also focus on achieving the team goals.

The above opinion reveals that the major cause of challenges in schools is lack of teamwork and teachers instead working individually. Therefore, P5 emphasises that teamwork is very important because teachers will focus on a common goal and work together.

An analysis of the above responses reveals that teachers in a department, or the whole school, should embrace teamwork instead of competing against each other to accomplish the needs of learners. Teamwork develops trust, shared responsibility, motivation and creativity among team members. Therefore, in order to teach effectively, teachers should regard a department as a team of teachers who want to achieve the same purpose. The Departmental head should treat teachers as team members in such a way that there is no cause for complaint and dissatisfaction and motivate them in such a way that their abilities will be utilised to the full.

The advantages of using teamwork to improve teaching and learning is confirmed by Don and Raman (2019), who emphasises that effective teams make best and quality decisions via sharing of knowledge and skills of team members, ensuring that the school runs smoothly and manage change successfully.

Pauli (2023) contends that teamwork improves communication, the performance of the school, enhances the strengths of each teacher and ultimately, the school as a whole. Surbhi (2018) used the following picture to explain that members of a team work jointly to maximise the strengths and minimise the weakness by complementing each other.



According to Peterson (2020), effective teacher teamwork strengthens leadership, builds strong schools and continuous improvement of teaching and learning, provides exponential outcomes in efficiencies and shared responsibilities, creates a feeling of family, inclusion and interdependence, provides a strong teacher voice and significantly extends the base of organizational leadership, accountability and momentum to the teachers.

4.5.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Professional development of teachers

The participants were asked to name strategies that could be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning. An analysis of data revealed that Departmental heads can improve effective teaching and learning by conducting professional development of teachers. This finding was supported by P1 as follows:

We can use professional development of teachers to enhance teaching and learning. Professional development includes workshops, conferences, in-service training-advance studies, research and development, and pilot programs.

The above quotation reveals that teachers need further training while at work, to equip them with knowledge of improving teaching and learning. DH1 of School A concurred with the above view stating the following:

One of my strategies of improving teaching and learning is to conduct professional development of teachers. The aim is to equip the teachers in my department with the necessary knowledge and skills of the subject, which assists them to improve teaching and learning and the academic performance of the learners. I conduct this strategy once per month, in the first semester and once per term in the second semester.

The views of DH1 of School A about using professional development to improve teaching and learning, reveals that the aim of professional development is to train teachers to improve teaching and learning. The implementation of professional development as a strategy for improving teaching and learning was also supported by DH2 who offered the following opinion:

We DHs must conduct professional development in the form of workshops, to assist the teachers to improve teaching and learning. I emphasise the learner-centred approach, where learners assume a much more active role in the learning process. I discourage the teachers to use teacher-centred approach which consists of lecture methods. I also assist the teachers about the use of effective teaching aids and assessment methods.

The opinion of DH2 from School B, reveals that in professional development, teachers are trained in using effective teaching and assessment methods and resources.

P4 also confirmed the use of a professional development strategy to improve teaching and learning in schools providing the following response to the question:

One of the duties of DHs is to improve teaching and learning by conducting professional development of teachers after school. In professional development, teachers are allowed to ask questions. The DHs teachers train teachers about new teaching methods in order to enhance teaching and learning.

The above quotation reveals that in professional development sessions, the Departmental heads train the teachers about effective teaching methods and how they can resolve the challenges that they experience in teaching

That perception was reinforced by P5 as follows:

In our school, DHs are also using professional development strategy or workshops, to equip the teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills of improving teaching and learning. In the workshops the DHs assist teachers to improve their teaching and learning methods, assessment and solving their problems.

According to the views of P5, professional development means conducting workshops for teachers to prepare them to teach effectively. P5 also revealed that principals conduct professional development sessions for Departmental heads to prepare them to conduct effective professional development for teachers.

DH6 reinforced the perception as follows:

One of the strategies of ensuring effective teaching and learning is to conduct professional development. This strategy provides teachers with more knowledge and skills of teaching and solving their challenges. I also train teachers about designing schemes of work and lesson plans, how to use effective teaching and assessment methods, teaching aids and learning aids and how to design effective tests and examination questions.

The above quotation reveals the advantages of conducting professional development, namely, designing schemes of work and lesson plans, how to use effective teaching methods, how to assesses the learners, how to use effective teaching aids and learning aids, and how to design effective tests and examination questions.

It is evident form the above responses that all professional people require retraining in order to update their knowledge and skills. This implies that in all professions there are challenges, and the professional should be prepared to receive more training to be able to solve the challenges. Professional development of teachers is, therefore, a challenge to the Departmental heads because they are not able to conduct professional development if they don't possess more knowledge and skills than the teachers.

According to Glattenhorn (2007), professional development refers to the development of a person's professional role and by gaining increased experience in their teaching role. Through examination of their teaching ability, they systematically gain increased experience in their professional growth. According to Sonawane (2016), high-quality

professional-learning opportunities for teachers align with goals, state and district standards and assessments as well as other professional-learning activities, core content and modelling of teaching strategies for the content, provides the chance for teachers to collaborate and includes follow-up and continuous feedback. Improving teaching and learning by conducting professional development sessions is also supported by Trehearn (2015), who asserts that professional development promotes learners' academic performance because they are a continuous, voluntary, self-motivated, collaborative and learner-centred pursuit of knowledge. According to Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) the aim of conducting professional development is to support inexperienced and experienced professionals who wish to learn and improve their teaching skills to improve student learning.

4.5.3.4 Sub-theme 4: Parental involvement

The researcher wanted to acquire information about the strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning. After analysing the data, it was discovered that Departmental heads can improve effective teaching and learning by parental involvement.

P1 offered his opinion as follows:

The last method that I believe can assist to improve teaching and learning is to involve the parents in the education of their children. The DHs and teachers should invite parents to a meeting where they train the parents about supporting their children at home. They parents are advised to provide children with time to study their books, support them and if possible, assist them when they write their homework or assignments at home.

The above opinion revealed that Departmental heads can improve teaching and learning by inviting parents to meetings, training parents on how to support their children when they study and do homework at home.

This notion is reiterated by P3 who stated that:

One of the duties of DHs to ensure that parents are involved in the learning of their children. The parents should be advised to ensure that their children are provided with a peaceful atmosphere and time at home. The parents should

never discuss family problems and quarrel in front of their children because it can negatively affect their learning. The parents should assist their children to write their homework at home.

The views of P3 revealed that parents should assist their children when they read and do homework and they should request their brothers, sisters and even neighbours to assist their children. DH3 also supported the use of parental involvement to improve teaching and learning. DH3 also buttressed the above notion by declaring the following:

One of the duties of DHs and teachers is to involve the parents in the learning of their children. I regularly convene meetings of parents to show them how they should assist children to learn at home. The teachers must try to build up a good relationship with the parents and advise the parents to create a good learning environment at home, assist them when they do homework, assist them to read and also monitor all their activities at home.

The above quotation from DH3, about parental involvement, revealed that teachers should always work with parents to encourage their children to do homework and read books, motivate them and monitor all their activities at home.

The use of parental involvement to improve teaching and learning was also confirmed by DH4 who responded to the question as follows:

I always involve the parents in the education of their children at home. The teachers must meet the parents regularly in meetings to actually train them informally, to teach their children at home. The parents must be advised to assist their children to do homework, assist their children to do projects and assist their children to use learning aids.

The above quotation revealed that parents should assist their children when they do homework and projects at home, and to use learning aids such as tape recorders, computers and cell phones. P5 also confirmed the significance of parental involvement in children's learning. In his own words, P5 alluded the following response about parental involvement:

Many parents are willing to assist their children but they don't know how to assist their children. It is therefore very important for teachers and Departmental heads to meet the parents in a meeting and discuss how they can support their children. The parents should learn about their children's activities in school, from the teachers and always correct the child if something is wrong. The parents should be advised not to give their children a huge amount of work at home.

According to the above quotation teachers should train parents in assisting their children at home. Parents should check the performance of their children, motivate them to study and do homework at home.

DH6, in his own words, responded as follows to the question:

Another method of improving teaching and learning is to use parental involvement. The teachers should create a good relationship with the parents in order to motivate them to be teachers at home. The teachers should convene meetings of parents to discuss how they should assist their children to learn effectively. The parents should ensure that their children have enough time to learn at home. The parents should assist their children to do homework.

The opinions of DH6 about parental involvement revealed that teachers should motivate parents to use their own resources such as time, skills, knowledge and energy at home with different activities to assist their children in learning.

According to the above responses, Departmental heads should motivate the parents to participate in their children's learning. It is very clear that parents are not expected to work as teachers but are expected to support and motivate their children to learn at home. The problem is that many parents do not know they should support and motivate their children to learn. It is, therefore, the duty of Departmental heads to train teachers to motivate and support children.

The involvement of parents in their children's learning is also supported by Pius (2021), who emphasises that the best predictor of the success of a child in their academic pursuit is the extent of the parents' involvement in the child's educational progress. According to Pius (2021), when parents involve themselves in their children's academic lives, students not only have the support base at home to attend

to and finish their homework, but also develop a lifelong passion to learning, higher grades and test scores, more positive attitude and behaviour, better attendance and higher academic performance. According to Fraser-Thill (2020), parental involvement in their kids' education has far-reaching benefits, namely, high academic performance of learners, good school attendance, creation of good behaviour of children, social functioning and mental health. Involved parents improve academic achievement in a number of ways, such as by establishing a mastery orientation toward learning and promoting self-discipline essential for academic success (Gonzalez-DeHass, 2019). Parental involvement is also supported by Garcia and Thornton (2014), who emphasise that family involvement in education enhances learner achievement, lowers truancy and rebuilds parents' confidence in their children's education. According to Hornby and Lafaele (2011) parental involvement is an important component of education and may be achieved at home by doing things like listening to the child as they read and helping them with their homework, as well as at school by participating in events like parents' meetings and workshops on education. According to Llamas and Tuazon (2016), parents become more at ease when the education system demands that parents participate in school activities and parent-teacher collaborations have a significant positive impact on children's education.

4.5.3.5 Sub-theme 5: Providing sufficient teaching and learning resources

The participants were asked to name strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads implement to ensure effective teaching and learning. An analysis of data revealed it can be done by providing sufficient teaching and learning resources. DH1 responded as follows:

One of the strategies of ensuring effective teaching and learning is to provide teachers with sufficient teaching and learning resources. In my department, I give teachers books, blackboards, chalks, dusters, indicators, pictures, maps, graphs, charts and posters. Teaching resources help students to understand the subject matter and retain what they have been taught. I also provide the teachers with learning aids for learners.

The above quotation from DH1 from School A, reveals that in some schools, teachers are provided with teaching resources so that they can ensure that learners understand

what they are teaching them. DH2 also confirmed the use of teaching and learning aids to improve teaching and learning. DH2 asserted that:

I always ensure that the teachers in my department, have sufficient teaching and learning resources. Teachers are able to teach all lessons effectively, when they use teaching resources and the learners are able to understand what is presented by the teacher. At our school we don't have enough money to buy sufficient teaching aids and I always go to the business sector to request some teaching aids.

The above opinion reveals that teaching resources are very important for improving teaching and learning because learners are better able to understand what is presented by the teachers. DH2 indicates that they do not have sufficient resources in their department because of financial problems of the school.

DH4 reinforced the perception responding to the question as follows:

I always ensure that the teachers in my department have effective teaching resources and the learners also have effective learning resources such as textbooks. At the beginning of the year, we had shortage of textbooks. In March, we received the outstanding textbooks from the department of education and we also have workbooks, flat pictures, maps, charts, cartoons and posters).

The above opinion reveals that there are Departmental heads who are able to obtain teaching and learning resources such as flat pictures, maps, charts, cartoons and posters and give them to the teachers and ensure all learners have textbooks DH6 buttressed the above notion by declaring:

In my department, I also improve teaching and learning by providing teachers with teaching resources and learners with learning resources. I give teachers' resources such as maps and tape recorders and also give learners resources such as textbooks and workbooks. This year we have shortage of textbooks and tape recorders. I also request the resources from the private or business sector and some of them assist me.

The above quotation revealed that some Departmental heads provide teachers and learners with teaching and learning resources. Departmental heads also get teaching and learning resources from the private sector.

The participants' responses revealed clearly that teachers cannot teach effectively if they don't possess relevant resources for teaching the subject matter. This implies that the intention of using teaching and learning resources in class is to help the teachers with the presentation and transmission of subject matter and the achievement of educational objectives, whilst assisting the learners to learn effectively. The researcher emphasises that there is no effective teaching and learning if there are no teaching and learning resources. The Department of Education should ensure that all schools possess teaching and learning resources. It would be unfair to blame a teacher for the poor performance of the learners, if the learners have no textbooks.

According to Wilson (2014), resources are recognised as aiding in the processing of information by creating interest in learners, attracting and maintaining attention, helping understanding and aiding memory, so that the knowledge of the learners can be greatly increased, and their learning enriched to achieve their academic goals. According to Right (2018), teaching materials are instructional components of lesson planning, significantly support student learning, allow the students to explore knowledge independently, act as a guide for both the teacher and student in that they offer a valuable routine, provide a student with important opportunities to practice a new skill gained in class and increase student success.

4.6. THE PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED BY OBSERVATION

The aim of this section is to present, analyse and interpret the data collected by means of non-participant observations of six Departmental heads in six selected schools of the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District in Limpopo Province. An analysis of data collected through observations was based on one research question, which was used as theme number 1, namely; *What is the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader?*

The aim was specifically to observe how Departmental heads perform their instructional duties during that time. The observation schedule included the following categories: how instructional leadership strategies were employed, how morning briefings were conducted, how issues related to instructional roles were addressed and the effectiveness of the lessons. These pre-determined items of focus ensured

that the researcher remained focused on issues of instructional leadership during the observation period. The following observations were conducted in each school:

- (a) Observation of 1 morning briefings conducted by Departmental heads
- (b) Observation of 1 meeting of the Departmental heads and teachers.
- (c) Observation of 1 class visit of Departmental heads.

The next section focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected through observations in each of the six schools.

4.6.1 Observation in School A

4.6.1.1 Main theme 1: The instructional leadership role of the Departmental heads on teaching and academic performance of learners

Main theme one emerged from an analysis of the role of the Departmental Head, in the data collected through observations. This analysis was based on research question one. The researcher first observed the morning briefings conducted by the Departmental heads. Briefing refers to a type of communication or meeting in which the manager and team get together in person in the morning to share information, ask questions, and provide feedback (Cheprasov, 2022:01). A morning briefing is therefore a dialogue between two or more teachers using concise and relevant information to promote effective communication before they go to the classes to teach the learners. The Departmental Head and four teachers met in the staffroom and started to discuss the important tasks of that day. The Departmental Head explained how to conduct the monthly geography test that day. The Departmental Head as an instructional leader wanted to ensure that the assessment of learners was going to be conducted effectively.

Data was collected by observing a meeting of the Departmental heads and teachers. All the geography teachers attended the meeting after school at 14h30. The meeting was conducted by the geography DH in the staffroom. The researcher approached the DH and explained to him that she wanted to observe their meeting from an outside perspective and he allowed it. The aim of the meeting was to discuss how to implement formative assessment in geography classes. The Departmental Head started the discussion and all the teachers participated for 60 minutes. The researcher listened

and wrote notes. According to the observation, all teachers were motivated to participate in the discussion on the matter. After 60 minutes the Departmental Head thanked the teachers for attending the meeting after school and for contributing ideas on how formative assessment could be implemented in geography. It was very clear that the Departmental Head was not giving the teachers instruction, but wanted them to contribute to how formative assessment should be implemented in their classes.

Data was also collected through class visits of teachers, conducted by Departmental heads. The researcher was also involved in the observation of a meeting of the Departmental heads and the teachers. On a Wednesday afternoon, the Departmental Head conducted a class visit of one Grade 10 history teacher. It was requested that the Departmental Head allow the researcher inside the class to observe how the class visit of the geography teacher would be conducted. The observation of the class visit by the Departmental Head was based on items of focus which were placed on the observation schedule prior to the observation. The researcher observed the Departmental Head once during her class visit. The findings of this observations are based on the agenda of issues which appeared on the observation schedule. The teacher's timetable indicated that it was period 4 when the lesson started, and the teacher was teaching history. According to the observations of the Departmental Head, the classroom climate was very good because all the learners enjoyed the lesson and participated in learning by providing answers and asking questions. The teacher seemed to be comfortable with the presence of the Departmental Head and the researcher. It was observed that the DH was holding the teacher's preparation of the lesson. The teacher started teaching history to the Grade 10 learners while the Departmental Head and the researcher were seated near a table looking towards the learners and listening to the presentation of the lesson. The Departmental Head never interrupted the teacher during the lesson. There was a clear introduction and presentation of the lesson and the learners listened attentively. The learners participated in the lesson after which they wrote a classroom exercise. The teacher showed to have a very clear understanding and interest in the subject content. It was observed that the teacher made use of a formative assessment to see if the learners understood what he was teaching and used various teaching materials such as pictures and textbooks. The teacher concluded the lesson by asking the learners questions orally. All the learners participated happily in answering the questions. While

the learners wrote their classwork, the DH started a discussion with the teacher. Upon request the teacher gave the researcher access to the lesson plan. The Departmental Head congratulated the geography teacher for the manner in which he presented the lesson and how the learners participated in the learning.

4.6.2 Observation in School B

4.6.2.1 Main theme 1: The instructional leadership role of the Departmental heads on teaching and academic performance of learners

Main theme one was produced by analysing the observations of the instructional leadership role of the Departmental Head on teaching and academic performance of learners, as well as document analysis. This analysis was based on research question one. In School B, observations were conducted of morning briefings, meetings of Departmental heads with teachers, and the observation of one class visit by the Departmental Head. The morning briefing was conducted outside of the staffroom. The observation focussed on the briefing of the life sciences teachers regarding their work. According to Wilkinson (2019), the concept *morning briefing* means a regular short meeting which energises a team and aligns them to the collective goals for the day.

The Departmental Head conducted morning briefings by explaining to the teachers what they needed to know before they started their work of presenting lessons to the learners. Three life sciences teachers and the Departmental Head met outside the staffroom to discuss the important task of that particular day which involved how to conduct the monthly test of life sciences on that day. The Departmental Head conducted the morning briefing to ensure that the teachers implement effective assessment of learners.

In School B, data was collected through observation of a meeting of Departmental Head and teachers. The history teachers attended the meeting after school from 14h40 in the staffroom. The researcher requested to observe their meeting from outside and the Departmental Head accepted. The meeting was led by the Departmental Head, and the aim of the meeting was to discuss the implementation of formative assessment in history classes. The Departmental Head and the teachers

discussed the implementation method of formative assessment for 40 minutes, while the researcher listened from outside and noted important points. All the teachers were motivated by the Departmental Head to discuss the matter. After 40 minutes the Departmental Head concluded the discussion and thanked the teachers for attending the meeting after school and for contributing to how formative assessment of history should be implemented in the class. The Departmental Head was not just giving instructions to the teachers, but allowed them to contribute ideas on how they can implement formative assessment in their classes.

In School B, I also collected data through the observation of class visits of teachers conducted by the Departmental Head. On Thursday at 11h30, the Departmental Head conducted a class visit of one Grade 11 maths teacher. The researcher requested permission from the Departmental Head to enter the classroom to observe how he conducted his class visit of the Maths teacher and was welcomed. Observation of the class visit of the Departmental Head was guided by focus items, which were placed on the observation schedule prior to the observation. The Departmental Head during her class visit only observed once and the findings of the observations were guided by the agenda of issues which appeared on the observation schedule. The teacher started to present the maths lesson in the fourth period. There was a clear introduction and presentation of the lesson and the learners listened attentively. The classroom climate was very good, the lesson was enjoyed by all the learners and they all participated in learning by answering and asking questions. The teacher was comfortable with the presence of the Departmental Head and the researcher. The Departmental Head analysed the teacher's preparation of the lesson. During the presentation of the lesson, the Departmental Head never interrupted the teacher. The learners participated in the lesson until the end when they wrote the classroom exercise. It was observed that the teacher possessed a very clear comprehension and interest in the subject content. Upon request the teacher gave the researcher access to the lesson plan. The Maths teacher was congratulated by the Departmental Head for the manner in which he presented the lesson and how the learners participated in the lesson.

4.6.3 Observation in School C

4.6.3.1 Main theme 1: The instructional leadership role of the Departmental heads on teaching and academic performance of learners

Main theme one emerged from my analysis of the role of instructional leadership of the Departmental Head. This analysis was based on research question one. In School C, observations were conducted of how the Departmental Head conduct morning briefings, meeting of the Departmental heads with teachers and one class visit by the Departmental heads. A school morning briefing is a dialogue between two or more teachers used to advise or inform each other before they go to the classes to teach the learners. The Departmental Head and three history teachers met in the staffroom for their morning briefing. The Departmental Head provided information to the teachers and spoke about assigning learners history projects that day and the following day. The teachers asked questions and the briefing was concluded after 4 minutes. The Departmental Head wanted to ensure that all teachers follow the rules and regulations of learner assessment.

In School C observation of the meeting between Departmental heads and teachers was conducted. The history Departmental Head invited 3 history teachers to the meeting which started at 14h30. The researcher met with the history Departmental Head and explained to him the relevant ethical standards of the study. The history Departmental Head commenced the meeting and they discussed how to design an effective lesson plan to improve the presentation of the curriculum and academic performance of the learners. The Departmental Head's presentation was followed by a discussion which involved all the teachers. All the teachers were free to express their views on the lesson plan. The Departmental Head concluded the meeting after 2 hours and thanked all the history teachers for attending the meeting and participating actively in the meeting.

At School C observation of the class visit by Departmental Head was also conducted. The Departmental Head conducted her class visit with the English teacher. The Departmental Head permitted the researcher to conduct the observation in the class while he also observed the presentation of the lesson. We entered the Grade 9A class and we were welcomed by the teacher and learners. The Departmental Head requested the lesson plan of the English lesson and other documents after which the

teacher started to present the lesson. During the presentation, the Departmental Head did not interrupt the teacher. The researcher's observation of the class visit by the Departmental Head was based on the focus items which were placed on the observation schedule prior to the observation. The introduction of the lesson was very effective and the lesson was presented successfully. The lesson was on English pronouns which the teacher presented for 35 minutes. The learners participated in the presentation of the lesson and the teacher was comfortable and happy. The lesson was concluded by the teacher asking the learners formative questions. The Departmental Head thanked the teacher for the presentation of the lesson but advised the teacher to always give learners homework at the end of the lesson and to include assessments in her lesson plans. The Departmental Head also thanked the researcher for the observation of the lesson.

4.6.4 Observation in School D

4.6.4.1 Main theme 1: The instructional leadership role of the Departmental heads on teaching and academic performance of learners

Main theme one emerged from an analysis of the role of instructional leadership of the Departmental Head. This analysis was based on research question one. In School D, I conducted observations of morning briefings, meetings of Departmental Head with teachers and an observation of a class visit of the Departmental Head. At School D, an observation of morning briefing by Departmental heads was conducted. In this observation, the Departmental Head briefed three life orientation teachers in the staffroom. In my observation I discovered that the aim of the meeting was to discuss the writing of life orientation tests that day. The Departmental Head read the rules of writing tests from a document and the teachers asked some questions and were all involved in brief discussion.

I observed the meeting of the Departmental heads and teachers. All the English teachers attended the meeting after school from 14h00 and it was conducted by the English Departmental heads. The aim of the observation was to see how the English departmental head conducts a meeting as an instructional leader. The Departmental Head started the meeting with a prayer and then explained to the teachers how they should identify learners with challenges in learning English and the strategies that

should be implemented to resolve the challenges. The Departmental Head explained to the teachers how to use teaching and learning resources in the class and the teachers participated in the discussion. The meeting lasted 1 hour and 40 minutes.

The researcher also observed the class visit of the mathematics Departmental Head. The mathematics Departmental Head visited a Grade 11 teacher to monitor the implementation of the mathematics curriculum. The teacher presented the mathematics lesson for about 30 minutes and concluded by asking the learners questions and giving them homework. There was a clear introduction and presentation of the lesson and the learners listened attentively. The Departmental Head never interrupted the presentation of the lesson. The Departmental Head provided a report of his observation of the lesson to the teacher. The Departmental Head was satisfied with the presentation of the lesson but he advised the teacher to always include classwork at the end of the lesson. The Departmental Head also advised the teacher to improve the lesson plan or preparation. According to observations the instructional leadership of the Departmental Head was very effective because he always listened to the teacher and never interrupted the presentation of the lesson. The Departmental Head was very happy during his discussion with the teacher, congratulated the mathematics teacher for the manner in which he presented the lesson and how the learners participated in the learners. The researcher commented that the Departmental Head displayed very effective instructional leadership. The researcher thanked them both for allowing her to observe the presentation of the lesson.

4.6.5 Observation in School E

4.6.5.1 Main theme 1: The instructional leadership role of the Departmental head on teaching and academic performance of learners

Main theme one emerged from an analysis of the role of instructional leadership of the Departmental Head. This analysis was based on research question one. In School E, morning briefings, meetings of the Departmental heads with teachers, and a class visit by the Departmental heads were observed. The briefings were conducted by the Departmental Head in the staffroom, giving precise instructions or essential information to five Xitsonga teachers in the department. The aim of the briefing was to

discuss writing of Xitsonga that day and the following day. The Departmental head read some rules regarding the writing of tests from a curriculum policy document. The teachers asked some questions the Departmental Head responded to, followed by a brief discussion regarding the assessment of learners.

In School E, the meeting of teachers conducted by Departmental Head was also observed. All the physical science teachers attended the meeting after school from 14h25. The aim of the observation was to see how the physical science Departmental Head conducted a meeting as an instructional leader. The Departmental Head commenced the meeting with a prayer and explained to the teachers how they should identify learners with challenges in learning physical science and the strategies that should be implemented to resolve the challenges. The Departmental Head also explained to the teachers how to use teaching and learning resources in the class. The teachers participated in the discussion. The meeting lasted 1 hour and 40 minutes.

In school E, one class visit by English Departmental Head was observed. The English Departmental Head visited a Grade 10 teacher to monitor the implementation of the English curriculum. The teacher presented the English lesson to a Grade 10 class lasting for about 30 minutes and concluded by asking the learners oral questions and giving them homework. There was a clear introduction and presentation of the lesson and the learners listened attentively. The Departmental Head never interrupted the presentation of the lesson. The learners participated in the lesson until the end, when they wrote down questions for homework. At the end of the lesson, the Departmental Head provided a report of his observation. It was discovered that the Departmental Head was satisfied with the presentation of the lesson but he advised the teacher to always include classwork at the end of the lesson and not only oral questions. The Departmental Head also advised the teacher to improve the lesson plan or preparation of the lesson. According to observations the instructional leadership of the Departmental Head was very effective because he always listened to the teacher and never interrupted the teacher during the presentation of the lesson. The Departmental Head was also very happy during his discussion with the teacher and congratulated the English teacher for the manner in which he presented the lesson and how the learners participated in the learning. The researcher expressed her gratitude to both

the Departmental Head and the teacher for allowing her to observe the presentation of the lesson and the observation of presentation.

4.6.6 Observation in School F

4.6.6.1 Main theme 1: The instructional leadership role of the Departmental Heads on teaching and academic performance of learners

Main theme one was produced by an analysis of the role of instructional leadership of the Departmental heads. This analysis was based on research question one. In this study, observations of morning briefings, a meeting of the Departmental heads with teachers, and an observation of class visit by Departmental heads were conducted. The observation in School F, was the morning briefings conducted by the Departmental Head. The aim of this observation was to analyse how the Departmental Head conducted morning briefings. During the *briefing* the Departmental Head of languages provided precise instructions or essential information on the presentation of the curriculum of languages to three language teachers. The Departmental Head explained to the teachers how to design of a monthly test on languages. The Departmental Head read some rules to the teachers on the writing of tests from a curriculum policy document. The teachers asked questions and they were provided with responses.

In School F, a meeting between the social sciences Departmental Head and teachers was also observed. All the social sciences teachers attended the meeting after school from 14h30. The aim of the observation was to see how the Departmental Head of social sciences conducts a meeting as an instructional leader. The Departmental Head started the meeting with a prayer and then explained to the teachers how they should present their lessons. The Departmental Head also explained to the teachers how to conduct co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in social sciences. The teachers participated happily in the discussion which lasted about 2 hours.

A class visit conducted by the business economics Departmental Head was also observed. The business economics Departmental Head visited a Grade 11 teacher to monitor the implementation of the business economics curriculum. The teacher presented the lesson for about 60 minutes and concluded the lesson by asking the

learners oral questions and giving them homework. It was observed that the teacher presented the lesson effectively, while the learners listened attentively. The Departmental Head never interrupted the presentation of the lesson. During the lesson the learners participated until the end. The Departmental Head provided a report of his observation of the lesson to the teacher and stated he was satisfied with the presentation of the lesson but advised the teacher to use formative assessment during the lesson and to improve his design of lesson plans. The instructional leadership of the Departmental Head was very effective because he was very positive and friendly and never interrupted the presentation of the lesson by the teacher. The Departmental Head congratulated the Business Economics teacher for the effective presentation of the lesson. The researcher thanked the Departmental Head and the teacher for allowing her to observe the presentation of the lesson.

4.7. THE PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED BY DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

This section focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the of the data collected through document analysis method at six selected schools, of the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District in Limpopo Province. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for interpreting, reviewing or evaluating both printed and electronic documents to give voice and meaning (O'Leary, 2014). Documents can offer a wealth of information with a high degree of validity (Mouton & Marais, 1993:79).

The researcher requested the documents from the Departmental Heads and principals of the selected schools. The document analysis process involved a careful, more focused reading, re-reading and review of the minutes of meetings and school policy. In this study I obtained data from 5 documents, namely, school policy, the roles and responsibilities of instructional leaders in schools, time register, allocation of work document and minutes of the school meetings. The documents' analysis assisted me to uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the instructional leadership of the Departmental heads. The documents were based on one research question, which was used as theme number one. In this study the document analysis included the type of document and date, creator of the document, aim of the document, context, intended audience, the factual information contained within, why the document is a valuable source of information and what the document

does not answer. In this study, the research questions guided a search for evidence about quality practices in the schools that were held in the perceptions of the staff, contained in official and formal documents related to policy, procedures and practice. Each document was analysed to determine the extent to which the policy or programme addressed or considered each of the identified 'themes' for sustainable services.

The National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996 document is aimed at ensuring that all learners have access to quality education without discrimination and makes schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 15. This policy document presents very clearly the rights of children, the allocation of funds for the public-schooling system and school governance, through school-governing bodies. This document presents all the duties of teachers and instructional leaders of the school and ensures that all instructional leaders of the school know their duties and responsibilities. The South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996) also supported the above findings of observations of the morning briefing, class visit and the meeting of teachers that were conducted by the Departmental Head of School B. The aim of the policy is to allocate duties to the instructional leaders of the school. The policy document presents the attendance-, admission- and language-policies, the code of conduct, governance and management of schools, funding of schools, roles and responsibilities of the principals, DHs and teachers, and role of parents.

The time register document, also supported the above findings of observations of the morning briefing, class visit and the meeting of teachers that were conducted by the Departmental Head of School B. The aim of the document is to indicate time of arrival, departure and absence of teachers at school. The main points expressed in the document are the name of the teacher, their time of arrival, time of departure and their signature. This document revealed one of the duties of Departmental heads also called instructional leaders. The time register of School B is very clear because it indicates teachers who came to work and those who were absent, those who are punctual and those who were late, and their time of arrival and departure, which promotes punctuality and performance of teachers and learners at school.

The Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998), also supported the above findings regarding observations of morning briefings, class visits and meetings of teachers that were conducted by Departmental heads. This Act regulates the professional, moral and ethical responsibilities of educators, as well as teachers' competency requirements. The main points expressed in this document are the roles and responsibilities of the principals, DHs and teachers. It also indicates that teachers may put in requests to be absent from work due to factors such as illness, family responsibility and examinations. This policy is very important because it ensures that all educators and instructional leaders know their duties and responsibilities.

The minutes of school meetings also supported the above findings of observations of morning briefings, class visits and meetings of teachers that were conducted by Departmental heads. The aim of the document is to keep the record of the discussions for future reference. The document also ensures that all educators and instructional leaders know their duties and responsibilities.

According to the above-mentioned documents that were analysed, the schools were functioning according to specific national and local policies and regulations. The documents also detailed the teachers who were present and absent on each day as well as their time of arrival and departure. These documents contributed to effective instructional leadership, teaching, learning and academic performance of the learners.

4.8. CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the qualitative descriptive data (responses) emanating from the research questions. This chapter includes research questions and presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from the principals and Departmental heads through individual interviews, observation and document analysis. In this study, all the questions were answered by the participants, which indicated that they were clear and easy to understand. All the relevant responses of the participants are included in this chapter in the form of quotations. A thematic qualitative data analysis was used to analyse the data. This involved the breaking up of the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this study was to explore the role of Departmental heads on teaching and academic performance of learners. In chapter four, the researcher presented, analysed and interpreted the data that emerged from individual interviews, observations and documents. This study was also guided by the research questions which were used to design the individual interviews, document analysis and observation schedule. All the data collection instruments of the study were used to answer the following research questions:

- (a) What is the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader?
- (b) What are the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks?
- (c) What strategies can Departmental heads implement to ensure effective teaching and learning.

The goal of chapter five is to give an overview of the chapters, a summary of its major findings and to discuss the implications of these findings, to make recommendations based on these findings and their implications, and to draw final conclusions.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter one provided the background of the study regarding the role of the Departmental Head in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools (cf.par.1.1). The rationale of the study provided the key reasons that triggered the study of instructional leadership of DHs (cf.par.1.2). The major problem of this study is the poor academic performance of the learners in the Lulekani Circuit and other circuits of Limpopo Province, caused by poor instructional leadership of Departmental heads. The main aim and objectives and research questions of this study are also presented in chapter one. A short discussion of the preliminary

literature review (cf. par 1.5) was provided. In this chapter, major concepts (cf. par 1.8) on the instructional leadership role of DHs, that commonly appear in this study were defined so that the reader is able to understand the contexts in which they are being used. The key concepts included, instructional leadership, management, educator, teaching and learning. A short discussion on the significance of the study (cf. par 1.4), research paradigm (cf. par 1.6.1), research design (cf. par 1.6.1), research approach (cf. par.1.10.3), research instruments (cf. par 1.6.3), population, sample and sample technique (cf. par 1.6.2) was included. This was followed by the data analysis procedure, interpretation and presentation (cf. par 1.6.4). Lastly, the organisation of the dissertation (cf. par 1.9) was presented.

Chapter two of this study provided an overview of the literature (cf. par. 2.2-2.10). The aim of this chapter was to review various literature sources to gain a better understanding of the instructional leadership role of the Departmental Head in secondary schools. The literature review focused on conceptual framework, theoretical framework, the role of the Departmental head as an instructional leader, the challenges of instructional leadership experienced by the Departmental heads and the factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads. (cf. par. 2.1). The literature review presented the conceptual framework of this in order to clarify the main concepts of the study (cf. par. 2.2) and the theoretical framework chosen for this study, namely, the Skinnerian Model of Discipline (Skinner, 1992) which was developed by Harold Kelley and Bernard Weiner in 1980 (cf. par. 2.2) (cf. par. 2.2). The aim of the attribution theoretical framework was to assist the researcher in contextualizing the study and choosing the research paradigm, research design, research approach and research methodology (cf. par. 2.2). This chapter also presented the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader (cf. par.4), the importance of instructional leadership in schools (cf. par. 2.4), the role of the Departmental Head as instructional leader (cf. par. 2.5), the factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of Departmental head (cf. par. 2.6) and the challenges of instructional leadership experienced by Departmental heads (cf. par. 2.7). According to Esa, Muda, Mansor and Abraham (2017), instructional leadership has a long history aimed at improving the academic performance of learners (cf. par. 2.5). Departmental heads are seen as having key leadership roles as instructional

leaders, providing professional leadership and management for a subject in order to secure high-quality teaching and improved standards of learning and achievement for all learners (Ruding, 2000). (cf. par. 2.5). The major challenges of instructional leadership experienced by Departmental heads as instructional leaders are lack of subject content knowledge, lack of knowledge and skills for providing support and guidance, and increasing task demands (Spillane & Lee, 2014); Olfos, Goldrine & Estrella, 2014; Fink & Silverma, 2014). (cf. par. 2.7). The factors that contribute to effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads are planning professional development for Departmental heads, support from administration, access to resources and adequate knowledge and skills. (cf. par. 2.6).

Chapter three presented the research methodology and design (cf. par. 3.1). This chapter incorporates the research paradigm, research design, research approach, population of the study, sampling, data collection, research questions, demarcation of the study, data analysis, trustworthiness and credibility of the research and the ethical considerations (cf. par. 3.1). This study is based on the constructivist paradigm (Wahyuni, 2012) (cf. par. 3.2), phenomenological research design (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) (cf. par. 3.4) and qualitative approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017) (cf. par. 3.3). The population of this study are the Departmental heads and school principals of six secondary schools in the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District, Limpopo Province. (cf. par. 3.5). Purposive sampling was used in this study to select the schools and the participants based on the researcher's judgment about which ones would be the most useful or representative (Babbie, 2014). (cf. par. 3.5). The sample of this study consisted of six Departmental heads and six school principals from six selected schools in the Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District, Limpopo Province. (cf. par. 3.5). In this study, data was collected using three techniques, namely, individual interviews, observations and document analysis. (cf. par. 3.5). In this study, the thematic data analysis method was used to analyse the qualitative data collected by means of individual interviews, observations, and document analysis. (cf. par. 3.7).

In Chapter four, the findings of the study were presented, analysed and interpreted qualitatively. This chapter includes the research questions, presentation of data collected from the principals and presentation of data collected from Departmental heads (cf. par. 4.2 to 4.6). This chapter revealed that many schools are characterised by violation of the code of conduct by learners and the school management team even

though teachers and school governing bodies are continuously implementing various strategies to maintain good discipline of learners. The study also revealed the role of the principals and Departmental heads in maintaining good discipline of learners.

Chapter five is the last chapter of the thesis which presents an overview of the findings, summary of research findings and recommendations of the study (cf. par. 5.2 to 5.5). This chapter focuses on the summary of research findings from all the participants, namely, principals and Departmental heads teachers, contributions of the study and recommendations of the study.

5.3 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section presents a summary of the major findings of the study and is based on the research objectives and research questions. The findings that are discussed in this section are based on the data that was analysed and interpreted.

5.3.1 The role of the Departmental heads as an instructional lead

The participants were asked to explain the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader (cf.par.4.5.1). The participants revealed five major duties of Departmental heads, namely, to design a year plan and to guide teachers to design the schemes of work and lesson plans, to assist the teachers in teaching effectively by using effective teaching methods, providing professional development for teachers, assist the teachers to assess learners effectively by using effective assessment methods and monitoring the work of educators and learners in the department (cf. 4.5.1). The participants explained that the first role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader is to design a year plan for the department before the school opens in January and submit it to the principal for approval when the schools open (cf.par.4.5.1.1). Before designing a year plan, the DH must do research to identify the challenges that were experienced the previous year (cf. 4.5.1.1). Thereafter, the DH must hold a meeting with the teachers, give each teacher a copy of the year plan and show them how it must be used (cf.par.4.5.1.1). The participants also indicated that the DH is also responsible for training teachers to design a scheme of work and lesson plan. (cf.par.4.5.1).

The participants revealed that another role of the DH, is to assist the teachers in teaching effectively by using effective teaching methods (cf.par.4.5.1.2). The

participants indicated that the HoDs must conduct professional development sessions to train teachers in effective teaching methods (cf.par.4.5.1.2). The DHs must ensure that teachers to use various teaching methods, such as visualization, cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning or using technology and not only one method for teaching all lessons (cf.par.4.5.2). The participants emphasised that the DHs must ensure that the teachers use child-centred teaching methods and not teacher-centred teaching methods (cf.par.4.5.1.2).

The participants indicated that another duty of the DH is to assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using effective assessment methods (cf.par.4.5.1.3). The participants indicated that the DHs must ensure that the teachers in that department know the different types of assessments such as diagnostic, formative assessment, formal assessment, informal assessment, summative assessment, and ipsative assessments, as well as when and how to use them (cf.par.4.5.1.3). At the beginning of the year, the teachers must be supported to use diagnostic assessment in order to understand learners' strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills of a subject, before teaching (cf.par.4.5.1.3). Teachers must first assess the learners to understand the type of learners that they are teaching (cf.par.4.5.1.3). The DHs must also remind the teachers to ensure that they use formative assessment to assess the learners while they are teaching, whereby they actually gather evidence and feedback in order to adapt the teaching in ways that will meet the needs of learners and diagnose their progress toward a long-term objective (cf.par.4.5.1.3). The DH must also ensure that the teachers understand that summative assessment is only used at the end of the term or year (cf.par.4.5.1.3).

The participants also revealed that the role of Departmental heads is to conduct professional development sessions for teachers which is also called in-service training, staff development, teacher training, teacher learning and professional learning (cf.par.4.5.1.4). Teachers must always be trained by DHs, who are experienced professionals, from the beginning of the year until the end of the year, in order to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills for the effective presentation of the subject of that department (cf.par.4.5.1.4). The Departmental Head may conduct professional development session when the school opens in January, every term and after examinations, to train the teachers to design year plans for the current and prospective year (cf.par.4.5.1.4). The DHs should never wait for problems

to occur and then only conduct professional development to equip the teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for solving the problem, for example, how to design a year plan, lesson plan, assessment plan, monthly test and maintain constructive discipline of learners in the classroom (cf.par.4.5.1.4). The DH should arrange for workshops for all teachers as per the subjects' categories to assist them in delivering curriculum in the institution, doing their work properly and sharing ideas about curriculum implementation (cf.par.4.5.1.4).

The participants also revealed that the role of Departmental Head as an instructional leader is to monitor the work of educators and learners in the department and submit reports to the principal as required (cf.par.4.5.1.5). Monitoring the work of teachers means that the DH is responsible for conducting class visits in order to check the teaching methods used by the teachers (cf.par.4.5.1.5). The DH must also check practical work conducted by teachers and learners, check the work of learners, ensure that teachers are always attending lessons, control administrative responsibilities of staff members and also submit reports to the principal (cf.par.4.5.1.5). The DH must also ensure that teachers teach what they are supposed to teach and learners learn what they are supposed to learn (cf.par.4.5.1.5). The participants emphasised that monitoring is not to search for the mistakes that are committed by the teachers but to explore their challenges to support them (cf.par.4.5.1.5).

5.3.2 The challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks

The participants were asked to explain the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. The participants identified several challenges, namely, increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads, shortage of teaching and learning resources, poor discipline of learners and lack of support by parents. The participants explained that one of the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks is increasing task demands or work overload (cf. par.4.5.2.1). The participants indicated that DHs have management and administrative duties as well as teaching learners and therefore, they do not have sufficient time for instructional leadership (cf. par. 4.5.2.1). The participants indicate that instructional leadership

includes monitoring, professional development and involving parents in learning of their children (cf. par. 4.5.2.1).

The participants also identified a shortage of teaching and learning resources as one of the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks (cf. par. 4.5.2.2). The participants revealed that there is a shortage of textbooks, teaching aids and learning aids, images, maps, photographs, sketches, diagrams, films and written material such as newspaper clippings or articles from scientific and technical literature (cf. par. 4.5.2.2). The participants indicated that the shortage of resources is a serious challenge because these resources make the teaching process more attractive, interesting and modern (cf. par. 4.5.2.2).

The participants also identified poor discipline of learners as one of the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks. According to the participants, there are rules in place to guide learners' behaviour and teachers constantly try to enforce discipline but the learners don't always follow the rules (cf. par. 4.5.2.3). The participants also emphasised that many learners regularly come to school late, don't do school work, make noise in classes, go home during break, fight in classes, constantly disrupt teachers, smoke in the toilets and sell drugs (cf. par. 4.5.2.3). The teachers punish the learners who violate school code of conduct, but they continue to break the school rules because they are not afraid of punishment.

The participants also identified lack of support by parents as one of the challenges experienced by HoDs (cf. par. 4.5.2.4). The participants explained that effective learning requires a triangle that needs a teacher, parent and a learner, but the triangle is not working (cf. par. 4.5.2.4). The participants indicated that most parents do not support the education of their children because most of them work far from home and believe that teaching their children is only in the hands of teachers (cf. par. 4.5.2.4). The participants also asserted that most parents do not attend meetings and training sessions where they are trained to assist their children at home (cf. par. 4.5.2.4). The parents also refuse to come to school to resolve the problems of their children and emphasised that some parents regard teachers as their enemies (cf. par. 4.5.2.4).

5.3.3 The strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning

The participants were asked to explain the strategies that could be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning. The participants identified four strategies, namely, designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan, teamwork strategy, participating in professional development and parental involvement (cf. par. 4.5.3.1).

According to the participants, the best strategy to ensure effective teaching and learning is designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The participants indicate that when they enhance the school curriculum, they start to change the subjects that are taught in that school, by removing two or three subjects and replacing them by new subjects (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The DHs first conduct research to explore the careers which are preferred by learners in the communities (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The participants also indicate that the DHs can replace 25 optional subjects only, and not compulsory subjects which are 2 official languages, Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy and Life Orientation (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The participants also revealed that DHs are not allowed to change the curriculum but rather design strategies of improving the implementation of the curriculum (cf. par. 4.5.3.1).

The participants also recommended teamwork as one of the best strategies to ensure effective teaching and learning (cf. par. 4.5.3.2). According to the participants, teachers can only work effectively if they work as a team and not as an individual group, such as academic departments, curriculum teams, appraisal teams and pastoral teams (cf. par. 4.5.3.2). This indicates that the whole staff forms a team with a common purpose of educative teaching of children (cf. par. 4.5.3.2). In a school, a team is responsible for ensuring effective teaching and learning but the teachers who work in divided groups do not speak to each other harmoniously thus not able to improve teaching and learning. (cf. par. 4.5.3.2).

Professional development of teachers was also recommended by the participants as one of the best strategies for ensuring effective teaching and learning (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). The participants indicated that professional development includes workshops, conferences, in-service training-advance studies, research and development, and pilot programs (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). The aim of the professional development of teachers is to

increase their teaching knowledge and skills training them (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). Although teachers are qualified to teach in secondary school, they require support from experts about the effective methods of presenting the curriculum (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). The participants indicated that, before conducting effective professional development, the DHs should first analyse learners' achievement data to identify learning problems common to learners in a particular grade or class (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). The teachers who attend the professional development sessions, are able to expose the challenges that they face in the classes, and they are assisted by the DHs to resolve the challenges (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). The participants emphasised that professional development sessions are usually conducted after school to prevent the disruption of teaching (cf. par. 4.5.3.3).

The participants also discussed parental involvement as one of the best strategies for improving effective teaching and learning (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). According to the participants, the DH and teachers should invite parents to a meeting where they train them on how to support their children at home (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). They should advise the parents to always provide them time to study, support them, and if possible, assist them when they do their homework or assignments at home and ensure that their children get sufficient time to read books (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). The participants assert that DHs should advise the parents that their children's education begins at home and that they are their first teachers and have a key role in shaping their character (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). The participants also emphasised that parents should be careful not to overburden their children and give their children time to rest because they are involved in learning from early morning (cf. par. 4.5.4). The parents should never discuss family problems or quarrel in the presence of their children, because it can negatively affect their learning (cf. par. 4.5.4).

5.4 IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section discusses the implications or contributions of the research study's findings in context of its main research aim and sub-objectives.

5.4.1 The role of the Departmental head as an instructional leader

According to the participants, the findings of this study will contribute extensively to effective instructional leadership of Departmental heads (cf. 4.5.1), which will enhance

the quality of education in South Africa and the whole world. The participants revealed that designing a year plan for the department assists the DHs to identify challenges experienced the previous year and assist the DHs and teachers to complete the curriculum effectively (cf.par.4.5.1.1). The findings of this study will also assist DHs to explain to teachers how the year plan should be implemented and how to design a scheme of work and lesson plan. (cf.par.4.5.1).

The findings of this study will also aid DHs in assisting teachers to teach effectively by using effective teaching methods (cf.par.4.5.1.2). The DHs will then ensure that teachers use various teaching methods, such as visualization, cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning or using technology, and not only use one method for teaching all lessons (cf.par.4.5.2). After this study, the DHs will ensure that the teachers use child-centred teaching methods and not teacher-centred teaching methods (cf.par.4.5.1.2).

The results of this study will assist DHS in training teachers to use various effective assessment methods and not only one assessment method (cf.par.4.5.1.3). The DHs will then be able to ensure that the teachers in that department know the different types of assessments, such as diagnostic, formative assessment, formal assessment, informal assessment and summative assessment, as well as when and how to use them (cf.par.4.5.1.3). After this study, the DHs will ensure that teachers assess learners before teaching them, use formative assessment to assess learners while they are teaching in order to adapt their teaching in ways that will meet the needs of learners and diagnose their progress toward a long-term objective (cf.par.4.5.1.3). The findings of this study will also assist DHs to ensure that teachers use summative assessment only at the end of the term or year (cf.par.4.5.1.3). The findings of this study will also motivate and assist DHs to participate in continuous professional development sessions to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for supporting teachers in effective teaching. (cf. par.4.5.1.3).

It is, also hoped that the findings of this study will prepare DHs, to conduct effective professional development of teachers that will improve the teachers' pedagogic content knowledge to enhance instruction in the schools (cf.par.4.5.1.4). In this study, the DHs are advised to never wait for problems to occur, and not only conduct

professional development to equip teachers with necessary knowledge and skills when problems arise that need solving (cf.par.4.5.1.4). The findings also advise DHs to train the teachers to design year plans for the current and prospective year (cf.par.4.5.1.4).

In this study, DHs are also advised to always monitor the work of educators and learners, check practical work conducted by teachers and learners, ensure that teachers are always attending lessons, control administrative responsibilities of staff members and submit reports to the principal (cf.par.4.5.1.5). The researcher is confident that, as an authentic exploratory study, the findings of this study will offer new directions in research of the enhancement of quality education in South African schools.

5.4.2 The challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks

In this study, the DHs were made aware of the several challenges that they experience in their instructional leadership and how they can solve them (cf.par.4.5.2.1). The challenges are increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads, shortage of teaching and learning resources, poor discipline of learners and lack of support by parents (cf.par.4.5.2.1). The findings revealed that the DHs experience challenges because they have management and administrative duties as well as teaching learners (cf. par. 4.5.2.1).

The findings also revealed the resources which are insufficient in schools, namely textbooks, teaching aids and learning aids, images, maps, photographs, sketches, diagrams, films and written material such as newspaper clippings or articles from scientific and technical literature (cf. par. 4.5.2.2). Due to these challenges, the teaching process is now unattractive, uninteresting and ineffective (cf. par. 4.5.2.2). The findings also revealed poor discipline of learners as one of the challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks (cf. par. 4.5.2.3). Poor discipline of learners disrupt teaching and learning when the learners regularly come to school late, don't do school work, make noise in classes, go home during break, fight in classes, constantly disrupt teachers, smoke in the toilets

and sell drugs (cf. par. 4.5.2.3). The findings also revealed that learners continue to have poor discipline because they are not afraid of punishment. The results of the study revealed that poor discipline of learners is caused by parents who believe that teaching their children is only in the hands of teachers (cf. par. 4.5.2.4). The poor discipline of learners causes poor relationships between teachers and parents because parents regard teachers as their enemies (cf. par. 4.5.2.3).

5.4.3 The strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning

The findings of this study will make teachers aware of effective strategies for teaching and learning to improve the quality of education in their schools (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The findings of the study revealed four strategies that should be followed by DHs to enhance teaching and learning, namely, designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan, teamwork strategy, participating in professional development and parental involvement (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The findings revealed that Departmental heads can improve effective teaching and learning by designing an academic or curriculum improvement plan (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). When they enhance the school curriculum, they start to change the subjects that are taught in that school by removing two or three subjects and replacing them with new subjects (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The DHs should first conduct research to explore the careers which are preferred by learners in the communities (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). The findings also indicate that the DHs can replace 25 optional subjects only and not compulsory subjects, which are 2 official languages, Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy and Life Orientation (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). DHs are not allowed to change the curriculum but can rather design strategies for improving the implementation of the curriculum (cf. par. 4.5.3.1).

According to the results, teachers can only work effectively if they work as a team rather than an individual group, for example, academic departments, curriculum teams, appraisal teams and pastoral teams (cf. par. 4.5.3.2). The findings of the study revealed strategies of professional development which should be used by the DHs to improve teaching and learning, namely workshops, conferences, in-service training- Professional development, enables teachers to expose the challenges that they face in the classes (cf. par. 4.5.3.3).

The findings of the study identified parental involvement as one of the best strategies for improving effective teaching and learning (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). To improve teaching and learning, DHs are advised to invite parents to a meeting where they train them on assisting their children at home when they do their homework or assignments and ensure that their children get sufficient time to read books (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). The parents are also advised that they should not overburden their children with more work, and should give their children time to rest because they are involved in learning from early morning (cf. par. 4.5.4). Parents are also advised not to discuss family problems or quarrel in the presence of their children, because it can negatively affect their learning (cf. par. 4.5.4).

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

This section provides recommendations regarding the improvement of the academic performance of learners in schools. These recommendations have been derived in accordance with the sub-objectives detailed in chapter one and the related findings presented in sub-sections 5.2.1–5.2.3.

5.5.1 The role of the Departmental head as an instructional leader

The first set of recommendations has been drawn from findings regarding the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader. This study recommends that an instructional leader should design a year plan for the department before the school opens in January and submit it to the principal for approval when the schools open (cf.par.4.5.1.1). This study also recommends that, when the schools open in January, the DH should give each teacher a copy of the year plan and show them how it must be used and train teachers in designing a scheme of work and lesson plan (cf.par.4.5.1). This study also recommends that the DH should train teachers to teach effectively by using various teaching methods and not only one method (cf.par.4.5.1.2). DHs must conduct professional development sessions to train the teachers on effective teaching methods when the school opens in January, every term and after examinations (cf.par.4.5.1.2); cf.par.4.5.1.4). The findings also recommends that DHs must train teachers to use child-centred teaching methods and not teacher-centred teaching methods (cf.par.4.5.1.2). It is recommended that DHs must assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using different types of assessments such as diagnostic, formative assessment, formal assessment, informal assessment

and summative assessment as well as when and how to use them (cf.par.4.5.1.3). This study also recommends that DHs must check practical work conducted by teachers and learners, ensures that teachers are always attending lessons, control administrative responsibilities of staff members and submit reports to the principal (cf.par.4.5.1.5).

5.5.2 The challenges experienced by Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks

In this study, it is recommended that DHs and teachers should always avoid and resolve the challenges usually experienced by DHs, namely, increasing task demands or work overload on Departmental heads, shortage of teaching and learning resources, poor discipline of learners and lack of support by parents (cf.par.4.5.2.1). It is recommended that DHs should share their work with teachers, request the department of education to supply sufficient resources, always apply code of conduct regulations and motivate parents to support learning of their children (cf.par.4.5.2.1).

5.5.3 The strategies that can be implemented by Departmental heads to ensure effective teaching and learning

This study recommends that DHs should ensure effective teaching and learning by designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). At the end of each year, Departmental heads should review the performance of the learners of the past three years and if there is effective teaching of a subject, but learners find it difficult to learn that subject, the Departmental heads are free to replace that subject if it is not a compulsory subject (cf. par. 4.5.3.1). According to Hoadley (2012), teachers are struggling to implement the curriculum because they received short in-service training. This study also recommends the use of teamwork to ensure that teachers work harmoniously (cf. par. 4.5.3.1) and to conduct professional development to increase the teaching knowledge and skills of teachers (cf. par. 4.5.3.3). In this study, parental involvement is recommended for DHs as one of the best strategies for improving effective teaching and learning (cf. par. 4.5.3.4). It is recommended that DHs and teachers invite parents to meetings where they train them on how to support their children at home (cf. par. 4.5.3.4).

5.5.4 RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY MAKERS

The findings of this study revealed that the functioning of schools is based on the policies that are designed by the policy makers in the Department of Basic Education, such as South African School Act (SASA, 1996), White Paper on Education and Training, National Education Policy Act of 1996, Education Labour Relations Act, Number 66 of 1995 and Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998). In order for principals, Departmental heads and teachers to devote more time and attention to the improvement of instruction, their jobs need to be redesigned. This will require the creation of other support roles with the responsibility of managing the important tasks only indirectly related to instruction. It is also recommended that policy makers should design distribution leadership policy, which include the teachers and parents in instructional leadership and not only principals and Departmental heads. Distributive leadership refers to the leadership functions of organisations that are shared by many people in various ways that strengthen the whole school community, intensifying a sense of engagement and shared responsibility while making the workload more manageable (Jones & Harris, 2013:18). Distributed leadership is therefore based on the premise that all teachers can and must lead. According to Whitby (2014), distributive leadership involves the leadership functions of a school being shared by many people in ways that strengthen the whole school community, intensifying a sense of engagement and shared responsibility while making the workload more manageable. The emphasis of distributed leadership is therefore, on interdependent interaction and practice rather than individual and independent actions associated with those with formal leadership roles. Distributed leadership is a situation where those in authority and subordinate positions interact with each other and co-perform the leadership activity in the same place. In simple terms, distributed leadership means mobilizing leadership expertise at all levels in the school in order to generate more opportunities for change and to build the capacity for improvement. The emphasis of distributed leadership is upon interdependent interaction and practice rather than individual and independent actions associated with those with formal leadership roles or responsibilities.

5.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused on the role of Departmental heads in instructional leadership, in improving the academic performance of the learners in schools. This study focused on Departmental heads in Lulekani Circuit of Mopani District. An interesting potential avenue for further research would be to repeat the present study in all other circuits of the Mopani District, for example, Namakgale, Nkowankowa, Khujwana, Groot Letaba, Giyani, Manómbe and Nsami, in addition to the one already investigated by the researcher. Conducting a similar study in various circuits of the Mopani District will assist the researchers in having a comprehensive perception of the role of Departmental heads in instructional leadership.

In this study, only qualitative approach methods were used to collect data on the role of Departmental heads in instructional leadership. It is therefore recommended that quantitative research should be used to collect data on the role of Departmental heads in instructional leadership in future studies. Quantitative research can capture vast amounts of data far quicker than other research activities. Data computing documents makes it possible to process and analyse data quickly, even with large sample sizes. If the participant sample size is increased in future studies, a substantial amount of data could be collected.

5.7 CLOSING REMARKS

The main aim of this study was to explore the role of Departmental heads as instructional leaders in teaching and the academic performance of learners. In this chapter, a summary of the chapters, summary of major findings, implications of the findings and recommendations of the study, and suggestions for further research were presented. The significant findings of this study responded to the main and secondary research questions and the main aim and objectives of the study.

The findings of this study revealed that Departmental heads serve as the curriculum drivers in their different phases, allocate duties of all teachers in the beginning of the year, ensure that all subordinates know their roles and perform them as specified by the PAM document. The findings also revealed five major duties of Departmental heads, namely, to design a year plan and guide teachers in designing schemes of work and lesson plans, to assist the teachers in teaching effectively by using effective

teaching methods, to assist the teachers in assessing learners effectively by using effective assessment methods, conducting professional development of teachers and monitoring the work of educators and learners in the department. The findings of this study also revealed serious challenges experienced by Departmental heads in instructional leadership, namely, shortage of teaching and learning resources, poor discipline of learners and work overload. Lastly, the findings of this study recommended strategies that can be implemented to enhance and sustain instructional leadership of Departmental heads in the schools, namely, designing the academic or curriculum improvement plan, teamwork strategy, participating in professional development and parental involvement.

The findings of this study indicate that instructional leadership of Departmental heads is fundamental for whole school improvement. The Departmental Head of a school is an instructional leader who has the responsibility to lead and develop a specific subject, manage the teaching staff and their department's financial resources. It is the responsibility of the Departmental heads at a school to improve the academic performance of the learners in the subject that they are heading. The Departmental heads at a school aims to raise overall standards of education by improving the quality and consistency of the teaching delivered by teachers under their supervision. The Departmental Head must ensure that teachers and support staff have all the technology and materials needed so that the curriculum can be delivered effectively. The researcher believes that the findings of this study will contribute to improving instructional leadership of DHs and enhance teaching, learning and academic performance of the learners in South Africa.

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APPENDIX A

PROOF OF REGISTRATION



0843 M1RST

LEBEYA R M MISS
P O BOX 228
LULEKANI
1392

STUDENT NUMBER : 6340-445-1

ENQUIRIES NAME : MALEFO SP
ENQUIRIES TEL : 0124415702

DATE : 2021-02-16

Dear Student

I wish to inform you that your registration has been accepted for the academic year indicated below. Kindly activate your Unisa mylife (<https://myunisa.ac.za/portal>) account for future communication purposes and access to research resources.

DEGREE : MED (EDUC MANAGEMENT) (98405)

TITLE : The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning at secondary schools in the Lulekani circuit, Limpopo province

SUPERVISOR : Dr SJ RAPETA (rapetsj@unisa.ac.za)

ACADEMIC YEAR : 2021

TYPE: DISSERTATION

SUBJECTS REGISTERED: DFEDU95 Med - Education Management

A statement of account will be sent to you shortly.

You must re-register online and pay every academic year until such time that you can submit your dissertation/thesis for examination.

If you intend submitting your dissertation/thesis for examination you have to submit an Intention to submit form (available on the website www.unisa.ac.za) at least two months before the date of submission. If submission takes place after 15 November, but before the end of January of the following year, you do need not to re-register and pay registration fees for the next academic year. Should you submit after the end of January, you must formally reregister online and pay the full fees.

Please access the information with regard to your personal librarian on the following link:
<https://bit.ly/3hxNqVr>

Yours faithfully,

Prof M S Mothata
Registrar



University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX B

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM THE LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**



Enquiries: Lebeya RM

P. O. Box 464

Contact: 0720479421

Lulekani

1392

Email Address: reginalebeya@yahoo.com

20 June 2021

The Head of Department
Limpopo Department of Basic Education
Strategic Planning and Research
Private Bag
Polokwane, 0970

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN LULEKANI CIRCUIT

My name is LEBEYA REGINA MASHOTO, a Master of Education (M. ED) degree student, at the University of South Africa. I hereby request permission to conduct research in six secondary schools in Lulekani Circuit. The title of my research is "*The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province.*" This study was approved by the Research Ethics Review Committee of the University of South Africa.

The participants of the study consist of six principals and six HODs from six schools in the Lulekani Circuit of the Mopani District in Limpopo Province. Document Analysis, Observation and Telephonic Individual Interviews will be used to collect information from the participants. The research will be conducted during and after school hours and during school holidays.

I will adhere to all the ethical standards of research of the University of South Africa and Covid-19 regulations, which include voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, wearing of masks, social distancing, and minimisation of risks.

Thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully

Lebeya RM

Researcher

APPENDIX C

APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 2/2/2

Enq: Makola MC

Tel No: 015 290 9448

E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Lebeya RM
House 464
LULEKANE
0003

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"THE ROLE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT IN CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESSFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS ,IN LULEKANI CIRCUIT,LIMPOPO PROVINCE. "**
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the School concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
 - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
 - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH : LEEYA RM Page 1

Cnr 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X 9489, Polokwane, 0700
Tel:015 290 7600/ 7702 Fax 086 218 0560

The heartland of Southern Africa-development is about people

- 4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
- 5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes

Mashaba KM
DDG: CORPORATE SERVICES

25/04/2022

Date

APPENDIX D

**A LETTER TO PRINCIPAL REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT
RESEARCH IN THE SCHOOL**



Enquiries: Lebeya RM

Contact: 0720479421

Email Address: reginalebeya@yahoo.com

P. O. Box 464

Lulekani,

1392

21/08/2021

The principal

.....

.....

.....

Dear Sir/Madam

I, LEBEYA REGINA MASHOTO, am doing research under the supervision of Dr S.J. Rapeta in the Department of Instructional leadership and school management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The title of my research is "*The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province.*" I hereby humbly request permission to be allowed to conduct research in your school by telephonic individual interviews of the principal and one Departmental Head with 5 - 20 years' experience as instructional leaders.

The major aim of this research is to explore the role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province and the following are the objectives of the study:

- (a) To understand the role of the Departmental Head as an instructional leader.
- (b) To determine the challenges faced by the Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks.
- (c) To investigate the strategies that Departmental heads can implement to ensure effective teaching and learning.

The principals and DHs will be involved in telephonic individual interviews, which comply with Covid-19 regulations. The duration of the interviews will be 30 to 45 minutes per participant. Participation in this study is voluntary and withdrawal of participant without reprisal is accepted. In this study, there are no potential risks involved to participants and there will be no reimbursement or incentives for participation in this research. I as a researcher will ensure that the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants are upheld. I furthermore would like to assure you that all the information gathered will be solely used for the purpose of this study.

Thanking you in advance
Lebeya RM

CONSENT FORM (Please sign and return the slip)

I, _____ (participant name), attest that the individual who requested my permission to participate in this research informed me of its nature, procedure, potential advantages and anticipated inconvenience. I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had enough time to ask questions and am ready to take part in the research.

I am aware that my participation is voluntary and that I can leave at any moment without facing any consequences. I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but unless otherwise stated, my participation will remain confidential. I also consent to the interview being recorded.

Participant Name & Surname _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Name & Surname _____

Researcher's signature

Date

APPENDIX E

A LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENTAL HEADS REQUESTING PERMISSION FOR THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY



Enquiries: Lebeya RM

P. O. Box 464

Contact: 0720479421

Lulekani

1392

Email Address: reginalebeya@yahoo.com

20 June 2021

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Dear prospective participant

My name is LEBEYA REGINA MASHOTO, a Master of Education (M.ED) degree student under the supervision Of Dr S.J. Rapeta in the Department of Instructional leadership and school management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). I hereby request you to participate in my study. The title of my research is "*The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province.*" I have obtained permission to conduct this study from the Department of Basic Education in the Limpopo Province and the Research Ethics Review Committee of Unisa.

The major aim of this research is to explore the role of the Departmental heads in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools, in Lulekani Circuit, Limpopo Province and the following are the objectives of the study:

(a) To understand the role of the Departmental heads as an instructional leader.

- (b) To determine the challenges faced by the Departmental heads in carrying out their instructional leadership tasks.
- (c) To investigate the strategies that Departmental heads can implement to ensure effective teaching and learning.

You are requested to participate in this study because you are well experienced in instructional leadership. In this study a principal and 1 DH will participate in telephonic individual interviews. Your role in this study is to answer research questions related to instructional leadership. The maximum time scheduled for the interviews is 30 – 45 minutes, and this will be conducted out of normal teaching time and during school holidays. Your participation is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential and you are free to withdraw at any time. If you decide to participate in this study, you are requested to sign a consent form and submit it to me. Your participation in this study will remain anonymous, and only the researcher and the designated research team members will be aware of it. In this study I will use a number or a pseudonym for your name and nobody will be able to link you to the answers you give. A report of this study may be submitted for publication in journal articles, but you will not be identified.

There is no risk associated with this study, but you are requested to sacrifice your time. Hard copies of your answers will be stored safely by the researcher for one year in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the researcher's office. Electronic information will be saved in a computer that has a password. After one year the electronic data will be deleted from the computer and all hard copies will be shredded. There will be no incentives or payment of any kind but all schools participating in this study will be provided with the results of the study.

For more information on the study, please contact me at the above-mentioned phone number or email.

Thank you for consenting to participate in this study.
Lebeya RM (Researcher)

CONSENT FORM (Please sign and return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), attest that the individual who requested my permission to participate in this research informed me of its nature, procedure, potential advantages, and anticipated inconvenience. I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had enough time to ask questions and am ready to take part in the research.

I am aware that my participation is voluntary and that I can leave at any moment without facing any consequences. I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but unless otherwise stated, my participation will remain confidential. I also consent to the interview being recorded.

Participant Name & Surname _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Name & Surname _____

Researcher's signature

Date

APPENDIX F
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

**THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CONTRIBUTING TO
SUCCESSFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN
LULEKANI CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE.**

Greetings. Firstly, I would like to start by expressing my gratitude for allowing me to interview you. The intention of this interview is to ask for your opinions about the role of Departmental heads in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools. I ask that this interview be recorded so that I won't miss any of our discussions. When I use note taking, I worry that I might miss something important or perhaps accidentally change what you say. Your honest responses and comments will determine whether or not this interview is successful. There is no right or wrong answer and please feel free to voice your thoughts with regard to instructional leadership.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. As a principal you are responsible for two types of leadership in your school, namely; administrative leadership and instructional leadership. Please explain the difference between these two types of leadership and their importance.
2. Please explain your role as an instructional leader and administrative leader in your school.
3. Have you ever been trained in administrative leadership or instructional leadership? When, where, how many times, and by whom?
4. As a principal are you also responsible for teaching learners. If you are teaching, do you have sufficient time to teach and conduct administrative and instructional leadership?
5. There is an assumption that the improvement or decline in the academic performance of learners in the whole school is influenced by the instructional

leadership of principals. Do you agree or disagree with this assumption? Motivate your answer.

6. One of the strategies of improving instructional leadership is to attend professional development workshops. Are you attending professional development workshops, who is conducting the workshops and what do you gain from the workshops?
7. Are you also able to conduct professional development workshops of teachers? How many times do you conduct the workshops per term, who are attending the workshops and what is the focus of the workshops?
8. DHs are also responsible for instructional leadership. Do you support this role of the DH's? Motivate your answer.
9. The main aim of instructional leadership is to enhance the academic performance of the learners. How is your instructional leadership improving the academic performance of learners in your school?
10. As a Departmental Head and instructional leader, how do you support your teachers with regard to their instructional obligations?
11. How is Covid-19 affecting your duties as an instructional leader?

I sincerely appreciate your input. Be blessed.

APPENDIX G
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HoDs

**THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CONTRIBUTING TO
SUCCESSFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN
LULEKANI CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE.**

Greetings. Firstly, I would like to start by expressing my gratitude for allowing me to interview you. The intention of this interview is to ask for your opinions about the role of Heads of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools. I ask that this interview be recorded so that I won't miss any of our discussions. When I use note taking, I worry that I might miss something important or perhaps accidentally change what you say. Your honest responses and comments will determine whether or not this interview is successful. There is no right or wrong answer and please feel free to voice your thoughts with regard to instructional leadership.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. As an DH you are responsible for instructional leadership in your school. Please explain the aim of instructional leadership in your school.
2. There are two types of leadership in schools, namely administrative leadership and instructional leadership. Please explain the difference between these two types of leadership and their importance.
3. Are you responsible for administrative leadership or instructional leadership or both of them? Motivate your answer.
4. Have you ever been trained in administrative leadership or instructional leadership? When, where, how many times, and by whom?
5. As Departmental Head, you are also responsible for teaching. Do you have sufficient time to conduct instructional leadership? Explain the time that you use to conduct instructional leadership.

6. There is an assumption that the improvement or decline in the achievement of learners in the National Senior Certificate is influenced by the enactment of instructional leadership by the Departmental Head. Do you agree or disagree with this assumption? Motivate your answer.
7. One of the strategies of improving instructional leadership is to attend professional development workshops. Are you attending professional development workshops, who is conducting the workshops and what do you gain from the workshops?
8. Are you also able to conduct professional development workshops of teachers? How many times do you conduct the workshops per term, who are attending the workshops and what is the focus of the workshops?
9. Principals are also responsible for instructional leadership. Do you support this role of the principal? Motivate your answer.
10. The main aim of instructional leadership is to enhance the academic performance of the learners. How is your instructional leadership improving the academic performance of learners in your school?
11. As a Departmental head and instructional leader, how do you support your teachers with regard to their instructional obligations?
12. How is Covid-19 affecting your duties as an instructional leader?

I sincerely appreciate your input. Be blessed.

APPENDIX H
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS & DEPARTMENTAL HEADS	
<p>The observations will be conducted in the classroom where the principal or Departmental Head is conducting class visits. A personal timetable will be used which constitute 30 minutes per period.</p> <p>Date: -----</p> <p>Classroom number: -----</p> <p>Name of principal/HOD: -----</p> <p>Name of teacher: -----</p> <p>Subject taught: ----- Duration: -----</p> <p>Grade: -----</p>	
<p>The following questions will assist in the observation process:</p>	
1. What is the classroom climate?	
2. Was the observer warmly welcomed by the teacher?	
3. According to the teacher's timetable mention the period number when the lesson started.	
4. Which subject is being offered in the classroom?	
5. Is the teacher having a lesson preparation?	
6. What is the principal or DH doing in the class?	
7. Is the principal or DH talking to the teacher during the lesson?	

8. Is there a clear introduction and presentation of the lesson?	
9. Does the principal or DH complete a class visit report?	
10. Does the teacher show understanding and interest in the subject content during the presentation?	
11. Is the teacher comfortable with the presence of the principal or DH?	
12. Were learners actively involved in a lesson?	
13. Is the teacher assessing the learners?	
14. What type of assessment is given to learners? Formal/informal (verbal/written class activity).	
15. Does the teacher use relevant Learning and Teaching Support Materials?	
16. Which Learning and Teaching Support Materials did the teacher used?	
17. Is there a conclusion?	
18. What is the principal or DH doing after the lesson?	
19. What is the teacher doing after the lesson?	
20. Do you have any comments?	

Signature of Observer: -----

Signature of Principal/DH: -----

Signature of Teacher: -----

APPENDIX I

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE	
NAME OF SCHOOL:DATE.....	
TYPE OF DOCUMENT:	
NAME OF DOCUMENT	
AUTHOR/CREATOR:	
DATE	
AIM OF DOCUMENT	
INTENDED AUDIENCE	
MAIN POINTS EXPRESSED IN THE DOCUMENT	
SIGNIFICANCE OF DOCUMENT	
WHAT DOCUMENT DOES NOT ANSWER	

=====

APPENDIX J

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

CHANÉ SMITH
PROOFREADING AND EDITING

Member of the Professional Editors' Guild

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING



To Whom It May Concern,

This letter serves to confirm that in January 2023, I completed the proofreading and language editing of the dissertation for

Lebeya Regina Mashoto

Student number: 63404451

Preliminary title: The role of the Head of Department in contributing to successful teaching and learning in secondary schools in Lulekani circuit, Limpopo Province.

This document is being submitted in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Masters Degree

in

Education Management

at

University of South Africa

I have proofread and edited the dissertation, including the introductory pages, appendix pages, and the list of references. This editing involved proofreading, language, style, grammar, and technical editing. I used track changes in WORD to make comments and note changes. The document was returned to the author, who was responsible for making the necessary changes. Please note that this confirmation refers only to editing of work done up to the date of this letter and does not include any changes which the author or the supervisor may make later.

Sincerely,

Chané Smith

BEd, Hons. (Ed.), MEd, Dip. Proofedit

30 January 2023



071 440 6154

csproofreading.editing@gmail.com

APPENDIX K

TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

dissertation. 23/01/2023

ORIGINALITY REPORT

33% SIMILARITY INDEX	29% INTERNET SOURCES	8% PUBLICATIONS	15% STUDENT PAPERS
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PRIMARY SOURCES

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