

**PRIMARY SCHOOL DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF THEIR FUNCTIONS IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CASE STUDY, MANZINI REGION**

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PRIMARY SCHOOL DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF THEIR ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CASE STUDY, MANZINI REGION

I declare that this above dissertation 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.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it fall within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



30 January 2023

SIGNATURE

DATE

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents Mr and Mrs P.E. Hlophe who worked tirelessly and paid my school fees from their ordinary subsistence farming products. Thank you so much Makhonkhosi lamahle.

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To God Almighty, I fail to show and express how grateful I am for the wisdom and direction that you bestowed upon me throughout the study.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the primary school deputy headteachers' experiences of their functions in the implementation of the National Curriculum in Eswatini, in the Manzini Region. The researcher used a qualitative research approach. A case study research design was employed. The research issues focused on how DHTs operate in schools and the difficulties they encounter in carrying out their responsibilities for curriculum implementation.

The instruments used to collect data were semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis were the methods used to collect the data. Week plans, term plans, annual plans, and meeting minutes were among the documents used in observation and analysis.

The population consisted of only deputy headteachers. Ten participants were purposively sampled from ten (10) schools in the Kwaluseni Zone, Manzini Region. All participants were selected on basis of being deputy headteachers. By guaranteeing anonymity, voluntary involvement, informed consent, and confidentiality, ethical principles were upheld. The acquired data were analysed using a thematic approach.

The study found that assumed roles of DHT were far less demanding than when the DHT was in the job. The study also revealed that DHTs had comprehensive and divert functions which included supporting and empowering stakeholders, working with different groups at different levels and supervising daily functions within the school.

Key terms: Deputy headteacher, curriculum, perceptions, curriculum guidelines, diversity of learners

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BOG	Board of Governor
DC	Disciplinary Committee
DEO	District Education Officer
DHT	Deputy Headteacher
EC	European Commission
FPE	Free Primary Education
GoS	Government of Swaziland
HOD	Head of Department
HT	Headteacher
MoET	Minister of Education and Training
NETSP	National Education and Training Sector Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PLC	Professional Learning Community
REO	Regional Education Officer
SMS	Short Message Service
T.I.C.	Teacher-in-charge
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UNISA	University of South Africa
US	United States
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The importance of education in the growth of any country has been acknowledged on a global scale. Government has therefore invested large sums of funds in the development of school curricula and set up systems that ensure the effective implementation of those curricula. There is general agreement that school management plays a crucial role in ensuring that the national curriculum is implemented and observed, in addition to other criteria (such as finances, educational resources, and teacher student ratio). In this regard, the deputy headteachers' role is crucial in the realisation of educational curriculum objectives.

In the Eswatini education system, every primary school that has an enrolment that is significantly above 400 learners qualifies for a deputy headteacher (DHT). Primary schools that have above 700 learners qualify for a second deputy headteacher (Swaziland Ministry of Education, 1988: 30). Since the government implemented its Free Primary Education (FPE) policy in 2009, there has been a rise in the need for deputy headteachers because, regardless of their family's financial position, practically all children of school age attend primary school.

Different countries use different terminology for this position. In the United States of America (USA) for example, the deputy headteacher is called the assistant principal and in other countries like Australia, is referred to as deputy principal (Anderson, 2006: 2). In using the term deputy headteacher, Eswatini follows the United Kingdom (UK), probably because Eswatini was a British protectorate before its independence. Other countries like Ghana and Kenya also use the term deputy headteacher, just like Eswatini.

Anderson (2006: 4) has listed the roles of the deputy principal as outlined by the Department of Education and Training in Western Australia as follows:

- Establishing and promoting a shared vision for the school.
- Using change management techniques to create better educational services.
- Helping to organise staff professional development.

- Contributing to the design of policy and educational growth.
- Creating and overseeing administrative processes to enable effective school administration.
- Supporting education and learning.

In Kenya, deputy headteachers are employed by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and dispersed across several schools, according to Kariuki, Majau, Mungiria, and Nkonde (2012: 46). In their new positions, they are not trained, and it is up to the school principal and educational officers to give orientation. In Eswatini, the headteacher of the school must make sure that teachers' positions, for example, the deputy headteacher, carry out all aspects of their work as laid down according to their position, and to ensure that their duties are carried out effectively (Swaziland Ministry of Education, 1988: 11).

Some of the following functions are appropriate for the deputy headteacher:

- To advise the head of the school on matters requiring top-level decisions.
- To deputise for the head of the school when he/she is unable to perform his/her normal duties.
- To deal with discipline problems, in the first instance, which teachers cannot handle.
- To supervise staff attendance, punctuality, and conduct.
- To supervise the general administration of the school concerning grounds, library, classrooms, school stock, duty rosters, assembly, daily routines, school attendance, and regulations.
- To prepare a timetable within the framework laid down by the school.
- To supervise student welfare (Swaziland Ministry of Education, 1988: 11).

The deputy headteacher is employed by Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training. He/she is promoted through the Teaching Service Commission, which was established by the 1982 Teaching Service Act No. 1 and the 1983 Teaching Service Regulations (Ministry of Education and Training, 2011: 50). The Teaching Service Commission invites the deputy headteacher to an interview and subsequently issues a letter of appointment to that specific school. Making sure that all teachers and administrators arrive to school on time is one of

the Teaching Service Commission's policy goals (The Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy, 2011: 50).

The deputy headteacher's job is described by Anderson (2006: 2) as falling midway between that of a principal and a classroom teacher. A deputy headteacher really applies for this position with a background of a classroom teacher or senior teacher.

This research will advance knowledge in a variety of ways. It will improve our comprehension of the primary deputy head teachers' responsibilities of putting the curriculum into practice in the classrooms. The obstacles that deputy headteachers have in carrying out their duties, particularly when adopting the national curriculum, will also be looked into.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The school administrator plays a crucial role in national curriculum implementation. In any case, the school's principal will need to publicly and consciously commit to staff empowerment (Carl, 2009: 10). Eswatini in current years has witnessed an increase in the number of deputy headteachers and this number has increased on the reason that they assist in the realisation of the education curriculum in the country. This has led to a rise in costs at the expense of other resources that are needed to achieve the education goals in the country. In light of this, the present study will seek to investigate the experiences of the primary school deputy headteachers in Eswatini in their roles of implementing the national curriculum in their schools, the assistance needed to implement policies and development plans, the experiences in their functions or as well as to determine the challenges they face.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is meant to respond to the following central research question:

How do primary school deputy headteachers in Eswatini perceive their functions in relation to what they experience in their daily duties?

Additionally, in order to direct the data gathering procedure, the next guiding questions were developed.

- What are the functions of the deputy headteachers in the schools?

- What are the challenges faced by the deputy headteachers as they carry out their functions in implementation of the curriculum?

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1.4.1 Research Aim

The main aim of this study was to document perceptions of primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carry out their daily duties.

1.4.2 Research Objectives

The study required to achieve the following research objectives:

- To determine the functions of deputy headteachers in the schools.
- To identify the challenges faced by deputy headteachers as they carry out their functions in implementing the curriculum.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A case study using qualitative approaches was the research design employed in this study. The definition of a case study given by McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 344) is "an in-depth analysis of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, process, or individuals) based on significant data collection." The case study proved to be the best design because the study sought to determine the experiences of deputy headteachers in their positions. Depending on the question and circumstance, case studies include significant and varied data collection. The study was also bound. Being bounded means being unique according to space, time, and participant characteristics.

A qualitative research approach examines behaviour in its natural setting. There is no handling, control, or externally imposed restraint of conduct or settings, McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 321) emphasise. The research was conducted in a classroom, the deputy headteacher's office, or other school locations like notice boards, etc. I agree with McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 322) that behaviour is best understood when it happens naturally, free from outside restrictions and control as in this regard. Multiple realities, such as interviews with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and teachers on a social situation, are another benefit of qualitative research methodologies.

The study used purposeful sampling to select a sample of participants. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2005: 194) contend that it is uncommon to be able to contact the entire population and that it is impossible to reach all the individuals of a population of interest. In purposeful sampling, the researcher chooses specific components from the population that will represent or provide information about the research topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 138). De Vos et al. (2005: 328) state that while sampling, a specific instance is picked because it exemplifies a feature or procedure that is relevant to the study at hand.

The usage of interview schedules served as the study's primary method of data collection. In a case study, the persons who contributed in the study are reported in a manner to protect confidentiality of data, so likewise in this study. Thus pseudonyms were used.

Observations would also be done during the interview process. The recording of facial languages, gestures and movements were triangulated with the verbal data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 363). Field notes were taken to record observations during workplace visits. The researcher was aware that accessibility to observe all interactive activities that participants engage in with others in the workplace might be impossible.

1.5.1 Data Analysis

Data analysis entails systematically arranging the data. According to Creswell (2014: 195), it involves segmenting and taking apart the data as well as putting it back together. This was done in a way that the researcher clearly understood and was in a position to present to others. This was performed concerning the research questions. Data derived from interviews were presented and analysed descriptively using the thematic form of data analysis. Data from observation were coded into themes and the themes were compared with themes from the interviews. The observation method denotes the collection of information by way of the investigator's observation, without interviewing the respondents (Kothari, 2011: 17).

1.5.2 Trustworthiness

This study enhanced its trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Flick, 2009: 392). Other strategies that were used included prolonged and persistent fieldwork, multi-method strategies, mechanically recorded data, member

checking, and participant review (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 330). To enhance this, the researcher collected data from more than one source and visited each source at least three times. Long-term and persistent data collection enabled interim data analysis and confirmation to guarantee a match between findings and the reality of participation.

1.5.3 Ethics

The Director of Education in Mbabane, Ministry of Education, granted permission for the study to be conducted with deputy headteachers. This made it easy for the researcher to get in touch with deputy headteachers right away. The researcher obtained authorisation to conduct interviews and workplace observations from the headteachers of the schools where participants work before getting started. The privacy of participants' and schools' identities was guaranteed to headteachers. Additionally, participants were given the assurance that their involvement in the study would be considered confidential.

When collecting consent for a study, the researcher should not force individuals to sign the informed consent form. Participants in a study should understand that participation is fully optional, and the researcher should make this explicit in the instructions on the consent form (Creswell, 2014: 195).

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The ideas that follow were important for the study and are well defined below:

1.6.1 Deputy Headteacher

A deputy headteacher is a teacher employed to assist the head of the school in administrative functions as well as carrying out his/her normal teaching duties. In the United States (US), an entry-level campus administrative post is frequently referred to as an assistant principal. Depending on the country of origin, several terms are used. Vice principal, administrative assistant, deputy head, deputy principle, associate principal, and assistant to the principal are a few additional titles for the post (Woods, 2012: 26).

1.6.2 Curriculum

According to Alberta (2012: 25), the teaching-learning process is built on the curriculum. The development of study schedules, instructional materials, lesson plans, student assessments, and even teacher training are all based on the curriculum. A planned

educational experience is what Thomas, Kern, Hughes, and Chen (2016: 4) characterise as a curriculum. It covers a wide range of educational experiences, including short courses on one or more topics, year-long programs, and clinical clerkship to entire training programs.

Curriculum is defined by the Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (NETSP) (Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini, 2018: x) as all the experiences offered to students both within and outside of the classroom. This may contain the curricular standards, schedules, syllabi, learning resources, textbooks, and assessment rules. The cornerstone of any education and training system, the NETSP emphasises that the curriculum should be flexible to cater to the great diversity of learners.

1.7 ASSUMPTION OF THE STUDY

The study assumed that deputy headteachers are not provided with enough orientation and job description as they start their jobs as DHTs. Furthermore, there are no workshops for DHTs as per schools' rules and regulations booklets.

1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in the Manzini Region of Eswatini and it focused on the Kwaluseni zone. This is because of the proximity to the school in which the researcher is located. In the Kwaluseni zone, these schools closely interact in several conducts such as cluster teaching, sporting activities, music competitions, and many more.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The process and consequences of this research study are presented in five chapters, namely:

- Chapter 1 includes the study's background, problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives, research methodology, definition of important words, assumptions and study delimitations, and summary.
- Chapter 2 consists of the current available writings around the topic at hand. The researcher used information collected from the internet, textbooks, journals and past research on similar studies. The researcher also explored theories that underpinned the study.

- Chapter 3 provides a detailed account of the research's methodology, including the research design, research strategy, methodology, research limits, and validity as well as dependability concerns.
- Chapter 4 presents research findings using diagrams and tables, and figures and narrations.
- Chapter 5 analyses the information acquired and offers suggestions to the case study organisation based on the research findings.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the background to the study and the preliminary literature that resulted in the introduction of DHTs in primary schools. The chapter further identified the aim of the study and the methodology that was used. The researcher explained why the qualitative research design was adopted. The study design was then examined to clarify how the information gathered was transformed into useful data that was utilised to generalise findings and to provide an appropriate summary. Ethics were also discussed in the study. More literature that was relevant to the study will be introduced in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an analytical review of literature related to the study. In reviewing the literature, the researcher surveys and synthesises the theoretical assertions of experts in the field of school leadership. This is done with the express view of determining the extent to which practice in the research schools either resonates with or deviates from best practices from around the globe. To contextualize the study, the chapter begins by describing the history of Eswatini's educational system. The remainder of the chapter gives an overview of how the deputy headteacher oversees the operation of the schools. A detailed examination of school leadership in general is then given. The chapter then examines what encourages leadership at the school level as well as obstacles to leadership. The chapter then examines the characteristics of a school leader and contrasts them with the many difficulties faced by deputy headteachers. The chapter concludes with a report on the role of a deputy headteacher, as well as an assessment of this role in relation to curriculum implementation at the school level.

2.2 EDUCATION IN ESWATINI

In Eswatini, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) has emphasised that the quality of education and accountability are extremely important in schools (Government of Swaziland (GoS, 2017: 6) and that it is critical to realise that both quality and accountability rely heavily on the knowledge and experience of school leaders, including deputy heads (Mutero, 2014: 101). However, these school leaders have not always been well informed of their duties and it is, therefore, necessary that they be trained in what they should do and how to do it (MoET, 2014a; Mahlalela, 2018:98). Sibanda (2014: 4) maintains that such training needs to take into account the experiential background of school administrators, as well as their learning styles of the adults that they were.

The definition of educational quality is debatable, but Jana, Khan, and Chatterjee (2014: 22-3) contend that there is little debate regarding the fact that quality improvement efforts should be directed toward enhancing teaching and learning as well as developing environments where these activities can be carried out most successfully. Sibanda (2014: 145) goes on to say that the requirements of the learner should come first and that creating

high-quality curricula is an important undertaking. Focusing on learning quality raises questions about how to categorise and prioritise the varied needs of individual students, such as academic, social, spiritual, and moral development, as well as those related to citizenship, parenthood, and preparation for the workforce. However, this shouldn't be done at the expense of teachers, who are essential to the successful implementation of the educational curriculum (Palm, 2014: 45; Kanyongo, 2014: 45).

It is imperative to protect the right to a high-quality education (Palm, 2014: 89). According to Kanyongo (2014: 56), governments are responsible for ensuring that their citizens' rights to high-quality education are gradually realised. The author who first made this claim goes on to say that this is supported by UNESCO's government commitment to provide access to education for all. The second is to ensure that everyone has access to high-quality education, and the third responsibility is to safeguard student rights in the classroom. This means that the administration of the school, including the deputy heads, is crucial since they act as the government's representative in carrying out the curriculum. The social milieu in which the school works has an impact on the requirement for quality (Kanyongo, 2014: 84). According to Dewan (2019), three primary trends in the social environment are driving up demands for education's efficacy and quality, which have a significant impact on education. The first trend is the advancements in the educational and psychological sciences in recent years. An increase in financial costs and greater investment in education represent the second trend. The third and final trend is the rising demand for accountability for the delivery of high-quality education from parents and society as a whole.

In Eswatini, the concept of 'education for all' raises questions regarding the quality versus quantity dilemma whereby the lack of adequate financial resources militates against the establishment of quality education to all children. The lack of adequate financial resources compromises the standard of education provision in three critical areas: shortage of teaching staff, shortage of learning materials such as books, and insufficient infrastructure such as classroom blocks, science laboratories and students' hostels (UNESCO et al., 2015).

After understanding the role of the state and that of teachers in education, the next section will deal with school supervision by deputy headteachers.

2.3 SUPERVISION AT SCHOOL BY THE DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Before even tackling the supervisory role of the deputy headteacher, it is imperative to consider what the European Commission (EC) (2018: 54) rates as some essential professional and personal prerequisites for candidates for the role of teaching/learning supervisor such as that of the deputy headteacher. This consideration is particularly relevant to a study whose focus is the head teacher's experiences as supervisor of curriculum implementation at the school level. Firstly, the role of the school leader should be clearly defined. Translated into the Eswatini context, this would require that the MoET clearly specifies and delineates the duties of the headteacher. At present, there is ambiguity even as far as the exact role and attendant national stature of the school headteacher. A recent media report suggests that the government of Eswatini is still working around "...formalising its relationship with headteachers to recognize their role as managers" and, perhaps, thereafter also adjusting their remuneration commensurate with this new recognition (Phungwayo, 2019: 4). In defining the role, "a quality or competence framework might be helpful for this purpose..." (EC, 2018: 56).

Once the responsibility has been sufficiently defined, the first requirement is whether or not the candidate has a vision for the school. In addition to this, the issue of competence and charisma becomes paramount. These are the professional and personal qualities that empower the school curriculum supervisor to support, inspire and develop the teaching staff too (EC, 2018).

An equally important consideration for the selected candidate for deputy headteacher is the kind of professional support extended to them. It must be the duty of the school headteacher, as the deputy headteacher's immediate supervisor, to mentor and develop the leadership skills of the former (Hybels, 2016; Maxwell, 2015; Mohale, 2018). It goes without saying that support begins with proper recognition by the MoET – the employer, as earlier suggested. It would seem, at least from the EC perspective, that the MoET of Eswatini still has a long way to go before the school deputy headteacher feels empowered enough to satisfactorily fulfil the obligations of their hitherto largely invisible dual role as assistant headteachers and loosely defined de facto heads of discipline. At school level, a lot has to be done with regard to supervision as a way of promoting quality education and for the motivation of teachers as direct implementers of the curriculum.

The personnel who supervise at primary school are: the headteacher (HT), deputy headteacher (DHT) and the teacher-in-charge (T.I.C.). Hence there is a need to receive regular staff development, reorientation and in-service training (MoET, 2015c: 7).

“Effective clinical supervision may increase employees’ opinions of organisational support and improve their commitment to an organisation’s vision and goals,” (Van der Werf, 2014: 211).

2.4 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Multiple leaders are seen to have numerous advantages within a school organisation (Hybels, 2016; Maxwell, 2015). In the context of schools, which are frequently logistically too big and complex to be run by the headteacher alone, this actually makes a lot of sense. Instead, in order to operate schools efficiently, leadership responsibilities must be outsourced. Hybels (2016) and Maxwell (2015) make the case that one advantage of scattered leadership is more employee engagement in leadership, which may lead to more sensible decisions. This is because it is more likely that the decisions taken will consider the requirements and viewpoints of many stakeholders. Furthermore, multiple front-runners within schools may result in more widespread acceptance and ownership of organisational goals and a greater sense of empowerment by those involved.

Mahlalela (2018) demonstrates that some distribution patterns of leadership have a greater potential than others, and educators should be sceptical of assuming that distributed leadership is always beneficial and relevant for all organisations. One potential element that may help organisations achieve positive transformation and results is distributed leadership. He adds that there is growing proof that a distributed leadership approach might result in increased potential for organisational change and development.

Schools are no exception to the long-held rule that strong leadership is a critical component of organisational effectiveness and development (Maxwell, 2015). Similar evidence shows that leaders have an indirect but significant impact on a school's effectiveness and students' academic success (EC, 2018; Mahlalela, 2018: 92; MoET, 2015c: 14). It is sometimes maintained that the quality of leadership materials in determining the motivation of instructors and the quality of teaching in the classroom, even though the quality of teaching

has a significant impact on levels of learner motivation and achievement. One of the most important school elements influencing student progress is the DHT's participation.

The Deputy Headteacher can collaborate closely with teachers on teaching and lesson planning because they are instructional leaders, according to The EC (2018). Changing people's attitudes and, ultimately, behaviours, according to Hybels (2016), is one of the most efficient ways to alter an organisation's culture. When a professional learning community (PLC) is implemented, there is a shift in emphasis from a focus on teaching to one on learning. If the organisation is to sustain this transformation, it must be founded in its values, assumptions, and beliefs. It cannot be only structural and cosmetic.

2.5 DRIVERS TO SEEKING HEADSHIP AND BARRIERS TO HEADSHIP

2.5.1 Drivers to seeking headship

The DHT suggests that serving as a deputy serves as training for and an access point towards the position of headteacher. While all deputy or assistant headteachers aspire to the position of headteacher, many of them do desire advancement to the position of headteacher (MoET, 2015b: 16). One fundamental presumption regarding deputy headteachers is that they aspire to the position of headteacher and that their current position represents a significant phase in their evolution as future leaders.

The absence of leadership impact they believed they had inside the school was a major source of frustration or disappointment for many headteachers, according to research, who regarded their experiences as deputy headteachers to be particularly frustrating or disappointing (MoET, 2015b: 16). As department heads rather than DHTs, several people even felt that they had more leadership impact. Their perception of their time as a head teacher, which is typically considerably more favourable due to their obvious leadership role within the school, often stands in stark contrast to this negative opinion of their period as a deputy.

Research undertaken by the European Commission (EC, 2018) indicates that DHTs who were asked why they wanted to go for headship cited, among others, positive role modelling of the headteacher as playing a major role. Common traits of the modelling mentioned include that the HT possessed honesty, reliability, commitment, a positive attitude and generosity.

Another driver that they mentioned is the ambition to succeed, each stage of their career is planned and each DHT is where they are because of their ambition.

Possessing the ability to affect change or the potential to make a difference is another motivator. DHTs seem to be extremely skilled and self-assured in their work at the school. Their professional lives are typically much simpler on a daily basis. There is a strong sense that they are ready to go forward and begin considering what it would be like to establish their own school. Despite wanting to reform, they are limited by DHT's subordinate position.

2.5.2 Barriers to leadership

According to research conducted by the MoET, when DHTs were asked what obstacles or concerns they had with headship, the following factors became clear (2015b: 15).

- Family commitments and work life balance – finding a way to balance their own lives since they have their own families and children.
- The type of school and location, e.g., not too many pupils and primary school pupils because it is the most informative and most moulding age.
- Worries about age – DHTs are worried of being in headship for more than thirty years since most of those in the study were aged between their early thirties to mid-thirties.
- Money remuneration – DHTs feel headteachers are not supposed to be financially remunerated differently to a managing director of a business. In fact, some deputy headteachers do not aspire to headship because they do not like the notion of the changing role of the head from leading practitioner to chief executive.
- Accountability – The headteacher's responsibility for accounting everything that occurs in a school is something that DHTs are afraid of.
- Confidence – Some DHTs do not possess confidence and self-belief and, consequently, doubt their own capabilities. They focus on what they cannot do and not on what they can do.

Dlamini (2019) expresses the opinion that many people, including middle-level leaders, are constrained by self-deprecation and self-doubt, which is primarily caused by a fear of failing and the inability to free oneself to reach greater heights and to venture beyond one's past

and present contexts and stations in life and/or professions. As a result, they suppress any desire to work at the senior leadership level.

It goes without saying that there are a variety of reasons why intermediate leaders choose not to seek out senior leadership roles. Some of the causes are as follows: senior leadership positions call for an unfavourable rise in responsibility or workload, are more focused on administrative tasks, or will force them to stop teaching certain subject matter (Sibanda, 2014: 13).

2.6 EFFECTIVE QUALITIES OF MIDDLE LEADERS

From the research conducted by the European Commission (EC, 2018), personal qualities such as intelligence, innovation and flexibility of prospective school leaders rank among the prerequisite requirements. They are equally expected to have a strong sense of self-efficacy, motivation and communication to the role. Being open-minded, and having the capacity for problem-solving and seeing the 'bigger picture' are other valued qualities deemed essential for middle-level leaders. They are also expected to exhibit enthusiasm for the role and have the ability to encourage and inspire others (EC, 2018; Hybels, 2016; Maxwell, 2015).

The capacity to effectively interact with people is one of the skills mentioned in all of the aforementioned research. Outstanding interpersonal abilities, according to middle leaders, are essential for effective middle management. Some individuals refer to the necessity for interpersonal skills as the need to have "imaginary" interpersonal skills since, in a position where you would be interacting with a wide range of people, you will actually need to be able to get along with everyone and all personality types (EC, 2018).

Other traits noted include approachability, tact, and consideration for others. Additionally emphasised are the importance of organisational, administrative, and teaching skills. Middle leaders also stress the necessity to meticulously record the work they do and efficiently manage their time by choosing and prioritising the tasks that need to be completed. Another important talent is the ability to manage your time effectively. Other attributes or skills mentioned by middle leaders as essential for effective middle leadership include the capacity for teamwork. Not forgetting the ability to effectively use technology, and the possession of self-assured administrative and financial management abilities (Mahlalela, 2018: 101; Maxwell, 2015: 234).

2.7 CHALLENGES FACED BY DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS

According to research, it is simple to list the duties of a deputy official but more difficult to think about how a deputy headteacher actually functions in the everyday operations of the school. The point person at the school is the deputy headteacher. Given that they are the focal point of all school events, they must use extreme tact in carrying out their duties and accountabilities. Therefore, the DHT must be knowledgeable and helpful to all those that engage with the school where he or she has been placed (EC, 2018: 113). However, he or she encounters a number of difficulties in carrying out his or her duties.

As middle managers, deputy headteachers perform most of the duties of the headteachers, including discipline and welfare of both staff and learners. Yet, as stated earlier, deputies are an invisible, silent minority. In fact, they are the forgotten troops in the education army, and suffer the most casualties. That is to say, despite slaving and providing support to both staff and learners, deputy headteachers bear the brunt when things go wrong. Despite the well-documented concern about these other groups, the overall effect of their challenging duty is that more deputies burn out than either heads or classroom teachers (MoET, 2015b: 14).

It is also important to take into account the DHT's job role if the deputy headteacher position is to be seen as a precursor to the headship. Outside of the 'real' versus 'ideal' competency issues that are explored in-depth here, research suggests that the function of the DHT is fraught with difficulties. The headship is frequently the first official leadership role that educators take on at their institution. They now have responsibilities and challenges in their new roles that they did not have as educators. DHTs frequently struggle to balance their personal and work lives due to the many and demanding responsibilities (Dewan, 2019: 57).

Conflicts might arise when a DHT transitions from a teaching post to an assistant headship job since they now have to supervise staff who, up until recently, were their peers. The new assistant headteacher worked mostly with students in their previous roles as teachers. However, they must frequently interact with adults, including school administrators, in their capacity as administrators. New assistant headteachers consequently shift their focus from

the particular classroom to the overall school. This transition is frequently described as taking place from the closed-off setting of the classroom to the more welcoming and cooperative environment of the administrative office (MoET, 2015b: 18). Finally, discipline and staff management can be difficult for new DHTs due to their frequently unpleasant nature. The work of new DHTs might be a demanding and uncomfortable change from their previous employment for a variety of reasons.

Some of the difficulties that new HTs and DHTs face are comparable in kind (EC, 2018: 51). First, they encounter resistance while working with ineffective, demoralised, or child-centred teachers. Second, there is pressure on incoming administrators to replicate the accomplishments and, probably more crucially, the manner of their predecessors because they are frequently compared to them. The new HT and DHT may experience self-doubt and efficacy concerns as a result of the pressure to uphold the legacy of their predecessors (Dlamini, 2019: 89). Third, the demands of their workload, particularly in the areas of time management and paperwork, overwhelm many newly appointed headteachers and deputy headteachers. Ineffective management of these responsibilities can lead to anxiety and stress, especially for school administrators who also have personal commitments. Head instructors should continually raise student achievement. Finally, pressure from a variety of stakeholders pushes the headteacher and deputy headteachers to constantly improve student performance.

The challenges faced by the DHTs, as identified by MoET (2015c: 25), are as follows: high workload, lack of enthusiasm, disrespect, lack of discussion and indiscipline. Challenges experienced by deputy headteachers stem from the fact that the society is changing and the school is affected by these changes as well. These challenges include financial issues, social culture, politics, as well as profession and discipline-related ones.

In curriculum implementation, the European Commission's (2018: 78) study cites the following challenges they face while observing implementation of the curriculum: the absence of teachers from the classroom, their lack of preparation, the inadequate teaching facilities, and increased workload for the deputy and uncooperative teachers. Such challenges impact negatively on the effective performance of DHTs in their role of curriculum and instruction implementation. The study further observed that schools with

uncooperative teachers and a high load for the supervisor cannot achieve educational quality.

According to UNESCO et al. (2015: 87), challenges faced by DHTs on disciplinary challenges include lack of a disciplined committee, an uncooperative community, as well as dynamic and emerging forms of indiscipline. Challenges from the neighbourhood include politics that interfere with the administration of the school, lack of financial support for the institution, interference from the sponsor's sponsoring religion, politics from the headmaster, and appointments to the Board of Governors (BOG).

Generally, some of the challenges experienced by deputy headteachers in doing their duties, as highlighted by the MoET (2015c: 23) include:

- getting time to teach;
- parental interference;
- overruling of decisions by the headteacher;
- lack of unity;
- uncooperative parents;
- disciplining students and upholding the children's act;
- indiscipline from teachers and subordinate staff.

Van der Werf (2014) lists the following difficulties that DHTs encounter. He lists three different types of issues, including:

- i. issues that are personal or human;
- ii. issues that arise within organisations;
- iii. Extra-organisational issues

2.7.1 The personal or human problems

The personal or human problems, as highlighted by Van der Werf (2014), were qualified with the problems outlined below:

- Curriculum and instruction;
- Skills and techniques;

- Training;
- Educational background
- Age.

2.7.1.1 Curriculum and instruction

A deputy headteacher has the duty of organising and administering the approved school curriculum. Nevertheless, most schools, especially in operational contexts such as Eswatini, suffer from a serious scarcity of essential teaching and learning material like textbooks, workbooks, and science equipment, among others.

2.7.1.2 Skills and techniques

Although the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) has established processes for the appointments of deputy headteachers, there are still deputy headteachers who lack the necessary skills and techniques to do their tasks. The Board of Governors itself appointed some of the DHTs who are currently in the roles. Other DHTs were appointed based on their seniority in the educational system or extended service at a single institution. In order to win over the community, certain appointments have been made on the basis of clan connection. This implies that some ineffective, incompetent, and subpar instructors have been promoted to the position of DHT. As a result, additional relevant abilities and competencies must be taken into account.

2.7.1.3 Training

No suitable training is provided for the demanding position of a DHT. The majority of DHTs make use of their prior teaching expertise. Some people use their positions as heads of department (HODs), which are significantly more junior positions with much simpler job descriptions. Some people rely on the limited pointers and suggestions provided to them during college pre-service training, brief in-service courses, and suggestions they receive from co-workers or superiors.

2.7.1.4 Educational qualifications

If the DHT is less qualified, some or all of the more qualified teachers that he or she must supervise may look down on him or her. The teachers might not want to carry out the DHT's instructions because they believe they are more intelligent and of higher standing than the DHT. When this occurs, the DHT finds it extremely challenging to properly perform his or

her administrative responsibilities. Therefore, it is crucial that the DHT possess at least as good of academic credentials as those who report to him or her. In order to carry out his or her tasks with confidence, it is also anticipated that the DHT has greater experience than the teachers.

2.7.1.5 Age

Age could provide difficulties in managing educational institutions. The DHT will have trouble understanding the demands of the more experienced teachers if they are too young. The DHT may find themselves at odds with some of the young employees if they are mature individuals who must deal with young instructors who appear rebellious due to college hangover and occasionally because of the rebellion.

2.7.2 Intra-organisational problems

Kanyongo (2014: 43) qualifies intra-organisational problems as: finance, staff workers, discipline and behavioural problems and the nature of the job.

2.7.2.1 Finance

The DHT's responsibility for aiding in financial planning, collecting, expenditure, record-keeping, and accounting for school finances presents another challenge.

2.7.2.2 Maintaining good staff relations

Another difficulty facing DHTs is retaining competent staff. It can be challenging to work with a group of people who plainly have different personalities; some teachers have bad attitudes toward their jobs, some lack commitment and attention to their careers, and some have a bad reputation. Dealing with such people calls for competent leadership that can foster peace, staff trust, and an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning within the school. The deputy may have a problem about the link between the HT and the DHT. This could be because of delegation, where some HTs disrespect the status of a deputy by giving him/her the duties the HT does not like or has little time for. Such a tendency relegates the role of the DHT to that of a virtual errands boy for the HT.

Additionally, the DHT might desire the respect of the head and the teachers. While with the teachers, he or she may criticize the HT, and because of the DHT's knowledge of the

administration and the person in charge, his or her critique will be more authoritative and trustworthy. And because the head was a visitor in the staff room, they might condemn teachers while they were present. A teacher may come out as sneaky and a source of tension between the headteacher and staff if they make an effort to develop a close relationship with the HT.

2.7.2.3 Behavioural or discipline challenges

The challenges of supporting subordinate staff and enforcing student discipline fall on the DHT. He or she mentors them in making moral decisions and hence needs to be well-versed in discipline as a subject. The DHT must also come up with effective plans and methods for continuously correcting everyone who comes before him or her.

2.7.2.4 Nature of the job

For the DHT, who already has a lot of obligations that require personal attention, the nature of the position can present difficulties. They all need to be handled carefully, effectively, efficiently, and competently. DHTs are expected to perform a reasonable amount of teaching in addition to their administrative duties. But when this responsibility is added to them, even a small burden grows heavier. It is difficult to strike a balance between the duties of a deputy head of school and classroom teaching. DHTs are expected to get to know every student in order to be aware of their unique needs and be able to meet them. In fact, they should also be ready to immediately step into any class where a teacher is suddenly unable to provide instruction. Otherwise, learners will find themselves stranded, possibly for as long as it takes for a fitting replacement to arrive.

2.7.3 Extra-organisational problems

Some of the challenges that are outside the school that the DHT has to deal with may include religious conflicts and problems caused by parents, as explained below.

2.7.3.1 Religious

There are people who identify with different religious faiths and claim affiliation with the school; this could lead to conflict and division there. Some religious organisations might look for a DHT who professes their beliefs; if not, they might start interfering with that DHT's

work and ask that they be transferred to another institution. Certain groups may be persuaded to hold their rallies or services in the school by the DHT, who is also in charge of school routine. They pose a dilemma for him or her if they seem hostile toward this. Religious matters can be extremely explosive and delicate, requiring the intervention of various parties, particularly the educational authorities.

2.7.3.2 Problems caused by parents

There are numerous interactions between parents and the school that their children attend. Some may decide to support the kids in this process when the school and the kids disagree, especially when it comes to discipline and academic concerns. If a parent encourages a child in such situations, they will grow to dislike the deputy headteacher and other teachers. This can then have an impact on school learning. The pupils might not follow the norms and regulations of the school, which would undermine the disciplinary procedures. Additionally, some parents might support a particular politician on a political level. The smooth operation of the school is hampered by political interference, and self-control may be jeopardized.

2.8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

According to the UNESCO et al. report (2015), the DHT's job in secondary schools is primarily focused on pastoral or instructional duties, however in elementary schools, the role frequently encompasses both. The degree to which some of these duties conflict and overlap with the headteacher's duties, however, continues to put significant strain on the deputy and assistant headteachers. When the headteacher is absent from the school, deputies and assistant heads may be required to carry out all of the duties assigned to them. For instance, a significant survey of DHTs in Australia revealed that the majority of DHTs felt that the headteacher's job was not well defined.

There is also a view that DHTs need a much stronger leadership role than they actually possess and that the role was too reactive with little real scope for leading innovation and change. This scenario resonates with the current situation in the Kingdom of Eswatini (Phungwayo, 2019).

According to the EC (2018) report, assistant heads are frequently given the job of managing the school's attendance and discipline concerns. The two most frequent duties of DHTs are observed to be discipline and attendance, even in America. In certain circumstances, it appears more and more that the DHTs serve a maintenance rather than a developing purpose inside the school and do not frequently operate as co-leaders within the organisation.

As previously said, the following is a general summary of the roles and responsibilities of a DHT:

- i. Act as the head of the school in the absence of the HT.
- ii. Take charge of the school's internal communication.
- iii. Be in charge of maintaining discipline among the students.
- iv. Coordinate the efforts of the other teachers to whom tasks have been assigned.
- v. Support the personnel in developing their teaching techniques.
- vi. Convene all or part of staff meetings.
- vii. Be in charge of organizing regular gatherings.
- viii. Backing classes for absent teachers.
- ix. Be in charge of stockpiles of consumables.
- x. Prepare the school timetable.
- xi. Manage his or her class
- xii. When the school has audio-visual equipment available, he or she trains subordinates on how to utilize it and provides first-line support.

The EC (2018) suggests the following as some necessary elements of a deputy headteacher's evolving position, however:

- i. Curriculum development and innovation.
- ii. Achieving the goals of the school.
- iii. Communicating and developing vision and promoting shared understanding amongst staff, taking advantage of the assistant head's intermediate and visible presence between staff and headteacher.

- iv. Working as a change agent (understanding change processes, initiating programmes and encouraging participation).
- v. Being a leading professional with a specialised knowledge base (e.g. on discipline).
- vi. Being a community relations agent, developing community links.

In reality, however, in studies of DHTs (e.g., MoET, 2015c: 17) the following roles have constantly been cited as the dominating DHT frequent task routine:

- i. Maintaining discipline;
- ii. Supervision of curriculum implementation;
- iii. Timetabling;
- iv. Chairing the procurement committee;
- v. Deputising;
- vi. Attending the board of governors meeting;
- vii. Attending to visitors.

Of these, maintaining discipline is the most prominent; supervision of curriculum implementation is second in the ranking.

2.9 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

2.9.1 Curriculum implementers

The phrase "implementation" describes how the curriculum, syllabus, or components are actually used in the classroom. In the cycles of developing and executing a curriculum, it is a crucial stage. Implementation requires educational processes since it entails altering beliefs and behaviours. Development and evaluation are components of implementation (GoS, 2017: 9).

Since practitioners are accountable for the educational process and are unable to delegate this obligation to outside organisations, they are the primary players in implementation. The development of practice may be supported and stimulated by external organisations and individuals, such as researchers, curriculum developers, and in-service trainers; however, decisions about initiating development and the control over its direction are within the purview of practitioners' professional judgment (GoS, 2017: 8; MoET, 2015c: 16).

2.9.2 Factors that favour implementation

According to MoET (2015c: 19), a number of variables make it challenging to apply new curriculum in actual classroom settings. Teachers, however, must comprehend the process of change and their roles as change agents because they are ultimately accountable for providing the authorised curriculum substance. In order to do this, they need to participate in the debates that take place about curriculum change.

Implementing the curriculum in Eswatini requires effective management and planning system as well as improved provision and use of resources to confirm that teaching and learning are maximised in schools. Resource issues in realising curriculum intentions in classroom include the following:

- Curriculum management
- Material resources
- Human resources
- Inclusive education
- Co-curricular activities
- Community relations

- Monitoring and evaluation (GoD, 2017: 9; MoET, 2014b: 40).

2.9.3 Importance of implementers in curriculum implementation

The literature that is now available suggests that while teachers are the most crucial players in curriculum implementation, they are frequently ignored when innovations have an impact on the curriculum. Teachers hold a highly crucial position in the curriculum's implementation, according to the MoET (2015c: 22). Teachers, and hence DHTs, cannot be excluded from the decision-making process because they are the key players and final arbiters. In order to avoid resistance or the development of a negative attitude towards the new curriculum, it is essential to involve instructors in curriculum innovation from the very beginning.

2.9.4 How educators respond to implementation

GoS (2017: 11) and MoET (2015c: 24) emphasise that a teacher responds to curriculum change in one of these three ways: cooperation, non-implementation, or mutual adaptation.

2.9.4.1 Cooperation

Here the curriculum is applied but with no real changes in the teachers and students, as well as no changes in the classroom. Teachers implement those things that are necessary – usually those that will keep them out of trouble. The plan and their teaching will remain much the same as they were. These teachers simply reinterpret the new ideas – the new curriculum - through the only lenses they have, their own understandings of teaching and learning. The actual experiences of students and teachers remain unchanged. Teachers largely teach as they always have and learners learn as they always have.

2.9.4.2 Non-implementation

Here, the curriculum plan is merely disregarded by the teachers or falls apart while being implemented. You find teachers saying they will not implement certain aspects that may appear to be unreasonable, in their opinion. They may actively complain about the new curriculum. These teachers, in many cases, are opposed to the new curriculum, either on grounds of ideology or on grounds of practicality. Such a scenario played itself out in the Eswatini primary school setting when the MoET imposed the implementation of continuous

assessment, much against what teachers, DHTs included, viewed to be non-conductive conditions on the ground (Al-Nouh, 2014: 216; Bremmer, 2014: 134).

2.9.4.3 Mutual adaptation

Here, the teaching process modifies or changes the new curriculum. When strategy and practice collide in the classroom, the curriculum and the teachers are affected. The shift is typically conceptualized as small, gradual modifications that always involve instructors and continuously take into account the situations in which the new policy needs to be implemented rather than as a "big bang" change.

2.9.5 Considerations during curriculum development

2.9.5.1 Reality/Representation

Helping students comprehend the facts of the social condition and how they came to be, as well as accurately expressing those realities, is a continuous concern of curriculum development in all areas (Al-Nouh et al., 2014: 236; Bremmer, 2014: 135; Mthethwa-Kunene et al., 2016: 47). Furthermore, they claim that despite society's great diversity in terms of racial and cultural backgrounds, curriculum designers have tended to be more exclusive than inclusive. They romanticize racial relations, gloss over socioeconomic issues and the realities of ethnic and racial identities, and downplay the difficulties of poverty and urban living in favour of middle-class and suburban experiences in their rush to promote harmony and avoid controversy and conflict. The portrayal is insufficient, and the reality is deceptive.

2.9.5.2 Relevance

Many students from different ethnic backgrounds do not find school to be stimulating or welcoming; instead, they frequently feel undesired, unimportant, and isolated. For these students, too much of what they are taught is not immediately useful. Although it does not reflect who they are, most instructors concur that learning is more engaging and straightforward when pupils can relate to it personally (Al-Nouh et al., 2014: 236; Bremmer, 2014: 136; Mthethwa-Kunene et al., 2016:47).

2.9.5.3 Multiculturalism

Closing the achievement gap, genuinely leaving no child academically behind, reviving faith and confidence in the promises of democracy, equality, and justice, creating educational

systems that reflect the diverse cultural, ethnic, racial, and social contributions that forge society, and improving opportunities for all students could all be solved by multicultural education (Julianto & Subroto, 2019: 420).

The fact that developing a curriculum involves more than simply compiling a list of academically necessary subjects is another crucial consideration. Instead, a number of factors need to be taken into account, including the students' learning needs, the consensus among teachers and administrators, community expectations, and recent advances in academic fields.

The main responsibility of the MoET in Eswatini is to ensure that all Swazi individuals have access to relevant, high-quality education at all levels while taking equity, efficacy, and efficiency into account. Realizing that education is the cornerstone and primary pillar of economic and social growth and mindful of its primary mandate, the MoET is dedicated to provide the highest-quality education that is readily available, reasonably priced, and relevant (GoS, 2017: 7; MoET 2014b: 5).

GoS, (2017: 6) and Alberta Education (2019: 67), new teachers may find the curriculum creation process confusing. The method is frequently mentioned in the literature as a guide for developing a curriculum that can be applied to a variety of subjects (i.e., a macro-view); nevertheless, it is also characterised as the strategy teacher's use in the classroom to organise learning activities (i.e., a micro-view). In order to conceptualize and consistently implement effective learning activities for students, both views of curriculum development are acceptable and beneficial. Aspiring teachers should become knowledgeable about macro and micro-level planning, learning theory, and student assessment/program evaluation once they have built a conceptual framework and comprehend the fundamentals of curriculum strategy.

Table 2.1 Levels and Curriculum Products

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Supra	International	<p>Common European Framework of References for Languages. Usually “generic” in nature.</p> <p>Examination platforms: e.g., Third International Mathematics and Science Study or Programme for International student assessment or progress in International reading literacy study.</p>
	Provincial, national, regional	<p>Intended core objectives (specialised in a curriculum framework and/or programme of studies).</p> <p>Authorised learning and teaching resources.</p> <p>Attainment levels.</p> <p>Examination programmes; e.g., Pan-Canadian Assessment Program.</p>
Meso	School jurisdiction, school	<p>School programme (locally developed courses).</p> <p>Educational programme with an emphasis on specialised school-based activities (e.g., specific focus on arts, sports, or academics).</p> <p>Site-specific learning and teaching materials developed, identified and accessed.</p>
Micro	Classroom, teacher	<p>Instruction plan for module or course.</p> <p>Learning and teaching materials.</p>
Nano	Student, individual	<p>Individualised learning plan.</p> <p>Individualised course of learning or learner pathways.</p>

2.10 EMPIRICAL STUDIES

GoS (2014: 51) states in the study that the DHTs are often given the responsibility to look after discipline, attendance and basic school administration. As observed earlier, the DHTs have a maintenance function rather than a developmental function within the school and are not acting, in most cases, as leaders within the organisation.

According to the EC's (2018: 127) study, the duties and responsibilities of deputy heads in Europe include managing the school in the absence of a head, overseeing internal communications, maintaining order and controlling students, coordinating the work of other teachers to whom responsibilities have been delegated, helping staff members improve their teaching abilities, calling all or some staff meetings, and being in charge of routine assessments. According to Mutero (2014: 43), deputy heads in Germany are also responsible for overseeing the stock of consumables, creating the school calendar, organizing courses, and supervising the teaching staff.

Kanyongo (2014: 43), on the other hand, suggests that some key elements that would comprise an emergent role for an assistant or deputy headteacher would include curriculum development and innovation, promoting the school goals and communicating and developing vision and promoting shared understanding amongst staff, taking advantage of the assistant head's intermediate and visible presence between the staff and the head teacher. Anderson (2015: 43), in his study, recommends that deputy heads should work as change agents (understanding change processes, initiating programmes and encouraging participation), be leading professionals with a specialised knowledge base (e.g., on discipline) and be community relations agents, developing community links.

In a study by Marope (2014: 5), 20 DHTs were asked to remark on their roles in the school. Their responses were as follows: discipline management, supervising curriculum implementation, timetabling, chairing procurement committee, and deputising, attending board of governors meeting and attending to visitors' needs.

All of the DHTs in Mutero's (2014: 43) survey indicated that upholding discipline was their duty, and 75% mentioned timetabling and oversight of curriculum implementation. Only half of the deputies reported chairing the procurement committee and filling in for the head of the school, while 25% of them indicated going to BOG meetings and taking care of guests.

According to Kanyongo (2014: 84), assistant principals still considered student discipline to be one of their top responsibilities in 2010. Additionally, a significant portion of their responsibilities—including student discipline, administrative tasks (paperwork), and parent-teacher conferences—remain managerial, even though parent-teacher conferences and student discipline these days are more closely linked to academic performance.

When asked about their working conditions, 85% of the deputy headteachers agreed that they had enough authority to carry out their responsibilities and were not harassed by others while doing so. In terms of decision-making, almost 60% of the deputy headteachers acknowledged that they had this freedom (Palm, 2014: 32). DHTs' opinions of themselves were probed in the same research investigation. DHTs were asked how they regarded themselves, and 70% said they saw themselves as instructors with additional responsibilities and 30% as administrators with teaching assignments (Palm, 2014: 53).

The DHTs were questioned about whether they had gone to training to become more capable of carrying out their tasks. The findings revealed that 75% of DHTs had not gone to any training to help them perform their duties. Only 25% of DHTs claimed to have had proper training for performing their jobs (Palm, 2014: 54). At most, a fortnight was needed for the training they received. Tendering, deputy headteacher responsibilities, budgeting, administration, discipline, management, and team building were some subjects taught in their training (Palm, 2014: 43).

Overall, the literature has convincingly demonstrated that deputy headteachers had prior teaching experience before being appointed DHTs. The experience spans from 10 years to more than 20 years, on average. The literature has also demonstrated that while DHTs have easy access to important resources like the visitor's book, school log book, and correspondence from TSC, most DHTs do not have access to the inspectorate report and correspondence from District Education Officer (DEO) when it comes to their access to staff confidential files and accounting documents. These continue to be the domain of school principals. This discrepancy implies a lack of trust between the heads and their deputies in these two areas.

2.11 SUMMARY

The researcher has studied the literature in this chapter that is pertinent to the main ideas of this investigation. These included the perspectives of primary school deputy headteachers on their participation in the national curriculum's implementation. The literature study that came before it made clear that the DHT faces many difficulties in carrying out his or her crucial but frequently ill-defined tasks in the day-to-day operations of the school as a whole. The review also emphasised the motivations for and obstacles to pursuing headship. The DHT's implementation of the curriculum was discussed. The general roles of DHT were then described. The next chapter will introduce the approach that was used in conducting the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature that is pertinent to this topic was given in the chapter before. The research design's description and analysis, and methods employed to gather information on primary school deputy headteachers' perceptions of their involvement in the national curriculum's implementation will be the main points of this chapter. The investigation on the experiences of primary school deputy headteachers in their roles in curriculum implementation used a qualitative research approach to acquire data. Aside from describing the sampling method and size, research settings, data collecting and analysis, and study-related ethical concerns are also covered in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is described by ReadingCraze.com (2017) as the idea that projects how the world is seen through human perceptions, understandings, and interpretations. A paradigm is a worldview, defined by Creswell (2014: 6) as "a fundamental set of beliefs that direct behaviour." Similar to this, Sefotho (2015: 5) describes a paradigm as fundamental belief structure that directs a study's scientific examination. It is a group of presumptions, ideas, standards, and behaviours that the members of that group employ to view reality, particularly in an intellectual discipline.

Researchers must consider the philosophical worldview assumptions they bring to the study while planning for it (Creswell 2014: 5). From a philosophical standpoint, both ontology and epistemology defined this qualitative investigation. According to Choongwa (2018: 21), the epistemological realism debate is about knowledge and the best ways to know or acquire it, while the ontological debate is about the essence of being. In this study, the researcher attempted to get as near to the participants as possible while taking into account various realities.

This study was also underpinned by the constructivist paradigm which, steeped in interpretivist, states that in studying any phenomenon, individuals equally must seek understanding of the wider world in which they live and work - which gives rise and meaning to the phenomenon under study. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences (ReadingCraze.com 2017). In the same study it states that the goal of research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation. Similarly, in Kwaluseni Zone, the researcher investigated the perceptions of the roles of the deputy headteachers in curriculum implementation. The goal of the research depends solely on the participants' views of the roles of the DHTs.

According to Creswell (2014: 185), the inquiries broaden and become more general so that the participants can create their own interpretations of the scenario, which are often developed through conversations or interactions with other people. This was the situation with this research because questions were more open-ended for the participants to express themselves and the researcher recognised how to shape questions for more detail and clarity.

3.3 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The study tracked a qualitative methodology. Lambert and Lambert (2012: 255), state that interpretive and qualitative studies frequently borrow from naturalistic inquiry, which asserts a dedication to researching something in its natural state to the extent that it is feasible within the framework of the research arena. This fits in with the interpretation of this study as a positivistic paradigm, the intention being to appreciate the world in which the participants live and work.

Qualitative research, according to Choongwa (2018: 84), is a situated activity that sets the observer in the context of the world. It is made up of many interpretive material activities that put the outside world in the spotlight. These techniques affect global change. They change the world into a collection of representations, which could include notes made to oneself, observations made while out in the field, conversations, interviews, and pictures. The qualitative technique was adopted because it allows for the study of behaviour in its natural setting. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 319), there is no manipulation, control, or externally imposed restraint of behaviour.

Additionally, a qualitative technique was taken because it was the most appropriate methodology given that the researcher intended to comprehend deputy headteachers' experiences in their daily or routine professional tasks. The objective was to get in-depth information about the deputy headteachers' experiences whilst executing their duties. Data collection was through observations and in-depth interviews, and they were presented in a narrative form. The researcher also personally collected data from the context in which the participants live, hence the use of the qualitative research design (Creswell, 2014: 185).

The researcher also chose qualitative research because of its elasticity. A qualitative research has its own special approach to the collection and analysis of data. In this approach, the researcher plays a significant role in the production and interpretation of qualitative data. McMillan (2012: 12) views qualitative research as interactive, face-to-face research, which requires ample time to conduct interviews, observe, and record research processes as they occur naturally. In effect, the qualitative researcher is the major data-gathering instrument. Additionally, qualitative research was appropriate for this study

because its focus is not in the measurement of interactive characteristics of participants (Okeke & Van Wyk, 2015: 217).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A plan to answer study questions in a more systematic manner is a research design (Choongwa, 2018: 81). In order to conduct this investigation, a case study was adopted. This is because the study dealt solely with experiences of deputy headteachers in their roles. The case study proved to be the ideal design. According to Choongwa (2018: 92), a case study is a process of enquiry that involves a series of well-planned and carefully executed activities to find solutions to research problems from the perspective of in-depth enquiries. This method was selected for use because the researcher wanted to explore a bounded system over time by collecting detailed and in-depth data involving multiple sources of information by using observations, interviews, notice boards and the office “walls” of the deputy headteachers.

3.5 POPULATION

Choongwa (2018: 105) describes a research populace as a group of people who appeal to the interest of the researchers in generalising the outcomes of the research. Choongwa (2018: 106) adds that a research population is an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications that a researcher wishes to sample from. The population for the study was from schools in the Kwaluseni Zone in the Manzini region of Eswatini. The study relied on deputy headteachers in the zone as participants. The deputy headteachers were asked about their experiences of their roles in the implementation of the national curriculum and challenges they faced during the process because, in this study, the researcher was interested in considerate lived experiences. Each interview lasted for approximately thirty minutes.

3.6 SAMPLING

Sampling is defined as an act, process, or technique for selecting a sample for the study (Singh & Masuku, 2014: 18). Strydom (2013: 224) states that a researcher usually chooses a sample of the population for data collection because the population is quite large and it would not be practicable to collect data from all the members of the population. In the same way, Choongwa (2018: 107) states that sampling is done to minimise the cost of the study,

to get superior speed of data collection, to obtain greater accuracy of outcomes, and it permits the researcher to collect smaller quantities of data that represent the overall population.

Participants of the research were selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is ideal when specific individuals or groups are considered relevant in providing information. This type of sample is usually based on the discretion and judgement of the researcher. This sampling strategy was chosen because the participants were probably well informed and educated about the phenomenon in question (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014: 322). The sample consisted of ten deputy headteachers who were chosen from ten different primary schools in the Kwaluseni Zone because they were experienced and had extensive information about the study. The deputy headteachers received the researcher's explanation of the study's purpose at these selected schools.

The researcher's position as deputy headteacher at one of the schools in the Kwaluseni Zone made it easier for her to access other schools and choose them as the study's location. The place of study was chosen because the researcher wanted to analyse schools in the same area since it would be economical and because the difficulties would be nearly identical given the community's demographics. The site would also be able to provide the ideal sample size for data collecting. The researcher received authorisation from the director of education's office to conduct the study.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The focus of data gathering techniques, which may include participant observation, questioning, artefact examination, field reviewing, and other techniques, is on what a phenomenon means to participants. Typically, researchers only use one primary strategy to gather data (McMillan & Schumacher 2014:340). In-depth interviews, observational approaches, and document reviews are three major categories that can be used to classify the aforementioned regularly used evaluation techniques. Qualitative researchers must be adaptable to differences in the kind of data that are gathered and how they are gathered because study strategies can change. Three visits were made by the researcher to the schools where the data was gathered. The first visit was made in order to meet the potential participants in person, inform them about the study, and ask for their participation. It was

also done in order to acquire approval from the school officials so that the study could be carried out. The researcher also decided with the participants during the initial visit on a day that would be convenient or appropriate for them to be interviewed, observed, and to analyse documents.

A second visit was done for purposes of interviewing the participants. Interviewing was done together with observations and document analysis. The interviews were recorded on audio; the researcher having asked the participants for permission to do this beforehand. During observation sessions, the researcher wrote down her observations and these formed her field notes. Documents that were analysed included week plans, term plans, year plans and minutes of previous meetings. These documents helped the researcher grasp the case being studied by providing important information. The last visit was used to confirm if what the researcher had written was what the participants had said. This gave the researcher an opportunity to add information where necessary.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION

3.8.1 Interviews

For this study, the researcher collected data through interviews. The participant served as the expert during the in-depth interview, while the researcher served as the student. In order to understand everything the participant could tell the researcher, the researcher's interviewing strategy was driven by this objective. The researcher actively engaged the subject by offering questions, carefully observing the participant's responses, and then following up with questions and probes based on those responses. Instead of asking closed-ended questions that could only receive a "yes" or "no," the researcher would use open-ended questions.

During the data analysis process, a semi-structured interviewing technique was used to enable the comparison and categorisation of interview replies (Jacob & Ferguson, 2015: 199). Semi-structured interviews are advantageous because responses to predetermined questions can be elicited while yet leaving some room for relevance in the breadth of the answers. Based on the research questions, interview schedules for the deputy headteachers were created. With the participants' consent, each interview was taped to guarantee its

completeness and accuracy as well as to provide the opportunity for a subsequent explanation. As a result, validity was enhanced and a reliability check of the data was possible (Dikko, 2016: 521).

A tape recorder enables a considerably more thorough record than notes taken during the interviews, according to Brennen (2017: 4). The researcher was able to get more information on the subject under study from the interviewees by asking probing questions of them during face-to-face interactions with them (Creswell, 2014: 191). Face-to-face interactions with the participants also gave them the opportunity to ask the researcher for clarification on any issues that were murky or confusing.

The following table displays the advantages and disadvantages of interviews based on McMillan and Schumacher's observations (2014: 198).

Table 3.1 Strengths and weaknesses of interviews

Strengths	Weaknesses
Flexible	Costly
Adaptable	Time-consuming
Ability to probe and clarify	Interviewer bias
Being able to incorporate nonverbal behaviour	Not anonymous
High responsive pace	Subject outcomes
Used with non-readers	Needs training
	Leading questions
	Effect of interviewer characteristics

Choongwa (2018: 154) states that the researcher has the chance to ask as many questions during semi-structured interviews as possible on certain issues which might be unstructured. The questions were pre-planned prior to the interview but the interviewer gave the interviewee the chance to elaborate and explain particular issues through the use of open-ended questions. The questions were phrased in a specific yet open-ended style, which allowed interviewees to provide rich discussion of their experiences whilst still providing a clear focus for their responses. In order to obtain comparable data, the researcher standardised the interview questions. The questions were phrased or worded in the same way and presented across the board for all participants. The interview schedules are included in the appendices.

3.8.2 Observations

Observation of what deputy headteachers do as their roles was also done. These added to what they said during interviews. Observation involves a careful note and recording of events, behaviour and objects in a social setting. The researcher decided that observation was the best method for seeing deputy headteachers do their duties. The benefits of observation included the opportunity of having first-hand information as it occurs in a natural school environment, be it in the schoolyard/the deputy headteacher's office, or in the meetings with the headteacher or with the teachers. The researcher did not record any personally identifiable information about the individuals while taking field notes with a pen and paper.

3.8.3 Document analysis

During the process of research, the researcher collected qualitative documents. According to Creswell (2014: 190), these may be public documents (e.g. newspapers, minutes of meetings, official reports) or private documents (e.g. personal journals and diaries, letters, e-mails). Documents such as week plans, term plans or yearly plans, minutes of previous meetings and notice of meetings were requested from DHTs. The researcher did not simply pick words and passages from the available documents to be thrown into the research report, instead the meaning of the document and its contribution to the issues being explored.

Data from the documents were analysed thematically using emerging themes and categories. Coding of all data was done. Data is organised by coding, which involves bracketing sections of text or images and adding a term that represents a category in the margins (Creswell, 2014: 197-198). The codes that were used in the interview transcripts were applied to the content of the documents. Permission to use these documents was granted from the office of the headteacher of the school.

3.9 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY SITE

Quora.com (2019) describes a site as a place where precise events are expected to take place. The criteria for selection of a site include the site being appropriate for the research problem and design. The study was conducted in schools and schools were appropriate for the study because data about the experiences of deputy headteachers in their roles could be obtained from schools. In educational institutions, a location can only be secured if the proper steps have been taken. In this instance, the Director for Education asked the Ministry of Education and Training for permission to undertake a study (Appendix A) and the headteachers of the selected schools (Appendix C). All the schools that were chosen for the study have deputy headteachers who were informants or participants in this research project.

3.10 THE TRANSCRIPTION OF DATA

In a qualitative research, there are essentially three kinds of data. These, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 288), are notes written during observations and interviews, audiotape recordings of interviews, and visual images. The researcher transcribed all the recorded data verbatim to ensure that the direct words used by participants were not changed as this would affect the trustworthiness of the data. The researcher transcribed data after every interview schedule to ensure that all information to be recorded was still memorable. Participants were given the opportunity to review the collected data to make sure that the data represented their viewpoints as intended and communicated during interview sessions, and any necessary corrections, additions, and deletions in the transcripts were made.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis entails systematically arranging the data. Qualitative data analysis is a reasonably systematic process of coding, classifying, and interpreting data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest (Brennen, 2017: 4). The participants were interviewed and the audio-tapes were recorded and transcribed. The key ideas and developing themes from the interviews were identified from the participants by reading the interview responses and looking for patterns or themes among the participants. Observations taken as field notes during visits at school were also identified and coded through searching emergent themes. Creswell (2018: 175) suggests that qualitative researchers use inductive data analysis, where they create their categories and themes by grouping data into a more abstract unit of information. In this study, data were broken down into smaller sections which consisted of thoughts and experiences. Similar statements gathered from interviewees were grouped together to form themes.

One-on-one interviews that were conducted with deputy headteachers were attainable verbatim so that participants' voices could be heard. The observations that were made during school visits and the field notes that were taken were transcribed. This means that the data which were in the form of words were analysed by reducing, presenting data, and drawing conclusions. Documents such as week plans, term plans or yearly plans were requested and data were coded through searching emergent themes. According to Creswell (2018:186), the researcher organises data into categories or themes that cut across all of the data sources. Similar statements gathered from the different interviewees were grouped together to form themes.

3.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Choongwa (2018: 241) suggests that trustworthiness of a study involves credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability in a qualitative research. The study employed different methods of getting information that ensured data triangulation. The accuracy of the findings and analysis of the study was of central concern during data collection and analysis.

3.12.1 Credibility

Chowdhury (2015: 148) defines credibility in qualitative research as a criterion used to determine the “accuracy of research findings”. To ensure credibility, in-depth information was gathered from the in-depth interviews with the deputy headteachers about their experiences in their roles. It was hoped that from the relevant information collected from deputy headteachers, credibility of the findings would be achieved. The researcher avoided compromising the accuracy of the overall findings by considering all possible options that were available during the follow-up phase. Credibility of findings was also ensured by treating the responses as anonymous and confidential. This gave the participants the opportunity to provide very honest answers.

Flick (2018: 383) outlines five strategies for increasing the credibility of qualitative research:

- Activities increasing the likelihood that a credible result will be produced by a “prolonged engagement” and “persistent observation” in the field and the triangulation. According to Creswell (2014:201), triangulation is the cross-validation among data sources, data collection strategies, time periods, and theoretical schemes of different methods, researchers and data;
- “Peer debriefing”: regular meetings with other people who are not involved in the research in order to disclose one’s own blind spots and to discuss working hypotheses and results with them;
- The analysis of negative cases in the sense of analytic induction;
- Appropriateness of the terms of reference of interpretations and their assessment;
- “Member checks” in the sense of communicative validation of data and interpretations with members of the fields under study.

3.12.2 Dependability

Dependability is the reliability of the research findings, i.e., whether they yield the same outcomes when the same people or circumstances are used as in a second round of research. Relevant sources of data were included to increase data dependability. The researcher retained a combination of handwritten notes and audio recordings while gathering data.

Dependability can be in the following areas of an auditing trial:

- Raw data, their gathering and recording;
- Data reduction and results of syntheses by summarising, theoretical notes, memos, etc.
- Reconstruction of data and results of syntheses according to the structure of developed and used categories (themes, definitions, relationships), findings (interpretations and inferences), and the reports produced with their integration of concepts and links to the existing literature;
- Process notes;
- Information on goals and attitudes, such as research concepts, individual roles, and participant expectations;
- Information about the development of the instruments including the pilot version and preliminary plan (Choongwa, 2018: 248).

3.12.3 Transferability

Chowdhury (2015: 148) suggests that transferability can be used for evaluating the applicability of a research in the place of “external validity”. To support transferability in the research, the researcher collected sufficient information about the experiences of deputy headteachers on their roles. As the data was collected from only a small number of people, the results cannot therefore be generalised to all deputy headteachers’ experiences in all schools. Transferability will justify the appropriateness of research results to be applied to similar contexts.

3.12.4 Conformability

The impact of nonverbal cues, sentiments, emotions, and body language were taken into consideration to ensure conformability of the research results and to reduce any preconceptions and prejudice towards the findings. In this study, the researcher used open-ended queries to limit bias while maintaining a neutral stance toward the participants' responses. This study used a few verbal descriptions of the individuals to summarise its findings. Verbatim accounts of participants' opinions were another method for making qualitative study results more transparent (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell & Walter, 2016: 1809).

3.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Akaranga and Makau (2016: 1), research ethics are a branch of philosophy that deals with the conduct of people and guides the norms or standards of behaviour of people and their relationships with each other. Compared to quantitative research, qualitative research is more likely to be personally intrusive. Because of this, it is necessary to abide by certain ethical rules, such as those relating to deceit, informed permission, secrecy, anonymity, privacy, and caring.

The following measures were taken in order to comply with the ethical considerations:

- Ethical clearance was sought from the University of South Africa (UNISA).
- Permission was obtained from the Director of Education to conduct research in the schools (Appendix A).
- Letters were written to headteachers asking for permission to conduct research in their schools (Appendix C).
- Participants gave written approval to be included in the study by signing consent forms (Appendix D).
- Participants agreed to have their interviews recorded by the researcher.
- It was made clear to participants that they might stop taking part in the study whenever they wanted to.
- The confidentiality and privacy of the data gathered during the interviews were guaranteed to the participants.
- Participants were made aware that the interview would be recorded on audio and kept confidential for a period of five years.
- Participants received a guarantee that they would be informed of the study's findings after it was completed.

3.14 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The research techniques and study design were covered in this chapter. The chapter also covered study ethics, data collecting and analysis, and the sampling process and sample size. A discussion of the findings, analysis, and interpretation of the data for this study will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The researcher had given a summary of the data collection procedure and an explanation of the instrumentation utilised in the preceding chapter. In order to obtain important data and provide answers to the study questions, the researcher used a qualitative data gathering technique. As a result, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of how primary school deputy headteachers perceive their contribution to the national curriculum's implementation. The research data and findings will be presented, analysed, and discussed in this chapter. Based on the research's findings, the researcher will highlight the issues faced by the DHTs in the Manzini Region and the experiences of the primary school deputy headteachers in their jobs.

The study's primary aim was to record perceptions about primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carried out their daily duties. According to these objectives, the researcher will offer an analysis and discussion of the data acquired according to these main objectives:

- To determine the functions of deputy headteachers in the schools.
- To identify the challenges faced by deputy headteachers as they carry out their functions in implementing the curriculum.

The following steps were taken by the researcher to determine the categories and themes of the collected data:

- Browsing the data and locating data segments.
- Producing codes from the data by posing the question, "What's this about?"
- What are the participants explaining?
 - How should I put this? The margins had these codes.
 - The researcher compared these codes after compiling a list of them. To identify the categories and themes covered in this chapter, similar codes were put together in a single group.

The chapter will make an effort to respond to the questions on the research raised in Chapter 1. The study process will be briefly described in the chapter, and then the data will be interpreted.

4.2 THE PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PROCESS

4.2.1 Introduction

For the purpose of gathering data, the researcher used a qualitative case study approach. Participants from selected schools in the Kwaluseni Zone, Manzini Region, were interviewed in-depth and semi-structured.

4.2.2 Challenges faced during the research process

The process of conducting the interviews was very challenging because it was time consuming and the DHTs had very limited time. The researcher also noted that DHTs were very busy since schools had just opened from the Covid-19 outbreak. Some headteachers wanted to know the responses of the DHTs to the interviews. Through it all, the researcher managed to follow the necessary ethics and was able to conduct interviews which yielded valuable insight into the topic.

4.2.3 Positive aspects experienced during the research process

The ten schools were all very accommodating and helpful when it came to gathering the data. Participants were optimistic, honest, and provided insightful responses to interview questions. In fact, their feedback turned to be more than the researcher had expected. They were very committed to the study and one could tell that they were also committed to improving the efficiency of the education sector in Eswatini.

4.3. PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW DATA

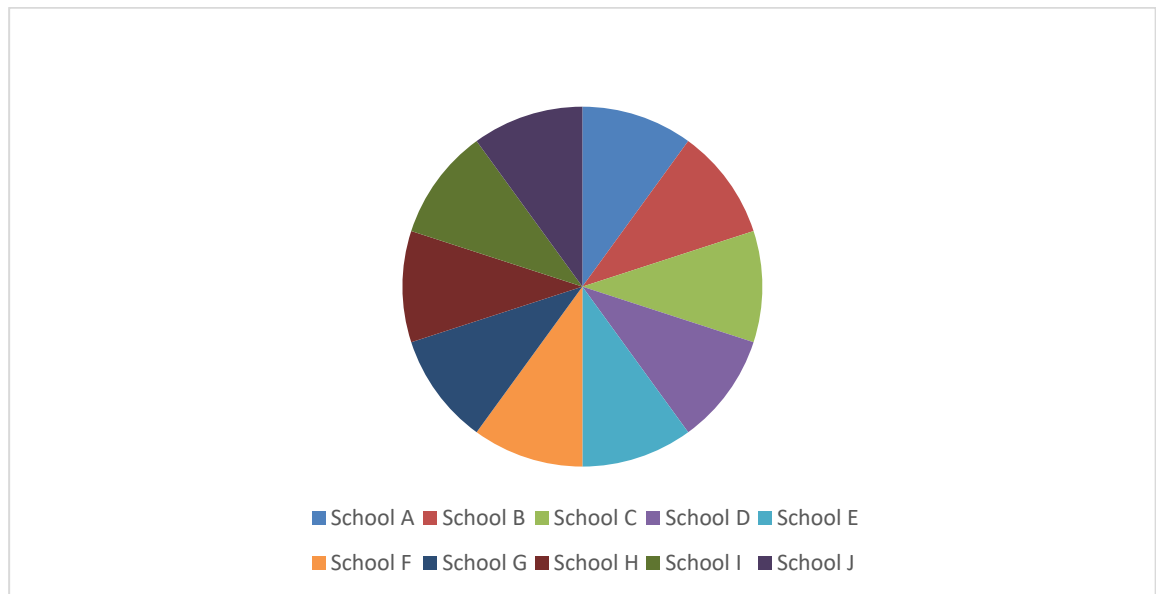
4.3.1 Introduction

In each of the ten chosen schools, the researcher interviewed the deputy headteachers in-depth. Ten people in all were interviewed for the study. These participants were included in the study to provide useful understanding into how primary school deputy headteachers in Eswatini see their roles in relation to what they actually encounter in the course of their everyday work in Kwaluseni Zone, Manzini Region.

Each participant provided their demographic information, which was analysed and classified into the proper topics using the transcribed interviews.

4.3.1.1 Number of participants

Figure 4.1 Participants involved in the study



There were ten schools involved in the study with only one DHT as a participant in each school.

4.3.1.2 Gender of participants

Figure 4.2 Gender of participants

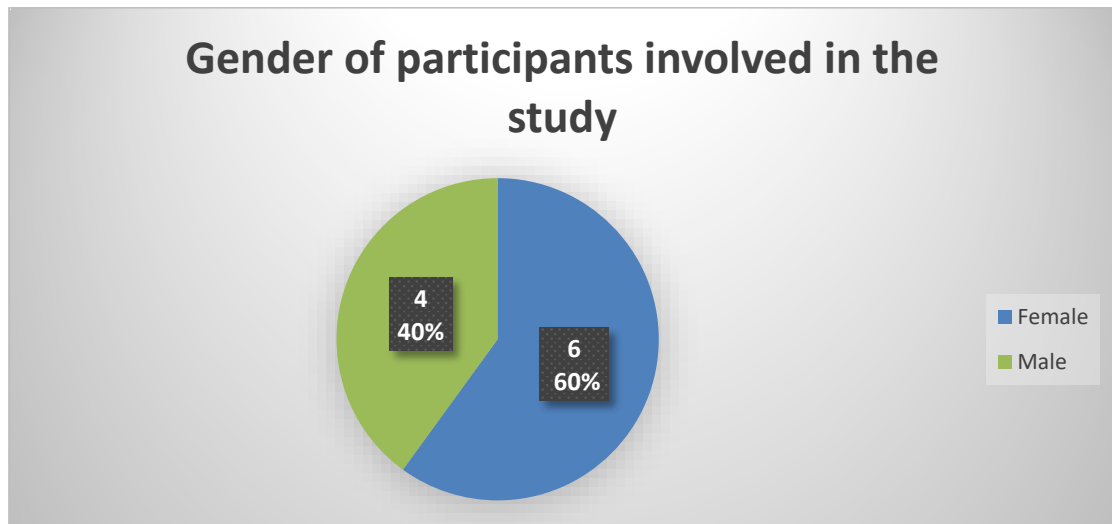


Figure 4.2 show the sexual category of the participants who were involved in the study. They consisted mainly of females: 6 females and 4 males.

4.3.1.3 Highest qualification of participants

Figure 4.3 Highest qualifications of participants

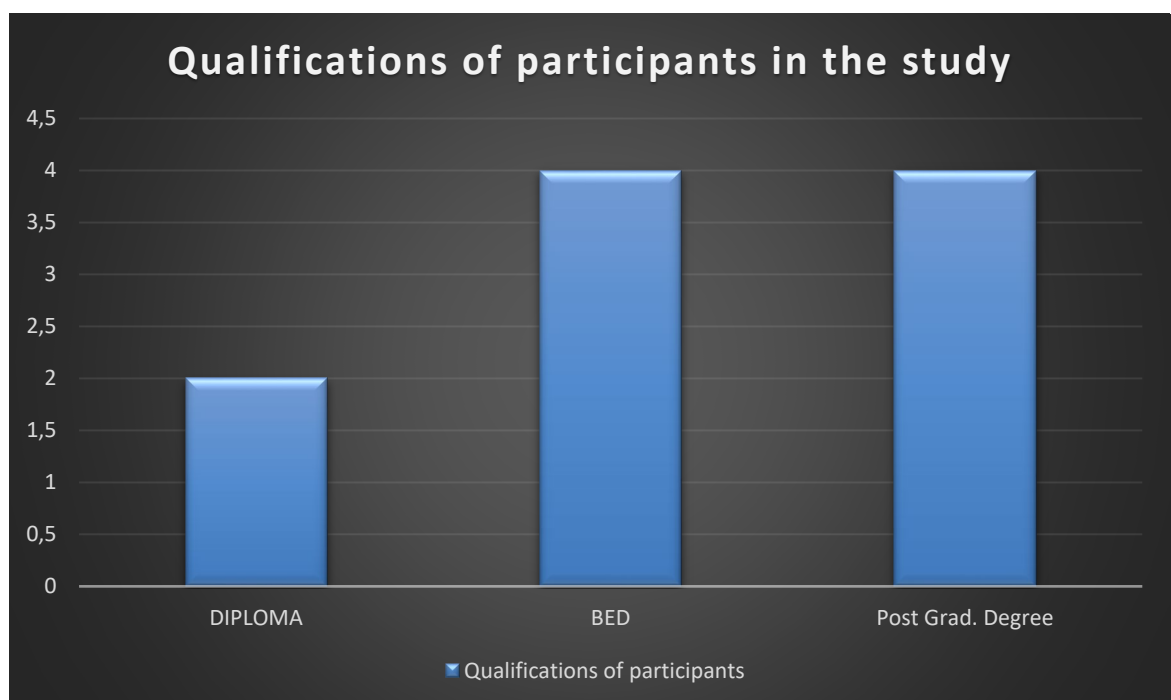
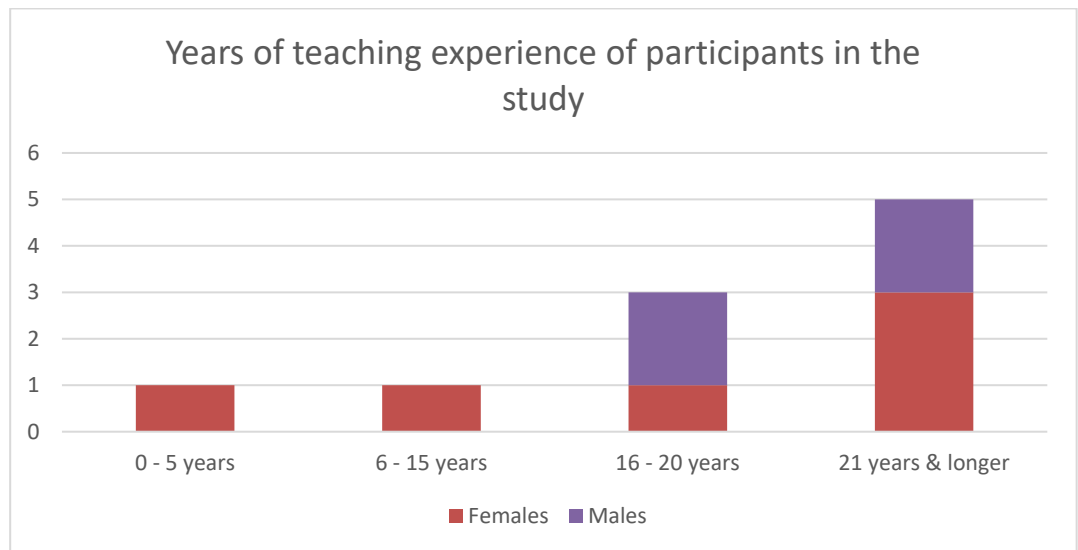


Figure 4.3 shows that all DHTs who were interviewed were qualified. Some had a diploma or degree in education and 30% had obtained an Honours and 10% had obtained a Master's degree.

4.3.1.4 Experience of the participants

Figure 4.4 Experience in teaching profession



The majority of study participants, as shown in Figure 4.4, had teaching experience of 21 years or longer, followed by those who had 16 to 20 years of experience.

Figure 4.5 Experience in current position (DHT)

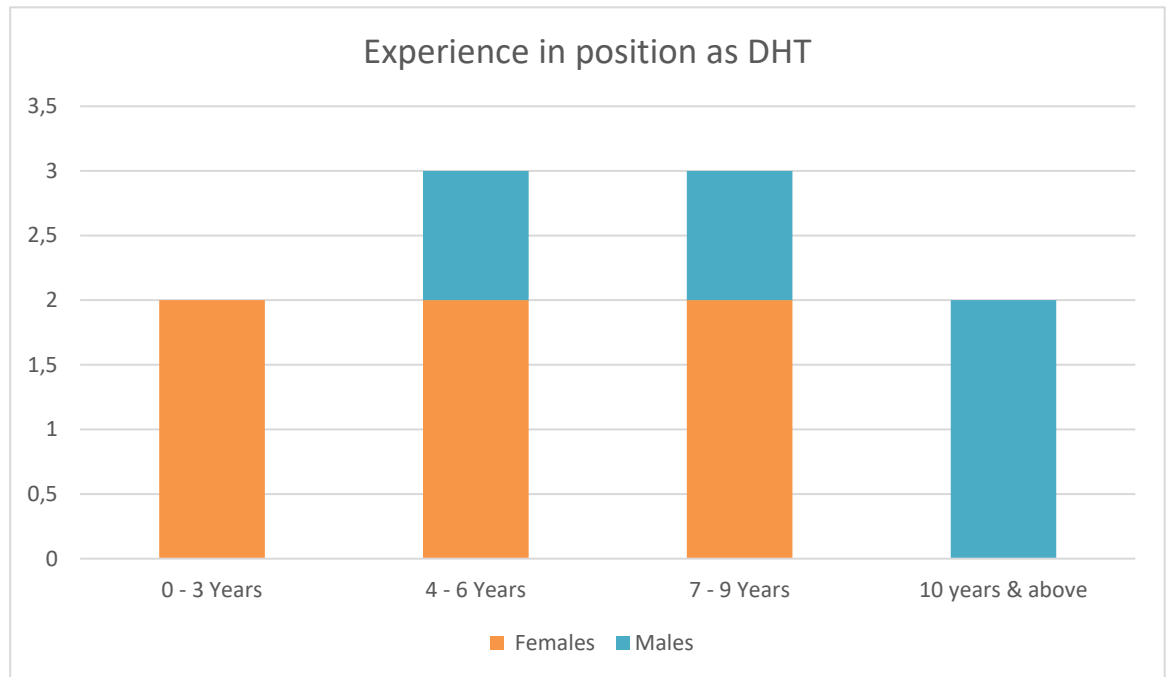


Figure 4.5 shows the experience of DHTs in their current position. According to the study, most DHTs with a lot of experience were males who had experience of 10 years and above.

4.3.2 Perceptions of DHTs in their functions

4.3.2.1 Interest in becoming a DHT

The researcher's initial question during the interviews with the DHT was to ask if they ever thought that one day they would become DHTs.

Responses from participants differed. About 50 percent responded that they never wanted to become DHTs. Forty percent responded with a yes. A participant from school I responded by saying, "I can't say, but I really wished for an administrative position."

It is clear from the participants' comments that they fear the challenges that come with a promotion, but they do want better pay and favour administration over teaching. A pay that was competitive was mentioned by 70% of participants as something that would make the job better.

4.3.2.2 Assumed roles of DHT

The participants were asked what they thought was the role of the DHT before they were appointed into the position of DHT.

Responses from participants differed. Common responses were that most DHTs thought the role of a DHT was to be a stand-in for the headteacher.

The participant from school B commented as follows:

I thought the role of the DHT was to be a stand-in for the headteacher.

The participant from school A thought that the role of the DHT was to look after the school grounds, uniforms, water, classrooms and to prepare schedules for teachers. More than anything, she/he believed in being a stand-in for the headteacher if she/he was not at school.

The participant from school C had the following to say:

I thought duties of a DHT was to meet visitors, keep food records, and check preparation books and other official books. Also, holding panel meeting with different teachers.

For the participant in school D, being a stand-in for the headteacher and having less teaching periods was the role of a DHT. He/she thought of it as meeting school visitors and interacting closely with teachers and pupils.

School E's participant had the following response:

- Checking preparation and other official books;
- Making sure learners came to school on time;
- Attending to uniform issues;
- Advising the headteacher on high decision matters.

The participant from school F had the following assumption:

I thought the roles of the DHT was to check preparation books and any other official books, fetching payslips from regional education offices, and inculcating discipline.

Just like the participant from school B, the participant from school G thought that the only role for the DHT was to be a stand-in for the headteacher.

The participant from school H thought that checking official books; keeping the school's grounds clean; attending to cleanliness and uniform issues; and advising the head of school on important decision-making issues was the role of the DHT.

The participant from school I had the following to say:

I thought the role of the DHT was to collect and record pay slips for teachers. Attending to teachers' and learners' absence issues was also what I thought. Let me also not forget that I have to fill in important documents on teachers' records and compiling the composite timetable.

The participant from school J had only one thought concerning the role of the DHT. She/he thought of it as working in the place of the headteacher in his/her absence.

4.3.3 Functions of the DHT in the school

4.3.3.1 Experiences in the role of DHT in the school

The participants were asked about their experiences in their role as DHTs in the schools. Responses were almost the same. It must be noted that almost all of them stated that what they thought to be the role of the DHT was far less than the actual experiences in the job.

The responses given by the participants mentioned the following roles for the DHT.

- Checking preparation books and other official documents;
- Compiling a composite timetable;
- Checking that the school grounds/yard kept clean;
- Advising the headteacher when it comes to important decisions;
- Compiling school routines such as assembly duty rosters, cleaning duty roster;

- Checking class timetables;
- Attending to parents' and learners' concerns relating to academic and social issues;
- Keeping food records in the school kitchen [Zondle];
- Checking test exercise books;
- Assessing teaching in classrooms;
- Being a stand-in for the headteacher in his/her absence;
- Advising all stakeholders when the need arises e.g. learners, teachers, parents and the headteacher;
- Interviewing learners for admission and making a list of those who are accepted;
- Fetching and recording advice slips (payslips);
- Being a member of the disciplinary committee (DC);
- Holding meetings with different panels in the school e.g. Maths/Science, Languages, Social Sciences, Practical subjects, etc.;
- Teaching some subjects/classes;
- Being a mediator between the headteacher and parents/teachers;
- Performing any other duties as assigned by the headteacher.

According to MoET (2015c: 17), maintaining discipline, overseeing curriculum implementation, timetabling, chairing the procurement committee, deputizing, attending board meetings, and tending to visitors are among the roles that are frequently cited as dominating for the DHT.

4.3.3.2 Assumed roles of DHT and experiences on the role of DHT

The participants were asked if what they thought were roles and the actual experiences they had were the same.

The participant from school A stated that the experiences were not really the same. Only the participant from school F agreed that the thoughts and experiences he had were the same. Participants from schools C, E and J had the same responses; they viewed the thoughts and the experiences as partly the same. Participants from school B and H thought that the roles and experiences were the same but a lot when it came to actually doing the job. The participant from school D had this to say:

No. It comes with a lot of work.

The participant from school G only said the thoughts and experiences were not the same. Participants from school I observed the thoughts and actual experience as not exactly the same but a lot was new.

4.3.3.3 Were you promoted into a new school?

The participants were asked if they were promoted into new schools. About 80 percent of participants were promoted into new schools. Only 20 percent of the participants were promoted in the same schools they were already teaching in.

4.3.3.4 Reception of new DHT into a new school

The responses from participants differed. Since 20 percent of DHTs were promoted in the same schools where they were teaching, they weren't the target audience for this query. From the 80 percent who responded that they were promoted into new schools, 60 percent were well received.

The participants from school B had this to say:

Well received.

The participant from school H said:

I was well received into the new school and you can't believe it, the headteacher and her staff prepared something to welcome me.

Only 20 percent of participants were not well received. The participant from school D commented follows:

I was received but let me say that people had mixed feelings, they were not the same. Some are good and some are bad. I can also say that the headteacher must go to learn.

The participant from school F, on the other hand, said the following:

May I say that they were not friendly at all, I wish to end here researcher.

Participants from schools A and J decided to reserve their comments on the matter.

4.3.3.5 Good things liked about the job

When DHTs were asked about things they liked about their jobs, responses varied.

The participant from school A liked the clean environment they were working under. He also liked the seriousness of teachers at work which included preparation of work, submitting preparation books without being pushed and keeping classroom records up to date which included tests.

The DHT from school B liked doing work knowing that someone else would have the final decision and that was the headteacher.

Participant from school C admitted:

I like interacting with parents and teachers the most.

The participant from school D, like the one from school C, enjoyed interacting with people. He/she added that he/she also liked solving different problems, for example being a counsellor, a motivator and a unifier.

The participant from school E cited the relationship they had as satisfying. He/she commented that:

Interacting with learners and parents about learning issues and the relationship I have with the teachers is what I like the most.

The participant from school F liked the smooth working relationship with all stakeholders.

The participant from school G responded by saying:

I think I like solving problems I come across. Also, working smoothly with learners and teachers is satisfying about my job.

Just like the participant from school F, the participant from school H liked working closely with all stakeholders i.e. teachers, parents and learners.

Solving issues and interacting with learners and teachers daily is what was liked by the participant from school I.

The participant from school J responded as follows:

Bringing order and the relationship I have with the teachers and learners is what I like the most.

From the participants' responses, it can be established that participants preferred a smooth relationship and a good working relationship while at work. They also liked solving issues and bringing order if possible to the workplace.

4.3.4 Qualities of a DHT

4.3.4.1 Skills thought to be needed by a DHT in order to be effective as a DHT

The participants were asked to mention skills they thought DHTs needed in order to be effective.

The participant from school A stated that DHTs should be fair and firm to both teachers and learners. He/she added that DHTs must know that the school has someone who runs it and must know that taking a final decision is not theirs but is for the headteacher.

The participant from school B cited communication skills, speaking skills, decision-making skills, thinking skills, interpersonal skills and problem solving skills as important qualities of a DHT. The same skills were observed in participants from schools C, E, F, G, H and I.

From school C, the participant emphasised that stress management skill was effective. He/she said the following:

I think communication skills, problem solving skills, speaking skills and decision-making skills are important for the work of DHT. The work is also very stressful, we

need to be taught on stress management skills. Interpersonal skills and thinking skills are also a must for a DHT.

The participant from school D had the following to say:

I think the DHT should have a big heart. He/she must be very fair, especially when making judgements. Being accommodative to everyone will make the working environment to be smooth. People want to be accommodated in the hearts of their administrators.

The participants from school J noted:

I think leadership skills are very important for a DHT. Also, good interaction/communication with people and listening skills will be a great advantage. I must also emphasise that respecting all stakeholders will help the DHT greatly.

From the answers given by the participants, it can be determined that skills needed by a DHT to be effective are as follows:

- Good communication skill;
- Speaking skill;
- Problem-solving skill;
- Decision-making skill;
- Thinking skill;
- Interpersonal skill;
- Stress management skill.

4.3.4.2 Advice to a newly appointed DHT

The participants were asked what advice they would give to a teacher newly appointed to the position of DHT.

90 percent of the DHTs advised that the newly appointed DHT should be respectful to the headteacher. Participant from school A had the following to say:

I can advise the newly appointed DHT to learn from the headteacher but to copy what is good. He/she must know that he/she is only a deputy, hence praises and final decisions are for the headteacher. Also a DHT must be respectful to the headteacher and be fair all the time. Learning what is done in the school and how it is done is important for a newly appointed DHT.

About 50 percent of the DHTs emphasised that the DHT should study and understand the characters of the teachers in the school. DHTs should not have grudges against the teachers they are working with.

The participant from school B had the following to say:

I can advise the newly appointed DHT to be respectful to the head of the school. He/she must work closely with him/her. The DHT must work well with everyone and must learn the characters of the people he/she is working with. He/she must avoid having grudges. In fact he/she must love his staff unconditionally.

Some DHTs cited leading by example to the newly appointed DHT. The participant from school C gave the following advice:

I can advise the DHT to respect everyone he/she will work with. Respect your immediate supervisor and be at work on time. Love your learners and their parents. Leading by example in everything is a must for the DHT.

Thirty percent of participants noted that it was important to advise the new DHT that operations in schools were not the same hence they were not expected to bring what they did in their former schools.

The participant from school G suggested the following:

My advice would be that the newly appointed to a position should respect the headteacher no matter what. He/she must know that operations in schools are not the same.

Only 20 percent emphasised that the newly appointed DHT must never undermine the authority of the headteacher. The participant from school I gave the following advice.

I would advise the newly appointed DHT to tell himself/herself that he/she is new in the job. He/she must respect the headteacher. Never talk on his/her back. Also, to never undermine his/her authority.

Twenty percent of DHTs would advise a newly appointed DHT on the importance of having knowledge of rules and regulations of the work. The participants from school D, E, F, H and J maintained:

It's very important to know the rules and regulations of the work you are doing as a DHT. If possible, seek knowledge of what you are expected to do. Discuss school rules and regulations together with the staff if possible. Lastly, learn to know the staff members yourself, do not be told by someone about their characters/personalities. The following suggestions can be drawn from the participants' responses:

Following suggestions given by participants, it can be concluded that the next advice was important for anyone newly appointed to the position of DHT:

- Being respectful to all stakeholders;
- Being active and flexible;
- Telling yourself you are new in the job;
- Never undermining the authority of the headteacher;
- Being an example;
- Being respectful of the headteacher's decision, no matter what;
- Having knowledge of rules and regulations of the work;
- Leading by example in everything.

4.3.5 Challenges faced by DHTs as they carry out their functions

4.3.5.1 Challenges of the job of a DHT

The participants were asked about the challenges they faced as they carry out their functions. The participants shared the following challenges:

- Misbehaving of learners;
- Disrespecting deadlines by teachers;
- Communication to the headteacher by parents in case the DHTs have done something wrong/not accepted by the parent(s);
- Having to talk to a teacher discussing her/his unreported absence at work;
- Having to talk to a teacher about not doing work e.g. preparation for work, testing in class, etc.;
- When the headteacher seeks for reports about the school from teachers during his/her absence;
- Having staff members who cannot talk to each other.

The EC (2018: 78) identified the following difficulties they encounter when monitoring the curriculum's implementation: the teachers' absence from the classroom, their lack of preparation, the poor teaching environments, and the increased workload for the deputy and disobedient teachers.

4.3.5.2 Professional development training into the position of DHT

The participants were asked if they were offered professional development courses/training for the position of DHT.

Responses from all participants showed that DHTs were not offered any training when they were promoted.

Participant from school F had the following to say:

I was never offered any professional development course but I got a verbal advice from the Regional Education Officer (REO) when I was signing my resumption of duty forms.

Following responses given by participants, it can be concluded that there is no professional developmental courses offered to newly appointed deputy headteachers.

4.3.5.3 Courses trained in

The participants were asked to mention the courses they were trained in when they were DHTs.

To most participants, this interview question was not applicable since participants were not exposed to any professional development courses/training.

4.3.5.4 Merging teaching function with other duties of DHT

Participants were asked how they combined teaching functions and the other duties of a DHT. The responses had some similar elements.

Participant from school H had the following to say:

I avoid teaching completing classes and I would place my periods in the morning hours when I am actually not very busy. Lastly, I actually prefer teaching lower grades where marking is light.

From the responses given by the participants, the following can be suggested:

- Starting classes as early as 7 am;
- Shifting periods to other working days except for Monday or Friday;
- Reserving teaching periods for after break when it is less busy;
- Teaching in the morning hours when it is not very busy;
- Teaching classes which might not be highly affected in case it is very busy;
- Avoiding teaching completing classes;
- Teaching lower primary classes where marking is very light.

4.3.5.5 Aspects to the position of DHT that were not expected

Participants were asked if there had been aspects to the position of DHT that they did not expect.

The participant from school A had this to say:

Taking decisions on behalf of the headteacher and leading a project such as developmental projects with Non-Development Organisations [NGOs].

The participant from school B stated that he/she never expected to fill in absent from duty forms for an absent teacher although the teacher had been warned several times.

The participant from school C admitted:

I was really shocked to learn that my headteacher talks bad about me in a school committee meeting, I didn't expect that.

The participant from school D revealed that he/she never expected acting for a headteacher for a long time. Also he/she never expected a teacher to be in a love relationship with a pupil and expect the DHT to hide the relationship.

To sum up, the responses given by participants were as follows:

- Fighting of teachers;
- The head of school having a group he/she talks to, not the whole staff;
- The REOs office/inspectors forcing the admission of learners even those who did not apply or attend the interview into the school;
- Acting for a HT for a very long time;
- A teacher deciding not to talk to DHT at all;
- A teacher in a love relationship with a learner expecting to be cushioned;
- The headteacher talking badly about the DHT in a school committee meeting;
- Having to fill-in absent from duty forms for absent teachers;

- Leading a project, for example, developmental projects with NGOs;
- Taking giant decisions on behalf of the headteacher.

4.4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF OBSERVATIONAL DATA

4.4.1 Introduction

The researcher conducted non-participant observations of the DHTs during the two visits at their schools to gather information to better understand primary school deputy headteachers' experiences of their roles in carrying out the national curriculum. The research questions helped to direct the observations and guided the recording of qualitative data in the form of the observer's description of what was seen and heard. The following items/activities were considered for observation: (a) noticeboards; (b) DHT's office; (c) DHT's interaction with the head teacher; (d) DHT's interaction with teachers; (e) DHT's interaction and relationship with learners; and (f) minutes of meetings with teachers and parents. Observation methods are useful to researchers in a variety of ways. They provided the researcher with ways to check for non-verbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate and establish how much time is spent on various activities. Participant observation allowed the researcher to corroborate definitions of terms that participants used in interviews, observe events that informants may be unable or unwilling to share when doing so would be impolite or insensitive, and observe situations informants have described in interviews, thereby making them aware of distortions or inaccuracies in descriptions provided by those informants. It provided several advantages of using participant observation over other methods of data collection, including access to 'backstage culture,' i.e., richly detailed descriptions of one's goal of describing behaviours, intentions, situations, and events as understood by one's informants. It provided opportunities for viewing or participating in unscheduled events.

4.2.2 Observations

4.2.2.1 Noticeboards

The DHTs were available in all visited schools. Almost all schools visited had noticeboards. Some of the noticeboards were in the office of the DHT and some were in the staffroom. Below are some of the items which were found on the noticeboards:

- Assembly duty rosters
- Cleaning duty rosters
- School's logo
- Mission statement
- Vision statement
- Values
- Class lists
- Meal rosters (meals to cook on the different days)

4.4.2.2. DHT's office

Most of the schools (80 percent) had offices for the DHT. The other 20 percent of DHTs were using classrooms as working places.

4.4.2.2.1 Talking walls of DHTs' offices

Below are some of the items which were found in the DHTs' offices:

- Class lists for all the classes in the school;
- Phone numbers of parents for sickly learners;
- Lists of classes and the class teachers;
- School enrolment showing the number of boys and girls;

- Calendars from the Ministry of Education and Training; and Examination Council of Eswatini.

4.4.2.2.2 On the table of the DHTs' offices

On almost all the tables of the DHTs the following items were found:

- Preparation books;
- Learners' written books;
- Test exercise books;
- Test scripts;
- Class registers;
- Time books.

4.4.2.2.3 Materials in the office of the DHTs

Below are some of the materials found in the office of the DHTs but they were not available in all the offices:

- Class files;
- Photocopying machines (used or unused);
- A chair and a desk;
- Balls and sports uniform;
- Medicine boxes with painkillers, bandages, etc.;
- Cleaning materials e.g. tissues, soaps, polish.

4.4.3 DHT's interaction with headteacher

Unfortunately the interaction of the DHT and the headteacher was not observed in all the schools. In two schools, the researcher did not observe any interaction of the DHT with the headteacher. With the eight schools, the headteacher would greet the researcher and notify her that he/she had sent children to call the DHT from a class or wherever the DHT was around the school.

The participant from school A was heard saying the following to the headteacher:

Thank you so much madam for letting me know that she was around.

DHTs had good relationships with their headteachers. This could be seen in unreserved positive nodding by the DHTs when the headteachers had a conversation with them. Most of the DHTs were noted as positive and supportive of their headteachers. Some were heard reminding the headteacher to call a certain parent of a learner.

Mphatsi (my boss - as most of them say when they refer to the headteacher), you must remember to call the parent for Siya (pseudonym) regarding that issue.

Another important point to note was that almost all the DHTs in this group had positive comments about their headteachers and all appeared to have been an inspiration to their DHTs.

4.4.4 DHTs' interaction with teachers

There was very little interaction (especially physical interaction) of DHTs with the teachers during the researcher's visits to the schools. Most of teachers did not come very close to the DHT since he/she was very busy with the visitor (researcher). Most interaction was seen in the memo book which was on the table for some deputy headteachers. In the memo books which the researcher was able to check, it was noted that most communication was about changes in the timetable and a few announcements. Below are some examples:

The participant from school F had the following in the memo book:

Kindly be informed that due to athletics competitions' preparations, each period will be reduced to 25 minutes instead of 30. This will take place only on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The following comment was made by the participant from school J:

Please be reminded that all scheme books should be submitted on/before 16 April 2021.

The opinions were different amongst schools. The researcher noted that the comments were not the same for all ten schools.

4.4.5 DHTs' interaction and relationship with learners

The DHTs were very active in all the schools; interacting with every situation around the school. During the observations at schools, I noted that they were also very interactive with the learners. At most schools the learners would come and report to the DHT for different reasons. Some of the reports that were given to the DHT included reporting absences (i.e. a sister or brother who was absent in a certain class/grade), reporting an absent teacher in class during a certain period, reporting any stealing and bullying which happened in class. Learners never cared that there was someone they did not know in the DHT's office. In school C, where I was visiting one morning, a learner came with a letter from home where a parent was reporting a grade 6B learner who was absent. I also noted the speech of the DHT, appreciating the learner and the parent for being responsible.

4.4.6 Minutes of meetings with teachers and parents

There were no minutes of meetings with teachers/parents found in the offices of the DHTs. The researcher asked if there were such records, only to be told that such meetings were held when the headteacher was part of it. Hence, the proceedings were kept in the headteacher's office.

Three schools (30%) were using panels and held meetings for the panel members. The chairperson for the panel meeting was the DHT. In one of the books I was able to open, the discussions included the following.

- welcoming of members;
- apologies of absent members;
- dates for writing tests;
- tentative dates for writing examinations;
- preparing the examination timetables for lower and upper grades;
- procedure for submitting examinations before typing;
- Submission of reports to DHT/headteacher for checking and signing.

Whilst I was in the office, I took note of a spreadsheet which was in the DHT's office. The spreadsheet had the names of the teachers and against each name was a tick to indicate if a teacher had submitted a preparation, a scheme and an attendance class register.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In all the schools visited, all DHTs were present. Some DHTs' offices did not have noticeboards inside but they were using noticeboards from the staffroom. Not all DHTs had offices; some were using classrooms. It was worth observing that the relationship between DHTs and headteachers was generally good and teachers were freely interacting with the DHTs. The DHTs were also freely interacting with learners and almost all DHTs had good relationships with their learners. Various functions and challenges faced by DHTs as they carried out their work were analysed as per findings from participants. Participants mentioned challenges they were facing in their work environment and also highlighted some advice for new DHTs starting in the job.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter's objective is to offer the study's summary, findings, and recommendations. The main aim of the study was to document the perceptions of primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carry out their daily duties. The objectives of the study were:

- To determine the functions of deputy headteachers in the schools.
- To identify the challenges faced by deputy headteachers as they carry out their functions in implementing the curriculum.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study was hard-pressed by the fact that the roles of deputy headteachers are not the same in different schools.

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study, giving the reader background information concerning the topic. It outlined the roles of deputy headteachers in other countries, and as well as those of Eswatini. Eswatini deputy headteachers have challenges in that they are all employed by the TSC through MoET and deployed to various schools. They do not undergo any training in their new appointments.

The background information into the school administrators' crucial role in the national curriculum implementation and other studies surrounding the topic led to the statement of the problem: How do primary school deputy headteachers in Eswatini perceive their functions in relation to what they experience in their daily duties? Two sub-questions were included in the main question:

- What are the functions of the deputy headteachers in the schools?
- What are the challenges faced by the deputy headteachers as they carry out their functions in implementation of the curriculum?

In chapter 2 the reader was given a literature review on school-level leadership inspirations alongside factors that hamper leadership. Literature relating to key concepts of the study was addressed. Drivers to seeking headship and barriers thereto were discussed. The

summary revealed that deputy headteachers had a lot of challenges in their poorly defined yet critical roles for day-to-day operations. The general roles of DHTs were outlined as well as an appreciation of their role in relation to curriculum implementation at school level.

Chapter 3 offered the study's research methods and design that were used in conducting the study. The reason a qualitative case study was employed to gather, process, and assess data was discussed by the researcher. The researcher mentioned why purposive sampling was used, revealed the number of participants included and described the selection on the basis of being a deputy headteacher. The chapter also mentioned that semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were to be used and that open-ended questions were asked to collect data for the study. Participants were ensured of trustworthiness of the research and the principles that the researcher observed in order to be ethical were examined.

Chapter 4 presented, examined, and debated the research data. The researcher began by analysing the data collection technique. The chapter sketched the different functions and challenges faced by DHTs as they carried out their work. Participants also equipped aspiring teachers by giving advice for the new DHT in the job. The researcher analysed the data by grouping the different themes which were identified. The interpretation of data in the chapter was organised by considering the aims of the study.

Chapter 5 is a summary of the study. The chapter discusses the findings of the study by attending to each of the sub-aims drawn in chapter 3. Finally, the chapter makes recommendations from the study.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

5.3.1 Introduction

The findings from the study will be discussed in the next paragraphs and these are compiled from the data that were analysed and interpreted, based on the main aim and the two objectives as mentioned above.

5.3.2 Findings with regard to the main research objective:

5.3.2.1 The perception of primary school deputy headteachers

As highlighted in Chapter 4, the perceptions of DHTs were different. The study revealed that DHTs feared the challenge that came with the promotion but needed the money and the

administrative positions. The study found that DHTs assumed that their roles included checking official books, making sure the school grounds were kept clean, advising headteachers when it came to making important decisions, attending to cleanliness and uniform issues, acting in the place of the headteacher in her/his absence and compiling some important documents. The study exposed that the assumed roles of DHTs were far less demanding than when the DHT was in the real job. The study discovered that a DHT's position can involve acting as a mediator between the headteacher and parents/students. She/he can also advise all stakeholders when the need arises.

In conclusion, the DHT plays a significant and comprehensive role. Everything that lands on his or her desk is handled by them. This includes supporting and empowering stakeholders, working with various groups at various levels, ensuring good and safe relationships between the school and the community, and supervision of daily functions within the school.

5.3.3 Findings with regard to the research sub-aim one:

5.3.3.1 The functions of DHTs in the schools

As stated in Chapter 4, the DHT has a lot of work and it is very strenuous. The study revealed that assumed roles by DHTs were far less than the actual experiences in the job. It was also discovered that the functions of DHTs were different from school to school. There is no written 'manual' to be followed by the DHTs. Their functions solely depend on their headteachers who disperse the duties. The study found that to function very well, most DHTs were promoted into new schools. DHTs promoted into the new schools shared that they were welcomed with mixed reactions. Some were received enthusiastically, whilst others were resented by both the headteacher and the teachers. The study also revealed what was liked by DHTs. These included that DHTs preferred a good and smooth working relationship whilst at duty stations. They preferred solving problems and bringing order during their functions. In conclusion, the duties of the DHTs are very valuable in the implementation of the national curriculum in primary school.

5.3.4. Findings with regard to the research sub-aim two:

5.3.4.1 The challenges faced by DHTs as they carry out their functions

The position of a DHT is very important as the school embarks on its daily tasks. If the DHT carries out his/her functions very well then the implementation of the curriculum in the

classes becomes easier. However, this turns out to be impossible because of challenges faced by DHTs. The research discovered that all stakeholders in a school posed challenges to the effective work of the DHT. Learners misbehaved; teachers did not meet deadlines; parents talked badly about the DHT or behind the DHT's back. The study found that DHTs were not offered any professional developmental training after their promotion. The study revealed that DHTs had a way of merging their teaching functions with other duties. According to the study, there were aspects to the position of the DHT that were not expected. These were challenges such as taking decisions on behalf of the headteacher and leading a project such as developmental projects with NGOs; and learning that headteachers talked badly about DHTs in school committee meetings. In conclusion, there are so many challenges faced by DHTs as they carry out their functions in implementing the curriculum that need to be addressed thoroughly and immediately.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

5.4.1 Introduction

The main aim of the study was to document the experiences of the functions of primary school deputy headteachers in the Manzini region of Eswatini in implementation of the national curriculum. Moreover, the study's objectives were to determine the functions of deputy headteachers in the schools, and identify the challenges faced by deputy headteachers as they perform their functions in implementing the curriculum.

DHTs were interviewed in-depth for the purpose of gathering data, and the results of the data collection were documented. Recommendations are now possible given the results. The recommendations set out below imply that the researcher has succeeded in achieving the primary objective:

To document the perceptions of primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carry out their daily duties.

5.4.2 Recommendation with regard to research objective one:

5.4.2.1 Perceptions on the functions of DHTs

The first research objective was to document the perceptions of DHTs before being appointed into the job. The study revealed that these perceptions were very shallow. At the

time they did not realise that the job involved as much as it did in reality. DHTs who were interviewed said that they perceived their jobs to include checking of official books, ensuring that the school grounds were kept clean, attending to cleanliness and uniform issues and advising headteachers on top priority matters. They added that they thought the job was also to be a stand-in for the HT. The study exposed that the DHT must be qualified for the job, with at least a diploma or an even higher education level. The experienced DHTs proved to be content and were fluent and conversant in their job description. The study discovered that a DHT can be a mediator between parents, students and the headteacher. He/she can be an advisor to all stakeholders in the school. The researcher's recommendation is that the DHT should be promoted after having at least seven years of teaching experience and should have experience in teaching most classes. A proper qualification into the position of DHT should also be looked into. A further recommendation is that a DHT should have acquired at least a degree in a course related to education. The study revealed that DHTs feared the challenge of becoming DHTs but wanted to be promoted because of money and the prestige of the administrative position.

5.4.3 Recommendations related to research objective two:

5.4.3.1 Functions of DHT in a school

The second research objective was to determine the functions of DHTs. These functions were discovered to be more than what DHTs not yet in the position thought it would be. The study revealed that the functions of DHTs included checking preparation books and other official documents; compiling a composite timetable; ensuring the grounds are clean; advising the headteacher when important decisions need to be made: attending to parents' and learners' concerns relating to academic and social issues; and advising all stakeholders when the need arises.

The study exposed that the experiences of DHTs on the job were different from what they had expected. The researcher's recommendation is that DHTs should be promoted into new schools. This can help in the working relationship of teachers and the DHT, as well as the relationship of the DHT and that of the headteacher in the new schools. Some DHTs did not want to comment much about their receptions into the new position in their schools but one could tell that it was not good at all.

The study revealed that DHTs had good things they liked about their job. They liked hiding behind the headteacher and this was noted when they said that they liked doing work knowing that someone else would have the final decision. They also liked their interaction with parents and teachers.

Another point that came out from the study was that DHTs liked a smooth working relationship with all stakeholders. They also liked solving issues and bringing order where possible. The researcher's recommendation would be that there should be an effective working relationship between all stakeholders involved in the school. The relationship and communication should adopt a bottom-up approach. The researcher also recommends that the list of roles for DHTs should be the same in all the primary schools and doing everything as assigned by the headteacher must be included.

5.4.4 Recommendations with regard to research objective three:

5.4.4.1 Challenges faced by DHTs as they carry out their functions

The third research objective was to identify the challenges faced by DHTs as they carry out their functions. The study revealed that DHTs are faced with numerous challenges, including misbehaviour of learners; disrespect of teachers especially that which pertains to deadlines; and unreported teachers' absence.

According to the study, headteachers were also creating challenges for DHTs when they had to look for reports about the school from teachers. The researcher recommends ensuring an open and straightforward communication between the management of the school i.e. the DHT and headteacher. The study also discovered that DHTs do not get any professional development training for the position of DHT. The researcher's recommendation is that the MoET should provide some professional developmental courses for newly appointed DHTs. The training should include skills needed by DHTs and they should be given advice about the job. The study revealed aspects to the position of DHT which were not expected. The recommendation is that the leading style of the headteacher is significant in the growth of the DHT. DHTs should be supported by their headteachers in all activities they do in the schools. DHTs were shocked by the leadership style of headteachers when they talked badly about them in school committee meetings.

5.4.5 Recommendation with regard to observational data

The study revealed that the duties of DHTs were observed in the schools through noticeboards, the DHT's office, and the interaction of the DHT with headteachers, teachers and learners. Meetings with teachers and parents were also observed, and they revealed a positive interaction of DHTs with all the stakeholders. The researcher's recommendation is that DHTs should be provided with offices so that they are able to keep documents collectively and in order. Other items that can be kept in good order would include files, medicine boxes, and cleaning materials. Most DHTs had positive comments about their headteachers and most of them were inspired by their headteachers. The recommendation is that headteachers should continue to provide mentorship to DHTs.

5.5 LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

Ten public schools in the Kwaluseni Zone, Manzini Region, were the only ones included in the study. Data was gathered using a qualitative case study research methodology. Time was an issue during the data collection phase. After the Covid-19 break, schools had started, therefore the majority of DHTs were highly active. Teachers believed that the interviews took too much time because they had a lot of work to accomplish at the schools and conducting in-depth interviews takes time. It could have been better to use a questionnaire so that participants could provide more thorough and convenient responses.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study exposed that the perceptions of DHTs about their job are not the same thing as their experiences on the job. It revealed that the work of DHT is very wide and quite demanding, and there was a need for orientation into the job by the MoET besides the welcoming and orientation by their current supervisor which was observed to be not the same in each school.

The researcher discovered while conducting the study that certain DHTs are overworked as a result of administrative tasks and classroom instruction. Taking this into consideration, further research could be done in merging administrative duties and teaching responsibility by the DHT.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the study was to document the opinions of primary school DHTs in their functions as they carried out their duties. The objectives of the study were to determine the functions of the DHTs in schools, and to identify the challenges faced by DHTs as they performed their functions in curriculum implementation. The following recommendations have been made to improve the duties of the DHT:

- Mixed gender of participants in deputy headship should be considered.
- DHTs who are appointed should have as a minimum a degree in education.
- DHTs should have at least not less than seven years of teaching experience.
- DHTs must be promoted into new schools.
- The school should have an effective working relationship with all stakeholders involved in the school.
- The school should ensure an open and honest communication between the management i.e. DHT and headteacher.
- The leadership style of the headteacher plays an important role in the growth of the DHT.
- DHTs should be provided with offices so that they are able to keep documents collectively and in order.
- Headteachers should continue to provide mentorship to DHTs.

In conclusion, the research showed that the functions of DHTs differed from one school to the other and that there is no written 'manual' provided for DHTs to use in schools. However, the management style of the headteachers played an important role in grooming DHTs. The mentorship they provided produced leadership after their own kind. DHTs were faced with challenges which emanated from learners, parents, teachers and their headteachers. Nevertheless, open and honest communication with all stakeholders is suggested as important.

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APPENDIX A: REQUEST FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

P. O. Box 6260
MBABANE

Mrs L. Dlamini (The Director)
Ministry of Education and Training
P.O. Box 39
Mbabane
Tell: (+268) 2404 2491

Dear Mrs Dlamini

Request to conduct a study in ten primary schools under the Kwaluseni Zone

Title of research: Primary school deputy headteachers' experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

I, Mpho Princess Simelane, am doing research under supervision of Professor T.I Mogashoa, an associate professor in the department of curriculum studies and instruction towards a master's degree at the University of South Africa in the College of Education.

The schools that will be invited to participate in the study entitled 'Primary school deputy-headteachers' experiences of their roles in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region' will include the following schools.

- Kwaluseni Central Primary School
- Matsapha Government Primary School
- Kwaluseni Infant Primary
- Eqinisweni Primary School

- Ludzeludze Primary School
- Mbikwakhe Primary School
- Mbekelweni Primary School
- Phocweni Primary School
- Masundvini Nazarene Primary
- Bethany Primary School

The aim of this study will be to document the experiences of primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carry out their daily duties.

These schools have been selected because they might have deputy headteachers who might be knowledgeable and experienced in the implementation of the curriculum. The study will be conducted in the natural setting of the participant and participation will be voluntary and anonymity of participants as well as confidentiality of the content of interviews will be maintained. It is hoped that knowledge gained from the research will help deputy headteachers have a better understanding of their roles and challenges.

There are no anticipated risks that will be encountered during participation in the study. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. Feedback procedure will entail a copy of a thesis to the schools and recommendations made on basis of the proposed study.


The researcher will advise participants to wear face masks and observe social distancing when visiting the school according to Covid-19 regulations.

Yours sincerely

M.P. Simelane (Researcher)

Appendix B: Permission to conduct research from the Director of Education

The Government of the Kingdom of ESWATINI



Ministry of Education & Training

Tel: (+268) 2 4042491/5
Fax: (+268) 2 404 3880

P. O. Box 39
Mbabane, ESWATINI

01 September, 2021

Attention:
Head Teacher:


Kwaluseni Central Primary School	Matsapha Government Primary School
Kwaluseni Infant Primary School	Eqinisweni Primary School
Ludzeludze Primary School	Mbhikwakhe Primary School
Mbekelweni Primary School	Masundvini Nazarene Primary School
Phocweni Primary School	Bethany Primary School

THROUGH
Manzini Regional Education Officer


Dear Colleague,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FOR UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA STUDENT - MS MPHONG PRINCESS SIMELANE

1. The Ministry of Education and Training has received a request from Ms. Mphong Princess Simelane, a student at University of South Africa that in order for her to fulfill her academic requirements at University she has to collect data (conduct research) and her study or research topic is: *"Primary school deputy head teachers experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: A case study, Manzini Region"*. The population for her study comprises of deputy head teachers in the selected primary schools within the Manzini Region. All details concerning the study are stated in the participants' consent form which will have to be signed by all participants before Ms. Simelane begins her data collection. Please note that parents will have to consent for all the participants below the age of 18 years participating in this study.
2. The Ministry of Education and Training requests your office to assist Ms. Simelane collect data virtually from the above mentioned school in the Manzini region as well as facilitate for the support she needs in her data collection process. Data collection period is one month.


DR. N.L. DLAMINI
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

cc: Regional Education Officer – Manzini
Chief Inspector – Primary
Head Teacher of the above mentioned school
Prof. M.S. Mothata – Research Supervisors



Page 1



APPENDIX C: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY FROM HEADTEACHERS

P.O Box 6260
Mbabane

The Headteacher

Dear Sir/ Madam

Request to conduct research at.....Primary School

Title of research: Primary school deputy headteachers’ experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

I, Mpho Princess Simelane, am doing research under supervision of Professor T.I Mogashoa, an associate professor in the department of curriculum studies and instruction towards a master’s degree at the University of South Africa in the college of education. The main aim of this study will be to document the perceptions of primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carry out their daily duties.

The school has been selected because it has a deputy headteacher who might be knowledgeable and experienced in the implementation of the curriculum. The study will be conducted in the natural setting of the participant and participation will be voluntary and anonymity of participants as well as confidentiality of the content of interviews will be maintained. It is hoped that knowledge gained from the research will help deputy headteachers have a better understanding of their roles and challenges. There are no anticipated risks that will be encountered during participation in the study. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. Feedback procedure will

entail a copy of a thesis to the school and recommendations made on basis of the proposed study.

The researcher will advise participants to wear face masks and observe social distancing when visiting the school according to Covid-19 regulations.

Yours sincerely

M.P. Simelane (Researcher)



Appendix D: Request to conduct a study from deputy headteachers

P.O Box 6260

Mbabane

Date:

Dear prospective participant

Title of research: Primary school deputy headteachers' experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

I, Mpho Princess Simelane, am doing research under supervision of Professor T.I Mogashoa, an associate professor in the department of curriculum studies and instruction towards a master's degree at the University of South Africa in the college of education. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled, "Primary school deputy headteachers' experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

This study is expected to collect data from primary school deputy headteachers. You are the only participants selected from your school and you are invited because you are the deputy headteacher. Your responsibility, expertise and experience are what the study is interested in. I obtained your contact details from your headteacher.

The main aim of this study will be to document the perceptions of primary school deputy headteachers of Eswatini in their functions as they carry out their daily duties.

The interview will take approximately a maximum of 30 minutes and it will be conducted in your place of work or at a mutually agreed upon place, date and time. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any penalties. All information you provide will be kept confidential and your name will not appear in the research report and publication. No one, apart from the researcher and

identified research team will know about your involvement in the research. Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answer will be given code number or pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publication, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

If you need further information which would facilitate your decisions to participate in the interview, please, do not hesitate to contact me through 76231236 or email mphopsims@gmail.com. If you need more information on this research you can contact my supervisor, Professor T.I Mogashoa (mogasti@uisa.ac.za) at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

The researcher will like to advise participants to wear face masks and observe social distancing when visiting the school during to Covid-19 period.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.

Yours Sincerely

M.P. Simelane (Researcher)



APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS

Contact number: +268 76231236 / +268 79231236

Email address: mphopsims@gmail.com

Date:

Consent to participate in the study

I, _____, confirm that the person asking my consent to take in this part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential and anticipated inconvenience of participation. I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any penalties. I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publication and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified. In addition, I agree to the recordings of the discussion and I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant

Name (Please print)	Signature	Date

Researcher

Mpho P. Simelane

Name	Signature	Date

Thank you in advance for helping me.

Yours faithfully

Mpho Princess Simelane (Researcher)

APPENDIX F: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE FROM UNISA



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2021/06/09

Ref: **2021/06/09/41337441/16/AM**

Dear Mrs MP Simelane

Name: Mrs MP Simelane

Student No.:41337441

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2021/06/09 to 2024/06/09

Researcher(s): Name: Mrs MP Simelane
E-mail address: mphopsims@gmail.com
Telephone: +26876231236

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof T.I. Mogashoa
E-mail address: mogasti@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 076 372 5083

Title of research:

Primary school deputy head-teachers' experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

Qualification: MEd Curriculum studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2021/06/09 to 2024/06/09.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2021/06/09 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



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

3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024/06/09**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **2021/06/09/41337441/16/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof PM Sebate
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za



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APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS

P. O. Box 6260
MBABANE

Date:

Title of research: Primary school deputy headteachers’ experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

Interviews will be semi-structured.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of organisation.....

2. Sex Male Female

3. Qualification

Diploma in Education Under-grad degree in education Post-grad Degree

4. Years of service

- i. Experience in teaching
 - 0 to 5 years 6-15 years 16-25 years 26 years and longer
- ii. Experience in current position
 - 0 – 3 years 4 – 6 years 7- 9 years 10 years and above

B. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1. Did you ever think that one day you will become a DHT?
- 2. Before you were appointed a deputy headteacher, what did you think was the role of the DHT?

3. Now that you are a deputy headteacher, what are your experiences in your role as DHT?
4. Is what you thought and the experiences you have now the same?
5. Were you promoted into a new school?
6. If so, what were your experiences when you came to that school? (How were you received in short?)
7. Which things do you like best about your job? (What is satisfying about your job)
8. What is it that you can cite as bad about your job? (What is depressing/ challenging about your job?)
9. What skills or qualities do you think a DHT need in order to be effective as DHT?
10. Were you offered professional development courses or training into the position of DHT?
11. If so, which courses or training?
12. How do you combine your teaching functions with the functions as a DHT?
13. Have there been aspects to the position of DHT that you did not expect?
14. What advice would you give to a newly appointed to a DHT's position?

Due to Covid-19, during this interview, both of us will be wearing face masks and before the start of the interview our hands will be sanitised.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN THIS INTERVIEW.



P. O. Box 6260
MBABANE

APPENDIX H: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Title of research: Primary school deputy headteachers' experiences of their role in the implementation of the national curriculum: a case study, Manzini Region.

The observations will take place around the school yard, the deputy headteacher's office, in meetings with the headteacher / the teachers. Field notes will be written with pen and paper. Each observation will not take more than an hour. Any information identifying participants will not be recorded. Covid-19 regulations will be adhered to whilst around the school.

Date:

Name of deputy headteacher (pseudonym):

School:

The following will be observed:

- * Notice boards
- * Deputy headteacher's office
- * Deputy headteacher's interaction with headteacher
- * Interaction with teachers
- * Interaction and relationship with learners
- * Meetings -teachers
 -parents

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF EDITING

Cell: 076 389 3246
gill.hannant@outlook.com

Mrs G Hannant
28 Hillcrest Avenue
CRAIGHALL PARK
2196

9 November 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I certify that I have edited the dissertation

**PRIMARY SCHOOL DEPUTY HEAD-TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF THEIR FUNCTIONS IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CASE STUDY, MANZINI REGION**

by

MPHO PRINCESS SIMELANE

However, the correction of all errors/missing information remains the responsibility
of the student.

G. Hannant

G.C. HANNANT
BA HED

APPENDIX J: TURNITIN REPORT- SIMELANE M P

PRIMARY SCHOOL DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF THEIR FUNCTIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CASE STUDY, MANZINI REGION

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by

SIMELANE MPHOTO

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