# UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

# LEADING FOR QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF SIX DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN THREE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITHIN THE PINETOWN DISTRICT

**BY**

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# DECLARATION

I, Sthabile Pridesworthy Bhengu, declare that:

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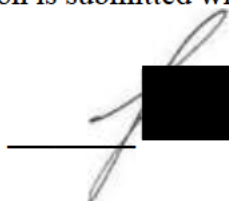
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# SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation is submitted with my approval.

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Dr S.B. Blose

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my late mother, Zinhle Princess Bhengu, who in her living days motivated and always encouraged me to further my studies. She was my anchor and I hope this dissertation makes her proud of the woman I have become despite her absence.

# ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of six Departmental Heads in their leadership towards achieving quality teaching and learning within the secondary schools under the Pinetown district. The theoretical framework underpinning this study is the transformational leadership theory. The methodology used for this study is the interpretive paradigm. This study adopted the case study methodology to help better understand the experiences of the six Departmental Heads. Interviews were arranged after obtaining consent from gatekeepers and participants and the data was then generated using two data collecting methods, namely: semi-structured interviews and documents review. The interview sessions were recorded using a tape recorder and transcribed before they got analysed using thematic analysis. The major finding of the study is that the participating Departmental Heads aimed to achieve maximum curriculum coverage for the departments they lead and manage, and in doing so, they used one-on-one meetings to assist teachers experiencing difficulties in the teaching and learning process. Departmental Heads shared that they monitor if quality learning and teaching takes place by checking learner exercise books, learner files, teacher files and making sure the teacher attends to the classroom as per period timetable. The Departmental Heads also expressed that in performing their duties, they experience challenges such as teachers who possess a negative attitude towards their work and teachers who show a negative attitude by portraying certain actions when it is time to go to class. The actions include a teacher not going to class on time, absenteeism, and sitting in the staff room during teaching time. Departmental Heads did not only discuss the challenges, but they added to the study by mentioning that principals play a supportive role when required to do so. The principal was viewed as someone who assists in organising workshops that will improve the Departmental Heads' skills where necessary and is someone who assists financially when organising extra help for the improvement of learner ability on certain difficult subjects. The principal is also viewed as someone who assists in getting the parents involved when it comes to the disciplining of learners who disturb the teaching and learning process.

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DoE   Department of Education

UKZN   University of Kwazulu-Natal

SMT   School Management Team

ATP   Annual Teaching Plan

PAM   Personnel Administrative Measures

B Ed   Bachelor of Education

PL1   Post Level 1

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**CHAPTER ONE**

**BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

# CHAPTER ONE
## INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY


## 1.1 Introduction

One of the most significant contributors to the improvement of quality in teaching and learning is effective school leadership and management that positively influence individuals to work towards the school's success. This chapter introduces the study that looked at the Departmental Heads experiences of leading for quality teaching and learning in selected schools of the Pinetown district. The chapter begins with a presentation of the background to the study, which is followed by the statement of the problem, purpose, and rationale of the study. The significance of the study, research questions, the objectives of the study, and the definitions of the key concepts are discussed thereafter. The chapter is concluded by a presentation of the outline of the chapters.


## 1.2 Background to the study

Several studies investigating the duties of Departmental Heads have agreed that Departmental Heads should monitor teacher and learner interactions in schools (Smith, Mestry, & Bambie, 2013; Mestry & Pillay, 2013; Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013; Bush et al., 2010). These duties include leading the learning process by making sure that teachers know their responsibilities, management of teachers, teaching and making sure that the curriculum is followed accordingly. They further ensure that learners' assessment tasks are marked, and that learners receive appropriate feedback. However, it appears that Departmental Heads are more focused on teaching (Smith et al., 2013), neglecting the other duties.

According to the PAM (EEA 76) of (1998). Departmental Heads engage in classroom teaching, they are responsible for the effective functioning of the department which includes providing guidance to teachers when it comes to teaching techniques, evaluations, approaches to the subject, they help the inexperienced new teachers, and they coordinate relevant extra – curricular activities to make sure that the subject and learning is promoted in a proper manner. These Departmental Heads also have the duty to observe teachers in classrooms and perform administrative duties.

Departmental Heads experience a challenge in carrying out these parts of their duties. (Mercer, Barker & Bird, 2010). Senge et al., (2007), acknowledges that the role of Departmental Heads is very important and challenging and if it is not done correctly, it compromises the merit of teaching and learning within the school environment. It also becomes a barrier and a challenge when it comes to making sure duties are carried out on time. According to the Employment of Educators act (EEA) 76 of (1998), the Departmental Head's role is to monitor the work of educators and learners in their departments. The policy further states that Departmental Heads have less instructional time than post level-one teachers. Scholars such as Smith et al. (2013) mention that Departmental Heads seem to be more focused on the teaching aspect. This effects management of time to exercise tasks of supervising and controlling of work; yet they are required to supervise teaching and learning (Mercer, Barker & Bird, 2010).

## 1.3 Statement of the problem

As a high school teacher in a township secondary school, I have comprehended that Departmental Heads try by all means possible to assist post level one teachers where required. In secondary schools, Departmental Heads are entrusted with the leadership and management in schools. Smith et al. (2013) claim that Departmental Heads are the driving force behind an organisation, and they are key agents in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Departmental Heads have to perform multiple managerial functions in the execution of their duties apart from teaching.

Departmental Heads at my school do not only lead and manage one subject but a multiple subject within their stream of specialisation for example, a Departmental Head in the commerce department is a Departmental Head for Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics. If one deals with leading and managing multiple subjects in my opinion that is a call for problems because these are three different subjects all require attention and some skill from the Departmental Head. These subjects all must be treated individually and given attention regarding supervision and administration which includes paperwork and paperwork is a critical component when it comes to administration as it must be correct and accurate. Departmental Heads in addition, have the responsibility of ensuring effective teaching and learning across the subjects in various departments. According to Fleming and Spicer (2014, p.1), "The Departmental Head has extra responsibilities of leadership and management on top of being

the classroom or subject teacher" and according to the EEA 76 (1998), this means Departmental Heads must be able to achieve accuracy in these different subjects and if not, it becomes problematic. This is a reflection from my observation as a teacher regarding Departmental Heads taking on multiple roles.

**Purpose and rationale for the study**

It is universally acknowledged that a Departmental Head is part of a group of personnel in a school who are key agents and are tasked with the roles and responsibilities of administering, managing, and leading curriculum implementation (Bennet et al., 2003; Thorpe & Bennet-Powell, 2014). EEA 04 of (1998) stated on the PAM (Personnel Administrative Measures) document that Departmental Heads have roles and responsibilities as curriculum leaders. These broad or general roles and responsibilities are extra and co-curriculum related roles, administrative roles, personnel management roles, resource management roles, collaborating and stakeholder involvement roles, extra-, and co-curricular involvement roles, and leadership roles.

According to the Employment of Educators Act 76 (1998), Departmental Heads in South Africa are responsible for monitoring the work of both teachers and learners. This policy also indicates that teachers should go into classrooms and teach. The purpose of the study is to discuss Departmental Heads' experiences and challenges and how they solve and overcome these challenges.

**1.4 Significance of the study**

This study could be beneficial to all Departmental Heads working in secondary school contexts where they are anticipated to supervise post level-one teachers. To add on this, the findings from the study could also enlighten school principals about both management and delegation of duties to the Departmental Heads in such a way that the above-mentioned double roles are appropriately accomplished. Findings from the study could also help the departmental officials at circuit and district levels in designing relevant training programmes for school based Departmental Heads. This study will also add to the already existing body of knowledge about the role of secondary school Departmental Heads as quality leaders of learning.

**1.5 Objectives of the study**

1.6.1   To understand the experiences of Departmental Heads in secondary schools.

1.6.2   To investigate the challenges that Departmental Heads encounter in executing their role in secondary schools.

1.6.3 To formulate strategies to enhance and support Departmental Heads in their effectiveness in secondary schools.

**1.7   Critical research questions**

1.7.1   What are the leadership experiences of Departmental Heads in secondary schools?

1.7.2   Which challenges do Departmental Heads encounter in executing their role in secondary schools?

1.7.3   How could Departmental Heads be supported to enhance their effectiveness in secondary schools?

1.7.4   How do Departmental Heads respond to the challenges they experience?

**1.8   Clarification of Key concepts**

The following core concepts are being used throughout this research study.

**1.8.1 Departmental Heads**

The Departmental Head is the person in authority within his/her department and he/she is administratively responsible for its entire working. The Department of Education (1998), Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of (1998) (EEA) defines a Departmental Head as someone who is a teacher but also responsible for a phase or learning area. Departmental Heads have various responsibilities in relation to other administrative tasks despite them spending little time leading their departments and performing subject development activities (Tapala, Fuller, & Mentz, 2021).

This concept refers to school-based educators employed in terms of the EEA Act 76 of (1998), occupying post-level two with curriculum management as their responsibility in addition to teaching (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). In the South African context, Departmental Heads are the members of the School Management Team (SMT), and they are the first line of the SMT. They monitor and supervise curriculum delivery daily and ensure quality education. The Departmental Heads have extra responsibilities of leadership and management in addition to being the classroom or subject teacher (Fleming & Spicer, 2014).

### 1.8.2 Management

Bush (2007) views Management as maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements. Management often exhibits leadership skills; the overall function is toward maintenance and attaining school resources towards utilising them for the achievement of organisational goals rather than change.

"The term 'management' is often used in relation to an organisational hierarchy, with those occupying higher management positions in the hierarchy having more power and responsibility than those lower down the management hierarchy. This view of management has its roots in Weberian bureaucracy" (Bendix, 1977, p. 3). Storey (2002) views the term 'management' as being closely associated with competence, planning, paperwork, procedures, guidelines, control, and consistency. This concept is an important part of this study because Departmental Heads manage teaching and learning in schools and are closely involved with the above-mentioned concepts.

### 1.8.3 Leadership

According to Bush (2007), leadership is influencing the actions of others in achieving the desirable ends; people who have leadership skills have the ability to form goals   and motivate the actions of others. These people can initiate change to reach the existing new goals. Badenhorst et al. (2003, p. 174) defines the term "as the process of directing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of the predetermined goals. It involves taking the lead to bridge the gap between formulating plans and reaching goals in other words, translating plans into reality." This concept is used to show how Departmental Heads would ensure that they use

the relevant leadership skills regarding the situations they face in playing a leadership role in the schools they work at to achieve set goals for their departments.

**1.9 Delimitations of the study**

My study was conducted in six secondary schools in the Department of education within the Pinetown district located in KwaZulu-Natal. It was limited to six Departmental Heads choosing two Departmental Heads per secondary school. I was restricted to the Pinetown District and had to gather all the data for the study from February 2021 to December 2021.

**1.10 Organisation of the Study**

**Chapter 1: Introduction and Orientation of the study**

Chapter 1 contains the background of the study, problem statement and the rationale of the study. It also provides the study's objectives and four research questions. The significance of the study, the key concepts and delimitation of the study are also provided, and the final part of the chapter discusses the outline of the study.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

This chapter concentrates on the theoretical frameworks which underpinned the study. It also examines the literature review on the role of high school Departmental Heads (also known as leaders of learning), as well as the conceptualisation of learning.

**Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter of the study contains the research design and research methods, together with the procedures that were followed while gathering information for this study.

**Chapter 4: Presentation and discussion of findings form information generated**

This chapter presents detailed information about the data that was collected and generated through interviews conducted with the six Departmental Heads from the three secondary schools within the Pinetown district, in keeping with the research title and information collected through the documents review analysis. This chapter provides an interpretation of the information collected.

**Chapter 5: Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusion**

This chapter provides the summary of this entire study which includes the findings and recommendations.

**1.11 Chapter Summary**

This chapter discussed the role of secondary school Departmental Heads as leaders for quality teaching and learning. It provided the background and rationale for the study. It explained the aims and objectives of the study. The research key questions which guide the study were stated and key concepts were discussed in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 2
# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of Departmental Heads in leading towards quality teaching and learning. The study focuses on literature of leadership perception, approach and challenges encountered by secondary school Departmental Heads. Some insight will be acquired from previous related studies on how quality teaching and learning can be achieved through appropriate leadership styles.

According to Drucker (2012), Departmental Heads often make the wrong assumption that since they are managers, they are automatically leaders who are followed by their subordinates. This chapter will begin by exploring the concept of quality followed by a discussion on quality in teaching and learning. It will then examine the fundamental difference between a Departmental Head as a manager and as a leader. The Departmental Heads' roles and responsibilities, workload, challenges, and how they communicate with their subordinates will be explored in detail. The chapter will conclude by an analysis of transformational leadership and the unpacking of the theoretical framework which guides the study.

## 2.2 Defining quality

Quality is a complex term to understand because its meaning is usually related to certain qualities of the subject which it seeks to describe (Luckett, 2006). Asiyai (2015) sees quality as an intense, particular concept which goes together with everyday usage and good performance, brilliance, or something valuable. A quality education provides learners with skills and a positive attitude, along with preparing learners to be productive citizens. Each school decides in terms of its vision and mission, and quality is then assessed accordingly. It can be recommended that quality in the education setting is related to performance outcomes, efficiency, empowerment, and excellence. Having discussed the definition of quality, a discussion on quality in teaching and learning will follow.

**2.3 Quality in teaching and learning**

Previously, quality has been discussed as a term which constitutes of excellence, performance, and efficiency. It is important to understand what is meant by teaching and learning and how quality plays a role in such. Teaching is defined as a process in which learners receive certain skills, attitudes and knowledge from their teacher through intellectual and social cooperation (Sá & Serpa, 2018). Learning is understood as the receiving of information (Wragg, 2011). Furthermore, learning can be defined as a continuous shift in performance or performance capability as a result of obtaining knowledge through interaction with the world (Lesort et al., 2020).

It is important to understand that the attitude of teachers and the quality of teaching influence learners in the choices they make when it comes to approaches of learning (Francisca et al., 2019). Motivating and encouraging teachers plays an important part in shaping how they carry themselves at work and the attitudes they have towards conducting their lessons efficiently (Schiller, 2002; Mulkeen, 2003), Departmental Heads should therefore have an open-door-policy where they communicate with teachers about the challenges they experience. As a result, they will have teachers who are motivated to perform their duties efficiently with a positive attitude.

For students to achieve good performance and to achieve excellence, they need to have effective teaching. For effective teaching to take place, different strategies of teaching and learning need to be employed so that quality in teaching and learning is achieved. This quality in teaching and learning does not only include getting learners to store facts in their memory but to also make them participate in the process that enable them to search for information by themselves and establish knowledge (du Plessis & Conley, 2007). In this way, the teacher will be helping learners by ensuring that there is an opportunity for them to learn and this results in quality teaching and learning.

Moreover, Wittek & Habib (2013) define quality in teaching and learning using the performance results within the classroom atmosphere. For the learners to achieve quality results, the teacher prepares what they will teach and the approaches they will make use of to make the lesson insightful; in addition, the teacher does not teach out of the book only (Cohen,

Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Good performance is detected by the direct product of learning, which is the main indication of teaching and learning taking place.

## 2.4 Departmental Heads as managers

Departmental Heads as middle managers play a vital role in ensuring quality teaching and learning in secondary educational institutions. A study by Brown et al. (2001) set out to analyse the role of the Departmental Head in the United Kingdom at a time where an emphasis was being placed on changing education standards and policies. However, no standards existed for them nationally which led them to focus on the role of the Departmental Heads in a small set up such as a school, which in their case included Birmingham and Manchester. The Departmental Heads' responsibilities were interpreted at a different level within the school; the researcher hoped to find a trend of what could be researched on a larger scale.

Managing professional subordinates is a huge responsibility that demands not only determination but also strategic planning, organisation and controlling skills from the Departmental Head if intended mission and objectives of the school are to be effectively achieved. According to Newton (2003), management is meant to make the vision of the organisation and allow the organisation to function effectively. Teachers can only be easily and effectively managed if both Departmental Heads and teachers share the same vision, values and purpose in the school.

Koontz, Weihrichs, & Candice (2020) also defined management as an art of getting things done through and with the people in formally organised groups. It is an art of creating an environment in which people can perform and individuals and can operate towards attainment of group goals. The available scarce resources at the organisation's disposal should be appropriately coordinated to achieve organisational set targets. Manager is a title that goes along with values which reinforces one's authority and integrity. According to Spranger (1923), an early and influential writer, values are defined as the constellation of likes, dislikes, viewpoints, inner inclination, rational and irrational judgements, prejudices, and association patterns that determine a person's view of the world.

Educational management is a key game changer in secondary school performance. Studies have shown that schools with good management practices produce excellent results. Mpisane (2015) reports that if learner performance can be enhanced at department level, then the role of Departmental Heads is of major importance. Educational management involves planning, organising, directing, and controlling the day-to-day activities of an educational institution through use of teachers. Squelch (2001) lamented that, the functionality of the activities is school-based management, which includes Departmental Heads because of power bestowed in them virtue of their position. Researchers seem to be agreeing that planning, organising, directing, and controlling are the cornerstone of management. This discussion aims to teach Departmental Heads to manage their departments in a way that will be effective for both teachers and learners which will breed better quality results.

### 2.4.1 *Planning*

One of the fundamental aspects that defines a manager is the ability to plan for short- term, middle- term and long- term goals. Subject distribution, timetable, class visit, exam revision program, material distribution needs to be focused well in-advance for quality teaching and learning (Naiker et al., 2021). Drucker (2008) defines planning as the continuous process of making present entrepreneurial decisions systematically and with best possible knowledge of their futurity organising systematically. Their inputs are not given priority and their responsibilities are often undermined.

Van Deventer & Kruger (2003) state that Departmental Heads are accountable for the planning of teacher evaluation year programs, the teacher development program and lesson preparations. As Friend & Hickling (2012) argues, planning is the procedure where an individual or organisation chooses in advance on some upcoming course of action. Similarly, planning includes selecting from another future course of actions for the organisations and for all departments or subdivisions within organisations (Cook, Hunsaker, & Coffey, 1999). Having discussed the concept of planning regarding Departmental Heads in schools, it can be summarised that planning plays a crucial role in enhancing teaching and learning.

### 2.4.2 *Organising*

Organising is the second most important management function after planning. Organising basically entails integrating physical, financial, and more importantly, human resources to achieve an organisation's vision and mission. Several definitions have been postulated by authorities in trying to explain this important function of management. According to Johanson & Mattsson (2015), organising is the process of defining and grouping the activities of the enterprise and establishing authority and relationship among them. In performing the organising function, the manager defines, departmentalises, and assigns activities so that they can be most effectively executed (Loosemore, 2003). Organising is both creation of a structure as well as a process, the process of creating a structure for the school that will enable all members of staff to work together effectively towards achieving its outcomes (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003).

Departmental Heads must ensure that teachers are empowered with classroom authority and responsibility. The tasks that must be performed by teachers have to be grouped and systematically coordinated for quality teaching and learning. The Departmental Head should bear in mind the environmental school challenges encountered during the organising process that may affect the effectiveness of executing certain tasks. For Van Deventer & Kruger (2003), the problems teachers and Departmental Heads may encounter during organising process include: a) Highly qualified members spending time doing work that might not require their specialised expertise and experience. b) Imbalance of responsibility, authority, and accountability, resulting in the uneconomic division or duplication of work. c) Maintenance of unnecessary records and statistics. d) Poor planning that can impact organisation which influences quality teaching and learning.

Departmental Heads run the risk of spending too much time in marathon meetings and engagements at the expense of actual classroom teaching, which is the core purpose of schools. This term aims to address how Departmental Heads can implement quality teaching and learning in schools with the help of being organised beings regarding their duties at school.

### 2.4.3 *Staffing*

Staffing is a management function that involves hiring and retaining of suitable qualified personnel that will get the job done. It is the responsibility of the Departmental Head to orientate, familiarise and develop the new recruits in the department. According to Biljana & Vlastimir (2011). managerial function of staffing involves manning the organisation structure through the proper and effective selection, appraisal, and development of personnel to fill the roles designed in the structure. It should, however, be stressed that as much as Departmental Heads are consulted in teacher recruitment, the final decision rests with the school principals and school governing board which, at the end of day, will not have direct conduct with the teacher. Staffing basically involves manpower planning, recruitment, selection and placement, training and development and performance appraisal.

### 2.4.4 *Directing*

Directing as a management function is at the heart of the school administration. It greatly influences the leadership, motivation, and supervision of the Departmental Heads in performing their duties. According to Belyh (2019), directing is about the actuation of the methods to work effectively so as to achieve the organisation's objectives. The function goes beyond organising the employees to their specific roles, but also involves ensuring that they are able to perform the tasks through a variety of means. Directing is strongly linked to leadership. Without directing quality, teaching and learning would not be effective (Randhawa, 2007).

### 2.4.5 *Controlling*

Controlling is an evaluation management function that establishes standard of performance, measures actual performance, compares actual performance and expected performance, and more importantly takes corrective action for quality results. Haimann (2018) defines controlling as the process of checking whether proper progress is made towards achieving the objective and goals and acting, if necessary, to correct any deviation. Measurement and correction of performance is done through class visits and results analysis to decide if set targets have been met. Monitoring and controlling constitutes of a management process that the Departmental Heads follows. This is done by means of assessing and regulating that the

teaching and learning work is in progress and making sure that the school's results may be accomplished (Bennett et., 2007).

According to Personnel Administrative Measures (EEA of 1998), of the department of education South Africa, the Departmental Head duties and responsibilities includes: controlling the work of educator and learners in the department, submitting reports to the principal as required, submitting mark sheets, tests, and examination papers as well as the memoranda, checking the administrative responsibility of staff members, as well as sharing responsibilities of organising and conducting of extra and co-curricular activities.

Controlling is not an event but rather an on-going monitoring process that ensures quality teaching and learning. The discussion above clearly demonstrates the managerial function expected of a Departmental Head in school. The role involves managing a budget or ordering material, timetabling, mediating between parties, providing information, and being a link between administration and teachers. These administration duties take up much of the limited release time that Department Heads are given for their role (Glover et al., 1995). The managerial function is somehow interlinked with leader functions as shall be demonstrated in the research.

## 2.5 Departmental Head as a leader

Leading is like a journey. The Departmental Head should always check if there are still followers shadowing him/her, failing which one seizes to be leader but just a person merely taking a walk. In other words, being a leader means there should be people following you. According to Poultney (2007), Departmental Heads have two main roles which are to lead and to manage. Departmental Heads often make the wrong assumption that because they are school or government appointed managers, they are also automatic leaders and by virtue of their entrusted authority the subordinates will naturally follow them. The Departmental Heads in schools are seen as perfect leaders following the curriculum because of the role and responsibilities they play they uphold in the school. Additionally, they are perceived as a linking connection as they are required to link the subject heads and teachers in the school. They are responsible for raising the staff morale, organising teaching, and learning resources and making sure there is continuousness of curriculum development of the school (Southworth, 2008).

Northouse (2001) defines leadership as a process where one individual will influence a group of individuals to accomplish a common goal. To be an effective leader, the manager must influence his or her associates in a positive way to achieve the goals of the organisation. Departmental Heads as leaders play a critical role in bringing and sustaining success of a school in dynamic environment. Pounder (2006) suggested that the traditional idea of a Departmental Head is outdated and must be replaced with a more effective teacher leadership concept which can embody the process of change. In a study on leadership, Bush & West-Burnham (1995) suggest that leadership should involve the following: creativity, problem solving, vision, a value-driven strategic view of the nature, clear decision-making, sensitivity, interpersonal and communication skills and delegation and improvement.

The concept of leadership is naturally defined differently by different researchers. Leither and Riehl (2011) have articulated leadership as a process of providing direction and exercising influence, while Hoerr (2005, p. 7) stated that "leadership is about relationship". Secondary schools will become ungovernable without middle managers. There are indispensable and effective in leading teachers towards quality teaching and learning. A Departmental Head's leadership can indirectly affect school improvement and student achievement (Muijs & Harris 2007). Departmental Heads are like a bridge between teachers and principals. Nevertheless, the current literature on Departmental Heads' leadership has some gap regarding the effect it has on teachers as educators, classroom leaders and individuals (Saleem et al., 2020).

There is also a shortage of literature on the effects of teacher leaders' self-efficacy and how interaction among themselves make them better leaders. A wealth of research has however been done on teacher leadership. Not everyone is born a leader, which therefore goes to say that some form of leadership training and development is needed for effective and efficient leadership. Every little is being done to prepare post level 1 educators for post level 2 (Departmental Head) positions. Most middle managers have confirmed to be using their predecessor leadership styles which they had been accustomed to over the years.

Furthermore, professional development makes Departmental Heads better leaders. This was supported by Bush & Glover (2005) who argued that the effort of the Department Head as teacher leader must be supported through the provision of appropriate professional development and support from colleagues and administration. Furthermore, a leader should be

a good listener. Talking is a repetition of what you already know while listening is learning (Spataro & Bloch, 2018). Listening is an art and mastering it will make one a great leader.

Van Deventer & Kruger (2003) assert that there are several assumptions that are generally held about quality leadership in a school. He states that an effective leader is one who enlists the support of all staff in creating and focusing on a mission that is shared, enables, and empowers the staff members to achieve quality teaching and learning; knows if he develops those closest to the process to manage the process, it would be cost effective. A leader takes note of and reaches for small things that can make a significant difference. Understanding leadership, therefore, is more about appreciating what perceived environment stage someone is in, than about learning actions and interaction patterns (Fairholm, 1998).

## 2.6 Roles and responsibilities of Departmental Heads

Departmental Heads must deal with teachers who challenge change and the highly autonomous professionals who resist collaborative efforts (Moore-Johnson & Donaldson, 2007). Such conditions give rise to ambiguity and complexity of the role and responsibility of the secondary school head. It is important to note that roles and responsibilities of Departmental Heads are not the same in a school as well as in a district. Each subject department in a school will be different; the same goes with each school. The roles and responsibilities of each department are partly determined by contextual factors such as background and beliefs, policy, pupils, school size, budget, and parent support as well as internal school factors like leadership style, aims and vision, communication, monitoring, and evaluation.

Several studies have been conducted on Departmental Heads' duties and responsibilities in secondary schools. The changing role of Departmental Heads was examined by Bennet et al. (2003) in the United Kingdom. With the Covid-19 pandemic and the rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution digitalisation, the role of Departmental Heads is getting dynamic. The finding was that Departmental leaders were against assigned duties of conducting classroom observations. Most departments resorted to just filling in observation forms without physical inspection. They preferred to rely on pupils' assessments, results analysis, and records. There was perceived conflict of roles which made Departmental Heads found in-between teachers and principals.

A South African study conducted by Ali & Both (2006) focused on determining the Departmental Head's role, their importance, and the effectiveness of contributing to school improvement in Gauteng at a public secondary school. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather the findings. The research revealed that Departmental Heads played a critical role in school improvement even though most of them lacked sound management and leadership skills. The challenges picked up ranged from lack of time to do their job, too much expectation from peers, overcrowding, teachers being improperly trained and heads of departments having no clear understanding of their expectations(source?). Tam (2010) recommends that Departmental heads should be developed regularly, according to their needs to be able to do their job more effectively.

As alluded above, the role and responsibility of Departmental Heads depends on the specific department and the nature of the school. The role and responsibilities of a Math and Science Departmental Head will differ slightly to that of a humanities, languages, and commerce Departmental Head. Nevertheless, the department of education set some guidelines of the roles and responsibilities. According to Personnel Administrative Measures on the Employment of Educators Act 76 (1998), the duties and responsibilities of the job are varied, depending on the approaches and needs of the school, and includes, but are not limited to, the following: teaching, extra and co-curricular, personnel and general or administrative. The aim of the job includes: to engage in class teaching, be responsible for effective functioning of the department and organise relevant/related extra-curricular activities to ensure that the subject, learning area or phase and the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner.

## 2.7 Departmental Head preparation for leadership of teaching and learning

How well Departmental Heads are prepared for leadership translates to quality teaching and learning in secondary schools (Bonser, 1992). Anecdotal evidence and empirical research suggest that in South Africa and other countries, teachers are promoted from post level 1 to Department Head positions based on their teaching experience and ability to market themselves during the interviews (Turner 2000).

From Turners' study and findings, all participating Departmental Heads who participated in his study, while they were still junior teachers idolised and adapted their then Departmental Head's leadership style and role conduct. Teachers who have produced very good subject pass

rates often get first preference when it comes to being promoted to Departmental Heads, despite the fact that subject knowledge and department management are two different things. A study conducted by Jaca in Tshwane South District reviewed that most teachers get promoted to the position of Department Head without proper training for their new role and responsibilities (Jaca, 2012). Departmental Heads react differently to these changes. The challenges experienced during the transition included lack of clarity, a lack of subject knowledge and management and leadership skills, heavy workloads, and time constraints, tension between management and leadership and teaching responsibilities, a resistance from teachers and inadequate support. A Departmental Head for commerce who specialised in accounting, for example, will have challenges in monitoring and controlling Business Studies and Economics. The same applies for a Life Science trained Departmental Head of Mathematics and Science in monitoring Physical Sciences and Mathematics.

## 2.8 Departmental Heads' communication with subordinates

Departmental Heads' ability to communicate with superiors and subordinates is a very important attribute for organisational success. The concept communication is a very simple and fundamentally basic term widely used in almost every faculty and field. The concept has been defined and used differently by various scholars and researchers. United Nations Education, Scientific and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) has defined communication as a dynamic process by which someone who has a purpose to accomplish tries to get others to be involved in doing something for achieving that purpose (Mundy, 1999). Ali (2021) on the other hand, defined it as a process of creating information and transmitting it; it is a psychosocial process that sets two individual and group into relationship (Antunes & Pinheiro, 2020). The important aspects common in both definitions are that it is a process, and that information is shared between or among groups.

Rawlins (2008) argues that effective leadership cannot function in its fullest capacity without the element of communication. The adoption of transparent internal communication demonstrates organisational leaders' genuine interest in maintaining or improving relationships with employees. Departmental Heads cannot run away from being a good and effective communicator (Niswati et al., 2019). The roles and responsibilities demand continuous briefing and interaction with subordinates. The Departmental Head should communicate what he/she means without leaving room for assumption. Effective communication with employees takes

effort, repetition, thoughtfulness and most importantly needs to come from the heart (Krantz, 2015).

According to Bottery (2003), It is vital to have a legitimate two-way trust to create self-worth and job satisfaction. This encourages a culture of trust and better communication between Departmental Heads and post level one teachers. Stella & Alesina (2010) further adds on the subject communication by explaining that Departmental Heads are responsible for the management of their departments in helping achieve the existence of the school. The Departmental Heads lead a team of teachers in delivering of the curriculum and to achieve this existence of the school, senior management believes that as head of department, one should have as much autonomy as possible, while operating with a collegiate structure. The responsibility of a Departmental Heads is to report to the senior management via link meetings and through a close working relationship with the deputy head responsible for the curriculum. The major thrust of the work of a Departmental Head is teaching and learning, curriculum delivery and development.

Departmental Heads in schools basically use oral and written types of communication to communicate with teachers in their departments (Sutiyatno, 2018). The Covid-19 pandemic and improving technology is also popularising video conference and virtual meetings via networks such as zoom and MS Team. Virtual meetings can be recorded for future reference in the same way physical meeting minutes can be recorded. After observation, test approval or analysis of results, the Department Head communicates his/her findings by way of writing a report with recommendations.

The Department of Education communicates with employee at various levels: national, provincial, district, circuit, and schools, through several means. Information that concerns curricular matters is usually dissipated from the top, national level, right down to the schools. It is in the school Departmental Head's capacity to ensure that curricular matters are communicated to the members of the department concerned.

The information will be communicated through meetings, where the Departmental Head explains and clarifies curricular matters. Handouts on matters under discussion can be handed out during the meeting. Usually written and oral communication goes concurrently. Often, these handouts need to be further clarified to ensure that staff members read and understand

the message. The meeting should be opened to facilitate open teacher participation on subject matters. In instances where discussion is not necessary, the Departmental Head simply sends a circular where members read and sign to confirm receipt of the update. Circulars can also be used to make subject members aware of the agenda of meetings to be held on a particular date (Bugallo-Rodríguez & Vega-Marcote, 2020). It is now becoming more common for Departmental Heads to send such communiques via departmental WhatsApp groups to minimise risk of the Covid-19 pandemic. The use of emails and virtual meetings with Zoom and MS Team is not only becoming popular and recommended by curriculum advisors and teachers, but also by school Departmental Heads and educators. The outbreak of Covid-19 and rapid digitalisation in the country is gradually changing the way of communication between Departmental Heads and subordinates.

Upward communication enables Departmental Heads to get suggestion and ideas from teachers (Fotheringham et al., 2022). Downward communication refers to the dissemination of information from those in higher positions to junior positions (Ocra, 2021). Oral, written and visual methods are used during the downward and upward communication at schools for informed decision-making and compliance among members. O'Reilly (1982) has shown that provision of good information enhances decision-making. He further notes that one of the hindrances in making good decisions is the lack of necessary communication. Departmental Heads use all formal channels possible to give specific directives about job-related tasks. Intentional or unintentional wrong approaches and choice of words during downward communication may be perceived as authoritarian or a dictatorship which can degenerate into lack of commitment among teachers. Norton (2008), in his paper submitted for Bureau of Educational Research Seminar, observed that poor communication accounts for 30% of strikes in schools. It causes a considerable amount of misunderstanding and anxiety and undue strain of relations between people and the school.

## 2.9 Departmental Heads' workload

Workload is task to be done by a person in a specified allocated time. According to Chughati & Perveen (2013), workload involves issues of leadership and management of time, number and length of meetings, calendar of directed time activities, planning requirements, written reports, class sizes, marking, lunch break entitlements, parents' evenings, and performance

management. Anything official that an educator or head teacher does during school hours, before or after school hours, and even during weekends and holidays for the purpose of improving teaching and learning is classified as workload. There is a wrong perception among the public that workload in education is the only the time educators spend in the classroom. The South African DoE defines the workload of a public educator as the engagement in class teaching, including the academic, administration, educational, and disciplinary aspects of teaching and organising extra co-curricular activity, to ensure that education of the learner is promoted in a proper manner (DoE, 2012).

Workload is a broad term as defined by the DoE. Some aspects like teaching hours can easily be standardised while most such as administration and disciplinary issues are difficult because they depend on several factors such as school culture and nature of the learners. Workload pressures on Departmental Heads is also attributed to high expectations from the top management. Communities where parents actively take part in learner welfare generally have less disciplinary challenges as compared to communities with uncooperative parents. Schools with well trained and competent educators will lessen the workload of Departmental Heads. The common reasons for Departmental Heads' heavy workload are administration issues, behaviour monitoring, data tracking, ever changing curriculum specifications, planning and meetings, as well as marking and assessment.

Overloaded Departmental Heads will not be able to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Johari et al., (2019) conducted research to establish the link between workload and effective leadership. The research findings revealed that workload has an important influence on leadership effectiveness. If educators get overloaded, they tend to get demotivated, hence affecting their performance. In a study conducted by Mophosho (2014) using mixed methods, 100 participants responded to a questionnaire which aimed at investigating the motivation and job satisfaction of teachers in KwaZulu-Natal South Africa. The findings revealed that the teachers were unhappy with their workloads and the multiple roles they played in schools.

## 2.10 Theoretical framework

The main theory that this study is based on is transformational leadership. Among the many literatures of leadership models, the researcher will explain why transformation leadership has been chosen. Exploring this model helped the researcher to comprehend, in depth, the impact

of Heads of Department on quality teaching and learning in three secondary schools within the Pinetown district.

**2.10.1 *Transformational Leadership Theory – James Burns (1978)***

A persons' leadership style involves some combination of task behaviour and relationship behaviour. The two types of behaviour, which are central to the idea of leadership style, are defined as follows: a) task behaviour – the extent to which leaders are likely to organise and define the roles of the members of their group, and b) relationship behaviour – an extent to which leaders are likely to maintain personal relationships between themselves and members of their group (Leo & Bruno, 2008). Transformational leadership is one of the many distinguished leadership styles developed that plays a vital role in ensuring quality teaching and learning.

James Burns (1978) first introduced the concept of transformational leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders, however the use of this term has extended into school management. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. In 1985, researcher Bernard Bass further expanded the concept of transformational leadership by looking at how to measure its success. The extent to which the followers want to be part of the leadership defines transformation leadership (Levine et al., 2010). The extent to which a leader is transformational is measured first in terms of his influence on the followers. The leadership style is usually associated with servant leadership philosophy. Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi are typical examples of leaders who subscribed to this philosophy.

The transformational leadership style basically entails inspiring and motivating fellow members as you walk together in the journey. Every member's view is valued as change is embraced during the execution of the same team-specific vision. The leader must effectively bridge the followers' sense of identity to that of the assignment and the entire organisation leader must conduct himself in a way that can be viewed as being a role model and setting the standards and parameters for the project.

Bass (1995) reiterates that leaders strive to change their followers' personal values to go beyond their self-interest and achieve the organisation's goal. Departmental Heads that adopt this approach do not only manage school but are also agents of change. Aitken also emphasised

that "educational leaders should see themselves as educational leaders who are capable of enabling other team members to acquire and exercise the leadership skills" Aitken (1998, p. 123). The morale, spirit of oneness and intrinsic motivation is uplifted to the extent that the followers get developed to become future leaders themselves. According to Bass (1995), expectations of transformational leadership include acting with integrity and fairness, setting clear goals for individual and the team, encouraging others, providing independent support and recognition, raising the morale and motivation of others, steering individuals away from their self-interest and towards selflessness and inspiring others to strive for the improbable.

Bass along with his colleague, Avolio, developed and refined the theory by coming up with the four main components: Idealised Influence, Intellectual Stimulation, Inspirational Motivation, and Individualised Motivation.

**(i) Idealised Influence**

Transformational leaders command great respect and control of leadership from their subordinates. This basically refers to the extent to which leaders exert their influence subconsciously or consciously within their organisation. They are role models who create an enabling environment to achieve clear common vision (Kirkman et al., 2009). The sense of belonging atmosphere becomes a strong unifying factor in the long run (Walker & Greene, 2009). Furthermore, Brett et al. (2006) stated that the sense of belonging plays a role to help in the attainment of the goals. A better approach is to guide your team, but to also allow them to solve the problem on their own.

**(ii) Intellectual Stimulation**

It defines the extent to which the leadership style deviates from the norms. Assumptions are challenged as followers take risks their ideas to brought to the test. According to Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010), transformational leadership requires decision-making that works towards the greater good. You need to be a mentor of sorts and lead by example. A diverse and open-minded environment is created which enables and encourages members of the team to freely bring forth new ideas or suggestions (Tjosvold, 2008).

**(iii) Inspirational Motivation**

According to Bass & Avolio (1993), inspirational motivation is the degree to which a leader articulates an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations. The leader together with the followers set high standards and all members have a sense of ownership. A vision must be clearly defined and a roadmap well-crafted to get there. They are free to communicate their expectations to subordinates as a way of motivating to be on board. Through motivational techniques, transformational leadership play a pivotal role in improving teacher and learner performance.

**(iv) Individualised Consideration**

The leader provides personal attention, which is focused to the followers, building a progressive relationship with each member of the team (Zuberbühler et al., 2012). It is important for leaders like Departmental Heads to realise that subordinates are different and so is what motivates them in the organisation. A good leader knows every member and should patiently listen to their concerns. Individualised consideration basically is the extent to which a leader is concerned with followers matters (Rudolph, Murphy, & Zacher, 2020). He/she is a team coach and mentor. Over and above this, a leader should be a good listener who identifies and develop talent and skills and inspire team members to achieve more.

The outbreak of Covid-19 and rise in digital technology further brought some changes and challenges that necessitate in-depth exploration of effective leadership models which usher in quality teaching and learning in secondary schools. Transformational Leadership theory among all the existing theories sees Departmental Heads as transformational leaders that initiate change, inspire, and motivate their subordinates while building commitment to accomplishing organisational objectives (Lulee, 2011). It is important for education leaders to lead the organisation not based on a give and take relationship, but on the leaders' personality, traits, intelligence, and ability to make a change through being the moral exemplars of working toward the good of the team or organisation as well as constantly committing to shared vision and goals (Bakti, Rizal, & Sri Hartono, 2022). Transformational leadership relies among other attributes on charisma while leaders also get guided by inspiration and motivation on their followers.

## 2.11 Some studies related to transformational leadership

Over the years, several studies have been conducted on transformation leadership in organisation including secondary schools. The effectiveness of transformational leadership has been examined in many theoretical and empirical research, which suggests that it enhances and affects members' task performance and cultivates good behaviour (Chun et al., 2016). Self-efficacy and leader-member exchange are two outstanding benefits singled out from the research findings.

In Britain, Bennett et al., 2003) investigated the complexity of Departmental Heads' roles and responsibilities in their quest for quality teaching and learning. Twenty subject leaders were interviewed, and their responses indicated some degree of frustration from undue expectations such as being expected to influence practice by being exemplary. Departmental Heads had to ensure that teaching and learning effectively took place under any circumstance. Chairing of meetings, orientating and advising teachers, motivating teachers as well as attending department courses added to their expectations. The study indicated that Departmental Heads were viewed as monitors who were expected to observe, monitor, approve, evaluation and recommend remedial work on analysed findings.

Tam (2015) finds a relationship between transformational leadership and school culture. Sharing of duties and responsibilities between Departmental Heads and their followers increase the success of school culture which translate to quality learning and teaching. This strong relationship activated dedication among the team members. A study conducted in Tanzania by Nguni et al. (2006) shows that value dedication was more influenced by transformational factors whereas loyalty to continue was more influenced by transaction leadership factors. In the context of South African schools, Mafora (2013) conceives of the goals of transformation as increased access, democratised structures, and process, redressing past inequalities and inequities, and improved efficiency. These goals should be pursued and realised in the realm of teaching and learning, governance and management, teacher development and support, and social relations.

**2.12 Conclusion**

There are several studies surrounding transformational leadership on quality teaching and learning in secondary schools, much of it focused more on principals' transformational leadership with very little concern on Departmental Heads as a standing and effective source for leadership. Most of these studies did not do enough justice on how Departmental Heads' input on instruction, curriculum and assessment can transform the quality of education in secondary school. It is considering this that the researcher opted to focus on Departmental Heads' impact on teachers' professional growth and learner achievement as a vital source in enhancing quality teaching and learning.

**2.13 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented and examined key concepts which are related to this study; a discussion of the theory relevant to the phenomenon under investigation was provided along with an engagement with the theoretical frameworks, Transformational Leadership. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology approaches employed in the study.

## CHAPTER THREE
## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

In Chapter two, the review of relevant literature and theoretical framework were presented in line with the role of secondary school Departmental Heads as leaders of learning. In this chapter, the research design and methodology are presented. The chapter begins by explaining the research paradigm within which this study is located. It then explains the research approach followed by the research design that will be used to understand the role, experiences, and challenges of Departmental Heads, and the support structure involved when solving problems. The chapter also discusses sampling how data will be generated, the data analysis procedure, ethical issues and issues of trustworthiness as guided by Lincoln & Guba (1985). Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary.

### 3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm can be defined as a belief system or world view which leads the investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This research is best suited within the interpretivism paradigm. Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 36) view the Interpretivist approach as researching the intention of understanding "the world of human experience". The assumption of this paradigm is that the researcher and the studied phenomenon are interactively linked to reveal multiple realities. This paradigm aims to understand human beings, how they understand the world around them and make meaning of particular actions. It is more about people and what meaning they attach to those experiences (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Furthermore, Mackenzie & Knipe (2006), Thanh and Thanh (2015) and Wahyuni (2012) also maintain that the interpretivist paradigm permits for reality to be discovered through participants and allows the researcher to interpret the world through the perceptions and experiences of participants' views and experiences.

Since the aim of the study was to explore the role of Departmental Heads in enhancing quality teaching and learning in secondary schools, the interpretivist paradigm allowed for the researcher to get first-hand experience from the Departmental Heads who could share their experiences through dialogue (Yanow, 2017). Furthermore, the study is in keeping with an

interpretivist paradigm as it meant to explore how Departmental Heads view their roles, allowing the researcher to understand their realities.

## 3.3 Research Design

A research design is a plan which guides an arrangement of the conditions for data collection and data analysis in a way which aims to combine these procedures with the research purpose (Sellitz, Jahoda, Deutsch, & Cook, 1965). However, Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006) views the research design as plans that are used to generate data with an aim to understand the research phenomena. The participants chosen for the study provided responses to the phenomena being researched.

The interpretivist researcher depends more on the interpretations of the situation which is being studied (Creswell et al., 2006). This study followed the qualitative research approach; this type of research refers to the inquiry in which the researcher generates data through interacting with selected participants in their situations (Cameron, 2009). Qualitative research is concerned with understanding participants' perspectives of the phenomenon. Participants who are Departmental Heads will be interviewed to understand their experiences and find out which challenges they encounter in their Departmental Head position. In using the qualitative approach to conduct my research, my aim was to also understand the phenomena itself through acquiring information from people and their experiences where they work.

According to Bunniss and Kelly (2010), a case study is often used in qualitative research in which the study is supported, and the researcher had chosen it as a methodology to get to know the views of my participants when it comes to their experiences as Departmental Heads in secondary schools. Case studies are in-depth, and they aim to describe what circumstances are like and take the reality of participants into consideration (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, a case study branches from looking at certainties from the participants' points of view (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002; Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Yin, 2003). In this study, the aim was to discuss, in detail using words, Departmental Heads' experiences and the challenges that they come across and how they address challenges. A case study is effective as a research methodology as it assists in the interpretation of the phenomenon (Rule & John, 2015).

**3.4 Data generation methods**

Two methods of generating data were used in this study, namely: semi-structured interview and documents review. These are discussed below:

**3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews**

An interview is a conversation between the researcher and the participant. Nevertheless, it is very different from an average conversation in that the researcher is the person who lays down the schedule and asks the questions. It is a structured and focused conversation where the researcher has in mind particular information that he or she wants from the respondent and has designed questions to be answered (Bertram & Christiansen 2014). This study used interviews as a primary data generation strategy to make sure the relevant information was collected from the Departmental Heads. The semi-structured interview was helpful in terms of getting the participants to share their experiences, understanding what the participant values and does not value and exploring the Departmental Heads' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes.

Interviewing the participants was a useful data generation method as it allowed the researcher to ask probing and clarifying questions, then discussing the participants' responses to obtain relevant data for this study. Interpretivist research uses the interview process in working towards its aim of discovering and describing people's insights, also understandings that might be unique to them, interviewing is a useful method, because it allows the researcher to ask probing and clarifying questions, and to talk about the research participants' understandings with them (Bertram & Christiansen 2014). An interview guide was used to generate data. Questions related to the research questions were asked and allowed for the respondent to speak more freely and openly about the topic. This assisted with gathering honest and true data.

**3.4.2 Documents review**

According to Bowen (2009), the use of documents as a data gathering technique allows the scholar to focus on all types of written statements that may shed light on the phenomenon being investigated. Documents provide significant information which is applied in analysis. They allow one to view the written communications that may put clarity on the topic under study

(Nixon et al., 2017), which in this study were the communications of Departmental Heads from three secondary schools.

Written information sources contain any document that is connected to the research investigation. In this study, documents such as Departmental Heads' performance appraisals and minutes for staff development meetings were requested from participants. The purpose of examining document sources is to match the information obtained from the interviews which have been conducted to obtain the relevant information for this study, the documents provide a background and context, additional questions to be asked, additional data, a way of tracking change and development, and verification of findings. from other data sources (Bowen, 2009). Moreover, documents may be the most effective means of gathering data when events can no longer be observed or when informants have forgotten the details.

## 3.5 Research Sampling

Sampling is when the researcher decides which people to include as part of the study, and which settings, behaviours and events will be part of the study. The researcher decides how many individuals, groups or objects will be observed and what they need to know about the participants chosen for the study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

All Departmental Heads are selected intentionally because they are the leaders of learning in various subjects, therefore the study adopted a purposeful sampling method. Cresswell and Plano Clark (2011) view purposeful sampling as a way which contains classifying and deciding on individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced in a phenomenon of interest; purposeful sampling also involves access to key informants in the field who can help in identifying information. When generating data for this research, purposeful sampling was chosen focusing on six Departmental Heads in three secondary schools within the Pinetown district. The six Departmental Heads were selected because they were deemed relevant to provide suitable, sufficient, and relevant information as they are part of the studied phenomenon. They were selected from three secondary schools for the purpose of getting different perspectives and to avoid getting all six of them from a single school as this would have somehow provided similar experiences from the Departmental Heads.

## 3.6 Data analysis procedure

The method used in the analysis of data is content analysis which refers to studying documents and the communicated information from the participants, evaluating texts and all the qualitative data that was gathered using data generating methods such as semi-structured interviews for each of the participants, using open ended questions.

Data gathered for this study is analysed through content analysis. Preparation for data analysis interview data must be prepared for content analysis. This involves the transitioning into text and the transcripts must be transferred to the computer (Lewins & Silver, 2007). When auditing the audiotape for transcription, it is very important to transcribe the tape exactly word-for-word from the tape and not paraphrased. Recognising information that may compromise the privacy of the participants and/or those to whom they refer during the interview can be removed at this time to maintain confidentiality (Morse & Field, 1995).

## 3.7 Ethical Issues

Cohen et al. (2011, p. 85) defines ethics as "a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others." This highlights the importance of protecting the rights of the participants.  The ethical clearance certificate was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, proceeding to receiving permission by the KZN Department of Education to carry out the study in the three secondary schools. The researcher is ethically obliged to ensure participants' privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and acceptance of replies and opinions.

To fulfil all the ethical issues required, the ethical clearance certificate was be obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Participants' privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, and acceptance of responses was taken into consideration and communicated with participants. The researcher acquired informed consent from the principals of the schools. Informed consent was also acquired from the Departmental Heads, who were informed of their rights to privacy. They were informed that their names will not be published and that their identity will not be endangered. This was done by using false names or pseudonyms. Furthermore, the participants were informed by the researcher that their involvement must be voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time and at any phase if they wished to do so.

The principle of non-maleficence was applied to seek consent and ensuring safety towards participants. (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Participants were ensured that by contributing towards the study, no harm would be caused towards them. Non-maleficence means "do no harm". The research should do no harm to the research participants or to any other people. Researchers need to think about whether their study will do any physical, emotional, social, or other harm to any person. Often, participants could be negatively affected if personal information about them was made public although some participants within the critical paradigm feel the opposite. Therefore, participants need to know how the information will be made public (Bertram & Christiansen 2014). This generally means that all participants need to be assured of the confidentiality of the information supplied by them. No possible harm was inflicted on them because of unethical behaviour and that all will be done ethically and no remuneration to be forwarded to participants (Beauchamp, 2008).

The participants were informed that they will not be remunerated or paid for participating in this research study and that the study is directly beneficial to them. The study could be beneficial to Departmental Heads of departments working in similar contexts such as secondary schools. It is rare for researchers to undertake research if they do not think it will lead to positive change, even if only in the long term. Sometimes the benefits to the research participants are less obvious or non-existing. Therefore, the researcher had to consider if some changes could be made that would increase the beneficence of the study (Bertram, Carol, & Christiansen 2014).

### 3.8 Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness or rigor of a study states that the level of confidence in data collected, the interpretation and methods are used to confirm the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). For the study to be considered worthy by readers of research, trustworthiness must be ensured. The necessary procedure needs to be followed during the process of gathering data for the study to strengthen the research when it comes to trustworthiness. To enhance trustworthiness in qualitative research the following four issues were considered: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Confirmability** – confirmability is the degree to which the findings of a study are created and supported by the data generated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The findings are supported by data

that is generated, for example, interviews and literature used. Since this research is supported by an interpretivist paradigm, data collection methods and analysis methods must be clarified to certify their effectiveness. This ensured that the findings were generated from the participants' point of view and not the researchers.

**Transferability –** transferability discusses the level to which the results of one study can be applied in other situations (Shenton, 2004). The researcher must be able to demonstrate that the research findings will be applicable to other contexts which, in this case, can mean similar situations or similar contexts of Departmental Heads in secondary schools. To ensure transferability, Departmental Heads from the three different secondary schools were involved in the study. If findings point to a similar direction, then the findings can be shifted to similar contexts, in this case, data can be transferred to other schools. Additionally, Lincoln & Guba (as cited in Krefting, 1991) mention that it is more the duty of the person wanting to transfer the findings to another situation or people than that of the researcher of the original study.

**Dependability** – "Dependability refers to the stability of the data over time and over the conditions of the study" (Polit & Bec, 2014, p. 1). Dependability in this study is ensured by findings that are consistent and repeatable. To attend to issues of dependability in the study, two data generation methods were employed. Semi-structured interviews and documents review were used as data generation methods in this study. Departmental Heads as sources of data were used to enhance the dependability of the study. Readers depend on the research findings because the study was conducted in three secondary schools. Another way to ensure dependability is to do an audit trail (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Data collection analysis methods are made transparent and will be critically discussed so that the researcher can look for places of misrepresentation and unfairness.

### 3.9 Chapter Summary

Chapter three presented the research design and methodology used in the study. Data generation methods were discussed, going into detail about how data will be generated from the chosen participants' interviews. The research paradigm and design were explained in detail to understand what type of design the study will follow. Sampling was also discussed to clarify how participants were chosen to gather data for this research. This chapter then went on to discuss ethical issues and trustworthiness in the process of conducting the study.

# CHAPTER FOUR
# DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

## 4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a discussion on the research design and methodology of the study. The chapter begins with a presentation of brief profiles of the participants, which includes information about schools in which they serve as Departmental Heads, managing and leading PL1 teachers within their departments. Following this, the data is discussed. The data discussion is presented under four broad categories: Departmental Heads' experiences in the secondary school environment, challenges experienced by Departmental Heads as they manage PL1 teachers, Departmental Heads' responses to challenges; and the support required by Departmental Heads.

## 4.2 Profiling of participants and schools

The study reported in this dissertation was conducted in three secondary schools all situated in a township area. These schools are given pseudonyms to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The first school is named Siphamandla Secondary, the second school is named Ukuthula Secondary, and the third school is named Intokozo Secondary. Two Departmental Heads were selected from each school. Information in terms of the participants in each school is tabulated below. After the table, I present profiles of participants which include a brief description about their schools.

### Table 4.1 List of participants

| Name of the school | Participant | Gender | Department |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Siphamandla Secondary School** | Mrs Zulu | Female | Languages (English and isiZulu) |
| | Miss Mkhize | Female | Business Studies and Commerce |
| | Mr Zondi | Male | Humanities |

| Ukuthula Secondary School | Mrs Mchunu | Female | Science and Mathematics |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intokozo Secondary School | Mr Skhakhane | Male | Business Studies and Commerce |
| | Mrs Ngema | Female | Science and Mathematics |

### 4.2.1 *Mrs Zulu*

The first participant is named Mrs Zulu; she is between 55-60 years old. She is a Departmental Head for the Languages department at Siphamandla Secondary school which is a school situated in a township under the Pinetown District. The school enrolment is approximately 1800 learners. Mrs Zulu is responsible for two subjects in her department, namely IsiZulu and English. She teaches English First Additional Language. Mrs Zulu has thirty-four years overall teaching experience. She holds the Baccallaureus Paedonomiae qualification (equivalent to a four-year university degree), a two-year Post Graduate Qualification, Bachelor of Education, and a Post Graduate Qualification in Adult Basic Education and Training. In her interview, she mentioned that she strives to provide quality education to learners attending at Siphamandla secondary school and her department has, over the years, obtained a 100% pass rate in matric examinations.

### 4.2.2 *Miss Mkhize*

The second participant is named Miss Mkhize who is between 30-35 years old. She is a Departmental Head for the Business, Commerce and Management department at Siphamandla Secondary School situated in a Township under the Pinetown District. The school enrolment is approximately 1800 learners. Miss Mkhize teaches Business Studies and Accounting. Miss Mkhize has been working as a Departmental Heads for three years and has eleven years of teaching experience. She is currently pursuing her master's degree. In her interview, she mentioned that she works hard at making sure that the teachers she leads are enthusiastic about their work and deliver quality education to learners as she also strives to produce the best grade 12 results at the end of each academic year. Her department has, over the years, aimed to obtain a 100% pass rate in matric examinations.

### 4.2.3 *Mr Zondi*

The third participant is named Mr Zondi; he is between 35-40 years old. He is a Departmental Head for the Humanities department at Ukuthula Secondary which is a school situated in a township area under the Pinetown District. The school enrolment is approximately 1500 learners. Mr Zondi has been working as a Departmental Head for four years and has thirteen years of teaching experience. He teaches Life Orientation and holds a Bachelor of Education (four-year) degree. Mr Zondi is a Departmental Head for the Humanities department. In his interview, he mentioned that he always ensures that his teachers are assisted in every way possible if they require any assistance regarding their work so that they produce quality education. His department has, over the years, aimed to obtain a 100% pass rate in matric examinations.

### 4.2.4 *Mrs Mchunu*

The fourth participant is named Mrs Mchunu, is between 50-55 years old. She is a Departmental Head for Mathematics and Science at Ukuthula secondary school which is a school situated in a township area under the Pinetown District. The enrolment of the school is approximately 1500 learners. Mrs Mchunu has been working as a Departmental Head for eleven years and has twenty-one years overall teaching experience. She teaches Life Sciences and holds a four-year Bachelor of Education degree. In her interview, Mrs Mchunu mentioned that she aims to produce quality teaching and learning as she always encourages her teachers to provide extra support for Science and Mathematics learners as these are the most challenging subjects for learners at Ukuthula Secondary school. Her department has, over the years, aimed to obtain a 100% pass rate in matric examinations.

### 4.2.5 *Mr Skhakhane*

The fifth participant is named Mr Skhakhane; he is between 55-60 years old. He is a Departmental Head for the Business, Commerce and Management department at Intokozo Secondary School which is situated in a township under the Pinetown District. The enrolment of the school is approximately 1200 learners. Mr Skhakhane has been working as a Departmental Head for Ukuthula Secondary for seventeen years and has twenty-four years overall teaching experience. Mr Skhakhane teaches Economics and Accounting and holds a

four-year Bachelor of Education degree. In his interview, he mentioned that he aims to achieve the best for his school as he works very hard to monitor curriculum delivery at Intokozo Secondary to ensure that his teachers produce quality learners with good academic performance. He added that during his time at the school, his department has aimed to obtain a 100% pass rate in Matric examinations.

### 4.2.6 *Mrs Ngema*

The sixth participant is named Mrs Ngema who is between 45-50 years old. She is a Departmental Head for Science and Mathematics at Intokozo Secondary which is situated in a township under the Pinetown District. The school has approximately 1200 learners. Mrs Ngema has been working as a Departmental Head for four years and has sixteen years overall teaching experience. Mrs Ngema teaches Life Sciences. She holds a Secondary Teacher's Diploma in Zoology, a certificate in Adults Basic Education and Training, Advanced Certificate in Education, and a Bachelor of Education Honour's degree specialisation in Management. In her interview, she mentioned that she strives to produce quality results for Intokozo Secondary school as she always encourages her department to ensure that they have a plan in place to assist Science and Mathematics learners with the relevant extra classes to enhance their performance. Her department has aimed to obtain a 100% pass rate in Matric examinations.

### 4.3. Data Presentation and Discussion

The findings of this study are presented under four categories in order to answer the research questions of the study. Under each category, themes are discussed with evidence drawn from participants' interviews and documents review. The table below shows the four categories and the themes; following this, the themes are presented

**Table 4.2 Themes and sub-themes**

| Categories | Themes |
|---|---|
| 4.3.1   Departmental Heads' experiences in the secondary school environment | a)  Capitalising on one-on-one meetings post- |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | moderation of teacher files and providing assistance in the areas requiring improvement.<br>b) Continuous monitoring of teachers' and learners' classroom attendance<br>c) Making use of annual teaching plans to track teaching and learning<br>d) Organising internal workshops to continuously empower teachers |
| 4.3.2 | Challenges experienced by Departmental Heads as they manage PL1 Teachers | a) Leading teachers with negative attitudes<br>b) Leading demotivated teachers |
| 4.3.3 | Departmental Heads' responses to challenges | a) Departmental Heads' goals towards achieving maximum curriculum coverage |
| 4.3.4 | Support required by Departmental Heads. | a) Principal's support as enablers<br>b) Departmental Heads' benefit from workshops |

**4.3.1 Departmental Heads' experiences in the secondary school environment**

When the participants were interviewed, they were asked to share experiences they encounter in executing their roles as Departmental Heads in secondary schools. Three experiences emerged from data, namely: capitalising on one-on-one meetings post moderation of teacher files, continuous monitoring of teachers and learners' classroom attendance, making use of the ATP to track the teaching and learning process and how they organise workshops to empower their teachers. These experiences are presented below:

**a) Capitalising on one-on-one meetings post-moderation of teacher files and providing assistance in the areas requiring improvement.**

The participants identified one-on-one meetings as a significant strategy to provide feedback to teachers under their leadership. These participants mentioned that they evaluate teachers' work regularly and following the work evaluation, they meet teachers independently. Direct feedback is provided to the teacher through the one-on-one meetings. In these meetings, they communicate and develop their teachers. The participating Departmental Heads also mentioned that the one-on-one meetings help them monitor and understand teachers' experiences in classrooms. This is what Miss Mkhize had to say about conducting the meetings with his teachers:

> *I conduct one-on-one meetings to allow my teachers to open up about the areas where they need help. Through supportive conversations with teachers, I am able to listen to the teachers' subject needs after moderating the teachers' work including his/her learners' work. I look at teachers' files and learners' exercise books. At least knowing that a teacher can go back to class to implement the new strategies discussed during the one-on-one meeting gives me some relief (Miss Mkhize).*

Miss Mkhize allows her teachers to open up during one-on-one meetings for her to be able to support them. By listening to them and providing solutions, effective strategies can be brainstormed for implementation in the classroom. Mrs Zondi shares a similar view as Miss Mkhize, mentioning that she provides support to her teachers during the one-on-one meetings post-moderation, she explains:

> *I provide support where it is needed in my department after moderating a teachers' file and learners' exercise books. If I learn that a teacher needs assistance with certain areas of their work, I organise a one-on-one meeting with them to assist with the problem area(s) experienced on the subject (Mr Zondi).*

Mrs Zulu stated that one-on-one meetings are a way of better communicating subject goals with the teacher involved and that they assist in monitoring teaching and learning. She shared the following regarding this:

> *I conduct one-on-one meetings after moderating the work of a teacher; these meetings are a great channel of communicating with teachers, they also provide you as a Departmental Head with what the teacher faces in the classroom (Mrs Zulu).*

Mrs Mchunu of Ukuthula Secondary school also explains how she uses one-on-one meetings. She focuses on the areas of improvement and concerns before verbally reporting to the subject advisor if necessary to do so. This is what Mrs Mchunu had to say:

> *I arrange one-on-one meetings to discuss the areas of improvement of the teacher especially if there were any identified concerns based on the findings after moderating their work using the teacher's file and the learner's written work. The purpose for this is to be able to verbally report back to the subject advisor if required to report about the findings of the work that has been monitored (Mrs Mchunu).*

Holding one-on-one meetings appears to be one of the effective methods that Departmental Heads use to improve teaching and learning. It helps them communicate with teachers and go through the challenges that they encounter to find solutions. Naicker et al. (2013) argues for a strong focus on improving the quality of teachers to ensure quality teaching and learning. Therefore, having meetings and discussing what is happening during teaching and learning could be a solution to improve the process. This is because problems are shared, and more ideas can assist teachers to have a better understanding of how to arrive at solutions.

Additionally, in terms of the use of power and influence, Departmental Heads achieve departmental goals if the power and authority are widely shared (Kotter, 1985). Therefore, if Departmental Heads do not hold these one-on-one meetings to help develop their teachers, they might end up having to do most of the work themselves. Departmental Heads use one-on-one meetings to communicate what needs to be done, and if a teacher is experiencing work-related challenges, the Departmental Head will want to help the teacher in ensuring the challenge is attended to by finding necessary solutions.

According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is a process where leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. The Departmental Heads in this study seem to motivate teachers towards change in the process of teaching and learning by making sure that new input is added to the teachers' practices, and that challenges observed are solved for the betterment of teaching and learning in future. This leadership practice reflects characteristics of transformational leadership.

**b) Continuous monitoring of teachers' and learners' classroom attendance**

The participating Departmental Heads identified the attendance register as a key tool that best helps them with monitoring classroom attendance. The classroom attendance register enables them to see if teachers honour their teaching periods daily. The Departmental Heads shared that they check the time a teacher goes to the classroom and the time at which they leave the classroom, to ensure that learners are given proper attention with no time being misused during lessons. The following is what Mr Skhakhane shared regarding the monitoring of teachers' and learners' classroom attendance in her department:

> *To monitor the classroom attendance, I make sure to monitor teaching and learning everyday using the school timetable to check that every educator goes to class during their respective period, and I also have a monitoring tool which works as a supervisor on what is needed for daily practices (Mr Skhakhane).*

Emerging from this as part of Departmental Heads' experiences is that they share similar sentiments when it comes to monitoring of teachers' and learners' attendance and agree that registers must be completed and checked every day. Mrs Ngema added to this by stating that she checks if teachers honour the teaching timetable daily when they are at work. She does not only get satisfaction from a teacher being present at work, but she also has to check if they go to class. The following is what she shared:

> *I monitor the class registers to see if the learners are attending the classes every day and I also monitor whether teachers do honour their periods every day to make sure that teaching and learning does happen effectively. During periods I continue to monitor the coming in time of the teacher to know when the lesson begins and to track if it begins on time. I check the number of activities given to learners daily (Mrs Ngema).*

Mrs Zulu of Siphamandla Secondary also shared similar sentiments. Both Mrs Ngema and Miss Zulu shared in their interviews that the work done in the classroom and the curriculum coverage serves as evidence of teacher and learner attendance. The Departmental Head is, therefore, able to track the teaching and learning process. Below, Mrs Zulu explains how she monitors teachers' and learners' attendance within her department:

> *I mainly check the attendance using the class registers of learners and monitor if the teacher honours his or her periods by going to class during the time allocated to the period. Other things such as learner assessments and records of classwork done can serve as evidence of classroom attendance of the teacher as well as the child, which is why I also check the learners' exercise books every week (Mrs Zulu).*

The Departmental Heads seemingly do not only rely on class visits, but they also monitor class registers, and they check if teachers honour their teaching periods. This is done to ensure that they acquire the relevant information concerning classroom attendance. Some of the Departmental Heads mentioned in their interviews that subject meetings are held to discuss the curriculum coverage by teachers, and this serves as evidence that the teachers and learners have been present at school and that the process of teaching and learning is successfully monitored. In keeping with this notion, Bush, Bell & Middlewood (2019) and DuPlessis (2013) noted that monitoring of teaching and learning is regarded as a major leadership role in locating weaknesses within the process to enhance learner performance and instruction. From these findings, it can be understood that Departmental Heads play an important role in developing and maintaining quality in teaching and learning through monitoring of teachers' and learners' work.

### c) Making use of Annual Teaching Plans to track teaching and learning

Departmental Heads shared how and when they use the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) to monitor the teaching and learning process. They mentioned that they use the ATP along with learners' exercise books and teachers' files to find out if the teachers follow the guidance of the ATP, which has to be accompanied by lesson plans. Mrs Ngema shared the following regarding this:

> *I make sure to design a curriculum monitoring plan for each of the four terms of the academic year, monitor educator's files according to the subject under my department, check whether the educator does follow the ATP, monitor learners' exercise books and files to check if the work corresponds with* the ATP *(Mrs Ngema).*

Mrs Mchunu of Ukuthula Secondary school shares similar sentiments about the use of the ATP to track teaching and learning. She shared the following:

*Every day I check if the teacher goes to class to ensure that he/ she is working towards covering the curriculum as stipulated by the ATP, I then check learners' exercise books every term by comparing the Annual Teaching Plan to check the curriculum coverage (Mrs Mchunu).*

Mr Skhakhane adds that he also uses the ATP and requests his teachers to write dates on the ATP for him to evaluate the use of the ATP. Emerging from the data provided by the Departmental Heads is that it is an essential duty to use the ATP when dealing with curriculum monitoring as delivered by teachers to learners:

*I mostly use the ATP together with teachers' files and learners' exercise books to help me check if the teacher is using and following the ATP correctly and I request my teachers to input dates on the ATP as an indication that they are following the ATP. (Mr Skhakhane)*

The Departmental Heads from all the schools shared similar views. They referred to the learners' and teachers' work during the year to check if the ATP was being followed accordingly. According to the Employment of Educators Act 76 (1998), Departmental Heads monitor teaching and learning. It is important that they manage teachers as stipulated in their job descriptions as Departmental Heads and in doing this, they must make sure that the curriculum is being covered according to the ATP for each subject. Every teacher under the Departmental Head must monitor the ATP by checking if the curriculum is being covered according to the document for each subject and they ought to ensure that these are accompanied by lesson plans (Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998).

**d) Organising internal workshops to continuously empower teachers**

Departmental Heads discussed how they provide necessary support by assisting and empowering teachers through workshops. Departmental Heads went on to mention that they also provide workshops to novice teachers in their departments when they enter the teaching field. They make sure that during the monitoring of teachers' work, which includes checking the teachers' file and curriculum coverage using the ATP, they identify gaps. Following this,

workshops to develop teachers are arranged. This is what Miss Mkhize of Siphamandla Secondary had to say about organising internal workshops to empower her teachers:

*I like to do quality assurance on both learners' and teacher's work, I like providing guidance to my newly appointed educators in my department and run subject's developmental workshops for them to assist them starting out and answering any questions they might have about their position in the school and in the management and commerce department (Miss Mkhize).*

Mrs Zulu who is also from Siphamandla Secondary, leading the Languages department, shares a similar view about the development of teachers who belong in her department:

*Every time when there is a new educator joining the school and my department, I try to assist them in getting to know how everything works within the school and I conduct a workshop for them. For effective communication, I use different ways to communicate with the teachers such as the communicator's book, circulating the notice sheet and I do make use of WhatsApp to communicate with the teachers forming a group where we can all belong as a department and communicate. (Mrs Zulu)*

Mr Skhakhane of Intokozo Secondary, who heads the Commerce department, also shares similar views as Mrs Zulu and Miss Mkhize of Siphamandla Secondary. However, he adds that after developing teachers, a follow up on the effectiveness of these workshops needs to be done. He focuses on making sure that the development is effective. He expressed:

*As a Departmental Head I arrange subject developmental workshops and invite a person who is an expert in that subject to help develop my teacher/ teachers depending on who needs to be developed at that time. I also make sure to follow up on the effectiveness of such workshops because the aim here is to make sure that the teacher receives the help that they need in their challenging areas (Mr Skhakhane).*

According to Bush (2018), Departmental Heads are accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in schools because of the designation of the supervision duties given to them as per job specification. Mrs Ngema, on the other hand, acknowledges that she does not always have all the necessary answers for her teachers when they are experiencing challenges, which is why

she makes use of subject heads and senior teachers to assist when needed. She also invites them to share their expertise during workshops. The following is what she had to share:

> *I encourage subject meetings and make use of subject heads and senior teachers to assist other teachers where their knowledge could be useful. I also encourage team teaching, consult with other Departmental Heads as I cannot have all the solutions for all problems my department experiences and I make sure to make use of senior management (the Deputy and the Principal of the school) in making sure that subject workshops within the school are organised and that my teachers also attend to those workshops organised by the DoE, and we also check with the neighbouring schools (Mrs Ngema).*

If there is a challenge that teachers are experiencing and if there is a change that must be implemented at work, teachers are usually provided guidance through workshops. Badley (1992) acknowledges that workshops are not a guarantee that the change effected will work and they do not provide evidence that there will be any improvements, but that providing workshops is a positive step towards solving the problem. Rawlins (2009) argues that effective leadership cannot function at its greatest capacity without communication being a key factor. The adoption of transparent internal communication demonstrates organisational leaders' interest in maintaining or improving relationships with employees. Apart from developing certain skills for teachers, Departmental Heads also use workshops as a way to communicate subject needs. These workshops help them to portray effective leadership.

### 4.3.2 Challenges experienced by Departmental Heads in executing their role in secondary schools

Departmental Heads shared challenging experiences that they encountered while leading their departments. Two key challenges emerged from data, namely: leading teachers with negative attitudes and working with demotivated teachers. Below, I present these challenges independently:

**a) Leading teachers with negative attitudes**

Mrs Mchunu expressed that the teachers displaying a negative attitude are those who do not want to take instructions from their superiors, including Departmental Heads as well as the principal. They exhibit behaviours that disrupt the process of teaching and learning, such as insubordination. During my interview with Mrs Mchunu, she shared the following regarding leading teachers with negative attitudes in her school:

> *As a Departmental Head, you find that teachers will show you an attitude at times when they do not want to take instruction and will be very stubborn in doing what they are meant to do. Some teachers will just be absent from work if they do not want to do what they are told to do, and the absenteeism of teachers and learners becomes a problem and interrupts the teaching and learning process and the insubordination of teachers is always a problem (Mrs Mchunu).*

Miss Mkhize's view differs from that of Mrs Mchunu. She explained how the teachers in her department did not want to leave the staff room and were not eager to attend to their classes. She noted:

> *As a Departmental Head I find that I have to keep on reminding the colleagues in my department to attend classes when they are sitting in their staffroom, and they do not like it when I when I do this. Some will go to class on time whereas some will continue with their stubborn behaviour which causes me to constantly monitor they (Miss Mkhize).*

Mr Zondi shared that the teachers in his department behaved in similar ways. The teachers would leave the staff room later than they should, not getting to class on time. He explained:

> *A teacher will go to class 20 minutes late and you have to tell them to leave the staff room and go attend to the learners. Sometimes a teacher would submit an examination paper and memorandum on the day of that examination which shows lack of preparation on time (Mr Zondi).*

Departmental Heads face challenges that hinder the quality in teaching and learning. According to Marianne, Michael & Middlewood (2003), these challenges include dealing with

demotivated teachers and leading teachers with negative attitudes. When teachers are demotivated, they may be experiencing other problems such as a lack of resources (Bantwini, 2010), such as textbooks, classroom space, laboratory equipment, audio-visual equipment, internet, computers, and data for research purposes (Simpson et al., 2016). The lack of these valuable resources could lead to teachers performing poorly which may then result in an altering teachers' attitudes (Seobi & Wood, 2016). In their interviews, Departmental Heads mentioned that these challenges even led to absenteeism which is the most significant factor that affects the progress of teaching and learning. When resources are lacking, teachers are more likely to develop negative attitudes and resort to avoid class or their duties.

**b) Leading demotivated teachers**

There are many factors that cause teachers to be demotivated at work, such as overcrowded classrooms, work overload, poor working conditions, teaching subjects they did not specialise in (in other words, they do not have the necessary training), and poor communication skills. Mrs Mchunu discussed an imbalance occurring in her school. An example of this is where a teacher that teaches grade 12 as well as lower grades. She mentioned that some teachers tend to focus more on grade 12 and are demotivated when it comes to giving attention to the other grades. This is because grade 12 learners would require more attention and focus from a teacher. As a result, teachers show signs of demotivation by being absent from work. Some also refuse to help or give learners extra time when needed. The following is what Mrs Mchunu had to say about demotivated teachers:

> *The challenges that I experience is that there is an imbalance for quality of teaching and learning, educators are more focused on grades 12 compared to other grades, lack of commitment from educators to provide extra tuition for learners during extra time. Another challenge is that in most cases when an educator decides to be absent, he/she does not arrange the work that is supposed to be done by learners while the educator is absent (Mrs Mchunu).*

Mrs Zulu from the Languages department at Siphamandla Secondary has realised over the years that when a teacher is given one of the languages to teach without having specialised in Languages, these teachers lack passion and show signs of demotivation. Mrs Zulu mentioned that these signs include teachers' lesson plans not corresponding to the written work in the

learners' exercise books implying that teachers could be doing less work than they say they do. Mrs Zulu expressed:

> *Teachers will lag in their teaching plans, this leads to lesson plans not corresponding with the written work in the learner's exercise book, then teachers lack passion, when teachers from my department are reshuffled to help in other departments just because a teacher who was employed for that particular subject is not fit to teach the subject they were employed for and when people take Isizulu and English as easy subjects which can be taught by anyone even if they have not majored in those languages. In most cases such teachers fail dismally because they have no passion, and the marking is too much for them (Mrs Zulu).*

Mrs Ngema added how COVID-19 has had a negative impact on how teachers attend to their responsibilities and how they became demotivated because of this:

> *Some of the challenges that create demotivated teachers includes COVID – 19, learner absenteeism, not having enough books, non-completion of the ATP still because of the COVID – 19 Pandemic which has brought a gap in learner attendance because learners no longer attend school as they used to and learners not submitting their work on time, this interrupts the teaching and learning process and demotivates teachers (Mrs Ngema).*

The findings from the data provided by the Departmental Heads above involves many issues and challenges that teacher face which leads to demotivation. Participants mentioned that teachers who teach grades 12 together with other grades tend to be more motivated and focused on grade 12 learners and lose focus when it comes to the lower grades.

Participants added to this notion by stating that teachers are sometimes employed to teach subjects they did not major/qualify in, and this becomes a big disadvantage to the teacher because they are not motivated enough to give it their full attention as they lack the expertise.

Additionally, participants continued to touch on COVID-19 being another contributing factor when it comes to teacher demotivation being a challenge to the schools. Participants mentioned that because learners were not attending all the school days. This was due to learners being

separated to attend school in groups in order to adhere to social distancing which is a health regulation for schools. This is a challenge as teachers struggle to complete the curriculum as stipulated in the ATP of each subject. Furthermore, Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & van Rooyen (2009) support that Departmental Heads have a responsibility of setting up structures and systems that facilitate a positive learning environment so that quality in teaching and learning is improved, such a responsibility posse a challenge to Departmental Heads with teachers who are demotivated because they are the ones required to remedy the situation for the process of teaching and learning to proceed well.  According to Meshkat & Hassani's (2012), in order to reduce demotivation, teachers need to use and be equipped with suitable school facilities that support learning.

Tam (2015) talks about the relationship between transformational leadership and school culture, mentioning that duties and responsibilities between Departmental Heads and their followers increase the success of school culture which translates to quality learning and teaching. This strong relationship activated dedication among the team members. Departmental Heads should form a strong relationship and create a culture of understanding between themselves and their teachers.

### 4.3.3   Departmental Heads' responses to challenges

Departmental Heads go through challenges in their positions such as dealing with teachers with a negative attitude and they have ways in which they choose to respond to such challenges, below Departmental Heads talk about how they plan on achieving maximum curriculum coverage for their respective departments.

### a) Insisting on the achievement of maximum curriculum coverage

Curriculum coverage is of utmost importance for the Departmental Heads because it requires a lot of hard work from teachers and learners. Departmental Heads urge teachers to ensure that they cover the curriculum on time and as stipulated by the ATP. They also encourage learners to be at school every day for them to stay on the same page with their teachers. Furthermore, parents need to get involved in making sure that learners attend school every day. When interviewing Departmental Heads, the researcher asked them what their goals are in terms of curriculum coverage and how they plan to achieve them. In response to this, Departmental

Heads mentioned that they are firm, making sure they stick to what the curriculum states in terms of what needs to be done in class when making decisions regarding curriculum coverage, and that they come up with different strategies to help cover the curriculum such as breaking down submission dates, giving teachers time to sort out the documents needed for them to submit when monitoring the curriculum such as the file, the ATP, the learner file and exercise book.

> *I become firm when making decisions regarding the curriculum and when instructing the teachers about something, takes notes of everything happening in my department and hold meetings with an educator under my department if they are experiencing challenges regarding curriculum coverage to find out how I can assist them in fixing the challenge (Mrs Mchunu).*

Mr Skhakhane tries to make things easier for his teachers when it is time to submit their files and learners' exercise books, which is a representation of how the curriculum is being covered. When he checks teachers' files and learners' work, this encourages his teachers to make sure the work is done because if he does not check it, some teachers would pay less attention to their work which may result in not covering the curriculum at maximum capacity:

> *I breakdown submission dates to give teachers time to update file and learner's exercise books for submission also making sure that when they submit everything is in order and that the curriculum is being covered as per ATP for the subject (Mr Skhakhane).*

Mrs Ngema realised that if teacher absenteeism is high in her department, the curriculum will not be covered as it should be within the required time. Therefore, she focuses on making sure that when her teachers are absent from work, they leave class work to occupy learners during the time the teacher is away from school. Mrs Ngema also mentions in her interview that she gets parents involved in their child's behaviour at school, which includes absenteeism. If a child is always absent at school and in class, she calls meetings with parents to discuss learners can cover all the work they are required to for them to pass. Below is what she had to say about maximum coverage in her department:

> *I make sure to monitor absenteeism of teachers and letting them know that they must report early and fill in leave forms when they come back. I address the issue of*

*absenteeism leave as of the EEA which illustrates everything about an educator and absenteeism. Regarding the absenteeism of learners and them coming late to school, I apply disciplinary measures such as giving them extra work to do and inform parents about the learner's behaviour. I also see to it that I keep records in form of registers as evidence of learners who do not come to school and those who are late comers. I make sure that these registers are monitored daily, and reports are compiled every Friday. Regarding the involvement of parents, I organise parental meetings whereby I educate parents about their responsibility towards their children and school. As mentioned earlier that I specialise in management, so I apply conflict resolution steps and try to organise team building workshops to help teachers get along and minimise conflict. In the case of the shortage of apparatus the educators learn to improvise and use what the school has and try to teach in a way that will help learners see what is happening in the experiment (Mrs Ngema).*

Mrs Zulu adds on the issue of absenteeism being related to delivering the curriculum. He mentions that registers are marked to help curb the problem of learner absenteeism in her department. Mrs Zulu provided a relief timetable that she uses in the event of teacher absenteeism. Two teachers are allocated for each day and if one of the teachers is absent, the other must check on the others teachers' classes for learning to continue. The other teacher's duty from the Languages department is to step in to give learners the work their teacher left for them. The timetable is a 10-day cycle which begins again after 10 school days excluding weekends. The timetable only works on days when a certain languages teacher is absent from work, then another teacher will stand in for them.

**Table 4.3:  Reviewed Languages department timetable**
s

| PERIOD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| DAY 1 | NVM | PCN | SJM | TSM | PCM | Departmental   Meeting |
|       | STM | BMC | TEN | TRM | SBZ | Period |
| DAY2 | PCN | BMC | ETN | TAM | KPH | KAH |
|      | TRN | SJM | NTN | SGM | NYA | PCN |
| DAY3 | KGL | MNM | SIM | SJM | PNC | TRN |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | TAM | TAM | MNM | ETM | TRN | SBZ |
| DAY4 | SJM | ETN | SJM | TAM | MNM | PCN |
| | STM | SBZ | TAM | SJM | PCN | SJM |
| DAY5 | ETN | NYA | PCN | MNM | BMC | CLEANING |
| | BMC | RTN | KAH | NTN | KAH | |
| DAY6 | PCN | NTN | RTN | SBZ | TAM | KPH |
| | | | | | | SJM |
| DAY7 | STM | TAM | PCN | PCN | NTN | BMC |
| | TRN | KGL | BMC | TAM | MNM | KGL |
| DAY8 | PNC | AJM | SJM | SJM | NYA | TAM |
| | BMC | MNM | BVM | MNM | ETN | RTN |
| DAY9 | SGM | NTN | YNA | BNM | SGM | PCN |
| | TRN | SBZ | SBZ | KAH | KGL | SGM |
| DAY10 | KAH | PCN | KAH | ETN | SJM | CLEANING |
| | NTN | ETN | TAM | SGM | KAH | |

*For learner absenteeism we mark registers and involve parents to curb this habit, Photocopying is used for helping in the shortage of books, the relief timetable is used where a teacher is absent and another teacher who is available at work assists in that absent teacher's class and for all learners to submit work – we have resorted to conducting our continuous assessment tasks in class so that they all submit. (Mrs Zulu).*

Curriculum coverage requires both teachers and learners to be present at school for it to be effective, so that teachers deliver the curriculum as per the subject ATP. Departmental Heads mention absenteeism monitoring and keeping of registers for both learners and teachers to help them understand how teachers cover the curriculum. According to Nkabinde (2012), Departmental Heads should be well informed about curriculum developments and ensure that effective teaching is taking place. For the learners to receive quality in teaching and learning, it is important that effective teaching takes place through the way the educator delivers content and strategies that are used.

In the interviews, Departmental Heads discussed the strategies they developed to ensure maximum curriculum coverage. Moreover, they stressed that it is important to monitor

curriculum coverage by checking learners' books and teachers' files and monitoring of attendance registers for a stand-in teacher to be provided if a teacher is absent from work.

### 4.3.4 Support required by Departmental Heads

During their interviews, Departmental Heads discussed how they receive assistance when they need it. They also discussed the support they receive from their principals and how positively the assistance is received by Departmental Heads when principals intervene.

**a) Principal's support as enablers**

One of the experiences of Departmental Heads is the positive support that they receive from their principals. The participating Departmental Heads identified their principals as important resources in their roles as Departmental Heads; the principals helped these Departmental Heads in various ways which include organising developmental workshops, supporting Departmental Heads in motivating teachers by organising events such as team building, assisting financially when teachers need external tutors for the learners in a certain challenging area of their subject, and so on. For instance, Mrs Mchunu is supported by her principal in terms of learner discipline She explains below:

> *The principal is always available to intervene where necessary, for example: when learners are not attending classes, he makes sure to handle this in a proper way and if it gets out of hand, he arranges a meeting with the child's parent to address the issue and come up with a solution and, he also assists in the issue of stubborn teachers and ensures that they do what is expected of them (Mrs Mchunu).*

Mrs Mchunu views her principal as a person who is always ready and available to help when it comes to disciplining learners and how to deal with difficult teachers, but Mr Skhakhane views his principal in a different way. He mentioned that his principal encourages Departmental Heads in keeping up with curriculum coverage. This is what Mr Skhakhane had to say:

*The principal encourages teachers to keep up with curriculum coverage because the Department of Education is strict on such matters and teachers should learn to follow policy documents and meet their required deadlines as expected (Mr Skhakhane).*

Mrs Ngema shared how her principal is a great help even when she is in charge of organising certain events for the department such as team building, workshops for teachers and so on:

*The principal makes sure that he supports me when I organise developmental workshops, when I organise, team building for my department, when organising events such as awards to applaud those who have performed well in their subjects, when I organise mitigation programmes for subjects such as mathematics and he makes sure that there is availability of teaching materials (Mrs Ngema).*

Mr Zondi added to his interview by mentioning that his principal tries to help them solve problems by inviting other teachers to help as well if he sees that he cannot solve the problem on his own. Mr Zondi added by saying the following:

*The principal assists by addressing the issues in staff meetings so that he does not take most of the decisions on his own using only his opinions but also makes sure he includes the Departmental Heads in decisions taken regarding their departments (Mr Zondi).*

Each of the participants had something different to say about their principal regarding them being an enabler and assisting them where they possibly can. Mrs Mkhize stated how the principal will go as far as assisting financially when she invites an expert to come and help the learners with certain topics:

*The principal is very supportive when I invite a person from another school to come and assist my grades 12 learners in a particular subject, the principal does provide incentives to that person and if the learners do not attend extra classes, the principal calls the parents of these learners and speaks to them regarding the discipline of the child (Miss Mkhize).*

Mrs Zulu also viewed the principal as someone who supports her department financially and continued to talk about her principal as someone who supports her department by being present when learners must be disciplined for bad behaviour:

> *With the challenges especially when a parent has to be called, he does write a letter to the parents and is present during such consultations with parents, for absent teachers there are also consultations where the principal avails himself in making sure this is dealt with and he also gives all the necessary support on the shortages that we experience as a department especially when it comes to the literature set of work and also when learners have to do language orals at a different school the principal ensures that they are transported and provided with meals during the day at that particular venue (Mrs Zulu).*

Departmental Heads identified their principals as being enablers and assisting with issues where they have to discipline learners with bad behaviour and when they are struggling instilling discipline in teachers. Some participants also recognise that their principals assist by encouraging the Departmental Heads when they have to organise workshops for teachers, and they help out financially when learners need to be transported to where they will do their language orals.

"Principals can rely on applied transformational leadership in empowering teachers to fulfil their contractual obligations, meet the needs of the school, and go beyond the "call of duty" for the betterment of their schools" (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2012, p. 3). Principals lead when they assist Departmental Heads when experiencing certain challenges and ensuring that Departmental Heads are equipped with skills through developmental workshops arranged by the principal. Departmental Heads use these skills to improve and add value to the school. The participants describe their principals as leaders who are supportive, helpful and available when they need them in solving problems they might have or have previously encountered.

**c) Departmental Heads benefit from workshops**

Departmental Heads form part of the School Management Team, and they lead and manage different aspects at the schools in which they belong. Therefore, the Department of Education (DoE) organises workshops in order to develop Departmental Heads in the areas where they may be falling short of expertise. During interviews, Departmental Heads were discussing how they benefit from workshops. This is what Mrs Zulu had to say:

> *The DoE organises Departmental Head's workshops and the principal also calls meetings to workshop us if there is an area where we need to be developed and our biggest challenge of late is teacher absenteeism and learner absenteeism. I do think we need to be developed for us to come back and help or even motivate our teachers and learners against absenteeism (Mrs Zulu).*

Mrs Mchunu shared a different view regarding workshops in her department. She shared how organising workshops aimed at addressing disciplinary matters within her department will help, as children often become problematic at school. The problem is escalated to the Departmental Head and the Principal of the school. This is what she said about this:

> *Improving learning and teaching in the school is a huge part of my job and if there is an area that as a Departmental Head I struggle with, the Principal and the DoE makes sure that I am developed and assisted as a Departmental Head in my school we get developed on how to monitor learner absenteeism and how to ensure that they are motivated onto behaving the right way when they are at school because we find ourselves having a lot of learners which have to be disciplined for bad behaviour such as: bullying, smoking, disrespecting teachers etc. and we try by all means to assist with such issues  not being a constant problem in the school premises (Mrs Mchunu).*

Mr Skhakhane pointed out during his interview that some workshops are not only for personal development at work as a Departmental Head, but they are for Departmental Heads to take and deliver to teachers, informing them and helping them tackle certain challenges better than before. This is what Mr Skhakhane shared about this:

*All workshops on professional development are attended, these workshops are organised by subject advisors, when I attend these, I make sure that when I come back, I share all the information and documents that are meant to be shared with my teachers and we are encouraged to study further as Departmental Heads to be able tackle the problems we experience with better knowledge and more ideas (Mr Skhakhane).*

Departmental Heads from different secondary schools feel differently about development at their schools but they all shared how they benefit from attending workshops, whether internally by the school or externally by the DoE. Mrs Zulu felt that as a Departmental Head in her school, she needed to be developed on how to handle learner and teacher absenteeism and how to motivate teachers and learners against absenteeism.

On the other hand, Mrs Mchunu felt that at his school they get support in terms of being developed when it comes to absenteeism of learners and how to monitor it and ensure that learners are advised against frequently absenting themselves. According to Mthethwa (2011), training enables one to execute one's duties with confidence. Departmental Heads confidently perform better if they attend workshops and are trained. They acknowledge the importance of training which they receive from the DoE and the principal of the schools in which they belong. Departmental Heads are responsible for the performance of learners and play a significant role. It is important that they encourage them, creating a positive environment for both teachers and learners and influencing teachers to develop themselves professionally so that quality in teaching and learning is achieved. To support this, Stenberg (2010) states that the more the knowledge and skills of the teacher increase, the more appropriate his or her decisions will be in the teaching and learning process thus leading to better quality teaching.

## 4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a discussion of data and the findings that emerged which were generated through semi-structured interviews conducted with six Departmental Heads from three secondary schools in the Pinetown district. Themes and sub-themes were used to analyse the data generated. This chapter discussed four themes which included the discussion about Departmental Heads' experiences in the secondary school environment, the challenges that they experience, how they respond to the challenges that they experience, and the support required by Departmental Heads. The Departmental Heads shared the support that they

received from their principals regarding their position, and they discussed how they benefit from internal workshops from within the school and external workshops from the DoE. The interviews conducted revealed that Departmental Heads experience challenges such as leading teachers with negative attitudes and leading teachers who are demotivated. The demotivated teachers, as stated by the Departmental Heads, lack motivation and commitment especially when it comes to giving extra tuition to grades 12, and mostly the demotivated teachers resorted to absenting themselves from work as it is an easier way to avoid facing their work. The Transformational leadership theory was used throughout themes to point out how Departmental Heads articulate change within their departments and ensure that whatever challenges they face are given attention and focussed on for the purpose of changing them for the betterment of teaching and learning in schools. In the next chapter, the researcher presents the conclusions and recommendations.

# CHAPTER 5
## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and discussed the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews. Four themes emerged from the data and were used to present the findings. These themes were Departmental Heads' experiences in the secondary school environment; challenges experienced by Departmental Heads as they manage PL1 teachers; Departmental Heads' responses to challenges and the support required by Departmental Heads. This is the concluding chapter which brings the study to the end. In this chapter, the researcher presents the summary of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings as well as the recommendations to various stakeholders.

### 5.2 Summary of the study

This study explored Departmental Heads' experiences of leading teaching and learning. The study is presented in five chapters with each chapter focusing on a specific element of the study. Below is a brief explanation of the contents of each chapter to remind the reader of the previous chapters.

**Chapter one** provided an overview of the study with an intention to introduce the study. In this chapter, the researcher presented the background to the study which included an introduction, the rationale of the study, the problem statement, the research questions as well as the aims and the objectives of the study.

**Chapter two** presented the literature review. The intention of chapter two was to show the literature landscape in terms of the research done on the studied phenomenon. Apart from this, the chapter discussed the Transformational Leadership theory which established the theoretical framework of the study.

**Chapter three** provided the methodological components that influenced the study process. This chapter initially explained interpretivism as a position the researcher took to view the world. Secondly, the chapter discussed the qualitative design which was adopted to understand

Departmental Heads' qualitative experiences. Thirdly, the chapter discussed the case study methodology which directed the research process. Fourthly, the methods including sampling, data generation, documents review, and data analysis were discussed. Finally, the issues of trustworthiness and ethics were explained.

**Chapter four** entailed data discussion and findings. This chapter began by presenting the profiles of participants and the schools in which they operate. Thereafter, the findings were presented in four themes that emerged from the data.

## 5.3 Conclusions drawn from findings

This section presents the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. These conclusions are drawn around each research question. This study was driven by three research questions and these questions are presented below to remind the reader.

- What are the leadership experiences of Departmental Heads in secondary schools?
- What challenges do Departmental Heads encounter in executing their role in secondary schools?
- Which methods do Departmental Heads use to enhance their effectiveness in secondary schools?
- How do Departmental Heads respond to the challenges they experience?

### 5.3.1 Departmental Heads' experiences of leading teaching and learning in township secondary schools

The study explored the experiences of Departmental Heads who lead teaching and learning in secondary schools within the Pinetown district. One of the experiences of Departmental Heads is conducting one-on-one meetings post-moderation with their teachers. Departmental Heads identify one-on-one meetings as a strategy to provide feedback to teachers; these one-on-one meetings help them monitor and better understand teachers' experiences in the classroom. Another experience of Departmental Heads is the monitoring of classroom attendance by learners and teachers.

The study found that Departmental Heads also use the ATP to monitor if the teacher and learner are both attending lessons. This has been found to assist in tracking if the work intended to be covered at a specific time is covered by both learner and teacher for effective learning. Departmental Heads do this by using the ATP and checking against the learners' exercise books and the teachers' file to track if the teacher follows the ATP when working with learners in the classroom, and that this must be accompanied by lesson plans.

The attendance register is found helpful when it comes to classroom attendance. This is because it helps in tracking if the teacher honours his or her periods daily. Additionally, they check to see if the teacher goes to class during his or her teaching period to ensure that no learning and teaching time is misused or wasted. Furthermore, the Departmental Heads are found to use the learners' exercise books to check if the teachers provide them with work during lessons, which has been found to help them monitor if both the learner and teacher are present during daily lessons in the classroom.

The third and last experience this study found is the use of workshops to communicate subject needs; the study found that these workshops are helpful since they are organised workshops aiming to develop teachers in areas that are found to be lacking, for example subject assessment needs for novice teachers. Furthermore, this study revealed that for schools to be able operate successfully, they must have Departmental Heads that influence, guide, develop and monitor their departments. For learners to experience quality education and be able to perform at their best level, the Departmental Head should play a leading role in the process of learning.

It can be concluded that the quality of Departmental Heads relates directly to teacher efficiency and learner quality. This is in line with the views of Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) who maintain that Departmental Heads are not only tasked with curriculum delivery, monitoring, and maintaining of teaching and learning in their departments but are also responsible for influencing teachers in their department for the enhancement of quality in teaching and learning.

**5.3.2 Departmental Heads' responses to challenges**

The study explored the challenges Departmental Heads' experiences in secondary schools. Findings revealed that Departmental Heads have a major challenge of discovering that they have teachers who are demotivated to do their work and those who portray a negative attitude towards their duties at work. The Departmental Heads observed that teachers with negative attitudes have been found to be the ones who resist taking instructions well from their Departmental Head. Departmental Heads further reviewed that some teachers are stubborn and become unruly when it comes to implementing change. Furthermore, the study found that such stubborn teachers end up interrupting the process of teaching and learning because they choose to be absent from work instead of taking instructions from their superior.

The Departmental Heads highlighted that teacher who appear to be demotivated were found to be those that are present but do not leave the staff room in time for their lessons. Findings revealed that these teachers become demotivated because some of them teach subjects they did not specialise in, which causes them to lack confidence in teaching that particular subject and they end up not having the correct attitude towards their responsibility as a teacher.

When Departmental Heads are dealing with the challenges they experience, they were found to make sure that despite the challenges, the process of teaching and learning is not disturbed, They made sure to monitor curriculum coverage by checking the learners' books for daily classroom work and activities, check if teachers go to class every day, monitor teacher and learner absenteeism and get parents involved in the work of the learners by inviting them to school for meetings and discussion about learner performance and behaviour.

**5.3.3   The role played by the school in supporting Departmental Heads**

Departmental Heads view their principals as people who play an active role in making sure the work of the Departmental Head is made easy. They emphasised that the principal is someone who assists with the issue of disciplining learners when they misbehave, disciplining teachers regarding absenteeism, assisting with stubborn teachers and so on. Furthermore, the principal is someone who is available to encourage Departmental Heads when it comes to issues of keeping up with and completing of the curriculum of different subjects within the school.

Departmental Heads view their principals as representatives of the school in encouraging curriculum coverage across all subjects and in ensuring that they organise helpful events such as developmental workshops for the Departmental Heads if it was identified that they needed assistance in certain areas. Principals also organise events such as team building programmes for Departmental Heads and teachers, therefore the Departmental Heads identify their principals as people who are leading by example. If the principals of the secondary schools behave in a supportive manner, they are exposing one of the most powerful tools to Departmental Heads and demonstrating that they too should be supportive to the teachers that they lead to achieve their departmental goals.

Furthermore, the study found that Departmental Heads are supported financially by the principals when they organise extra help from external teachers to assist with certain difficult subjects in the school. According to Santamaria and Santamaria (2012), principals serve as role models to Departmental Heads as they encourage them to be helpful to the teachers when necessary. In addition, principals were found to be supportive when they organise important workshops for Departmental Heads, when Departmental Heads needed to be developed, and assisted them by being present when they called parents to school for learner disciplinary measures.

This study concludes that for schools to operate successfully, they have to have Departmental Heads that influence, guide, develop and monitor their departments in order for learners to experience quality education and be able to perform at their best level. Therefore, it can be concluded that the quality of Departmental Heads relates directly to teacher efficiency and learner quality for each school.

## 5.4 Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations from the data generated. The recommendations are directed to the following stakeholders: Department of Basic Education, school principals, Departmental Heads, and fellow researchers.

**5.4.1 Recommendations to the Department of Basic Education**

The study found that Departmental Heads in schools are challenged by dealing with demotivated teachers who have a negative attitude towards their work. Such findings provide the Department of Basic Education (DoE) with clarity in terms of where exactly teachers need to be trained. The researcher recommends and suggests that the DoE provides Departmental Heads with training specifically designed for them to deal with different challenges including learning how to encourage and motivate teachers to have a positive attitude towards the subject that they teach and their overall duties as teachers in secondary schools.

**5.4.2 Recommendations to school principals**

It appears that Departmental Heads who participated in this study find the need for organising internal workshops for teachers in their departments. They organise subject development workshops for teachers, and they also arrange for new teachers to be trained in the areas where they need assistance and improvement. The researcher, therefore, suggests that school principals ensure that the Departmental Heads always get the support they need for workshops and teacher development to be able to successfully train the teachers in their department in a way that is effective to the teacher and the process of teaching and learning.

**5.4.3 Recommendations to Departmental Heads**

This recommendation is directed to the Departmental Heads. The researcher recommends that, Departmental Heads monitor teacher attendance by having a policy drawn up which will specifically deal with teachers that do not attend to their lessons on time. When drawing up this policy, teachers that belong to a department should be involved for them to relate to it and understand that the department they belong to has a policy which deals with teacher classroom attendance to avoid teachers going to class late or them not going at all and sitting in the staff room during their respective period.

### 5.4.4 Recommendations to researchers

This recommendation is directed to the research community at large. Teachers have been found to be demotivated and some have been found to have a negative attitude towards their work. These have been identified as challenges which Departmental Heads come across in their position as managers and leaders of teaching and learning. More research could be done on teachers to find out how this can be remedied and explore the causes of demotivation in township secondary schools. This would help teachers become better leaders of teaching and learning by identifying their needs to make them feel motivated and have the right attitude towards their work.

### 5.4  Chapter Summary

This study explored the experiences of six Departmental Heads leading teaching and learning in three township schools. Three research questions guided the study. The findings of the study exposed different experiences of Departmental Heads. These experiences included, among others, conducting of one-on-one meetings with teachers, continuous monitoring of teacher and learner classroom attendance, making use of Annual Teaching Plans to track the process of teaching and learning and organising internal workshops to empower teachers. Apart from the experiences, the study established that Departmental Heads create survival mechanisms and practices that they employ in order to continue leading teaching and learning in their contexts. In this last chapter, the researcher presented the conclusions drawn from the findings and made the recommendations to four role players, namely, the Department of Basic Education, the Departmental Heads, and the research community.

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## Departmental Head's research Interview Guide

**Key research questions guiding my responses for the data generation plan:**

1. What are the leadership experiences of Departmental Heads in secondary schools?
2. What challenges do Departmental Heads experience in executing their role in secondary schools?
3. How could Departmental Heads be supported to enhance their effectiveness in secondary schools?

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1. **What does your role as a Departmental Head at your school entail?**

2. **What are some of the challenges that you come across as a Departmental Head of your school in your respective department and how do you respond to these challenges?**

3. **What challenges do you encounter specifically when it comes to paperwork?**

4. **How does your principal assist you in some of the challenges that you experience in your position as a Departmental Head of a Secondary school?**

5. **How many years of experience as a post-level 1 teacher do you think a subject head should have before they are appointed as a Departmental Head and why?**

6. **What are your proposed goals in terms of teaching, learning and curriculum implementations for your department and how are you planning to achieve them?**

7. **What are the professional development needs of Departmental Heads and how are these addressed properly?**

8. **What do you as a Departmental Head like most and least about your work?**

25 June 2021

**Miss Sthabile Pridesworthy Bhengu (220108759)**
**School Of Education**
**Edgewood Campus**

**Dear Miss Bhengu,**

**Protocol reference number:** HSSREC/00002925/2021
**Project title:** Leading for quality teaching and learning: A case study of six departmental heads in three secondary schools within the Pinetown District.
**Degree:** Masters

## Approval Notification – Expedited Application

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

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

This approval is valid until 25 June 2022.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

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

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

Yours sincerely,

-------------------------------------------
**Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)**

/dd

**APPENDIX B**

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 3921062 / 033-3921051

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

**Enquiries:** Phindile Duma/Buyi Ntuli

**Ref.:** 2/4/8/7096

Miss Sthabile Prideworthy Bhengu
P.O. Box 10239
**HAMMARSDALE**
3699

Dear Miss Bhengu

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS**

Your application to conduct research entitled **"LEADING FOR QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF SIX DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN THREE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITHIN THE PINETOWN DISTRICT"**: in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 21st April 2021 to 10TH October 2023.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma/Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 21st April 2021

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

**APPENDIX C**

P.O BOX 10239

Hammarsdale

3700

18 February 2021

The Principal

Name of school

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL**

I am Sthabile Pridesworthy Bhengu, and I am conducting research as a requirement of the University of KwaZulu-Natal towards a Degree of Masters in Education – With Specialisation in Educational Management

The title of the research study is "Leading for quality teaching and learning: A case study of six Departmental Heads in three secondary schools within the Pinetown district".

I would like to use your school as one of the research sites, and this letter intends to request your permission. The focus of the study is on the…, therefore I would like to request your teachers to participate in the study. Should permission be granted, the interviews with the … will be scheduled for dates and times that are convenient for *him or her or them*. Care will be taken that no disruption is caused during such interviews. Please also note that the participation in this study is voluntary, and the participant has the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequence. In addition, you are assured that details of the school and the participant will be kept confidential, and your identity will never be disclosed to anyone.

For more information and questions about the study, you may contact the researcher or the research supervisor on the following details:

Name of researcher ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ email: sthabhengu11@gmail.com

Supervisor: Dr. SB Blose: Tel No.: (031) 260 1870; Email: Bloses@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the Research Office through:

P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel.: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thanking you in advance.

Yours in Education

Sthabile Pridesworthy Bhengu

**APPENDIX D**

A1582 Mdluli Road

Mpumalanga Township

Hammarsdale

3699

20 April 2021

28 Khwela Road

Mpumalanga Township C

Hammarsdale

3699

Dear Sthabile Bhengu

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT ISIBUKOSEZWE HIGH SCHOOL**

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

Yours sincerely

ISIBUKOSEZWE HIGH SCHOOL
P.O. BOX HAMMARSDALE, 3700
PRINCIPAL
DATE 22/04/2021

(The Principal)

A1582 Mdluli Road

Mpumalanga Township

Hammarsdale

3699

Uxolophambili Secondary School

Wozamazo Road

Mpumalanga Township

Hammarsdale

3699

Dear Sthabile Bhengu

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UXOLOPHAMBILI HIGH SCHOOL.

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

Yours sincerely

PRINCIPAL
KZN Department of Education
Uxolophambili High School
P.O. Box **School stamp** 1708

0 8 APR 2021

Phone: (031) 772 0766

Sign:

A1582 Mdluli Road

Mpumalanga Township

Hammarsdale

3699

Luthayi High School

20 Zondo road

Mpumalanga Township

Hammarsdale

3699

Dear Sthabile Bhengu

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT LUTHAYI HIGH SCHOOL

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

Yours sincerely

School stamp

(The Principal)

**APPENDIX E**

A1582 Mdluli Road

Hammarsdale

3699

18 February 2021

Your participant

## REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH

I am Sthabile. Prideworthy Bhengu and I am conducting research as a requirement at the University of KwaZulu-Natal towards a Degree of Masters in Education – With Specialisation in Educational Management
 The title of the research is "Leading for quality teaching and learning: A case study of six Departmental Heads in three secondary schools within the Pinetown district".

The objectives of the study are:

- Outline the objectives of your study

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

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split into two parts depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

|  | Willing | Not willing |
|---|---|---|

| Audio equipment | | |
|---|---|---|

I can be contacted at:

Email:  sthabhengu11@gmail.com

██   ████████

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

Email:          Bloses@ukzn.ac.za

Phone:          031 260 1870

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

Yours Sincerely

_____

Sthabile Pridesworthy Bhengu

**APPENDIX F**

**APPENDIX G**

**TO** : Sthabile Pridesworthy Bhengu (MEd student: 220108759)

**FROM** : Jennifer Sheokarah

**SUBJECT** : Dissertation editing

**DATE** : 7 July 2022

**LEADING FOR QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF SIX DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN THREE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITHIN THE PINETOWN DISTRICT**

The above dissertation was edited using track changes for the student's discretion.

While I have corrected spelling and language errors (punctuation, tense, concord, word choice, and word order) I have not edited any quotations. I have also not checked if referencing (list) has been done correctly.

Ideas expressed have not been altered in any way.

Sincerely

Jennifer Sheokarah
Language Editor

**APPENDIX H**