



**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**Secondary school departmental heads' experiences of
instructional supervision in a South African District**

By

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degree of Master of Education in the discipline Educational
Leadership, Management and Policy**

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, **Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu**, hereby declare that the dissertation titled **Secondary school departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in a South African District** is my original work. It has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for degree purposes. All the sources cited or quoted in this research paper are indicated and acknowledged in a comprehensive list of references.



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Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu

06 February 2025

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Date

ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this dissertation, has obtained the applicable research ethics approval for the research described in this work. The author declares that he observed the ethical standards in terms of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation is submitted with my approval.



Dr NI Jaca

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Date

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, friends and colleagues. The effort put into this Masters dissertation was motivated by your encouragement and love. Your unwavering support will forever be unmatched.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
B.Ed. Hons	Bachelor of Education Honours
CTA	Continuous Task Assessment
DH	Departmental Head
DoE	Department of Education
EEA	Employment of Educators Act
EMLP	Educational Management Law and Policy
JIT	Just In Time
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZN DoE	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
POLC	Planning Organising Leading and Controlling
PPN	Post-Provisioning Norms
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
SMT	School Management Teams
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United State of America

ABSTRACT

The study explored departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa. The qualitative approach and case study design infused within an interpretivist paradigm were adopted in the execution of this study. The study was underpinned by McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with six departmental heads sampled from two selected secondary schools located of uMzinyathi District to generate data that answers the study's research questions. Data were analysed using the inductive thematic approach. The findings of the study reveal that departmental heads do not fully understand their duties as instructional supervisors. Although they carry out some instructional supervisory duties, departmental heads do not execute instructional supervision in the way it should. Departmental heads are experiencing either internal or external challenges which include the lack of instructional resources, lack of training on instructional supervision, teacher resistance and negative attitudes towards instructional supervision as well as unbearable workloads. Training sessions are short and theoretical, adopting the one-size-fits-all approach. Management tasks such as planning, organising, leading and controlling are some of the strategies that were adopted by departmental heads in addressing the challenges. In addition, delegation of tasks, communication, collaboration and networking were other strategies used by departmental heads in addressing the challenges. The study unveiled the need for the provision of more training on instructional supervision and that should cater for departmental heads from different schools. Training sessions on instructional supervision should be longer and more practical. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education should provide sufficient instructional resources to all schools. The Department of Education should hold induction for all teachers, principals of schools and departmental heads on the significance of instructional supervision. Departmental heads' workloads should also be minimised. More research should be conducted on the departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in South Africa.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study explored departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools located at uMzinyathi District in South Africa. In the context of education, instructional supervision refers to the process of maximising teachers' opportunities and capacities for them to effectively contribute towards learners' academic achievement (Ghavifekr & Ibrahim, 2014). Studies conducted on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision have revealed that due to decentralisation and devolution of power, particular individuals are appointed to execute instructional supervisory duties in schools (Kiilu et al., 2023).

Studies that have focused on departmental heads show the different names given to these officers depending on the country in which they are working (Bambi, 2021). According to Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) RSA (2016), an educator who occupies a level two post in a school is regarded as a departmental head. According to Sengai (2021), in South Africa these officers are often referred to middle managers or departmental heads (DH). In the United States of America (USA), they are known as departmental chairs (Peretomode, 2021). In the United Kingdom (UK), they are referred to as curriculum coordinators (Urio, 2012) or subject leaders (Clarke, 2009). In Zimbabwe, they are also known as Heads of Department (Clive & Mestry, 2013). In this research report, the term departmental head will be used consistently throughout the dissertation.

Literature reviewed in this study depicts departmental heads as members of staff in both primary and secondary schools (Bambi, 2021; Emanuel & Mwila, 2023). Due to their intermediate position in the hierarchy of the school management team, they are often regarded as middle managers. Departmental heads are the members of school management teams (SMT) and often act as mediators between teachers and their senior supervisors (Mpisane, 2015). The duty of departmental heads is to plan, organise, coordinate and control all activities that happen in the departments they lead in order for quality education for all to be realised (RSA, 2016). In the study conducted in secondary schools in Tanzania, focusing on the best management practices, Emanuel and Mwila (2012) found that in order for departmental heads to be able to

execute their supervisory roles effectively and efficiently they must follow certain procedures, which include setting the tone, modelling the way and ensuring consistency. The study further reported that instructional supervisory duties also require departmental heads to assist teachers in evaluating their instructional practices by identifying what works or does not work for them. After all the strengths and weaknesses have been identified, strategies for improvement must be developed in order to enhance teaching and learning.

1.2 Background of the study

After the first democratic election in 1994, South Africa's democratic government inherited an education system based on inequality (Bambi, 2021; Naidoo, 2021; Sengai, 2021; Simpson et al., 2016). Mpisane (2015) and Mashapa (2019) argued that the democratic government in South Africa initiated a number of programmes designed to transform the education system in order to provide quality education for all. These programmes included curriculum change and the implementation of teacher development programmes such as *Jika iMfundo*, Just in Time (JIT) workshops and Continuous Task Assessment (CTA) which all aimed at enhancing teaching and learning in secondary schools. According to Bambi (2021), these programmes were developed and implemented with significant emphasis being placed on the right to quality education for all as stipulated in Section 29 of the Constitution of The Republic of South Africa and the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1998.

Prior to the 1994 elections, it was solely the duty of principals of schools to manage schools (Mashapa, 2019). The changes that took place in the education system after the democratic elections resulted in a number of administrative and managerial tasks being initiated in schools due to decentralisation and devolution of power (Bambi, 2021). Bambi (2021) reported that power was distributed amongst the members of school management teams (SMT), a structure in the school organogram that is formed by the principal of the school, deputy principal and departmental heads. This was done to hold schools accountable for their performance. According to Simpson et al. (2016), a school's improvement relies on the effectiveness of departmental heads as these are regarded as instructional supervisors. This duty requires departmental heads to have a knowledge base of all the subjects in their respective departments in order to assist teachers to realise quality education as stipulated in the Education Labour Relations Council Act No. 8 of 1998 (RSA, 1998).

Bambi (2021) argued that departmental heads' duties as instructional supervisors are documented in the legislative framework known as the Personnel Administrative Measures

(RSA) of 2016. However, departmental heads interpret them in different ways, something which also has its own unique challenges. Mpisane (2015) also argued that in schools where there is a shortage of teachers resulting from low enrolment, departmental heads encounter unbearable workloads and find it difficult to balance administrative and managerial tasks.

In the study conducted to establish the challenges of instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Tanzania, William and Ligembe (2022) reported the lack of pre-service training for the newly appointed departmental heads. Armstrong (2012) also highlighted that departmental heads only realise that their role is bigger than what they had been anticipating after they had been appointed and assumed the duties.

Studies have shown that the appointments of departmental heads in South Africa are highly questionable since they are done for different reasons (Bambi, 2021; Naidoo, 2021; Sengai, 2020). These reasons include a high level of competency in the subject (Naidoo, 2021), individuals' vibrancy in affiliation to political parties or teacher representative unions (Sengai, 2020) and experience in teaching the subject (Bambi, 2021). Bambi (2021) also argued that these appointments sometimes rely on the School Governing Body's gut feeling.

Chiwamba and Kigobe (2022) also revealed that in some countries; in order to be appointed as a departmental head, a candidate has to possess a formal leadership qualification and undergo a specific training before assuming the duties. However, in the study that examined departmental heads' training for professional development, Mestry and Gobler (2002) revealed the insufficiency of the training sessions being provided. In a similar study that was carried out in Kenya, Zepeda et al. (2007) also contended that the trainings of departmental heads must be prolonged because learning and internalising a new skill can be a lengthy process.

Despite all sorts of funding that have been exhausted in the development and implementation of the above-mentioned training programmes, poor performance in secondary schools seems to be a concern. Many learners drop out of school, especially when they are in the higher grades (Brown et al., 2015). It has also been observed that less than 60% of the learners who make it to the end of secondary education are able to secure spaces in institutions of higher learning (Malinga et al., 2021). The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZN DoE) registered an improvement in the results at the National Senior Certificate (NSC) level for the past three years and secured position three out of the nine provinces for 2022 matric pass rate which stood at 83% (DBE, 2023). In his speech that he presented during the provincial matric excellence awards that were held in the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Durban, the Minister of

Education reported that in the 2023 matric results, KwaZulu-Natal managed to secure the second position out of South Africa's nine provinces. However, he further revealed that despite the slight improvement achieved by KZN DoE, uMzinyathi District, a district in which this study was located, was reportedly the least performing district in the twelve districts of KZN as it secured position twelve in the past four consecutive years. During the analysis of the results, the factors that might have influenced the matric results were not considered and, in this case, the DoE's adopted a one-size-fits-all approach which is an unfair comparison (Bambi, 2021).

The Department of Education puts blame on school principals for the poor performance registered in schools and in turn, principals of schools blame departmental heads (Mpisane, 2015). As instructional supervisors, departmental are expected to act as catalysts in the teaching and learning process in schools, with their efficiency and effectiveness in their assigned duties being reflected in learner's academic outcomes (Bambi, 2021). However, there seem to be many factors mitigating progress in their assigned duties and this affects learners' academic performance in schools. In this study, departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in selected secondary schools in uMzinyathi District were explored.

1.3 Problem statement

Departmental heads play a critical role in instructional supervision, a function central to improving teaching quality and learner performance. According to educational policy (RSA, 1996b; RSA, 1998) and various scholars (Bambi, 2021; Chiwamba & Kigobe, 2022), these leaders are tasked with supporting teachers through lesson planning, classroom monitoring, and timely feedback. Instructional supervision has been linked to the enhancement of pedagogical practices, particularly within subject specialisations (Al-Kiyumi & Hammad, 2020).

However, despite the significance of their role, research reveals that many departmental heads are unable to carry out instructional supervisory duties effectively due to excessive workloads, teacher shortages, declining enrolment, and the need to balance teaching with administrative responsibilities (Mashapa, 2019; Sengai, 2020; Malinga et al., 2021; Naidoo, 2021). Additional challenges include limited training in instructional supervision, resistance from teachers, and inadequate resources (William & Ligembe, 2022; Malinga et al., 2021). These constraints have contributed to poor learner outcomes in several schools (Bambi, 2021; Sengai, 2021).

Despite the importance of this issue, there is a lack of focused research on departmental heads' instructional supervision practices, particularly in underperforming schools within uMzinyathi District, where contextual challenges such as staff shortages are prevalent. This gap necessitated a study exploring the lived experiences of departmental heads in implementing instructional supervision in this specific context. The insights gained from this study have the potential to inform the development of targeted support programmes aimed at enhancing departmental heads' capacity to perform effective instructional supervision.

1.4 Rationale

The interest to conduct this study emanated from my personal experience as a teacher teaching in a secondary school located at uMzinyathi District in South Africa. Schools have a low enrolment, thus signifying shortage of human resources. Supervisory roles are delegated to the available departmental heads irrespective of their specialisation. During conversation held with departmental heads, I found that departmental heads perceived their position in the school hierarchy as a demanding one, which resulted in them being unable to follow their departmental year plans. There were no classroom visits conducted except those of Quality Management Systems (QMS). After lesson evaluations, everything ended in the paper. The researcher noticed that there were inconsistencies in classroom visits, which was against the classroom visits stipulated in the year plans and departmental timelines and these made teachers to perceive the visits as a fault-finding method. Inconsistencies in supervision lead high failure rate in schools.

Bambi (2021), Malinga et al. (2021), Naidoo (2021) and Sengai (2021) recommended the need for conducting empirical research on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in order to understand factors that influence learners' performance in schools. There is a paucity of studies focusing on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools in the South African context. Most studies focusing on this area of study tend to lean more on the roles of departmental heads as leaders of learning (Mpisane, 2015) and challenges of instructional leadership (Atieno, 2019).

Findings from this study may help DoE officials to develop intervention programmes that respond to departmental heads' needs. The teaching and learning process may be enhanced and learners' academic performance will improve.

1.5 Purpose statement

The purpose of this study was to explore the departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in selected secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa in order to explore their understanding and practices of instructional supervision, the challenges they face in executing their instructional supervisory duties and the strategies they use to address these challenges as well as the kind of support department heads need in executing their instructional supervisory duties.

1.6 Research questions

Primary research question:

What are the departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in selected secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa?

In order to answer the primary research question, the following sub-questions were developed:

1. How do departmental heads understand and practice instructional supervision?
2. What challenges do departmental heads face in executing their instructional supervisory duties?
3. How do departmental heads address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties, and what support do they require to perform their duties effectively?

1.7 Key concepts

The following concepts were frequently used in this research study.

1.7.1 Departmental heads

Departmental heads are individuals authorised by DoE to hold a certain managerial position in a school and are liable for the performance of that specific department (Sengai, 2021). Departmental heads can also be referred to middle managers conferred with the authority to supervise specific departments in their workplace (Agih, 2015). According to Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998, a departmental head is a teacher who is also responsible for managing a phase in or entire learning area. They occupy a level two post in which curriculum management is an additional responsibility to the teacher's teaching assignment. In a South African school context, departmental heads are regarded as members of SMT, as their

responsibility is to lead and manage a specific department within the school. In this study, departmental heads were regarded as middle-managers due to their intermediate position in the school hierarchy and the fact that they are entrusted by Department of Education (DoE) to thoroughly define the schools' vision and mission, manage curricular implementation, as well as to guide and support teaching and learning in a school context.

1.7.2 Instructional supervision

Instructional supervision is a professional, continuous process designed to improve instruction (Atenio, 2019). It also refers to the process of guiding, assisting and sharing ideas for the betterment of an organisation offering educational services (Simpson et al., 2016). In this study instructional supervision referred to the process of communicating the school's vision, guiding and supporting both teachers and learners, identifying learning gaps and finding ways of bridging them.

1.7.3 Clinical supervision

According to Sergiovanni and Starrat (2007), clinical supervision is a face-to-face contact with teachers with the intent of improving instruction and increasing professional growth. It is a sequential, cyclic and systematic supervisory process that involves face-to-face (direct) interaction between teachers (supervisees) and supervisors designed to improve the teachers classroom instruction (Kutsyuruba, 2003).

1.7.4 Collaborative supervision

It is a process where supervisors and supervisees work involves together to improve teaching and learning in schools. It is a process whereby experienced teachers give guidance and support to new teachers or those that are new to school or in a teaching environment. It is a partnership that involves a shared decision-making, goal setting and problem solving. In this study, collaborative supervision was referred as a tool to enhance the teacher's skills, develop positive supervisory relationship and ultimately improve learner outcomes.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

This study was delimited to two secondary schools of uMzinyathi District in KwaZulu-Natal Province. Only six departmental heads, three from each school, participated in this study.

1.9 Overview of chapters

Chapter One

This chapter presents the introduction and background of the study, including the research problem, rationale for the study, critical research questions and key concepts. The final part of this chapter focuses on the layout of the dissertation.

Chapter Two

This chapter focuses on a review of the available national and international literature that is relevant to departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools. It also presents McGregor's theory of instructional supervision, which encapsulates the theoretical framework underpinning this study.

Chapter Three

This chapter focuses more on the research methodology, particularly the methods that were used to generate data for the study. The research approach and research design are also articulated in this chapter, including the paradigm guiding the study. The chapter also describes the sample, sample size and sampling technique. The final part of this chapter focuses on data generation methods, data analysis technique and the ethical considerations upheld in ensuring quality assurance.

Chapter Four

This chapter focuses on the presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings of the study which are based on the generated data, reviewed literature, research questions and the theoretical framework. It presents verbatim quotes transcribed from generated data to support the research findings.

Chapter Five

This chapter concludes the entire study. It summarises the findings and presents conclusions drawn from departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi District. Finally, the chapter proffers the recommendations for further research and practice as informed by the findings emanating from this study.

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the introduction to and background of the study, problem statement and rationale for undertaking the study. It also dwelt on primary and secondary research questions that guided this study. It presented the aim and objectives of the research study. The chapter presented the concepts that were frequently used in the study and concluded by giving an overview of the chapters constituting this dissertation. The next chapter presents and discusses the literature review and theoretical framework underpinning this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This study explored departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa. This chapter presents a review of the literature that is related to the topic being explored in this study. A study's literature review is an overview of the writings on a specific topic (De Vos et al., 2011; Van Wyk, 2018). The purpose of conducting the literature review is to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to a specific topic or area of study (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017; Maree, 2016). For this study, I reviewed published national and international research articles and dissertations on departmental heads' instructional supervision. When reviewing the literature, my main focus was on the topic, research methods and methodologies employed in generating and analysing data and research findings of the existing studies (Cohen et al., 2018). This helped me to identify research gaps (Hart, 2007; Mudavanhu, 2017). The four themes that emerged from the reviewed literature were: Departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision; the challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties; strategies that departmental heads use to address challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and the kind of support that departmental heads require when executing instructional supervisory duties.

2.2 Departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision

This theme on departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision was further presented and discussed under the following sub-themes: Global variations in instructional supervision and approaches, departmental heads' understanding of instructional supervision and departmental heads' practices of instructional supervision.

2.2.1 Global variations in instructional supervision approaches and practices

Different countries have developed unique ways of implementing instructional supervision. In South Africa, Poland and Tanzania where education systems are highly decentralised, the countries use both school-based (internal) and external inspectorate instructional supervision (Bambi, 2021). Regarding the execution of school-based instructional supervision, DoE

entrusted school heads and departmental heads with the responsibility to perform instructional supervisory duties in their respective departments (Harris et al., 2018). External inspectorate supervision is done by trained inspectors (Malinga et al., 2021). However, Sengai (2021), in a study conducted to determine the role of departmental heads, discovered that in schools and countries where education systems are highly centralised, such as Zimbabwe, Ghana and Botswana, inspectorate-based instructional supervision is conducted.

Studies have also revealed the different kinds of approaches to instructional supervision (Emmanuel & Mwila, 2023; Zepeda et al., 2007). However, in many secondary schools, there are only two approaches that seem widely adopted (Emmanuel & Mwila, 2023). In the study that explored the best practices of instructional supervision management in secondary schools in Kinondoni Municipality in Tanzania, Emmanuel and Mwila (2023) revealed that clinical and collaborative supervision approaches are widely employed in many secondary schools. According to Zepeda (2007), collaborative supervision encapsulates mentoring, cognitive coaching and peer coaching. Emmanuel and Mwila (2023) further reported that collaborative approaches to supervision were mainly designed to help newly appointed educators with the required support from more experienced colleagues. There was a belief that experienced colleagues can provide the required support timeously upon request.

Peer coaching occurs when teachers in a school system or department are encouraged to work collaboratively in small teams or pairs, observing one another teaching with the aim of critiquing and developing one another in order to improve the quality of instruction. It involves teachers of the same status, the newly appointed ones, being grouped with other newly appointed and veteran with other veteran teachers. During peer coaching, teachers reflect on current practices, expand, refine, identify gaps, build new skills, share ideas and help one another solving problems in the workplace.

During cognitive coaching, there is an establishment of sound relationships between professional teachers of different statuses. The cognitive coach should be a more knowledgeable and experienced teacher in instructional practice than the one who is being coached. During the coaching session, the coach becomes a mediator between the beginner-teacher being coached and his or her own thinking.

Mentoring involves a hierarchical relationship between a newly appointed teacher and a senior teacher from the same department. A senior teacher is assigned to mentor a beginner-teacher in order to guide him or her through the operations of the school and his duties.

A study by Burke and Fessler (2010) reported that teachers can grow if there is a collaborative approach to supervision in schools. Emmanuel and Mwila (2023) argue that, collaborative approaches to supervision do not limit staff development to teachers and his or her middle management supervisor but it is opened to multiple interactions within the educational setting thus enhances growth.

Sergvianni and Starrat (2007) define clinical supervision as a face-to-face interaction between a supervisor and a supervisee with an aim to improve the instruction, thus enhancing professional growth. Many secondary schools seemingly adopt this approach because it is a cyclical process of planning, designing, implementing and evaluating teaching and learning. It gives the individual an opportunity to reflect on their own practice, thus improving the quality of instruction. Snow-Gereno (2019) argued that clinical supervision is mostly adopted by departmental heads to support and guide novice teachers in order to increase their ability to supervise themselves, thus improving instruction and enhancing professional growth. When teachers are able to supervise themselves, departmental heads are relieved from other administrative duties. Apparently, instructional supervision is not carried out in the same way globally. This study will indicate the type and approach to instructional supervision that is adopted by departmental heads in selected secondary schools which will indicate how instructional supervision is carried out.

2.2.2 Departmental heads' understanding of instructional supervision

Studies show that departmental heads understand instructional supervision as a continuous process that aims to improve instruction for the betterment of learners' performance (Simpson et al., 2016; William & Ligembe, 2022). In their study, Simpson et al. (2016) explored the challenges that departmental heads encounter when carrying out instructional supervision in Ghana and discovered that departmental heads perceived instructional supervision as a process of assisting and guiding the supervisee and sharing ideas in order to achieve the desired instructional outcomes. In a similar study that had the same focus as the one carried out in Tanzania, William and Ligembe (2022) revealed that departmental heads perceived instructional supervision as a process of communicating a school's vision, guiding teachers, identifying learning gaps and developing solutions to bridge them. All these perceptions have a point of commonality, which relates to performing the above-mentioned duties for the betterment of the school's performance. These perceptions highlight that departmental heads have an idea of what instructional supervision is, its goals and how it is supposed to be carried

out. This study will tell us how departmental heads understand instructional supervision in selected secondary schools.

2.2.3 Departmental heads' practices of instructional supervision

Instructional supervision is a professional, continuous process meant to improve instruction (Atenio, 2019). The duties of departmental heads as instructional supervisors are to guide, assist and share ideas with teachers, identifying gaps and finding ways of bridging them for the betterment of the school's performance (Simpson et al., 2016). A study conducted by Mpisane (2015) in two secondary schools located in Ugu District discovered that departmental heads, as middle managers, play a vital role in determining the improvement of teaching and learning in schools through instructional supervision. Instructional supervisory roles, as exercised by departmental heads, are inclusive of but not limited to curriculum implementation and monitoring; they incorporate supporting and mentoring teachers as well as carrying out administrative and organisational duties. A qualitative study that was conducted by Bambi (2021) in secondary schools in Gauteng Province explored the roles of departmental heads as instructional leaders and found that the departmental heads' major instructional leadership role involved supervising teachers and learners. He argued that teachers should receive adequate support and guidance from departmental heads, thus enabling them to teach effectively and conform to the demands of the country's education system.

Studies show that departmental heads perform a number of activities for the aim of instructional supervision to be achieved (Bambi, 2021; Govender & Ajani, 2021). These include conducting both announced and unannounced classroom observation, demonstrations, pre-moderation and post-moderation of assessment tasks, monitoring and evaluating both teachers' and learners' work, scheduling accountability sessions for both teachers and learners as well as conducting professional development workshops. Departmental heads are also expected to evaluate and monitor the professional development of teachers in their respective departments, giving constructive criticism that stimulates staff development. According to Bambi (2021), instructional supervision should be collaborative and should be communicated with teachers prior to its implementation in order to reach consensus. Bambi (2021) further argues that instructional supervision should incorporate elements of teacher appraisal, assessment and development in order to improve teachers' teaching abilities. He also recommended that during communications between supervisors and supervisees, time frames and how instructional supervision will be administered should be discussed. It is the responsibility of departmental

heads to ensure that the objectives of their respective departments are aligned with the schools' desirable outcomes and to give timeous feedback on the administered instructional supervisory activities (Govender & Ajani, 2021). The reviewed literature have given us an indication of how departmental heads in other parts of the world understand practise instructional supervision. There are limited studies that focused on the instructional supervision practises in uMzinyathi District. Therefore, this study will bridge that gap by giving us an indication of how instructional supervision is practiced by departmental heads in selected secondary schools of uMzinyathi District.

2.3 The challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties

This theme embodies the challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties. Departmental heads face many challenges when executing instructional supervisory duties. These challenges are inclusive of but not limited to the lack of supervisory skills, teachers' resistance and negative attitudes towards instructional supervision and departmental heads' unbearable workloads. A lack of instructional resources and lack of training on instructional supervision were also mentioned as some of the challenges.

2.3.1 Lack of instructional supervisory skills

Studies show that departmental heads lack the necessary and essential skills to execute school-based instructional supervision (Emanuel & Mwila, 2023; Mamo, 2019). It seems departmental heads lack basic knowledge on pedagogical approaches and content (Aldaihani, 2017). Malinga et al. (2021), in their study examining the role of supervisors for educational change, reported that during the execution of instructional supervisory activities, departmental heads emphasised document inspection rather than identifying gaps and finding ways of bridging them. The study further established that departmental heads focus more on viewing documents, mostly teacher's files and learners' exercise books and making reports on the basis of the available documents, although the compiled reports were hardly shared with the supervised teachers.

Sibanda et al. (2011) also discovered that the major cause of ineffective instructional supervision in schools is the shortage of instructional supervisors with necessary skills and qualifications. Bambi (2021) supported Sibanda et al. (2011) on the view that in countries such as Canada, candidates for the position of a departmental head should obtain a certain qualification in management in order to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills expected

of an instructional supervisor. Bambi (2021) also noted that in South Africa, departmental heads lack the necessary supervisory skills because they are appointed for different reasons, such as the highest competency in the subject, experience and vibrancy in teacher unions, with the element of leadership and management sometimes not being considered. Thus, in South Africa, supervisory duties may not be carried out as expected leading to high failure rate in schools. The reviewed literature says nothing about instructional supervisory skills in secondary schools of uMzinyathi District. This study will indicate whether departmental heads in selected secondary schools lack instructional supervisory skills or not.

2.3.2 Teacher resistance and negative attitudes towards instructional supervision

Studies show that most teachers exhibit negative attitudes towards instructional supervision (Chiwamba & Kigobe, 2022; Mamo, 2019; Sengai; 2021; Tshabalala, 2013). Many departmental heads tend to execute instructional supervisory duties only after experiencing a misunderstanding with specific teachers and often use the supervision as a way of exposing them. Inconsistencies in the execution of instructional supervision result in teachers perceiving instructional supervision as a fault-finding tool designed to expose their weaknesses and therefore persecute them (Mamo, 2019). In a study conducted to establish teacher's perceptions of instructional supervision in secondary schools in Zimbabwe, Tshabalala (2013) discovered that poor communication between teachers and instructional supervisors contributes immensely to teacher's negative attitudes and acted as a serious inhibitor of effective instructional supervision. The study also reported that when instructional supervisors and supervisees perceive instructional supervision differently, there is bound to be conflicts, further noting that negative attitudes emanate from the approach the instructional supervisors' use. Tshabalala's (2013) study established that if decisions are taken objectively, there is a possibility of a mutual agreement, resulting in smooth execution of instructional supervisory duties.

In their study that explored the challenges encountered by departmental heads in carrying out instructional supervisory duties in secondary schools in Tanzania, Chiwamba and Kigobe (2022) reported that teachers' negative attitudes towards instructional supervision resulted from departmental heads' failure to communicate the purpose of instructional supervision to teachers. In a similar study but conducted in a different district in Tanzania William and Ligembe (2022) also reported that teachers always wanted to be notified in advance about instructional supervisory duties to be carried out. On the other hand, departmental heads

revealed that notifying teachers in advance about the supervisory itinerary might lead to falsification of information by not giving them what really occurs in the departments on a daily basis since teachers would have been alerted in advance. Departmental heads who participated in this study believed that pitching up in the classroom or monitoring and evaluating instruction unexpectedly might keep teachers performing their duties as expected.

A study conducted by Sengai (2021) on the roles of departmental heads in instructional supervision in selected Zimbabwean secondary schools also highlights that teachers' negative attitudes may sometimes emanate from the way in which the departmental heads were appointed. The researcher reported that in many schools there is a lack of collegial relationship between departmental heads and teachers. Teachers' resistance to and negative attitudes towards instructional supervision evidently results from inconsistencies and lack of clarity in the implementation of instructional supervision. This study will tell us how teachers perceive instructional supervision in selected secondary schools of uMzinyathi District.

2.3.3 Departmental heads' unbearable workload

Studies depict many departmental heads as grappling with unbearable workloads, thus hindering the successful implementation of instructional supervision which, in turn, negatively affects learners' academic and the performance of the school (Bambi, 2021; Naidoo, 2021; Okeke & Okaforcha, 2019). Bambi (2021) reported that departmental heads spend most of their time supervising teaching and learning activities in their respective departments. However, their workloads inhibit them from giving teachers individual attention and giving feedback timeously after an instructional supervisory duty has been carried out.

There are other factors mitigating the successful implementation of instructional supervision in secondary schools (Okeke & Okaforcha, 2019). Okeke and Okaforcha (2019) argued that despite having supervisory roles, departmental heads also have subjects to teach and carry out many other administrative duties assigned to them. Bambi (2021) revealed that principals of schools rely heavily on departmental heads as their support structure, especially in schools without deputy principals. The author argues that in schools with low enrolment, some of the duties assigned to departmental heads are not consistent with their lines of specialisation or expertise.

Naidoo (2021) reported that in schools with low enrolment, departmental heads of the humanities department were given a duty to supervise both humanities and sciences departments. Naidoo (2021) further reported that, as much as the departmental heads were able,

for example, to identify some problems or gaps in the sciences department, they were sometimes unable to develop solutions to certain problems due to their limited knowledge base and expertise. A study conducted by (Malinga et al., 2021) to determine science departmental heads' instructional leadership and instructional supervision roles in Gauteng high schools reported that in such contexts, departmental heads find themselves under immense pressure when executing instructional supervision because they receive little or no support from subject advisors and principals, which then compromises the effective implementation of instructional supervision.

Departmental heads perceive their position in the school hierarchy as a demanding one (Chepkuto et al., 2018). However, studies show that in schools with high enrolment it is feasible for departmental heads to work smoothly in their respective departments of expertise (Bambi, 2021; Peretomode, 2021). The number of learners in schools determines the size of the staff members due to Post-Provisioning Norms (PPN); thus, as the number of learners increases, the staff is also likely to increase, and this eases the burden on departmental heads' shoulders (Peretomode, 2021). According to Bambi (2021), when the school enrolment increases, each department is likely to have its own specific departmental heads who manage many teachers. Therefore, in such schools delegation is not a problem. Precisely, unmanageable workloads for departmental heads make them unable to set the tone of the schools, model the way and ensure consistency. A school's enrolment affects human resources. Therefore, many departmental heads recommend that their workloads be minimised if effective instructional supervision has to be realised in schools. It is imperative to explore departmental head's experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi District in order to understand how departmental heads perceive their workloads in selected secondary schools.

2.3.4 Lack of instructional resources

The core business of the school is to produce responsible and productive citizens who are competent locally and globally. This can only be possible if quality teaching and learning is happening in schools. Quality teaching and learning requires instructional resources, which may include textbooks, workbooks, reading materials and etcetera. Studies show that the unavailability of instructional resources adversely affects the implementation of instructional supervision. Chiwamba and Kigobe (2022) explored the challenges that departmental heads encounter when carrying out supervisory roles and reported that instructional supervision can never be effective without adequate instructional material. Usman (2015) also explored the

challenges of instructional supervision and reported that less equipped schools seem to face more challenges than their endowed counterparts regarding the implementation of instructional supervision.

In Usman's (2015) study, departmental heads also highlighted that the major problem that results in inadequate instructional resources is the mismanagement and misappropriation of school funds. The research report reveals that in most schools, it is solely the duty of the school principal to manage school finances due to high levels of illiteracy among the members of the School Governing Body (SGB). Principals of schools end up not prioritising the important things with the school's state allocation of funds and not all departments in schools encounter the lack of instructional resource. Certain departments were more prioritised than others. This caused unnecessary tension and competition among departmental heads and the various departments within the school, thus resulting in an environment that is not conducive for effective teaching and learning.

Some departmental heads end up keeping valuable information within their respective departments and ask teachers not to share it with members from other departments. Tension and conflicts also arise among teachers within the same department because there are subjects that are perceived as more important than others, thus they are provided with all the necessary instructional resources. Some departmental heads end up not being motivated to perform their instructional supervisory duties in the expected manner due to shortage of instructional resources. This means that, no matter how much the departmental head may want to effectively implement instructional supervision, they certainly fail due to lack of instructional resources. However, in most endowed schools, instructional supervision is carried out smoothly. This theme revealed that when talking about resources, people tend to focus on tangible things, overlooking financial and human resources which are equally important in the effective implementation of instructional supervision. It is also necessary that principals enrol for financial management qualification in order to properly oversee school finances as accounting officers. This study will indicate if instructional resource have impacted instructional supervision in selected secondary schools.

2.3.5 Lack of training on instructional supervision

In-service training programmes are designed to capacitate employees with new knowledge and skills so that they meet demands of the ever-changing education system (Habi, 2022). Bambi (2021) also defined in-service trainings as courses which aim to increase teachers' professional

competencies and performance. These training sessions are also designed to equip teachers with professional skills that enable them to meet the challenges and demands of the education system. However, studies show that departmental heads regard training sessions aimed to capacitate them on the implementation of instructional supervision as futile exercises (Oloweselu et al., 2019; William & Ligembe, 2022). According to Oloweselu et al. (2019), training sessions are short and more theoretical than practical. The instructor just reads what is written from the training manual, with no practical examples given and no questions asked. Once the reading is done, departmental heads are asked to sign the attendance register and thereafter the programme director announces the end of the session. William and Ligembe (2022) noted that these training sessions are one-size-fits-all programmes that are loosely connected with other contexts. This means that the training sessions seem to be relevant to and cater for a certain group of people, especially those who come from the most equipped schools, since they have all the necessary resources needed for effective implementation of instructional supervision. William and Ligembe (2022) also discovered that most training sessions were conducted just for the sake of formality. There were no follow-ups conducted to ensure that departmental heads apply the knowledge gained from the training sessions when executing their instructional supervisory duties.

In a qualitative study conducted to explore the preparation of instructional supervisors in the Sultanate of Oman through semi-structured interviews held with a group of departmental heads, Al-Kiyumi and Hammad (2020) reported that departmental heads consider their preparation as inappropriate, as the training sessions were reportedly short, focused more on theory than practical and offer few opportunities for practice. The study also revealed that departmental heads find the theoretical nature of the training sessions unnecessary since it negatively affected the professional support they give to their teachers. Departmental heads were concerned with the time frames in which these training workshops were conducted; they seemed to interfere with school-working hours. However, this study also recommends that training workshops should be conducted frequently in order to meet the demands of the ever-changing education system, globally.

In a study conducted to determine the challenges affecting instructional supervision in secondary schools in Nairobi, Kenya, Atenio (2019) reported that instructional supervisors are people who have been promoted from other positions. For an example, the assumption is that a teacher who has excelled in their teaching and has great experience in the subject and was supervised accordingly has to be promoted to the position of a departmental head. Hence, this

underlies the assumption that if the teacher was excelling in their previous position, there is no need for them to undergo any sort of training. Tshabalala (2013) also reported that there is insufficient funding for the training workshops for instructional supervisors. Thus, it makes sense for educators to demonstrate, prior to their appointment as departmental heads, that they possess the skills and background knowledge required for the advertised position of departmental head. Evidence of certification should act as the most significant opportunity for the appointment of departmental heads.

Departmental heads' unique settings are not taken into consideration during training sessions. They are also disappointed by instructors who are incapable of teaching. There is a necessity in lengthening training sessions and in making them more practical because learning and internalising a new skill can be a lengthy process. Additionally, there is a need for developing a series of follow-up programmes that seek to assess the effectiveness of the conducted training sessions and come up with turn-around strategies if necessary. Studies also advise principals of schools to consider certain aspects before they appoint a departmental head (Bambi, 2021; Usman, 2015). This creates a need for this study in order to understand how training on instructional supervision have impacted departmental head's practices of instructional supervisory duties in selected secondary schools.

2.4 Strategies that departmental heads use to address challenges they face in executing instructional supervisory duties

This theme enables presentation and discussion of strategies that departmental heads use to address challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties. Studies show that the majority of departmental heads adopt management tasks such as planning, organising, leading and controlling in order to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties (Bambi, 2021; Naidoo, 2021). In addition, strategies such as setting the tone from day one, modelling the way and ensuring consistency were also mentioned.

2.4.1 The adoption of four management tasks

Studies show that departmental heads overcome many challenges that hinder successful implementation of instructional supervision and make sure that quality teaching and learning is realised through the adoption of management tasks (Mpisane, 2015; Naidoo, 2021). These management tasks include planning, organising, leading and controlling.

According to Mpisane (2015), educational management is vital when teachers want to get things done and achieve desirable educational outcomes in schools. The author believes that effective management can make everything possible in schools. In a study that was conducted in 2015 on the roles of departmental heads in secondary schools, it was discovered that schools with good management practices normally obtain excellent results. Naidoo (2021) also reported that despite the prevalence of a number of mitigating factors departmental heads are experiencing when executing instructional supervisory roles, departmental heads try everything within their means to ensure quality teaching and learning in schools.

2.4.1.1 Planning

This is the first component of management (Bush, 2014; Ducker, 2008). It is believed that the success or failure of any organisation depends on how competent or poor the plan is. Planning is about jotting down how one can turn a vision into reality (Naiker et al., 2021). Deventer and Kruger (2003) argue that at the planning stage, a person who is in charge logically thinks about the vision of the organisation, incorporating what needs to be done, the required resources and the setting up of desirable outcomes. Studies show that planning waylays future problems (Friend & Hickling, 2012). At this stage, departmental heads schedule meetings with all the teachers in their respective departments. During the meetings, the goals of the school are revisited in order for the department to set its own goals that are in line with the vision of the school (Mpisane, 2015). All the teachers are included in the decision-making process to ensure that everyone in the department can be held accountable. Once decisions have been adopted by the majority, a plan to realise department goals is developed. This plan indicates the tasks that need to be done, the required resources, and specific time frames for each activity. For an example, this plan may indicate that teachers' files should be submitted to the departmental head's office every Monday.

2.4.1.2 Organising

This is the second stage of the management task (Bush, 2014). According to Johanson and Mattson (2015), in this stage, the manager attaches activities to names. He or she distributes activities that need to be done in order to make sure that everything goes as planned. Duties are mostly distributed according to individuals' abilities. To ease the burden on their shoulders, departmental heads assign some other duties to subordinate teachers in their departments. A departmental head may assign a duty of monitoring science teachers' files to a senior science teacher. This is done to empower more teachers to be able to perform more duties in order to

gain more experience, monitoring themselves and other members (Bush & Glover, 2016). Values such as honesty, trust, respect and transparency are strengthened within departments. This also maintains interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships within departments, which strengthens organisational culture and climate. It also helps the school when appointing an acting departmental head, in the case of the departmental head getting promoted or having transferred to another school.

2.4.1.3 Leading or guiding

This is the third stage of the management task (Bush, 2014) where a leader directly influences subordinates to perform duties assigned to them through motivation, communication, guiding and encouraging in order to ensure that the duties assigned to them get done accordingly (Belyh, 2019). At this stage, the leader can assist the staff where they need help, engaging in a serious dialogue with them. Departmental heads frequently schedule a number of meetings with teachers who have been assigned to perform some duties in order to initiate follow-up activities that allow teachers to be accountable for what they have done. If a certain teacher finds difficulties in performing some of assigned duties, the departmental head give continuous support (Burns et al., 2015).

2.4.1.4 Controlling

At the controlling stage, the leader continuously monitors the organisation's results against the set performance standards in order to ensure that everything is on track and that the organisation yields its desirable outcomes (Haimann, 2018). Departmental heads are responsible for monitoring the performance of duties that are assigned to teachers. It is also their responsibility to ensure that all the parties adhere to the agreements and deadlines that were stipulated during planning. This is due to the fact that at the end the departmental head is the only person that is held accountable for the performance of his or her department (Bush, 2014).

2.4.2 Setting the tone from day one, modelling the way, consistency

A study conducted by Chiwamba and Kigobe (2022) discovered that departmental heads execute instructional supervisory duties despite the numerous challenges that they are experiencing. Setting the tone, modelling the way and ensuring consistency are strategies that work for many instructional supervisors. In this study, setting the tone from day one means instructional supervisors ought to be proactive rather than reactive. This means that departmental heads communicate the vision and mission of the school from the first day of

their supervisory role. This includes the documentation and distribution of the departmental year plans that are also informed by school year plans in order to be known by all people in the respective department. During the distribution and discussion of the year plans, departmental heads can be able to perceive problems that might arise in future and prevent them in advance.

In their study Malinga et al. (2019) explored departmental heads' instructional leadership in high schools and found that modelling the way and ensuring consistency constituted the best recipe for successful instructional supervision. According to Haimann (2018), departmental heads should always practise what they say in order for teachers to take instructional supervision seriously. If the policy says a teacher should not go to class unprepared, this must apply to everyone. This also includes following departmental year plans, treating every individual equally and doing away with favouritism. If the year plan stipulates that on a specific day a certain teacher should expect a class visit from a departmental head, it really has to be like that, otherwise teachers will not take the year plan seriously. It is imperative to conduct this study in order to understand how departmental heads in selected secondary schools carry out their instructional supervisory duties despite the challenges they face.

2.5 The kind of support that departmental heads require when executing instructional supervisory duties

Departmental heads receive inadequate support from relevant stakeholders (Naidoo, 2021). Studies conducted by Bambi (2021) and Naidoo (2021) show that departmental heads require support in order to effectively execute their instructional supervisory duties. Naidoo (2021) reported that departmental heads want to be supported by different people in various ways and these people include the principal of the school, teachers, fellow departmental heads and subject advisors. The scholar reported that training sessions on instructional supervision and the provision of instructional resources seem to be the most important things in which departmental heads want the most support. Departmental heads see a need for developing capacity-building initiatives for instructional supervisors. The study then recommended that relevant stakeholders should conduct a series of seminars communicating the significance of instructional supervision to teachers. The study also suggested that government should increase funding for instructional supervisory activities.

In a study that focused on the provision of instructional resources, Habi (2022) examined school leadership practices in Lesotho and discovered that departmental heads want to be

included in matters pertaining the school budget and budgeting. The study reported that departmental heads suggest that all departments within the school should get at least equal proportions from State-allocated funds. According to the research findings, this might reduce unnecessary competition among departments, thus resulting in a harmonious teaching and learning environment. If it happens that the school budgeted for deficit, its School Governing Body should consider priorities within the school budget. Furthermore, departmental heads also reported that their workload should be minimised so that they can get enough time to execute their duties and be able to give everyone individual attention. This study will indicate if departmental heads in selected secondary schools require any support regarding instructional supervision.

2.6 Theoretical framework

A theory that a researcher chooses to guide his or her study is called a theoretical framework (Maree, 2016). The theoretical framework offers some explanation of an event (Beuzidenhout, 2014) or sheds some light on a particular phenomenon of the research problem (Imenda, 2014). It provides a theoretical scope a study should follow as well as the concepts that help to explain the phenomenon being studied (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Therefore, this study was guided by Douglas McGregor's (1960) Instructional Supervision Theory. The theory was developed to assist supervisors in carrying out instructional supervision efficiently and effectively in organisations. This theory has been the subject in numerous studies and analysis in the fields of leadership, management and organisational psychology. Many of these studies explore the management understanding, practices and approaches, challenges and strategies to instructional supervision in different organisations. It illuminates the term instructional supervision and explains how instructional supervisory duties should be conducted. This study explored departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in selected secondary schools through exploring departmental heads' understanding, practices and challenges in supervision. Strategies used by departmental heads to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties were also explored.

McGregor (1960) appropriately fosters an in-depth understanding of departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision. The theory also outlines that supervisory duties in schools involve defining school's vision, managing curriculum and instruction, creating a conducive teaching and learning environment, as well as observing and improving instruction.

Within this theory, there is Theory X and Theory Y. Theory X assumes that employees are inherently lazy and dislike work, requiring tight control and coercion while Theory Y assumes that employees are self-motivated, enjoy work, and can be trusted with responsibility. However, Theory X and Y have been critiqued by many authors such as Carbone (1981), Bunnies (1972), Likert (1974), Marsh (1974) and Nord (1978) pointing out its oversimplification of the human behavior. They also points out that, this theory fails to account for cultural diversity, behaviour and can potentially lead to manipulation. With all the critics, the authors did not discount the fact that leaders and managers in different organisations have core assumptions that affect their view of human nature and workers for that matter. The critics however stressed that the role of the environment must firmly brought into the equation. Later on, Theory Z was developed which suggested that managers should cultivate a positive work environment, foster trust and loyalty, empower employees to contribute their best work rather than relying solely on control and extrinsic rewards. However, Theory Z was not appropriate for this study since it is more embedded in Japanese corporate culture. A more nuanced and flexible approach to management that considers individual differences, situational factors and cultural variations is often recommended by the above-mentioned authors.

McGregor (1960) is of the view that instructional supervisors may work with supervisees who are either motivated or not motivated to perform their duties. When supervisees are not motivated to do their work, supervisors apply a close supervision. His theory posits close supervision as a style of leadership or management where a supervisor closely monitors and guides the behaviour and performance of the employees. He further asserted that a supervisor who adopts close supervision frequently checks supervisees' work, thus increasing his or her workload. This style of supervision is characterised by a series of meetings where the supervisor reminds the supervisee on the progress of their work, checking compliance with assigned duties. During those meetings, the organisations' vision is clearly communicated. Supervisees are encouraged to do their work accordingly in order to realise the organisation's goals. Constructive criticism is given, and supervisees are praised publicly and disciplined privately. The theory assumes that when supervisees are motivated to do their work, supervisors tend to adopt participative management style with a focus on empowerment, delegation and fostering collaborative work environment.

Lack of motivation may result from poor working conditions, lack of instructional resources and low wages and salaries. Such organisations rarely realise their goals. However, in an organisation where everything is under control and employees are motivated to perform their

duties, supervisors tend to be relaxed. This is due to the fact that in such conditions, supervisees tend to be goal-orientated, performing duties assigned to them at their level best.

McGregor (1960) acknowledges that supervisors may have different experiences of instructional supervision. The acknowledgement of different levels of experience makes the theory suitable for this study since its purpose was to explore the experiences of departmental heads regarding instructional supervision with no intention of arriving at the same conclusion. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), this theory was also consistent with the paradigm, research methodology and methods that were adopted in this study since it aimed to understand the phenomenon rather than explaining it and the participants' experiences were the most important part of the inquiry.

For effective and efficient instructional supervision to occur, this theory emphasises the importance of formulating policies. According to McGregor (1960) policy refers to a proposed principle of action that is adopted by an organisation or individual. McGregor argued that the formulation of policies in schools is done in order to assist people who are in charge of supervising the teaching and learning operations in the school. In South Africa, PAM is the policy that outlines the duties of departmental heads, which guides them in doing their instructional supervisory duties. Hof (2014) supported a view by McGregor (1960) that a school needs to have a clear policy that mainly focuses on instructional supervision as well as the teaching and learning process. Hof (2014) argued that if policies are in place and followed, teaching and learning outcomes improve and, consequently, schools' and learners' academic achievement improves. McGregor (1960) also recommends that departmental heads should familiarise themselves with the most valued and appropriate attitudes and behaviours when drafting policies. He believes that this can help departmental heads in managing instructional management processes.

McGregor (1960) stresses the need for instructional supervisors to openly communicate with their supervisees. His view was also supported by Clarke et al. (2010) who argued that a joint communication and collaboration are essential for the benefit of an organisation. A study conducted by Ndovela (2014) focused on the roles of departmental heads as instructional leaders and encouraged departmental heads to regularly meet with teachers in order to discuss issues pertaining teaching and learning within their respective departments. The study also motivates that during those meetings, departmental heads should present their common findings from classroom observations made during class visits. It is also encouraged that during

those meetings, teachers should also be allowed to share their experiences and challenges and how they overcome them. McGregor (1960) believes that the sharing of ideas would make a positive difference in an organisation.

Being goal-driven is one of the fundamental components of McGregor (1960) that is essential to realise efficient and effective instructional supervision. The theory encourages instructional supervisors to look beyond the school business. He argued that each organisation has a vision and a mission statement clearly outlining the goals of the organisation and ways in which its vision can be brought into reality. For an example, the school considers the kind of learners that the school wants to produce, the needs of the society, and etcetera. This is also supported by Dewey (1950) who defined the school as a mini-society and encouraged that the curriculum in the school should be informed by the needs of the society.

McGregor (1960) singles out empowerment as another important aspect of instructional supervision. According to the theory, training is necessary for the labour force in order to meet the demands of the ever-changing world. The theorist recommends that every organisation should be regarded as a learning organisation where people in the organisation are allowed and encouraged to learn. Mpisane (2015) and Bambi (2021) supported McGregor (1960) view that instructional supervisors should lead and manage their respective departments in a manner that trains supervisees to be co-supervisors. McGregor (1960) believes that this can be done through knowledge transfer by conducting departmental workshops, coaching, meetings and classroom observations. He believes that equipping others with essential skills and knowledge required in the organisation is beneficial to the organisation. For instance, the school would have someone to assist in performing the departmental head's responsibilities if the departmental head was to be appointed or transferred to another school while the organisation was still in the process of advertising the vacant post. In a school context, a temporarily appointed departmental head stands a good chance of being selected during interviews because of their experience and familiarity with the school's operations. Therefore, in any organisation, professional growth plans should be put in place and implemented in order for the organisation to achieve its desired outcomes and be able to challenge the status quo rather than accept it.

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter presented published national and international literature on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision. It also discussed the theoretical framework

underpinning this study. The next chapter presents the methodology, which involved the methods that were adopted to elicit data for this study. Ethical considerations that were taken into account to generate data are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and explains how the study was carried out. It presents and discusses the research paradigm underpinning the study. It then presents and discusses the research design and methods that were employed in eliciting, analysing and interpreting data in this study. It further presents the sampling methods and how data were generated. It further discusses the data analysis technique, ethical considerations, trustworthiness of findings and limitations of the study. It also provided a detailed justification for choosing the techniques used to select departmental heads, generate and analyse data for the reader to be acquainted with the context of the study and be able to follow how research findings were generated. This chapter concludes with the chapter summary.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do departmental heads understand and practice instructional supervision?
2. What challenges do departmental heads face in executing their instructional supervisory duties?
3. How do departmental heads address the challenges they face when executing their instructional supervisory duties and what kind of support do departmental heads require to perform their duties effectively?

3.2 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is a belief system, worldview, set of concepts, model, framework or pattern that underpins research (Cohen et al., 2018). There are different types of paradigms, and each has its own philosophical underpinnings such as ontology, epistemology and methodology (Maree, 2016). According to Scotland (2012) and Sefotho (2016), while ontology deals with the nature of reality from a philosophical stance, epistemology deals with how knowledge is created and acquired. Methodology mainly focuses on the procedures used in research to generate data under the guidance of the chosen paradigm.

A paradigm focusing on getting a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being explored among different individuals was vital for this study. Therefore, this study was guided by the interpretive paradigm, which accepts multiple realities that constitute the phenomenon being studied (Cresswell, 2009). It acknowledges that different individuals can have different perspectives regarding the same phenomenon and that reality is subjective and socially constructed (Sefotho, 2016). Levers (2013) also acknowledge that the world depends on people and, therefore, research findings and interpretations should emerge from the generated data. The nature of the discourse in this paradigm is dialogic while the nature of communication is transactional, which improves an understanding of the phenomenon of interest in its original setting (Scotland, 2012).

Since the study was qualitative and aimed to explore and understand the departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision, the interpretive paradigm was the most suitable paradigm for this study. Thanh and Thanh (2015) argued that there is a tight connection between a qualitative study and the interpretive paradigm. In this paradigm, departmental heads' experiences were the most important part of the inquiry. A study that is underpinned by the interpretive paradigm uses an emic (insider or inductive) approach, which allows the researcher to put aside all the assumptions and theories in order to let the participants and data speak, thus allowing themes, patterns and concepts to emerge uninterrupted. The role of the researcher in the interpretive paradigm is to understand and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants (Cohen et al., 2007). Therefore, I cannot establish absolute truth about phenomena, as truth is contextual and highly relative to individuals. The emphasis in this study was on getting a deeper understanding of and demystifying the phenomenon under study and not on the description thereof. A phenomenon is understood through the meanings that research participants assign to it (Maree, 2016).

3.3 Research approach

This study employed the qualitative research approach, which is defined as an emergent inductive, interpretive and naturalistic approach to the study of a phenomenon in its natural setting or context (Cohen et al., 2018). Qualitative approaches are more interested in gathering information that uses to present certain people on certain positions (Stake, 2010). This approach was employed in this study in order to reveal the descriptive interpretations that departmental heads attach to their experiences of instructional supervision. Therefore, this approach allowed departmental heads in this study to share their experiences and narratives, which resulted in

thick descriptions being given, thus strengthening the trustworthiness of research findings. This approach allowed the departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision to be the most important part of the inquiry, thus reducing my own biases. The qualitative approach was also in line with the chosen interpretive paradigm, as it is relevant when the depth of the information is required about the phenomenon of interest (Maree, 2016). Data were generated in words rather than numbers.

3.4 Research design

As a novice researcher, making decisions on how to navigate this study was not a simple task. However, decisions on what data to be generated and how to generate that data needed to be made. Stake (2010) points out that a researcher cannot rely on their expertise when conducting research but they have to engage with people who are knowledgeable in the field. The literature reviewed in preparation for this study influenced the choice of a case study methodology. A single exploratory case study design was adopted for this study since it focused on one group of people (departmental heads) to get a deeper understanding of their experiences of instructional supervision. In an exploratory study, a specific case is analysed and studied in great detail to explore and gain a deeper understanding of a particular phenomenon (Maree, 2016). According to Yin (2009) there is a difference between a case and a case study. He further explained that a case is a phenomenon and the case study is a research method used to understand the phenomenon. A case study is defined a qualitative research design that explores the concurrent phenomenon in its original setting (Yin, 2012). In this study, the case is instructional supervision and the focus was on departmental heads experiences in secondary schools. Maree (2016) highlighted that a case study emanates from the desire to catch up a close reality of a phenomenon within its real-life context. The case study design gave me an opportunity to be in the standpoint of departmental heads who experience the phenomenon under study in order to have a better understanding of their interpretations of their experiences. The case study design also allowed me to gain more insights into departmental heads experiences of instructional supervision. It strives to portray what it is like to be in a particular situation (Yin, 2009). This was done by catching a close-up reality and participants' thick descriptions of their lived experiences. It also allowed me to investigate the phenomenon within its real-life context, thus helping me to present and represent reality by giving the sense of being there.

3.5 Selection of participants

It is impossible to include the entire population in a research study (Maree, 2016). Usually, there are two main restrictions, which are time and cost (Cohen et al., 2018). Therefore, Cohen et al. (2018), Cresswell (2009) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that a researcher should employ a particular sampling technique to draw a sample that is representative of the entire population. A sample is a smaller group of people that represents the entire population in a study (Cresswell, 2012).

Research corroborates that there are two main measures of sampling and they are probability and non-probability sampling (Cohen et al., 2018; Grant 2018). According to Grant (2018), in a probability sampling criteria every individual stand an equal chance of being selected and it is used in a quantitative research study. However, non-probability sampling allows the researcher to choose participants based on the nature of the study and characteristics of the required sample. Non-probability sampling methods are used in a qualitative study. The research title for this study spoke to departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools in a South African District. Therefore, uMzinyathi District was conveniently selected. To select the research sites, I looked at the schools that were within my reach. Therefore, two secondary schools were conveniently selected under uMsinga Circuit since I also work under this circuit.

Six departmental heads, three departmental heads from each school were selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used to access knowledgeable departmental heads who typified the case being studied. Departmental heads were believed to be in possession of the in-depth knowledge about the experiences of instructional supervision. They were able to provide thick credible descriptions of the events and experiences, thus facilitated data generation and strengthened the trustworthiness of data. In one of the selected secondary schools, purposive sampling produced more than the required number of departmental heads who met the inclusion requirements. Therefore, convenience sampling was used to select departmental heads that were easily accessible to me.

3.5.1 Participants' inclusion criteria

The selection was based on the number of years one had spent as a departmental head. For departmental heads to be selected for participation in this study, they were supposed to have a

minimum of two or more years working as departmental heads in selected secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa

3.6 Location of the study

This study was conducted in two secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa under uMsinga Circuit which is located in a rural area with high levels of poverty and illiteracy. The community mostly relies on Government or State of funds for basic needs. The area frequently experiences civil wars which lead to high rates of mortality, migration and child-headed households. Many learners drop out of school. There are high rates of teenage pregnancy, drug and substance abuse as well as crime.

3.7 Data generation method

I followed qualitative data generation methods recommended by Cohen et al. (2018), Cresswell (2009) and Maree (2016). Data were generated through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, which allowed me to probe into and guide the selected departmental heads towards the research focus (Maree, 2016). I approached the interviews with a pre-planned interview questions in response to research questions. The same interview questions were used prior the actual interview in pilot interviews that I conducted with other departmental heads who were not participants in this study in order to check their suitability in terms of generating data and responding to the research questions. Maree(2016) put emphasis on conducting pilot interviews when conducting a qualitative study in order to assess the suitability of the instruments chosen for data generation. Lucky enough, pilot interviews indicated that interview questions and data generated responds to research questions. I scheduled the interviews with departmental heads who were my study participants. These interviews were conducted in selected secondary schools after school hours to avoid interrupting teaching and learning activities. The interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the departmental heads who participated in the study. During the interviews, I was also taking notes, reviewing the answers and asking additional questions if necessary. I did a lot of elaboration and clarification, probing in order to verify if what I had heard was what the departmental head meant. I also did reflections after every interview in order to examine if there was a need to conduct follow-up interviews.

3.8 Data analysis

Swanborn (2010) opines that research questions are a key guide for analysing the generated data for a case study. Data generation and analysis occurred concurrently. Data were analysed

through the thematic analysis technique. Thematic analysis is regarded as the most popular and easiest method of analysing qualitative data (Maree, 2016). It allowed findings to emerge from the generated data, thus minimising the risk of reporting my own biases. In this study, I used the four steps recommended by Maree (2016) and Cohen et al. (2018) which are followed in analysing the generated data. Firstly, all the recordings were transcribed verbatim. Transcription was done immediately after every interview, while everything was still fresh in the memory. Non-verbal cues were also included in the transcripts. Secondly, I familiarised myself with data by reading and re-reading transcripts line by line. Thirdly, codes were generated until no emergent codes could be identified. Lastly, themes were then formulated and this process was guided by the theoretical framework, research questions and research objectives through which data was presented, discussed and interpreted.

3.9 Trustworthiness of the study

The quality of the study is measured through generated data, including the methods used to generate, analyse and interpret the data (Cohen et al., 2018). In qualitative research, the quality of a research study is measured through the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maree, 2016). Trustworthiness has four fundamental components (Cohen et al., 2018), which were also observed in this study. These include credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability, which are discussed in detail below.

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility focuses mostly on the correlation of findings with reality and the assurance that the reader believes in the research findings (Cresswell, 2009). I ensured that well-established research methods and methodology were adopted. Research methods were informed by research questions, problem, rationale and the theoretical framework. I also ensured that there was rapport with departmental heads and the organisations that were being studied. Well-defined purposive sampling and detailed data generation methods were also utilised.

3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to a quality criterion that measures the degree in which findings can be transferred to other contexts (Cohen et al., 2018). Transferability rejects generalised claims when presenting research findings (Maree, 2016). However, Cohen et al. (2018) argue that transferability accepts and acknowledges that findings can be transferable to similar contexts. In this study, I ensured transferability through the selection of departmental heads who had

typical experiences of the phenomenon and the context being studied through purposive sampling. Complete details of the phenomenon and the context were provided to allow the reader to decide whether research findings are transferable. Thick descriptions were provided to provide readers with a full and purposeful account on the context, selected departmental heads and research design.

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the measure of the reliability of the findings, that is, the degree to which the findings can be trusted. Dependability is determined by the adopted research design and its implementation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I ensured that the readers were kept updated about everything regarding research methods, especially for the data generation and analysis technique. This enabled the reader to come to conclusions that are similar to those made in this study. Everything was documented, which also assisted the reader to follow the reasoning behind the interpreted data.

3.9.4 Conformability

Conformability focuses more on the design and neutrality of the findings (Punch, 2005). It also focuses on the degree to which findings can be confirmed using the same methods (Cohen et al., 2018). The contention around conformability is that if other researchers were to conduct the same study using the same methods, they should arrive at conclusions that are similar to those made in this study. During the interviews, I communicated his understanding of the departmental heads' responses in order for departmental heads to verify them through member-checking. In this study, findings were shaped by departmental heads' responses not by my own biases. I reproduced enough text to allow the reader to decide on the message that the participants were trying to convey and never forced his own interpretation. I also thoroughly explained the research methods and methodologies that were adopted for this study.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Prior to data generation, I ensured simultaneous application for ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and also sought permission to conduct research from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZN DoE). I then sought permission in writing from the schools to conduct the research. In those letters the purpose of the study was explained in order to obtain the informed consent. Only secondary schools and departmental heads who gave consent participated in this study. Ethical issues of autonomy, anonymity and

confidentiality, non-maleficence as well as beneficence were observed. The following paragraphs outline how the above-mentioned ethical issues were adhered to in this research study.

3.10.1 Informed consent and autonomy

It is vital for the researcher to obtain consent from every participant in the study (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2004). Nothing should be kept private from the participants, and it should be the participant's choice to participate in or withdraw from the study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). In this study, I informed the selected departmental heads about the aim of this study and that their participation in this study was free and voluntary. The departmental heads were also allowed to withdraw from the study at any given time whenever they felt like doing so. The departmental heads' rights to participation, respect, privacy, safety and security were also observed.

3.10.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

The safety of the participants in a research study should not be risked at all costs (Novak, 2014). Anonymity and confidentiality are ethical practices that are designed to protect the privacy of human subjects when the researcher is collecting, analysing and presenting data (Cohen et al., 2018). In this study, the identities of departmental heads and selected secondary schools were protected through the use of pseudonyms. The generated data were stored in a password-protected file on my and supervisor's cloud. Data were not shared with anyone else except the supervisor and were used for the research report only. Data will be completely deleted from the devices and from the backup system files after five years.

3.10.3 Non-maleficence

According to Flick (2006), it is important for the researcher to ensure that the research study does not cause any harm of any kind. Cohen et al. (2011) also emphasise that to prevent the research from causing harm, non-maleficence should be considered. Therefore, no harm of any kind occurred during this study. Departmental heads participated in this study voluntarily. Everything regarding this study was kept confidential. Interview recordings and generated data were used only for reporting research findings and will be stored in a safe place for five years and then get destroyed.

3.10.4 Beneficence

A research study should provide positive and observable benefits to the participants rather than being done to comply with the requirements for a certain qualification (Flick, 2006). In this study, departmental heads benefited through reflecting on their own practice regarding their instructional supervisory duties, thus they developed new ideas on how they can execute their duties efficiently and effectively in future. This may have a great impact on school performance, thus raising learners' academic achievement. I also shared the research findings and a copy of the dissertation with the participating departmental heads and schools as a way of providing feedback to them. The research report will also be published on the UKZN research space, library website and Google Scholar and be made freely accessible to everyone.

3.11 Limitations

Due to the research approach, research design, sampling technique and sample size employed for this study, the findings were only applicable to two selected schools due to a high degree of the contextualisation of data (Scotland, 2012). Therefore, this study was limited to generalisation. The findings could not be generalised, although they could be transferred to similar contexts. The case study design is vulnerable to distortion and lack of cross-checks (Yin, 2014). My own biases and positionality might have affected the research findings. I overcame the above-mentioned limitations by giving the reader a full description of the context of the study. I also made sure that the findings emerged from the generated data. Member-checking was also done in order to verify my interpretation and understanding of the generated data.

3.12 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the paradigm underpinning this study. It also focused on the research approach and research design that were employed in this study. The chapter also presented a description of the sample, sampling method, data generation plan and the data analysis process adopted in this study. Ethical considerations and the trustworthiness of the study were also discussed. It also outlined a brief description of the location of the study. The next chapter presents, analyses, interprets and discusses the research findings.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in selected secondary schools at uMzinyathi District in South Africa. The previous chapter presented the methodology and methods that were employed in this study. The rationale for adopting a qualitative research approach and relevant methods in this study were discussed. Various research techniques such as sampling, data generation, and data analysis that were used in this study were also discussed in detail. This chapter begins with a brief description of participants, which includes their sex, academic qualifications, teaching experience, and number of years as departmental head. This is followed by data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The data generated through interviews is presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed as themes. Three major themes that emerged were as follows: departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision, challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties, strategies used by departmental heads to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and the kind of support that departmental heads require to perform their duties effectively. The above-mentioned themes were informed by the following research questions.

1. How do departmental heads understand and practice instructional supervision?
2. What challenges do departmental heads face in executing their instructional supervisory duties?
3. How do departmental heads address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties, and what support do they require to perform their duties effectively?

4.2 Description of participants

Departmental heads from two secondary schools in uMzinyathi District participated in this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six departmental heads, three from each school. In the case where the chosen sampling strategy (purposive sampling) produced more than the required number of departmental heads, convenience sampling was used to select departmental heads that were easily accessible. Departmental heads had a minimum of five years and more of experience working as post level one educators and a minimum of three years and more working as departmental heads. Pseudonyms in the form of letters of the alphabet are used instead of real names to refer to both departmental heads and the schools that were selected for participation in this study. There was School A and School B as well as Participant A to F based on the sequence in which the interviews were conducted.

Table 4.1: Participants' details

School name	Participant and sex(M/F)	Teaching experience (Years)	Number of years as a departmental head	Qualifications
School A	A (F)	8	3	B.Ed., B.Ed. Hons (EMLP)
	B (M)	7	3	B.Ed., B.Ed Hons (EMLP)
	C (F)	10	5	B.Ed., B.Ed. Hons.
School B	D (M)	8	4	B.Ed.
	E (F)	12	6	B.Ed.
	F (M)	8	4	B.Ed. B.Ed. Hons (EMLP)

All the departmental head participants in this study held a Bachelor of Education qualification. Some departmental heads also held a Bachelor of Education Honours in Educational Management Law and Policy.

Table 4.2 Research questions, themes and sub-themes

Research questions	Themes, sub-themes and sub sub-themes
How do departmental heads understand and practise instructional supervision?	Theme one: Departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision 1. Guidance and support to improve teaching 2. Curriculum implementation and monitoring 3. Teacher support and mentorship 4. Evaluation and moderation 5. Administrative and organisational duties.
What challenges do departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties?	Theme two: Challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties 1. Departmental heads' unbearable workload 2. Lack of training on instructional supervision 3. Teacher resistance and negative attitude towards instructional supervision 4. Lack of instructional supervisory skills 5. Lack if instructional resources
How do departmental heads address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties, and what support do they require to perform their duties effectively?	Theme three: Strategies that departmental heads use to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and the kind of support they require to perform their duties effectively 1. Delegation of tasks 2. Communication, collaboration and networking 3. The adoption of management tasks 4. Continuous Professional Development from KZN DoE 5. Provision of instructional resources and equal treatment 6. Role clarity and workload reduction 7. Need for recognition and constructive feedback

4.3 Discussion of themes

Themes that were identified and presented below emerged from interview data reflecting departmental heads' responses to interview questions.

The three themes that emerged were linked to research sub-questions and research objectives. All the themes have sub-themes.

4.3.1 Theme one: Departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision

This theme is divided into two, it reflects on departmental heads' understanding and practices of instructional supervision.

Regarding departmental heads' understanding of instructional supervision, the sub-themes that emerged were categorised as follows; guidance and support to improve teaching.

4.3.1.1 Sub-theme one: Guidance and support to improve teaching

Most departmental heads understood instructional supervision as a procedure that is used to give guidance and support to teachers and learners under their supervision and identify gaps and finding ways to bridge them to improve teaching. Some departmental heads described the duties of departmental heads as instructional supervisors. Their understanding of instructional supervision showed that instructional supervision is a form of practice of influencing others in an organisation to do what is expected from them. Some departmental heads understood instructional supervision as a procedure that is used to guide and support both teachers and learners to improve teaching in order to achieve the school's vision. They said:

I think it is about guiding, assisting or helping those who are supervised to improve instruction and to do what is expected from them. It also includes the sharing of ideas to realise the vision and the mission of the organisation (Participant A).

I understand that instructional supervision is a procedure designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning in educational settings. It refers to the systematic support, direction and oversight provided to teachers by educational leaders such as principals, departmental heads or subject advisors to improve instructional practices and learner performance (Participant C).

It is about evaluating and monitoring instruction. It entails helping and guiding teachers to perform their duties to realise quality education for all. It is also about identifying gaps and finding ways to bridge them (Participant E).

It is about giving support, direction and oversight to teachers by educational leaders such as principals, departmental heads or subject advisors to improve instructional practices and overall learner performance (Participant F).

The above responses indicate that departmental heads understood instructional supervision as a procedure of constantly communicating, helping and reminding teachers under their supervision about the vision and the mission of the organisation for the organisation to achieve the intended outcomes. They perceived it as an ongoing process of reskilling and developing teachers to reach their full potential and meet the demands of the ever-changing education system. The sharing of ideas and inclusion of everyone during decision making is also emphasised as they work towards common goal for everyone to be held accountable. The verbatim responses are also in line with the assertions by scholars such as Atenio (2019) and Simpson et al. (2016) who define instructional supervision as a professional continuous process of improving instruction and as a process of guiding, assisting and sharing ideas for the betterment of the organisation. This finding is also in line with McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision that instructional supervision is about defining the vision and the mission of the school, managing the curriculum and instruction, creating conducive learning environment, observing and improving instruction to improve teaching.

Regarding, the departmental heads' practices of instructional supervision, the following sub-themes emerged: Curriculum implementation and monitoring, teacher support and mentorship, evaluation and moderation, administrative and organisational duties.

4.3.1.2 Sub-theme two: Curriculum implementation and monitoring

The study found that departmental heads monitor the curriculum implementation, schedule and conduct class visits to give support and guidance in order for the school to achieve the set goals. Regarding curriculum implementation and monitoring, four out of six departmental heads had the following to say:

I provide guidance in the implementation of the curriculum and visit classrooms for monitoring curriculum implementation (Participant B).

As an instructional supervisor, I perform various duties. I monitor curriculum implementation in my department on a regular (weekly) basis. I do class visits to monitor and support the process of teaching and learning (Participant C).

I provide guidance in the implementation of the curriculum and in any duty that is assigned to teachers in my respective department. I do classroom visits for curriculum monitoring (Participant E).

I monitor curriculum implementation in my department, weekly. I conduct class visits to monitor and support the process of teaching and learning (Participant F).

The above interview excerpts imply that departmental heads play a multifaceted role, that of supporting, monitoring and evaluating teachers and learners' work to ensure both teacher development and effective learners' learning outcomes. They provide support to their subordinates and conduct class visits to identify areas that require professional development. Departmental heads constantly check both teachers and learners work against the set goals. This enables them to identify curriculum needs and take corrective action if it is necessary. In addition, teachers are being provided with opportunities to reflect on their own practice, thus improving the process of learner instruction.

The finding above aligns with Musango (2023) who reported that departmental heads gather information through class visits and lesson observations to assess the effectiveness of curriculum implementation to ensure that it aligns with the set objectives and provide coherent and learning experience for learners. His study highlights that curriculum implementation, and monitoring facilitates school improvement by gathering feedback and making informed decisions to refine the curriculum. In addition, curriculum implementation and monitoring inform teacher education and professional development bodies to develop programmes to enhance skills and practices.

4.3.1.3 Sub-theme three: Teacher support and mentorship

Two out of six departmental heads reported that, they mentor newly appointed teachers. They said:

I mentor newly appointed teachers (Participant C).

I mentor newly appointed teachers (Participant F).

One departmental head said something closer to what was said by the two departmental heads above. He reported that he was assisting teachers who require assistance to improve teaching and learning. He said:

I assist teachers who require assistance to improve teaching and learning (Participant B).

The above responses show that novice teachers might not be having enough practical experience and new to the field of teaching and require some mentorship. The responses also

imply that departmental heads adopt clinical supervision and collaborative approaches that include peer coaching, cognitive coaching and mentoring accompanied by a cyclical process of planning, designing, implementing and evaluating. There is collaboration and collegiality. A professional relationship between experience and novice teachers is emphasised and built to develop the newly appointed teachers both personally and professionally.

The above finding support Bowman's (2014) who reported that teacher support and mentorship help to develop novice teachers in the areas of teacher retention, classroom practices, which positively affects learners' academic achievement. He also reported that working together in a school setting maintains consistency and teachers remain in their chosen profession for years if they are being supported. Moreover, mentoring assists departmental heads to emerge as leaders and reflects on their own practices in terms of assisting novice teachers.

4.3.1.4 Sub-theme four: Evaluation and moderation

Regarding the evaluation and moderation, two out of six departmental heads reported that their duties were to monitor both teachers and learners, identifying gaps, and finding solutions to bridge the gaps. They commented as follows:

I monitor both teachers and learners' work, identify gaps, find ways to bridge them (Participant A).

My job is to monitor and evaluate, identify problems and come up with solutions. I moderate assessments to be written by learners in my department. I also moderate the marking of scripts done by educators (Participant E).

One out of the six departmental head said something similar to what was said in the above verbatim quotes, but he only spoke about moderating teachers and learners' work. He said:

I moderate teachers and learners' work (Participant B).

The above interview excerpts highlight that there are certain curriculum standards that must be met regarding the assessments written by learners and their marking to achieve the desired outcomes. Departmental heads act as gatekeepers, and teachers are expected to submit assessments to be written by learners to their departmental heads for moderation. The teachers administer the assessments only after they have been moderated and approved by the departmental head. After the task has been administered and marked, teachers are expected to submit the marked scripts to the departmental head to check the standardisation of marking

before the marks are recorded. If the departmental head have monitored and evaluated teachers and learners' work, suggesting solutions to problems is also a departmental heads' duty.

Administrative and organisational duties

Regarding administrative and organisational duties, one out of six departmental heads reported that she communicated and reminded teachers about the vision and the mission of her department, which is in line with the vision and mission of the school. She also planned, organised and motivated people under her supervision. She said:

I communicate and remind teachers under my supervision about the vision and mission of my respective department which is in line with the vision and the mission of the school. I also plan, organise, motivate people under my supervision (Participant A).

Two out of six departmental heads reported that they conducted departmental meetings. They said:

I conduct departmental meetings (Participant C).

I schedule and conduct departmental meetings (Participant F).

The other two departmental heads reported that they were assisting their principals with other duties. They said:

I advise the principal about the division of work in my department (Participant B).

I assist the principal with various administrative duties (Participant E).

The above response highlights that it is the duty of the departmental head to align to her department's goals with those of the school. This means that, departmental goals should be informed by the school goals. However, it does not end with ensuring alignment and reminding others about the school goals, departmental heads must also engage those under their supervision in how they can contribute to realise departmental goals. Teachers and learners are also encouraged to do their duties accordingly for the school to achieve the desired outcomes.

The above findings imply that departmental heads understand their responsibilities in instructional supervision and curriculum leadership. Many departmental heads adopt clinical and collaborative supervision approaches. This gives the individual an opportunity to reflect on their own practice, thus improving instruction. In addition, departmental heads are mostly proactive rather than reactive. Their proximity to teachers leads to some form of interaction.

They are involved in everything that happen in the school and in their respective departments, which helps them to be abreast with important developments and problems in their departments, prompting them to act faster to overcome them before they arise.

The findings above are also in line with Tapala et al. (2021) who reported that departmental heads' duties include monitoring, evaluating, encouraging, modelling the way, goal setting, personnel management, accountability and communicating the school vision. The departmental heads also mentioned that monitoring both teachers' and learners work is part of the curriculum leadership roles. Further, departmental heads are expected to pre and post moderate assessments that are written by learners as part of continuous assessments in accordance with annual teaching plans and programme of assessments informed by CAPS document for each subject (Tapala et al., 2021). Researchers such as Grootenboer (2018) and Stephenson (2010) also reported that departmental heads are involved in the training of educators on curriculum matters in terms of coaching, motivating, orientating and delegation. Class visits and lesson observations are done to monitor curriculum coverage (Tapala, 2020).

Departmental heads' responses collectively imply that departmental heads are goal-driven, they are more concerned about the future outcomes. Being goal-driven is one of the fundamental components mentioned by McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision that is essential to realise efficient and effective instructional supervision. For effective and efficient instructional supervision, McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision also emphasised the importance of formulating policies. This means that each department should have its own rules or policies. If rules and policies are in place and followed, improvement in teaching and learning is triggered and consequently schools and learners' academic achievement (McGregor, 1960). Rules should be documented and known by everyone in a school.

4.3.2 Theme two: Challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties

This theme deals with the challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties. Departmental heads' responses revealed that there are many mitigating factors that hinder the successful implementation of instructional supervision. That included departmental heads' unbearable workload, the lack of and inadequate training on instructional supervision, teacher resistance and negative attitudes towards instructional supervision. Lack

of instructional supervisory skills and lack of instructional resources were also mentioned as challenges towards instructional supervision.

4.3.2.1 Sub-theme one: Departmental heads' unbearable workload

This study found that most departmental heads find their positions in the school hierarchy as a demanding one. Participants' responses revealed that despite being an instructional supervisor, departmental heads have classes to look after, a subject to teach, more administrative duties and other duties assigned to them by the school principal. They reported that their workload is unbearable. They commented as follows:

Besides being a department head, I also have subjects to teach and more administrative work to do. I also have some other duties that are assigned to me by the school principal (Participant A).

The whole school is doing Mathematics, and I am expected to moderate 10% of their written work. I also have many teachers under my department, which makes it difficult to conduct class visits regularly. Giving everyone individual attention is a challenge (Participant B).

The amount of paperwork is quite enormous (Participant D).

I also have classes to teach and a lot of administrative work to do, which culminate in inconsistencies and failure to adhere to departmental year plans (Participant E).

Teachers have diverse needs that I am expected to attend to. I also have classes to teach and other administrative work. There are also other duties assigned to me by the school principal (Participant F).

The verbatim quotes indicate that departmental heads are struggling with the dual role they must play, that of being teachers and leaders to other teachers, which culminate in an increase in their workload. It is evident from the above quotations that most departmental heads find it difficult to perform instructional supervisory duties assigned to them. The above verbatim quotes could also indicate that departmental heads' workload is more than what they have anticipated, which resulting in inconsistencies in the execution of instructional supervisory duties. These responses also indicate that beside the stipulated roles of departmental head as an instructional supervisor, there might be other duties they are assigned by the school principal, making it difficult for them to adhere to departmental year plans.

This finding supports Okeke and Okaforcha (2019) who reported that despite departmental heads supervisory roles, departmental heads also have more administrative duties assigned to them, subjects to teach and other duties assigned to them by the school principal. Eventually, departmental heads find themselves under immense pressure. Bambi (2021) also reported that principals of schools rely more on departmental heads as their support structure especially in schools where there are no deputy principals leading to the increase in the workload of departmental heads.

One of the departmental heads explained that she did not expect the responsibilities that come with the position. She said:

The responsibilities that came with this position are more than what I anticipated (Participant A).

The above imply that the departmental head was shocked by the responsibilities and duties she had to perform as a departmental head that she did not expect. This finding highlight that some departmental heads apply for departmental head positions without doing thorough investigations of what the position entails. This finding supports the finding of Bambi (2021) who reported that many departmental heads get to know about their responsibilities when they are already in the position.

4.3.2.2 Sub-theme two: Lack of training on instructional supervision

The responses of three out of six departmental heads indicated that there is a lack of training on instructional supervision. One out of six departmental heads reported that she was not initially trained for the departmental head position and the training sessions that were conducted when she was already in the position were insufficient. She said:

I was not initially trained for this position and the in-service trainings that were provided to us were short and more theoretical. Further, no follow-up was done. I did what was done to me by my then departmental head while I was still post level one (Participant A).

The second departmental head reported that training was provided, however, it was not proper. He said:

The department does not give us proper training (Participant D).

The third departmental head reported that the training they received on instructional supervision was not enough and it frustrates them because the education system keeps on evolving. She said:

There is insufficient training on instructional supervision. I think, since I became a departmental head, training on instructional supervision have been conducted only twice. Since the era of COVID-19, we haven't had any and it is frustrating because the education system has completely changed since then (Participant E).

The above interview excerpts indicate that the departmental heads are inadequately trained and as a result some are compelled to imitate their previous departmental heads to execute instructional supervision. It also means that teachers are still promoted without the requisite initial training to prepare them for instructional supervision. There are no pre-service trainings if departmental heads get to know more about their duties when they are already in the position. The situation is further exacerbated by fact that in-service trainings sessions on instructional supervision are short, theoretical and no follow-up is done. The training sessions on instructional supervision are regarded as a futile exercise. This finding is in line with Oloweselu et al. (2019) who reported that training sessions do not equip departmental heads with the necessary skills as they were short and more theoretical than practical. Further, Oloweselu et al. (2019) reported that the instructor just reads what is written from the training manual and often do not either give practical examples or ask questions. Once the reading is done, departmental heads are asked to sign the attendance register and thereafter the programme director announces the end of the session. William and Ligembe (2022) also noted that training sessions that are conducted adopt a one size fits-all approach and have a little connection with reality. Failure to provide follow-up sessions was a major challenge that the participants bemoaned.

4.3.2.3 Sub-theme three: Teacher resistance and negative attitude towards instructional supervision

Some departmental heads reported that teachers' negative attitudes towards instructional supervision was a major concern. Two departmental heads indicated that some teachers have a negative attitude towards instructional supervision. Teachers were reported to be resistant to supervision and avoid class visits. Resultantly, when teachers were scheduled for a visit, they absented themselves or pretended to be sick. One departmental head reported that due to inconsistencies in the implementation of instructional supervision, some teachers see it as a

fault-finding method. Other departmental heads indicated that teachers' negative attitudes may emanate from departmental heads' inconsistencies in the implementation of instructional supervisory duties. Departmental heads said:

When I meet with individual teachers to discuss my findings during class visits, some teachers are resistant to feedback (Participant C).

Teachers tend to have a negative attitude towards instructional supervision. Some teachers go to an extent of absenting themselves if I promised to do class visits. Others even pretend to be sick (Participant D).

Other teachers do not like to be followed to their classrooms. They seem to have a negative attitude towards instructional supervision (Participant E).

Teachers perceive instructional supervision as a fault-finding method due to inconsistencies in the implementation. When I meet with individual teachers to discuss my findings gathered during class visits, some teachers are resistant to feedback (Participant F).

The above responses indicated that departmental heads and teachers perceived instructional supervision differently, teachers' negative attitudes towards instructional supervision seem to result from a lack of understanding the significance of instructional supervision. This finding concurs with the findings by Mamo (2019) who reported that teachers perceive instructional supervision practices as fault-finding methods that are designed to identify teachers' weaknesses and to sanction them. Her study also reported that when teachers and departmental heads perceive instructional supervision differently, conflict is often inevitable.

4.3.2.4 Sub-theme four: Lack of instructional supervisory skills and subject knowledge

One out of six departmental heads reported that since she was inadequately trained on instructional supervision, she ended up doing what was done to her by her departmental head when she was still a post level one educator. She revealed that she put more emphasis on document inspection. She said:

I was not initially trained for this position and the in-service trainings that were provided to us were short and mostly theoretical, and no follow-up was done. I did what

was done to me by my then DH while I was still PL1 of which in a later stage I realised that that was a document inspection (Participant A).

Another departmental head reported that South Africa's Department of Education (DoE) want them to possess both content and a firm knowledge base for each subject in their respective departments. He reported that it is rare to get such a person. In the subjects that he is not familiar with, he focuses on checking the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) and the Programme of Assessments (PoA) against learners' exercise books. Identifying gaps can be easy for him. However, coming up with solutions to bridge these gaps is a problem since he lacked expertise in those subjects. He said:

The sad part is that our department want us to have both content and a strong knowledge base for each subject in our departments. It is very rare to get such a person. In the subjects that I am not familiar with, I focus more on checking the ATP and PoA against learners' exercise books. I also count the number of activities given to learners weekly. Sadly, I can identify gaps but I am unable to bridge these gaps due to my expertise (Participant F).

The above interview excerpts imply that departmental heads lack the necessary skills required to execute instructional supervisory duties. Departmental heads are expected to be well equipped in both content and a firm knowledge base for each subject in their respective departments. However, this implies that it is rare to find a person who is fit on both aspects in all subjects. In addition, the findings also imply that departmental heads do not really understand the responsibilities that come with the position. Some departmental heads are doing what was done to them by their departmental heads prior, when they were post level one educators before they got promoted to post level two. This finding is in line with the finding reported by Malinga et al. (2021) in their study regarding supervisors for educational change that during the execution of instructional supervisory activities, departmental heads put more emphasis on document inspection rather than identifying gaps and finding ways to bridge them. They argued that the lack of instructional supervisory skills and the lack of subject knowledge forces departmental heads to focus more on viewing documents, mostly teachers' files and learners' exercise books and make reports based on available documents, which they hardly share with teachers.

4.3.2.5 Sub-theme five: Lack of instructional resources

Three out of six departmental heads reported that there was a lack of instructional resources in schools, which made it difficult to perform duties assigned to them. One of them reported that, no matter how much she may want to work, without access to the necessary instructional resources, work cannot be done. Another departmental head was of the view that the lack of instructional resources emanates from both misappropriation and mismanagement of school funds, which consequently affect everything in a sequence. The lack of necessary resources was experienced by certain departments in schools and that demotivated both teachers and departmental heads. These departmental heads also reported that it was very hard for them to execute instructional supervisory duties if teaching and learning resources were not adequate. Their responses were as follows:

Some subjects do not have instructional resources, and we are expected to do miracles in the classroom. Some departments are treated as being special when compared to others and those often have all the necessary resources (Participant A).

There are limited instructional resources. It is very hard to supervise teachers who teach subjects with insufficient resources (Participant C).

My first challenge is the lack of instructional resources in my department. In this school, funds are misappropriated and mismanaged, which negatively affect the availability of instructional resources. It is very hard to work if the necessary resources are not there; it demotivates both teachers and departmental heads (Participant F).

The responses collectively highlight the systemic and operational challenges faced by departmental heads due to unequal or inadequate resource allocation. These challenges include: disparities in resource distribution, which creates feelings of unfairness and exacerbate difficulties in some departments, limited resources which hinder departmental heads' ability to effectively oversee and support teachers in their instructional roles. They also highlighted the misappropriation of school funds, which contributes to resource shortages, creating additional barriers to effective teaching and leadership. Lastly, the lack of resources lead to frustration and reduced motivation among teachers and departmental heads, negatively impacting their performance and morale.

The quotes also suggest the need for equitable resource distribution, improved financial accountability, and systemic reforms to ensure that all departments must have the tools required

to deliver quality education. These issues also highlight the importance of addressing contextual challenges to strengthen instructional leadership, which includes instructional supervision in schools. This is line with McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision, which states that when resources are not there, supervisees become demotivated, which then compels instructional supervisors to apply close supervision. In such organisations, organisational goals are barely realised. Usman (2015) also reported that the lack of instructional resource is a major problem in many schools, and it has resulted in serious conflicts and divisions among departments since it was observed that not all departments and subjects lack instructional resources.

4.3.3 Theme three: Strategies that departmental heads use to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and the kind of support they require to perform their duties effectively

This theme is divided into two, it reflects on strategies that departmental heads use to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and the kind of support they require in order to perform their duties effectively

In light of the strategies that departmental heads used to address the challenges they faced when executing instructional supervisory duties, the study found that departmental heads use various strategies to address the challenges they faced when executing instructional supervisory duties. Three sub-themes emerged from the generated data. These included the delegation of tasks, communication, collaboration and networking as well as the adoption of management tasks. Management tasks included planning, organising, leading and controlling. Collaboration with other departmental heads capacitates them with various ways of doing their work..

4.3.3.1 Sub- theme one: Delegation of tasks

Delegation of tasks was common in the departmental heads' responses especially those who considered their workloads unbearable. Most departmental heads reported that what kept them going despite the trials and tribulations in their journey of being instructional supervisors was the delegation of tasks. They commented as follows:

I assign some duties to other teachers. One teacher in my department is responsible for checking teachers' files and learners' work weekly. When I get time, mine is to look at the reports and intervene if necessary (Participant A).

I normally delegate some tasks to teachers in my department. For example, a senior Mathematics teacher supervises other Mathematics teachers in our department (Participant B).

I assign other duties to teachers in my department to ease the burden on my shoulders, consequently empowering them. As I am responsible for two departments in this school due to enrolment and Post Provisioning Norms, I supervise few individuals especially senior teachers who then assist me with supervising others. Sometimes I ask teachers of related subjects to supervise one another, then senior teachers become responsible for making sure that teachers supervise one another accordingly (Participant E).

Delegation of tasks is an important strategy. I assign my other duties to teachers in my department. For example, in our departmental meetings, there is one teacher who is responsible for taking minutes, the other teacher types and prints them and gives them back to me for filing (Participant F).

The findings highlight that delegation emerges as a key strategy for departmental heads to manage their workload, enhance collaboration, and empower teachers within their departments. By assigning specific responsibilities to senior or experienced teachers and leveraging peer support, departmental heads create a shared leadership dynamic that not only promotes efficiency but also supports teacher development. These practices underscore the importance of distributed leadership in achieving departmental goals and managing the challenges associated with increased responsibilities or limited resources. Therefore, teachers are trained to become co-supervisors. The view of training teachers to be co-supervisors was also stated in McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision. Instructional supervisors should lead and manage their respective departments in the manner that trains supervisees to become co-supervisors (Bambi, 2021; Mpisane, 2015).

4.3.3.2 Sub-theme two: Communication, collaboration and networking

Three out of six departmental heads indicated that, through communication, collaboration and networking, their challenges are minimised. Their responses indicated that departmental heads communicated their strengths and weaknesses with all the relevant stakeholders, with the intention to seek help. Everyone in the department is included in decision making. Other participants indicated that forming or joining Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) can be used as a strategy to address the various challenges. Regarding communication, some departmental heads commented as follows:

I inform teachers about the significance of instructional supervision thus their attitude has changed towards instructional supervision. I also encouraged teachers to join or create PLCs. When facing challenges regarding subject content and a good knowledge base, I schedule a meeting, present the problem and ask other staff members to assist or to recommend someone who is an expert in that specialty who might be of assistance. I ensure that I accept my weaknesses and communicate them (Participant A).

I communicate the challenges with relevant stakeholders and colleagues who are also departmental heads to seek advice (Participant E).

I communicate my weaknesses and allow others to assist (Participant F).

Regarding collaboration and networking, departmental heads said:

In my department, we now work as a team, I assign some duties to other teachers. We share ideas, we brainstorm together about different challenges and come up with solutions. I meet with other departmental heads from neighbouring schools who taught me how to plan and capacitated me with ways to train my supervisees to be co-supervisors (Participant A).

I am in contact with other departmental heads across the province via a WhatsApp group. I seek assistance from the fellow departmental heads (Participant E).

I seek for assistance from other departmental heads in my school and those in neighbouring schools (Participant F).

The quotes highlight that departmental heads rely heavily on collaboration, networking, and shared learning to navigate their responsibilities effectively. By building professional relationships within and beyond their schools, they gain insights, share best practices, and develop innovative solutions to challenges. These responses also emphasise the importance of self-awareness, as departmental heads openly acknowledge their limitations and actively seek support from peers, teachers, and external networks. This approach not only strengthens the departmental heads' leadership capacity but also fosters a culture of collective growth and continuous improvement within their departments. This is also in line with McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision, which stresses the need for instructional supervisors to open the room where supervisors' matters are discussed. His view was also supported by Clarke et al. (2010) that a joint communication and collaboration is essential for the benefit of the organisation. A study that was conducted by Ndovela (2014) that focused on the roles of

departmental heads as instructional leaders also encouraged departmental heads to meet with other departmental heads regularly to discuss issues pertaining teaching and learning within their respective departments.

4.3.3.3 Sub-theme three: The adoption of management tasks

This study found that two out of six departmental heads address other challenges by adopting management tasks such as planning, organising, leading and controlling. One departmental head out of six departmental heads mentioned thorough planning as her only strategy to address the challenges related to her position. Two departmental heads had the following to say:

I adopt four management tasks such as planning, organising, leading and controlling, and they seem to be working for my department (Participant A).

What can we do without POLC (Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling) and policies? (Participant C)

One departmental head that mentioned thorough planning said:

Thorough planning minimises problems in advance (Participant F).

The above interview excerpts suggest that departmental heads are more pro-active rather than reactive. As such, they foresee the problem before it arises and take corrective action and overcome the problem before it arises. They also rely on policies to address some of the challenges they face. Lastly, planning emerges as an essential strategy preventing challenges and maintaining control within the departments. Planning is the first stage of management tasks (Bush, 2014). According to Friend and Hickling (2012), planning overcomes problems in advance. This is also in line with McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision which stipulates that the failure and success of an organisation depends on how well planned it is. At this stage, departmental heads schedule a meeting with all the teachers in their respective departments. All the teachers are included in decision making so that everyone in the department can be held accountable. Once decisions have been adopted by the majority, a plan to realise department goals is developed. This plan indicates the tasks that must be done, the required resources, and specific time frames for each activity.

Regarding the kind of support that departmental heads require to perform their duties effectively. The kind of support that departmental heads require is discussed under four sub-themes that emerged from the generated data. These sub-themes includes continuous

professional development, provision of instructional resources and equal treatment, role clarity and workload reduction, need for recognition and constructive feedback

4.3.3.4 Sub-theme one: Continuous professional development

Two out six departmental heads reported that they wanted to be supported by being given sufficient training on instructional supervision. One of them suggested that training should be a continuous process and not just a once-off thing because the educational landscape is changing. They commented as follows:

There must be a lot of training programmes based on instructional supervision, and these must be more practical than theoretical...at least twice per term (Participant A).

More training is needed, not just a once-off training session when we are being appointed. I believe it should be a continuous exercise because the educational landscape is also evolving and I feel as if I have been trained only now when I was actually appointed in 2021; it does not really meet the complexities of the evolving needs of the education system in 2024 (Participant D).

Findings imply that there is insufficient training for departmental heads on instructional supervision and yet the curriculum and the education system keeps changing. The quotes imply that the training given to departmental heads is inadequate. It also implies that the training they receive does not equip them for instructional supervision and lacks continuity. Most of the trainings were one size fits all, and more theoretical than practical. Therefore, many departmental heads perceive them as a futile exercise and require more training on instructional supervision. Zepeda et al. (2007) suggested that training should be provided in any organisation, and they must have a prolonged duration because learning a new skill and internalising it can be a lengthy process. They argued that after every session, follow up should be done to measure the success of each training session and come up with turnaround strategies if needed. Some departmental heads do not know their duties. Naidoo (2021) also recommends that relevant stakeholders should conduct a series of seminars in which the significance of instructional supervision will be communicated. She further suggests that government should increase funding for instructional supervisory activities.

Another departmental head commented that teachers also need to be capacitated and conscientised about the significance of instructional supervision to eradicate their negative attitudes towards its implementation. She said:

KZN DoE (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education) must conduct orientation workshops for teachers that will focus more on the importance of instructional supervision, hopefully their attitudes and perceptions towards instructional supervision will change (Participant E).

This finding implies that departmental heads and teachers perceive instructional supervision differently. If their perceptions of instructional supervision are different, there is bound to be conflict. This is in line with Tshabalala (2013) who also reported that when teachers and departmental heads perceive instructional supervision differently, there is bound to be conflict. He suggested that teachers must be capacitated by departmental heads and education officials about the significance of instructional supervision in order to eradicate teachers' negative attitudes towards instructional supervision as implemented by departmental heads.

4.3.3.5 Sub-theme two: Role clarity and workload reduction

Two out of six departmental heads suggested that their workloads should be minimised. One participant reported that he does not really understand his duties as an instructional supervisor and suggested that Department of Education should provide them with a document that thoroughly explains their duties as instructional supervisors because the guideline that they already have is not clear. He perceived their position in the school hierarchy as a highly demanding one. Regarding the reduction of workload, they said:

I feel like there is a lot in our plates as departmental heads. Therefore, I suggest that our workloads should be minimised to realise effective and efficient instructional supervision (Participant D).

The department must do something with regards to our workload, it must be reduced (Participant F).

Regarding the need to clarify departmental heads' supervisory roles. One participant said:

I feel as if the guideline which they give the departmental heads is a bit vague; it needs to be clearer. A guideline should be explicit in terms of what exactly I should and should not do. The document should tell us the extent to which we go about executing instructional supervision.

The first responses regarding the reduction of departmental heads' workload highlights the excessive workload faced by departmental heads, which hampers their capacity to focus on

their core responsibility of instructional supervision. The suggestion to reduce workloads implies that overburdened departmental heads cannot effectively perform their supervisory duties, which may negatively affect teaching quality and overall school management. This points to a systemic issue where expectations do not align with available resources or capacity.

The second response regarding the need for role clarity implies that this departmental head is overwhelmed by nature of their role, comparing the experience to a burdensome, unsustainable condition. The call for departmental intervention suggests an urgent need for workload redistribution or structural adjustments to ensure that departmental heads can perform their duties without undue stress or burnout.

The above responses collectively indicated that departmental heads are not clear on what they should or should not do as instructional supervisors and they want their workloads to be minimised. This means that they have heavy workloads. According to Bambi (2021), minimising departmental heads' workloads will enable them to execute instructional supervisory duties efficiently and effectively thus act in accordance with the departmental year plans. This will consequently eradicate teachers' negative attitudes towards instructional supervision that resulted from implementation inconsistencies. This will also enable departmental heads to have more time to give teachers and learners the individual attention they need. In a study conducted in Lesotho, departmental heads suggested that their duty load should be minimised to get enough time to execute their duties and be able to give everyone in their respective department's individual attention (Habi, 2022).

4.3.3.6 Sub-theme three: Provision of instructional resources and equal treatment

The study found that out of six departmental heads that participated in this study, two wanted to be supported by being provided with instructional resources and all the departments to be treated equally. One departmental head stressed the need for the Department of Education to ensure that schools get enough instructional resources. Another departmental head suggested that all the departments should be treated equally and be provided with instructional resources on an equitable basis. He also urged the school's top management to do away with favouritism and for the school principals not to consider departments as being the same way since some of the departments do not have enough resources. They said:

The department should ensure that all schools get enough instructional resources
(Participant A).

The school's top management should do away with favouritism, this creates unnecessary competition among departments. All the departments should be treated the same way. Principals of schools should do away with comparing departments or subject performance the same way, knowing very well that some of the departments do not have enough instructional resources. That constitute an unfair comparison (Participant B).

The first verbatim quote implies that resources are not distributed equitably among schools hence the need for this challenge to be addressed. The second verbatim quote indicated that the participant perceives favouritism by the school's top management as a source of division and tension among departments. The finding also implies that unequal treatment fosters unhealthy competition, rather than collaboration, which can undermine the overall cohesion and productivity of the school. This highlights a need for fair policies that ensure all departments are supported equally, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

The above-mentioned responses collectively indicates that departmental heads are not supported enough in some schools to do their duties. No matter how keen a departmental head may want to work successfully in his or her department, when resources are not available, that cannot be practicable. Resources are needed, either human resource or material things.

Sufficient teaching and learning material culminate in the smooth running of the organisation, thereby contributing to a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning (Naidoo, 2022). In study that explored the challenges that departmental heads face when carrying out supervisory roles, it emerged that instructional supervision can never be effective without adequate instructional material (Chiwamba & Kigobe, 2022). Further, the study recommended that departmental head should be provided with all the necessary resources in for the school to achieve its desirable outcomes.

4.3.3.7 Sub-theme four: Need for recognition and constructive feedback

Out of six departmental heads that participated in this study, two departmental heads stressed the importance of being appreciated and motivated. They were clear about their desire for their efforts to be acknowledged. They revealed that they try and push through against all odds but their efforts seem not be appreciated as it should. One of the participants even went to the extent of suggesting that a token of appreciation in the form of remuneration once in a year would motivate them and others to do even more. They commented as follows:

School principals should learn to appreciate the little effort that we put and get good results against all odds. School principals should also learn the skill to appreciate in public and correct in private. This is important because what they normally do does not motivate us to do better (Participant A).

I wish that the department can compensate teachers who do their work exceptionally well in order to motivate them and others (Participant B).

The response from participant A highlights the lack of recognition and constructive feedback as a demotivating factor for departmental heads. Despite overcoming challenges to achieve positive outcomes, their efforts go unacknowledged, which diminishes their morale. The participant suggests a more balanced approach from principals, where public acknowledgment of achievement is combined with private discussions for corrective feedback. The participant is of the view that this approach fosters motivation and preserves professional dignity.

The above responses collectively indicated that departmental heads were neither appreciated nor motivated to do their work as instructional supervisors. According to McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision, lack of motivation may result from poor working conditions, lack of instructional resources, organisational culture, and low wages and salaries. Such organisations rarely realise their organisation goals. However, in an organisation that has everything under control, the supervisors are more relaxed. This is due to the fact that in such conditions, supervisees tend to be goal orientated and perform duties assigned to them at their level best. Habi (2022) suggested a token of appreciation should be given to those who do exceptionally well in order to motivate others to do even much better, despite the challenges.

4.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed data generated through semi-structured interviews that were conducted with six departmental heads from two selected secondary schools of uMzinyathi District. The findings were presented, interpreted and discussed under three major themes. Verbatim quotes were used consistently to support research findings. McGregor's (1960) theory of instructional supervision, which underpinned this study was also used to discuss findings throughout during the analysis and interpretation of the generated data. The next chapter presents the study summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study explored departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in two secondary schools at the uMzinyathi District in South Africa. The previous chapter presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed data. The research findings were generated through the use of semi-structured interviews with six departmental heads from two selected secondary schools. Data was presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed under three main themes that emerged from the generated data. This chapter presents the summary of the study, content, main findings, conclusions drawn from research findings, and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study is presented in five chapters.

Chapter 1

This chapter contained the introduction and background of the study. The research problem, rationale, critical research questions, research aim, research objectives and key concepts were discussed in this chapter. Personal and professional experiences together with national and international available literature on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision were used in this chapter. The final part of this chapter focused on the outline of this study as well as key concepts that were constantly used. It outlined the contents of each chapter of this study.

Chapter 2

This chapter discussed existing studies that are relevant to this study. This chapter also discussed the theoretical framework which underpinned the study.

Chapter 3

This chapter discussed the methodology and methods that were used in this study. The paradigm, research approach and research design chosen for this study were articulated in this chapter. Further, the chapter entails details on the sampling technique, sample and sample size. The final part of this chapter discussed data generation and analysis, trustworthiness of the study as well as ethical considerations that were observed in this study.

Chapter 4

The chapter presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed data generated through semi-structured interviews that were conducted with six departmental heads from two selected secondary schools of uMzinyathi District. The findings were presented under three main themes that emerged from the generated data. Transcribed verbatim quotes from generated data were frequently used to support research findings. Existing literature and the theoretical framework were used throughout in the discussion of findings. The next section discusses the main findings (these are discussed according to themes), conclusions drawn from findings and recommendations.

The study responded to the following research questions.

1. How do departmental heads understand and practice instructional supervision?
2. What challenges do departmental heads face in executing their instructional supervisory duties?
3. How do departmental heads address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and what support do they require to perform their duties effectively?

5.3 Main findings, conclusions and recommendations

The findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented under four major themes.

5.3.1 Departmental heads understanding and practices of instructional supervision

The study found that departmental heads understand instructional supervision as a process of giving guidance to teachers and learners, identifying gaps and finding ways to bridge them to improve teaching. Regarding departmental heads' practices of instructional supervision, the study found that they monitor curriculum implementation by conducting announced and unannounced class visits, lesson observations, support and mentor teachers, evaluate and moderate teachers and learners work by conducting pre and post moderation in accordance with the subjects' Annual Teaching Plans (ATP), Programme of Assessments (PoA) and Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). The study also found that departmental heads have other administrative and organisational duties assigned to them.

Departmental heads in the studied schools demonstrate a clear understanding of instructional supervision as a supportive and improvement-oriented process. Their practices align with

formal policy expectations, involving curriculum monitoring, lesson observation, and assessment moderation. However, their ability to fully engage in instructional supervision is potentially constrained by the additional administrative and organisational responsibilities they are required to perform.

Therefore, based on the above conclusions, it is recommended that departmental heads should be given clear and specific guidelines on how to execute instructional supervisory duties.

5.3.2 The challenges that departmental heads face when executing instructional supervisory duties

The findings indicate that departmental heads experience different challenges when executing instructional supervisory duties. Challenges differ in each individual secondary school and within each department. These include departmental heads' unbearable workload, the lack of training on instructional supervision, teachers' resistance, and negative attitude towards instructional supervision. Teachers lack an understanding of the significance of instructional supervision. The lack of instructional supervisory skills, subject knowledge and instructional resources were also mentioned as challenges. This study also revealed the systematic and operational challenges faced by departmental heads due to the uneven distribution of resources. Misappropriation and mismanagement of school funds was also considered as contributing to resource shortages thus creating an additional barrier to effective teaching and leadership. The lack of resources resulted in low motivation among departmental heads and teachers, which negatively affected their performance and morale. Other departmental heads in selected secondary schools hardly shared valuable information with other departments due to performance competitions between departments. Departmental heads and individual departments were not treated equally.

Departmental heads face multifaceted and context-specific challenges that hinder their ability to carry out effective instructional supervision. These include personal, institutional, and systemic issues such as heavy workloads, inadequate training, lack of resources, and resistance from teachers. Furthermore, unequal treatment among departments, poor collaboration, and mismanagement of funds exacerbate these difficulties, leading to low motivation and diminished performance.

Based on the study's conclusions, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of instructional supervision by departmental heads. Firstly, it is essential that departmental heads are provided with comprehensive guidelines clearly outlining their roles

and responsibilities as instructional supervisors. In addition, professional development initiatives should include extended, in-depth training sessions, as the acquisition and internalisation of new supervisory skills require time and practice. These training programmes should be context-specific, taking into account the unique needs and challenges of individual schools.

Moreover, follow-up sessions and regular school visits should be conducted after each training initiative to allow for reflection, assessment of progress, and the design of targeted intervention strategies where necessary. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZN DoE) is encouraged to conduct school visits to assess and ensure the availability of adequate teaching and learning resources. The department should also organise workshops to sensitise educators on the importance and benefits of instructional supervision.

To improve performance and efficiency, the workload of departmental heads should be reviewed and reduced where possible. Additionally, the efforts and dedication of departmental heads should be formally acknowledged, with motivational strategies such as annual incentives or performance-based.

5.3.3 Strategies that departmental heads use to address the challenges they face when executing instructional supervisory duties and the kind of support they require to perform their duties effectively

The study concludes that departmental heads in selected secondary schools within the uMzinyathi District employ a range of proactive strategies to mitigate the challenges associated with instructional supervision. These strategies includes, task delegation, effective communication, interdepartmental collaboration, and the application of key management functions such as planning, organising, leading, and controlling reflects an adaptive and contextually responsive leadership approach. By engaging in teamwork, fostering open dialogue, and establishing networks with peers within and beyond their schools, departmental heads create an enabling environment that supports both teacher development and improved instructional practices. These collaborative efforts not only enhance their own supervisory roles but also contribute to a culture of shared responsibility and professional growth. Nevertheless, the findings underscore the need for continuous support and targeted training interventions to strengthen these practices and ensure that persistent challenges are addressed comprehensively and sustainably

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that school leadership implement targeted support and professional development programs tailored to the needs of departmental heads to enhance their existing leadership strategies. While the proactive use of diverse, inclusive, and collaborative approaches has demonstrated significant potential in promoting teamwork, transparency, and shared responsibility, additional training opportunities are essential to refine these practices. Such programs would equip departmental heads with advanced competencies to address ongoing challenges. A particular emphasis should be placed on strengthening leadership capacity in areas such as instructional supervision, effective delegation, communication, and collaboration. Furthermore, establishing platforms for knowledge sharing and networking among departmental heads from different schools could facilitate the exchange of best practices, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their strategies and contributing to improved teaching outcomes and overall school performance.

The study also found various ways in which departmental heads require to be supported in executing instructional supervision. They require more training on instructional supervision that is relevant and conform to the demands of the ever-changing education system. They also want clarity in terms of instructional supervision roles and that their workload be reduced. The study also reveals that departmental heads want to be provided with enough instructional resources and be treated equally. Some departmental heads urged other departmental heads to share valuable information with fellow departmental heads and refrain from causing unnecessary competitions among departments. In addition, the study found that departmental heads want their hard work to be recognised. Further, they appreciate constructive feedback.

The conclusion drawn from these findings is that departmental heads require comprehensive support and clear guidance to effectively execute their duties in instructional supervision. Their professional development needs to be prioritised, particularly through relevant training that aligns with the evolving demands of the education system. Moreover, clarifying the specific roles and responsibilities of departmental heads, along with reducing their workload, would enable them to focus more on their supervisory duties. The study also highlights the necessity of providing adequate instructional resources and promoting equitable treatment among departmental heads to foster a collaborative and supportive working environment. Furthermore, the importance of sharing valuable information across departments, minimising competition, and recognising the hard work of departmental heads is emphasised. Constructive feedback is also crucial, as it enhances their professional growth and motivation. Overall, the

findings underscore the need for strategic interventions that address both the professional and personal challenges faced by departmental heads in their leadership roles.

This study recommends that education authorities and schools should design and implement regular training workshops focused on instructional supervision. These programmes should be tailored to address the dynamic and evolving needs of the education system, equipping departmental heads with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective leadership and supervision. Clear and comprehensive guidelines regarding the instructional supervision roles of departmental heads should be developed and communicated. This will eliminate ambiguity and ensure departmental heads have a well-defined framework for their responsibilities. Schools should implement strategies to redistribute administrative tasks or provide additional support staff to reduce the workload of departmental heads. This would allow them to focus more on their instructional supervision duties. Schools and education departments must ensure that departmental heads are supplied with sufficient instructional resources to enhance their supervision and support teachers effectively. Schools should create policies that ensure departmental heads are treated fairly and equitably. This includes providing equal opportunities for training, recognition, and access to resources. Principals and education authorities should establish formal mechanisms to acknowledge and reward the efforts of departmental heads. Regular, constructive feedback should also be provided to support their professional growth and improve performance. Schools should encourage a culture of teamwork and collaboration among departmental heads by creating platforms for sharing best practices, challenges, and innovative solutions. This could include regular inter-departmental meetings or networking sessions with departmental heads from neighbouring schools. Policies should be crafted to discourage unhealthy competition among departments. Instead, schools should promote a culture of mutual support and collective responsibility for the success of the institution.

5.4 Recommendations further research

This recommendation is directed to the community of researchers. This study explored departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi district. This study employed qualitative exploratory case study design. More research should be done in other approaches and designs.

This study drew a smaller sample from the entire population of departmental heads and findings cannot be generalised to the whole population because of a high degree of contextualisation of generated data. However, findings can be transferable to schools with similar contexts. There

are few studies that have been conducted on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in South Africa. More research on departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision should be conducted in a larger scale focusing on primary and secondary schools.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the summary of this study. It then presented the main findings, drew conclusions and made recommendations for both practice and further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



01 July 2024

Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu (223054908)
School of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear VM Ndlovu,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00007106/2024

Project title: Departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi district

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 27 May 2024 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.

Incidents of adverse events and serious adverse events (AEs and SAEs) should be reported in writing to HSSREC, the study sponsors, and any regulatory authority (where appropriate), within 7 working days of the occurrence for local sites and 14 days for all other South African sites.

This approval is valid until 01 July 2025.

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.

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

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)
/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

APPENDIX 2: GATEKEEPER'S LETTER



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X 9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Email: buyi.ntuli@kzndoe.gov.za Tel: 033 392 1051

Ref No.: 2/4/8/180

Enquiries: Mrs B. T. Ntuli

Mr Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu
P.O. Box 517
WARTBURG
3233

Dear Mr Ndlovu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"DEPARTMENTAL HEADS' EXPERIENCES OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF UMZINYATHI 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 **03rd May 2024 to 31st August 2026**.
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 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.



Mr G.N. Ngcobo
Head of Department: Education
Date: 03 May 2024

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

APPENDIX 3: INFORMED CONSENT FORM(S)

P O Box 1252

Greytown 3250

Date: 03/ 05/ 2024



Attention: The Principal

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

My name is Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu, a student for Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am conducting research as a requirement towards a Degree of Master of Education in Educational Leadership Management and Policy under supervision of Dr NI Jaca.

The title of the research study is **“Departmental heads’ experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi District”**.

I am writing this letter to request permission to conduct research in your school as one of the research sites, and this letter intends to request your permission. Departmental heads will be required to participate in this study. This study will involve semi-structured interviews that will be conducted with departmental heads at the times that are convenient to them. With Departmental head’s permission, interviews will be audio recorded. This research will in no way disrupt the functionality of the school. The participation in this study is voluntary. The participant have the right to withdraw at any time. In addition, kindly be assured that the school’s and participants’ details will be confidential. Pseudonyms will be used instead of real names to ensure anonymity.

For more information and questions about the study, I (Mr VM Ndlovu) and my research supervisor (Dr NI Jaca) can be contacted on the following details:

Mr VM Ndlovu

email: 

Supervisor: Dr NI Jaca

email: JacaN1@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the research office through:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

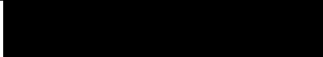
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated

Yours Faithfully

VM Ndlovu (Student)

Declaration

I  ...(full name of the principal),
a 
principal of(name of the school) hereby confirm that
I
understand the content and focus of the study: Departmental heads' experiences
of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi District.

Mr Vusumuzi Mthemneni Ndlovu has fully explained to me the nature of the study and gave
me an opportunity to ask questions when I need clarity on issues pertaining the study. I
therefore understand everything that has been explained to me and that participating in this
study is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time if I wish to do so.

I therefore give / **do not give** a consent to the researcher to use my school as a research site
(underline the selected option)

Signature of the principal ...  Date...03/ 05/
2024

P O Box 1252
Greytown 3250

Date: 03/ 05/ 2024



Attention: The Departmental head

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

My name is Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu, a student for Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am conducting research as a requirement towards a Degree of Master of Education under Educational Leadership Management and Policy under the supervision of Dr NI Jaca

You are invited to participate in a study titled “**Departmental heads’ experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of UMzinyathi District**”.

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Mr VM Ndlovu

email: p [REDACTED]

Supervisor: Dr NI Jaca

email: JacaN1@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the research office through:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully

VM Ndlovu (student)

Declaration

I(full name of the participant) a
departmental head at.....(name of the school) hereby
confirm that I understand the content and focus of the study titled: Departmental heads'
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understand everything that has been explained to me and that participating in this study is free
and voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time if I wish to do so.

I therefore give/ do not give consent to participate in this study (underline the selected option)
Are you willing to be audio recorded? Yes/ No (underline the selected option)

Signature of a participant ...



.....

Date.....03/ 05/ 2024.....

P O Box 1252

Greytown 3250

Date: 03/ 05/ 2024



Attention: The Departmental head

Dear Sir/ Madam

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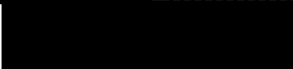
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I therefore give/ do not give consent to participate in this study (underline the selected option)

Are you willing to be audio recorded? Yes/ No (underline the selected option)

Signature of a participant ... 
2024

Date..... 03 / 05 /

P O Box 1252

Greytown 3250

Date:

03 / 05 / 2024



Attention: The Principal

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

My name is Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu, a student for Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am conducting research as a requirement towards a Degree of Master of Education in Educational Leadership Management and Policy under the supervision of Dr NI Jaca.

The title of the research study is **“Departmental heads’ experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of uMzinyathi District”**.

I am writing this letter to request permission to conduct research in your school as one of the research sites, and this letter intends to request your permission. Departmental heads will be required to participate in this study. This study will involve semi-structured interviews that will be conducted with Departmental heads at the times that are convenient to them. With Departmental Head’s permission, interviews will be audio recorded. This research will in no way disrupt the functionality of the school. The participation in this study is voluntary. The participant have the right to withdraw at any time. In addition, kindly be assured that the school’s and participants’ details will be confidential. Pseudonyms will be used instead of real names to ensure anonymity.

For more information and questions about the study, I (Mr VM Ndlovu) and my research supervisor (Dr NI Jaca) can be contacted on the following details:

Mr VM Ndlovu

email: 

Supervisor: Dr NI Jaca

email: JacaN1@ukzn.ac.za

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Yours Faithfully

VM Ndlovu (Student)

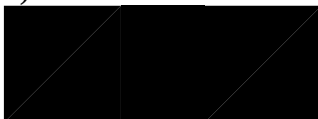
Declaration

I (full name of the principal), a principal of ...  ..(name of the school) hereby confirm that I understand the content and focus of the study: Departmental heads' experiences of instructional supervision in secondary schools of UMzinyathi District.

Mr Vusumuzi Mthemneni Ndlovu has fully explained to me the nature of the study and gave me an opportunity to ask questions when I need clarity on issues pertaining the study. I therefore understand everything that has been explained to me and that participating in this study is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time if I wish to do so.

I therefore give / **do not give** a consent to the researcher to use my school as a research site (underline the selected option)

Signature of the principal ...



03/ 05/ 2024

Date.....

.

P O Box 1252

Greytown 3250

Date: 03/ 05/ 2024



Attention: The Departmental head

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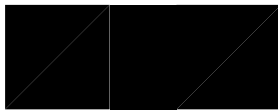


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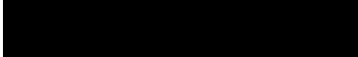
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Signature of a participant 

Date.....03/05/2024.....

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Questions

Icebreakers

- a) What are your qualifications?
- b) How long have you been a teacher?
- c) How long have you been a Departmental Head?

Main interview questions

- 1. What do you understand about instructional supervision?
- 2. What roles do you perform as an instructional supervisor?
- 3. What are the challenges that you are experiencing when executing instructional supervisory roles?
- 4. How do you address the challenges that you face when executing supervisory roles instructional?
- 5. How can you be supported to address the challenges that you face when executing instructional supervisory roles?

APPENDIX 5: EDITORS LETTER

KEMIST S H U M B A

LANGUAGE EDITOR

CONTACT

Researcher
University of KwaZulu-Natal

+27 31 260 1111

shumbak@ukzn.ac.za or
k [REDACTED]

05 February 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: DEPARTMENTAL HEADS' EXPERIENCES OF
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
OF UMZINYATHI DISTRICT

I write to confirm that language editing was performed on
the above dissertation.

Technical changes on spellings, grammatical expression
and scientific writing were made.

The editor shall not be held liable for errors imported in later
versions of the dissertation.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Kemist Shumba (PhD)

PhD in Health Promotion: University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)
Master of Social Science in Health Promotion (*cum laude*): UKZN
Bachelor of Social Science Honours in Cultural & Media Studies: UKZN
Postgraduate Certificate in Education: Great Zimbabwe University
Bachelor of Arts (English): University of Zimbabwe

APPENDIX 6: TURNITIN REPORT

Turnitin Originality Report

Processed on: 27-Jan-2025 3:49 PM CAT

ID: 2565786696

Word Count: 22231

Submitted: 3

223054908 By Vusumuzi Mthembeni Ndlovu

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