THE ROLES OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LUVUVHU CIRCUIT OF THE VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION IN CURRICULUM STUDIES

at the

FACULTY OF HUMAN, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AND CURRICULUM STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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2024

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DECLARATION

I, **SEANI SYLVIA MALANGE** declare that this thesis entitled:

> ***The Roles of Geography Departmental Heads in Curriculum Delivery in Secondary School in the Luvuvhu Circuit of the Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province***

… is my work in design and execution, and all sources used herein have been indicated and duly acknowledged using a full reference list.

03/01/2025

…… ……

Signature **Date**

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children - Muvhumbi and Mulamuleli Malange. You missed a lot of quality time with me while I was studying. I would not have achieved this if it was not for your understanding.

To my loving parents - Mrs TE Malange and Mr ME Malange - this work is dedicated to your enduring love for education and success.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere, most profound gratitude and appreciation go to the following people whose assistance made this study possible:

- God Almighty the Creator for the protection, guidance, and excellent health He gave me throughout this study.

- My promoter and mentor, Dr MP Tshisikhawe and co-promoter Dr MG Muremela, for their - patience, encouragement, guidance, assistance, support, motivation and constructive criticism - they gave me throughout my studies. Your academic leadership made it possible for me to complete this study.

- To my family, I am grateful for your support as I spent sleepless nights engaged in this research. Without your support and encouragement to endure, I would have certainly thrown in the towel in despair.

- To my Professional Editor and Proofreader, words are not enough to describe the splendid work you did to academically clean up this document to what it is now.

- Last but not least, my gratitude goes to all those who participated in this study in one way or the other. Your participation ensured the completion of this study.

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ABSTRACT

Geography is an indispensable subject in developing learners' geospatial competence. This study was premised on the fact that despite the Department of Basic Education's support to improve teaching and learning over the years, learners are not performing as is expected. Studies have been conducted on the performance of learners in various subjects. However, not much has been studied concerning the factors that account for curricula delivery in Geography in secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit. This study thus investigated the factors that contributed to the curricula delivery in geography in the said circuit. In particular, the study focused on the Geography Departmental Heads' roles in curriculum delivery and its impact on learners' performance in Geography. The study followed a qualitative phenomenological approach underpinned by the interpretivism paradigm and was conducted in four secondary schools. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants based on their experience, knowledge, and understanding of the issues affecting learners' geography performance. The participants comprised - 4 principals, 4 deputy principals, 4 Geography departmental heads, and 8 Geography teachers. Interviews were used to collect data. Individual interviews were utilised to collect data from the principals, deputy principals, and Geography departmental heads, while focus-group interviews were conducted with the geography teachers. Transformational Leadership Theory underpinned the study. Information obtained from the interviews was analysed thematically, and the findings were presented according to the study's objectives. The study recommended that thorough motivation and training of geography departmental heads and geography teachers for effective professional development may be implemented in schools to improve learners' academic performance in GIS and mapwork techniques. Parents and teachers share the common goal of learners' achievement; results show that parents' failure to monitor their children's school work or help them negatively impacts curriculum delivery. The study recommends that geography and English teachers liaise with each other to curb language barriers to learners; results suggested that the use of English as a medium of instruction is a stumbling block to effective curricula delivery in government schools.

Keywords: Curriculum, Departmental Head, Academic Performance, Teachers, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and Learner Academic Performance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ATP	:	Annual Teaching Plan
BEDFET	:	Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training
CAPS	:	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CPD	:	Continuing Professional Development
CPTD	:	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DBE	:	Department of Basic Education
DH	:	Departmental Head
DoBE	:	Department of Basic Education
DP	:	Deputy Principal
EEA	:	Employment of Educators Act
ELRC	:	Education Labour Relations Council
FET	:	Further Education and Training
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion.
GDH	:	Geography Departmental Head
GIS	:	Geographical Information Systems
GPS	:	Global Positioning System
ICT	:	Information Communication Technology
LRC	:	Learners Representative Council
LTSM	:	Learning and Teaching Support Material
NCS	:	National Curriculum Statement
NSC	:	National Senior Certificate
PAM	:	Personnel Administrative Measure
PGCE	:	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PPN	:	Post Provisioning Norms
QLTC	:	Quality Learning and Teaching Committee.
QMS	:	Quality Management Systems
SACE	:	South African Council for Educators
SAMS	:	School Administration Management Systems
SBA	:	School Based Assessment

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SGB	:	School Governing Body
SIP	:	School Improvement Plan
SMT	:	School Management Team

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the study's - background, statement of the problem, research objectives and related questions, research methodology, research design, research approach, the population, sampling procedures, and data collection and analysis techniques. Also covered are - definitions of key concepts, delimitation of the study, ethical considerations, and an outline of the whole research structure. This chapter is only an introduction to the study; hence, detailed discussions of the above topics are also presented in the relevant chapters of the thesis.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Teachers and the School Management Teams (SMTs) are largely blamed by both parents and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) officials when learners perform poorly at school (Memela & Ramrathan, 2022:2). In this blaming saga, it seems stakeholders do not consider that good results are dependent on several factors, such as - the social, economic, institutional, emotional environments, as well as the design of the curricula. Among these factors, there are those that can be addressed by the departmental heads (DHs): curricula need, classroom environment, learning materials and equipment, and punctuality. Other stakeholders also address other responsibilities. To enhance teaching and learning in schools, the DBE restructured schools to empower teachers by appointing heads of departments for each subject in the school. Such restructuring resulted in decentralised leadership and distributive school offices (Mthiyane, Naiadoo & Betram, 2019:3). This has resulted in keeping the teaching and learning process at the nerve centre of classroom activities; thus, teachers and SMTs have become more accountable for classroom activities given their complementary responsibilities in the selection of

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content, curricula delivery, and the organisation of the learning activities (Bambi, 2013:12).

Therefore, the DHs' major role is to ensure that all learners who do Geography succeed in the subject from Grade 7 to 12; that is, the DHs' vision should be inspired by their wish to see Geography learners succeed in the subject. Their interactions with teachers and learners are largely through instructional evaluation of the former while keenly monitoring the latter's academic progress. Mudzanani and Makgato (2016:100) postulate that instructional evaluation occurs when DHs make frequent classroom observation visits and promptly provide feedback about the instructional methods, materials used, and the learners' reactions and performance. The above process increases the emphasis on the DHs' knowledge and accountability with respect to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) (PAM, 2016:27). According to the PAM (2016:27), the DH is to engage, among other responsibilities, in-class teaching, in the effective functioning of the department, and in organising relevant and extra-curricular activities. Engaging in these activities ensures that Geography and the education of learners are done properly.

The DHs are to emphasise the critical urgency of Geography results' improvement (PAM, 2016:27); to support them, the DBE made changes to enhance the teaching and learning processes in schools. In this context, learners' poor performance in Geography can be attributed to various factors - teachers, learners, family, school environment, resources and support offered to the teaching and learning process (Needham, Crosnoe & Muller, 2004:75). Of these factors, the researcher focused on the role of Geography DHs in curricula delivery, in other words, the nature of the support they offer, to improve learners' performance in the subject,

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The study explored the factors that impact Geography curricula delivery and learners' performance in secondary schools. In particular, the DHs' roles were investigated in order to find out how they influence the learners' academic performance in the subject. Luvuvhu

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Circuit of the Vhembe East in the Limpopo Province was selected as a research site, while principals, deputy principals, and Geography teachers were the units of analysis in this study. Mohammed (2015:8) asserts that Geography is the subject that empowers people to comprehend the earth and its environment as Geographical knowledge helps us to appreciate the delicate balance between human and physical elements that binds people to the planet.

Statistics indicate that more than half of the learners have failed to achieve Geographic literacy. DBE, Diagnostic Report (2021:102) and Business Tech (2022:1) point out that since 2015, the number of learners who write their Matric examinations has shown a steady decline in the national pass rate each year. The learners' poor Geography results in South African secondary schools at the National Senior Certificate Examination level is a matter of concern (Dean, 2002:129, Smith & Ngomo-Maema, 2003:345).

Learners are the most essential asset for any educational institution because the country's social and economic developments are directly linked with their academic performance (Mushtaq & Khan, 2012:55). All attempts, therefore, are made by any country to ensure a relevant curriculum and teaching strategies which would result in satisfactory performance; one such attempt is the creation of the position of departmental heads (DHs) in the different subjects. DHs ensure good professional practice, standards and quality of teaching and learning of subjects by properly addressing the teachers' concerns under the directive of the relevant education officer (PAM, 2016:27). Doing so promotes a process of perceptual informal observation of class teaching practice and the subsequent designing of relevant strategies.

In the Luvuvhu Circuit, the learners' poor performance in Geography has caught the local communities' attention, in particular, parents; when learners perform poorly in school, their parents experience severe stress, in addition to the creation of low self-esteem in the children (Spaull, 2013:56). As a result, a lot of frustration and criticism have been expressed about the quality of teaching and learning and the nature of support given to teachers in the Luvuvhu Circuit; this has drawn attention to the DHs' role in instructional

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leadership. Concerns have been directed at the challenges DHs face in carrying out their role as instructional leaders due to their lack of experience and training, which compounds their workload demands. Furthermore, the inconsistent government policies seem to lead to an increase in DHs' stress and emotional turmoil; hence, they face a variety of obstacles and demands at work, and their level of engagement in role performance is influenced by the resources they have access to or own (Lai *et al*., 2020:27).

These factors contribute to poor academic performance and must be mitigated if the learners' performance is to improve. The researcher contends that despite many intervention strategies employed by schools and the DBE, learners still perform poorly in Geography at school, and this needs to be investigated, hence, this study. The study's problem is that while there is an increased enrolment of learners in Geography in the Luvuvhu Circuit, their performance has been unsatisfactory over the years. As leaders, the Geography Departmental Heads (GDHs) are experts in the subject; they provide leadership and assist in developing teachers in curriculum delivery. DHs should be knowledgeable in their subject areas to influence the curricula delivery and manage teachers for better results. Effective departmental heads influence teachers' classroom performance, ensuring conducive teaching and learning lead to better results. This study, therefore, investigated the role of GDHs in curriculum delivery in selected secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit of Vhembe East District.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study's purpose was:

- To investigate the roles of the Geography DHs in teacher curricula delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit and devise strategies to improve the learners' academic performance.

1.5 STUDY OBJECTIVES

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To achieve its purpose, the main aim of the study was: To discover how Geography DHs support teacher curricula delivery and which strategies may improve the learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit. To achieve that, the following objectives were developed:

- Identify and explain factors that impact geography curriculum delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit schools.
- Suggesting strategies that can be used to improve the Geography DHs' support offered to teachers in curriculum delivery
- Propose a model for the approaches to enhance GDH roles.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study answered the following main research question:

- How do Geography DHs support teacher curricula delivery, and which strategies may improve the learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit

The study answered the subsidiary questions below to fully answer the main research question.

- What factors impact Geography curriculum delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit schools to improve the learners' academic performance?
- What strategies can be used to improve the Geography DHs' support to teachers in curriculum delivery
- What is the proposed model for the approaches to enhance GDH roles?

1.7 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

An assumption is an unexamined belief; it is what we think without consciously knowing about it. Our inferences or conclusions are often based on assumptions; hence, they are things that we think are true or certain to happen, but they are not proven (Pal, 2020:2); in other words, they are implicit or underlying beliefs. Researchers make assumptions based on various reasons. Assumptions influence how a study can be designed, conducted, and interpreted, although sometimes they may lead to errors or indicate gaps

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in our knowledge. In this study, the researcher assumed that where there is effective departmental head management in Geography, there is likely to be better learner results as knowledgeable GDHs competently perform their duties. Therefore, learners who perform well in Geography are supported by department heads who are hardworking, dedicated and knowledgeable. In other words, learners struggle with geographical skills because DHs are not giving proper guidance to teachers.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section illustrates how the study was conducted. This was done by detailing the research paradigm, the research design, the research methodology, sampling, and the methods used to collect and analyse the data collected.

1.8.1 Research Design

A research design focuses on the end product and all the steps in the process to achieve that outcome (Thomas, 2017:47). In this sense, the research design is viewed as the functional plan in which certain research methods and procedures are linked together to acquire a reliable and valid body of data for empirically grounded analyses, conclusions, and theory formulation. The research design is a plan adopted to answer research questions. Asenabi (2019:32) states that the research design is a plan devised by the researcher before data collection commences to achieve the research objectives. The idea is to translate the data collected through analysis to provide relevant answers to research questions.

The study provided evidence from the participants for the study to base its conclusions; thus, the study followed the phenomenological mode of inquiry. Neubaur (2019:1) indicates that the phenomenology design focuses on individuals' lived experiences in the world and contributes to a greater understanding of such individuals' lived experiences. Tshisikhawe (2017:87) argues that reality is emergent and arises from creating and exchanging social meanings during social interaction. Reality, hence, is not just anything

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but is based on perceptions created by human actions and the interpretation of their meaning aimed to transform lived experiences into a descriptive essence, allowing reflection and analysis (Tshisikhawe, 2017:87). The researcher used a phenomenology research design to gain an in-depth insight into the lived experiences of the GDHs roles on the geography curriculum delivery.

1.8.2 Research Methodology

A research methodology describes techniques and strategies exploited to collect data. Creswell (2013:114) adds that it is the development of methods to investigate and improve the properties, such as the reliability and validity of the results obtained. This study adopted the qualitative research methodology; it was also interpretative and constituted an interactive dialogue that happens between the researcher and the participants (Tapala, 2019:12). Throughout the interaction process between the researcher and participants, the former attempts to interpret the data collected (Thomas, 2017:132).

A qualitative methodology was used to understand the participants' perceptions of the geography curricula; this involved a deeper exploration of their views. To collect the data for this study, the researcher used individual face-to-face interviews with the principals, the deputy principals, and GDHs, and focus-group discussions were used for the teachers. The qualitative methodology enabled this study to focus on smaller samples and engage in an in-depth analysis of the obtained data. Hence, a comprehensive, holistic data analysis was made by reporting detailed views of the participants (Maree, 2007:55).

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

A theoretical framework is a specific collection of thoughts and theories that guide the investigation by providing a framework that ensures that the study is focused (Du Ploy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014:75). Ridley (2011:106) explains a theoretical

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framework as offering an explanatory device, often in the form of categories and relationships. It is useful to explain and predict the output of a scientific inquiry based on academic thinking about issues. Mohammed (2015:18) asserts that the theoretical framework is the benchmark for research work in general. Merriam (1998:3) considers the theoretical framework as the structure or scaffolding of one's study and a stance one brings to the study. Grant *et al*. (2014:12) maintain that the theoretical framework is the foundation of all knowledge (metaphorically and literally) for a research study. In this case, the theoretical framework was used to investigate the roles of the geography DH in curricula delivery and possible strategies to improve the learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit.

The study was underpinned by the transformational leadership theory propounded by James Downton in 1973 (Bryman *et al*., 2011: 299). Burns (1978:220) developed this theory to distinguish between leaders with strong motivational relationships with their subordinates and those without. Burns (1978:220) explained transformational leadership as a process where leaders and their subordinates support each other to higher levels of morality and motivation. Bass (1985) further developed Burn's leadership theory by adding a psychological notion to the tenet - "One who emotionally connects with their followers is likely to become a prominent leader", as was phrased by Chi *et al*. (2012). In addition, Arabiun *et al*. (2014:56) stated that a transformational leader induces organisational change by creating a new perspective for both manager and staff. Ramatseba (2012:14) asserted that transformational leaders advocate for changing the status quo in any organisation to that of relationship-oriented, concerned with end products.

In this study, the GDHs' role is goal-oriented towards effective curricula delivery to improve learner performance, demonstrated by better Geography results at the end of each term and finally in the matric examinations. Schools around the world are increasingly recognising that they cannot handle issues that prevent the success of their learners alone; hence, schools should tackle these problems with the help of multidisciplinary teams with expertise and skills, as well as diverse activities. The DHs'

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main duties are to engage in class teaching, be responsible for the effective functioning of the department, and organise relevant extra-curricular activities. Extra-curricular activities ensure that the subject and education of the learners are promoted on as many fronts as possible (PAM, 2016:12; Employment of Educators Act (EEA), 1998).

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study explored the role of geography DH in curricula delivery to improve learner performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit. Significantly, the study addresses the roles of GDH, such as curricular leader, instructional leader and class teacher. This study would benefit the Luvuvhu Circuit in particular and the DBE in general. The study would contribute to the body of knowledge in geography curricula studies and beyond, thereby highlighting the role of the DHs in curricula delivery; this transcends subject boundaries. The study also recommends possible teaching strategies to improve Geography results and the proposed model to enhance GDH roles. By extension, other teachers could adopt and adapt the said strategies and the proposed model to suit their subjects. In addition, the study results could be distributed to all stakeholders in education (principals, teachers, School Governing Bodies (SGB), and parents) for possible implementation. Intervention strategies and programmes to improve learners' performance could be adopted, particularly by the Luvuvhu Circuit. DHs and teachers who will study this document will likely assess their strengths and weaknesses, hopefully improving the pass rate and curriculum delivery. The Department of Education will be informed about issues like - how to identify and appoint relevant GDHs; hence, untrained and qualified GDHs contribute to poor curriculum delivery, necessary curricular amendments and support needed for learners' better performance - thus, the geography national pass rate is likely to improve.

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1.11 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

This section defines the study's key concepts. The concepts are described in the context of their use in the study. It should be noted that concepts vary in meaning and use; hence, context details when defining any concept.

1.11.1 Departmental Heads

These are also referred to as - middle managers, subject leaders, and curriculum coordinators (Kirkham, 2005:160). In this study, a departmental head is a teaching staff member in any of the Luvuvhu Circuit secondary schools. He/she is a specialist responsible for the subject of geography. He/she is involved in administrative aspects such as controlling mark sheets, overseeing tests and examinations (setting, writing, and marking), memoranda, and discipline. He/she is a liaison officer between the school and parents. Ndyali (2013:7) defines the departmental head as a teacher who oversees the teaching and learning of a subject at school and ensures that subordinates execute their roles efficiently to provide quality education to learners. Dumakude (2022:1) explains that the departmental head's leadership responsibilities include ensuring - quality in teaching and learning, curriculum planning and evaluation, selection and placement of learners in various subject programmes, observation of teaching and learning, and assessment of subjects. This study examines the departmental head in the context of curricula delivery to improve the learners' academic performance in geography.

1.11.2 Curriculum

Armstrong (2003:4) views curriculum as a decision-making process and products that focus on preparing and assessing plans designed to influence the learners' development of specific knowledge and skills. Tapala (2019:25) describes the curriculum as knowledge and skills learners should acquire. These are presented as lessons and content in class, through courses, programmes, or subjects. In this study, the Geography curriculum investigates the departmental head's role in content delivery (Tapala,

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2019:28). In other words, the curriculum is a series of work on Geography, which learners do and experience to improve their knowledge and skills.

1.11.3 Academic Performance

The learners' general level of performance in school subjects, accomplishments, or successes can be identified as academic performance (Dzever, 2015:67). Ndyali (2013:8) refers to academic performance as how well or poorly a learner does in his/her study. This is mainly assessed through tests and examinations during the implementation of the Geography curricula at the end of the lesson, term, academic year, or educational programme. Tigere (2016:8) adds that academic performance is an exhibition of knowledge attained or skills developed in subjects or areas of study. In this study, academic performance is attributed to completing homework and classwork, completing assignments, and performing well in tests and examinations. The learner's results assess academic performance after curriculum delivery.

1.11.4 Geographical Information System:

This is a conceptualized framework that provides the ability to capture and analyse spatial and geographical data (Wilmot & Dube, 2015:2). Ali (2020:2) sees it as a system of computer software, hardware data, and personnel that makes it possible to capture, manipulate, analyse, and present data, and information that is tied to a location on the earth's surface. Ershad and Ali (2020:1) explain this concept as a computer application capable of creating, storing, manipulating, visualising, and analysing geographic information. In this study, geographical information systems are important as they are the skills that learners should have when studying the subject.

1.11.5 Learner Academic Performance:

Owusu (2015:1) argues that learner academic performance is a multidimensional construct of skills, attitude, and behaviour contributing to academic success in the classroom. Ngambi (2014:27) states that a learner's academic performance involves

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factors such as - intellectual level, personality, motivation, skill, and interests. In this study, the learner's academic performance is the benchmark to measure the role of the Geography DH in supporting curricula delivery.

The essential keywords of the study are - departmental heads and curriculum - because the study investigated the role of GHDs in curriculum delivery. The DHs are the overseers of teaching and learning; they are also leaders in subjects, whereas curriculum is the knowledge and skills to be acquired by learners.

1.12 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study focused on - secondary school principals, deputy principals, GDHs and teachers from four selected schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit of the Vhembe East District; hence, it did not cover all the schools in the district. This was because the researcher resides and is employed by the DBE in the Vhembe East District (Luvuvhu Circuit). These aspects contributed to the researcher confining the study to the said circuit. In addition, delimiting the study to the Luvuvhu Circuit reduced travelling and accommodation expenses that would have been incurred had the study been extended to the rest of the district. The study only focused on the role of GHDs in curriculum delivery, with the assistance of the identified participants; data was not gathered from learners.

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

De Vos (2010:100) indicates that ethical issues in research should include non-maleficence (not harming participants), privacy, and anonymity. The study involved human participants. Therefore, the researcher informed them that participation in the study was voluntary and that the information obtained would always be kept secure and confidential. Leedy and Ormrod (2012:53) dealt with ethical issues in research under three categories – non-maleficence, privacy and anonymity.

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The researcher did not expose her research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm, as participants should not risk losing life or limb, nor should they be subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment, or loss of self-esteem (Creswell, 2016:32). In cases where a study could create psychological discomfort, participants should know beforehand. Necessary debriefing or counselling should immediately follow thereafter (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012:66). When people are intentionally recruited for participation in a research project; they should be told the nature of the study and given the choice of whether to participate or not. Any research that involves people should respect their right to privacy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012:98); since the study involved people, it followed all the procedures in line with ethical issues. Under no circumstance did the researcher report details, either oral or in written form, so that readers become aware of who the participants were or how they responded to the questions. The researcher ensured the participants' confidentiality by using codes to refer to her participants instead of their actual names, and the data were stored in a locked cabinet. The researcher obtained an ethical certificate to conduct research at the University of Venda, certificate number FHSSE/22/PCSEM/03/2109. The researcher further obtained permission to conduct research in the Luvuvhu circuit in Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province of Education to conduct research.

1.14 QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES

The trustworthiness of the collected data was verified to ensure internal and external validity (Creswell, 2001:276). In the qualitative approach, the focus is on the trustworthiness of data by measuring things that numbers might not be able to define and identify trends before they appear. Data trustworthiness has four components:

1.14.1 Credibility

The researcher used different sources of information to help confirm and improve the clarity and precision of the research findings (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273). Credibility refers to the believability of the findings, and it is enhanced by evidence such as confirming the

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evaluation of conclusions by the research participants, Individual interviews with the principals, the deputy principals and geography departmental heads and focus groups with the geography teachers confirming the evidence of information, control of unwanted influences, and theoretical fit. Maximum confidence in the believability of conclusions comes from the support provided by the participants' agreement, analysis of multiple sources of data, other experts' interpretations and prediction based on relevant theoretical models (that is, a predicted pattern matches an actual pattern) (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273). To ensure credibility, Qualitative methods of approach were used, which were individual interviews and focus-group interviews to enhance the findings' credibility.

To assess credibility, one would focus on the data quality, its analysis, and resultant conclusions (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273) since any weak link here would threaten the study's usefulness. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:12), credibility is related to construct validity, which is assessed by evidence that the construct being studied is the same as what the theory presumes exists. Checks relating to data accuracy took place on the spot during the data collection process. At the end of the data collection process (some interviews were in the mother tongue), the researcher allowed the participants to verify what they had said. Here, the participants confirmed whether their words aligned with their intended words.

1.14.2 Transferability

Transferability is enhanced by detailed descriptions of research methods that enable judgments about a "fit" with other contexts. The study utilises the qualitative approach of individual face-to-face and focus group interviews. Transferability refers to evidence supporting the generalisation of the findings to other contexts across different participants, groups, and situations. This is akin to external validity when applied to quantitative research (Thomas, 2017:57). Transferability is enhanced by detailed descriptions that enable judgments about a "fit" with other contexts. Comparisons across cases (cross-case comparisons) or other units of analysis (for example, classrooms or schools) that yield similar findings also increase transferability. Therefore, its findings

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might be transferred to other circuits and districts and the roles of geography departmental heads in curriculum delivery in secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit of Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province. Maree (2012:305) maintains that transferability is the extent to which a study can be transferred to a larger population or settings with complete reliance. To assess the extent to which the findings might be true in other settings, similar projects utilising the same methods but conducted in different circuits could be of great value.

1.14.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of data to determine whether the findings would be consistent with future studies of a similar nature. To ensure the dependability of the data, the researcher did not generalize the findings (Maree, 2012:305). Prolonged engagement at the selected schools and extensive interactions with the participants contributed to the internal validity. External validity was ensured by a detailed description of the study's focus, and multiple data collection methods and strategies were reported in detail. The researcher achieved dependability by member checks, identified themes, and confirmation with the participants to ensure the findings were accurate and dependable. The researcher achieved dependability by member checks, identified themes, and confirmation with the participants to ensure the findings were accurate and dependable.

1.14.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to dealing with the neutrality or objectivity of the collected data and the absence of bias and subjectivity in the research procedures and findings (Gay *et al*., 2011:114). Thomas (2017:58) asserts that raw data such as field notes, tapes, transcripts, and other documents compiled by the researcher during the data collection stage should be kept safe for later inspection by the promoter or auditor. The researcher and the supervisors verified the information and description of the data to ensure their accuracy, credibility, and authenticity**.** The researcher verified the information and description of the data to ensure their accuracy, credibility, and authenticity**.**

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1.15. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Chapter One: Introduction and Background

Chapter One introduces the research topic and then outlines the study's background, statement of the problem, research questions, research assumptions, significance of the study, definition of key concepts, delimitation of the study, ethical considerations, and the structure of the whole thesis.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

The succeeding Chapter Three illustrates the theory that informed this study. The study adopted and adapted the transformational leadership theory to understand the roles of the Geography DHs in curricula delivery to ensure the learners' optimum performance in the subject.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

This Chapter reviews literature relevant to the study. The chapter covers what other researchers have written about the topic in general.

Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

In Chapter Four, the focus is on the design and methodology used to conduct the research. This chapter includes the research instruments, population and participant selection, and data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter Five: Data Presentation and Analysis

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The fifth chapter presents and analyses the data collected from the participants. The data are presented and analysed based on the research questions and participants' words. The participants' direct words will also be quoted to support the presentations and interpretations.

Chapter Six: Discussion of Results

Chapter Six discusses the study results presented and interpreted in the preceding chapter. This is done by integrating the theory that informed this study and the secondary sources reviewed.

Chapter Seven: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This is the study's last chapter; this concluding chapter provides the study's summary based on Chapters Four and Five. A concluding section ties up the whole study; the preceding section focuses on recommendations, based on the findings, for the stakeholders involved in ensuring learners' satisfactory performance in Geography.

1.16 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides the study's - background, statement of the problem, research objectives and related questions, research methodology, research design, research approach, the population, sampling procedures, and data collection and analysis techniques. Also covered are - definitions of key concepts, delimitation of the study, ethical considerations, and an outline of the whole research structure. This chapter is only an introduction to the study; hence, detailed discussions of the above topics are also presented in the relevant chapters of the thesis. The following chapter shall be the Theoretical framework that discusses the theory underpinning the study.

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CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the background and rationale of the study, while this chapter details the theory that informed the study. The study adopted and adapted the transformational leadership theory; therefore, this chapter explains how this theory is an integral part of the study's theoretical framework. The theoretical framework as a concept is first outlined, followed by a detailed discussion of the transformational leadership theory. The discussions focus on adopting and adapting the theory to become consistent with the study. The roles of the Geography DHs are explained in the context of the theory, stressing the need for curricula delivery to improve learners' academic performance in Geography in the selected secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a specific collection of theories that guide an investigation by providing a framework that ensures that the study is focused (Du Ploy-Cilliers *et al*., 2014:75). According to Ridley (2011:106), a theoretical framework offers an explanatory device, often in the form of categories and relationships. The theoretical framework helps explain and predict a scientific inquiry's output based on academic reasoning. In addition, Mohammed (2015:18) explains a framework as the benchmark for research work in general. Merriam (1998:3) stated that a theoretical framework is the structure or scaffolding of one's study; it is a stance one brings to a study. Grant *et al*. (2014:12) elaborated that the theoretical framework is the foundation of all knowledge for a research study. In this study, therefore, the roles of the geography DH in curricula delivery to attempt to improve the learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu were investigated under the lens of the theoretical framework. The framework facilitated the link among various aspects and variables of the study, such as - the selection of participants, data

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collection methods, analysis, and interpretation. As earlier indicated, the study was informed by the Transformational Leadership Theory, which was propounded by James Downton in 1973 (Bryman *et al*., 2011:299) and further developed by Burns in 1978. Burns (1978:220) distinguished between leaders based on their motivational and supporting relationship with their subordinates. The transformational leadership theory was suitable for this study because the Geography curricula delivery occurs effectively when the DH, as an instructional leader, leads Geography teachers to success. As the substantive (or temporal) leader of a subject department, the DHs are key to the school improving its results, in this case in Geography; thus, a lot is expected from them, in particular, to serve as intellectual resources or catalysts for teaching and learning in the subject. Dumakude (2022:1) observed that the DHs' role in leadership for quality in teaching and learning includes - supporting the teachers' pedagogical skills, reporting progress and challenges of the subject for improved quality in teaching and learning to the principal, and facilitating teachers' professional development.

2.2.1 Historical Overview of the Transformational Leadership Theory.

Burns (1978) initially established the notion of transformational leadership to differentiate between leaders with strong motivating relationships with their followers and subordinates and those who place a high premium on exchange with transformational leadership interaction to achieve objectives. Transformational leadership is a deliberate, moral, and spiritual process that establishes patterns of equal power connections between leaders and followers to accomplish a common objective or effect actual change. Burns (1978:220) explained 'transformational leadership' as a process where leaders and their subordinates support each other morally and motivationally. Gomes (2014:18) attests that Bass model (1985) stated that leaders used inspirational motivation to encourage and inspire followers as well as intellectual stimulation to support followers' innovative and creative efforts that promote the growth of followers and used empowerment process rather than control strategies to achieve transformational influence over the group. In 1985, Bass expanded Burn's theory by adding a psychological factor - "The leader who connects to their subordinates is likely to become a prominent leader" (Chi *et al*., 2012).

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Transformational leadership is the process of engendering commitment to corporate objectives and enabling individuals to accomplish them. Transformational leadership assists and encourages followers to develop their creativity and sense of self-worth to advance team, group, and organizational objectives. A transformational leader affects change across the business and instils a sense of purpose in both managers and personnel (Arabiun et al., 2014:57). Moreover, Arabiun *et al*. (2014:56) indicate that a transformational leader induces a change in an organisation by creating new perspectives. Ramatseba (2012:14) asserts that transformational leaders advocate for relationship-oriented change and are concerned with end products. In this study, the geography DHs' role is oriented towards effective curricula delivery to improve learner academic performance. Throughout the world, schools now recognize the need to partner with parents and other stakeholders in order to ensure learners' success. Schools have realized the need to tap expert knowledge and skills from support personnel, including the DBE and DHs (PAM, 2016:12; EEA, 1998). Leaders, such as the geography DHs, encourage teachers to work together to improve learner performance in Geography, thereby making them transformation agents (Shahbaz & Korejan, 2016:178). That is, as transformational leaders, geography DHs monitor, supervise, and ensure a high quality of education by ensuring teachers' efficient geography curricula delivery in classrooms. Mohammed (2015:9) posits that Geography is one of the oldest and most encompassing disciplines offered in schools. As a result, the subject seeks academically and pedagogically competent teachers if learners are to perform well in the subject (Mohammed, 2015:9). Through Geography, learners are prepared to become globally competent individuals in the 21st century through distinctive teaching methods and investigative tools such as maps, fieldwork, and powerful digital communication technologies (Mohammed, 2015:9).

In this study, transformational leadership theory was seen as suitable in creating a committee of peers to improve the Geography results in schools. Zinth (2005:45) maintains that schools organize students for instructional purposes on an elementary, middle, secondary or high school levels. This characteristic manifests in the school's management structures, procedures, policies, and management system.

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Transformational leadership consists of four main dimensions - ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual considerations (Hoffmeister *et al*., 2012:69). The following explanations are based on these 4 dimensions' application in schools, particularly, in relation to the teaching of Geography. Transformational leadership theory ensures that DHs, the Geography DH included, is goal-oriented towards change and better results, enhanced by effective curriculum delivery.

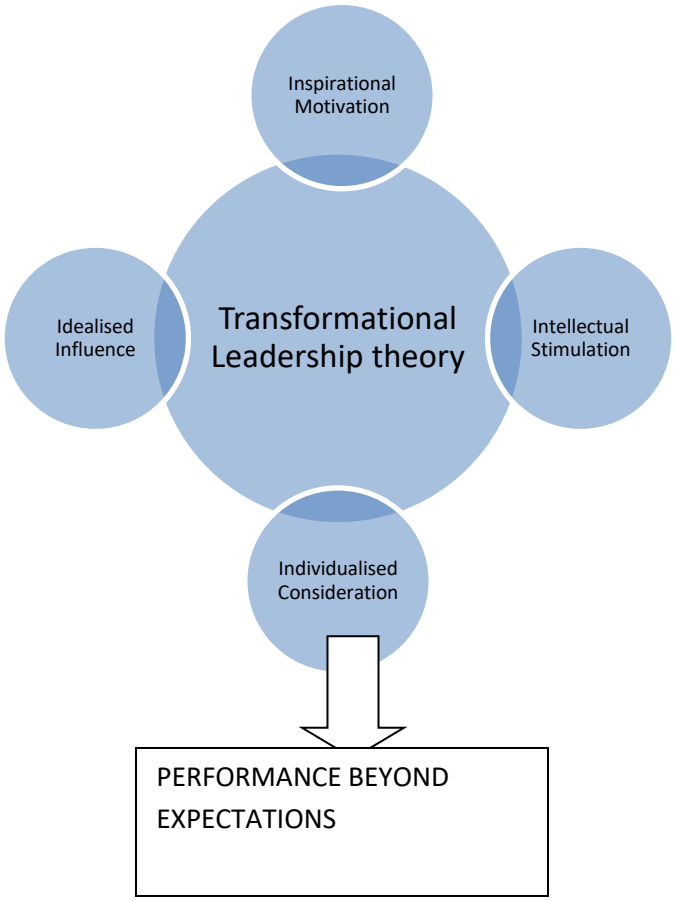

Figure 2.1: Transformational Leadership Model. Adapted from Estherita, Shanmugam and Sudha (2023:1).

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2.2.2. Four Dimensions of Transformational Leadership Theory

a) Idealised influence

The leadership style is where a manager acts as a role model for the associates, inspiring them to follow their lead. Leaders become models for their subordinates by being friendly, humble, respectful, and trustworthy. Leaders pay more attention to their subordinates' needs than theirs, and they avoid using power for personal aggrandisement (Deveshwar, 2014:178). In the context of schools, a GDH coordinates, evaluates/assesses homework and written assignments for the subjects to provide informed guidance. The DHs model the skills to be learned by teachers and the processes required to complete teaching tasks; they should communicate classroom expectations for performance and behaviour, which must be clear and consistent. In this study, the GDHs ensure that Geography teachers feel accepted by meeting with them, where the latter raise their concerns regarding the difficulties they face in curricula implementation.

b) Inspirational motivation

The degree to which a leader articulates an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations. (Chebon et.al, 2019:45) attests that inspiration encourages followers to raise their consciousness about and elicit their commitment to the mission and vision of the institution. The DHs help in setting a compelling vision that challenges Geography teachers in their jobs and motivates them to work as a team. They jointly develop, with the educators, the policy for the subject departments to promote the success of all teachers (PAM, 2016:27). In doing so, the DH advocates, nurtures and helps to sustain the school culture conducive to the teachers' growth and learner performance. These can be done by creating situations that guide, support, stimulate, and encourage professional development. Inspirational and motivational leaders challenge their followers in their jobs and create a clear perspective to reach goals and go toward the future by increasing efficiency in the workplace (Korejan & Shabbz, 2016:458). In the context of the study, a GDH enables teachers to identify with and follow the departmental vision. Teachers are also encouraged to find solutions to challenges experienced in the department. The key here is to discover innovative ways to improve

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the learners' academic performance. A GDH's duty is to help with curricula coverage and provide teachers with continued professional development (ELRC, 1995; QMS, 2020:50). In this case, under-performing teachers would be continuously supported and developed to provide quality teaching; teacher development is the cornerstone of professional competence in teaching (Mukondeleli, 2018:81). The Geography DH motivates teachers by paying attention to their individual differences and high-level needs; she/he then provides mental stimulation by increasing the teachers' involvement in decision-making.

c) Intellectual stimulation.

Intellectual Stimulation is when the leader encourages the ability of creativity, curiosity and critical thinking among the team to cope with the uncertainty and complexity and how it can benefit the school. Rajan et al. (2023:166) attest to having a transformational leader who encourages innovation as well as critical thinking and problem-solving. Therefore, intellectual stimulation can be regarded as the enhancement of cognitive processing, including creativity, discernment and insight that occurs when individuals exchange ideas and opinions during interpersonal group discussions.

This is the key component of transformational leadership theory: leaders encourage their team members to be creative and offer new perspectives and solutions. Leaders encourage their subordinates by motivating and modifying approaches and opportunities for the latter and stimulating solutions from different perspectives. The DH co-operates with colleagues to maintain a good teaching environment and progress among learners. They also foster administrative efficiency within the department. A resourceful DH outsources expert teachers from other schools to assist in dealing with difficult aspects of the curricula; doing so helps to improve the learners' academic performance in class; for example, the Geography DH can outsource an expert in map work interpretation and GIS as part of the curriculum to raise the learners' academic performance. Transformational leaders encourage their subordinates to create motivation and creativity by modifying their subordinates' approaches and opportunities. The main purpose of leaders is to allow the free flow of ideas and imagination so that their followers and subordinates can try to

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create new techniques and approaches (Korejan & Shabbz, 2016:458). In the context of the study, the Geography DH encourages teachers to reflect on the learners' learning difficulties. The GDH helps teachers set their assessment tests according to Bloom's taxonomy to cater to learners with various learning abilities. Bloom's taxonomy is widely recognised as important in various teaching and learning contexts (Li, Mladen; Poh, Gaševic & Guanliang, 2022:1).

d) Individualised consideration

Considering each and every member of a team involves keeping lines of communication open, attending to the individual needs of teachers, mentoring them and organising each teacher's contribution. Kayago et,al. (2023:65) attest that individual consideration is the construct through which a transformational leader takes into account individual needs by being their mentor and coach, as well as paying attention to the needs of members.

The extent to which a leader attends to each follower's needs and mentors, coaches or guides the team. The leader listens to the concerns and needs of each follower and provides support and empathy for each person's situation and background. A leader pays attention to individuals in the school to develop a healthy relationship. This could be done by providing new learning opportunities for educators' interests and skill improvements, hence, being a mentor to their less experienced colleagues. A DH can give novice teachers work to do, during which the former appraises them to improve their teaching, learning, management, and effective curricula delivery through lesson observations (ELRC, 1995, (Collective Agreement No. 2); (Quality Management Systems, 2020). The geography DH can share the teaching strategies of the geography curriculum with a novice teacher so that the latter can gain experience. Leaders behave towards their subordinates according to the latter's own characteristics and capabilities. A leader pays personal attention to individuals in order to develop a healthy relationship by providing new learning opportunities according to the latter's interests and skills (Korejan & Shabbz, 2016:458). In the context of this study, the Geography DH helps geography teachers to improve teaching and learning. This can be done, for example, by doing class visits and

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checking class timetables (the number of lessons teachers teach) (Mathiyane & Betram, 2019:2).

The teachers' fair treatment also translates to them fairly treating learners in class; in contrast, disgruntled teachers often take that to the classroom. In other words, when teachers perceive unfair treatment at school, they deliver haphazard lessons in class. Perceived unfairness at school facilitates the learners' development of unfairness and a sense of injustice; therefore, in a fair school environment, teachers show a high level of modernity, such as - being valued, strong self-efficacy and pride, participating more in school activities, communicating, and cooperating with others and being more responsible at work (Zhang, 2017:100).

These above dimensions of the transformational leadership theory also focus on the DHs' accountability and knowledge as instructional leaders in the school hierarchy. The idea here is to achieve the school's specific aims and objectives, particularly curricula delivery. The DH should, therefore, effectively coordinate the teachers' activities in their departments to improve the learners' academic performance. In addition to the above, the DH's roles include curriculum knowledge and supervision of teachers, as well as the development and appraisal of teachers (ELRC, Resolution 8 of 1995). The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our daily lives, becoming the most significant and unpredictable global public health crisis in decades. To mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic, the geography DHs distributed responsibilities to teachers and conducted online meetings to monitor curricula delivery through online teaching and learning platforms. Online teaching and learning activities were organised as directed by the DBE, particularly for Grade 12 learners. The rotation of lower-grade learners was later done when COVID-19 lockdown rules and regulations were toned down. Rotational school attendance influenced teamwork; in this context, the geography DHs distributed responsibilities to a network of teams throughout schools. For instance, teachers were grouped into teams and under-nominated team leaders' responsibility for each grade per team. Team leaders ensured that learners wore masks in or out of the classrooms, washed their hands,

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maintained physical distances as regulated, and complied with basic COVID-19 hygiene protocols.

One of the DHs' roles was to establish a culture of trust, collaboration and shared responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This ensured that teaching, learning, and curriculum delivery were done effectively to the learners' benefit. This meant that the geography DHs adopted the transformational leadership style, focusing on motivation, inspiration, encouragement, innovation, and shared visions, thereby putting the teachers' needs first. The transformational leadership theory helped this study devise means to help the Geography DHs improve their pedagogical skills and abilities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated constraints.

2.3. Transformational Leadership Theory characteristics.

Transformational leadership can be defined as the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes, beliefs, and values of followers to a point where the goals of an organization and the leader's vision are internalised, and followers achieve performances beyond expectations. Transformational leadership empowers leaders to achieve extraordinary outcomes by transforming how their teams think and act, cultivating specific traits, and embracing innovative strategies (Korgan & Shahbazi, 2016:455).

Transformational leadership with contemporary significance - has become the focus of academic scholars (Gong *et al*., 2009:23 cited in Wang, 2019:3). Wang (1019:3) attested to the fact that a school head who adopts a transformational leadership style seeks to raise the teachers' awareness of the necessity of undertaking the task of education, by stimulating their high-level needs. In this way, mutual trust between the DHs and teachers is built, and subsequently urging teachers to sacrifice their interests for the development of the school; they do so by extending themselves to exceed the educational performance expectations (Bass, 1995, cited in Wang, 2019:2). The Geography DH creates a conducive teaching and learning climate as part of their school leadership roles and responsibilities. Robinson *et al*. (2008:114), cited in Wang (2019:4), emphasized

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that a DH's transformational leadership have positive effects on learner development and direct results. DHs support the transformational leadership style because they have exceptional personal ability to provide examples. Effective leaders can be role models, facilitate change, and promote good performance.

2.3.1. Transformational Leadership Theory Focal Point.

Transformational Leadership theory aims to instil good motivation among workers; organisations not only offer extrinsic rewards to them but also plan to enhance their intrinsic motivation. Khan, Rehman and Asim (2020:1) concur that this is an approach to present a clear and justified organisational vision and mission by motivating workers to work towards the idea through developing association with the employees, considering requirements and assisting to exert their potential positively. Transformational leadership Theory management philosophy has 3 major focal points:

a) Change-Leaders strive to reshape the surroundings and systems within which they operate.

b) Plans for the future- The leader inspires the team with the vision to develop the team's ideas further.

c) People- The leader leads by example in investing in developing his/her team.

Leaders who can adopt a transformational style will deliver the best organisational results, which is fundamental in the current set-up of education, starting from the national level to the school level. Moreover, (Khan, Renmat & Asim, 2020,2) attest that work performance has a positive significant relationship with transformational leadership style. Furthermore, leaders in the education sector are shaped by instructional leadership, where the principal decides the SMT and the curriculum (Mona, 2023:12). The DH can also act as a source of good behavioural examples because they inspire educators and learners to be open-minded and self-confident; to continually reflect on and improve themselves and offer personalized care to individual learners who face developmental and learning difficulties. Therefore, Transformational leaders seek to create ideas, new perspectives, and new paths of

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growth and improvement, as the geography departmental head seeks a new path of improvement in curricula delivery and skills in the geography department in the school by developing commitment to geography teachers, passion and loyalty among geography departmental head and geography teachers.

2.4. Concept of Leadership and Transformational Leadership Theory.

Leadership emerges from social life; some people are put together to begin their social life and influence each other. Leadership was needed from the beginning of human society (Davis & Thilagaraj, 2022:154). Leadership can be regarded as a leader who has ambition and skills. personality, and other qualities to motivate and influence a group of people to reach a common goal. Moreover, (Strait 2020: 2) attests that a leader is a person who is the focal point of group change. Transformational leadership is achieved when leaders and followers motivate each other for higher motivation and morality. These leaders have better relationships with their supervisors. In this context, the geography departmental head has a better relationship with the deputy principal and the principal as they are all members of the SMT. They help the school more than leaders who act transactionally, and they create more value for the school. Transformational leaders motivate their employees to do more than what is cited in their employment contracts, and they focus on the employees' higher-level needs (Korajan & Shahbaz, 2016). These leaders act as mentors and advisors and pay attention to personal development, learning, and supplying the needs of the teachers. They provide challenge, a sense of mission, broader perspectives, respect, and trust for the teachers, and they act as role models for their teachers. They create an atmosphere of trust and motivate teachers to work for the school beyond their self-interests (Khorshid & Pashazadeh, 2014: 7). Transformational leadership refers to leaders who seek to create ideas and new perspectives to create a new path of growth and prosperity in front of the organization. By developing commitment, passion and loyalty among managers and staff, they mobilize the organisation's members to make fundamental changes in the fundaments and the basis of the organisation in order to be prepared and to gain the necessary capabilities for moving in new directions and reaching higher ideals performance peaks (Mirkamali et al., 2014,23). The

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transformational leader constantly looks for potential motives in followers and aims to draw followers' attention to superior needs and convert individual interests into collective interests. According to Bass and Avolio (2000:52), transformational leadership is a conscious, moral and spiritual process that provides development patterns for the organization through reliable equal power leadership. Transformational leaders explain the organization's future prospects and provide a model consistent with the prospects, improve acceptance of group goals, provide a wide range of support for individuals in the organization and encourage them to pursue the organization's goals (Mortazavi & Nikkar, 2014, 105). In this study, the geography departmental head explains the goals and targets of the geography department in the school. It supports geography teachers by providing them with teaching and learning materials from the Department of Basic Education. Transformational leadership theory suits the geography departmental head, who is regarded as the transformational leader by creating a vision and encouraging teachers to fulfil it; not only does the geography departmental head need to show their capabilities, but geography teachers in the school also have to cooperate with their departmental head to achieve desired results.

2.5. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY.

Transformational leadership theory is a management approach in which leaders inspire and motivate employees to align with the objectives and success of the organization. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the transformational leadership theory, one may become better prepared to implement this leadership style successfully in the institution. Transformational leadership theory refers to leaders who should be able to influence others, stimulate them into action, and accept responsibility for the results (Davis & Thilagaraj, 2023:154).

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2.5.1. Strengths of Transformational Leadership Theory.

There are some strengths of Transformational Leadership Theory, as stated by Eaton, Bridgman& Cummings (2024:2) concur that employees inspire self-confidence in specific jobs as well as the power to make decisions once they have been trained. The following are the strengths of Transformational Leadership Theory:

a). Foster commitment, loyalty, and improved performance while promoting innovation and organizational effectiveness.
b). Best for communicating new ideas, better ways of getting things done, and developing specific plans to achieve the vision.
c). Fosters employee empowerment and independence, employing transformational leadership theory to make people understand the value of professional development.
d). Improves employee engagement and performance. It emphasises creativity and innovation.
e). Builds company's culture, stronger company development, the school's culture becomes more teachers centric, rather than hierarchical.
f). Improves employee well-being, engagement, and performance, which reduces teacher burnout.

2.5.2. Weaknesses of the Transformational Leadership Theory.

Bass (1985) transformational leadership theory can have negative effects on their followers that lead to destructive, negative and reactionary goals. This divergence and criticism that followed (Hawell&Avolio.1992) led Bass (1998) to propose the concept of pseudo-transformational leaders. The following are the weaknesses of Transformational Leadership Theory:
a). Enthusiasm can be exhausting for both the leader and followers, maintaining the heightened level of enthusiasm can be draining for some leaders.
b). Transformational Leadership theory can be disruptive; it works best in environments that require significant systematic changes.

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c). Leaders can be self-absorbed.

d). Relying on employees can backfire, even if the leader remains true to his/her course; the question is how their environment will respond to their efforts; trusting employees to work without supervision does not work out even if they are given the opportunity to prove themselves.

e). Transformational Leadership Theory often relies on the leader's presence and support.

Khan, Rehmat and Asim (2020:1) attest that there is an indirect and significant relationship between transformational leadership and burnout and social loafing. It is important for the change management process, which needs a new system and new approaches; the manager's behaviour and leadership style significantly impact the type of needs and awareness of the staff (Korgan & Shahbazi, 2016:455).

Though transformational leadership theory has its strengths and weaknesses, the study utilizes it. Mona (2023:14) concurs that transformational leadership theory prioritises the professional development of staff. CTPD (Continuing Teacher Professional Development, the system that is managed by SACE (South Africa Council for Educators) that aims to continually improve teachers' teaching practices to respond to learners' ever-changing needs. The geography departmental head evaluates teachers' performance under the quality management system policy to monitor competency, strength, and areas that need development through class visits and lesson observations. Teachers are provided with opportunities for continuing learning and growth. Leaders who can adopt a transformational style deliver the best in the school results, which is fundamental in the current situation of the education system, starting from the national level to the school level.

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2.6. GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS' TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND CURRICULA DELIVERY.

A geography DH influences and makes teachers identify their abilities and often produces a strong emotional attachment to the leadership and school. Teachers regard their DHs as the epitome of perfect and progressive leaders, hence, enthusiastically execute orders provided by them (Zhang & Chen, 2011:12). An essential function of transformational leadership is to shape a school's environment and help to form an organisational culture and structure of care, respect, and co-operation. PAM (2016:27) stipulates that the duties of the DH include ensuring that teaching and learning occur effectively in schools. In addition, the DH encourages teachers and learners to be part of the school decision-making body, where learners are represented by the Learners Representative Council (LRC). Ali, Mahmut and Emre (2022:1) reiterate that transformational leadership ensures teachers innovative practices through commitment; it establishes a school's organizational structure that develops participatory decision-making that encourages teachers and learners to make choices independently. Moreover, the LRC liaises with teachers in making decisions. Thus, learners realise their impact in school and, hence, believe that they can inspire their school's vision. Wang (2019:10) elaborated that in this way, an affiliation climate is possible to form, thereby, creating a trustful, open, and protected environment for teachers and learners. Wang and Tian (2016:110) believe that transformational leadership forms the basis for school educational innovation, as teachers and learners are free to reflect on their thoughts and behaviours and share new ideas. Lin, Yin and Liu (2022:1) claim that transformational school leadership means that school leaders can create collective beliefs about their capabilities, among the teachers by empowering them - to set their personal goals, to shift teachers' objectives from self-interest to school's interest, enhancing their feelings of self-efficacy, and acting as role models. The transformational leadership theory was suitable for the study as it helped to address issues of incompatibility between the education policy and the actual practice in Geography curricula delivery in class. In the researcher's opinion, however, in most secondary schools, teaching and learning activities in Geography are not conducted efficiently because most learners exit school without acquiring adequate knowledge and

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skills in map reading, calculations, and GIS. Mona (2023:20) stated that teachers in South Africa are subject to assessment under the Quality Management System (QMS) policy to monitor their competency, strengths, and areas that need development. Transformational leadership theory is relevant because the leader inspires and motivates their subordinate to bring good results to the institution. Therefore, the geography departmental head assesses geography teachers under the Quality Management System through lesson observation and class visits so that gaps in curriculum delivery can be identified. Transformational Leadership Theory is relevant because it provides a framework for understanding how leadership and practices can positively influence teacher professionalism, which has a significant impact on the quality of curriculum delivery and success in the school. Mona (2023:14) attests that transformational leadership theory prioritises the professional development of teaching staff. Teachers are provided with opportunities for continued learning and growth, which is the key to professionalism. Hence, the CPTD system (Continuing Teacher Professional Development), managed by SACE, aims to continuously improve teaching practices to respond to learners ever changing needs. Transformational leadership was instrumental in helping the researcher to understand how the Geography DHs should conduct themselves in curricula delivery; thus, this theory motivated shaping the school environment for effective teaching and learning; hence, geography, by its nature, is real and practical, that is, learners should interact with their environment if they are to understand Geography concepts, such as weather, soil erosion, climate change, rainfall patterns, and landforms. Therefore, curriculum delivery should be effective in schools to cater to the learners' needs.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter discussed the ‘theoretical framework’ concept, particularly the transformational leadership theory. This theory was explained in terms of the Geography DHs’ roles in curricula delivery to improve the learners’ academic performance. The chapter presented the theoretical framework as a guide that directs the research process and provides the blueprint by which the study was conducted. The transformational leadership theory underpinned this study concerning leaders with strong

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motivational relationships with subordinates. A DH ensures that teachers align themselves with the department's vision and mission by raising the team's morale and self-confidence. The transformational leadership theory, therefore, informed this study regarding the roles of Geography DHs in curriculum delivery, learner academic performance improvement, and teacher development.

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CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature related to this study. Reviewing the literature here would help to refine and widen the study's theoretical framework as a literature review reveals developments in a field of study, thereby exposing gaps in existing literature. The process also helps a researcher to examine the available body of knowledge in her area of research, thereby expanding information concerning her study. This chapter reviews literature about the concepts of Geography and curriculum and the roles of a Geography DH and teachers in curriculum delivery. Literature on the relationship between curriculum delivery and the learners' academic performance is also reviewed here. Finally, literature related to Geography DHs' constraints in curricula delivery and the strategies to implement the Geography curricula to improve the learners' performance was reviewed; the review was done according to the study objectives outlined in Chapter One.

3.2 GEOGRAPHY IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Geography is a subject that equips learners with knowledge, skills, and positive attitude; acts as a benchmark for further training and studies at the tertiary level; and provides sufficient evidence of the learners' competency (DoBE, 2012:12). More specifically, Geography is the branch of knowledge that studies lands, the features, the inhabitants, and the earth in general. Geography means "writing about the Earth"; the concept can be divided into two parts - geo and graph. 'Geo' means the earth, and 'graph' refers to writing (McDermott, 2017:6). Today, however, Geography means much more than writing about the Earth; it now reveals all the wonderful changes and activities that have been going on in the world, since the beginning of time.

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Geography draws from across the physical, cultural, economic, and political spheres at both local and global levels; it is the study of the earth and its natural, physical, and human environment (Pandey, 2018:1). Through Geography, we learn to appreciate the diversity of landscapes, peoples, and their cultures (Hatzimichali, 2022:5). It is, therefore, a vital subject for the 21st century global citizens. The subject enables us to face issues, such as - what sustainability means in an interdependent world. The introduction of statistical techniques has proved useful for carrying out research in - physical, economic, human, and regional geography, as well as map reading. Geography is a colourful subject for secondary school learners if lessons are invigorated with various school activities (Mohammed, 2015:1). The subject involves studying human activities and their interrelationships and interactions with environments on local and global scales. It bridges the natural and social sciences and, thus, deals with spatial variability; in other words, phenomena, events, and processes which vary within and between places. Knowledge of Geography, therefore, should be regarded as an essential part of the education of all citizens in all societies (Puttick, 2022:1).

The CAPS Geography document (DoBE, 2019:32) stresses the need for all topics to be explored within the conceptual framework of place, spatial processes, spatial distribution patterns and human and environment interaction. Geography as a subject has always had a core focus on maps and spatial patterns. In recent years, though, GIS has become an essential component in Geography; thus, the current generation of geographers is empowered by modern techniques of Remote Sensing and GIS. These are powerful tools; however, to use them properly, one requires a theoretical understanding of the subject.

In the Further Training category (Grades 10 – 12), Geography aims to - develop tools and skills to research, interpret, analyse, and make judgments based on the information gathered, thereby contributing to geographical literacy; develop knowledge and critical understanding, and changing nature, and interrelatedness of human existence and environment over space and time; prepare learners to become informed, critical, and responsible citizens who can make sound judgments, and take appropriate action that

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will contribute to equitable and sustainable development of human society and the physical environment (NCS, Grade 10-12 Geography, 2003:19).

Geography provides several opportunities for additional education and training, and career links include - aviation, cartography, earth science studies, eco-tourism, education and teaching, environmental management, geographical information systems, geology and surveying, meteorology, nature conservation, remote sensing, rural and regional planning, urban planning, water, and land affairs. The study sought to illuminate the DHs and teachers' experiences in curriculum delivery to improve learners' academic performance. Also, it investigated the difficulties faced by GDHs and teachers as they delivered curricula. The strategies that could be used to enhance curricula delivery and the proposed model to enhance GDH roles were also explored as part of the study objectives.

3.3 GEOGRAPHY CURRICULA: POLICY DOCUMENT

Ensuring effective curriculum delivery is part of the Geography DH's leadership role. Hence, it is logical to elucidate what a curriculum is. Curriculum refers to the knowledge and skills learners are supposed to learn, and these are presented in the form of lessons and content (Wood, Luke & Weir, 2010:10). The GDH, leading the curriculum's implementation, therefore, must make sure that it is effectively taught by geography teachers to improve the learners' performance in the subject. Learners should acquire geography skills such as reading maps, calculating, and using GIS. This should be based on certain objectives and predetermined standards that learners should reach (Tapala, 2019:26). The curriculum is an official document which assists teachers in ensuring that the required goals and objectives are reached (Wood & Hedges, 2016:36).

Stephenson (2010:255) states that every institution of learning, including schools, has a set of outcomes, goals, and objectives they want to achieve. Therefore, the curriculum plan is used by implementers such as the geography DH and teachers to inform its implementation. For this study, a curriculum means all activities that take place in the

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Geography classroom for the purpose of teaching and learning. These include the learners' planned and documented experiences to develop their general knowledge and skills (Ornstein & Hunians, 2013:224).

The CAPS document (DoBE, 2011) is the point of reference for all concerned; it is available in all South African schools. This document is the blueprint of what must be done in the classroom, by whom, and when. The CAPS document is the directive of what to teach and how to teach in South African schools (Du Plessis & Marais, 2015:12) and for geography learners, it is stated they should acquire, among others, map reading, calculation, and GIS skills, as informed by the CAPS document.

Morris and Adamson (2010:133) state that curriculum offers much more than content as it includes the development of learners in totality; therefore, it is not only from the subject content that learners learn and develop new knowledge and skills. Glathom and Jailla (2000:53) acknowledge that the curriculum should emphasise deep rather than broad coverage of important areas of knowledge as well as solving authentic and contextualised problems. The Geography DHs, in their capacity as curricula leaders, should be aware of what curricula are recommended in the CAPS document (Tapala, 2019:23). The training of teachers on Geography curriculum delivery should include problem-solving skills and appropriate instructional resource provision. Moreover, Mona (2023:20) concurs that Transformational Leadership Theory prioritises the professional development of teaching staff. This would assist learners in mastering Geography content. If effectively taught, learners would leave school having acquired map reading and GIS skills.

3.3.1 Geography in CAPS

The Minister of Basic Education made changes in the curriculum, such as - new ways to plan content, new teaching methods, as well as new methods of curricula implementation, evaluation, and reporting, *inter alia* (DoBE, 2010:11). Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is a document that guides or describes the teaching, learning, and assessment processes in the South African Education System at both primary and post-

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primary phases of learning (Ajani, 2021:1). The CAPS document (2019:19) defines geography as a science that studies physical and human processes, and spatial patterns on earth in an integrated way over space and time. It examines the spatial attribution of people and their activities, physical and human-made features, ecosystems, and interactions among people and between people and the environment in a dynamic context. Geography is studied from Grades 8 to 12, and the National Senior Certificate (NSC) completes the basic education.

The CAPS document, therefore, outlines effective learning outcomes in classroom practices (Ajani, 2021:1). The policy provides teachers with clear guidance on what should be taught and how assessment should be conducted in Geography (DoBE, 2014:3). To achieve quality education, school curricula were transformed after the introduction of the initial democratic curricula in 1997, to the recent CAPS document, which forms part of the National Curriculum Statement. The need to prepare learners to acquire skills to be part of a rapidly advancing technology-driven world led to the recent changes. In high school Geography, the CAPS document includes the theme of GIS in Grades 10 – 12 and is examined in Grade 12 (Manik, 2022:1). Ahiaku (2016:22) emphasises that geographical content is to be studied and interpreted with physical and human processes, linked to the social world. New learning tools, such as Information Communication Technology (ICT) and GIS, are emphasised in Geography (DBE, CAPS & Assessment Policy Statement, Grade 10-12, 2019:19).

The NCS and CAPS in Geography for FET (Grades 10 – 12) aim to develop and enhance learners' geographical skills, such as - the use of verbal, quantitative, and symbolic data forms in texts, pictures, graphic tables, diagrams, and maps. The curriculum also ensures the - practising of field observation and mapping, interviewing people, interpreting sources, and working with statistics; applying communication, thinking, practical, and social skills; identifying questions; collecting and structuring information; processing, interpreting, and evaluating data; making decisions and judgments; deciding points of view; suggesting solutions to problems; and working co-operatively and independently (DBE, 2011:9).

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3.3.2 The Previous Structure of Geography Examination

In the FET phase, the Geography Examination Paper consists of two parts - Paper 1 and Paper 2. Paper 1 is the theoretical aspect of Geography and includes Physical Geography (Climate, Weather and Geomorphology); also included in this paper is Human Geography (Rural and Urban settlements and Economic Geography of South Africa. The total mark for this paper is 225, and the paper is written for three hours and learners are expected to answer any three questions from those given (DBE, CAPS, 2011:58). Paper 2 examines learners on map calculations, the analysis and interpretation of a topographic map and photograph, and the application of theory, as well as the GIS use. Paper 2 carries 75 marks and is written in one and a half hours.

Assessment in Geography is based on knowledge and understanding of geographical issues, working with data, and making judgments and decisions. Learners should be able to demonstrate knowledge of spatial patterns and spatial interactions and use and apply geographical skills and techniques in reading, analysing and interpreting information in various forms (verbal, numerical, diagrammatic, pictorial, graphical, and digital). They should also be able to depict information in simple maps, diagrammatic, and digital forms (DBE, 2011:59).

3.3.3 The Restructured Geography Papers.

The 2021 Geography Examination marked the first year after the move to two 3-hour papers of 150 marks each. The two papers reflect two Geography disciplines with geographical techniques and skills (map work) tested in both papers. Paper 1: Physical Geography (climate, weather, and geomorphology) and geographical skills and techniques. Paper 2: Human Geography (rural and urban settlement and economic Geography of South Africa) and geographical skills and techniques. The decision to move to two equally weighted papers has been well-received by the 2021 Geography cohort. This was possibly due to the reduction in time and management pressure. With the new format, the two papers combined required six hours to complete a 300-mark examination

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as opposed to the previous norm of four and a half hours for the same marks. Secondly, the distribution of the content was over two days, and the decision to write the two papers on different days enabled candidates to focus their last-minute preparations for each day on only 50% of the curriculum (NSC Diagnostic Report, November Examination, 2021:104). Candidates, however, continue to struggle in both papers, particularly with concepts such as - geographical skills and techniques, map calculations, and GIS. Candidates either answered only a few sub-questions or did not attempt the questions at all.

3.3.4 Overall Achievement Rates in Geography

Table 3.1 shows the 2021 November Diagnostic Report by the NSC Examinations Board (Chapter Six, Geography, 102).

Table 3.1: Geography Performance Trends, 2017-2021 (Source: NSC Report, 2021)

Year	No. Wrote	No. Achieved at 30% and above	% Achieved at 30% and above	No. Achieved at 40% and above	% Achieved at 40% and above
2017	276 771	212 954	76.9	138 704	50.1
2018	269 621	200 116	74.2	126 011	46.7
2019	271 807	218 467	80.5	144 755	53.3
2020	287 629	216 467	75.3	132 955	46.2
2021	358 655	266 402	74.3	155 060	43.2

Table 3:1 shows the candidates' performance per level from 2017-2021 in Geography final examinations. The table shows the performance trends of geography achievement from 30% to 40% and above, and the percentage achieved at 30% and 40% and above (NSC, Diagnostic report 2021:102).

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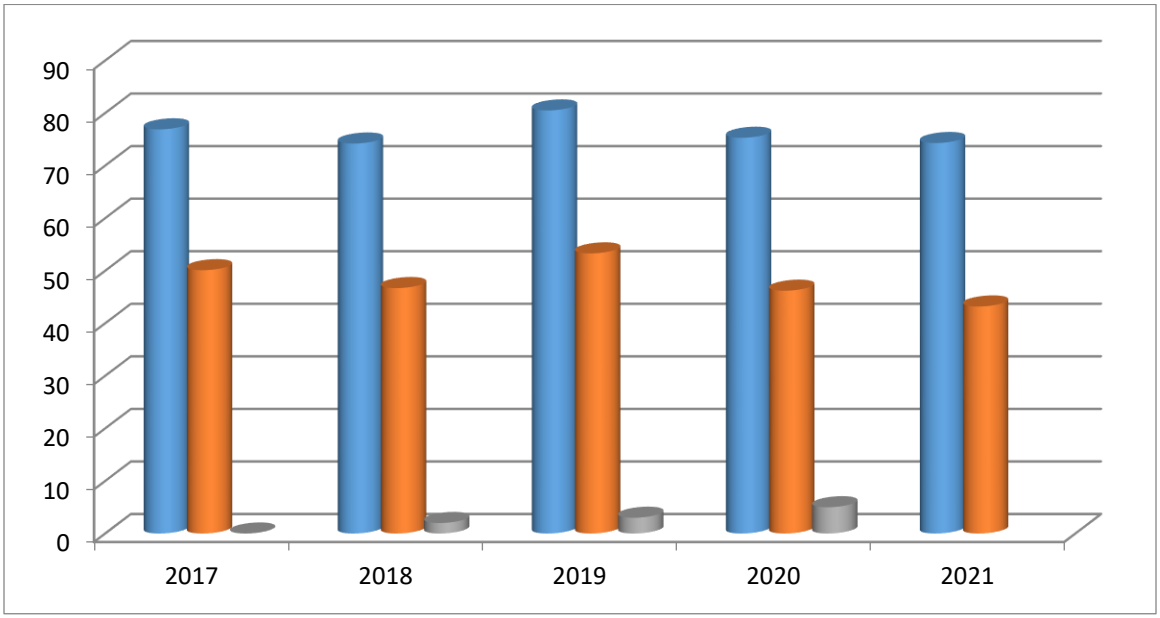
3.1. Geography Overall Achievement Rates in Percentage



Graph 3.1: Geography Overall Achievement Rates in Percentage (Source: NSC Report, 2021)

Graph 3.1 shows the overall achievement in Geography from 2017-2021 in percentages % achieved at 30% and above ☐ % achieved at 40% and above. Blue colours represent % achieved at 30% and above, while red represents % achieved at 40% and above. The graph shows the performance per year from 2017 -2021. It shows how curriculum delivery impacts the achievement of learners.

Table 3.2: Performance Comparison - 2017-2021 (Source: NSC, Diagnostic Report 2021:102**)**

□% achieved at 30% and above				
□% achieved at 40% and above				
2017	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**
76.9	74.2	80.5	75.3	74.3
50.1	46.7	53.3	46,2	43.2

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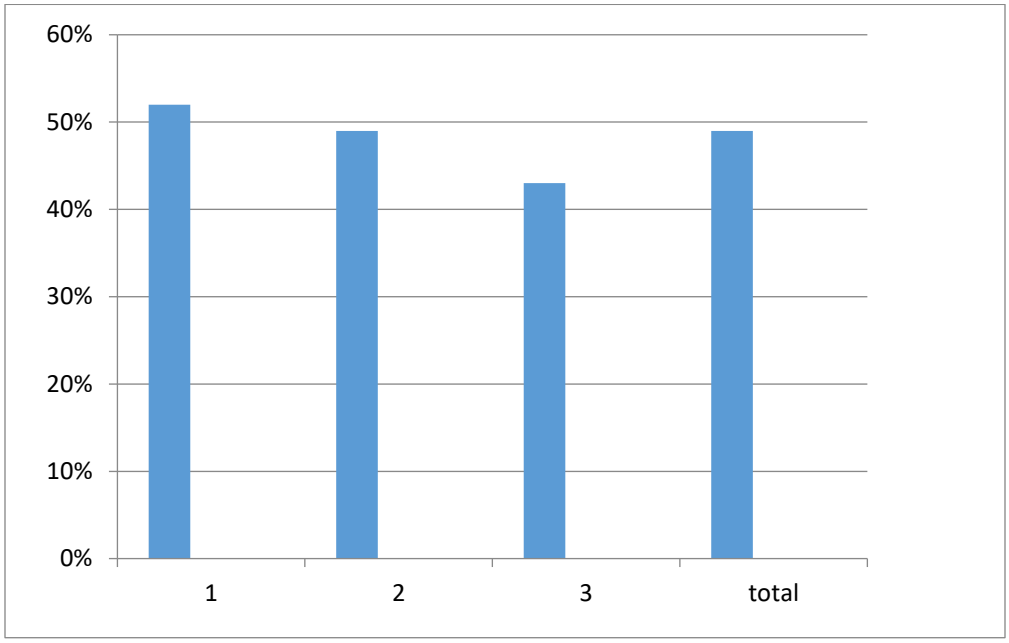
Table 3.2 compares performance achievement in percentages - the graph shows achievement at 30% and above shows achievement at 40% and above. Blue represents the percentage achieved at 30% and above, while red represents the percentage achieved at 40% and above.

3.3.6 Question Analysis: Geography Paper 1



Graph 3.2: Average Performance Per Question in Paper 1

Graph 3.2 above is based on data from a random sample of 100 candidates per province that shows the performance of candidates in Geography Paper 1, which consists of three questions. The graph shows the performance of candidates per question; Question 1 performs at 52%, Question 2 at 49% and question3 at 43%; the overall performance for Paper 1 is a total of 49%. (November Diagnostic Report by the NSC Examinations Board (Chapter Six, Geography, 109). It shows the impact of the roles of geography departmental heads on curriculum delivery, per questions from questions 1-3, showing that question 3 has a low achievement, which covers map work and

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geographical information systems. It also indicates how the geography departmental role can impact teacher and learner support.

Table 3.3: Topics Covered in Geography Paper 1

Question	Topics
1	Climate and Weather
2	Geomorphology
3	Geographical Skills and Techniques

Table 3.3 shows the topics covered in Geography Paper 1 (NSC Report, 2021). The table shows the topics under each question that was examined in Geography Paper 1.

a) Question 3: Geographical skills and techniques

The researcher's observation after analysing the answers to the questions, as indicated in Table 3.2, is that the learners performed at 43%, a lower mark than the 50% expected for a pass. This is the lowest performance compared to other questions on that paper. The 2021 NSC Diagnostic Report for the above question shows that calculations and map skills were challenges to many learners, so despite being given the magnetic declination, learners still struggled to measure accurately with protractors, hence the low marks attained. In addition, the answers to the questions on map interpretation revealed that learners do not use either the topographic map or the orthophoto one and these are required if learners are to improve their results in this paper. Many candidates did not reference information on the topographic map to its full potential, showing learners' challenges in map interpretation. Furthermore, GIS is a concept that is not taught in a practical and applied manner, yet it should; therefore, data layering was a challenge for learners.

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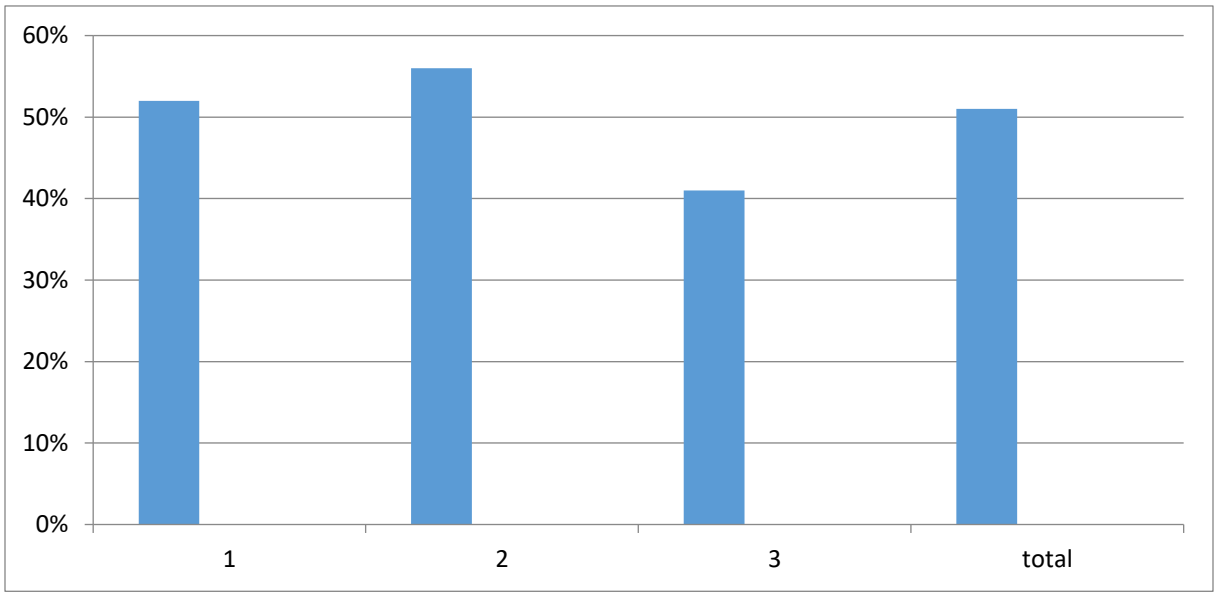
b) Diagnostic question analysis: Paper 2

Figure 3.3 is based on data from a random sample of 100 candidates per province. The data in Figure 3.3 was useful in assessing the degree of challenges each question provided to candidates as they wrote Geography Paper 2.



Graph 3.3: Performance per Questions in Geography Paper 2.

The graph is based on data from a random sample of 100 candidates per province, which is useful in assessing the relative degree of challenge of each question experienced by candidates. Question 1 performed at 52%, Question 2 performed at 56% and Question 3 at 41%, which makes a total of 51% for Paper 2. (NSC Diagnostic Report, 2021:121). It shows the impact of the roles of geography departmental heads on curriculum delivery, per questions from questions 1-3, showing that question 3 has a low achievement, which covers mapwork and geographical information systems.

Table 3.4: Topics Covered in Geography Paper 2 (NSC Report, 2021)

Q	Topics
1	Rural and Urban settlement
2	Economic Geography of South Africa
3	Geographical Skills and Techniques

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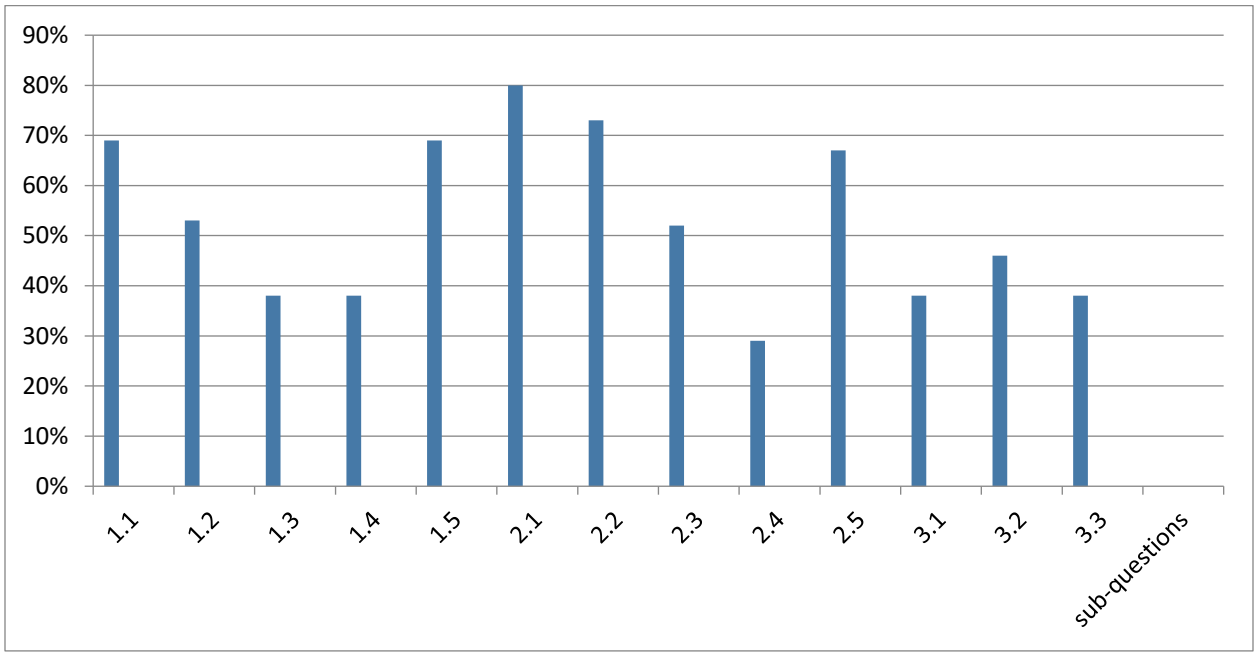
Table 3.4 above shows the topics covered in Geography Paper 2. Each topic is for each question.



Graph 3.4: Performance per Sub-questions in Paper 2. The sub-questions are from question 1.1. settlement terminology, which performed at 69%, Question1.2. The hierarchy of settlement was performed at 53%, Question 1.3. Rural-urban migration performed at 38%, Question 1.4. Land use zones performed at 38%, Question1.5. Informal settlement was performed at 69%.2.1. Small and large–scale farming was performed at 80%, Question2.2. Economic terminology performed at 73%, Question 2.3. Coal mining performed at 52%, Question 2.4. SWCape core industrial region and Coast SDI performed at 29%, Question 2.5 informal sector performed at 67%, Question 3.1. Map skills and calculations performed at 38%, Question 3.2. Map interpretation was performed at 46% and Question 3.3. Geographic information systems performed at 38%. Shows how each subsection performed, showing how the geography departmental head can intervene to support geography teachers and what kind of help is needed to support both GDH and the geography teachers.

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Table 3.5: Sub-questions and Topics for Paper 2

Sub-Q	Topics	Sub-Q	Topics
1.1	Settlement terminology	2.3	Coal mining
1.2	Hierarchy of settlement	2.4	SW Cape core industrial region and W. Coast SDI
1.3	Rural-urban migration	2.5	Informal sector
1.4	Land use zones	3.1	Map skills and calculations
1.5	Informal settlement	3.2	Map interpretation
2.1	Small- and large-scale farming	3.3	Geographic information systems
2.2	Economic terminology		

Table 3.5 above shows the topics examined for each sub-question in Geography Paper2

The 2021 NSC Report confirmed that most candidates had the following challenges regarding Question 3 on Geographical Skills and Techniques - the mark obtained for sub-question 3.1 was 38%, 3.2 was 46%, and 3.3 was 38%. This shows that candidates had challenges with Question 3. The main challenge identified was learners had limited knowledge about interpreting cross-sections and relating that to the topographic or orthographic map, for example, using the contour lines to determine the correct cross–sections; therefore, calculations, in particular, gradient calculation, remained a perennial problem. In addition, other challenges include the fact that many candidates did not know how to express the final answer in ratio form, applying theory to map reading and theory to geographical skills and techniques. The researcher observed that learners experienced challenges with Question 3 of both Papers 1 and 2, based on the 2021 diagnostic report (DoBE, 2021:10).

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3.4 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF ROLES OF DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

Shaked and Schechter (2017:35) claim that in most countries, DHs are not trained to perform the curricula leadership roles they are employed for. Tam (2010:42) suggested that unless DHs commit to making innovation a priority, the potential of teachers to contribute to any curricula change might not be realised. The school DHs' role is to participate in the agreed school/teacher appraisal process in order to regularly review the latter's professional practices. The aim here is to improve teaching, learning, and management. Therefore, teachers with positions of responsibility at all levels in schools are forced to become more accessible and collaborative to colleagues and be aware of pastoral, as well as academic problems among staff and learners. Jenkins (2020:167) points out that teachers' effectiveness in implementing curricula change was shown to be heavily dependent on the school leadership, teacher relationships with the leaders and colleagues, school operational practices and school culture, as well as personal motivation.

Geography DHs play a crucial role in managing, supervising, and training teachers on issues pertaining to the curriculum and the latest approaches to the subject, methods, evaluation, and aids. Mudzanani and Makgatho (2016:102) maintain that the attitude of learners towards learning or a subject is also the most significant factor towards their improved performance in teaching and learning practices; that is, a positive attitude towards a subject brings a positive performance in that subject. Ndyali (2013:20) argued that for learners to achieve higher marks and improve their academic performance in Geography, DHs should try to reduce absenteeism and dropout among learners. This could be done through observation of classroom teaching, lesson plans, teachers' notes, and the learners' exercise books. Supervising the teaching process would enable the Geography DHs to see exactly what the teacher does and what learners can produce. This would help the DH measure the effectiveness of curriculum delivery in improving the learners' academic performance.

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Rodrigues and De Lima (2021:1) aver that most of the DHs' leadership practices do not focus on student learning but rather on school administration and management; thus, when transitioning from teaching to managerial roles, DHs should undergo an induction stage to assist in socialising them into the school or the new role (Kilinc & Gumus, 2020:1). The induction stage should aim for DHs to attain acceptance, learn the school culture, and establish ways to overcome the insecurity of being inexperienced and to develop a sense of confidence (Kilinc & Gumus, 2020:1). Li, Poon, Lai and Tam (2021:1) assert that DHs, as the middle leaders at the school and the subject department level, exert substantial positive and direct influence on the teachers' change in pedagogical practices. They also influence the teachers' participation in the system-wide professional development activities, their receptivity toward reform, and their perceived student learning process.

3.5 AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLES OF DEPARTMENTAL HEAD

Ndyali (2013:17) explains that very little attention is given to addressing issues relating to DHs' appointment, training, and support. Ndyali (2013:13) adds that in most countries, the DHs are appointed from within the ranks of senior classroom teachers with little or no preparation for the complex task of a school leadership role; Juma, Ndwiga and Nyaga (2021:1) affirm that DHs conduct day-to-day instructions in their schools; hence their classroom visits and observation of teaching and learning significantly influence student learning outcomes in secondary schools.

In Ghana, Osei (2014:17) contends that all learners are educatable and that the way in which the schools are managed is the most critical factor in determining the quality of education for its learners. Okia, Naluwemba and Kasule (2021:116) state that a DH ensures that teachers do early planning of lessons, effective lesson delivery, and proper use of teaching aids, as well as strict follow-ups of the curriculum. Some factors hinder the learners' academic performance, such as - the teachers' limited time and expertise in school-based curriculum development and the need for effective collaboration in the department. In essence, DHs need to set up mechanisms for nurturing and unfolding the

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teachers' potential to enhance effective teaching and learning (Mathibe, 2007:523). The Geography DH thus ensures that all learners are well prepared for examinations, both internal and external ones, by maintaining knowledge of all learners in each year's group and taking any actions to promote their progress and development.

Mohammed (2015:7) asserts that teachers consider education as "banking", a process in which they deposit knowledge to learners; thus, knowledge is a gift from knowledgeable teachers to know-nothing learners. Bush (2018:1) reasoned that teaching qualifications and experience are often considered sufficient attributes for a new DH. Mbise (2012:117) acknowledges that the DHs in Tanzania's public schools in Tanzania have no real power over staff; that is, they cannot give instruction, hire, relocate, reward, punish, or fire them. Ndyali (2013:10) adds that good relationships between schools and communities create favourable environments for teaching and learning, resulting in improved learner academic performance. The DHs, as administrators of their units, should lead diligently in times of upheaval and crisis (Kruse, Heckmann & Lindle, 2020:2). DHs are leaders and key decision-makers at school, particularly with regard to procedures within their departments. It is expected, therefore, that DHs should lead and manage the totality of the day-to-day work of the school and teachers in their departments.

3.6 SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES ON DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

In South Africa, one has to be an expert in Geography to be appointed to the position of GDH (Mampane, 2017:33; Ogina, 2017:55; Seobi & Wood, 2016:45). Dinham (2007:42) states that teaching experience is vital if one is to be appointed to the DH position since the DH should be knowledgeable, and with teaching skills in the subject. Tapala (2019:6) postulates that the DH should have teaching and leadership abilities to lead a department effectively. Mastery of the subject matter is equally important, just like one's experience in the profession matters a lot, including the knowledge of subject management and strong interpersonal skills (Tapala, 2019:6).

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The Quality Management Systems (QMS) extended the responsibilities of the DH to include assessing and monitoring the teachers' performance (Tapala, 2019:6). In essence, strategic curriculum leadership is likely to lead to more effective teaching and learning practices. In this context, the DH appraises teachers' performance, including lesson observations, and keeps records thereof (ELRC Collective Agreement No. 2. 2020:41). In this regard, one of the main functions of the South African Council for Educators (SACE) is to promote and facilitate the professional development of teachers through Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) management system. The CPTD is managed by SACE with the support of the DBE, the nine provincial education departments, and education stakeholders (DBE, 2010). Professional development programmes are conducted in 145 schools and 13 districts across the country (DBE, 2010).

The role of the DHs is to motivate teachers so that their potential is realised; hence, their roles relate directly to teacher effectiveness in curriculum delivery and learner learning. Sallis and Jones (2002:40) reiterate that DHs are central to the process of knowledge creation and should, therefore, create conditions that enable teachers to deliver valid knowledge and skills acquisition. Teachers are essential in schools; thus, they need accountability from the DH for development. In this way, the culture of teaching and learning can be improved and maintained in schools through effective curriculum delivery. Tapala, Muller and Menz (2019:1) reasoned that the DHs have huge responsibilities in heading phases, departments and teaching subjects and at the same time, they need to focus on leadership and management tasks as senior teachers. PAM (2016:27) stipulates that DHs should assist with the planning and management of school stock, textbooks, and the departments' equipment and materials, the department budget, subject work scheme, and also act on behalf of the principal during his/her absence from school (if the school does not qualify for a deputy principal or if both are absent). Curriculum delivery is characterised by teaching and learning (Paranosic & Riveros, 2017:33).

South African learners' performance at the secondary level is generally the lowest among middle-income countries (Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaull & Armstrong,

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2011:123; Spaull, 2013:46). The poor quality of education received by most poor children in South Africa places them in permanent disadvantage relative to affluent ones. Mudzanani and Makgatho (2016:103) claim that a positive relationship between students' performance and curriculum coverage is one of the most important factors that contribute towards improved learner performance. However, Khumalo (2020:2) argues that in most schools, there are no systems in place for the effective management of curricula. DHs link principals and teachers; thus, they have responsibilities and are accountable to principals; in other words, they wield both horizontal and vertical influence at school (Du Plessis & Eberstein, 2018:27).

Mudzanani and Makgatho (2016:102) explain that CAPS require that teachers should administer continuous assessment to learners as an integral part of teaching and learning. The learners' poor pass rate in secondary schools has become a concern to both parents and teachers; however, the training of the GDHs to help improve the schools' pass rate in Geography is relatively limited (Shaked & Schechter, 2017:45; Tapala, 2019:8). There is limited training of Geography DHs on curriculum delivery in most secondary schools. To identify the barriers and enablers, the Geography DHs should be trained on modern trends in curricula delivery since DHs are expected to be accountable and knowledgeable in their roles to influence learner performance. Mathiyane, Naidoo, and Bertram (2018:2) emphasise that according to the DBE policy, the DH is a teacher, subject specialist, and expert who also mentors colleagues. DHs play a staff development and monitoring role, hence their required ability to relate to teachers well. Doing so would make teachers strong and, in turn, improve teaching and learning. Thus, a DH is critical in building capacity to improve learning outcomes.

3.6.1 Departmental Heads and Parental Involvement

Bipath and Nkabinde (2018:3) claim that the DH school roles supersede that of an ordinary teacher; for example, the DH is a public relations officer between the school and the communities it serves (Bipath & Nkabinde, 2018:3). In this context, the DH embraces parental visits to school, as involving parents in school matters is imperative. Learners'

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academic performance reforms require the joint efforts of both parents and teachers; thus, parental involvement in school matters cannot be over-emphasised (Hill, 2022:1). Mudzanani and Makgato (2016:3) elaborate that teachers and parents should be involved in the improvement of the education of learners. Teachers are aware that parental involvement plays a significant role in improving the performance and achievement of the learners' social, intellectual, and emotional development. Radebe (2022:1) concurs that parental involvement has proven to be the solution to ensuring that learners continue learning at home.

The learners' poor pass rate in secondary schools has become a problem for both teachers and parents; however, the training of DHs to help improve the learner performance in class has, to date, been relatively limited and slow (Shaked & Schechter, 2017:45; Tapala, 2019:8). It has become clear that the limited training and preparation of Geography DHs for effective curricula delivery in secondary schools hamper the learners' academic progress. This limitation has become a barrier to the Geography DHs' endeavour to deliver curricula effectively. Mathiyane, Naidoo and Bertram (2018:2) emphasise that the DBE policy depicts the DHs as teachers, subject specialists, and experts. For this reason, they are supposed to mentor novice colleagues through staff development and monitoring roles. The DHs' ability to relate well with teachers builds teachers holistically and, in turn, improves teaching and learning (Bipath & Nkabinde, 2018:7); thus, the DH's roles are critical in building capacity to improve learning outcomes (Cosso, Von Suchodoletz & Yoshikawa 2022:1). The core duty of the Geography DH is to ensure that teachers undertake teaching and learning, efficiently, in the classroom.

3.7 ROLES OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD.

It is pertinent to note that the supervision of teachers is necessary to guarantee and instil professional standards in teaching. Anyona, Sabina and Alindulah (2017) postulate that through teacher supervision, a DH diagnoses and remedies challenges that hinder - growth, subject improvement, enrolment, and effective guidance. Once these challenges have been remedied, teachers' professional abilities are enhanced to meet the challenges

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of a changing education system. Metcalfe (2018:43) elucidates the roles of the DH as - regularly checking the teachers' curricula coverage and the learners' work, working with teachers to improve curricula coverage, and assisting teachers with problems related to curricula coverage.

As a Geography DH, the researcher performs the above duties at her workstation by working with teachers to ensure that the geography curriculum is timeously covered. Such efforts become otiose if learners do not grasp what is taught to them in class to cover the curricula; curricula coverage is, therefore, futile if learners do not academically benefit from it. Metcalfe (2018:44) concludes that the DH should monitor and document whether teachers are using the trackers - a document that details what content and assessment teachers need to cover daily (CAPS, 2007:4). This process is aimed at tracking coverage of the curricula and related lesson plans and whether teachers plan and conduct assessments of their learners regularly in class.

3.7.1 MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES.

As middle managers in schools, the departmental heads have a vital role to play through supervision and control to improve teaching and learning. Supervising teachers in the department and leading in the matters of curriculum delivery. Tapala, Fuller and Mentz (2021:1) affirm that departmental heads have huge responsibilities of managing the phase, department and teaching the phase. The geography departmental head manages and leads the geography teachers and learners and leads by example. Transformational Leadership theory is suitable, as the geography departmental head inspires geography teachers, influencing them to perform for better results in their department.

3.7.1.1 Geography Departmental Head Role as Curricula Leader.

A curriculum leader is a person who provides leadership and management of their academic area by overseeing and co-coordinating the curriculum, staff, budget and resources. Shabalala, Hebe and Mnguni (2023:1) affirm that curriculum leadership has a role within the schools for effective curriculum implementation; ideally, teachers and other

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stakeholders adopt, develop school policy and delegate roles. Therefore, curriculum leader requires a strategic balance of pedagogical and administrative responsibilities in the multi-faceted and complex education system. Hence, curriculum leaders consider a high-level factor to influence the entire teaching and learning at schools, knowledgeable about society's challenges and trends and identify their strengths and weaknesses to adjust their school's education direction and content (Zhang, 2023:1). The main objective of the DBE is to ensure quality public education for all, and to improve the quality of learning and teaching constantly. The idea is to ensure the improved and sustained delivery of quality teaching and learning that redirects the attention to the leadership capacity of educational institutions. In this case, the Geography DH's position is crucial. There are links between a subject departmental head and a school administration, and establishing this brings the management of the subject closer to its members. In this respect, there is a need to improve the quality of schools, teaching, and learning (De Grauwe, 2001:136). A Geography DH works closely with curricula and, therefore, has a certain level of knowledge and skills in curricula leadership and management at school (Tapala, 2019:23). Knowledge, skills acquired, and experience enable a Geography DH to manage and oversee curricula implementation at school.

3.7.1.2 Geography Departmental Head as Instructional Leader.

An instructional Leader is a person who sets instructional goals, co-coordinates the curriculum, supervises and evaluates instruction, mentors learners' progress, fosters professional development and promotes connections with external stakeholders. Education Improvement Research Centre (2022:2) defines instructional leadership as a core aspect of effective school leadership, which has an intentional focus and demonstrated impact on continuous improvement in quality teaching and learning, Anyona, Sabina, and Alindulah (2017:12) explain that the roles of DHs are - to conduct regular meetings with the subject teachers, to sign professional records, and ensure that there are well-set assessments and examination policies within the department. The main objective of effective school-based supervision is to enable individual teachers to become implementers of effective teaching. The Geography DHs conduct meetings to evaluate

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teachers' and learners' class activities and then discuss the findings with teachers to identify challenges learners and teachers face in curriculum delivery. According to PAM (2016:27), the DH is responsible for the effective functioning of the department. Anyona et al. (2017:13) saw the role of the DH as to improve, stimulate, coordinate, and make teachers self-directed and cooperative towards personal and school achievement. School-based supervision by the DHs enables teachers to be effective implementers of the curriculum to improve the learners' academic performance in line with CAPS dictates. Curriculum implementation, however, cannot be achieved effectively unless it is made possible through the supervisory function of the DH.

The Geography DH does the above - by deploying staff, addressing underperformance and recognising good performance; providing the basis for paying salary progression, rewards, and other incentives; ensuring that teachers perform their duties with integrity and, maintaining a positive and vigilant attitude towards the learners' activities; allocating time to subjects taught at school; providing teaching and learning materials; creating an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning; organising internal inspection regularly, and discussing funding with Geography teachers. The GDHs also - ensure that there are well-set assessment and examination policies within the department; arrange on-the-job programmes for the newly-appointed teachers in the department; encourage Geography teachers to use appropriate teaching materials and new dynamics in teaching; encourage teachers to acquire ICT skills and lead and promotes a range of CPD activities/events within the department (Chaudnary, 2015:3; QMS, 2020:8). SACE manages CPTD system and aims to continually improve teachers teaching practices to respond to learners ever-changing needs (Mona,2023:20).

A Geography DH maintains a school tone and culture that creates a climate of social responsibility and effective curriculum delivery; these cannot occur when the DH cannot execute his/her supervisory functions. The DH should have the potential to influence his/her subordinates to adopt an attitude of life-long learning (Mthiyane, Naidoo & Bertram, 2019:3). Mathyiane *et al*. (2019:3) confirm that the DHs should participate in professional development activities that equip them with knowledge and skills necessary

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for substantive professional conversations with colleagues. Mona (2023:15) affirms that Transformational Leadership Theory provides a framework for understanding how leadership behaviour and practices can positively influence teacher professionalism, which significantly impacts the quality of curriculum delivery and success in the school.

Similarly, the curriculum and instructional leader is involved in developing a school-based curriculum, ensuring it is implemented to meet the specific needs of learners. The school's principal is the instructional leader responsible for leading and developing curriculum standards and ensuring implementation. The departmental head in the school is the curriculum leader responsible for supervising teaching and learning, ensuring class activities are completed and the curriculum is implemented. Manages teachers, leads planning, and acts on behalf of the principal if the school does not have a deputy principal; therefore, it can be used interchangeably.

3.7.2 TEACHER SUPPORT AND MOTIVATION.

The geography departmental head supports and motivates teachers by organising workshops and training sessions and providing teachers with teaching and learning materials. Mugala and Kabeta (2024:1) affirm that motivated teachers are essential for creating a conducive learning environment and facilitating improved learning outcomes. The positive relationship between the geography departmental head motivation strategies motivating geography teachers and learners' academic performance.

3.7.3 DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.

The geography departmental head plays a vital role in disseminating information to the teachers; important information can improve pedagogical quality and learning through teacher workshops, seminars, training and teacher professional development. This can be circular and online information disseminated by the departmental head to the teachers. The departmental head is an agent of change who contributes a significant impression on the education system through information sharing. (Cherryet et.al., 2021:1325) affirms that school leaders contribute a significant impression on how information is shared.

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3.7. 4 CLASS VISITS AND TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT.

The departmental head is the axis around which many elements of the school take place. The departmental head manages the curriculum by conducting regular classroom visits to provide support and development for teachers. (ELRC collective agreement no.2. 2020:21). The geography departmental head assesses teachers' performance regularly and provides feedback, mentoring and support. Mona (2023:20) affirms that teachers in South Africa are subject to assessment under the Quality Management System (QMS) Policy to monitor their competency, strength and areas that need development.

Like in any other leadership role, the Geography DHs, as curricula leaders, have positive and negative issues in their leadership styles (Rudhumbu, 2015:232). The appointment of DHs decentralises education services and vests them with additional administrative and financial responsibilities. They seem too busy teaching in the classroom and lack the time and skill to supervise their subordinates. The PAM document, it can be argued it does not allow sufficient time for the departmental head to perform their task efficiently (Bipath and Nkabinde, 2018:1). Transformational leadership theory prioritises the professional development of teaching staff. Teachers are provided opportunities for continued learning and growth, which is the key performance of professionalism (Mona,2023:14).

3.7.5 Geography Departmental Head as a Class Teacher.

The geography DHs are also expected to teach across the board since their job description is that of a class teacher. A DH is expected to - teach in the agreed curriculum area using the ATP and prescribed textbooks; plan structured lessons that meet the needs of individual learners and to share plans and teaching resources with colleagues; maintain records, mark and assess the learners' work according to the departmental policy and national curricula requirements; report on learners as required by the school policy and national curricula requirement and monitor curricula coverage (Kocalar & Demirkaya, 2017:17).

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The teaching of Geography should involve adopting methods that promote creativity, aesthetics, and critical perspectives. Geography DH is an important medium for transacting curricula; hence, it should simplify concepts in a language that is comprehensible to learners. GDHs should try to make the process of participatory learning real by shifting from merely imparting information to involvement in class debates and discussions. This learning approach would keep learners and teachers engaged with social realities. The Geography DH should clarify concepts through the lived experiences of individuals and communities.

3.8 ROLES OF GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS

The role of the geography teacher is to impart information or skills to learners, that is, teaching. Rajagopalan (2019:5) explains teaching as a scientific process with major components such as content, communication, and feedback. Teaching has to do with engagement with learners to enable their understanding and application of knowledge, concepts, and processes. The Geography teacher's role is to get learners involved in the active construction of knowledge. For this study, learners should be able to use GIS, develop map reading and calculation skills, and be able to apply these skills in post-secondary school. Jimmy (1962:101) describes the role of the teacher as being to guide the growth of children, directing them as they acquire skills necessary for gaining knowledge and understanding. In addition to the above, teachers should help develop the learners' understanding of themselves, the world around them, and places in the world. Teachers also work to develop the learners' understanding and relationships, which form the basis for their actions, reactions, and interactions in the world they live in.

Reid (2000:337) reflects that the Geography teacher should have an insight in teaching of Geography curricula to contribute to the learners' environmental education. This topic focuses on the uniqueness of places, whether inhabited by people or not, and the importance of learning about places to develop their environmental understanding. Reid (2000:337) asserts that geography teachers have a vital role to play when it comes to the acquisition of learners' information and skills. Human intervention in natural systems is

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largely informed by geography and understanding its concepts, maps, and graphs; hence, geography teachers should contribute to learners' knowledge and understanding of geographical skills such as GIS, map reading, and calculations. Geography teachers should be effective in their curricula delivery endeavours so that when learners leave school for Higher Education, they should be well informed. As geography teachers, they should teach the subject through a particular form of practice within the school curricula to enhance the learners' understanding of the concepts taught. They should also adapt to the learners' quest for skills acquisition and academic performance improvement (Parula, Jaronen & Lemmetty, 2019:5).

Dhakal (2019:35) points out that Geography should be taught as a practical subject, as it adds knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the world around us. Geography teachers should use a variety of teaching methods in class as that is an essential ingredient for creating interest among learners. Dhakal (2019:40) reasons that the major task of Geography teachers is to use classroom instructions and presentations to help learners learn, thereby playing a vital role in the overall development of learners. Teachers are models to learners who should show cognitive and affective behaviour, exhibit proper attitudes, and productive relations. The success of the teacher leads to the school's success; the school's success leads to the circuit's success; the circuit's success leads to the district's success; the district's success leads to provincial success, and the success of the province becomes a national success.

Kocalar and Demirkaya (2017:1) admit that Geography teachers who are effective in education and training use materials and methods according to the curriculum specifications. Geography teachers should participate in in-service training in order to develop and maintain effective teaching. Mohammed (2015:10) argues that no one knows everything, and no one knows nothing; hence, learners are perceived as containers filled with knowledge by teachers. Most teachers, although not intentionally, deny learners opportunities to discover and invent ideas by doing what learners themselves should do and to think the way they are allowed to think; in other words, teachers condition learners to act in certain ways at school. Geography teachers should

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make sure that learners have the mathematical analysis relevant to geographical applications like map reading and GIS (Siljeg, Milanovic & Maric, 2022:2).

The willingness to teach Geography depends on the overall knowledge obtained in college and how well one mastered Geography to gain practical methodological competence. Geography teachers promote a positive, purposeful, and professional working atmosphere that encourages cooperation whilst valuing contributions that individuals make to the success of the subject. The Geography teacher does the following at school - encourages high standards in all aspects of school life, particularly in the learners' progress; contributes to the effective and efficient running of the school; promotes a school culture which is positive, purposeful, and professional; supports and motivates learners, teachers, and other school employees; and encourages consultation, review, and improvement (Coe *et al*., 2014:12),

The Geography teacher employs the following to make teaching and learning effective - plans and prepares well-structured and presentable lessons appropriate to the abilities of all learners and the syllabus taught; helps learners develop high-performance learning skills in line with the school's values and ethos; makes sure that the classroom is a stimulating environment that facilitates learning; generates enthusiasm for Geography lessons and inspires all learners to work to their potential; promotes high standards in the use of English as the common language and help develop English for academic progress. The GDH also - assesses, records and monitors the progress of all learners in order to provide accurate information to the DH; maintains materials and resources as needed; is respectful of the needs of colleagues and department with regards to cooperation, meeting deadlines; and is collaborative; participates positively in departmental meetings, adheres to policy and generally contributes to the effective and efficient running of the department. Per PAM (2017), the Geography teacher delivers good lessons using a wide range of teaching strategies and utilises maps, fieldwork, GIS, and a range of multimedia resources to support geographical teaching and learning.

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3.9 FACTORS THAT IMPACT QUALITY GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM DELIVERY AND LEARNER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Discussing learners' academic success involves examining many factors. A good teacher and motivated learners contribute to positive learner academic performance. Factors such as - lesson delivery, class size, parental involvement, and the school's social dynamics all work together to contribute to the learner's performance. Other factors that contribute towards the learners' academic improvement in Geography are - instruction quality and delivery methods, class size, and learner performance, as well as parental involvement; these are detailed below.

3.9.1 Instruction Quality and Delivery Method in Geography

Teaching is a profession that is beset with changes due to constant reconceptualisation and restructuring of education, often based on political whim or positioning (Mellor, 2016:2). This burdens the Geography teacher to develop new knowledge and skills in response to such changes and related expectations (Mellor, 2016:2). In essence, quality of instruction in the Geography classroom is an important factor in the performance of learners. Engaging Geography learners in such a way that the teacher shares the objectives and guidelines of lessons gives the latter an opportunity to participate in lessons more and allows them to gain a deeper understanding of the subject. Mellor (2016:34) postulates that in a geographical context, teachers are privy to multiple change agendas that include - new forms of knowledge through an emerging national curriculum, new forms of pedagogies that call for more active engagement of learners in learning that are connected to the real world; new forms of assessment that call for the centrality of learning and at the same time subject learners to national examinations. Geography teaching also calls for new forms of learning engagement that demand the centrality of the learners' integration with technology and collaborated or networked learning, new forms of quality assurance and active monitoring of teacher quality.

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As a result, adopting new Geography curricula requires teachers to feel confident in the delivery and purpose of the material they use to ensure accurate implementation. Nilsen and Gustafesson (2016:4) affirm that the classroom level contains two essential variables for learning outcomes - teacher quality and instructional quality.

a) **Teacher Quality:** is operationalised via qualifications such as teacher educational level, job experience, participation in professional development activities, as well as teacher characteristics, such as self-efficacy. In this case, geography teachers should have a geography qualification so that they can teach relevant lessons to learners effectively.

b) **Instructional Quality:** is operationalised in three dimensions in the classroom set-up - cognitive activation, supportive climate, and classroom management.

Cognitive activation refers to the teacher's ability to challenge learners cognitively. It comprises instruction activities in which learners evaluate, integrate, and apply knowledge in the context of problem-solving (Nilsen & Gustafessen, 2016:4). Thus, the geography teacher instils a learning culture by imparting knowledge and skills such as map reading, calculations, and GIS. The supportive climate is a dimension that refers to a classroom where teachers provide extra help, which is needed to respect learners' ideas and questions and care about and encourage learners to work hard (Kane & Cantrell, 2012:34; Nilsen & Gustafesson, 2016:5). This process relies on - clear instruction, clear learning goals, connecting new and old topics, and summaries at the end of lessons. These enable all learners to be engaged in activities that happen in class. Jayaram (2019:2) avows that Geography-quality teaching comprises responsive and reflective teaching where learners get knowledge transfer from teachers and construct it through meaningful involved activities within the class and outside the classroom. Geography teachers should be able to promote the use of new technologies, such as information communication technology and GIS. Doing so would help develop learners who have the knowledge, skills, and attitude to practice essential transferable skills - literacy, numeracy and graphics.

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3.9.2 Geography Class Size and Learner Performance

Kohler (2020:1) states that in the South African context, most studies that use observational data concluded that, on average, greater class sizes are associated with poorer outcomes; hence, the size of the class plays a vital role in delivering effective lessons; that is, learners thrive in small classes than in a bigger one. Small classes enable teachers to spend more time with individual learners, making sure that nobody slips through the cracks. In addition to the above, small classes give learners opportunities to ask questions and receive direct feedback on their schoolwork. This leads to an overall improvement in the learners' academic performance in Geography. It is also easy for Geography teachers to manage smaller classes compared to larger ones. Teaching small classes enables Geography teachers to facilitate learning effectively when there are fewer disruptions. Effective teaching and learning lead to more time for in-depth discussions and immersive learning.

Proponents of smaller classes argue that they allow for higher quality learning opportunities, enhance teacher morale, and there is less learner misbehaviour (Chingos, 2013; Hattie, 2005). The authors continue that learners who behave disruptively by bullying other learners, talking during class lessons or requiring the teacher to interrupt lessons to discipline them, have a negative effect in the classroom. These generally happen in large classes where disruptive learners interfere with the teacher's ability to teach effectively as disruptive behaviour calls for the teacher's attention. Ghiora (2010:223) comments that if learners feel safe within the classroom environment and can ask questions freely and easily, their behaviour is positive, and they perform well academically.

Large classes change the way teachers give feedback and the style of learning. In this situation, there are more objective tests and, fill-in-the-blank exercises, short answer tasks in a classroom where the teacher is overwhelmed by the number of learners; there is also less personal attention for each learner in a large class. Mukondeleli (2017:54) explains that an overcrowded classroom is one of the variables that learners experience

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less personal attention from the teacher when they study map work in Geography. Overcrowded classrooms, especially in rural areas, negatively impact the teaching strategies used by teachers, learners' discipline, and teachers' feedback (Sao, 2008:29). This implies that if the learner-teacher ratio is too high, it is difficult for a meaningful Geography map work teaching to take place. The teacher does not have space to stand and write on the chalkboard when teaching overcrowded classes. It makes the teacher fail to teach and deliver the curriculum effectively, and the result would be poor performance, and learners would not acquire skills in map work and GIS, which they need post-Grade 12. In large classes, it is very difficult for teachers and learners to communicate effectively and for teachers to assess and observe all learners equally and give feedback. Overcrowded classrooms are not conducive to effective Geography teaching and learning, especially in map work and GIS, because learners need to practice individually if they are to acquire these skills.

3.9.3 Parent Involvement

The traditional definition of parental involvement includes activities in school and at home and the dedication of resources by parents to their children (Boonk, Gijselaers, Ritzen & Brand-Gruwel, 2018:1). Rajeshkumar and Vijaya (2016:233) explain that parental involvement is getting an imperative status in the field of education, which may be in the form of volunteers to help out with school activities or work in the classroom or take an active role in governance and decision-making necessary for planning, development, and providing education for their children.

The transformational leadership theory emphasises commitment, involvement, loyalty, and performance from parents (Reid, 2023:2). The transformational leadership theory supports the idea that the child's home life is important, and parents should contribute greatly to the development and academic performance of the child (Bunn, 2022:1). Ramatseba (2012:144) acknowledges that transformational leaders advocate for moving the school towards changing the status quo, which is relationship-oriented, advancing change and is concerned with the end product. Parental involvement in school is a key

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factor for children's positive academic outcomes (Lara & Saracostti, 2019:1). Parenting includes all activities that parents engage in to raise happy and healthy children who become capable learners (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017:140). Parents maintain a life-long commitment to their children. Activities that support this type of involvement provide information to parents about their children's development, health, safety, or home conditions that can support their learning (Boonk *et al*., 2018:4).

A supportive and involved family is an essential factor that affects the learners' academic performance. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017:137) reiterate that numerous studies show that good cooperation among schools, homes, and communities can lead to academic achievement for learners, as well as reforms in education. A learner with involved parents achieves higher grades, has a better attendance record, and has bigger long-term aspirations. Parents can become involved and yield quality parental influence when they ask questions about their children's learning at school on a day-to-day basis, help with homework and assignments, or help with extra-curricular activities. Sanders and Sheldon (2009), cited in Durisic and Bunijevac (2017:139), discover that effective schools have higher learner achievers and consistently show that these have strong and positive school-home relationships.

More importantly, these effective schools exhibit a positive school climate and have made an effort to reach out to their families to bring about good cooperation. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017:139) and Epstein (2009:134) allege that there are many reasons for developing and establishing a partnership between schools, families, and communities. The main reason for such partnerships is to aid learners in succeeding at school. Other reasons include improving school climate and programmes, developing parental skills and leadership, assisting families in connecting with others at school and the community at large, and assisting teachers with their work. All these reasons emphasise the importance of parents playing an active role in their children's education and keeping a strong and positive relationship with schools.

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3.9.4 Peer Relationship and Geography Class Attendance

Peer relationship refers to a kind of interpersonal relationship developed in the process of interaction in small clusters of individuals that are closely connected with each other based on shared interests and friendships (Rohrbeck & Garvin, 2014:112; Shao & Kang, 2022:6). Peer relationship is crucial to the physical and mental development of adolescents. It not only reduces adolescents' social anxiety, shapes their moral cognition and behaviours, but also enhances their engagement, which contributes to their academic success (Shao & Kang, 2022:7). A learner with friends at school often looks forward to attending classes; they are more prone to engage in the curriculum as well. In essence, having friends is good for one's self-esteem and boosts learners' confidence to participate in class discussions to share their unique perspectives (Ryzin & Roseth, 2018:1).

According to Lubbers *et al*. (2006:492), the influence of interpersonal relations with classmates on academic progress is mediated by the students' relatedness and subsequent engagement in class. Social relationships play a vital role in the academic performance of learners. Li (2018:2) notes that peers are an important source of children's social development and an influencing factor for their self-concept and healthy personality formation; however, when a learner struggles to make friends, experiences bullying or feels like they do not fit in with their peers, problems arise.

It is reported that high-quality friendship is protective against being conflicted, rejected, and bullied, which promotes engagement in learning (Terlektsi *et al*., 2022:23). Hemi, Madjar and Rich (2021:1) affirm that adolescents' academic achievement goals are associated with their perceptions of teacher and peer goals. At the classroom level, group activities, class discussions, and interactive lessons encourage learners to know one another, and peer group influence is prominent during adolescence. Olelekan (2016:35) acknowledges that the most important influence on learner behaviour to learning is not always the teacher but fellow learners. This indicates that acceptance by the group may have positive effects on learners. A brilliant learner might do better if he/she is accepted by the group that is inclined to study. Olalekan (2016:42) laments that learners learn

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more easily within their peer group, as when they are wrong, they prefer to be corrected by a member of their peer group than the teacher. The most important influence on learner behaviour to learning is not always the teacher but fellow learners.

3.9.5 Geography Assessment

Assessment is a critical element of the NCS Grade 10-12. It is a process of collecting and interpreting evidence to determine the learners' progress in learning and make a judgment about the learners' performance (NSC, 2003:53). Yamba (2020:1) posits that assessment involves interpreting and attaining information about the learners' level of attainment of learning goals. Assessment is also used to identify individual learner weaknesses and strengths so that the teacher can provide specialised academic support, educational programming, or social services (Yamba, 2020:1). Assessment can be defined as all activities that teachers and learners undertake to get information that can be used to alter teaching and learning. This includes teacher observation and analysis of student work (homework, tests, essays, reports, practical procedures, and classroom discussion of issues). All these are concerned with sampling what a learner may or may not know (Mekonen & Fitiavana, 2021:70). Through assessment, learners and the teacher can evaluate whether they are on track to meet the goal relating to education.

Sekyi (2016:1) confirms that for Geography teachers to be effective in promoting the desired goals of the basic school curricula, greater recognition must be accorded to the influence of assessment on teaching and learning. Understanding it could arguably play an important role in introducing changes that promote the cognitive processes and thinking skills desired in schools and classrooms. Assessment is integral to teaching and learning activities in school and mediates the interaction between teachers and learners in the classroom.

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3.9.6 Geography Teaching and School Environment/Facilities.

Thapa *et al*. (2013:114) assert that the school environment creates the foundation and might directly and indirectly influence learning. Schools that are well equipped with tools, resources, and facilities for learners tend to see higher levels of learner academic performance, and they are more likely to attract highly qualified teachers. Teachers with an abundance of resources are better equipped to cater to various learning styles and levels, thus offering better support to their learners. Nilsen and Gustafesson (2016:114); Wang and Degol (2015:122) affirm that learners with access, for instance, to laboratory equipment, computers, well-stocked libraries, and sports equipment are more highly engaged and tend to perform better.

Beyond learning materials, the school infrastructure is a crucial factor to consider as well. Schools with ventilation, heating, lighting, and noise-control buildings tend to see higher learner performance than those that do not have such infrastructure. A good school climate affords spaces in which learners are encouraged to reflect on their thinking and become more tolerant of their mistakes. As their personalised thinking is inspired, their minds and vision are opened up, learners gradually become more curious and explore the outside world while continuously thinking and questioning to expand their thinking ability (Inkeles, 1983:114; Wang, 2019:11).

The school is also a significant place for learners to socialise. In a good school climate, learners can learn to adapt and meet with teachers and other learners. They also learn to restrain themselves, participate in various activities guided by the teacher, and communicate with other learners. All these expand their contacts outside their families facilitates the formation of good relationships between teachers and learners, and promote positive learning (Eshbach & Henderson, 2010:16; Wang, 2019:12). In this environment, learners feel that they are part of the school and are accepted, and they form intimate relationships with other members of the school and a sense of their responsibilities towards school is promoted.

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In line with the above factors, a learning organisation that creates a positively welcoming environment that is conducive to learning promotes - communication, interaction, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, learning and self-fulfilment. Prothero (2020:12) reasons that the most important job of the principal is to create a school environment where learners are safe, supported, engaged, and accepted. A positive school environment can improve the learners' academic performance, attendance, engagement and behaviour, as well as teacher satisfaction and retention.

3.9.7. Geography Resources and Teacher Development.

It is the responsibility of the school principal, school administration, and the school governing body to impact the Geography DH and teachers in curricula implementation. The principal's supervision entails giving guidelines to the school to offer diversified curricula according to the DBE policies. The Geography DH is involved in effective teaching and learning, especially curriculum, in the day-to-day business. Geography teachers face challenges due to the lack of resources at school. These are resources like computers and GIS software like ArcView, which are important to learners when doing GIS; without the proper LTSM, teaching is difficult. Rammala (2009:32) asserts that there is a sound relationship between learner performance and the quality of the resources available in school. The inequalities regarding the quality and distribution of LTSM in schools is still a problem. After celebrating more than 28 years of democracy in South Africa, there are still no Geography laboratories for the effective teaching of Geography lessons in most schools. Schools lack maps, GIS software, and computers, while there are torn and worn-out maps. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:2) argue that GIS topics should be taught in GIS laboratories, where the learners are taught both theory and its practical application.

Geography is a technological subject, especially the teaching of GIS, that needs the use of the Internet. Lack of Internet access in rural schools affects learners' academic performance because, without the Internet, learners cannot connect with teachers or classmates, cannot do independent research, or get help with online homework from

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teacher-assigned tasks that require the use of the Internet. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:7) observe that the use of technology, particularly in GIS, is hindered in many ways by teachers' limited time and resources to understand the complexities of software programmes like ArcMap. Despite the availability of computers and software in schools, schools do not use GIS software. Hence, the supply of computers to some schools is in vain as the computers remain redundant in the absence of internet connectivity in the classrooms.

Only a small number of public schools in the Vhembe East District have internet-connected computers for learners to utilise and an even smaller percentage have financial resources to purchase the software needed to effectively teach GIS. There is a big gap between rural and urban secondary schools in terms of resource availability. Most secondary schools in rural areas lack infrastructure such as computer labs and smart boards. This has resulted in teachers failing to effectively integrate technology into their GIS teachings in secondary schools. The lack of internet connectivity negatively affects learner performance in GIS techniques.

3.10 FACTORS THAT IMPACT CURRICULUM DELIVERY'S AIM TO IMPROVE LEARNER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

There are various factors inside and outside school that contribute to the quality of curriculum delivery in improving learner academic performance. This study considers the home environment, learner profile, level of internet effectiveness, teacher effectiveness, lack of motivation, and school location.

3.10.1 Home Environment and Learner Performance

The role of a family is to provide for, educate, and protect children. These are done at home, which is an integral part of the education system. Parents are regarded as the most influential primary role models to their children as they grow up. Parents ensure their children's academic performance and success in school are guaranteed. The

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parents' expectations and involvement in their children's education differ; hence, rural parents' involvement in school differs from that of parents in urban areas. Alan and Hawas (2021:2) attest to the fact that the home environment has a major impact on learner performance, especially during teenage years.

The grooming and mentoring of learners begin with the family. Learners identify themselves in social classes, religion, society, and culture which is taught at home. Alan and Hawas (2021:3) conducted research on how home environment affects learner performance at school; they found that economic status, home, occupation, and location have a considerable impact on learner academic performance. The home environment is an important part of the learner's support system. A family is made up of family members and educational resources that affect the learner's life and knowledge acquisition from parents and other important people at home. The family is the most likely determinant that positively and valuablely impacts the learners' academic performance.

Dube (2019:22) argues that the learners' learning foundation is the family, and the family background has a tremendous influence on the education of learner and their attitude towards learning. The ideas learned at home, and family inspirations towards education and a better life influence a learner's success or failure at school. Parents influence their children's academic success by grooming them in skills, attitudes, and behaviours towards education and school. Parental influence emanates from the environment and how parents deal with children, teaching and grooming them; thus, parents can influence academic dealings by their socioeconomic standings (Manuson, 2007:117; Alan & Hawas, 2021:2). Parents with higher education levels are directly responsible and influence their children's higher academic performance. Mwamwenda (2014:235) says that if parents and siblings assist younger children with their homework and supplement what they have learned in school, coupled with a home background which provides books, newspapers and learning gadgets such as a radio, television and a computer, their academic performance would be enhanced. Yuliant, Danssen and Droop (2020:34) found that parents in the middle and higher levels of education showed a higher level of

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involvement than those with low levels of education in rural area schools; such parents are more involved in their children's education at home.

3.10.2 Teachers and Academic Performance of Learners

The role of the subject teacher's experience, efforts, motives, and teaching strategies also contribute to learner academic performance. Studies indicate that the performance of a teacher influences the performance of learners through various factors (Nickols, 2016:12; Gilbert, 2018:12). The learners are likely to better understand the subject if the teacher fully commands its teaching, meaning teachers easily deliver knowledge if they know the subject matter very well; they would teach in such a way that learners fully understand the context taught. At times, however, teachers do not understand the subject matter well, and then they fail to communicate content effectively due to poor knowledge.

In addition to the above, factors like the teacher's late arrival in class make learners lose interest in the subject. This results in learners not paying much attention to what is taught, thereby missing out on important issues. Once learners fail to understand what the teacher teaches, they are likely to hate that teacher and the subject. Consequently, the learners' performance in subjects like Geography, is compromised, producing poor results at the end of the term or year in the subject.

Criticism and motivation of learners by the teacher impact their academic performance in one way or the other. Motivating learners is considered an important factor in learning. However, frequent scolding by the teacher can make learners less enthusiastic to learn, leading to them performing poorly in Geography (Bakar, 2018:1). Albrecht and Karabenick (2017:4) expound that motivation helps learners become interested in learning. In general, learners need motivation, not only tangible but also intangible, as it is part of the teacher's job not only to teach learners but to groom them as well. Teachers are naturally supposed to guide learners, have faith in them, and be appreciative of their efforts in class, and they can show their appreciation of the learners' efforts in words or in other forms to boost their morale. Delelis (2019:114) emphasises the importance of

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qualified teachers in the field of teaching, as the success of the teaching and learning process is dependent on their ability to teach effectively.

In this case, under-qualified teachers' lack of mathematical background and map reading skills required to teach map work in geography would negatively affect learners' performance. Amosun (2016:47); Filgona *et al*. (2016:2) believe that in Geography map work, teachers do not prepare themselves adequately to meet the challenges associated with that concept. The worst-case scenario is that some teachers are poor in Mathematics, thereby avoiding teaching Geography map work and GIS as map work and GIS require abstract thinking and mathematical skills (Filgona *et al*., 2016:2); lack of these two skills leads to poor performance in Geography as a subject. This is evidenced by the learners' poor performance when they are unable to do the majority of the mathematics-related questions in examinations (Amosun, 2016:45). Mthiyane et al. (2019:8) lament that the tracker takes a one-size-fits-all approach to curriculum coverage as it does not cater for differences in learning abilities amongst learners.

3.10.3 Poor Performance in Map Work and GIS.

GIS is recognised as one of the best ICT skills to implement in Geography (Siljeg, Milanovic & Maric, 2022:1). Mutua (2012:1) established that poor performance in Geography is grounded in many factors that include - unavailability of resources, library shortages, lack of fieldwork, and teaching aids. Other factors include – short time allocated for teaching Geography, wide syllabi, and an insufficient number of Geography teachers leading to large teacher-learner ratios. The Geography classroom is where map work skills are taught to learners (Innes, 2012:93). The researcher observed that Geography map work needs the following learner-teacher materials, such as - 1:50 000 topographical maps, 1:10 000 Orthophoto maps, different types of maps for use as examples, visual aids, wall maps, protractors, magnetic compass, Geographic Positioning System (GPS) devise Google Earth computers, laptops, GIS software, aerial photographs, rulers, calculators, cameras, cell phones, pencils, felt-tip pens, and textbooks.

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Map work is a practical-oriented concept, and hence the need to use resources when teaching it. Moduane (2016:136) reveals in his study that 43 75% of teachers strongly agree that geography map work is neglected at some stage when they teach; consequently, learners perform poorly in geography map work examinations. Teachers with negative attitudes do not have a passion for extra classes to cover areas that lag behind in their teaching. Aydin (2011:298) states that Geography has important applications in our lives and should be conveyed to learners through brain-based learning, GIS, research-based learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, subject-based learning, multiple intelligence, and events-based learning.

One of the reasons for an inefficient lesson is the use of the teacher-centred method, where learners become passive recipients of information. Aydin (2011:298) explains that active learning can be fulfilled by the use of new approaches such as field trips, active learning, project methods, group work and experimentation. GIS, computer-based learning, and other methods that encourage learners' engagement should be included in geography lessons, just as in other science subjects. Rambuda (1994:57) and Mukondeleli (2018:5) assert that in most Geography lessons, learners are taught facts and concepts of which they have minimal understanding. Teachers, therefore, should have sufficient knowledge, skills, necessary equipment, conscience, and responsibility to ensure that learners are taught effectively across the Geography curricula. In this context, education becomes an act of depositing knowledge where learners are depositories and teachers are the depositors; however, more than half of the learners fail to achieve geographic literacy, such as map reading, calculations, and GIS skills.

The NSC Diagnostic Report, Grade 12 Geography Examination (2021:105) notes that there seems to be a lack of practice in mastering the application skills in the Geographical Skills and Techniques section of the question paper. Candidates do not make good use of topographic and orthophoto maps to assist them in answering questions (NSC, 2021:105). It appeared that the general information page was also not consulted by candidates and that there was not a thorough integration of map skills and theory. These

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two aspects of Geography need to be integrated when taught. Regular practice of calculations is necessary for candidates to be prepared correctly for the NSC Examinations; Question Paper 1 produced the poorest results at 43% in 2021.

The NSC Diagnostic Report (2021:105) explains that candidates continue to struggle with geographical skills, a topic now examined in both question papers. Calculations such as Area (Q3.1.4) and magnetic bearing (Q3.1.6) are typical examples. A number of candidates did not use the given information (length in Q3.1.4 and the magnetic declination in Q3.1.7), which resulted in them attaining answers outside of the range prescribed. Practical application skills, using both the topographic and orthophoto maps to identify features as in Q3.2.3 and Q3.2.4, were lacking in learners. Many candidates did not understand the terminology and the application thereof when answering questions concerning GIS.

Most teachers have challenges when it comes to teaching GIS and map work to learners in Geography as they do not want to teach those topics (Mukondeleli, 2018:99). In addition, training in leadership and GIS teaching is essential for the Geography DHs to execute their roles successfully (Kosgei, 2015:227). Wilmot and Dube (2015:6) note that inadequate teacher training in computer-based GIS is a major impediment to effective GIS teaching in South African schools. The DBE (2014.a) have identified challenges for teachers, including - teacher assessment practices, the level of cognitive skills teachers require of learners, teachers' subject knowledge (knowledge of GIS and calculations), and the need for the teachers to develop learners' writing and thinking skills.

The attitude of learners towards map work varies when studying the concept in Geography lessons. The NSC Geography Diagnostic Report (2012:23) confirms that learners appear to be ignorant since they do not read examination instructions nor use the given information, such as sketches, graphs, and photographs, to support their answers. The researcher's contention, hence, is that learners experience difficulties in learning map work.

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One of the glitches learners experience when they study map work in Geography is caused by their unfortunate backgrounds in Mathematics and some major Geography concepts. Learners are not conversant with mathematical calculations and have a negative attitude towards Geography map work as a result (Mukondeleli, 2018:58). This is because the most challenging map work aspects are mathematical in nature, as map work has a high content of Physical Sciences and Mathematics. Most teachers have not had a formal education in GIS; inevitable, such teachers would have a negative attitude towards teaching GIS and map work to learners because of their lack of basic knowledge and formal training in GIS, map reading, and calculations (Siljeg, Milanovic & Maric, 2022:2). Learners who are weak in Physics and Mathematics also have a negative attitude towards map work. Riwan, Akahomen and Gbakeji (2014:31) affirm that teachers, as respondents in their study, showed that 53% of the learners' level of interest in Geography was adequate and the learners' interest was generally higher in Physical Geography, with 57,14%, Human Geography followed with 17,86%, Regional Geography with 14,28%, and map work with 10,7%. These scholars then concluded that the lowest percentage pass in map work was due to the learners' attitude towards map work. The influence of Physics and Mathematics on Geography map work has made the subject difficult for learners when they have to calculate. Calculations such as - straight-line distances, area, gradient, vertical exaggeration, magnetic declination, and magnetic bearing - have a background in Physical Science and Mathematics. Learners appear to do well in some aspects of Geography, but map work and GIS are problematic simply because of their mathematical backgrounds (Amosun, 2016:46). WAEC (2015:106) observe that map work, which necessitates map analysis and interpretation comprises lots of calculations as found in topics such as - longitude, scale measurements, bearing, gradient inter-visibility and latitudes.

Adeyimi and Cishe (2016:171) argue that learners who displayed low numerical ability achieved below par in map work and suggested that remedial classes be organised in Mathematics for learners of this classification to make up for this numerical deficiency. Meanwhile, learners with positive attitudes in Geography map work in South African

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schools can follow career paths such as GIS technicians, geologists, cartographers, and environmentalists.

3.10.4 Teacher Qualifications and Academic Performance of Learners

Teacher qualifications are vital in the learners' academic performance in Geography map work at Grade 12. There are two ways for one to become a qualified secondary school teacher in South Africa. The first is by completing a four-year undergraduate bachelor's degree, majoring in Geography (Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training, BEDFET). The second way is by obtaining a three-year bachelor's degree with Geography as a major course and then enrolling for a Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (Moduane, 2016:136). Teachers who do not have a deep command of the knowledge of Geography map work become a barrier to the learners' academic achievements. Nkosi (2017:7) revealed that in its 2016 NSC Examination Diagnostic Report about learner performance, the department included Grade 12s' poor knowledge of subject content as the cause of their failure. Mukondeleli (2018:59) claimed that teachers' poor teaching skills, incompetency, and poor qualifications to teach Geography are reflected by the poor performance of learners in map work.

3.11. SCHOOL CULTURE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Dogan (2017:42) outlines school culture as the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions. There are also issues such as the physical and emotional safety of learners, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces and the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic or cultural diversity (Dogan, 2017:42). Furthermore, school culture results from both conscious and unconscious perspective values, interactions, and practices. It is heavily shaped by the school's particular institutional history, learners, parents, teachers, administrators, and its staff members; the community also influences the culture of the school where it is located.

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Karaduman (2021:43) explains that school culture is composed of all the values, implementations, and beliefs shared among all present at school; thus, the school culture is very important for the learners' academic performance.

Learners' performance depends on the school they attend and where it is located. In classrooms, learners learn most of the expertise necessary to help them reach their desired future goals in order to have a better future. For any educational institution, learners are the most important assets. Deal and Peterson (1999:2) assert that school culture fosters improvement, collaborative decision-making, professional development of staff, and learners' learning.

School culture helps learners progress; therefore, a school with a positive culture tends to have good academic performers as learners. School culture is the shared beliefs, attitudes, and values of school stakeholders, as well as the relationships among staff, learners, and families, as well as elements such as school policies and school history. A school with an outstanding background of values and discipline tends to have good academic high achievers as learners. The school culture begins with the DHs; however, if the school has issues with the learners' behaviour, then the DH might place special emphasis on monitoring and encouraging good behaviour. Stoll (2022:3) claims that attitudes, parents' engagement, and communication are crucial in shaping the school culture.

Different elements of school culture, as laid down by Stoll (2022:3), are attitude, parental engagement, and communication; these are discussed below.

i. Attitude

Attitude is an influential aspect of the school culture, as the attitude of those within the school is expressed daily. If the attitude of teachers and learners is indicative of discontent, apathy, and dissatisfaction, it would undoubtedly be reflected in the school culture (Stoll, 2022:3). The researcher also observed that the attitude of learners towards their school and teachers is hugely influential in the formulation of the school culture.

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ii. **Parents engagement**

Parents have a huge impact on the school culture. If parents are engaged in the learning process and active in the school activities, this would produce a more positive school culture. Parents who take more of a laissez-faire approach to their children's education would contribute to the school's negative culture. These are parents who are pessimistic and are not engaged with their children's education.

iii. **Communication**

Communication is the key aspect of a school's culture. If clear channels of communication exist between different levels within the school and between staff and parents, this would help foster a positive culture. Communication is the pillar that helps promote more collaborative and community-focused experiences. When teachers, learners, and parents have a voice and listen to each other, they are more likely to share their time and get involved in school activities. Conversely, if teachers do not feel like they have a voice in school matters, this can lead to dissatisfaction and low retention rates. The culture of schools differs from one school to the other, depending on faith, objectives, and challenges. What schools should have in common are strong leaders and stakeholders aligned with the values and actions that are reflective of their school culture.

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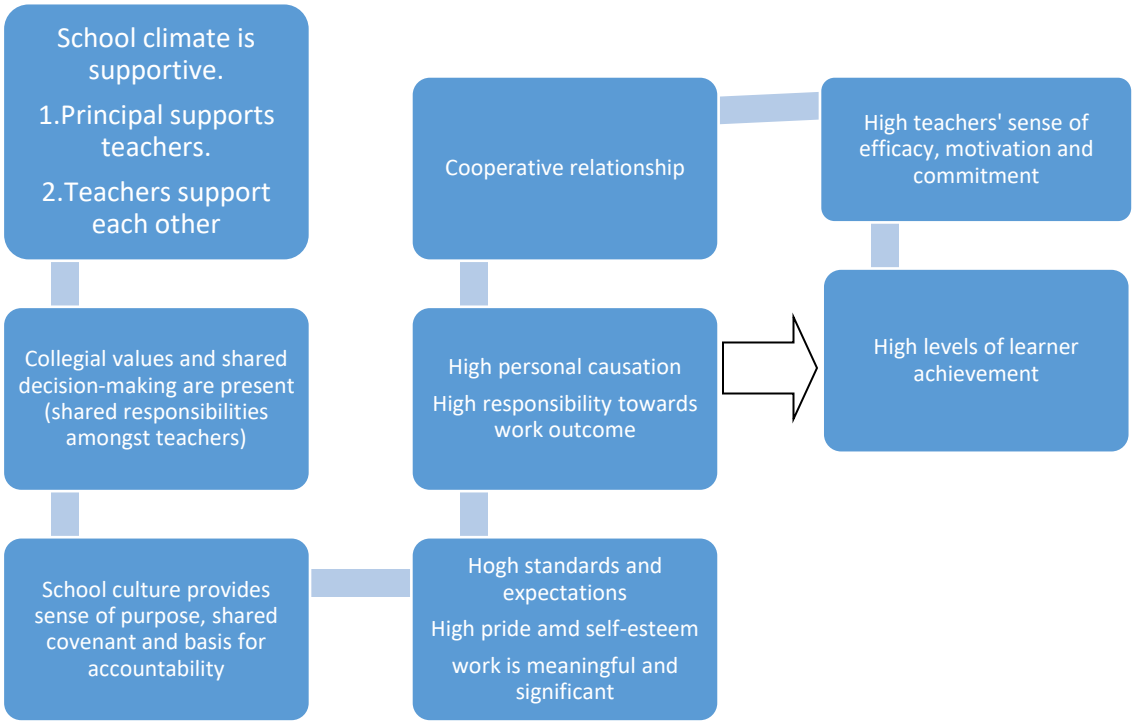

Figure 3.4: A Positive School Culture Adapted from Cooray (2023)

The researcher observed that school culture is - a non-physical environment that is welcoming and conducive to learning. This social environment promotes a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and self-fulfilment. The principal should support the Geography DH to come to grips with the factors that influence motivation among teachers and their learners in class. Teachers should encourage learners to participate in learning activities involving map reading and GIS actively. Doing so would encourage learners with different learning abilities to express themselves freely. Prothero (2020:2) posits that high expectation is the hallmark of a healthy school climate, where teachers have high academic expectations, assist learners to set meaningful academic goals for themselves and promote a strong academic culture.

3.12. TEACHING STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE ADOPTED TO TEACH GEOGRAPHY

Methods, procedures, and techniques that a teacher uses during lessons are important in Geography teaching**.** The question of the interpretation and use of geographical terms and symbols such as - altitude, contours, distance, data layering, and geographical

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coordinates of a position - are considered important (Lonari & Tzoura, 2019:1); there often are problems in learners understanding and interpreting these (Lonari & Tzoura, 2019:1). Despite the other factors that contribute to the academic performance of learners, effectiveness of the teacher is important. Teacher characteristics, such as the ability to be clear and audible to make learners familiar with them, good explanation of concepts, and asking questions at the right stage of lesson development are very essential (Hlatswayo & Manik, 2022:10). These focus on teaching methods such as the lecturing method, discussions, questioning, and explaining. These methods are appropriate for teaching GIS as the teacher uses the questioning method, lecturing method, and class discussion approaches. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:24) found out that most teachers used teacher-centred pedagogical approaches to teach GIS.

The teaching method that shifts the focus of instruction away from the teacher towards the learners is key in teaching Geography effectively. These include teaching methods such as discovery, demonstration, field, and project work. The learner-centred method (the jigsaw learning style) was developed by Elliot Aroson (1979) (Booysen, 2015:22). This requires learners to work in groups of six members on a particular topic, for example, calculating gradients on the topographical map, thereafter, different groups present their work, explaining how they calculated the gradient. In this way, learners can interact with others, helping each other to learn. The learning technique is suitable for teaching map work. This implies that the learner-centred teaching strategy should be used to teach Geography map work as it is in line with the South African education system, which is outcome-based.

3.13. CONSTRAINTS THAT PREVENT GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS FROM FULFILLING THEIR ROLES

According to PAM (2016:27), DHs promote the success of all teachers by advocacy as well as making sure that there is effective functioning of the department and the whole school environment of teaching and learning. Simpson *et al*. (2016:156) observe that most DHs are not adequately empowered to perform creditably because of no pre-training

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for the post and no time to attend to instructional issues. This is due to too much administrative work, lack of interpersonal relationships, and lack of pedagogical knowledge (Simpson *et al*., 2016:156). The researcher observed that the Geography DH also had too much paperwork to do.

Geography DHs, like other school curricula leaders, complain about teachers' absenteeism, late coming, and workload. Malatji (2018:131) posits that these issues contribute to the problem of supervision in the following ways - unprofessional attitudes to work, lack of interest in work, and the lack of basic knowledge or formal training in leadership. Mpisane (2015:3) reveals that Geography DHs experience constraints in managing classwork and giving feedback because of the workload they have. In the CAPS document, the pacing is strongly framed since the teacher has to follow this document, as lessons must not be skipped.

The Geography DH must support the teacher to achieve curriculum coverage, however, the fast-paced curriculum delivery means that meaningful coverage is not always possible. The researcher contends that the GIS skills, map work reading, and calculations need time to be covered so that learners can understand and acquire skills they would later apply in life. Geography teachers are required to move with the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP); however, the problem is the number of learners the teacher can move with to the next topic, considering the pace.

3.13.1. Departmental Policies

Mathiyane *et al*. (2019:10) conclude that the National Departmental Policies, the Post Provisioning Norms (PPN), and the progression of learners impact Geography teaching. The Post-Provisioning Norms allocate teachers according to the enrolment numbers, leading to teachers moving to other schools with a post and more learners. The researcher realised that this policy constrains the DH since new allocations of teachers need to be accommodated. This confuses the learners who have been left by the one teacher, and they have to get acclimatised to the new teacher. Furthermore, the

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progression policy means that learners who have failed a grade in a phase would automatically progress despite their failure. As the researcher observed, GIS, map reading, and calculations need basics from Grades 10, 11 and 12. Changing of teachers, therefore, causes learners not to perform well in calculations and GIS. Learners who are poor in numeracy would not perform well in GIS, map reading, and calculations due to confusion brought about by teacher instability.

3.13.2. Learner Capacity and Motivation to Learn

Mthiyane *et al*. (2019:10) assert that DHs complain that the tracker assumes that when a teacher teaches learners, they understand the content without challenges, yet 60% of South African learners do not know how to read for meaning starting from Grade 3. Van der Berg (2015) and Mathiyane *et al*. (2019:10) maintain that learners never fully access the curriculum despite being promoted to higher grades. Spaul, Wills, Gustafsson and Kotze (2016:116) confirm that mathematics achievement is usually low. Hence, learners cannot perform well in map reading, calculations, and GIS concepts. The fundamentals are not in place for many learners, making it impossible to cover the curriculum at the required pace.

3.13.3. Huge Range of Administrative Work

Mathiyane *et al*. (2019:11) elucidate that the DH has to fulfil administrative tasks that are not directly related to teaching and learning. These are monitoring the attendance of both teachers and learners, attending to learner-discipline issues, and entering learners' marks on the School Administration Management Systems (SAMS) database. The DH also sits on various school committees, such as bereavement and cultural committees (Mathiyane *et al*., 2019:11). The researcher is familiar with the above administrative work, given her position as the Geography DH in her school. Given the researchers' experience here, there is a big difference between no-fee secondary schools and the fee-paying ones. The fee-paying secondary schools employ individuals and administrators whose job is to monitor learner attendance, attend to disciplinary issues, and capture marks.

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3.13.4. Time and School Context

Mathiyane *et al*. (2019:12) acknowledge that time and school context are the major constraints for Geography DH's ability to track and support curriculum coverage in the school. Contextual factors such as lack of geography textbooks, lack of water, teacher absenteeism, the use of time, learner readiness to learn, and the progression policy hinder the Geography DH from sometimes playing supportive roles to teachers. The DH leads their department from a technical position of authority rather than an adaptive role. The technical level is when the Geography DH follows the requirements of the curriculum tracker, learner monitoring tools, supervision tools externally regulated by the DBE, Geography curricula advisors through monitoring of learner portfolios, SBA teachers' files, Geography DH file, schedules per term during school visits, and SBA moderation.

In this context, Geography DH cannot introduce her systems to suit the effective curriculum delivery in order to improve learner performance in Geography. The policy is rigid and cannot be queried, modified, or suspended by the DH or school. This means that even if policy negatively affects the effective curriculum delivery, neither the DH nor the school principal has the authority to suspend it or modify it to suit their school or departmental circumstances. In this sense, the DH roles are a liability to the effective curriculum delivery to improve learner performance; thus, in terms of adaptive change, the Geography departmental head would have to move from a compliance approach to a developmental approach of supervision, which is characterised by reflection, learning, behavioural change, and improved teaching practice (Mathiyane *et al*., 2019:11).

3.13.5. Workload

Mpsane (2015:1) emphasises that the DH in some schools complain about heavy workloads. The GDHs (as middle managers in schools) supervise and control teachers and learners in the geography department. They play a crucial role in determining whether teachers teach learners effectively or not; however, the DH may experience challenges as they perform their roles. Heavy workloads disturb DHs in that they have

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a lot on their plates, as some DHs spend most of their time dealing with administrative issues while other roles, such as teaching and marking the learners' work, then become secondary. Once learners are not effectively taught and feedback on the written tasks is not provided timeously, their performance in Geography is negatively affected. The DH also spends a lot of time attending to disciplinary issues at school involving both teachers and learners. This is also problematic as the supervision of teachers and learners' work lags behind. Poor supervision of both teachers' and learners' work amounts to neglect of duty by the Geography DH and hence breeds poor learner performance.

In addition to the above, workload is problematic for the DHs in performing their duties diligently, in that they spend most of their time attending various committee meetings that contribute to the smooth functioning of the school in general. While this is in order, the core function of teaching and learning suffers, thereby affecting the learners' performance in Geography. In other words, the Geography DHs have a lot to do while they have little time to effectively accomplish all the expected tasks (PAM, 2017:27). Their failure to effectively perform their roles is problematic in the context of curriculum delivery to effectively improve the learners' academic performance in Geography.

3.14. STRATEGIES TO MOTIVATE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

Some Geography DHs experience constraints, as alluded to above; however, it seems they are duty-bound to develop strategies to overcome the constraints to advance the quality of teaching and learning geographical information systems, map reading, and calculations in schools. Deventer and Kruger (2003:28), as cited by Malatji (2018:126), saw supervision and curriculum as essential strategies for promoting teaching and learning in schools.

Supervision of teaching and learning ensures effective leadership and efficient management of Geography teaching. Geography DHs are curricula leaders who ensure curriculum delivery is done effectively to improve learner academic performance by supervising teachers. Ekundayo *et al*. (2013:186) state that supervision is important in

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promoting and monitoring teachers' performance; in the process, DHs note the teachers' work and use appropriate strategies to remedy flaws while building on the merits observed (Ekundayo *et al*. 2013:186) doing so enhances the teaching standards in schools to achieve set goals. Malatji (2018:125) states that the GDHs should be supported internally by the principals, deputy principals, and external curriculum advisors to manage geography curricula effectively.

Curriculum management, therefore, is about curriculum improvement and its effective implementation (Massey & Pretorius, 2018:3). Principals should spend time dealing with effective curriculum implementation issues if the geography teaching and learning process is to benefit learners. Effective curriculum implementation leads to effective teaching and learning, the primary function of an education system. This involves properly managing the teaching and learning process at school, and to perform the above task effectively, one of the DH's tasks is to be a curriculum manager. Mpisane (2015:35) observes that DHs use meetings with their geography teachers to help improve the teaching and learning of the subject. GDHs, hence, should use such meetings to blend new ideas with effective teaching strategies to help improve curriculum delivery in their department.

The Geography DH should, among other aspects, supervise teachers by documenting their attendance at departmental meetings (Metcalfe, 2018:43). In addition to the above, the DH could also conduct class visits to ensure adherence to the class timetable. In this way, no teacher would miss lessons unless seriously ill. The Geography DH should also find solutions to problems in the department by consulting her subordinates concerning the constraints they face in curriculum delivery to improve the learners' academic performance (Metcalfe, 2018:43). The GDH should also record the number of lessons each teacher misses to use that record when constantly reprimanding absent teachers; this could be done through one-on-one meetings with the concerned teachers. Another strategy the Geography DH could use is to check the teachers' workbooks to see whether they align with the information noted in the teacher's tracker and should have professional, supportive conversations with teachers (Mathiyane *et al*., 2019:2). One-on-

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one meetings improve the relationship between the DH and teachers, hence, strengthen teamwork in the department.

The NSC Diagnostic Report (2012) suggests that teachers should set tasks using appropriate symbols to train learners to use them in conjunction with the maps provided. This aligns with the transformational leadership theory that encourages Geography DHs and Geography teachers to work together to ensure that the DBE policies are adhered to. The GDH should work harmoniously with the teachers if curricula implementation is compelling enough to promote the learners' academic performance in class. Doing so would help improve the quality of learning so that learners can acquire map reading and GIS skills. Wang (2019:2) attests to the fact that the school DHs who employ transformational leadership ideas seek to raise the teachers' awareness of the importance of providing effective lessons in class. Furthermore, Odumeru and Ifeanyi (2013:356) affirm that transformational leadership stimulates and transforms followers to look for extraordinary results.

3.15. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed literature related to this study. That is, issues concerning the roles of the Geography DH in curriculum delivery were reviewed to help establish what other scholars say about the topic being investigated and the influence of Transformational leadership theory that underpins the study. The literature review focused on the roles of the Geography DH in general from an international perspective in the African context and then at the South African level. In all these contexts, scholars have agreed that the roles of the GDH are key to the effective delivery of curriculum to improve the learners' academic performance, and the influence of transformational leadership on theory on the roles of geography departmental heads influences teachers' curricular delivery on learner academic performance. Mona (2023:25) affirms that transformational leadership theory provides a framework for understanding how leadership behaviour and practices can positively influence teacher professionalism, which significantly impacts the quality of curriculum delivery and success in schools. Reviewing the said literature also revealed

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various roles ascribed to subject DHs, Geography teachers, and factors that impact curricula delivery in general. The literature on how curriculum delivery impacts the learners' academic performance and factors that hinder curriculum delivery in schools was also discussed. Details were provided to understand the constraints faced and strategies that can be used to improve curricula delivery in the school. The process revealed that there is little research on the effectiveness of the roles of the GDH in teaching geographical techniques and map work to learners to improve their academic performance.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding Chapter reviewed the literature concerning pertinent issues to this study. Chapter four focuses on the study's research design and methodology. Areas that were detailed here are the study's research paradigm, sampling, population, data collection and analysis methods, and ethical considerations. The research questions and the related objectives informed the selection of data collection and analysis methods. The study investigated the role of the Geography DH in curriculum delivery to improve the learners' academic performance in secondary schools. Data was collected through - individual interviews and focus group interviews,

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is a set of common beliefs and agreements shared by scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed to guide research and practice in any field of study (Ngwenya, 2017:100). Khatri (2020:1435) defines the research paradigm as a theoretical or philosophical ground for research work; hence, it can be viewed as a research philosophy or rather a philosophical way of thinking in educational research. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), cited in Katri (2020:1435), describe paradigm as the philosophy used to describe the researcher's - worldview, perspective or school of thought or set of shared beliefs that inform the meaning or interpretation of research data. Tshisikhawe (2017:83) asserts that a paradigm is a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts, or prepositions that orient thinking and research. The researcher sees a paradigm as the researchers' beliefs about the world they live in or want to live in. A paradigm is perceived as a way of seeing the world that frames the research topic, influences how the researcher thinks about the topic, and how the problem can be investigated.

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Additionally, the research paradigm can be regarded as a comprehensive belief system, worldview or framework that guides research and practices in the field. It directs the researcher in the overall process of investigation, including the selection of a research problem, setting research questions, determining the nature and types of reality, knowledge, methodology, and the value of the research work. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:56) claim that paradigms are important as they provide beliefs in a particular discipline, influence what should be studied, how it should be studied, and how the result should be interpreted. Rehman and Alherthi (2016:51) explain paradigm as a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions; thus, researchers are supposed to have some underlying philosophical assumptions about what constitutes valid research.

To conduct and evaluate any research, it is important to know the assumptions; a paradigm, therefore, implies a pattern, structure, and system of scientific ideas, values, and assumptions (Katri, 2020:1436). In this case, different questions were asked to the participants in order to ascertain their experiences regarding the Geography DH roles in curriculum delivery (for instance, map reading and GIS) to improve the learner's academic performance. In addition, questions posed sought answers to issues such as the challenges that affect the DH's effective curriculum delivery. According to Katri (2020:1436), a paradigm comprises four elements**,** namely, ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology. The following briefly discusses these major components of the research paradigm that constitute the philosophical assumptions of this study.

Ontology

Ontology deals with the philosophical assumption about the nature of reality and existence, and it is called the 'theory of reality' (Katri, 2020:1436). The term ontology was derived from the Greek words 'onto', which means 'being', and 'logia', which means 'science, study, or theory'. Rehman and Alharthi (2016:51) define ontology as the nature of our beliefs about reality. Ontology is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with the articulation of the nature and structure of the world (Ngwenya, 2017:101). It is, therefore, an ontological question that leads a researcher to enquire what kind of reality exists.

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The study made use of an ontology to define the truth and reality from the perspective of the participants who were purposefully sampled; the reality was obtained through the use of interviews and focus group interviews. School documents on curriculum and its delivery were analysed to obtain information about the topic investigated. Key documents analysed for this study were the Diagnostic Reports from previous Grade 12 NCS examinations. The ontological question - *What makes learners fail?* - informed data collection here. Also investigated were issues such as the best ways to deliver a Geography curriculum when teaching map work techniques and GIS to produce better results.

Epistemology

Epistemology comes from the Greek word “episteme”, which means “knowledge”, and simply put, it is the philosophy of knowledge. Gall and Borg (2013), cited in Rehman and Alharthi (2016:52), refer to epistemology as the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired and validated; thus, the nature of the relationship between the researchers and knowledge denotes the nature of human knowledge and understanding. Such knowledge could be acquired through different types of inquiry and methods of investigation. Epistemology, thus, is concerned with the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired and communicated to people. As such, epistemological questions necessitated this study. One such epistemological question was – *what are the roles of Geography DHs in enhancing curriculum delivery to improve results?*

Different questions were asked of different participants to gauge their experiences with factors that can impact curriculum delivery and ensure better results in geography. Constraints that prevented GDHs from fulfilling their roles in curriculum delivery were also investigated, as well as strategies that can be used to motivate them to support teachers in curriculum delivery.

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Methodology

Methodology is the third component of the research paradigm to be discussed here. Methodology refers to the strategy or action plan or the processes or design that informs one's choice of research methods. Grix, cited in Rehman and Alharthi (2016:52), posits that methodology guides the researcher in deciding the data type required for the study and which data collection tools are most appropriate for that process.

Axiology

Axiology refers to the ethical issues that need to be considered when planning and, later on, executing one's study. Finnis (1990), cited in Kivunja (2017:28), states that axiology is considered a philosophical approach to making valid or right decisions. Kivuja pointed out that axiology involves defining, evaluating, and understanding concepts of right and wrong behaviour relating to research. Axiology considers what value the researcher would attribute to different aspects of the research, the participants, data, and readers targeted by the research results. These are determined by aspects such as teleology, deontology, morality, and fairness (Kivuja, 2017:30).

Teleology

Teleology is the theory of morality, which postulates people doing what is intrinsically good or desirable, a moral obligation that should be pursued in every human behaviour (Kivuja, 2017:30). Research teleology refers to attempts made to make sure that the research results are meaningful outcome that would satisfy as many people as possible (Kivuja, 2017:31). This can be facilitated by questions such as - *Was the method used pragmatic, and do they make common sense?*

Deontology

Deontology is the understanding that every action that is undertaken during research, which would have consequences, is intended to benefit the participants, the researcher, and the scholastic community or the public at large (Kivuja, 2017:31). Participants were assured of their rights during the process of data collection.

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Morality

Morality refers to the intrinsic moral values upheld during the research; therefore, conducting an activity in a manner that respects people's rights and dignity as human beings - in such a way that it portrays integrity (Ichendu, 2020,172). Participants were not harmed or awkward during the data collection process; their rights were respected.

Fairness

Fairness refers to drawing attention to the researcher to respect all research participants and ensure that their rights are upheld. This notion can be guided by questions like - *How fair is the research action? Should all the research participants be treated the same way (Kivuja, 2017:32)? All participants were treated equally and fairly during the investigation process*.

4.3 DIFFERENT PARADIGMS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Educational research has different approaches that could be used to conduct it. These approaches include, but are not limited to - positivism, critical paradigm, anti-positivism, and post-positivism; these approaches are detailed below.

4.3.1 Positivism

Rehman and Aharthi (2016:53) define positivism as a branch of philosophy that rose to prominence in the early nineteenth century due to the works of Augustine Comte. Positivism assumes that reality exists independently of people; reality is not mediated by people but governed by immutable laws. The ontological position of positivism is that of realism. Positivism strives to understand the social world as a natural world; however, in nature, there is a cause-effect relationship between phenomena. Positivism relies on experiments and hypotheses and its epistemological position is that of objectivism, meaning that the researchers' subjectivity could enable them to comprehend the world as it exists in itself accurately. Social entities exist externally to the external actors who are concerned with existence.

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Researchers come in as objective observers to study a phenomenon that exists independently of them, and their presence does not disrupt what is being observed. Language and symbols are used to describe a phenomenon in its real form and as it exists without any interference whatsoever. Positivism believes that there are laws governing social phenomena; the stand applies scientific methods, which are formulated and presented through factual statements. A positivistic researcher seeks generalisation, which is in contrast with the order and regularity one finds in the natural world. Positivism uses quantification to represent and analyse features of reality through experiments (Rehman & Aharthi, 2016:54).

According to Kivunja (2017:31), the following are the characteristics of research conducted within the positivism paradigm - a belief that the theory is universal and law-like generalisations can be made across the contexts; an assumption that the context is not important; the belief that the truth or knowledge is out there to be discovered by research; the belief that the result of inquiry can be quantified; the belief that theory can be used to predict and control outcome; employs empirical or analytical approaches; believes in the ability to observe knowledge and applies scientific methods. The positivist paradigm, thus, was not deemed suitable for this study since the study focused on the participants' lived experiences regarding the role of Geography DHs in curriculum delivery to improve learner academic performance in secondary schools.

4.3.2 Critical Paradigm

Critical paradigm originated from the works of a group of twentieth-century philosophers affiliated with the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt (Rehman & Alharthi, 2018:57). This paradigm assumes that reality exists and it is shaped by - cultural, political, ethnic, gender, and religious factors - which interact with each other to create a social system. The critical paradigm is concerned with the issue of power relations in society and the interaction of race, class, gender, education, economy, religion, and other institutions that contribute to social system (Rehman & Alharthi,

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2018:57). Asghar (2013:3123) asserts that the critical paradigm is more philosophical, hence, more accommodating by nature as compared to the other paradigms – those that are more methodological and less concerned with the independent nature of truth of reality of life (Asghar, 2013:3123). Researchers who adopt the critical paradigm often bring unique methodologies and theories, such as feminism and critical race theory, to better understand and analyse their participants' experiences.

Kivunja (2017:35) reveals the following characteristics of doing research using the critical paradigm are, *inter alia* - concerns with power relationships set up within social structures, conscious recognition of the consequences of the privileging versions of reality; respect for cultural norms examining conditions and individuals in a situation based on their social positioning; treats research as an act of construction rather than discovery while deliberating on efforts of the researcher to promote human rights, and increase social justice. The critical paradigm focuses on the utilisation of participatory research and the efforts of the researcher to address issues of power, oppression, and trust among research participants.

The critical paradigm was not employed in this study as it focuses on power relations in society; this study was not designed to highlight and explain social factors that cause oppressive and powerful groups to dominate our society's oppressed and repressed sections. This study investigated a social setup based on equality for all members. Post-positivism's ontological position is critical realism, which assumes a reality that exists independent of the observer and can be apprehended imperfectly because of the complexity of social phenomena.

4.3.3 Anti-positivism

Anti–positivism is also called the 'interpretivist paradigm' and was developed as a reaction to positivism. Rehman and Aharthi (2016:55) indicate that interpretivists assume that reality is subjective, multiple, and socially constructed. Anti-positivism is sometimes referred to as 'constructivism' because someone's reality can only be understood through

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their experiences of that reality, which might be different from another person's since historical or social perspectives shape them. Reality is not seen as anything apart from human perceptions. Social sciences see reality or social reality as created out of human perceptions and their interpretation of meaning (Phillips, 2023).

Interpretivism is a people-centred approach which acknowledges the research's integration within the research environment (Wang, 2020,1). In this study, anti-positivism was deemed appropriate because it is centred on people - teachers and the school environment. Interpretivists believe in socially constructed multiple realities, truth, and reality created into discovered meaning; to them, it is possible to know reality as it is because our senses always mediate it. Pham (2018:3) explains that interpretivism is rooted in the fact that methods used in understanding knowledge related to humans and social sciences cannot be the same as its usage in physical sciences - humans interpret their world and then act on that interpretation while the world does not. Using the interpretive perspective, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of curriculum delivery and its complexities in its unique context instead of generalising the understanding for the whole population. The interpretive researcher can describe objects, humans, or events and understand them in a social context.

Social researchers can collect data from the same point of view by making observations through lenses that shape and colour their language, culture, discipline-based knowledge, and the past experiences that inform these (Asghar, 2013:3123). The interpretivism paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation. To observe is to collect information about events, and to interpret is to give meaning to that collected information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract patterns.

To this end, Kivunja (2017:34) provides these characteristics as being part of research conducted under the interpretivist paradigm - the admission that the social world cannot be understood from an individual standpoint, the belief that realities are multiple and socially constructed, acceptance that there is inevitable interaction between the

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researcher and his/or her research participants; acceptance that context is vital for knowledge and knowing; belief that knowledge created by finding can be value-laden and these values need to be made explicit; the need to understand the individual rather than universal laws; the belief that cause and effect are mutually interdependent; and the belief that the contextual factors need to be taken into consideration in any systematic pursuit of understanding.

For the purpose of this study, the interpretive paradigm was chosen as best suited to inform this study because, according to Asghar (2013:3123), an interpretive methodology requires the social phenomenon to be understood through the eyes of the participants rather than the researcher to understand the social phenomenon in its context. In line with the interpretive paradigm, the researcher became part of the participants to understand and feel what they experience in curriculum delivery. This paradigm was the most suitable for this study because it allowed for the observation of participants as they engaged in curriculum delivery in ways which may improve the learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit secondary schools.

This study was conducted within the interpretivism paradigm. Interpretive researchers employ methods that generate qualitative data. Examples of data collection methods that yield qualitative data are - open-ended interviews with varying degrees of structure, field notes, and personal notes. Personal visits to selected secondary schools for data collection helped the researcher to interpret the participants' experiences, thoughts, opinions, and actions in their social settings and cultural contexts. The study was empirical, meaning that any conclusions drawn are based on factual evidence obtained from information collected from real-life experiences.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design provides a clear research plan to guide data collection methods and decisions made and sets the basis for data interpretation. It relates to the process of carrying out a study, inclusive of time, participants, and the environment in which data is

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gathered (Tshisikhawe, 2017:88). Akhtar (2016:1) explains that the research design is the conceptual blueprint within which research is conducted. The researcher prepared an action plan, which constituted an outline for data collection, measurement, and analysis, as well as the type of evidence required to reasonably answer the research questions. For this study, data were generated from interviews with secondary school principals, deputy principals, GDHs, and geography teachers.

The research design can be considered as the structure of research; it is the glue that holds together all the elements in a research project. In short, it is the plan of the proposed research work. The research design can be regarded as the master plan that specifies methods and procedures for collecting and analysing data; it is the conceptual framework within which research is conducted; hence, it is the blueprint for data collection, measurement, and analysis (Tshisikhawe, 2017:88; Akhtar, 2016:1). The research design, therefore, is used to structure the research, and it serves to show how major parts of the research project work together in a bid to address the central research questions, the sample or group measures, or programmes, and methods of data collection and analysis (Tshisikhawe, 2017:88).

According to Arthar (2016:70), the research design has these features - a plan that specifies the sources and type of information relevant to a research problem; it is the strategy that specifies which approach would be used to gather and analyse data and may provide information on the time and budget since most studies require financial backing. Generally, the research design refers to the entire activities that embrace planning and putting into action those plans to execute the research - from problem identification to reporting and disseminating the findings (Punch, 2009, cited in Tshisikhawe, 2017:89).

The above understanding informed the study's selection of its participants following the purposive sampling technique. That is, the researcher purposefully chose participants who were knowledgeable about curriculum delivery, its constraints, difficulties associated with improving learner academic performance in rural secondary schools, and problems

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DHs encounter as they execute their duties. As alluded to earlier, the participants included secondary school principals, their deputies, GDHs, and Geography teachers. These participants manage curricula delivery and ensure that teaching and learning are effective in schools. Pandey and Pandey (2020:18) assert that a research design is a master plan specifying methods and procedures for collecting and analysing needed information.

Thakur (2021:1) states that a research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economic procedure. Borwankar (1995, cited in Thakur (2021:1) observed that a research design is the plan, structure, strategy, and investigation formulated to obtain a search question and control variance. The study's design defines the study type, whether descriptive, experimental, or empirical.

Asenahabi (2019:1) observes that a suitable research design is required for research to be carried out successfully. The researcher adopts this plan before data collection commences to achieve research objectives validly. Designing a study involves multiple decisions about how the data would be collected and analysed to ensure the final report answers the initial research questions. The following section discusses some qualitative designs informed by the post-positivism paradigm.

4.4.1 Ethnography

Ethnographic research originated from the field of Anthropology. It often involved an anthropologist living with an isolated tribal community for an extended period in order to understand their culture. Ethnography is sometimes called ‘participant observation’ (Yanik, 2017:113). Yanik (2017:113) claims that an ethnographic approach focuses on a specific lifestyle and is seen as a way of explaining and defining the perspective of a section of society or an individual group. It is the study of people using methods other than those of experimental design and quantitative measurement. It usually involves participation and observation, which are systematic, comprehensive, and topic-oriented. Rector (2018:12) argues that ethnographic research took a natural lens to study people’s

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lives within a community. Ethnography, hence, is the study of culture or cultures that a group of people share (Van Maanen, 1995:4). As a research design, ethnography is usually associated with participant observation by a single investigator who immerses himself/herself in the group of interest for a specific period (Van Maanen, 1995:4).

Caulfield (2023:1) postulates that ethnography is a type of qualitative research that involves immersing oneself in a particular community or organisation to observe their behaviour and interaction up close. Ethnography, thus, is a flexible research design that allows one to gain a deep understanding of a group's shared culture, conventions, and social dynamics, although it also involves some practical and ethical challenges. Caulfield (2023:5) explains the advantages of ethnographic research design as follows – it gives the researcher direct access to the culture and practices of a group; it is useful for learning first-hand information about the behaviour and interaction of people within a particular context, and it involves extensive immersion in a natural setting like school, classroom, playing field, and lunchroom.

For this study, ethnography was not suitable because it focuses on the learned pattern of action, languages, beliefs, rituals, and ways of life, and it involves prolonged fieldwork. Ethnography utilises observation and casual interviews with participants of the identified group and also involves a comprehensive account of the social setting from the participant's point of view, which was not the focus of this study (Caulfield, 2023:1).

4.4.2 Case Study Research Design

Larrinaga (2017:149) defines a case study design as a methodology based on empirical inquiry with essentially qualitative techniques from real contexts in which multiple sources of evidence are used with an inductive and partially deductive scientific approach. Furthermore, the design investigates a contemporary phenomenon with its real-life context. Heale (2018:7) notes a case study as an intensive study about a person group, community, or unit, which is aimed to generalise over several units. The case study design can be described as an intensive, systematic investigation of a single individual,

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group, community or some other unit in which the researcher examines data relating to several variables. Takahashi (2020:102) observes that the design can be centred on a phenomenon or population. Mccombes (2023:1) explains it as a detailed study of a specific subject, such as a person, group, place, event, organisation, or phenomenon. A case study design was not utilised because it is specified and centred on a group or community.

4.4.3 Grounded Theory

Bytheway (2018:1) notes that the grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Straus in 1967 from pragmatism. Groen (2017:3) illustrates that grounded theory provides researchers with a systematic and flexible constant comparative approach for theory construction. This research design is concerned with the generation of theory, which is grounded in data that has been systematically collected and analysed. Tie (2019:1) alludes to the fact that grounded theory sets out to discover or construct theory from data systematically obtained and analysed using comparative analysis. Grounded theory is a strong, inductive research design for discovering new theories, and it involves inductively building up a systematic theory that is grounded in or based on observations. The grounded theorist first summarises observations into conceptual categories and directly tests the coherence of these categories in the research setting with more observations.

Bhanduri (2021:2) asserts that grounded theory is a systematic qualitative research methodology initially developed to merge qualitative approaches in Social Sciences. This design enables researchers to build theory from data through constant comparison by identifying analytical codes and categories and then using those categories to generalise theories and theoretical models. Grounded theory, therefore, is an overall strategy for doing research through theory grounded in data. For this study, however, grounded theory was not applicable because it focuses on theory-grounded data, while this study focused on lived experience and knowledge of the subjects.

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4.4.4 Phenomenology

Qutoshi (2018:215) explained phenomenology as a philosophy and method of inquiring, which is not limited to any approach to knowing, an intellectual engagement in interpretations, and meaning-making that is used to understand the lived world of human beings at a conscious level. Phenomenology is a science that understands human beings at a deeper level by gazing at phenomena. Researchers use this approach to gain a wider meaning to lived experiences and interpret them for meaning-making. In this context, a researcher can utilise interviews, observations, and discussions as data collection strategies to study participants' lived experiences at a deeper level. Phenomenology is part of the constructivist and interpretivist paradigms that are both philosophical and methodological. Phenomenology research is a qualitative research approach that seeks to understand and describe the universal essence of a phenomenon. It investigates the everyday experiences of human beings and helps us to understand the meaning of people's lived experiences (Qutoshi, 2018:215).

For the purpose of this study, the phenomenology research design was the best to be used because it explored what people had experienced (Neubauer, Witkop & Varpio, 2019:1). Phenomenology is a powerful research strategy that is well-suited for exploring challenging problems in curriculum. Understanding the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning this study was essential for the successful conduct of this phenomenological research. This is because the study was socially focused on the lived experiences of the participants. Phenomenology focuses on the study of a phenomenon that has impacted an individual. Greening (2019:2) argues that with a phenomenological approach, it is easier to provide detailed comments on the situation of individuals that do not lend themselves to direct generalisation. This means that gathered information and perceptions through inductive and qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group interviews, and participants' observations might bring the reality of the participants' lived experiences.

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According to Lester (1999:1), epistemological and phenomenological approaches are based on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity. They emphasise the importance of personal perspectives and interpretation. As such, phenomenology is powerful for gaining insight into people's motivations and actions. Rietmeijer and Veen (2021:114) add that phenomenology investigates people's subjective experiences with some phenomenon. This study investigated the impact of GDH in curricula delivery to improve learners' academic performance; thus, the phenomenological approach suited this study.

For this study, the experiences of the participants in curriculum delivery and how they impacted the learners' academic performance were key. The phenomenological research starts with the acknowledgement that there is a gap in map work techniques and GIS research, as learners were performing poorly on these topics. Berrel and Spiegelberg (2023:2) state that phenomenology makes it possible to obtain insights into the essential structures and the essential relationships of phenomena based on the careful study of concrete examples supplied by experience. Guided by the phenomenological research design, the study utilised individual interviews with the said participants purposefully selected from four secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit. This was done to get first-hand information from people who are involved with the daily teaching and learning of geography concepts.

Before the interviews began, the researcher explained to the participants the purpose of the research study, their rights as the study participants, the risks associated with participating in the research study, and the confidentiality of the information they would provide. The researcher showed the participants letters seeking permission to conduct the research from the Provincial DBE offices, the Circuit Office, and the ethical clearance certificate from the University of Venda. These procedures ensured the participants freely participated in the study and shared their experiences.

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4.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is defined as the theoretical and systematic analysis of the methods that are applied to conduct a specific study (Igwenegu, 2016:1). This is a set of systematic techniques used in research, a guide to research and how it is to be conducted (Igwenegu, 2016:1). Research methodology, therefore, describes and analyses research methods to be used to collect and analyse data.

Adedoyin (2020:2) explains a research methodology as a means of understanding the entire research process, including - its social, and organisational context, philosophical assumptions, ethical principles, and the impact of new knowledge from the research enterprise. Jansen and Warren (2020:1) refer to the research methodology as the practical 'how" of any given piece of research. It is how researchers systematically design a study to ensure valid and reliable results that address the research aims and objectives (Jansen & Warren, 2020:1). Goundar (2019:4) claims that the research methodology involves the learning of various techniques that can be used to conduct research, thus, a systematic way to solve the research problem. For this study, the qualitative research approach methodology was adopted. This was largely because of its advantages, as outlined by Ugwuowo (2016:5), that the approach - provides tools to do research, enriches the research process and provides chances for an in-depth analysis to understand a subject, helps to evaluate and use research results with reasonable confidence and informed decision-making; enables researcher to learn to read and think critically about data collected.

4.5.1 Qualitative Research

Mattimoe, Hayden, Murphy and Ballantine (2021:2) observe that qualitative research pursues qualia, that is, phenomena as experienced by individuals. Qualitative studies, therefore, seek to collect rich data that are understood within a context and are associated with an interpretivism philosophy. Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right, which is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of

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interpretive materials that make the world visible - field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos.

Chivenga and Monyai (2020:12) argue that qualitative researchers study aspects in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. The study investigated the participants' views, opinions, and perceptions about Geography curriculum delivery in secondary schools. Thus, the researcher chose to utilise qualitative research design as informed by the interpretive paradigm to collect data to answer the research questions.

Qualitative research, therefore, discovers cases that enhance what the researcher learns in a particular context about the process of social life and usually uses non-random sampling techniques (Abuhamda, Ismail & Bsharat, 2021:75). Chivenga and Monyai (2021:15) state that qualitative research methodology acknowledges the existence of multiple interpretations of reality in the sense that every person who participates in the research study would have his/her interpretations of event, occurrence, or phenomenon investigated. The researcher placed herself in the context of the phenomenon investigated to understand the participants' lived experiences.

Chowdhury and Shil (2021:191) note that qualitative methodology provides detailed data, thick description, in-depth inquiry, and direct quotations and captures people's perspectives and experiences. The researcher had direct contact with and got close to the participants, schools, and the phenomenon studied; this was because she is a Geography DH and National Senior Certificate examination marker. The researcher's personal experiences and insights were very relevant during the inquiry and provided a critical understanding of the issues that were investigated.

Yadav (2022:1) suggests numerous methods that can be coupled within qualitative research and are established on diverse philosophical perspectives. It is a descriptive form of research; thus, it could be used successfully to describe groups, communities, and organisations. The researcher chose to gather information from those involved with

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Geography curricula delivery in secondary schools. As such, the participants of this study had strong views on how the Geography curriculum on map work techniques and GIS could be effectively delivered to improve the learners' academic performance in Geography. In this case, their opinions were captured verbatim for interpretive purposes.

Tshisikhawe (2017:95) claims that there is usually an interest in a phenomenon being studied as it occurs in its natural environment, with a view to reflecting on the participants' lived experiences. The idea here is to perceive reality in the eyes of the participants. Thus, this study was conducted in a real rather than experimental situation. The researcher obtained accurate information from the sampled participants, given that she is aware of the learners' academic performance at the National Senior Certificate level, from a senior marker's perspective. In addition, the researcher is involved in the diagnostic process after marking the Grade 12 examinations. The researcher, therefore, had first-hand information from people on the ground who were involved with marking geography examination papers. As informed by the phenomenology research design, the researcher visited sampled schools to observe how participants deliver curricula to improve the learners' academic performance.

The qualitative methodology was chosen because of its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people's experiences are given meaning during data analysis and interpretation. Meaning is provided in terms of human aspects such as behaviour, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships. The researcher utilised the qualitative approach where the data collection process is sensitive to the participants; an inductive data analysis procedure that enabled one to organise information into patterns and themes was utilised.

The qualitative research methodology was chosen because of the following advantages, as suggested by Akyildz and Amed (2021): the approach facilitates - the realisation of a detailed description of an issue, improvement of research questions, obtaining the perspectives of the group of participants, simplifying complicated issues; obtaining of subjective and detailed data and opens communicate with participants during interviews.

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Gay and Airasian (2003:13) argue that methods used in a qualitative study assist the investigator in gaining detailed information about the reality of issues and how they are perceived. Jansen and Warren (2020:3) explain that qualitative research refers to research which focuses on collecting and analysing words. It is used to understand people's perceptions about events that took place. Qualitative researchers commonly use the following data analysing methods - qualitative content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and narrative analysis.

All these data analysis techniques begin with data coding. In addition, with qualitative methods, participants can elaborate their answers in greater detail. The researcher had the opportunity to respond immediately to what the participants were saying by probing further in cases where the responses were either vague or required further clarity. This helped both the participants and the researcher to better understand the challenges the participants had with the Geography curriculum delivery regarding map work techniques and GIS. The researcher presented the findings as they were given by the participants; the study largely employed thematic data analysis.

4.5.2 Rationale for Using Qualitative Research

According to Creswell (2009:13), the qualitative research method is an effective model that works in natural settings and enables a researcher to develop a level of detail from intense involvement in the actual experience. Its application consists of a set of interpretive material practices that make the world visible. Mohajan (2018:2) explained that the qualitative approach is a type of Social Science research that collects and works with non-numerical data. It seeks to interpret meaning from data to help us to understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places. The researcher chose qualitative research due to its data collection methods flexibility, as one can use a variety of methods to collect qualitative data as opposed to the other two methods. Punch (2013:43) suggests the use of qualitative research informed by post-positivism to explore the behaviours, perspectives, feelings, and experiences of people and what lies at the

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core of their lives. The advantage of qualitative research lies in its interpretive approach to social reality and in the description of people's lived experiences.

Cibangu (2012:124) asserts that qualitative research's advantage over other research methods is that it involves multiple aspects - logic, ethnography, discourse analysis, case study, open-ended interview, participant observation, counselling, therapy, grounded theory, biography, comparative method, introspection, focus group, literacy criticism, meditation practice, and historical research. The qualitative approach was advantageous to use here because of its interest in people's beliefs, experiences, and meaning from the perspectives of people, and the tradition brings a deep understanding of a phenomenon (Domholdt, 1993:145). Another advantage was that the qualitative approach helped this study to describe and interpret issues systematically from the point of view of individuals or the population being studied.

Mwita (2022:619) suggests that qualitative research seeks to explore social phenomena, reveal feelings associated with the problem, and understand the subjective experience of people associated with the research problem. The author adds that qualitative research has the following strengths - flexibility as it provides their subjects with an opportunity to offer more explanation and clarification; provides in-depth and detailed information that allows researchers to collect more data and information and be in a better position to understand the details of the research problem and using data collection methods such as interviews, observation and open-ended questions gives the researcher an opportunity to probe and seek more detailed information.

Qualitative research also provides integration of human touch where the researcher interacts with participants. which gives the researcher an opportunity to understand the actual feelings and experiences of the participants and the research problem can be easily understood through narrations from the participants. The researcher can easily study the emotions and perceptions of the participants to understand how they felt about various issues raised during interviews. Qualitative research also minimises the chances of missing data as the researcher collects data until data saturation. Another advantage

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is that the researcher has the opportunity to seek clarity from the participants on unclear issues. It is also cost effective as, a small sample is preferred, and this allows the research to be conducted with a reduced financial cost. The qualitative approach permitted the collection of thick and rich narrative explanations of the phenomenon under study as the researcher was given a chance to take into account the views of the participants and their interaction in their natural school environment.

4.6 STUDY POPULATION

Philane (2011:52) defines a population as the totality of items, people, or events. Population is a group to which the findings can be generalised and clarified by the objectives of the study. According to Wani (2019:1), a population is any collection of specified groups of human beings or non-human entities, such as objects and educational institutions. Polit and Hungler (1999:37) suggest that population is an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects, or members that conform to a set of specifications. Casteel and Bridler (2021:3) add that the population comprises the individuals, dyads, groups, organisations, or other entities one seeks to understand and to which the study results may be generalised or transferred. It is the principal group about which the research is concerned.

Uifah (2019:1) explains population as the subject of research. Creswell (2012:42) adds that a population is a group of individuals with the same characteristics. Pandey and Pandey (2020:40) suggest that the population is the entire mass of observations, the parent group from which a sample is to be formed. The population of this study was all secondary school principals, their deputies, all secondary Geography DHs and all secondary Geography teachers from the Luvuvhu Circuit. This means that the population is a group of people or units to which the findings of the research are to be applied (Shukla, 2020:2).

Shukla (2020:1) refers to the population as the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied. The researcher selected four secondary

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schools, and this study focused on the roles of geography DHs in curriculum delivery to improve learners' academic performance in these secondary schools. The rationale for choosing that population was that Geography DHs are expected to effectively and efficiently lead and manage the curricula in order to promote quality teaching and learning of Geography.

4.7 SAMPLING METHOD AND PROCEDURES

Sampling is a technique or procedure a researcher adopts in selecting items of the population (Mohammed, 2015:85). Hurumraj (2013:25) explains that sampling leads to the selection of a small group proportional to the total set of objects, individuals, or events which together make up the population of the study. Sampling is necessary because it is impossible to include everyone in the study; in practice, it is difficult to interview or meet with all those involved in a situation.

Shukla (2020:3) adds that sampling leads to identifying units to be selected from the study population and identifies two types of sampling methods - probability and non-probability sampling.

4.7.1 Probability Sampling

This is the method of sampling that utilises simple random sampling. This means that all units of the population have an equal chance to be selected as a sample (Shukla, 2020:3). Jamil (2018:1) suggests that these sampling techniques are used when the researcher wants to make inferences about the population. The sample is taken randomly from a simple frame. Showkat and Parveen (2017:2) explain that probability sampling is a method in which each element of the population has known non-zero probability selection; they list some probability sampling methods as - tossing a coin, throwing some dice, using the lottery method, and blindfolded method. Business Research Methodology (2022:3) adds that the use of some form of random selection and application of these methods offers the highest chance of creating a sample that truly represents the population.

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4.7.2 Non-Probability Sampling

Non-probability sampling technique is mainly used in exploratory and qualitative research. Group members are selected non-randomly. Therefore, only certain members of the population have a chance to participate in the study (Showkat & Parveen, 2017:2). The authors note that non-probability sampling uses a non-randomised method to draw the sample. It evolves judgment instead of randomisation, and participants are selected because they are easy to access. The findings obtained through this method apply to the group studied because it studies a particular phenomenon with the potential to generate valuable insights. This study adopted the non-probability sampling method in order to gain a deeper understanding and insight into the topic. Some non-probability sampling methods are - conveniences, purposive, quota and snowball.

Convenience Sampling

This is the sampling method where the researcher prefers certain participants over others for convenience's sake. Showkat and Parveen (2017:7) note that the researcher selects the closest persons as participants; for example, a researcher can select one learner out of ten according to her/his wish. This means that participants who are readily accessible or available to the researcher are selected.

Purposive Sampling

In purposive sampling, the researcher chooses participants based on her judgment, bearing in mind the purpose of the study. This type of sampling is used in exploratory research or field research. Purposive sampling helps to select only those individuals who are relevant to the research (Showkat & Parveen, 2017:8). Engel and Schutt (2013:126) point out that purposive sampling might target individuals who are particularly knowledgeable about the issues under investigation based on an established criterion.

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Quota Sampling

Showkat and Parveen (2017:9) observe that the researcher in the quota sampling selects participants based on their available to immediately make up the required size. Engel and Shutt (2013:124) point out that the distinguishing feature of a quota sample is that it ensures that the sample represents certain characteristics proportionate to that prevail in the study population.

Snowball Sampling

Snowball is a non-probability sampling method, which is socio-metric in nature (Showkat & Parveen, 2017:2). It is also considered accidental sampling (Engel & Shutt, 2013:124). Showkat and Parveen (2017:10) add that snowballing is appropriate when members of a special population are difficult to locate, for example, homeless people or migrant workers, among others. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011:158) posit that snowballing starts with the researcher identifying a small number of individuals who have the characteristics of interest to the study. When using snowball sampling, the researcher identifies one member of the population who speaks to him and then asks that person to identify and recruit others in the population.

4.8 STUDY'S SAMPLING METHOD

The study utilised the purposive sampling method. Neuman (2000:517) referred to the purposive sampling technique as a non-random sampling method where the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate the participants. Ames (2019:1) indicates that purposive sampling is a way of achieving a manageable amount of data. Palinkas (2015:3) posits that purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for effective use where resources are limited. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are knowledgeable about or experienced with what is investigated. Nikolopoulou (2022:1) explains purposive sampling as a group of non-probability

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sampling techniques where units are selected because they have characteristics required by the researcher. This type of sampling relies on the researcher's judgement, identifying, and selecting individuals, cases, or events that would provide the best information to achieve the study objectives.

Maree (2012:79) explicates that purposive sampling means the participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that make them holders of data needed for the study. Ames (2019:3) claims that purposive sampling helps to ensure that the study represents a wide geographic spread, rich data and closely resembles the synthesis of the objectives. The researcher thus chose the purposive sampling method because the participants were part of the curriculum delivery process, teaching Geography to learners at the Luvuvhu Circuit. It was, therefore, appropriate to select them based on the knowledge they possess in the context of the study's objectives and its related research questions. This means that the participants were chosen based on the researcher's judgment; hence, for the purpose of this study, only people with knowledge of Geography curriculum delivery were purposefully selected.

4.8.1 Study Sample

To Mujere (2016:1), a sample provides the information needed by the researcher; it is a smaller set of the study population chosen by the researcher using a pre-defined selection method as explained. Kenton (2022:1) refers to the study sample as a smaller, manageable version of the larger group. It is a subset that contains the characteristics of a larger population. In this study, out of seven secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit, four secondary schools were chosen. These schools were chosen because geography is compulsory. All learners are doing geography as a subject. Out of the four selected secondary schools, the following participants were chosen to make up the study sample - four principals, four deputy principals, four GDHs, and eight Geography teachers. As already stated, the participants were purposefully selected because of their knowledge of the issues being investigated by the researcher in order to answer the study's research questions. Thus, the study's sample size had twenty participants.

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Table 4.1: Sample Size and the Data Collection Method Used

Sample	Number of Participants	The Method Used to Collect Data
Principals	Four (one per school)	Individual interview
Deputy principals	Four (one per school)	Individual interview
Geography DHs	Four (one per school)	Individual interview
Geography teachers	Eight (two per school)	Focus Group Discussion
Total	**20 participants**	

4.9 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND PROCEDURES

To collect in-depth and relevant data, a researcher first decides which sort of data she/he requires for the study. In this case, data sources and how data would be gathered become central to the data collection process regarding reliability (Mohammed, 2015:83). Taherdoost (2021:1) defines data collection as the process of collecting data to gain insight into the research topic. There are different types of data and data sources, hence, different data collection methods. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. The choice of each data collection method is important to ensure the quality of information to be collected.

Before the data collection methods, the type of data that is required for the study should be determined (Kabir, 2016:123). Taderdoost (2021:11) states that qualitative data collection methods are suitable for gathering detailed information to explore and determine new effects and consequences of a phenomenon. Such data are taken into

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cognisance feelings, perceptions, and emotions, and unstructured approaches such as interviews, focus group discussions, and naturalistic observations are used for their collection. Tshisikhawe (2017:108) reasons that qualitative research methodology relies on personal contact, and interpretive researchers emphasise a better understanding of the world through first-hand experience.

Data can be collected from two major sources - primary and secondary (Taderdoost, 2021:11). Data that are not yet published and are first-hand information, which an individual does not change, are primary data. Primary data sources help to gain high-quality data, which can improve results, and the researcher has the opportunity to add more data if required. Secondary data is gathered from published sources, meaning that data have already been gathered and used by someone else for other reasons (Tshisikhawe, 2017:108). Primary data for this study were collected through individual interviews and focus group discussions from the study sample. Secondary data were collected by analysing and surveying secondary school documents about Geography curricula delivery. Mohammed (2015:84) clarifies that primary data can be obtained through observation or direct communication with the participants and through interviews, while secondary data might be either published data or unpublished data from relevant books, journals, and other documents. Hence, the researcher combined data collection instruments, such as interview schedules and focus-group discussions.

4.9.1 Individual Interview

The technique of individual or face-to-face interviewing is a pipeline for extracting and transmitting information from the interviewee to the interviewer (Creswell, 2013:123). Individual interviews are useful as an in-depth data collection method in qualitative research as they generate intensive one-on-one interviews with participants to explore their perspectives on a particular idea or situation (Creswell, 2013:123). Frances, Coughlam and Patricia (2009:1) argue that an individual interview is valuable for gaining insight into people's perceptions, understandings, and experiences of a given phenomenon. Tyrimari (2021:1) explains that a face-to-face interview is a data collection

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method where the interviewer directly communicates with the participants following an interview schedule/guide. The researcher used individual interviews to gather information from the secondary school principals, deputy principals, and Geography DHs to reflect on the participants' perceptions and understanding of the nature of the Geography curricula delivery to improve the learners' academic performance in schools. This data collection method suited well with the interpretive approach adopted by the study. It gave the researcher the opportunity to intimately know the participants so that she researcher could understand how they thought and felt about curriculum delivery.

George (2022:1) claims that an interview is a qualitative research method that relies on asking questions in order to collect data; he points to one of the strengths of an interview, thus helping to obtain information through interaction. During the interview sessions, probes were used to get in-depth and relevant information about the research questions. In addition, George (2022:1) points out that an interview is an appropriate way to understand participants; from the sessions, an interviewer is able to have an insight into the participants' views and gain more knowledge regarding issues being investigated. It is a common method of data gathering which captures perceptions, descriptions of conditions, and meanings from interactions of participants.

George (2022:1) observes that through interviews, rich data is gained; hence, when an in-depth interview is used, it helps yield rich data with enhanced insights and more details. This beneficial factor is the main reason to exploit in-depth interviews. The style of interviewing can be tailored to the needs of the study. It is also an opportunity for individuals to explore a given topic and gain or offer ideas about it. The in-depth interview enables the interviewer to explain questions the participants might not understand by rephrasing those questions to make them understandable to the interviewees (George, 2022:1). In addition to the above; there is also the aspect of the interviewer benefitting from an in-depth interview. By explaining or clarifying the queries involved, the interviewer enhances the responses' usefulness. In that manner, the interviewer thus benefits. The interviewer can also add observational information to the given responses,

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and the additional information helps the researcher to better evaluate those responses (George, 2022:1).

The interview also offers a relaxed atmosphere to the interviewee and the interviewer as well. People find it easy and comfortable in a relaxed environment when they have a one-on-one conversation rather than completing long and wordy forms (George, 2022:1). Since the participants are relaxed, they become free to answer all questions asked and whenever they begin to digress, the researcher can easily refocus them to the issue at hand. On top of that, there is the aspect of information sharing involved with interviews. With the help of in-depth interviews, individuals can share their opinions so that there is no bias. High-quality data is obtained from individuals as they are interviewed one-on-one instead of in group interviews. This helps the researcher to get first-hand information without others' influence. The interview is also flexible and cost-effective since more information is drawn out from an in-depth interview, and there is always high value from each interviewee. In this way, the interview process is a more flexible form of data collection method than other methods (George, 2022:1). Another important aspect of the interview is the ability of the interviewee to impress the interviewer since there is no rush; therefore, the control that an interview affords encourages better responses from the calm interviewee.

In this study, the interviewees' attitudes during the sessions were very good. The interviewees were cooperative and expressed their ideas fully. The participant's body language also helped the researcher gain a valuable understanding of the views provided by the participants. The participants were given the freedom to express their views in the way they felt comfortable, and they answered every question as expected of them without adding or leaving out some information. Some participants expressed their views in their mother tongue because they had indicated that they could express themselves well because English is their second language, and they were not good at it. Mather, Fox and Hunn (2000:113) conclude that an interview is a significant data-gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the subject. The interview is commonly used in exploratory and descriptive studies; hence, since this was a

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descriptive study, the interview was well suited here. The interview enabled the participants to discuss their interpretations of the Geography curricula delivery.

4.9.2 Focus Group Discussion

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a data collection method that brings together a small group of people to answer questions in a moderated setting (George, 2023:1). The group is chosen due to predefined characteristics, and questions are designed to shed light on the topic of a study. The FGD is great for conducting explanatory research where a topic is explored and is a qualitative method for collecting data on a selected topic with an unstructured discussion with a small group of people (Gundumogula, 2020:299).

The focus group interview is also called the 'group discussion', a well-used qualitative method of data collection (Gundumogula, 2020:299). Geography teachers whose core duty is teaching using documents, such as the ATP, Geography Policy document, textbooks, and maps, interacted with using the FGD. Eight geography teachers formed the focus group. The researcher requested the participants to assemble in one neutral venue where the interview FGD was conducted in one session. The FGD helped a lot because the discussants could correct each other as they discussed issues raised. As a result, a lot of information about their experiences regarding geography curricula delivery was collected. Using the FGD did not replace individual interviews but helped to gather information to complement the latter.

The FDG is typically a group of people who share similar experiences, not a group that is naturally constituted as an existing social group (Tshisikhawe, 2017:111). In this study, the Geography teachers participated in the focus interview. These were purposefully selected from the four schools identified earlier. The FDG helped to reveal new aspects and information that were not collected during the individual interviews. Wu *et al*. (2021:185) note that the FGD provides insights into how individuals think and feel towards certain issues by also indicating their differences among the group of individuals. The

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FGD was suitable for revealing the underlying issues that underpin the Geography curricula delivery in an attempt to improve the learners' academic performance.

The FGD has unique strengths. Akyidiz and Ahmed (2021:8) provide the following FGD strengths - dealing with real-time, unfiltered responses on a given topic among the discussants; a fast, effective, and economical method for gathering information amongst the discussants, and providing everyone with a chance to say how they feel about the topic. An FGD provides directional information, which helps uncover new questions or future research ideas. Large amounts of information can be achieved rapidly and at less cost compared to one-on-one interviews, while questions are rooted in feelings or perceptions. The discussants have the opportunity to develop any idea to its full significance. Another advantage is that the FGD can help collect general and complex information in a short space of time and permits on-the-spot follow-ups to explore the discussants' views. The FGD often yields rich information as the discussants respond to each other's comments and raise unexpected topics. These discussions also provide an enjoyable experience for the discussants as they engage in dialogue. When the discussion started, some discussants were reserved and did not want to open up, but as the discussion progressed, everyone started to show interest and wanted to be part of the discussion. In the end, everyone enjoyed the session, and it even became difficult to end the discussion. Most importantly, the discussants help the teachers recall issues they would have otherwise forgotten, producing more diversified views. During the session, teachers were open and recalled issues from their experiences.

4.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Leedy and Ormrod (2012:142) point out that the term 'analysis' basically means the resolution of a complex whole into parts. It involves reducing data to manageable proportions. The collected data were analysed thematically. Thematic data analysis is the method of analysing data by identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data; thereafter, one minimally organises and describes data sets in detail. In the process, one interprets patterns of meaning within data, organising and describing data sets by coding

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the interview transcripts into specific topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning. According to Caulfield (2019:1), thematic data analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data applied to texts such as an interview or transcripts.

The researcher closely examines the data to identify common or repeated themes, ideas, and patterns of meaning. Data were coded by identifying specific words for themes that could be noted to address the research questions. The themes were compared, inferred, and tabulated for implementation. Thematic analysis is a relevant approach where the researcher tries to find out the participants' views, opinions, experiences, or values from a set of qualitative data, such as interview transcripts or survey responses. Braun and Clarke (2006), cited in Cualfield (2019:3), develop six steps for analysing data using the thematic data analysis technique. There is familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up.

Familiarisation means getting to know one's data and a thorough overview of all data collected before starting to analyse individual items. After the interviews, the researcher gave the participants the chance to listen to what they had said. Coding means highlighting sections of a text, usually in phrases or sentences and coming up with labels or codes to describe their content. The researcher conceptualised and explained concepts without significant loss of information; similar questions were grouped into one category for easy analysis.

Generating themes is looking at the codes created to identify patterns amongst them and then coming up with themes. Themes are broader than codes, and they are created to tell something helpful about the data for the purpose of the study. In reviewing themes, one makes sure that they are useful and accurately represent the data collected. This can be done by returning to the data and comparing themes against data; thereafter, one defines and names the generated themes. Here, the final list of themes is made, and the process of naming them begins. Defining themes involves formulating what each theme means and figuring out how it helps to understand data. The researcher

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transcribed what the participants said into written words so that she could easily analyse them.

Finally, the researcher wrote up the data that had been analysed. Writing up a thematic analysis requires an introduction to establish the research question, aim and approach, the methodology adopted, describing how data were collected and analysed, presenting the results or findings to address all the themes identified, and describing how themes came up and what they mean, including examples from data as evidence. Finally, the conclusion explains the main takeaway and shows how the analysis answered the research question. Tapala (2019:17) asserts that data analysis is the process of observing patterns in the data, asking questions about those patterns, constructing conjectures, deliberately collecting data from specifically selected individuals on targeted topics, confirming those conjunctures, then continuing analysis, asking additional questions, and seeking for more data. It is also the process of sorting, questioning, thinking, constructing, and testing conjectures. During the process of data analysis, the researcher transcribed all the data collected during interviews to clearly understand the information (Creswell, 2014:67).

Miles and Huberman (1994:27) state that qualitative data analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification; this data analysis framework was employed in this study. Mezmir (2020:18) posits that qualitative data analysis is concerned with transforming raw data by searching, evaluating, recognising, coding, mapping, exploring, and describing patterns, trends, themes, and categories in the raw data to interpret them and provide underlying meanings. When the process was over, the researcher had a description that elaborated on the participants' feelings, attitudes, and experiences. Data collected from individual interviews and focus group interviews were analysed. The researcher made sure that she followed the sequence of data analysis to ensure the accuracy and usefulness of the results. The researcher transcribed the recorded voices of the interviewees and translated the recorded voices of interviews conducted in the mother tongue to English. The study used Individual face-to-face and Focus group interviews to collect data.

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4.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Bhandari (2022:1) explains that the ethical issues in research are a set of principles that guide one's research design and practices. What the researcher decides to research and how the research will be conducted involves key ethical considerations. These considerations work to protect the rights of the research participants, enhance the research validity, and maintain the scientific or academic integrity of the research (Bhandari, 2022:1). De Vos (2010:100) states that ethical considerations should include non-maleficence (the researcher must not harm the participants), privacy and anonymity (the identity of the participants must not be revealed in any way).

The study involved human participants; hence, the researcher informed them that participation was voluntary. The information obtained was to be kept secure and confidential, and issues of ethical confidentiality and personal rights would be protected. Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with the conduct of people and guides the norms or standards of behaviour of people and their relationships with each other. Leedy and Ormrod (2012:53) name the ethical issues in research as one of the categories that the researcher considers while conducting a study. The researcher applied for the ethical certificate at the University of Venda, certificate number FHSSE/22/PCSEM/03/2109. These principles are - protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and confidentiality. These are detailed below.

4.11.1 Protection from Harm

The researcher should not expose the research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm. Participants should not risk losing life or limb, nor should they be subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment, or loss of self-esteem (Creswell, 2016:32). In cases where the nature of the study involves creating a small amount of psychological discomfort, participants should know this ahead of time, and any necessary debriefing or counselling should follow immediately after participation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012:66). For this study, no risk or harm was experienced by the participants as none existed. The

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researcher ensured that the interview questions did not affect the participants either physically, mentally, or emotionally and followed all ethical principles regarding causing no harm to study participants.

4.11.2 Informed Consent

Bhandari (2022:4) defines 'informed consent' as a situation in which all potential participants receive and understand all the information they need to decide whether they want to participate. This includes information about the study's benefits, risks, funding, and institutional approval. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2012:67), when people are intentionally recruited to participate in a study, they should be told the nature of the study to be conducted and given the choice of either participating or not. Furthermore, they should be told that if they agree to participate, they will have the right to withdraw from the study at any time they so wish; any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. Explanations on informed consent for this study's participants were delivered unambiguously, clearly, and freely. The researcher explained to the participants the purpose of the study and the risks that could be involved and guaranteed the confidentiality of the research subjects by observing anonymity. After these explanations, the participants were asked to sign a consent form to indicate that they freely and voluntarily agreed to be part of the study.

4.11.3 Right to Privacy

Any research study involving human beings should respect the participant's right to privacy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012:98); here, the researcher should ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The right to privacy means that a person has the right not to take part in research, answer questions, or be interviewed, not to have their homes intruded into, and to engage in a private place without fear of being observed (Cohen *et a*l., 2011:90). In this study, the participants were assured and alerted to their right to the privacy of all the information they shared during the interviews, therefore, whatever was spoken during the

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interviews was kept private and never divulged to anyone with connected to the supervision team.

4.11.4 Confidentiality

The researcher agreed with the participants through the informed consent form about how private information would be handled and disseminated to the reader. By making sure that no participant would disclose their names or names of their school, and that the information obtained during interviews would be kept confidential and safeguarded, and no individual would disclose to others without permission, except in a way that is consistent with the original disclosure. The confidentiality of the findings of the study should be upheld (Maree, 2012:307). The participants were assured that the collected data would be used only for this study and would not be disclosed to other people. The results of the study will be presented in such a way that the participants' anonymity will be preserved. The researcher assured the participants that whatever they said in the interview would remain confidential. Throughout the interviews, the participants were given all the respect that they deserved as human beings. Geography teachers were reminded to respect each other during the FGD. The researchers assured the teachers that information gathered during the FGD is highly confidential and not communal to any other person.

4.11.5 Anonymity

Anonymity refers to keeping secret by not identifying the background of the participants, refraining from referring to them by their names or divulging any other sensitive information about them (Bhanadari, 2022:6). Under no circumstance should a research report, either oral or in written form, be presented in such a way that others become aware of how another person responded or behaved. That is, the researcher keeps and ensures the participants' anonymity.

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The researchers made use of coding to substitute for the participant's names, and data was stored in locked cabinets. Anonymity means that no one knows who the participants are; therefore, the researcher should not link any individual participant to his/her data. Anonymity was guaranteed by not collecting any personally identifiable information, such as names, phone numbers, email addresses, IP addresses, physical characteristics, photos, and videos.

4.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The trustworthiness of the collected data was verified to ensure the study's internal and external validity (Creswell, 2001:276). For quantitative research, vigour is measured by validity and reliability, while the qualitative approach focuses on the trustworthiness of data by measuring aspects that numbers might not define and identifying trends that show up. Trustworthiness is defined as the process through which the accuracy of the findings is determined (Tapala, 2019:25). The researcher measured the information obtained from the participants and whether it was recorded and analysed accurately. In doing so, the researcher implemented the following strategies of trustworthiness.

4.12.1 Credibility

The researcher used different sources of information to help both confirm and improve the clarity and precision of the research findings; multiple data collection sources included interviews and document analysis (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273). Credibility refers to the believability of the findings. It is enhanced by evidence such as - confirming the evaluation of conclusions by the research participants, convergence of multiple sources of evidence, control of unwanted influences, and theoretical fit. Maximum confidence in the believability of conclusions comes from the support provided by the participants' agreement, analysis of multiple sources of data, referring to other experts' interpretations and prediction based on relevant theoretical models (that is, a predicted pattern matches an actual pattern) (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273). Different methods of data collection were used to ensure credibility. These were individual interviews and focus group interviews.

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The researcher asked the participants to review data collected by interviews. The researcher asked one of the principals to review the data as a peer examination (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:275). To make the data collected credible, the researcher tape-recorded the participants' responses to the interview questions. After each interview, the researcher allowed the participants to listen to their responses to clarify issues where necessary, provide comments, or add to what they had said. The researcher also transcribed the recorded interviews word-for-word. Maree (2012:305) explains credibility as the assurance that the researcher's conclusions stem from the data collected. Thomas (2017:56) points out that the researcher uses data triangulation to enhance a study's credibility. In this study, for instance, the researcher checked the learners' mark sheets and mark schedules to ensure the credibility of the data collected.

To assess credibility, one would focus on the data quality, its analysis, and resultant conclusions (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273). Any weak link here would threaten the usefulness of the study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:12), credibility is related to construct validity, which is uncovered by evidence that reveals that the construct being studied is the same as the theory presumes exists. Checks relating to the accuracy of data took place on the spot during the data collection process. At the end of the data collection process (some interviews were in the mother tongue), Some participants indicated that they could express themselves well in their mother tongue because English is not their mother tongue. Their mother tongue (Tshivenda) is also included in the 12 official languages. The interview was conducted in their mother tongue, and the researcher allowed the participants to verify what they said. Here, the participants also verified whether their words were in line with what they had intended to say.

4.12.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the study findings are content-bound and whether they apply to the context or group settings (Tapala, 2019:18). To ensure appropriateness, the researcher provided information that would add value to future research. Categories or themes that emerged from the information gathered were

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returned to the participants to establish whether the conclusions were accurate. The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique to maximise specific data that were related to the context in which they were collected. Thomas (2017:57) asserts that the researcher uses specific procedures for coding and analysis, such as symbols and signs, during the data analysis phase, to ensure transferability.

Transferability refers to the evidence supporting the generalisation of the findings to other contexts across different participants, groups, and situations, among others. This is akin to the notion of external validity used by quantitative researchers (Thomas, 2017:57). Transferability is enhanced by detailed descriptions that enable judgments about a "fit" with other contexts. Comparisons across cases (cross-case comparisons) or other units of analysis (for example, classrooms or schools) that yield similar findings also increase transferability. Since the study was about curriculum delivery to improve the learner's academic performance, its findings might be transferred to other circuits, districts, and provinces. Maree (2012:305) says that transferability is the extent to which the study can be transferred to a larger population or settings with reliance on its findings. To assess the extent to which the findings might be true of people in other settings, similar projects utilising the same methods but conducted in different circuits could be of great value. The researcher supplied the necessary information about where the research took place, the research process, and the study participants to decide how the research outcomes could be transferrable.

4.12.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of data to determine whether the findings would be consistent with future studies of a similar nature. To ensure the dependability of data, the researcher did not generalise the findings (Maree, 2012:305). Prolonged engagement at the selected schools, coupled with the interaction with the participants contributed to the internal validity. External validity was ensured by a detailed description of the focus of the study, multiple methods of data collection, and strategies used were reported in detail.

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Dependability is enhanced by common qualitative strategies (audit trails, rich documentation, and triangulation) and also by traditional methods such as inter-coder or inter-observer agreement (two coders or observers are consistent), and code-recode consistency (the same coding or observation occurs more than once using the same "human instrument") (Maree, 2012:305). Thomas (2017:57) adds that to ensure dependability, the researcher should safeguard against theoretical positioning and bias. The researcher achieved dependability by member checks, themes identified, and then discussed with the participants to ensure that the data was accurate and dependable.

4.12.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to dealing with the neutrality or objectivity of the collected data, the absence of bias, and subjectivity in the research procedures and findings (Gay *et al*., 2011:114). The researcher used different sources of information to help confirm and improve the clarity and precision of the research findings (Richie & Lewis, 2003:273). Tapala (2019:19) states that member checking involves taking the interpretation and descriptions of the data analysis back to the participants to verify the data's accuracy, credibility, and authenticity. Thomas (2017:58) asserts that raw data such as field notes, tapes, transcripts, and other documents compiled by the researcher during the data collection stage should be kept safe by the researcher for later inspection by the promoter or auditor. The researcher verified the information and description of the data to ensure their accuracy, credibility, and authenticity**.** The researcher gave participants the transcribed data to confirm the accuracy of the transcription.

Confirmability refers to objectivity (neutrality) and the control of researcher bias. Bias in qualitative research is an ever-present concern, but unbiased interpretations are more likely once the researcher's self-reflection recognises them overtly. Confirmability is also enhanced by ensuring consistency with quantitative research findings that reach similar conclusions. Other evidence includes the consensus reached by peer review.

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4.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter dealt with the research design and the methodology used to execute the study. The post-positivist paradigm was adopted to inform the study; it followed the qualitative research methodology as it analytically described data in order to answer its research question and, hence, solve the posed problem. The researcher utilised individual face-to-face and focus group interviews to collect data. Four schools were selected out of seven secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit. The collected data aimed to find the role of the Geography DHs in curriculum delivery and to improve the learners' academic performance in Geography. The study also aimed to find the constraints that prevent Geography DHs from fulfilling their roles, such as workload and the teachers' attitude towards teaching GIS and map work in class.

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CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research methodology, research design, theoretical framework, and paradigm used to conduct this study. Also illustrated in Chapter Four were the study - population, sample and size, methods of collecting data, ethical issues, and ways of establishing the study's trustworthiness. This chapter presents and analyses data collected using the qualitative research approach. Data are presented and analysed in the context of what the participants said. In addition to the above, data are interpreted to provide the researcher's ideas regarding what the literature has revealed. This is done by integrating secondary data with the researcher's interpretations; doing so enables the researcher to provide nuanced views. Data are presented and analysed following the major themes as derived from the objectives. The themes are further divided into sub-themes for easier presentation and analysis. The second section provides the participants' demographic information to understand the participants who took part in the study.

The study investigated the role of Geography DHs in curriculum delivery in secondary schools on learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit of the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. The research objectives and related questions informed the data collection, presentation and analysis procedures.

The objectives

The objectives of the study were:

- Identifying and explaining factors that negatively impact Geography curriculum delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit schools.

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- Investigating the constraints the Geography DHs face in offering leadership in curriculum delivery.
- Suggest strategies that can be used to improve the Geography DH's support offered to teachers in curriculum delivery to teachers in curriculum delivery and proposed model on the approaches to enhance GDH's roles.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study answered the following main research question:

The main research question

- How do Geography DHs support teacher curricula delivery, and which strategies may improve the learners' academic performance in the Luvuvhu Circuit?

The following subsidiary research questions guided the study:

To answer the main research question fully, the study answered the subsidiary questions below.

- What factors negatively impact Geography curriculum delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit schools to improve the learners' academic performance?
- What constraints do the Geography DHs face in curriculum delivery?
- What strategies can be used to improve the Geography DHs' support to teachers in curriculum delivery and proposed model on the approaches to enhance GDH's roles?

Data collected from interviews were interpreted using content analysis; Hleza et al. (2021:2) posit that a researcher can analyse the presence, meaning and relationships of certain words, themes or concepts. The analysis was based on the themes and patterns that emerged from the data collected from the interviews guided by research questions and objectives. The data gathered from the individual interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis were recorded by the schools. Rahman (2017:104) claims that content analysis makes it possible to compare the views of participants

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according to the study site and research findings, and that provides a relationship during the information processing stage.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

This section presents the participants' demographic data - position at school, sex, qualifications, and experience in Table 5.1. Providing such information goes a long way in making one understand and appreciate the type and authenticity of the information provided by these participants.

Table 5.1: Demographic Data of Participants

Participants	Sex	Number of Participants	Qualification	Experience in Years
Principal A 1	M	1	Masters of Education in Management	13
Principal B 2	M	1	B.Ed. Honours	20
Principal C 3	M	1	MBA	9
Principal D 4	M	1	Honours of Education in Management	15
Deputy Principal A 1	F	1	Honours of Education in Management	8
Deputy Principal B 2	M	1	Masters in Public Admin	5 months
Deputy Principal C 3	F	1	Master of Education in Management	5
Deputy Principal D 4	M	1	Master of Education in Management	2

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Geography DH A 1	M	1	Honours in Geography	15yrs
Geography DH B 2	F	1	BA General and PGCE	5yrs
Geography DH C 3	M	1	BA General and PGCE	1yr
Geography DH D 4	M	1	B.Tech	10
Geography teachers A1	M	1	B.Ed. Honours in Education	5
Geography Teacher A2	F	1	BA and PGCE	3
Geography Teacher B1	M	1	BEDFET	7
Geography Teacher B2	F	1	BA.ED	15
Geography Teacher C1	M	1	BA and PGCE	4
Geography Teacher C2	F	1	BA, PGCE, Honours in Education Management.	20
Geography Teacher D1	M	1	BA.ED	13
Geography Teacher D2	F	1	BA.ED	17
TOTAL	**20 Participants**			

Table 5.1 shows that the participants had adequate experience in Geography curricula delivery. They were expected to deliver the curricula as they have knowledge and

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experience about how Geography curricula should be delivered; the demographic details show that the teachers and Geography departmental heads are qualified to teach Geography to learners. Principals and deputy principals are the managers of all school setups. Most of the participants had experience in curricula management, except for the geography teachers, as some had less than five years of experience in teaching geography map work and GIS skills. Participants were either males or females with teaching qualifications; thus, they had sufficient professional knowledge and skills to teach and facilitate learning activities and curriculum management.

Table 5.2: Profiling of Schools

Characteristic of the School	School A	School B	School C	School D
Province	Limpopo	Limpopo	Limpopo	Limpopo
District	Vhembe East	Vhembe East	Vhembe East	Limpopo
Circuit	Luvuvhu	Luvuvhu	Luvuvhu	Luvuvhu
Category	Quintile 1	Quintile 1	Quintile 1	Quintile 1
Location of the school	Rural	Rural	Rural	Rural

Table 5.2 is a profile of the sampled secondary schools that participated in the study. All schools were Quintile 1, that is, non-fee-paying schools. These are South African public schools that serve the poorest communities, representing 20% of the population with the lowest income (Botha, 2020:2). The sampled secondary schools offer Geography as a compulsory subject and the qualitative approach was exploited for this research in order to understand the Geography teachers' experiences holistically. These schools were chosen because they are under Luvuvhu Circuit in a rural area where the study has taken place.

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5.3 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF CONTEXTUAL QUESTIONS.

The presentation, analysis, and interpretation below is qualitatively done because the data collection procedures were not numerically orientated. Rahman (2017:103) alluded to the fact that the qualitative research approach is about the person's lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings as well as about organisational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interaction between nations. This means that the approach incorporates multiple realities. The researcher found it necessary to utilise a qualitative approach as the study investigated the roles of the Geography DH in curriculum delivery to improve the learners' academic performance in secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit. Qualitative research is interested in analysing subjective meaning or social production of issues, events, or practices by collecting non-standardised data and analysing texts (Rahman, 2017:103).

This is in contrast to the quantitative approach that emphasises numerical data collection. Rahman (2017:105) refers to the quantitative approach as seeking regularities in human lives by separating the social world into empirical components called variables, which can be represented numerically as frequencies or rates, and association with each other can be explored by statistical techniques. Mohammed (2015:19) states that constructivists claim that people construct their meaning by building on previous knowledge and experience. Learners cannot build their experience in learning without the curriculum knowledge. Teachers have to teach learners by acquiring geography knowledge and skills in map work and GIS.

The study utilised a qualitative approach because it helped the researcher discover the participants' inner experiences and thus figure out how meaning can be shaped through culture (Rahman, 2017:104). The data were analysed based on the literature review, Individual interviews, Focus Group Interviews, and the transformational leadership theory that underpins the study. The participants were coded as follows: P1 (Principal 1), DP1 (Deputy Principal 1), and GDH1 (Geography Departmental Head 1) from school A. The same applied to the rest of the sampled schools. That is, P2, DP2, and GDH 2 from school

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B. P3, DP3, and GDH3 from school C. P4, DP4, and GDH4 from school 4. Focus group interview was conducted with eight Geography teachers from the four sampled secondary schools and they were coded as follows: GTA1 (Geography Teacher A1 from school A) and GTA2 (Geography Teacher A2 from school A). The same coding style was used for the rest of the sampled schools. That is, GTB1 and GTB2 from school B, GTC1 and GTC2 from school C and GTD1 and GTD2 from school D. The analysis followed the themes that emerged during the initial data analysis.

5.4 EMERGED THEMES

Five major themes emerged from the final data analysis. These major themes were divided into sub-themes in order to effectively present and analyse the participants' views on them. Table 5.4 provides the themes and sub-themes that emerged from individual interviews and focus group interviews during the final data analysis.

Table 5.3: Themes and Sub-themes of the Study

Themes	Sub-themes
5.4.1. Role of Geography DH	5.4.1.1.GDH Management and leadership responsibilities as curricula leader, as an instructional leader and as a teacher. 5.4.1.2. Teacher support and motivation 5.4.1.3. Dissemination of information and teamwork building within the Geography Department. 5.4.1.4. Class visit and assessment.
5.4.2. Factors that affect Geography curriculum delivery in schools.	5.4.2.1. School shared vision on teaching and learning and culture of curriculum delivery within the school.

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	5.4.2.2. Ensuring teaching and learning of Geography within the school. 5.4.2.3. Motivating Geography DH by supporting teachers on curriculum delivery.
5.4.3. School improvement plan for development of departmental heads	5.4.3.1. Understanding of school improvement plan. 5.4.3.2. Motivation of DH within the school. 5.4.3.3. Improvement of pass rate in map work and GIS.
5.4.4. Challenges in managing teaching and learning in Geography.	5.4.4.1. Challenges encountered by GDH in teaching and learning Geography. 5.4.4.2. Challenges encountered by teachers in teaching map work and GIS. 5.4.4.3. Areas that teachers need training and support to help them teach map work and GIS effectively.
5.4.5. Strategies to motivate GDHs.	5.4.5.1. Motivation of the GDHs at school. 5.4.5.2. DBE's motivation of GDHs. 5.4.5.3. Strategy to help to solve the challenges

5.5 THEME 1: ROLES OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

This theme explored the role of GDHs within schools. The theme assessed the awareness of the roles of the GDHs in Geography and the school in general. Management and leadership responsibilities, Teacher support and motivation, dissemination of information and class visits and teachers assessments, problems encountered during classroom visits, and the qualifications of the DHs are provided here.

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5.5.1 Management and Leadership Responsibilities

It is important for the GDH to know their management and leadership responsibilities within the school. *The participants were asked to respond on management and leadership responsibilities at school. How does GDH manage the curriculum?*

The study revealed that the participants were familiar with the management and leadership responsibilities of the GDHs, as provided below. The face-to-face interviews revealed that the GDHs know their management and leadership responsibilities. For example, one geography head from school A said:

> *I ensure that teachers start their lessons on time. I am responsible for drawing the departmental policies. I also ensure that exercises and tests are written according to the weekly and monthly guidelines. I also lead the extra-mural activities and excursions for learners in relation to what they do* (GDH A1).

Another GDH pointed out that:

> *My responsibilities are to see if teachers in my department help me to encourage learners to develop an interest in Geography as a subject and hence make them understand the geographical features they face daily. I teach GIS to learners to become future technicians…* (GDH B2).

Another GDH from school C responded to the idea;

> *What we normally do is when teachers set formal or informal tests… I moderate them. I check whether teachers are concerned about the content that should be covered. I also check if questions are set properly, from simple to hardest* (GDH C3).

Another point mentioned was:

> *I manage curricula delivery, induct new educators who join the department and assist them with topics they are not acquainted with. I also profile learners so that we can easily assist them in improving their performance [GDH D4].*

The results above suggest that the DHs ensure that educators in the GD observe teaching and learning time when at school. Part of the GDH's responsibility is to ensure that the GD functions smoothly by formulating policies that help educators work effectively and harmoniously. The results are consistent with those of Ahiaku, Mncube, and Olaraniran

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(2019), who assert that the GDHs ensure that educators assess learners through standardised tests and examinations; doing so helps to ensure that learners are effectively taught in geography. The results also suggest that the GDHs manage their departments by strictly monitoring teachers to ensure they adhere to the curricula delivery policy. This is in line with Metcalfe's (2018:43) indicated that the role of the DHs is to regularly check the teachers' coverage of the curriculum and the learner's work and work with teachers to improve curriculum coverage and assist them with problems related to curriculum coverage.

5.5.2. Teacher Support and Motivation in the Geography Department

The role of the GDH is to motivate teachers so that their potential is realised. Motivating teachers to realise their full potential directly relates to their effectiveness in curriculum delivery and learner learning. Sallis and Jones (2022:41) posit that the DHs are central to the process of knowledge creation and, therefore, should create conditions that enable teachers to produce valid knowledge and skills acquisition.

The researcher: how the GDH supports teachers under his /her supervision as the departmental head.

In response to the above idea, the GDHs provided the following views:

> *To support teachers, we ask them to express themselves freely to us if there is an issue they feel needs our attention. We also outsource other teachers to come and assist when we face a major problem in the department. At times, we liaise with the University of Venda to come and staff-develop our teachers* (GDH A1).

Another view was that,

> *I support them by checking the work they give to learners in order to be sure that learners are given enough written work. I also check if teachers go to class on time and if they report to me the problems encountered while teaching geography. If I fail to solve the identified problems, I escalate them to the principal's office* (GDH B2).

One GDH claim:

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> *Normally, I make it a point to give teachers materials needed for effective teaching, such as pace-setters. I collect such materials from the district office* (GDH C3).

In another school, teachers are supported thus,

> *We have departmental meetings where we discuss geographical problems to come up with support strategies. We also discuss the learning gaps teachers have identified among learners and then suggest ways to help the affected learners improve (GDH D4).*

The results show that schools have different ways of supporting their Geography teachers in order to deliver the curricula effectively to learners. However, positive results do not show - whether such support mechanisms are effective or not, given that the participants were silent on this aspect. Nonetheless, the important issue is that the GDHs strive to help improve the learners' academic performance by supporting their teachers as they deliver the curricula in schools. This is in line with Tapala (2019:22), who indicated that the GDH is in a position to guide their geography teachers on how best to help develop the learners' skills through well-structured lesson plans; in other words, the GDHs provide teachers with lesson delivery ideas in order to boost the latter's teaching confidence.

5.5.3. Dissemination of Information within the Geography Department

The GDH conducts meetings to evaluate the activities of teachers and learners in classrooms. They discuss the diagnostic findings on examinations so that the teachers become aware of the challenges learners and teachers face in curriculum delivery. According to PAM (2016:27), the duties of the DH include being responsible for the effective functioning of the department and disseminating information relevant to the functioning of the GD.

The researcher: how important is information disseminated and building teamwork in the department?

The participants responded to the above idea in the following manner.

In one GDH's view:

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> *Important information is disseminated. Technology is growing, and everybody must be online. We get some of the information through WhatsApp groups that we form as a school to share ideas. We normally encourage our teachers to go to Google to get recent information on contemporary issues* (GDH D4).

Another GDH from school A said:

We live in the 4th industrial revolution, where some of the information is disseminated through social media (GDH A1).

In some schools, this is how they share information:

> *I call meetings when there is important information to be shared with teachers under my leadership, and then we discuss the way forward* (GDH B2).

The results suggest schools or GDs have common ways of information dissemination; they generally share ideas in groups or in meetings organised to enhance curricula delivery and mitigate factors that hinder its effective delivery in class. This is in line with Bambi's (2013:51) position that there is a need for teachers to work together by sharing ideas about issues that promote or hinder effective curricula delivery in schools. Ahiaku et al. (2019) also highlight that effective schools are those whose teachers share ideas about good teaching methods and progressive ways of handling wayward learners. In reality, no department can succeed in its curricula delivery agenda if its teachers are not united and supportive of each other. Anyona, Sabina and Alindula (20017:13) assert that the role of the DH is to improve, stimulate, coordinate, and make teachers self-directed and cooperative towards personal and school achievements; hence, cooperation among teachers in the GD is anchored by its DH. If the DH is divisive, so would be those they lead. The consequence of this would be poor learner performance in geography.

5.5.4. Class Visits and Teacher Assessment

The GDH plays a crucial role in managing, supervising, and training the teachers on issues pertaining to curricula delivery and the latest approaches to teaching the subject in terms of - methods, techniques, evaluation, and teaching aids, among others; GHDs effectively convey these to other staff members to actively promote Geography teaching

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within the school and encourages learners' interest in the subject. Doing class visits promotes and supports teachers in learning and improving their teaching skills. Participants were asked, "How many times do your class visit *your teachers to observe how they are delivering curriculum"?*

The participants responded to the above idea as illustrated below:

> *We do class visits quarterly, even though the school policy says this should be done weekly. This becomes difficult to fulfil, particularly for those who teach Grade 12 as they need to concentrate on teaching Geography in preparation for the end-of-year examinations. However, when I do class visits, I check how teachers manage teaching and assessment. I also visit to support them against bullying learners* (GDH D4).

In another school, the GDH does the following:

> *I do class visits once per quarter. When I visit teachers, I listen while they teach. After the lesson, I commend the positives and advice on areas that need improvement* (GDH A1).

One participant aptly said: "*Once per quarter"* (GDH B2).

Another one said: "*Once per quarter because of time constraints as I also have a class to teach"* (GDH C3).

The results show that class visits done by the GDHs fulfil policy requirements instead of as a mechanism to assist teachers in delivering the Geography curricula effectively. The results align with Bambi (2013:64), who notes that DHs have developed a negative attitude towards their work in most cases. The GDHs have no zeal to do class visits because the exercise is supposed to be done regularly, yet they do it once after four months. This is a disservice to learners and the education system in that the GDHs' failure to regularly supervise teachers teaching breeds laziness and the "I do not care" attitude (Bambi, 2013:67). The results are in contrast to the QMS that stipulates the responsibilities of the DHs - that they have to play major roles in assessing and monitoring

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the performance of educators (Tapala, 2019:6). The results also reflect a demotivated cohorts of GDHs with little or no interests in fulfilling their obligations as supervisors and policy implementers in their departments.

5.5.4.1. Problems Encountered during Classroom Visits

Class visits are important if schools are to perform well academically; thus, it is the duty of the GDHs to do class visits in order to understand how their teachers perform in their teaching duties. In addition to this, class visits enable the GDHs to - check and evaluate the teachers' daily lesson plans, evaluate the learners' work, prepare and lead staff meetings, attend school meetings with informed departmental problems and evaluate teaching methods and assessment techniques after class visits. In addition, class visits lead to the facilitation of providing needed materials to the department, solving contradictions between teachers, learners, and parents, and helping constructive discussions about the learner's academic and discipline matters.

The researcher: *what problems do you encounter during class observation and visits?*

The GDHs encounter problems during class visits, and to this end, the participants said:

> *What I usually encounter is poor lesson preparations. Teachers follow all aspects of the lesson preparation in class, anticipating the visit, but they do not do the same in other lessons where they do not anticipate the visit. Teachers do not want to prepare for lessons* (GDH C3).

Another GDH from school D replied:

> *So far, I have encountered no problems. Educators are very cooperative, especially young educators. They are willing to learn and have a passion for the subject* (GDH D4).

One GDH had the following experience:

> *Some teachers refuse to be visited while teaching their classes. We ended up going to a class that was well-behaved and had active learners. Unfortunately for us, we do not get the true reflection of the*

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> *other classes. As a result, teachers complain that our lesson observations are biased against them; however, if we class-visit them, they tell us that they are not comfortable. That becomes a challenge to us* (GDH A1).

GDH from school B was short and precise in response:

There are no problems I encounter (GDH B1).

The results show that schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit have different problems that manifest through their Geography teachers' behavioural patterns. That is, most GDHs in the Circuit have ill-disciplined teachers with no regard for superiors. The results are consistent with Du Plessis and Eberlein's (2018:11) idea that, in general, schools with ill-disciplined teachers and learners find it difficult to fulfil their mandates. Ill-discipline has become a problem in most public schools largely because teachers there are disgruntled with issues such as the lack of teaching resources, very large classes, and wayward learners; therefore, the results show teachers who are rebelling against policy. This has become a conundrum for the GDHs, who are supposed to supervise and monitor the teaching and learning process but are barred from doing so by the recalcitrant teachers. Generally, the GDHs and teachers are overloaded by work, both within the classroom and outside (Mohammed, 2017:150). The above is an indication that too much workload overburdens teachers, hence the lack of cooperation in most GDHs.

5.6 THEME 2: FACTORS AFFECTING GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM DELIVERY

This section presents the participants' responses about the factors that affect Geography curricula delivery in their schools. Here, the researcher targeted the school principals and their deputies as they are the people responsible for curricula delivery in schools. The sub-themes that were responded to include - the schools' shared vision on teaching and learning, the culture of curriculum delivery within that school, how schools ensure the effective teaching and learning process therein, and how they motivate the GDHs to support Geography teachers on curricula delivery. As illustrated earlier, the qualifications of the deputy principals were Bachelor's degrees, Honours and Master's degrees;

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principals seemed to have adequate experience, with the majority of them having over ten years of experience as school principals.

5.6.1 School Shared Vision on Teaching and Learning and Culture of Curriculum Delivery

The main objective of the DBE is to ensure quality public education for all, and to constantly improve the quality of teaching and learning, thus ensuring the improvement and sustenance of the teaching and learning process; this directs the attention to the leadership capacity of educational institutions. The sub-theme outlines the views about the lack of sound curriculum delivery. The duty of the principal is to shape a vision of academic success for all learners, whereas that of the deputy principal is to provide professional leadership and support the principal in operational and academic matters. Deputy principals should have an understanding of the curricula across subject areas; they are the accounting officers for curricula delivery in schools. Curricula are presented in the form of official documents, which assist teachers in ensuring that the required goals and objectives are reached by giving guidelines on what should be done, how, by whom, and when (Wood & Hedges, 2016:36).

Principals were asked, "What *is your school's shared vision of teaching and learning? Is it adhered to by all teachers and the heads of departments in your school?*

The responses of the principals are as follows:

> *The delivery of curricula is a challenge as far as the competence of educators is concerned. That is, there are concepts such as map work and GIS that require competent educators if learners are to succeed. Geography has undergone many changes in how it is assessed; for instance, three years ago, map work was integrated into the theory paper. That integration gives teachers and learners some challenges. Performance, particularly in our school, is not pleasing* (PD4).

Another principal responded thus:

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> *Geography educators use a collaborative approach, especially at the FET level. We make sure that we spread the subject over a number of educators. For example, in Grade 12, educators work together as a team. This approach is effective because ever since we implemented it, we have never produced less than 95% pass in Geography. Our educators are committed to their work* (PA1).

To the second principal, the issue was:

> *What I actually expect the DH to do is to make available all the materials, such as the annual teaching plan or work schedules, textbooks, and examination guidelines, to educators. What we know is that practice makes perfect. When learners are assessed, continuous feedback should be given to them. The DH monitors learners' and educators' work to ensure that the work indicated in the work schedule is covered within the specified time. After assessing learners, the educator profiles them according to their performance. Learners' performance is then reported to parents so that they know how their children perform at school* (PB2).

The other principal noted:

> *As a school, we have our organisational way in terms of the culture of curriculum delivery. What normally happens is that as a school manager, I have a deputy and DHs who normally come up with their programmes of action in terms of how they deliver curricula in classes. They normally make presentations to me so that I understand what exactly they would do quarterly. I check how far they have gone in terms of those areas they feel they need to improve. I also visit classes to check what is happening in terms of the implementation of the curricula. I check whether the reports I get are consistent with what happens in class. When I notice grey areas, I sit down with them to try and assist* (PC3).

Another Principal said:

> *In Geography, we have dedicated teachers. Those teachers always teach in the mornings and in the afternoons so that learners can pass their subjects with distinctions. Geography teachers work together as a team. That is, when they prepare for a certain topic, they come together and discuss it before they go to their classrooms [DPA1].*

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Participants were asked to reflect on the situation at their school concerning the culture of curriculum delivery.

One respondent said:

> *The culture of curriculum delivery is good at our school. That is, I see educators getting into their classrooms, how they involve themselves to enrich learners with knowledge, and the lessons they conduct after normal working hours as a sign of commitment and dedication to their work. Educators who teach Geography are committed to their teaching, as seen from their long work hours. Thus, curriculum coverage is excellent here* (DPB2).

One Deputy Principals said:

> *In our school, Geography is a compulsory subject for all learners. Geography is important because it focuses on nature, hence, learners would not be surprised when they experience weather changes. As a department, we hand over the ATP, work schedule, and pacesetters to the educators who then teach learners. After that, learners write additional work. Concerning tests, the educator should spend three days marking the test, after which they hand over the answer sheets to the DH for moderation. After moderation, marks are reported to parents* (DPC3).

Another Deputy Principal responded:

> *In fact, the curriculum is the co-business at our school. We have 30 teachers who are responsible for curriculum delivery. All teachers have been allocated subjects to teach, and we have DHs who are responsible for monitoring those teachers. I monitor the DHs and report to the principal. I am the curricula manager of the school because I am the one responsible for managing the DHs. The teachers' duties are to teach and assess learners. Teachers are also responsible for the formal and informal assessments of learners in class (DPD4).*

These comments suggest that the principals' and their deputies' duties are complementary in nature showing that there is no overlap of responsibilities given that the former are the overall overseers of curricula delivery while the latter perform roles that cement what their superiors do. The results are consistent with the DBE (2010:23), which

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points out that effective curriculum delivery results from cooperation among teachers, DHs, deputy principals, and principals. If these entities do not work harmoniously, curricula delivery in schools becomes affected. In addition, Du Plessis and Eberlein (2018:12) claimed that schools that perform well academically are indicative of their school management's effectiveness. In contrast, poorly managed schools depict poor curricula delivery due to poor results and the general ill-discipline associated with them. Furthermore, the results show that schools with hard-working principals and deputy principals are epitomised by adequate teaching materials, classroom furniture, disciplined learners, satisfied teachers, and high academic performance, inter alia. Conversely, schools with poor management are characterised by teachers who lack confidence in their work due to several factors, such as - lack of teaching resources, rude learners, staff and students' chronic late coming, high absenteeism rate, and below-standard performance; the above speaks to what Essein (2017) observed as "delinquent schools". Effective curricula delivery, thus, is subject to proper school management, cooperation, and teamwork.

5.6.2 Ensuring Effective Teaching and Learning in Schools

Learners should be more active than the educator in performing activities. The objectives of the Geography subject is learner-oriented rather than teacher-centred (DBE, 2018). Thus, effective teaching and learning in class should result in learners applying skills they acquired during the teaching and learning process.

The researcher interviewed individually the principal and the deputy principal and asked, "As the head of the school, how do you make sure that teaching and learning are *taking place?*

Individual interviews done with the principals and deputy principals about effective teaching and learning in schools yielded the following responses.

One principal noted:

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> *Effective communication is key. We ensure that we communicate our expectations to all Geography teachers at the beginning of each year when we have our first meeting. In fact, we tell them exactly what we expect to happen throughout the term until year-end. Our communication with teachers and the members of the SMT becomes our expectations throughout the academic year. During the course of the term and year, if we discover that teachers do not deliver as discussed, we call them to order, especially the DH, who is responsible for Geography. In that crisis meeting, I tell them the problem and we work towards correcting it* (PA1).

In another school, they handle the issue thus:

> *I monitor my DHs and deputy principals to ensure that they work according to their job descriptions as indicated in the PAM measures. I make sure that when I monitor my deputy, he also does the same to those directly under his supervision - departmental heads (PB2).*

One principal said,

> *Educators are supposed to be in class on time because each educator has his/her own timetable. Even learners know that they have to be in class on time and ready for lessons. Any other issue that is not education-related is dealt with after school hours. The attendance register is controlled by class representatives. We use attendance registers to check the educators' class attendance* (PC3).

Another one pointed out:

> *There are many aspects we use. Firstly, we develop period registers that allow us to see whether learners are in class, and we expect teachers to sign them after recording learners who were absent from their lessons. Secondly, we expect senior teachers to visit junior teachers and give feedback on what has happened in their classrooms. We also check the learners' exercise books using the monitoring tool. We give reports to teachers on what we found after monitoring the learners' work (PD4).*

The responses suggest that principals ensure effective teaching by cultivating a culture of effective communication with their subordinates. That is, principals have established clear-cut communication avenues in their schools that are adhered to by both the deputy

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principals and their GDHs. The results are in line with Dzever (2015:68), who asserts that effective communication in any organisation is the bedrock for its success. Without effective lines of communication in schools, it becomes difficult for schools to achieve their mandate - effective curriculum delivery. The results also suggest that working together ensures effective teaching in schools. This speaks to Hemi, Madjar and Rich (2021), who observed that shared responsibilities in schools are a fertile ground for teachers to perform well in class. The teachers' good classroom performance is, therefore, underpinned by sound management skills from the school executives, thus, when teachers and the SMT communicate effectively, curricula delivery becomes effective and productive (Jenkins, 2020). Teachers and the SMT should share the problems they face in their different roles as curricula implementers. To this end, effective curriculum delivery is dependent on the sound relationship between teachers and the SMT. Farhan, Hadiyati and Rahmawati (2023:1175) postulate that educational personnel must be adequate and competent in their fields, and one of the educators who has an important role in school management is the principal.

The deputy principals also provided their views about the said idea. This is what they said in response to the questions asked:

> *We do control the learner's work by checking their exercise books to see if the content written therein covers what they are supposed to cover. I also use the GDH's report to check if it is correct* (DP A1).

Another one said,

> *As the deputy principal, I hold meetings with the DHs where we check the content coverage. I also check the work done by the GDH and then write a report to the principal. Educators who need support are given such support in order to achieve the best results. We also pair our learners with other schools in order to share ideas. Learners are also profiled so that those who are behind can also get the best results* (DP C3).

One deputy principal narrated thus:

> *Firstly, we see that the period register is controlled and kept by learners. Once the period is over, the educator signs the register to show that*

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> *learners attended the class. We use the attendance register to check whether learners attend lessons or not. Educators do have a timetable; that is, there is a class timetable and a personal timetable. These are measures that we use to ensure teaching and learning are conducted effectively at our school* (DP B2 & DP D4).

The results suggest that schools apply different methods to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning in classes; however, with respect to some of the participants' views, one would argue that the mechanisms applied by those schools do not necessarily guarantee effective curricula delivery in that the SMTs just follow policy. There are no innovative and unique ways cited by the participants that speak of intent and purpose to ensure effective teaching and learning in their schools. The results are consistent with Jenkins's (2020) assertion that if schools are passive and do not do enough to ensure effective content coverage in class, then learners are likely to perform poorly. It is possible, thus, to conclude that the lack of effective monitoring and supervision of teachers contributes to poor teaching and learning in schools. The results also reveal weak systems in ensuring effective teaching and learning in the Luvuvhu Circuit (Jeyara, 2019:34). That is, because there is no zeal among the SMTs to provide innovative and creative methods of ensuring effective teaching and learning, such as - the provision of incentives to hard-working and dedicated teachers; cumulative points system for outstanding teachers and increasing such teachers' chances of promotion. Effective leadership practices, hence, are usually associated with various models of instructional leadership that focus on promoting effective curriculum delivery (Gogo, Mkhize & Bhengu, 2022:251).

5.6.3. Motivating Geography Departmental Heads to Support Teachers in Curriculum Delivery

Motivation is the driving force behind human actions; it is a process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. In other words, it empowers people to achieve high levels of performance and helps to overcome barriers in curriculum delivery. Uka

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and Prendi (2021:1) postulate that motivation plays an essential role in employees' performance and keeping them happy.

The researcher: *How do you empower geography departmental heads with school leadership skills?*

When asked for their views on this point, the participants responded thus:

> *I showed the GDH how she should work by discussing with her the performance of the subject in the NSC. I give them the chance to explain themselves in this respect and also ask her to illustrate how she plans to improve curricula delivery given the state of the Geography results at the school and elsewhere* (DP B2).

One deputy principal explained:

> *The department organises workshops for the GDHs to make sure that they are up to date with current teaching trends. I provide them with the ATP so that they know what is expected of them (DPD4).*

Another deputy principal said:

> *I supply the GDH with adequate teaching and learning materials he requires so that he lacks nothing. I also encourage the GDH to monitor the work done by their Geography educators so that enough assistance is provided to them when needed (DP C3).*

The results show that schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit provide enough motivation to their GDHs to help them oversee curricula delivery effectively. This means that the GDHs have enough support from their superiors to help them run their departments effectively and competently in their endeavour to effectively deliver curricula. The results are consistent with Fletcher-Wood's (2017) observation that principals and their deputies who support their subordinates have schools that are run from a sound background. In other words, GDHs whose superiors are fully behind them in words and deeds generally run departments that deliver curricula effectively. Fletcher-Wood (2017) add that if school authorities are not supportive of their subordinates, the consequence for that is disgruntled teachers. The results also suggest that schools whose GDHs are motivated

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perform better than those with demotivated ones. In essence, demotivated GDHs have the potential to preside over poor curricula delivery. One would acknowledge the fact that any teacher who works in a stressful environment is likely to perform poorly in curriculum delivery (Nkosi, 2017:7). Thus, it is imperative that the GDHs be always motivated if they are, in turn, to motivate those under their supervision. Malatji (2018:125) states that the DHs should be supported internally by principals and deputy principals to deliver curricula effectively. Therefore, it is aligned with the transformational leadership theory employed by the study as it creates visionary leaders who encourage teachers to fulfil fundamental skills.

5.7 THEME 3: SCHOOL PLAN TO HELP DEVELOP DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

The theme sought to identify the school plan to help develop the GDHs in a bid to provide effective curricula delivery to improve the learners' performance in Geography. For this point, the researcher assessed the awareness of the participants regarding their schools' plans to help develop the GDHs and how the DHs adhere to the vision of the school that is shaped by that plan. In addition, the study sought to determine how the GDHs are empowered in schools to ensure effective curricula delivery in terms of map work and GIS concepts. The theme is divided into sub-themes that inform this data presentation and analysis.

5.7.1 School Improvement Plan

Principals are key figures concerning how schools function each year. The study discovered that the participants were generally familiar with the school plan meant to help develop the GDHs to effectively deliver curricula.

The researcher asked," What *are the school improvement plans (SIP) provisions of professional development of departmental heads?*

One deputy principal stated:

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> *There are workshops that are conducted by the principal not only for Geography teachers but for all the subjects we offer at school. We encourage them and workshop them so that they gain more knowledge in the subject [DP B2].*

Another deputy principal revealed that:

> *We usually call motivational speakers every quarter of the calendar year to help motivate our teachers. That is, we invite pastors and academics, stake holders of the QLTC committee, and former students to do the motivation for us* (DP D4).

According to another deputy principal, the school does the following,

> *As a school, we apply whatever we can to the Geography department. For example, we can budget for the items required by the GDH even though it might take two years to acquire those items* (DP C3).

This deputy principal motivates the GDH by:

The school makes sure that necessary and adequate materials are provided to the GDH as and when required (DP A10).

One principal responded in the following manner when asked the same question:

> *We outsource teachers from other schools if those we have face challenges when teaching difficult concepts, such as map work and GIS. We give the GDH the prerogative to outsource teachers she believes in. Doing so motivates her as she feels empowered and in control of her department (PD4).*

The results indicate that the GDHs are well motivated in the Luvuvhu Circuit; most of them have the liberty to request materials they need in order to help them deliver curricula effectively. In other words, the GDHs are supported given the way their schools respond to their requests. The results are in line with what Nkosi (2017:7) concluded about demotivated teachers, that schools whose teachers are demotivated do not deliver curricula effectively. That is, there is a need for school authorities to ensure that teachers and GDH are always motivated if they are to enjoy their work -, effective curricula delivery. Successful leaders tend to establish a determination for the organisation by setting clear

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goals and direction to improve the functioning of an organisation's system (Cheung, Keung, Kwam & Cheung, 2019:234). This shows that without clear-cut priorities, school authorities are likely to ignore the need to motivate their GDHs, a situation that might lead to poor curricula delivery.

5.7.2 Empowering Departmental Heads within the School

Leadership is crucial in schools; it is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts towards the achievement of set goals in situations. Chipunza (2018:3) regards leadership as the ability to encourage participation in achieving set organisational goals or objectives. Leadership, therefore, is the process of influencing others to work exceptionally well towards the achievement of established organisational objectives or goals.

The principals were asked *"How do you empower geography departmental heads within the school leadership skills?*

The principals responded below to how GDHs are empowered with leadership in their schools.

We do that through delegation and mentorship to make sure that we empower them with leadership skills (PA1).

For the principal from school B2, the response was,

> *I let them come together with all educators under one jurisdiction so that they can discuss topics they specialise in and develop teamwork* (PB2).

Another principal stressed:

> *We allocate all educators to different committees in line with their expertise. We have a QLTC committee that deals with everything that affects quality education and learning and social workers* (PC3).

Another response was:

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> *I encourage them to attend courses by giving them reading materials. I encourage them to go get guides and I pay for them. I also encourage them to mark NCS examinations so that they can broaden their horizon in the subject content* (PD4).

These responses suggest that schools provide varied support to their GDHs in that the support provided largely depends on what the said DHs request, showing that they are given opportunities to develop themselves professionally. In other words, schools grant the GDHs the chance to engage in activities that promote their professional growth. The results are consistent with the idea that progressive schools are those that provide support to their teaching staff in any way possible (Project Solutions, 2019:20). These results also indicate that in general, the GDHs are happy with the support given to them by their schools; implying that those working under supervision are equally happy and motivated as they work in satisfying environments (Shao & Kang, 2022). In addition, the GDHs provide informed leadership to their subordinates given that the former are professionally developed. It is imperative, therefore, that school authorities continue to assist the GDHs in order to enhance the department's curricula delivery, hence improving the learners' academic performance.

5.7.3 Improving Pass Rate in Geography Map Work and GIS

Improvement is a structured approach to evaluate the performance of the system and its processes. Questions on map work and GIS are generally answered poorly by learners. This sub-theme dealt with what could be done to improve the pass rate in map work and GIS concepts.

Geography departmental heads were asked" *How do you motivate teachers to perform better in geography mapwork and GIS?.*

The following is what the GDHs said about this idea.

> *As a department, we embark on field trips so that learners can experience first-hand what is meant by steep slopes or gentle slopes* (GDH C3).

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Another GDH from school A answered:

> *We show interest in the subject by teaching learners to also love Geography as a subject, particularly its concepts such as map work and GIS* (DH A1).

To another GDH, the issue is handled thus:

> *We have workshops where we help each other on how to teach map work and GIS. We also give learners extra work, to encourage them to work harder (GDH D4).*

In another GDH's view:

> *We hire teachers who specialise in map work and GIS to complement those who specialise in other geography concepts* (GDH B2).

The results show that schools have special mechanisms they employ in order to help improve the learners' performance in map work and GIS. These mechanisms are dependent on the needs and circumstances of each school. The way each school faces problems in map work and GIS concepts is unique, hence the need to employ equally unique strategies to address those problems (Simpson, Howard, Peligah & Cann, 2016). The results also reflect the need for schools to be hands-on when tackling problems that affect the teaching and learning of map work and GIS. In short, the results are to the effect that schools are proactive in solving issues that hinder Geography pass rate as opposed to being reactive (Tigere, 2016:64). It is possible to conclude that field trips, more written work, workshops, and teachers who specialise in map work and geographical information systems can assist to improve the performance on these topics in the Geography curriculum. Mathyiane et al. (2019:3) affirm that it is crucial that the departmental heads participate in professional development activities that equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to sustain professional conversations with colleagues. The following data presentation is based on what the focus group discussants said.

Teachers were asked," What can be done to improve geography results, especially in mapwork and GIS?

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In responding to the above idea, the focus group discussants provided the following views. The participants responded thus:

> *Learners should have relevant instruments for map work and GIS learning in order to be practically engaged during lessons* (GT2 A1).

One view was:

> *We are given more time to teach learners these map work and GIS. We do so in the morning, afternoon, and weekend so that learners grasp these concepts fully* (GT1 C3).

Another view was:

> *We assist learners with calculators, pencils, and protractors. We use overhead projectors for them to see what goes on in actual practice* (GT2 B2).

One other view was:

> *We need to be workshopped about how to teach map work and GIS concepts effectively as some of us are new in the teaching field* (GT1 D4).

These utterances indicate that a lot is done by different schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit to help improve the pass rate in Geography. Both teachers and learners were identified as contributing to the poor pass rate in Geography. Thus, different remedial activities were applied to each category according to the established weakness. The results are consistent with Wang (2019) who pointed out that when addressing problems that affect curricula delivery in schools, not only learners should be seen at fault by the teaching staff. Luvuvhu Circuit schools realise that both teachers and learners contribute to the poor pass rate in Geography, hence, relevant measures were employed to rectify the problem. One would suggest that improving the teachers' pedagogical understanding and effectiveness complements the efforts put in by the schools to provide learners with adequate learning materials or equipment (Bipath & Nkabinde, 2018:5). When learners have relevant geography equipment to use during lessons, the correct teaching methods used by teachers would enable the learner to master the concepts taught. Dhakal

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(2019:35) stated that Geography should be taught as a practical subject to add knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the world around us.

5.8 THEME 4: CHALLENGES IN MANAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN GEOGRAPHY.

The above theme deals with the challenges related to the management of Geography teaching. The focus was on the GDHs, Geography teachers and the teaching of map work and GIS.

5.8.1. Challenges in the Geography Department

The study revealed that there are challenges the GDHs encounter in the teaching and learning process. The views of the participants were solicited regarding their understanding and knowledge of the Geography curriculum delivery with the aim of improving the results.

The researcher asked, "What are the challenges that you are experiencing in managing teaching and learning in geography as a subject?

In response to the above idea, one geography departmental head said:

> *Shortage of resources, lack of interest from learners, and overcrowded classes make it difficult to mark all the learners' test/exam scripts* (GDHB2).

The geography departmental head from school B2 indicated:

> *The challenge is that as the DH, one sits down with teachers to inform them about how they should do their work effectively, but learners perform poorly.*

Another response was that,

> *Geography is science, and hence a hands-on subject. If one gives learners a task to do at home but they do not do it, there is nothing we can do. It becomes difficult to know the type of help to give the*

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> *learners… because one does not know whether the learner performs well or not* (GDH C3).

Another said:

> *We do not have a Geography laboratory, yet the subject requires the space to keep its resources like maps and other materials. I think the lack of infrastructure is a problem in my school* (GDH D4).

Another GDH said:

> *High enrolment in my school is a challenge because 90% of the learners do Geography. It becomes difficult for us to know all learners in order to identify gaps in their learning as some hide behind others* (GDH A1).

The results suggest that there are multiple challenges that are faced by the GDHs in their endeavours to deliver Geography curricula effectively to learners to improve their academic performance. In other words, the GDHs are constrained by various issues that include the learners' lack of zeal to learn and poorly-resourced schools. The underlining issue here is that rural-based schools are difficult to run given their overflowing classrooms that make class management difficult and impossible. The foregoing is consistent with Mathiyane, Naidoo and Bertram (2019:12), who point out that time and school context are the major constraints hindering GDHs' ability to track and support curriculum coverage in the school. In addition, Mthiyane et al. (2019:13) noted that contextual factors such as the lack of geography textbooks, water, teacher absenteeism, learner unreadiness to learn, and the progression policy hinder the GDHs from effectively playing their supportive roles in the department. That is, the GDHs require the school principal and SGB support if they are to overcome the challenges they face in running their departments. The transformational leadership theory is aligned with the findings, as transformational leaders have to motivate and inspire the team to cope with uncertainty and complexity.

Academic content is lessons taught in school (educational institution), a specific course/programme, or a well-organised plan for conducting educational activities. The curriculum plan is presented in the form of a document, which is used by implementers,

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such as GDH and Geography teachers as guidelines for the implementation of the curriculum. In this study, a 'curriculum plan' means all activities that take place in the Geography classroom for the purpose of teaching and learning, including all learners' experiences, which are planned and documented with the intention of developing the learners' general knowledge and skills (Mizan, 2022:1). Principals and deputy principals from the selected schools were interviewed about this sub-theme.

Principals and Deputy Principals were asked individually, "*What are the factors that affect curriculum delivery in your school"?*

What they said are given below:

> *All schools that perform well are usually those with disciplined teachers and learners. Generally, discipline is important in teaching and learning. That is, some learners come from child-headed families where there is no discipline. Some have parents, but they care less about their children's education. Some parents do not bother to check their children's exercise books to find out if they are doing well at school or not; thus, ill-discipline negatively affects the teaching and learning process in class (PB2).*

In another principal's view, the issue entailed are the following:

> *I think one of the key issues here is time. There are many activities that happen, which affect curriculum delivery in our school. Some of them are meetings now and then, which are organised at the District level. These meetings affect teaching and learning as time spent attending them is teaching time lost. We also have issues of discipline of learners as a problem* (PA1).

One of the principals summed it up thus:

> *There is a shortage of teachers and those who are there sometimes do not go to their classes, and it affects curriculum delivery* (PD4).

Another principal said:

> *Unplanned meetings derail curriculum delivery as we spend a lot of time in meetings. Another factor is that of educators attending workshops for*

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> *curriculum development, thereby leaving their classes unattended for the whole day. Parents are also problematic as they often fight with their children at home* (PC3).

The results suggest that schools have different issues that affect curricula delivery, although, in reality, they seem to be minor, as most of the issues raised by the participant's border on ill discipline and lack of enthusiasm from the teachers to do their work. The results are in line with the idea that schools that tolerate *laissez-faire attitudes from their teachers and learners alike risk performing poorly in national examinations* each year (Jeyara, 2019). The results also suggest that the Luvuvhu Circuit schools have problems in planning their activities to carter to official meetings that generally help to develop teachers. Attending official meetings, teacher truancy, and learner ill-discipline cannot be blamed for poor curricula delivery, given that schools with sound management can easily eradicate such problems (Kohler, 2020). It is the duty of principals, their deputies and GDHs to ensure that teachers attend classes on time and are well-prepared if curricula are to be delivered effectively; lessons missed due to attending any other official duties can be rearranged to be covered. In any case, meetings are important for the development of teachers, GDHs, deputy principals, and principals, therefore, doing away with them in the name of ensuring effective teaching and learning is likely to have more adverse effects on teacher development (Moloney, 2020). To this end, meetings should be seen as complementing schools' efforts to provide effective curricula delivery.

The deputy principals were also asked for their views regarding this point. In their response, the participants provided the following observations:

> *Some educators are too lazy to teach, in most cases due to age and a bad attitude. That is, there are educators who do not have an interest in teaching and those who lack commitment to the teaching profession. Learners also have bad attitudes towards school and educators, and some abuse substances* (DP B2).

Another deputy principal said:

> *Learners from disadvantaged families do not attend school regularly due to hunger and lack of school uniforms. This affects curricula delivery in*

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> *that such learners do not get proper education due to their irregular school attendance [DP D4].*

One deputy principal had this to say:

> *Parents do not involve themselves in the education of their children as they do not support them at home with schoolwork. Another issue is that our schools are poorly funded and, hence, lack resources to effectively deliver curricula* (DP C3).

Another one claimed that,

Late coming and absenteeism of learners contribute to poor curricula delivery (DP A1).

These results show that there is a plethora of factors that affect curricula delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit. Unfortunately for the participants, simple issues were regarded as major hindrances to the curricula delivery given the poor management systems that seem to prevail in those schools. The results are in line with the observation that when minor issues are left to escalate in schools, they have the potential to derail the smooth running of those schools, thereby affecting the quality of education offered therein (Navaglosky, 2019; Nhlapo, 2021). Instead of complaining about trivial issues raised herein, the participants should focus on serious issues such as the lack of infrastructure and internet connectivity, as well as a shortage of teaching and learning materials and computer laboratories. Nhlapo (2021) castigated the lack of innovative ideas among the SMTs, contributing to the lack of quality education provision among rural schools as they seem to wait for the government to do everything for them. One would suggest that the SMT teams should prioritise the acquisition of modern teaching equipment and technology by vigorously engaging in fundraising activities such as sponsored walks, sourcing funds from local business people, organising competitions and, dinner dances, and concerts. The acquisition of resources would help boost the effective curriculum delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017:137) affirm that good cooperation between schools, homes, and communities can lead to effective curriculum delivery when local business people sponsor the acquisition of computers, internet connectivity, library books, and science equipment, *inter alia*. The transformational leadership theory employed in the study fits because intellectual stimulation encourages creativity where there are not

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enough resources. However, Geography DH, together with the teachers, can share and exchange ideas 6 to solve the problem.

5.8.2. Challenges GDHs Face in the Teaching and Learning of Geography

The GDHs should ensure that Geography teachers teach the subject effectively at all times; the former are positioned to guide their subordinates on how best to help develop the learners' skills through well-structured lesson plans (Tapala, 2019:22). There are, however, challenges that the GDHs experience in managing Geography teaching and learning.

The researcher: What are the challenges that you are experiencing in managing teaching and learning geography as a subject?

In response to the above question, participants said:

> *There is no Geography centre in our school where we can consolidate our equipment and other teaching materials. We do not have space to display geographic features* (GHD D4).

One GDH stated:

> *High enrolment is the problem at our school, with more than 90% of the learners doing Geography. High school enrolment means large classes* (GDH A1).

Another GDH mentioned that:

Shortage of resources, lack of interest from learners, and overcrowded classrooms are problematic at our school (GDH B2).

From one participant the response was:

Learners do not write homework (GDH C3).

The results show that the Luvuvhu Circuit schools spend most of their teaching time dealing with multiple challenges that make it difficult to deliver curricula effectively. When

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schools are faced with challenges that include learners' failure to do their work and infrastructural facilities, not much can be achieved academically. These results are in line with Kalane and Rambuda (2022:203) who claim that poorly-resourced public schools are as good as the learners they produce. In addition, Madonsela and Proches (2022:191) reason that the lack of classroom space and other related facilities is problematic to schools as they are constrained in delivering curricula effectively. One would add that a combination of issues, such as a shortage of teaching and learning equipment and materials, negatively affect the learners' academic performance. Anyona, Sabina and Alindulah (2017:12) state that the roles of subject heads include facilitating the acquisition of teaching equipment and resources to ensure that learners obtain quality instruction. In doing so, the GDHs are supported by teachers, particularly, in schools where the teaching and learning environment is appealing and accommodative.

5.8.3. Challenges Experienced by Teachers in Teaching Map Work and GIS

Geography learners perform better when they have maps for map reading and calculations, as well as GIS skills. According to the CAPS document, most Geography learners leave school without obtaining skills in map work and GIS. Rajagopalan (2019:5) defines teaching as a scientific process with major components such as content, communication, and feedback. In this respect, there are challenges that teachers experience when teaching Geography. Some of the challenges were identified during the focus group discussions conducted with teachers from the sampled schools.

The researcher: *What challenges do you have in teaching geography as a subject?*

The discussants identified some of them as:

> *Teaching map work is a challenge given the complex topics that are difficult for learners to understand. Teaching Geography is time-consuming, and this is compounded by the GDH, which pushes us to adhere to the ATP format (GT1 D4).*

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One put it as:

> *Map work is difficult for learners to understand, and there is not enough time for us to teach Geography per week. We only have four hours to teach map work per week, while calculations take time for learners to master them* (GT2 C3).

Someone added that:

> *There is a language barrier in class as most learners can hardly understand and speak English, yet calculations in GIS are done in English. Some learners do not have smart-phones to Google information* (GT2 C3).

One discussant responded that:

Learners do not understand map work and GIS. Learners lack the background in map work from lower classes (GT2 D4).

Another respondent claimed that:

> *The challenge is that educators do not understand the calculations they are supposed to teach in Geography lessons. Our school does not have expert teachers in map work and GIS* (GT1 A1).

The results suggest that Geography is largely taught by incompetent teachers in some schools. This has led to learners failing to acquire the basics of Geography in areas such as map work and GIS. Metaphorically and literally put, *academically blind learners in the Luvuvhu schools are taught by academically half-blind teachers*. The results are consistent with those of Makgato and Mudzanani (2019:99), who acknowledge that, in most cases, teachers lack both pedagogical and academic knowledge to teach learners effectively in public schools. The results further suggest that due to the teachers' poor content knowledge, learners have become disillusioned by the way they are taught in class. The point is that there is no meaningful teaching and learning process in class if teachers lack knowledge of what they are supposed to teach (Dumakude, 2022:88). The results also suggest that the use of English as a medium of instruction in government schools has become a stumbling block to the effective delivery of curricula in schools. The English language is not native to Luvuvhu area, hence the difficulties learners

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experience when communicating in it. The results resonate with Matsepe and Maluleke's (2019:187) finding that the government's failure to change the medium of instruction at the FET level to local languages has negative effects on learners in rural areas. In such cases, teachers cannot be blamed for the learners' failure to grasp what they are taught in English. Jayara (2019:2) asserts that quality teaching comprises of responsive and reflective teaching where learners get knowledge transfer from teachers and construct it through meaningful involvement with activities within and outside the classroom. Mukondeleli (2017:54) claims that congested classrooms contribute to poor curriculum delivery in addition to the hardships experienced by learners who can hardly speak English.

5.8.4. Areas that Teachers Need Training and Support to Help them Teach Map Work and GIS Effectively

Both the GDHs and geography teachers need support when it comes to teaching Geography effectively, however, such training and support, if indeed given, may not be enough, given the dynamics of the education system because once one problematic area is sorted out, another arises given the nature of the modern education system. Geography teachers should always be trained and supported to continuously improve their pedagogical knowledge and standing.

The researcher asked *"Which area do you think you need training/support to make a better geography teacher?*

In view of the above idea, one of the FG discussants responded thus:

> *We need overhead projectors and other assistive resources if we are to teach map work and GIS effectively* (GT2 C3).

Another discussant added:

> *We need training in map work and GIS teaching strategies* (GT1 D4).

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The results revealed that, in general, teachers lack knowledge about map work and GIS, hence the need to develop them on how the concepts are taught. The results are consistent with Rodrigues and Ávila de Lima (2021:16) who assert that teachers should undergo in-service training to acquaint themselves with the latest teaching methods in Geography and other subjects. To enhance the teachers' teaching capabilities in order to meet the modern teaching trends, universities should chip in by doing pedagogical needs assessment in Geography. Doing so would help the universities shape their pedagogical courses such that they include issues raised by teachers on the ground. Teachers who do not have a deep command of the knowledge of Geography map work become barriers to the learners of the subject they teach (Nkosi, 2017:7). Hence, Transformational Geography DH implement individual consideration by attending to individual needs of teachers to cater their difficulties in the curricula.

The GDHs from the sampled schools also provided their views regarding the areas they felt needed training or support for them to improve their teaching of map work and GIS. This is what they said in response.

> *We need material and pedagogical support to teach map work and GIS effectively in class* (GDH B2).

Another added:

> *We should be given overhead projectors or big-screen television sets and maps (GDH C3).*

One GDH said,

> *We need financial support so that we can buy teaching materials to teach map work and GIS* (GDH A1).

While another GDH put it as:

> *We need learning materials such as calculators for GIS and climatology (GDH D4).*

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These statements indicate that schools require support that ranges from material to financial if the Geography curricula are to be delivered effectively in class. However, rural public schools are short of teaching and learning materials in technical concepts. The results are consistent with those of Juma, Ndwiga and Nyaga (2023) that there are certain concepts that cannot be taught effectively without certain instruments or equipment. It is, therefore, imperative that the school's source for such materials if the Geography curricula is to be effectively delivered in the Luvuvhu Circuit schools. Learners generally learn by manipulating instruments and objects in class, and this involves practically doing certain aspects in order to master them. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:2) argue that GIS topics should be taught in GIS laboratories, where learners are taught both the theory and practical application of concepts learned. The emphasis here is on the need for rural public schools to equip themselves with adequate teaching and learning materials if the Geography curricula are to be delivered effectively in class.

5.8.5. Suggestions to Help Solve the Challenges

The GDHs encounter challenges when working with teachers and learners in the teaching of Geography. There is a need, therefore, to help solve those challenges if the delivery of the Geography curricula is to be effective. If not solved, those challenges will continue to negatively affect the teaching and learning process in class. It is the duty of the GDH to make sure that all challenges that the Geography teachers and learners face are dealt with to improve the learners' academic performance in the subject.

The researcher: *How these challenges can be solved?*

The participants provided the following views on this point.

> *Discipline should be the top priority for both teachers and learners. Parents should also play their role in support of their children's education* (GDH C3).

Another GDH from schools B2 and A1 suggested that:

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> *We should reduce the number of learners per class. In addition, the department should also hire additional teachers to teach excess learners* (GDH B2 & GDH A1).

While another said:

> *The department should provide financial support for us to construct more classroom blocks, a school hall, and a library* (GDH D4).

The results show that teachers, in general, have ways in which they think and believe would help to solve the challenges they face in teaching Geography in their schools. The challenges faced by schools, however, are beyond teachers and GDHs to solve, hence, the need for the national government through the parent ministry to intervene. The results are in line with the comment that most problems faced by rural-based public schools have to do with the national government and its failure to provide adequate support to them (Howley, 2017:120); for example, no-fee schools find it difficult to raise enough financial resources to construct infrastructure required to ease overcrowding. Poor schools' largest funder is the central government, and without its support, nothing can be done. Kohler (2020:19) also claims that most rural schools do not have enough classroom blocks despite their high enrollment. In this context, the results show that rural schools are largely neglected by the government when it comes to infrastructural provision in the context of high enrolments that are obtained in those schools. Piotrowka, Cichon, Abramowicz & Sypniewwski (2019:78) point out that in most cases, poor learner performance is related to the learning environment they are subjected to in schools. Schools also require new technology if they are to boost their Geography curricula delivery. Thus, the obligatory introduction of map work and GIS-related issues in the core Geography curricula at the school level helps to offer education adapted to civilisation and digital technologies. This creates an opportunity to shape and improve digital competencies and to include them in the scope of geographical education.

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5.9 THEME 5: STRATEGIES TO MOTIVATE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

Strategies to overcome constraints against the advancement of quality teaching and learning in map reading, GIS, and calculations in schools are various. Malatji (2018:126) identifies the following strategies for the promotion of teaching and learning in schools - supervision and curriculum management. Supervision of teaching and learning ensures effective leadership and efficient management of the teaching and learning process. In this case, the GDHs are curricula leaders, and they ensure that curricula delivery is done properly to improve the learners' academic performance by supervising teachers and the learners' work. Theme five focuses on ways of motivating the GDHs in schools.

5.9.1 Motivating Geography Departmental Heads in Schools

The GDHs should hold meetings with the Geography teachers as doing so assists in the sharing of new ideas and strategies for improving curriculum delivery. New teaching strategies could be adopted and shared in such meetings, however, the GDHs experience constraints in such endeavours given the number of disillusioned teachers they supervise. There is a need, therefore, to motivate the GDHs, if they are to remain resilient in their work.

The researcher: *How do you motivate the geography departmental head to support geography teachers in curriculum delivery?*

In response to the above sub-theme, the participants provided these ideas:

> *Through one-on-one meetings and awarding them at school for the best results and good work they are doing as the curriculum manager, and make them accountable* (DP B2; DP D4; DP A1).

One deputy principal claimed:

> *I encourage the GDH by supplying materials needed for the curriculum delivery* (DP C3).

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The results suggest that the GDHs work in conducive environments where their contributions to an effective Geography curriculum delivery are acknowledged and appreciated by their superiors. This is to say that the GDHs' contributions to curricula delivery in schools are rewarded by motivational gestures provided by their seniors at work. The results are in line with the claim that teachers who are motivated at work usually put extra effort in order to not disappoint those who acknowledge the efforts they put to make the organisation succeed (Albrecht & Karabenick, 2019:43). In addition, Bipath and Nkabinde (2018:466) maintain that motivating teachers is one of the many strategies that can help improve the learners' academic performance in schools. In contrast, demotivated teachers are likely to bring down the schools' pass rate as they are the ones who teach learners daily. Malatji (2018:125) states that the DHs should be supported internally by the principals and their deputies, and externally by the curriculum advisors as motivation enhances one's performance at work.

5.9.2 DBE's Motivation of GDHs

Supervision of teaching and learning ensures effective leadership and efficient management. The GDHs are the curricula leaders; hence, they should ensure that the curriculum delivery is done properly and effectively to improve the learners' academic performance. That could be done by thoroughly supervising teachers and the learners' work. In this case, the DBE should ensure that the GDHs are motivated to do their duties enthusiastically and efficiently. Motivating the GDHs would encourage them to likewise motivate their subordinates to equally work efficiently as they deliver curricula in schools.

The researcher: what can DBE do to motivate the GDH to effectively deliver the curriculum and support geography teachers?

Responding to questions asked about this idea, the participants offered these suggestions:

The DBE should facilitate workshops and training for the GDHs (DP A1).

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One deputy principal said:

> *They should introduce the Excellency Awards at the Circuit level to appreciate the efforts put in by the GDHs and their teachers in Geography* (DP C3).

Another stated that,

> *The DBE should promote hard-working DHs to positions of principals or deputy principals* (DP D4).

DPB2 said,

> *The DBE can motivate the GDHs by giving them supporting teaching materials to make teaching and learning easier and hence improve the learners' performance in the subject* (DPB2).

The results suggest that there is a lot the DBE can do in order to help the GDHs work hard to improve the learners' academic performance in Geography and that there is a need for the GDHs, as well as their teachers, to be motivated at the national level is unquestionable. The results are consistent with Bipath and Nkabinde (2018:467) who state that the DBE should be directly involved when it comes to teacher incentives as doing so would motivate them to work even harder to improve the learners' pass rate in public schools. It is clear that the motivation of teachers by the DBE could be in any form as long as that makes teachers happy and enjoy their work at school. The results also suggest that in general, there is not much done by the DBE to motivate the GDHs and other teaching staff in schools. The general, mood in schools among teachers is that of disillusionment. On this point, Du Plessis and Eberlein (2018:10) acknowledge that teachers in public schools are demotivated by poor salaries and less than conducive working conditions, hence, there is a need for the DBE to improve the teachers' working conditions as well as their remuneration packages. Roncales (2023:2) claims that

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motivational strategies, job satisfaction, recognition, and achievement have significance and contribute to effective curricula delivery in schools, showing that, demotivated and dissatisfied teachers negatively affect the country's education system and the future of the young generation.

5.9.3 Support Mechanism to Provide Quality Teaching of Map Work and GIS

Additional support is required for map work and GIS topics because most learners do not perform well on those topics. The 2021 NSC Examination Diagnostic Report confirmed the following with regard to Question 3 (Geographical skills and techniques); in sub-question 3.1, learners scored 38%; in sub-question 3.2, learners scored 46%; and in sub-question 3.3, learners scored 38%. This was the most poorly answered question when compared to other questions. These statistics show that candidates have challenges in map work and GIS. Despite the magnetic declination, learners still struggle to measure accurately with protractors, resulting in low marks (DBE, 2021:5).

The researcher: What support mechanism do you use to provide quality teaching of geography map work and GIS?

The participants gave their views as provided below.

> *We provide them with maps only. Our school is situated in rural areas, hence it is hard for us to get computers for GIS. Consequently, learners have access to one computer only. There is no way we can achieve our goals unless the department sources tablets, laptops, or computers from somewhere so that learners could be able to work on their GIS lessons effectively (GDCH C3).*

At another school, one participant said:

> *We sit as a team and discuss a particular topic of interest in order to understand it. Thereafter, we demonstrate how to teach that concept in the classroom. We concentrate on Grade 12 learners because they are an examination class, however, we use the Grades 8 and 9 GIS and*

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> *map work concepts. The idea is for learners to get to higher classes with background knowledge in map work and GIS* (GDHD4).

Other schools are innovative as stated below:

> *We use technology such as the overhead projector when teaching difficult concepts to learners or what learners are not aware of. The point is to make learners see what they do not know live on the screen. For example, learners would see what a trigonometrical beacon is in order to understand it* (GDH A1).

In another school, the support comes as:

> *We encourage teachers to profile learners when teaching and record marks for every test written so that those who need assistance can be easily identified and given individual attention and assistance (GDH B2).*

The results show that some schools use innovative ways to provide support for quality teaching of map work and GIS concepts, therefore, practical map work and GIS lessons are conducted to enable the learners to directly see geographical features and structural maps. This is consistent with Ahiaku et al. (2019) who state that technological gadgets should be used more often as forms of support mechanism to enhance the learners' understanding of key Geography concepts such as map work and GIS. The results also show that schools differ in the way they provide support when teaching map work and GIS. Different support mechanisms provided here show that learners in the Luvuvhu East Circuit understand Geography differently, hence, poor performance in the subject. There is no standardised approach to teaching Geography concepts such as map work and GIS. The lack of resources has also created learning disparities among learners in the Circuit. This speaks to Adem and Hurriyet's (2021:102) remark that the lack of uniform teaching strategies among poorly equipped and under-resourced rural schools significantly contributes to a high failure rate. Ahiaku et al. (2019) also acknowledged that poor rural schools are a breeding ground for poor results. This means that if rural schools are equipped with modern teaching materials, technology, and general resources, standardised teaching might be achieved. The use of technology in teaching Geography concepts is likely to improve the learners' academic performance.

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5.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter presented the qualitative data that were gathered through individual interviews and focus groups, and reflections were made on the data collected and analysed. Data were presented and analysed according to the five delineated themes. The chapter explored the role of the GDHs in curricula delivery that may improve learners' performance in secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit. The participants were knowledgeable about the roles of the GDHs in curriculum delivery.

The results also suggest that the GDHs manage their departments by strictly monitoring teachers to ensure that they adhere to policy on curricula delivery. Geography departmental heads are also responsible for drawing departmental policies. Furthermore, the results revealed that GDHs encourage learners to develop an interest in geography as a subject. Moderation of formal and informal tasks and tracking of content coverage by the teacher is an essential role of the geography departmental heads, as well as the induction of newly-appointed geography teachers, assisting teachers in teaching topics which they are not acquainted with. GDH have to profile learners according to their performance, which enables teachers to know how they can assist learners with difficulties. GDHs monitor teachers to ensure adherence to policy on curriculum delivery by making sure that teachers are using the ATP, correct textbooks and are following the normal time specified for Geography per week. The transformational leadership theory is relevant because it provides the framework for understanding how leadership behaviour and practices can positively influence teacher professionalism, which has an impact on the quality of curriculum delivery and success of the schools (Mona, 2023:15). Geography departmental head as a transformational leader inspire and motivate geography teachers to perform well so that they can produce good results.

The GDHs face multiple challenges as they execute their duties of overseeing effective curricula delivery to improve the pass rate in the subject. Many of those challenges, as raised above, are beyond the GDHs' powers to control or overcome, given that some have to do with demotivated teachers and overcrowding in classrooms, which makes

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class management difficult and leads to poor results for learners. Shortage of teachers, wayward learners, uncooperative parents and scarcity of resources, in particular, seems prevalent and a serious problem among the rural public schools. Thus, the teaching and learning process in Geography is compromised as there is no participatory learning, which should be learner-centred; these have a negative impact on learners' academic performance. The results show that the paramount challenge for GDHs is the departmental policies - the progression policy - that hinder GDHs from effectively playing their role.

These results show that GDH provides teachers with support, by providing them with lesson delivery materials such as - ATPs, Caps Documents, textbooks, maps and globes - in order to boost their teaching confidence. For Quality teaching of map skills, schools used various methods, some used fieldwork. Curriculum leaders consider a high-level factor to influence the entire teaching and learning at schools, knowledgeable about society's challenges and trends and identify their strengths and weaknesses to adjust their school's education direction and content (Zhang,2023:1).

Results show that some schools in Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe East, understand Geography differently, hence varied performance in the subject. This creates disparity among these learners. This means that if rural schools are equipped with modern teaching materials, technology and general resources, standardised teaching might be achieved. The use of technology in geographical concepts is likely to give better results in the circuit.

Results show that schools have a common way of disseminating information. Generally, geography teachers share ideas in a group WhatsApp, starting from district, circuit to school levels; teachers share ideas in formal on curricula delivery and mitigation factors. The cooperation of teachers is anchored by the GDH. Sidharta and Mousumi (2021:1) affirm that the effectiveness of information dissemination rests considerably on how it is accessed.

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Class visits are done by the GDHs, which fulfil departmental policies and are a mechanism to assist teachers in efficient curricula delivery. Responses indicate that some GDHs have no zeal for doing class visits; hence, they do them once after months, and this breeds laziness in the teachers. This point is contrary to the QMS that mandates DH to play a major role in assessing and monitoring the performance of the teachers. Mona (2023:20) affirms that teachers in South Africa are subject to assessment under the Quality Management System (QMS) policy to monitor their competency, strength and areas that need development.

Class visits are important if schools are to perform well academically. Thus, it is the duty of the GDHs to do class visits in order to understand how their teachers perform in their teaching duties. In addition to this, class visits enable the GDHs to check and evaluate the teachers' daily lesson plans, evaluate the learners' work, prepare and lead staff meetings, attend school meetings with informed departmental problems and evaluate teaching methods and assessment techniques after class visits. Furthermore, class visits facilitate the acquisition of needed materials for the department. However, there are some teachers who are not in favour of this policy. This has become a conundrum to the GDHs who are supposed to supervise and monitor the teaching and learning process but are barred from doing so by the recalcitrant teachers. The results show that schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit have different problems that manifest through their Geography teachers' behavioural patterns. Most GDHs in the Circuit have ill-disciplined teachers with no regard for superiors. Concerning class visits and explanations, the results suggest that schools in Luvuvhu Circuits have different problems that manifest through geography teachers' behavioural patterns. Rebellious teachers against the policy become a challenge to the Geography DH who are supposed to supervise and monitor the teaching and learning process. Mugala and Kabela (2024:1) concur that there is a positive relationship between departmental head motivation strategies and the academic performance of learners. Therefore, motivated teachers are essential for creating a conducive learning environment and facilitating improved learner outcomes.

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The duty of the principal is to shape a vision of academic success for all learners, whereas that of the deputy principal is to provide professional leadership and support the principal in operational and academic matters. Deputy principals should have a concise understanding of the curricula across subject areas. They are the accounting officers for the curricula delivery in schools. The results suggest that the principal's and their deputies' duties are complementary in nature; there is no overlap of responsibilities since the former are the overall overseers of curricula delivery while the latter perform roles that cement what their superiors do. Principals and deputy principals have a shared vision of curriculum delivery in the schools. Furthermore, the results illustrate that schools with hard-working principals and deputy principals are epitomised by adequate teaching materials, classroom furniture, disciplined learners, satisfied teachers, and high academic performance, *inter alia*. Conversely, schools with poor management are characterised by teachers who lack confidence in their work due to several factors such as - lack of teaching resources, rude learners, staff and students chronic late coming, high absenteeism rate, and below standard performance. The results suggest that rural-based schools are difficult to run given their overflowing classrooms, which makes it difficult and impossible to manage.

The results suggest that principals ensure effective teaching by cultivating a culture of effective communication with their subordinates. That is, principals have established clear-cut communication avenues in their schools that are adhered to by both the deputy principals and their GDHs. Transformational leaders encourage their subordinates to create motivation and creativity by modifying the approaches and opportunities of their subordinates. The main purpose of leaders is to allow the free flow of ideas and imagination so that their followers and subordinates can try to create new techniques and approaches (Korejan & Shabbz, 2016:458).

The results also suggest that working together ensures effective teaching. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the lack of effective monitoring and supervision of teachers contributes to poor teaching and learning in schools. Teachers and the SMT, therefore, should share the problems they face in their different roles as curricula implementers.

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However, it was also revealed weak systems of ensuring effective teaching and learning exist in the Luvuvhu Circuit schools.

It is the duty of principals, their deputies and GDHs to ensure that teachers attend classes on time and are well-prepared, if curricula are to be delivered effectively. Without effective lines of communication in schools, it becomes difficult for them to achieve their mandate, that is, effective curriculum delivery. One would suggest that the SMT teams should prioritise the acquisition of modern teaching equipment and technology by vigorously engaging in fundraising activities such as sponsored walks, sourcing funds from local business people, organising competitions dinner dances, and concerts, *inter alia*. Lin, Yin and Liu (2022:1) claim that transformational school leadership means that school leaders are able to create collective beliefs about their capabilities, among the teachers by empowering them - to set their personal goals, to shift teachers' objectives from self-interest to school's interest, enhancing their feelings of self-efficacy, and acting as role models.

The responses reveal that schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit provide enough motivation to their GDHs to help them oversee curricula delivery effectively. This means that the GDHs have enough support from their superiors to help them run their departments effectively and competently in their endeavour to deliver curricula effectively. The results also suggest that schools whose GDHs are motivated perform better than those with demotivated ones. In essence, demotivated GDHs have the potential to preside over poor curricula delivery; hence, without clear-cut priorities, school authorities are likely to ignore the need to motivate their GDHs, a situation that might lead to poor curricula delivery.

DHs are given opportunities to develop themselves professionally. This means schools grant their GDHs the chance to engage in activities that promote their professional growth. The principal from school D4 "encourages the Geography DH to mark NSC examinations to broaden his horizons in subject content". Such comments indicate that, in general, the GDHs are happy with the support given to them by their schools.

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The Luvuvhu Circuit schools realise that both teachers and learners contribute to the poor pass rate in Geography, and hence, measures are employed to rectify that. One would suggest that improving the teachers' pedagogical understanding and effectiveness complements the efforts done by schools to provide learners with adequate learning materials. Mona (2023:20) attests that Transformational leadership prioritises teaching staff's professional development. Teachers are provided opportunities for continuous learning growth and key performance of professionalism.

One would add that a combination of issues, such as a shortage of teaching and learning equipment and materials, negatively affects the learners' academic performance. This indicates that poorly resourced public schools are as good as the learners they produce.

The results suggest that Geography is largely taught by under-qualified teachers in some schools. This has led to learners failing to acquire the basics of Geography in areas such as map work and GIS. Due to the teachers' poor content knowledge, learners have become disillusioned by how they are taught in class. Teacher development is the cornerstone of professional competence in teaching (Mukondeleli, 2018:81).

The use of English as a medium of instruction in government schools has become a stumbling block to the effective delivery of curricula in schools. The English language is not native to the Luvuvhu area, and hence, the difficulties learners experience when communicating in it.

Both the GDHs and geography teachers need support when it comes to teaching Geography effectively. Teachers should undergo in-service training to acquaint themselves with the latest teaching methods in Geography and other subjects. To enhance the teachers' teaching capabilities in order to meet the modern teaching trends, universities should chip in by doing pedagogical needs-assessment in Geography. The results indicate that schools require support that ranges from material to financial if the Geography curricula are to be delivered effectively in class. Rural public schools are short of teaching and learning materials for technical concepts. The emphasis is the need

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for rural public schools to equip themselves with adequate teaching and learning materials if the Geography curricula are to be delivered effectively in class. Knowledge of Geography, therefore, should be regarded as an essential part of the education of all citizens in all societies (Puttick, 2022:1).

Teachers, in general, have ways in which they think and believe would help to solve the challenges they face in teaching Geography in their schools. The challenges faced by schools, however, are beyond teachers and GDHs to solve, hence the need for the national government through the parent ministry to intervene.

GDHs work in conducive environments where their contributions to effective Geography curricula delivery are acknowledged and appreciated by their superiors. The GDHs' contributions to curricula delivery in schools are underpinned by the motivational gestures provided by their seniors at work. Motivating teachers is one of the many strategies that can help improve the learners' academic performance in schools. In contrast, demotivated teachers are likely to bring down the schools' pass rate as they are the ones who teach learners daily. The results suggest that there is a lot the DBE could do in order to help the GDHs work hard to improve the learners' performance in Geography. Hence, there is a need for the GDHs, as well as their teachers, to be motivated at the national level. Perceived unfairness at school facilitates the learners' development of unfairness and a sense of injustice; therefore, in a fair school environment, teachers show a high level of modernity, such as - being valued, strong self-efficacy and pride, participating more in school activities, communicating, and cooperating with others and being more responsible at work (Zhang, 2017:100).

It is clear that the motivation of teachers by the DBE could be in any form as long as it makes teachers happy and, as a result, enjoy their work at school. In general, there is not much done by the DBE to motivate the GDHs and other teaching staff in schools so the general mood in schools among teachers is that of gloom and disillusionment. There is a need for the DBE to improve the teachers' working conditions as well as their remuneration packages. Demotivated and dissatisfied teachers are not conducive to the

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country's education system and the future of the young generation. Geography curricula at the school level help to offer education adapted to the current civilisation and digital technologies. This creates an opportunity to shape and improve digital competencies and to include them in the scope of geographical education. Inspirational and motivational leaders challenge their followers in their jobs and create a clear perspective to reach goals and go toward the future by increasing efficiency in the workplace (Korejan & Shabbaz, 2016:458).

The chapter presented the qualitative data and analysis through thematic analysis. Analysed data themes were created to show how the transformational leadership of the geography departmental heads influences curriculum delivery in the Luvuvhu circuit. The roles of geography departmental heads assisted teachers in curriculum delivery and enthusiasm for teaching and learning, though challenges were identified that hampered the roles of geography departmental heads.

The next chapter identifies and discusses the results that emerged from the data presented in Chapter Five. The discussions focus on the data collected from four secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit. The said discussions are integrated with the data collected from secondary sources, including the theoretical framework that underpins the study.

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CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter analysed and interpreted the data based on the research questions and literature reviewed. This chapter discusses the study findings and synthesises issues that emerged during the research process. The literature reviewed, responses of participants, and personal experiences are infused in an endeavour to develop a fuller understanding of the role of the GDHs in curricula delivery to improve the learners' academic performance in secondary schools.

The data were obtained from the interviews that were conducted with school principals, deputy principals, GDHs and Geography teachers and document analysis. The data analysis process was also guided by the theoretical framework, research questions, research objectives, and literature reviewed. The findings of the study unfolded under the following themes - Roles of geography departmental heads, the factors that affect Geography curricula delivery within the school, school improvement plan, provisions on the development of GHDs, challenges in managing teaching and learning in Geography, and strategies to motivate the GDHs.

6.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: HOW DO GEOGRAPHY DHS' PLAY THEIR SUPPORT TO TEACHER CURRICULA DELIVERY, AND WHICH STRATEGY CAN BE USED TO IMPROVE LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN LUVUVHU CIRCUIT?

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study under the following theme - The roles of the GHDs. The sub-themes are - management leadership responsibilities, challenges in the Geography department, teacher support and motivation, support

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mechanism used to provide quality teaching of map work and GIS, dissemination of information and teamwork within GD, class visits and teacher assessment.

6.2.1 The Roles and Impact of Geography Departmental Heads

This study described the roles of the GDHs in curriculum delivery. Studies on the role of GDHs as middle managers in the school are plenty. The 21st-century DHs have various responsibilities in their departments that contribute to the effective functioning of the school system as a whole (Strydom, 2020:12). These discussions will focus on the secondary school principals and their deputies from the selected schools regarding the roles of the GDHs at school. These participants are knowledgeable about the role of the GDHs. Data presentation and analysis on this aspect indicated that the management of teaching and learning, and holding meetings with teachers were some of the key roles of the GDHs (Bipath & Nkabinde, 2018). To effectively manage the teaching and learning process, the GDHs were expected to avail all necessary teaching and learning materials such as CAPS documents, ATPs, examination guidelines, and textbooks to teachers.

6.2.1.1 Management and leadership responsibilities

Moderation of formal and informal tasks and tracking of content coverage by the teacher is an essential role of the geography departmental heads, as well as the induction of newly-appointed geography teachers, assisting teachers in teaching topics which they are not acquainted with. GDH have to profile learners according to their performance, which enables teachers to know how they can assist learners with difficulties. GDHs monitor teachers to ensure adherence to policy on curriculum delivery by making sure that teachers are using the ATP, correct textbooks and are following the normal time specified for Geography per week.

The monitoring of learners' and teachers' work and ensuring that teachers teach what they were expected to teach according to the ATP guidelines were the GDHs' responsibility. Profiling of learners according to their performance also formed part of

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the GDHs' management of teaching and learning, and reporting the learners' performance and communicating with parents were part of the GDHs' roles (Du Plessis & Eberlein, 2018:15). The data presented and analysed under this theme also revealed that the Geography curriculum delivery faces challenges in as far as the teachers' competencies in GIS is concerned. Madonsela and Proches (2022:2) posit that curricula managers are responsible for leading and managing their departments, and they need to effectively maintain sustainable connections and trust. The emphasis is on the need for rural public schools to equip themselves with adequate teaching and learning materials if the geography curricula are to be delivered effectively in class.

The results suggest that the DHs ensure that educators in the GD observe teaching and learning time when at school. Part of the GDH's responsibility is to ensure that the GD functions smoothly by formulating policies that help educators work effectively and harmoniously. The results are consistent with Ahiaku, Mncube and Olaraniran (2019) who assert that the GDHs ensure that educators assess learners through standardised tests and examinations; doing so helps to ensure that learners are effectively taught in Geography.

The GDH's responsibilities also include responding to the demands of the school system as a whole. The GDH does not exist in isolation nor independent of other departments at school rather it is part of and thus complements other departments for the proper functioning of the whole school (Du Plessis & Eberlein, 2018:17). The results also suggest that the GDHs manage their departments by strictly monitoring teachers to ensure that they adhere to policy on curricula delivery. This is in line with Metcalfe's (2018:43) observation that the role of the DHs is to regularly check the teachers' coverage of the curriculum and the learner's work and also work with teachers to improve curriculum coverage and assist them with problems related to curriculum coverage). The above is an indication that too much workload overburdens teachers, hence, the lack of cooperation in most GDHs.

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6.2.2 Teacher support and motivation

The DHs, therefore, are at the forefront of positively impacting school norms and standards. Working as a collective and in sync with each other, the roles of the DHs in school can improve its outcomes by influencing the capacity levels of teachers (Marishane, 2016:22). The GDHs impact the way the Geography teachers deliver the Geography curriculum in map work and GIS, and also the latter's commitments, thus, learners' academic performance is positively influenced. Sauls (2019:55) concurs that the lifelong influence of the country's education system depends on the effectiveness of the management systems in schools.

The GDH also ensures the achievement of the departmental goals, school vision, and mission. Tlali and Matete (2021:1) explain that the role of the DHs in the school structure is to provide middle leadership. The DHs have a significant role to play in improving teaching and learning through supervision and monitoring of the teachers' work. There is a need for the DBE to improve the teachers' working conditions as well as their remuneration packages. Demotivated and dissatisfied teachers are not conducive to the country's education system and the future of the young generation. Geography curricula at the school level help to offer education adapted to the current civilisation and digital technologies. This creates an opportunity to shape and improve digital competencies and to include them in the scope of geographical education. Inspirational and motivational leaders challenge their followers in their jobs and create a clear perspective to reach goals and go toward the future by increasing efficiency in the workplace (Korejan & Shabbaz, 2016:458). Motivating teachers is one of the many strategies that can help improve the learners' academic performance in schools. In contrast, demotivated teachers are likely to bring down the schools' pass rate as they are the ones who teach learners daily. The results suggest that there is a lot the DBE could do in order to help the GDHs work hard to improve the learners' performance in Geography. Hence, there is a need for the GDHs, as well as their teachers, to be motivated at the national level. Perceived unfairness at school facilitates the learners' development of unfairness and a sense of injustice, therefore, in a fair school environment, teachers show a high level of modernity, such as

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- being valued, strong self-efficacy and pride, participating more in school activities, communicating, and cooperating with others and being more responsible at work (Zhang, 2017:100).

6.2.3 Dissemination of information

The results suggest schools or GDs have common ways of information dissemination; they generally share ideas in groups or in meetings organised to enhance curricula delivery and mitigate factors that hinder its effective delivery in class. This is in line with Bambi's (2013:51) position that there is a need for teachers to work together by sharing ideas about issues that promote or hinder effective curricula delivery in schools. Ahiaku et al. (2019) also highlight that effective schools are those whose teachers share ideas about good teaching methods and progressive ways of handling wayward learners. In reality, no department can succeed in its curricula delivery agenda if its teachers are not united and supportive of each other.

Results show that schools have a common way of disseminating information. Generally, geography teachers share ideas in a group WhatsApp, starting from district, circuit to school levels; teachers share ideas in formal on curricula delivery and mitigation factors. The cooperation of teachers is anchored by the GDH. Sidharta and Mousumi (2021:1) affirm that the effectiveness of information dissemination rests considerably on how it is accessed.

6.2.4 Class visits and teacher assessment

Class visits are important if schools are to perform well academically. Thus, it is the duty of the GDHs to do class visits in order to understand how their teachers perform in their teaching duties. In addition to this, class visits enable the GDHs to check and evaluate the teachers' daily lesson plans, evaluate the learners' work, prepare and lead staff meetings, attend school meetings with informed departmental problems and evaluate teaching methods and assessment techniques after class visits. Furthermore, class visits

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facilitate the acquisition of needed materials for the department, however, there are some teachers who are not in favour of this policy

The GDH further ensures that classroom activities are undertaken effectively and timeously, that the marking of the learners' work is done, and that feedback is given to them promptly (Jenkins, 2020:174; Du Plessis & Eberlein, 2018:17). These seem to suggest that the GDHs lead their departmental teams in implementing school policies and its vision to enhance teaching and learning. The GDHs are the link between their department and the school management team. The results show that schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit have different problems that manifest through their Geography teachers' behavioural patterns. Most GDHs in the Circuit have ill-disciplined teachers with no regard for superiors. Concerning class visits and observations, the results suggest that schools in Luvuvhu Circuits have different problems that manifest through geography teachers' behavioural patterns. Rebellious teachers against the policy become a challenge to the Geography DH who are supposed to supervise and monitor the teaching and learning process. Mugala and Kabela (2024:1) concur that there is a positive relationship between departmental head motivation strategies and the academic performance of learners. Therefore, motivated teachers are essential for creating a conducive learning environment and facilitating improved learner outcomes.

6.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT IMPACT GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM DELIVERY?

6.3.1 Challenges in Managing Teaching and Learning in Geography

The above theme was presented and analysed under the following sub-themes - the challenges the GDH faces in teaching and learning Geography, challenges of Geography teachers in teaching map work and GIS, and areas that need training and support to solve these challenges. These discussions will focus on the challenges in managing teaching

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and learning in Geography, as one of the key roles of the GDH is to ensure that teaching and learning is effectively done in the classroom.

6.3.1.1 Lack of infrastructure

The lack of infrastructure, such as a geography lab and library where materials (maps, globes, and computers, inter alia) should be stored, was raised as problematic in the Luvuvhu Circuit. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:354) indicated that having GIS in the curriculum cannot be achieved without systematic initiatives to create an appropriate teaching environment and skills for teachers entrusted with teaching the concept. One of the major issues identified during data presentation and analysis on this point was the lack of a Geography laboratory and resources in teaching map work and GIS, which hindered both the teacher's and learners' academic performance in these concepts. The results show that poorly resourced public schools are as good as the learners they produce. One would add that a combination of issues, such as a shortage of teaching and learning equipment and materials, negatively affects the learners' performance.

6.3.1.2 Lack of experienced teachers.

The lack of teachers who have experience in teaching map work and GIS topics came out as problematic in most schools in the circuit. Newly qualified teachers have little knowledge in this respect, while the rest are old teachers with outdated knowledge and are computer illiterate. The argument is that old teachers were not trained on how to teach map work and GIS concepts, given the constant curriculum changes due to modern technology and digitisation (Jenkins, 2020:178). Such a situation has created gaps in the old teachers' subject knowledge. This implies that the cause for poor performance in these topics varies from school to school, as some schools do not have old teachers who were not trained to teach map work and GIS. In this context, it becomes the duty of those teachers to academically improve themselves in view of the ever-changing world influenced by information technology (Jeyara, 2019:33). Consequently, teaching and learning cannot be promoted if teachers do not improve their academic and professional qualifications to meet the demands of the 21st century. Teachers battle with content-

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knowledge-short-comings regarding map work and GIS, thereby negatively impacting the Geography curricula delivery in schools (Mthiyane et al., 2019). This is a serious problem that requires governmental intervention in terms of assisting the affected Geography teachers to study further by providing bursaries geared explicitly towards promoting effective curricula delivery. That there is a need for the GDHs, as well as their teachers, to be motivated at the national level is unquestionable.

Furthermore, the teachers' attitude towards map work and GIS was said to contribute towards the poor-quality teaching and learning as exhibited in the learners' dismal performances in Geography across the Grades and schools. Teachers apparently do not have an interest in teaching Geography at all given their documented complaints about poor working conditions and salaries (Mukondeleli, 2018:55). Data presentation and analysis revealed that teachers were not enthusiastic about going to the classroom as they feel that the government is short-changing them. Their perceived or real grievances are exacerbated by the ever-increasing workload where newly introduced sections in the Geography curriculum add to their woes (Mukondeleli, 2018:58). Teachers who have 30 years and above of experience are bound to experience challenges because when they were trained as teachers these newly introduced concepts were not there in the curriculum. The bottom line is that the new concepts that are added to the Geography curricula highlight the insensitivity of the education system to the already overburdened Geography teachers. The results further suggest that due to the teachers' poor content knowledge, learners have become disillusioned by the way they are taught in class. The results also suggest that the use of English as a medium of instruction in government schools has become a stumbling block to the effective delivery of curricula in schools.

6.3.1.3 Teacher reluctance for DHs class visits

Another aspect that was exposed during data presentation and analysis was that teachers do not want to be observed while teaching in the classroom by their GDHs. Their covert refusal suggests that quality teaching and learning depends on the commitment of teachers and learners who should be ready to respond to changes that promote quality

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teaching and learning and professional development (Nhlapo, 2021:35). In actual fact, the teachers' supposed insubordination in this respect reveals the deep-ingrained problems the GDHs face in the execution of their duties in schools. There are many problems that affect effective curriculum delivery, and some of them are self-inflicted, as shown here. Thus, the GDHs' resilience and strategic management of wayward teachers count for success if such problems are reduced or their damage to effective curricula delivery is minimised (Fletcher-Wood, 2017). It is in this context that class size matters if teachers are to be positive to class visits from the GDHs. The results show that schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit have different problems that manifest through their Geography teachers' behavioural patterns. That is, most GDHs in the circuit have ill-disciplined teachers with no regard for superiors concerning class visits and observation.

6.3.1.4 Lack of Parental Involvement.

Furthermore, the results showed that in general, learners are not interested in learning while some have no support materials to learn map work and GIS. The understanding is that learners do not have an interest in learning given that they come from broken homes where parents do not instil the value of education to them (Spaull, 2013:449). Some parents, hence, are not involved in their children's education. The parent's failure to monitor their children's schoolwork or help them with homework negatively impacts curriculum delivery in that such children come to school without doing homework. The above tends to demoralise teachers who then develop negative attitudes towards those children (Spaull, 2013:35). Without help from both teachers and parents, it goes without saying that such learners would not perform well in their studies, a problem compounded by the lack of resources for those learners who might have to work alone, without any home support.

6.3.1.5 Lack of resources

The lack of resources came out as a serious concern to the participants when data was analysed. Most schools do not have learning materials for map work and GIS to help

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teachers and learners put theory into practice (Ahiaku et al., 2019:19). This makes it difficult for teachers and learners to work effectively together. Resources such as maps, globes, atlas, rain gauges, computers and related software programs, instruments, and projectors, among others, are largely unavailable in public schools (Ahiaku et al., 2019). Due to the non-availability of these resources, it becomes difficult for teachers to teach the practical aspect of Geography, thereby, emphasising theory as a result. In this case, Geography map work and GIS, for example, cannot be taught with understanding to learners without the necessary equipment and instruments (Kalane et al., 2022:201). The point is that Geography is a living subject that should be taught with appropriate instruments. The perception is that schools with enough resources positively impact the learners' academic performance (Madonsela & Proches, 2022:192). In this regard, public rural-based schools would always struggle to positively impact their learners' academic performance if urgent measures to equip them with Geography resources are not taken. The results show that schools with hard-working principals and deputy principals are epitomised by adequate teaching materials, classroom furniture, disciplined learners, satisfied teachers, and high academic performance, *inter alia*. Conversely, schools with poor management are characterised by teachers who lack confidence in their work due to several factors, such as lack of teaching resources, rude learners, chronic late coming, high absenteeism rate, and below-standard performance.

6.3.1.6 Language barrier

Another prominent feature that came up during data analysis as problematic was English as a barrier to learner performance in examinations. English language proficiency is considered to be a predictor of learner academic performance in South Africa (DBE, 2018). The learners' adequate understanding of the medium of communication in the teaching and learning process is paramount. Data analysis in this respect showed that the majority of learners in rural schools have a serious problem communicating in English. This affects their academic performance because English is their second language, therefore, if they fail to understand their teacher's teaching, the chances of them performing badly in Geography are high (Makgato & Mudzanani, 2019:103). That is,

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even in their examinations, they would not understand questions written in English. Another area of concern here is the teachers who worsen the situation by teaching learners Geography concepts in their mother tongue (Mkhwanazi, Ndlovu, Ngema & Bansilal, 2021:9). The assumption is that learners in rural areas do not understand English and it becomes a waste of time, therefore, to teach them in English (Mthiyane, Naidoo & Bertram, 2019:67). The results also suggest that the use of English as a medium of instruction in government schools has become a stumbling block to the effective delivery of curricula in schools. The English language is not native to the Luvuvhu area, and hence the difficulties learners experience when communicating in it.

6.3.1.7 Workload

In addition to the above observation, workload was prominent as one of the factors that impacted the effectiveness of teaching and learning in Geography. The GDHs have a lot to do besides teaching their classes as they are expected to teach, manage their subject, and give feedback to both teachers and learners after assessment and teaching (Dumakude, 2022:118). In the schools' hierarchical terms, the GDHs are middle managers who are expected to have a sound organisation of their routine work, leadership skills, and knowledge of Geography as a subject, hence, the GDHs play double roles of being a leader and manager (Li, Poon, Lai & Tam, 2018). The GDHs work under critical conditions where they have to justify directives from higher authorities to their subordinates (Okia, Naluwemba & Kasule, 2021). This implies that the GDHs are duty-bound to develop departmental policies and discuss them with their subordinates before they are implemented. Due to the load of their work, it becomes difficult for the GDHs to perform their roles satisfactorily (Dumakude, 2022:92). Their hands are completely full, but they are still expected to teach overcrowded classes that are supposed to perform satisfactorily as well. The DHs, hence, should be supported internally by the principals and their deputies, and externally by the curriculum advisors, as motivation enhances one's performance at work.

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6.3.1.8 Time management challenges

Time management is one of the challenges the GDHs were discovered to face in their endeavour to effectively implement curricula. Proper time management is necessary in order to execute one's duties effectively (DBE, 2022). When analysing the data, it emerged that departmental workshops and meetings consume too much time, thereby negatively affecting the teaching and learning process. When teaching and learning is disturbed, the learners' performance is also affected as lessons are not delivered. When meetings are held during school hours, the GDHs and their teachers lose valuable teaching time while learners stay idle in the classrooms (Mthiyane et al., 2019:70). In order to make up for the lost time, the GDHs work overtime under pressure to fulfil the ATP expectations. Working under pressure makes the GDHs' work challenging, and hence negatively impacts the quality of teaching and learning (Makgato & Mudzanani, 2019:99). It is, however, easy to solve the issue of time here - workshops and meetings could be held after classes have ended in order to ensure that all lessons are covered.

6.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT CONSTRAINTS DOES GEOGRAPHY DHS FACE IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY?

Geography DH as middle managers faces some constraints when monitoring teaching and learning and teachers. The focus is on the GDHs, Geography teachers and, the teaching of map work and GIS.

6.4.1 Factors that Affect Curriculum Delivery in Schools

The data analysis showed that the duties of the school principal, *inter alia,* are - overseeing all higher-level operations in the school, creating a safe learning environment, setting performance goals for both learners and teachers and making sure those goals are attained (Madonsela & Proches, 2022:193). Those of the deputy principal include supporting the principal in operational and academic matters, having a comprehensive understanding of the curricula, and being an accounting officer of the curricula delivery

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(Madonsela & Proches, 2022:193). To this end, the factors that affect Geography curricula delivery in schools are high enrolment leading to overcrowded classes, shortage of resources to teach map work and GIS, and the learner's lack of interest in learning.

6.4.1.1 Negative attitude towards learning.

When analysing data, the researcher realised that GIS is a challenge to teachers as they had difficulties in teaching the concept, while learners were seen as not ready to learn GIS and did not focus on their schoolwork. Negative attitudes towards map work and GIS by both learners and teachers also contributed to poor curricula delivery in the Luvuvhu Circuit (Šiljeg, Milanović & Marić, 2022:846; Hlatswayo & Manik, 2022:345). Another factor that hindered Geography curricula delivery in schools was language. That is, the use of English as the medium of communication when teaching is a barrier to effective curriculum delivery in class. Learners in rural public schools can hardly converse in English given their rural background and the lack of exposure to environments where English is highly spoken (Hlatswayo & Manik, 2022:345). To improve the learners' communication in English, the Geography teachers should liaise with the English language teachers so that the latter can assist learners in English language proficiency.

Another factor that hinders effective curriculum delivery is that of parents failing to support teachers at school. The issue here is that some parents do not check their children's schoolwork and do not attend the school's parent meetings. Driessen (2021:2) asserts that parents who have high aspirations and expectations for their children contribute to their children's excellent academic performance. Also identified as hindering the Geography curricula delivery were map work and GIS concepts that were said to be difficult to teach. This is a challenge because some Geography teachers were not trained to teach map work and GIS (Hlatswayo & Manik, 2022:345). Furthermore, the time allocated for map work and GIS is not enough, as these concepts require calculations. It is common knowledge that teachers and learners have difficulties in Mathematics; this lack of mathematical skills negatively affects the learners' academic performance

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(Hlatswayo & Manik, 2022:346). Jayaram (2019:2) notes that quality teachers exhibit responsive and reflective teaching where learners get knowledge transfer from them and then construct it through meaningful involvement in activities as well as outside of the classroom. There is not much done by the DBE to motivate the GDHs and other teaching staff in schools on this issue, hence, the general mood in schools among teachers is that of disillusionment.

6.4.1.2 Shortage of Resources

The Geography curriculum requires the use of GIS tools to better the Geography teaching. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:338) argue that the GIS concepts should be taught in GIS laboratories where learners are taught both the theory and practical applications. However, rural schools do not have Geography laboratories. The lack of such laboratories hinders effective curriculum delivery in class.

The teachers' difficulties in teaching map work and calculations hinder the Geography curricula delivery in the context of map work and GIS. Furthermore, some Geography teachers do not teach map work because they are not mathematically literate (Šiljeg et al., 2022:846). This makes it difficult for teachers to teach calculations, leaving learners vulnerable to such topics. Results show that the time allocated is not enough as this topic needs calculations, and some learners are slow as they do not have equipment like calculators and instruments and have difficulty dealing with mathematical problems. Jayara (2019:2) describes the teachers' poor mathematical skills that contribute to high failure rate in Mathematics and other Science subjects.

6.5 RESEARCH QUESTION 4: WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE USED TO MOTIVATE GDHs TO SUPPORT TEACHERS IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY?

For better performance, there should be some strategies that can be implemented to motivate Geography DH to support teachers in curriculum delivery. Supervision of

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teaching and learning ensures effective leadership and efficient management of the teaching and learning process.

6.5.1 Strategies to Motivate Geography Departmental Heads

These discussions will focus on the GDHs and the strategies to help them in schools. Supervision and curriculum management ensures effective leadership and efficient management. The GDHs should have one-on-one meetings with the Circuit Manager to motivate and support them.

6.5.1.1 Geography departmental head and teachers' motivation.

One of the issues that came up during data analysis was that there is a need for the DBE to supply teaching and learning materials to disadvantaged rural schools in order to enhance effective teaching and learning to improve the learners' academic performance. Furthermore, the GDHs should be accountable to their subject leaders by periodically holding accountability meetings with their subordinates (Dumakude, 2022:109). In such meetings, for example, issues that negatively impact curriculum delivery and those that promote it should be discussed to enhance curriculum delivery. In particular, workshops and training in map work and GIS teaching should be conducted (Hlatswayo & Manik, 2022:340) at the circuit and district levels in order to improve the teachers' pedagogical skills. Also prominent during data analysis was the issue of excellence awards at the circuit level that can help to motivate the Geography teachers who were disgruntled with teaching large classes. Curriculum management is about curriculum improvement and effective implementation (Massey & Pretorious, 2018:3). This is to say that the GDHs' contributions to curricula delivery in schools are underpinned by the motivational gestures provided by their seniors at work. Motivating teachers is one of the many strategies that can help improve the learners' academic performance in schools. In contrast, demotivated teachers are likely to bring down the schools' pass rate as they are the ones who teach learners daily.

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6.5.1.2 DBE's Motivation of GDHs

Another topical issue during the data analysis was the availability of resources that was seen as the predictor of the learners' performance in Geography. If instructional facilities and materials such as textbooks, weather stations, laboratories, maps and globes, were made available to rural schools, both teachers and learners would be motivated to work harder to promote the Geography curricula delivery. Resources and teaching materials are necessary for effective teaching and learning in Geography or any other subject (Dumakude, 2022:110). The results show that there is a need for the DBE to improve the teachers' working conditions as well as their remuneration packages. Furthermore, the results suggest that there is a lot the DBE could do in order to help the GDHs work hard to improve the learners' performance in Geography. That there is a need for the GDHs, as well as their teachers, to be motivated at the national level is unquestionable. Demotivated and dissatisfied teachers are a disaster to the country's education system and the future of the young generation.

6.5.1.3 Parental support

Furthermore, parents and school governing bodies should provide support to the GDHs by funding Geography learners to undertake educational field trips - learners perform better through doing and seeing (Madonsela & Proches, 2022:201). Field trips could be motivation for learners to do better in the subject. There is a need for parental support to motivate GDH and teachers for effective teaching and learning that may bring better results in Geography.

6.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter discussed the results that emerged from the study. The participants showed that they were aware of the roles of the GDHs in curriculum delivery; they ensure that teachers start their lessons on time, draw departmental policies, encourage learners to develop an interest in geography as a subject and make them understand the geographical features they face daily. Monitoring teachers will ensure that they adhere to the departmental policy on curriculum delivery. The objective was to ensure that

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effective teaching and learning of geography curricula was done to enhance learner academic performance. This means that if rural schools are equipped with modern teaching materials, technology and general resources, standardised teaching might be achieved. The training of teachers in map work and GIS to improve effective teaching and learning in schools was uppermost in the participants' views. Learners should be encouraged to learn map work and GIS as these concepts are important in the Geography curricula. Career-wise, studying these concepts would lead to learners pursuing careers such as - geospatial managers, GIS specialists, cartographers and environmental Sciences experts. Other views were to the effect that the Geography teachers needed training in map work and GIS to improve their lesson delivery. The results suggest that, in general, teachers lack content knowledge on mapwork and GIS topics, showing that some do not have expertise on how to teach these concepts. Hence, staff development is needed on how these concepts can be taught. The results suggest that working together ensures effective teaching in schools; however, according to the participant's views, one would argue that the mechanisms applied by those schools do not generate effective curricula delivery in that SMT just follow policy. There is no zeal among the SMT members to provide innovative and creative methods of ensuring effective teaching and learning, such as the provision of incentives to hard-working and dedicated teachers and the cumulation of a points system for outstanding teachers, which leads to promotional posts. Learners also needed to be ready to learn map work and GIS if they were to do well in these concepts. The results show that a lot has been done by different schools in Luvuvhu Circuit that may improve the pass rate. Both teachers and learners were identified as contributing to the pass rate in geography. Thus, different remedial activities are required for each category according to its weaknesses. One would suggest that improving the teachers' pedagogical understanding and effectiveness will complement the effort put in by schools. When learners have relevant geography materials to use during lessons and the correct teaching method used by teachers, this would enable the learner to master the concept taught. School principals and deputy principals should support and motivate GDHs by ensuring that teaching and learning materials for effective teaching and learning are available. In contrast, demotivated GDHs are likely to bring down the school pass rate. They are the ones who motivate the teachers who teach

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learners daily. Results suggest that DBE could help GDH to work hard to improve geography performance by motivating GDH and teachers at the national level; this could be in any form as long as it can make GDH and teachers motivated in their work at school. Improving teachers' working conditions as well as their remuneration packages, hence, is essential. Parental involvement is a vital factor because it improves learners' attendance, social skills and behaviour and helps learners to adapt well at school. Therefore, these findings suggested the development of the proposed model on the approaches to enhance GDH roles.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the findings of the study by interpreting and integrating data collected from secondary sources, as well as infusing the researcher's personal experience as a GDH. The research questions provided the framework for the interpretation of the study findings and in the process, guided the discussion to highlight the significance of the results. This chapter presents the summary, conclusion, recommendations, and suggestions for the study.

7.2 SUMMARY

The summary of this investigation is guided by research questions and literature reviewed.

7.2.1. Summary of Findings.

The study was informed by the main research question - *What is the role of GDH in curriculum delivery on learner academic performance in secondary schools of the Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe East District of the Limpopo Province?*

The school as an organisation should be managed effectively. Doing so is the responsibility of the school management team that comprises of the departmental heads, principals, and deputy principals. The departmental head is the manager of the curriculum and ensures that teaching and learning take place effectively in the classroom. Kalane and Rambuda (2022:196) asserted that the management and leadership of the school are not vested in the principal alone but are a teamwork responsibility, which includes middle managers who are the departmental heads. Departmental heads are

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critical agents in teaching and learning and are responsible for the school's academic performance.

The geography departmental head provides leadership to the department. Kruse, Hackmann and Lindle (2020:2) concurred that the departmental head is an administrator of the unit, who should provide quality leadership even through times of sudden change and crisis. The geography head oversees Geography policies and their implementation to improve curriculum delivery and the learners' academic performance. By providing teachers with ATPs, holding departmental meetings, and tracking curriculum coverage per term, the GDHs become the champions of curriculum delivery in schools. Like other teachers, geography departmental heads should be viewed as professionals capable of overcoming the challenges they face in running their departments (Nhlapo, 2021:1). The study established that the GDH's main roles are management and leadership, to provide support to Geography teachers, class visits and teacher assessment and dissemination of information to ensure that teaching and learning are effective within the school. The GDH also influences how Geography teachers should deliver the geography curricula. By investigating the roles of the GDHs towards curricula delivery, the study found that they provide Geography teachers with support, manage teaching and learning, and hold meetings with the teachers. The DHs were expected to avail all materials to teachers such as ATPs, examination guidelines, and textbooks. Monitoring of learners' and teachers' work and ensuring that teachers teach what they are expected to teach in line with the ATP were also part of their job description. Profiling of learners according to their performance reporting learners' performance, and communication with parents also fall under the GDH's duties. Madonsela and Proches (2022:2) indicate that DHs or curriculum managers are responsible for leading and managing their departments and need to effectively maintain sustainable connections and trust. Knowing the GDH's roles enhanced the geography teachers' curricula delivery. The roles of the DHs could improve school outcomes by influencing the capacity levels of teachers (Marishane, 2016:22). GDHs are pivotal in the view of Tapala et al. (2021:1) as they have huge responsibilities of heading phases, departments, and teaching subjects, while also focusing on leadership and management tasks as senior teachers. The work of the DH is demanding, driven by

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expectations on curricula leadership and delivery that emanate from the system and other teachers, thus, such expectations could cause tensions concerning how they execute their roles.

High enrolment, shortage of resources, lack of interest from learners, overcrowding in classes as well as lack of teaching and learning materials for mapwork and geographical information systems. Some teachers pointed out that geographical information systems (GIS) are challenging, as learners are not ready to learn, or focused on their school work. Negative attitudes towards mapwork and GIS from both learners and teachers play a pivotal role. Teachers revealed that the language barrier is an obstacle in teaching Geography. English is used as a medium of instruction in schools; hence, it can be considered as a predictor of the performance of learners. Some participants revealed that geography teachers should liaise with English teachers to assist learners in English language proficiency.

The difficulty for teachers in teaching mapwork calculations played a detrimental role in delivering the geography mapwork curriculum, as some geography teachers are not trained to teach mapwork and GIS topics. Furthermore, the time allocated is not enough as these topics need calculations, and as both teachers and learners have difficulty in mathematical skills, this influences the learners' academic performance. Ayara (2019:2) indicates that quality teachers comprise responsive and reflective teaching where learners get knowledge transfer from the teacher and construct it through meaningful involvement activities in the classroom and outside.

The geography curriculum requires the use of GIS tools as more support is needed to better geography teaching. Hlatswayo and Manik (2022:2) alluded that geographical information system topics should be taught in GIS laboratories, where the learners are taught both theory and practical applications.

Subsequently, teachers' difficulty in teaching mapwork calculations played a detrimental role on delivering of the geography curriculum; some Geography teachers are not

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teaching the topic on mapwork because they are not mathematically literate. This makes it difficult for them to teach calculations. Furthermore, the time allocated is not enough as this topic needs calculations, and some learners are slow and have difficulty in mathematical skills. Jayaram (2019:2) elucidates that quality teaching comprises responsive teaching where learners get knowledge transfer from the teacher and construct it through meaningful involvement activities in the classroom and outside the classroom.

The data presented reveal factors that affect Geography curriculum delivery in schools. Some of the factors identified were - high enrolment, shortage of resources, lack of interest from learners, overcrowding of classes and, lack of teaching and learning materials for map work and GIS. It was evident from the data discussed that learners performed poorly in map work and GIS. Jayara (2019:2) alluded to the fact that effective teachers are responsive and reflective in their teaching. This is because learners get knowledge from teachers through the teaching and learning process. Learners reconstruct such knowledge through meaningful involvement in class activities and outside of the classroom. The lack of parental support was also a challenge, since because of that some parents neglect their children's schoolwork. Driessen (2021:2) asserted that parents with high aspirations and expectations for their children contribute to their academic performance. The teacher's difficulties in teaching calculations were seen as detrimental to the effective curriculum delivery in Geography concepts such as map work. In this respect, data revealed that some Geography teachers do not teach map work because they are innumerate. The teacher's innumeracy makes it difficult for them to teach calculations. To compound the difficulties faced in Geography curricula delivery, the use of the English language as a medium of instruction in class has become a barrier to the learners' performance.

Ensuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools is one of the most significant roles of the GDHs. Data discussed about this aspect revealed that the GDHs should have one-on-one meetings with their circuit managers for motivation and support. Doing so would help them to improve teaching and learning and learners' academic

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performance. In order to provide effective curriculum delivery, district and circuit levels' workshops and trainings should be conducted for map work and GIS. Excellence awards at the circuit level were seen as able to motivate the GDHs. Effective curriculum management is about curriculum improvement and effective implementation (Massey & Pretorious, 2018:3). The understanding among the participants was that motivation of any sort was critical to the improvement and effective implementation of the geography curricula (Massey & Pretorious, 2018:3). One can also point out that DBE should also intervene by supporting GDHs and teachers with the good working environment and remuneration packages.

Geography teachers should be well qualified with Geography as their major teaching subject if they are to become effective teachers in the subject. Geography teachers should be motivated and supported when teaching the subject in order to accomplish their task of curriculum delivery/implementation effectively. In this case, the transformational theory posits that leaders and their subordinates raise each other to higher levels of morality and motivation. Korgan and Shahbazi (2016:1) reasoned that transformational leaders create ideas and new perspectives to pave a new path for growth and prosperity within the organisation. These are leaders who develop commitment and passion and mobilise organisation members to make fundamental changes in the organisation. The GDH's role is goal-oriented towards effective curriculum delivery to improve learner academic performance, leading to good results by the end of the academic year. Ausat, Suhertan, Peirisal and Hirawan (2020:1) illustrated that transformational leadership impact positively impacts organisational commitment and work performance. The GDH should instil commitment and influence among the geography teachers to improve the learners' academic achievement. The transformational leader inspires subordinates to achieve anticipated or significant outcomes. Being self-confident in specific Geography curricula areas, such as map work and GIS concepts, is critical to motivating Geography teachers to teach these concepts effectively. In this regard, the Geography teachers should be provided with training and workshops on teaching map work and GIS concepts. Jayara (2019:2) states that quality teachers are responsive and reflective to teaching where learners get knowledge from them to reconstruct it through meaningful involvement

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in activities in the classroom and outside of it. The GDHs should set high standards for teachers so that they can commit to achieving the tasks they set out to do, to the best of their capabilities (Strydom, 2020:15). Quality teachers enhance effective teaching and learning in the classroom, leading to great achievements by the learners. Most teachers have challenges in teaching map work and GIS (Mukondeleli, 2018: 99), making them hesitant to teach these concepts.

Lack of parental support and poor working conditions, insufficient supply of learning and support materials and lack of laboratories are the major challenges to the effective role of geography departmental heads. Kalane and Rambuda (2022:195) reiterate that parents should provide sustainable support to their children in terms of their schoolwork and other school-related needs to enhance the DHs' management of teaching and learning in schools. Lack of parental support was a problem as some learners came from child-headed families, and some parents did not check their children's schoolwork nor attend school parent meetings. Driessen (2021:2) asserts that parents who have high aspirations and expectations for their children contribute to their children's academic performance.

7.2.2 Highlight of new findings

Demotivated GDHs are likely to bring down the school pass rate. They are the ones who motivate the teachers who teach learners daily. Results suggest that DBE could help GDH to work hard to ensure effective curricula delivery by motivating GDH and teachers at the national level.

Language Barrier- Geography and English teachers should liaise with each other to curb language barriers to learners. The results also suggest that the use of English as a medium of instruction in government schools has become a stumbling block to the effective delivery of curricula in schools. The English language is not native to the Luvuvhu area, hence. the difficulties learners experience when communicating in it.

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The results suggest that, in general, teachers lack content knowledge on map work and GIS topics, showing that some do not have expertise on how to teach these concepts. Hence, staff development is needed on how these concepts can be taught. This means that if rural schools are equipped with modern teaching materials, technology and general resources, standardized teaching might be achieved.

Parental involvement is a vital factor because it improves learner's attendance, social skills and behaviour and helps learners to adapt well at school. Therefore, these findings suggested the development of the proposed model on the approaches to enhance GDH roles.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

The study explored the role of the GDHs in curriculum delivery on learners' academic performance in secondary schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit of the Vhembe East District. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are made - the GDH's role in the Geography curricula delivery could be effective if challenges in curriculum delivery are addressed such as class size and lack of infrastructure and resources. The GDHs should be fully supported and motivated as they play significant roles in ensuring that the Geography curricula are delivered effectively in schools. Such support and motivation should begin at the school level and then cascade to the circuit, district, provincial, and national levels. The DBE should play a pivotal role in appointing highly-qualified GDHs so that, they would be able to support teachers with difficult concepts and topics. That is, training is essential for the Geography teachers for the effective teaching and learning of Geography curricula to improve the learners' academic performance. The DBE is the custodian of basic education in South Africa and thus should be at the forefront in training the GDHs on pedagogical skills regarding the effective delivery of Geography curricula in the context of map work and GIS; doing so would empower the GDHs to assist struggling teachers. Equally important is the need for the DBE to provide resources and infrastructure in rural public schools so that teachers and learners have adequate resources and proper classrooms for the effective teaching and learning process. The

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continued failure by the DBE to provide resources would condemn rural learners to a life of perpetual failure.

The idea is to ensure that teaching and learning are done effectively in order to improve the learners' academic performance. It is critical that learners understand and have skills in map work and GIS, two of the most difficult concepts in the Geography curriculum delivery. Before leaving school, learners should have acquired these conceptual skills as they might need them to further their studies or in the world of work. The integration of map skills and GIS with other topics will ensure that when learners leave school, they are holistically integrated into the geophysical systems of the world. For example, the GIS knowledge could be used to examine how human activities affect the environment such as urbanisation, migration, climate change, or natural hazards, *inter alia*.

Parental involvement is important in learners' education as it makes it easier for teachers to work with learners in the classroom and obtain better results. Children who come from supported families performed well in their education in contrast with those from absent parents.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Guided by the research findings, the study recommends the following:

- The DBE should ensure that all teaching and learning resources for Geography are available in all rural schools to enhance effective curriculum delivery. The results show that poorly resourced public schools are as good as the learners they produce.

- The DBE should train Geography teachers in the latest concepts, such as GIS and map skills concepts, to enhance better results in Geography as a subject. The results revealed that in general, teachers lack knowledge about these concepts, hence staff development is needed on how concepts are to be taught.

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- Parents should participate in the education of the children by buying learning materials for them and assisting with homework at home, among other aspects. The results suggest that learners who come from child-headed families and uninvolved parents have difficulties in coping at school. The parent's failure to monitor their children's schoolwork or help them with homework negatively impacts curriculum delivery for these children who come to school without doing their homework.

- Schools should develop policies to curb learners' absenteeism to ensure that teaching time lost is made up. The results show learners lack the zeal to learn, and poorly-sourced schools make it difficult for effective curriculum delivery.

- The DBE should appoint highly qualified Geography DHs in schools so that they can support teachers with difficulties in some topics.

- DBE should appoint more teachers as overcrowding is a problem in some schools. Results show that rural-based schools are difficult to run given their overflowing classrooms, which makes class management difficult and impossible.

- The DBE should ensure that there are enough Geography curriculum advisors to manage and support the GDHs throughout the Circuit as well as the teachers and learners.

- Geography and English teachers should liaise with each other to curb language barriers to learners. The results also suggest that the use of English as a medium of instruction in government schools has become a stumbling block to the effective delivery of curricula in schools. The English language is not native to the Luvuvhu area, hence. the difficulties learners experience when communicating in it.

- GDHs should be motivated in various ways so that they, in turn, motivate Geography teachers to work harder to improve the learners' academic

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performance in schools. The results suggest that DBE could motivate GDH and teachers at the national level; this could be in any form as long as it can make them content and appreciated in their work; this could be in the form of improving working conditions and remuneration packages.

- Schools should be offered tutors from universities who would be responsible for extra classes to learners who lag behind in key Geography concepts. One would also suggest that to enhance the teacher's teaching capabilities to meet the modern teaching trends, universities should contribute by doing pedagogic needs assessment in geography; doing so would also help the universities to shape their pedagogical courses such that they include issues raised from the ground.

- The Department of Education should provide all schools that offer Geography as a subject with specific infrastructure, such as geography labs. The emphasis is on the need for rural public schools to equip themselves with adequate teaching and learning materials if the Geography curricula are to be delivered effectively in class. The results show that rural-based schools are difficult to run given their overflowing classroom, which makes it difficult and almost impossible to manage.

- There is a need for the GDHs as well as their teachers to be motivated at the national level as demotivated and dissatisfied Geography DHs and teachers are a disaster to the country's education system and the future of the young generation.

7.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study experienced limitations such as the area of the study being limited to the Luvuvhu Circuit instead of the rest of the district. This was due to the time being too limited to conduct an effective study throughout the district, hence, only focusing on the Circuit. In addition to the above, the study was limited financially. The researcher did not get enough sponsorship to cover the rest of the schools in the circuit as travelling around is expensive. Given that only a few schools were used to conduct the study, it makes it

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difficult to generalise the results of the study to similar contexts. The researcher was also limited to interviewing the principals, their deputies, GHDs, and the Geography teachers, due to time and financial resources, consequently, curriculum advisors with relevant knowledge were not interviewed. Under normal circumstances, the Curriculum Advisors should have been interviewed as they are the ones who make sure that the curriculum is implemented in the classroom to improve the learners' academic performance. Another limitation is that there was no data collected from learners, the very same people who are affected by the poor curriculum implementation – they would surely have contributed very insightful data.

7.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The researcher suggests further investigation to be done based on the role of the GDH utilising the mixed methods research approach. Such a study would most likely yield significant comprehensive results. A similar study could be conducted focusing on wider research, including curriculum advisors and learners as participants, and the study can cover performance at national, provincial and district levels.

7.7 PROPOSED MODEL ON APPROACHES TO ENHANCE GDH ROLES.

The model developed based on Literature reviewed on the roles of GDH, Transformational theory –the theory that underpins the study, the data presented, analysed, and findings that suggest motivation of GDH from national, provincial, circuit up to school level, and parental support, discussed in Chapter Five and analysed the findings employing the theory that underpins the study made the development of the model as it was the culmination of the issues raised by the participants as affecting the Geography curricula delivery. The six key components of the model collectively demonstrate how the Geography DH roles may be enhanced. Each key component is further divided into complementary compartments on ways that the DH can be empowered. The model consists of six key components - Department of Education,

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school size, Roles of GDH, geography curriculum advisors, parental involvement and professional development.

The model below depicts approaches to enhance DHs' roles for effective curricular delivery.

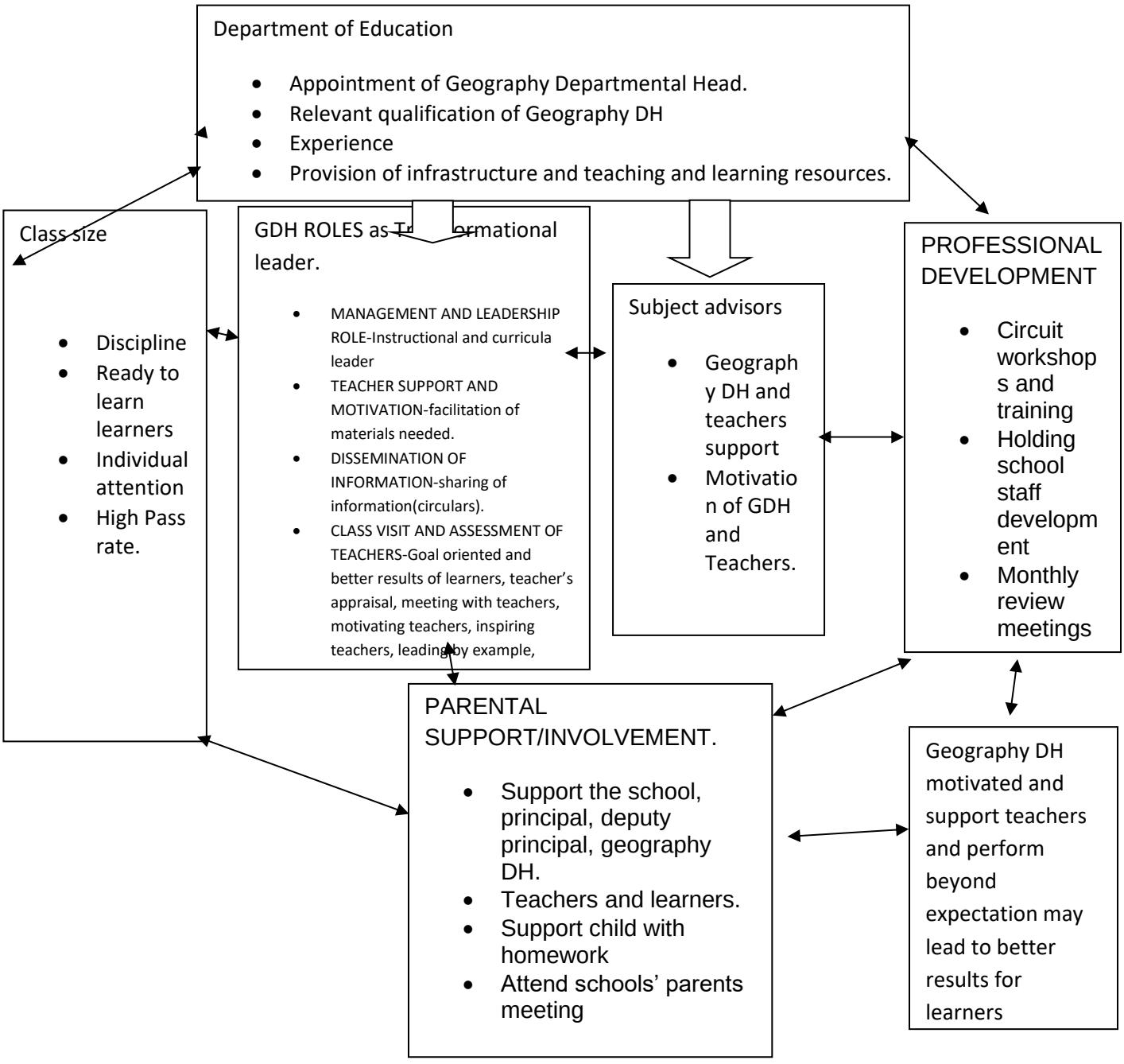

Figure 7.1: Approaches to Enhance GDH Role (Malange, 2024)

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- **The Department of Basic Education**

The Department of Education, as the employer, appoints GDHs - to engage in class teaching, be responsible for the effective function of the subject, and supervise teachers. There is a need for the Department of Education to make sure that candidates who are appointed to the Geography department have relevant qualifications in geography and post-graduate qualifications in management. Furthermore, experience in teaching the subject is of more importance so that the departmental head can support teachers in the subject. The department should learn how to appoint relevant DH and should build Geography laboratories in all schools that teach the subject to enhance the academic performance of learners. Lack of resources emerged as hindering the effective teaching and learning of Geography. Geography as a subject uses the environment as a laboratory, but its topics, such as GIS, need a geography laboratory for the upkeep of computers and other materials to be used in teaching and learning.

- **School Size**

School size is significant as it greatly affects the performance of learners. Large schools have the advantage of performing better because DHs can focus on one subject appointed for, rather than in a small school where there is one DH who manages all the subjects, is also supposed to be teaching in the class, and also making sure that discipline is maintained in the school. From experience, since the researcher is a DH in a small school where there is only one DH who is in a position of deputising and managing the curriculum as well, this is a lot of work. The Department of Education should provide schools with infrastructure so that classes maintain a small number of learners to maintain discipline. Small size classes allow teachers to deliver curriculum more effectively, which increases the likelihood of meeting learners' educational needs, which may lead to better results.

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- **Class Visits**

Class visits done by Geography DH fulfil the departmental policy requirement and its mechanism to assist teachers in delivering curricula effectively. Class visits help to facilitate the needed materials to support teachers towards effective curricula delivery that may lead to better results for learners in Geography. These visits motivate teachers and influence them to work hard. Teachers' lesson preparation during class visits enhances effective teaching and learning which leads to better classroom management as learners will be engaged in activities.

- **Subject Advisors**

Subject advisors are education officials who are experts in the subject curriculum. They visit schools to support both Geography DH and teachers; make sure that GDH has a toolbox that consists of CAPs documents and lesson plans; make sure that teachers are teaching according to the ATP and have exam guidelines; maintain geography pass rate by supporting GDH and teachers by meeting with them; analyse the result with GDH and teachers aimed at making improvement plans for the subject. Subject advisors promote standardisation of teaching and learning that enhance curriculum management. Curriculum advisors need to monitor the geography teachers' and learners' work to ensure that teachers are using the approved pace setter to deliver the curriculum. The GDHs should lead and manage the curriculum, making sure that teachers follow the ATP and use examination guidelines.

- **Professional Development**

Geography teachers should be developed by the circuit and the department. Monthly meetings should be held to review concepts covered in that month and this would help teachers to share ideas and raise pertinent issues that they had encountered during their teaching. During such sessions, teachers' content gap about concepts like mapwork and

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GIS will be attended to which will lead to better performance of teachers in curricula delivery and better performance of learners.

- **Parental Involvement**

Parents support the schooling areas such as - building relationships with the school management team; supporting the school by helping in projects that build the school; making the school environment conducive for teaching and learning; making sure that the school is safe for both teachers and learners; attending parent's meetings to support their children; knowing the performance of their child and coming up with intervention strategy to help their children for better results. Parents supporting children with homework and learning materials help in teaching and learning for better results, thus enhancing the empowerment of Geography DH in influencing curriculum delivery.

If strictly applied, it is hoped that this model would help to improve curriculum delivery and Geography DH as the transformational leader, and teachers will perform beyond expectation, leading to better performance of learners in Geography. Learners will exit secondary schooling knowing all the concepts of geography curriculum which may lead to better further studies and careers for them.

7.8 GENERATION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE

The study extended the existing knowledge about the roles of the GDH without making a complete change in the existing state of the geography curricula. The DBE would most likely use this study to appoint highly qualified Geography DHs who can motivate and support teachers, leading to better results. Motivated teachers are likely to raise the pass rate of learners. From the school level, for the Geography teacher, Mathematics teacher and English teacher, the study would inform them about the need to liaise with each other to curb the language barrier as English is the medium of instruction and assessment in public schools. Mathematics teachers should liaise with the Geography teachers as map work involves calculations so that learners can be helped with Numeracy. The study

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would inform the DBE on appointing highly qualified and experienced Geography DHs to improve and motivate teachers with effective curriculum delivery. The study will inform DBE about the urgent need to train Geography teachers in modern curriculum trends and that a policy should be put in place, with emphasis on all lessons to be taught equally in terms of time.

7.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE STUDY

The study consists of seven chapters.

7.9.1 Chapter One: Introduction and Background

Chapter One introduces the research topic and then outlines - the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, research assumptions, significance of the study, definition of key concepts, delimitation of the study, ethical considerations, and the structure of the thesis.

7.9.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter reviews existing literature relevant to the study and, hence, covers what other researchers have written about the topic in general.

7.9.3 Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

The succeeding Chapter Three explicates the theory that informed this study. The study adopted and adapted the transformational leadership theory in order to understand the roles of the Geography DHs in curricula delivery that may improve the learners' performance in the subject.

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7.9.4 Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

In Chapter Four, the study explains in detail the research design and methodology used to conduct it. Included in this chapter are the research instruments used for the various aspects of conducting research, such as – selecting a sample, data collection and analysis procedures.

7.9.5 Chapter Five: Data Presentation and Analysis

The fifth chapter presents and analyses the data collected from the participants. Data are presented and analysed based on what the participants said in relation to the research objectives. The researcher also interprets the presented and analysed data in conjunction with her views.

7.9.6 Chapter Six: Discussion of Results

Here, the researcher discusses the study results as presented and analysed in the preceding chapter. This is done in the context of the theory that informed this study. In discussing the study results, data from secondary sources were integrated.

7.9.7 Chapter Seven: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This is the study's last chapter. This concluding chapter provides the study summary based on Chapters Four and Five. A concluding section follows that ties up the whole study from the first chapter to the sixth one. The preceding section is succeeded by a list of recommendations based on the findings.

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ADJUNCTS

ADJUNCT 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE; PRINCIPALS/D/PRINCIPALS/GDH/FGD

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

INTRODUCTION

I wish to thank you for accepting to take part on this research project. You are assured that everything you say during the interview will only be used for this project. You should never mention your names, name of your school. You are also free to use any language that will help you express views, without compromise.

PART ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTION

1. How long have you been a principal?

PART TWO: ROLE AND IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY WITHIN THE SCHOOL

1. Please reflect on the situation of your school concerning the culture of curriculum delivery.
2. Some parents are claiming that there is general lack of sound curriculum delivery in some schools around this area, what is your views on that?
3. What is your school shared vision of teaching and learning? Is it adhered to by all teachers and heads of department?
4. As the head of the school, how do you make sure that teaching and learning is taking place?

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PART THREE: FACTORS THAT AFFECT CURRICULUM DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. What are the factors that affect curriculum delivery in your school?
2. What is the school doing about these factors to ensure that teaching and learning is not affected?

PART FOUR: STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USED TO MOTIVATE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD ON SUPPORTING TEACHERS ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY

1. What are the School Improvement Plan (SIP) provisions for professional development of departmental heads?
2. How do you empower Geography departmental head with school leadership skills?

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INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH SCHOOL DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

INTRODUCTION

I wish to thank you for accepting to take part on this research project. You are assured that everything you say during the interview will only be used for this project .You should never mention your names, name of your school. You are also free to use any language that will help you express views without compromise.

PART ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTION

1. How long have you been a deputy principal?

PART TWO: ROLE AND IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY HEAD WITHIN THE SCHOOL

1. Please reflect on the situation at your school concerning the culture of curriculum delivery.
2. Some parents are claiming that there is a general lack of sound curriculum delivery in some schools around the area, what is your view on that?
3. As the deputy principal, how do you make sure that teaching and learning is taking place?

PART THREE: FACTORS THAT AFFECT CURRICULUM DELIVERY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. What are the factors that affect curriculum delivery in your school?
2. What is the school doing about these factors to ensure that teaching and learning is not affected?

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PART FOUR: STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USED TO MOTIVATE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD ON SUPPORTING TEACHERS ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY

1. What are the School Improvement Plans (SIP) provisions for professional development of departmental heads?
2. How do your Geography departmental heads keep abreast with the latest development and initiatives in education?
3. How do you motivate Geography departmental head on supporting Geography teachers on curriculum delivery?
4. How successful are your Geography departmental head in supporting teachers?

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INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD

INTRODUCTION

I wish to thank you for accepting to take part on this research project. You are assured that everything you say during the interview will only be used for this project. You should never mention your names, name of your school. You are also free to use any language that will help you express views without compromise.

PART ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTION

1. How long have you been a Geography departmental head?

PART TWO: ROLE AND IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY WITHIN THE SCHOOL

1. What management and leadership responsibilities do you have at school as the Geography departmental head?
2. Many teachers seem to complain about poor performance of learners in mapwork and GIS, what do you think is the problem?
3. How do you support teachers under your supervision as the departmental head?
4. How do you disseminate important information and build team work in your department?
5. How often do you have subject meetings?

PART THREE: FACTORS THAT AFFECT CURRICULUM DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. What are the factors that affect Geography curriculum delivery in your school?
2. What is the school doing about these factors to ensure that teaching and learning is not affected?

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PART FOUR: CONSTRAINTS THAT PREVENT GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS FROM FULFILLING THE ROLES IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY

1. What are the challenges that you are experiencing in managing teaching and learning in Geography as a subject?
2. How these challenges can be solved?

PART FIVE: STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USED TO MOTIVATE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD ON SUPPORTING TEACHERS ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY

1. How do you motivate and encourage teachers to perform better in Geography Mapwork and GIS.
2. What support mechanism do you use to provide quality teaching of Geography mapwork and GIS.
3. Which teaching strategies can be adopted to enhance the teaching and learning of Geography mapwork techniques and GIS?
4. How many times do you do class visits to your teachers to observe how they deliver curriculum?
5. When using classroom observation as a form of teacher assessment. What does it involve?
6. How often do you have subject meetings?
7. What problems do you encounter during classroom observation of teachers in your department?
8. How are teachers in your department supported and developed?
9. Which area do you think need more support, and what kind of support can be offered and by who?

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FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

I wish to thank you for accepting to take part on this research project. You are assured that everything you say during the interview will only be used for this project. You should never mention your names, name of your school. You are also free to use any language that will help you express views without compromise.

PART ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTION

1. How long have you been a Geography teacher?

PART TWO: ROLE AND IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEAD ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY WITHIN THE SCHOOL

1. How often do you discuss issues related to curriculum delivery with your Geography departmental head?
2. What support do you get from your Geography departmental head in executing your job?
3. How do you feel about your Geography departmental head observing you in the classroom?

PART THREE: FACTORS THAT AFFECT CURRICULUM DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. What challenges do you have in teaching Geography as a subject?
2. Which area do you think you need training /support in to make you a better Geography teacher?
3. Some teachers indicated that Geography mapwork and GIS seem to be a challenge for some teachers, what is your view on this?

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4. How do you find Geography mapwork and GIS for learners?
5. What do you think are the challenges experienced by learners when they learn mapwork and GIS in Geography classroom?
6. What are the challenges you come across as a teacher when you teach mapwork and GIS?

PART FOUR: STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USED TO MOTIVATE

1. In what way can Geography mapwork and GIS be taught with understanding to learners?
2. How do you apply learner assessment in Geography as a learning tool?

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ADJUCT 2: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE CIRCUIT MANAGER

P.O. Box 705
Thohoyandou
0950

28 November 2022

Circuit Manager
Department of Education
Luvuvhu circuit

Dear Madam

PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I **SEANI SYLVIA MALANGE**, student number **9306403**, am a SEDECS DED in Curriculum Studies student at the University of Venda and engaged in a research in Secondary schools under Luvuvhu Circuit. My research study is entitled: **THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY ON LEARNER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LUVUVHU CIRCUIT, VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO.** The aim of the study is to investigate the role of Geography departmental heads in curriculum delivery on learner academic performance in secondary school Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe East District of Limpopo.

I therefore request permission to conduct this research in the following schools: Thase Secondary School, Azwifarwi Secondary School, Tshilala Secondary School, Mukhwantheli Secondary School, Sam Mavhina Secondary School, Thivhilaeli Secondary School, Gole Secondary School and Muvhavha Secondary School. Data collection will take eight weeks, starting from 25 January to 24 March 2023. You are further assured that data collected during the investigation will be highly confidential and

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will only be used for the purpose of my research and will not disturb teaching and learning. For further information about this study, please contact my Promoters: Dr Tshisikhawe M.P. & Dr Muremela M.G. at these numbers: 083 235 7089 and 0714248583.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

_____

Seani Sylvia Malange

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ADJUNCT 3: UHDC APPROVAL LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

OFFICE OF THE DVC: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

TO : MR/MS S.S MALANGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

FROM: PROF. N.N FEZA

DVC: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

DATE : 22 NOVEMBER 2022

DECISIONS TAKEN BY UHDC OF 22nd NOVEMBER 2022

Application for approval of Thesis Proposal Report in the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education: **S.S Malange (9306403)**

Topic: "The Role of Geography Departmental Heads in Curriculum Delivery on Learner Academic Performance in Secondary School Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province."

Supervisor	UNIVEN	Dr. M.P Tshisikhawe
Co-supervisor	UNIVEN	Dr. M.G Muremela

UHDC approved of Thesis Proposal

Type text here

PROF. N.N FEZA
DVC: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

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ADJUNCT 4: RESSC ETHICS CERTIFICATE

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:
Ms. SS Malange

STUDENT NO:
9306403

PROJECT TITLE: **The Role of Geography Departmental Heads in Curriculum Delivery on Learner Academic Performance in Secondary School in Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province.**

ETHICAL CLEARENCE NO: FHSSE/22/PCSEM/03/2109

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr MP Tshisikhawe	UNIVEN, Professional and Curriculum Studies	Supervisor
Dr MG Muremela	UNIVEN, Professional and Curriculum Studies	Co - Supervisor
Ms. SS Malange	UNIVEN, Professional and Curriculum Studies	Investigator – Student

Type: Masters Research
Risk: Minimal risk to humans, animals, or environment (Category 2)
Approval Period: September 2022 – September 2024

The Research Ethics Social Sciences Committee (RESSC) hereby approves your project as indicated above.

General Conditions
While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following.

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
  - Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
  - Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
  - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the REC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date; a new application must be made to the REC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the REC retains the right to:
  - Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project,
  - To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
  - withdraw or postpone approval if:
  - Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
  - It becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
  - The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
  - New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions A it necessary

ISSUED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Date Considered: August 2022

Name of the RESSC Chairperson of the Committee: Prof TS Mashau

Signature

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
2022 -09- 20
Private Bag X5050
Thohoyandou 0950

University of Venda
PRIVATE BAG X5050, THOHOYANDOU, 0950, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA
TELEPHONE (015) 962 8554/8313 FAX (015) 962 9060
"A quality driven financially sustainable, rural-based Comprehensive University"

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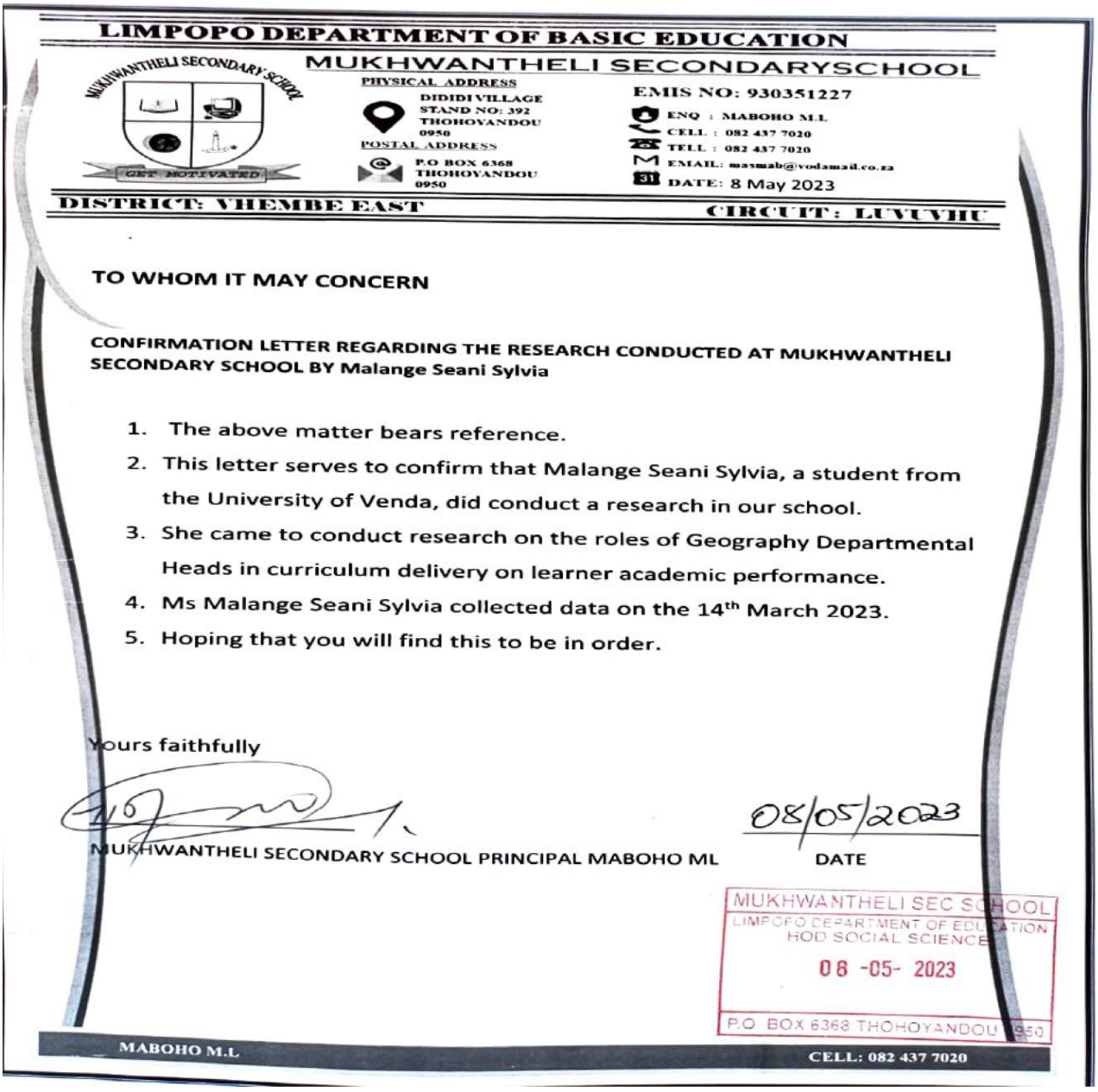
ADJUNCT 5: LETTER FROM MAKHWATHELI SECONDARY SCHOOL



LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

MUKHWANTHELI SECONDARYSCHOOL

MUKHWANTHELI SECONDARY SCHOOL
GET MOTIVATED

PHYSICAL ADDRESS
DIDIDI VILLAGE
STAND NO: 392
THOHOYANDOU
0950

POSTAL ADDRESS
P.O BOX 6368
THOHOYANDOU
0950

EMIS NO: 930351227
ENQ : MABOHO M.L
CELL : 082 437 7020
TELL : 082 437 7020
EMAIL: maxmab@vodamail.co.za
DATE: 8 May 2023

DISTRICT: VHEMBE EAST CIRCUIT: LUVUVHU

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

CONFIRMATION LETTER REGARDING THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT MUKHWANTHELI SECONDARY SCHOOL BY Malange Seani Sylvia

1. The above matter bears reference.
2. This letter serves to confirm that Malange Seani Sylvia, a student from the University of Venda, did conduct a research in our school.
3. She came to conduct research on the roles of Geography Departmental Heads in curriculum delivery on learner academic performance.
4. Ms Malange Seani Sylvia collected data on the 14th March 2023.
5. Hoping that you will find this to be in order.

Yours faithfully

MUKHWANTHELI SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL MABOHO ML

08/05/2023
DATE

MUKHWANTHELI SEC SCHOOL
LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HOD SOCIAL SCIENCE
08 -05- 2023
P.O BOX 6368 THOHOYANDOU 0950

MABOHO M.L CELL: 082 437 7020

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ADJUNCT 6: LETTER FROM AZWIFARI, TSHILALA, SAM MAVHINA AND MUKHWANTHELI SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Azwifarwi Secondary Schoo/

REF : A22097
ENQ : THE PRINCIPAL
CELL NO: 072 557 6758
EMIS NO: 0930351203

P.O Box 2512
THOHOYANDOU
0950
mulaudzifj@yahoo.com

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

SUBJECT: COLLECTION OF RESEARCH DATA FROM AZWIFARWI SECONDARY SCHOOL BY MALANGE SS

1. The above matter refers.
2. This letter serves to confirm that Malange Seani Sylvia, a PHD student at the University of Venda, came to collect data at Azwifarwi Secondary School.
3. The research data was collected on the 21st of February 2023.
4. Hoping that you will find the above in order.

School principal

22/06/2023
Date

AZWIFARWI SEC. SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL
2023 -06- 22
01
P.O BOX 2512
THOHOYANDOU 0950
TEL 015 962 2479

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Creating Future Leaders

TSHILALA SECONDARY SCHOOL

Enq: Balibali N.P
tshilalasecondary@gmail.com
Contact: 076 064 8988
0646030627

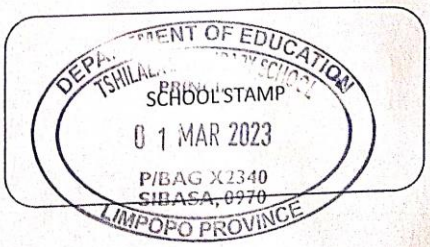
Tshilala Secondary School
Private Bag x 2340
SIBASA
0970
05 MAY 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

CONFIRMATION LETTER REGARDING THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT TSHILALA SECONDARY SCHOOL BY MALANGE SEANI

1. The above subject matter has reference.
2. This letter serves to confirm that MALANGE SEANI, a student from the University of Venda did conduct a research in our school.
3. MALANGE SEANI collected data on the Roles of Geography Departmental Head in Curriculum Delivery on Learner's academic performance.
4. MALANGE SEANI collected data on 01 March 2023.
5. Hoping that you will find this to be in order.

Principal



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Creating Future Leaders

SAM MAVHINA SECONDARY SCHOOL
ENQ: THE PRINCIPAL
CELL NO: 082 763 2524
OR 076 532 8302
E-mail Address:
P.O. BOX 1019
THOHOYANDOU
0950
adbacs@yahoo.com
VISION: "strive for the future"
BLOCK J, Muledane Village, THOHOYANDOU, 0950

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

CONFIRMATION LETTER REGARDING THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT SAM MAVHINA SECONDARY SCHOOL: MALANGE SEANI SYLVIA

1. The above subject matter has reference:
2. This letter serves to confirm that Malange Seani Sylvia, a student from the University of Venda, has collected data on the role of Geography Departmental Head in Curriculum Delivery on Learner Academic Performance.
3. She collected data on the 16th March 2023
4. Hoping that you will find the above in order.

Yours faithfully

Signature (Deputy Principal)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SAM MAVHINA SECONDARY SCHOOL
ADMIN
2023 -03- 16
TEL: 079 205 3333 FAX: 086 530 4266
P.O. BOX 1019, THOHOYANDOU, 0950
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

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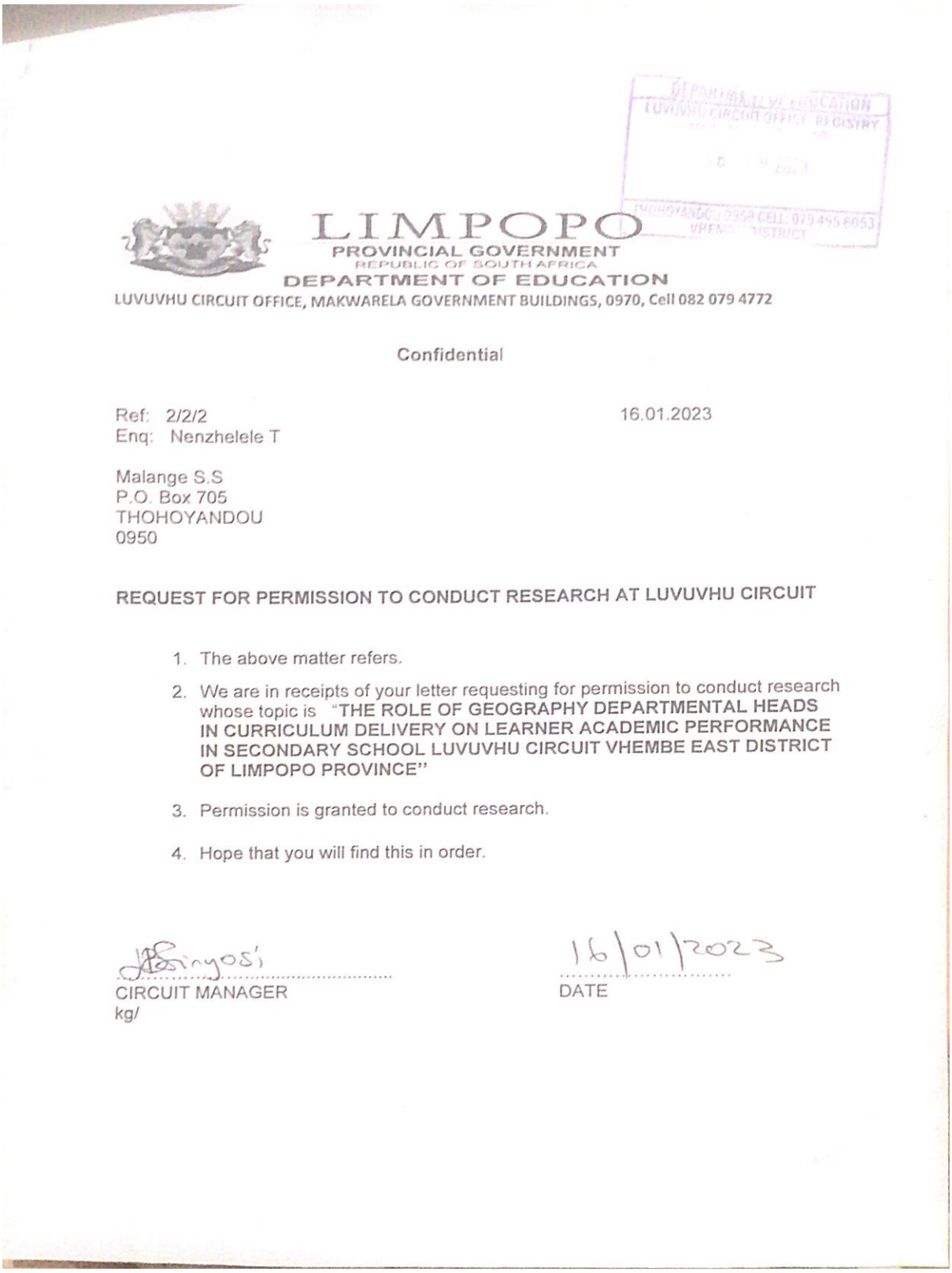
ADJUNCT 8: LETTER FROM LUVUVHU CIRCUIT OFFICE



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LUVUVHU CIRCUIT OFFICE, MAKWARELA GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, 0970, Cell 082 079 4772

Confidential

Ref: 2/2/2
Enq: Nenzhelele T

16.01.2023

Malange S.S
P.O. Box 705
THOHOYANDOU
0950

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT LUVUVHU CIRCUIT

1. The above matter refers.
2. We are in receipts of your letter requesting for permission to conduct research whose topic is "THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY ON LEARNER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LUVUVHU CIRCUIT VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE"
3. Permission is granted to conduct research.
4. Hope that you will find this in order.

.....
CIRCUIT MANAGER
kg/

16/01/2023
.....
DATE

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ADJUNCT 9: LETTER FROM THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICES

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 2/2/2 Enq: Makola MC Tel No: 015 290 9448 E-mail:MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Malanga SS
P O Box 705
Thohoyandou
0950

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **" THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY ON LEARNER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LUVUVHU CIRCUIT, VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE "**
3. The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the School concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.

3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

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

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4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

18/10/2022

Mashaba KM
DDG: CORPORATE SERVICES

Date

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

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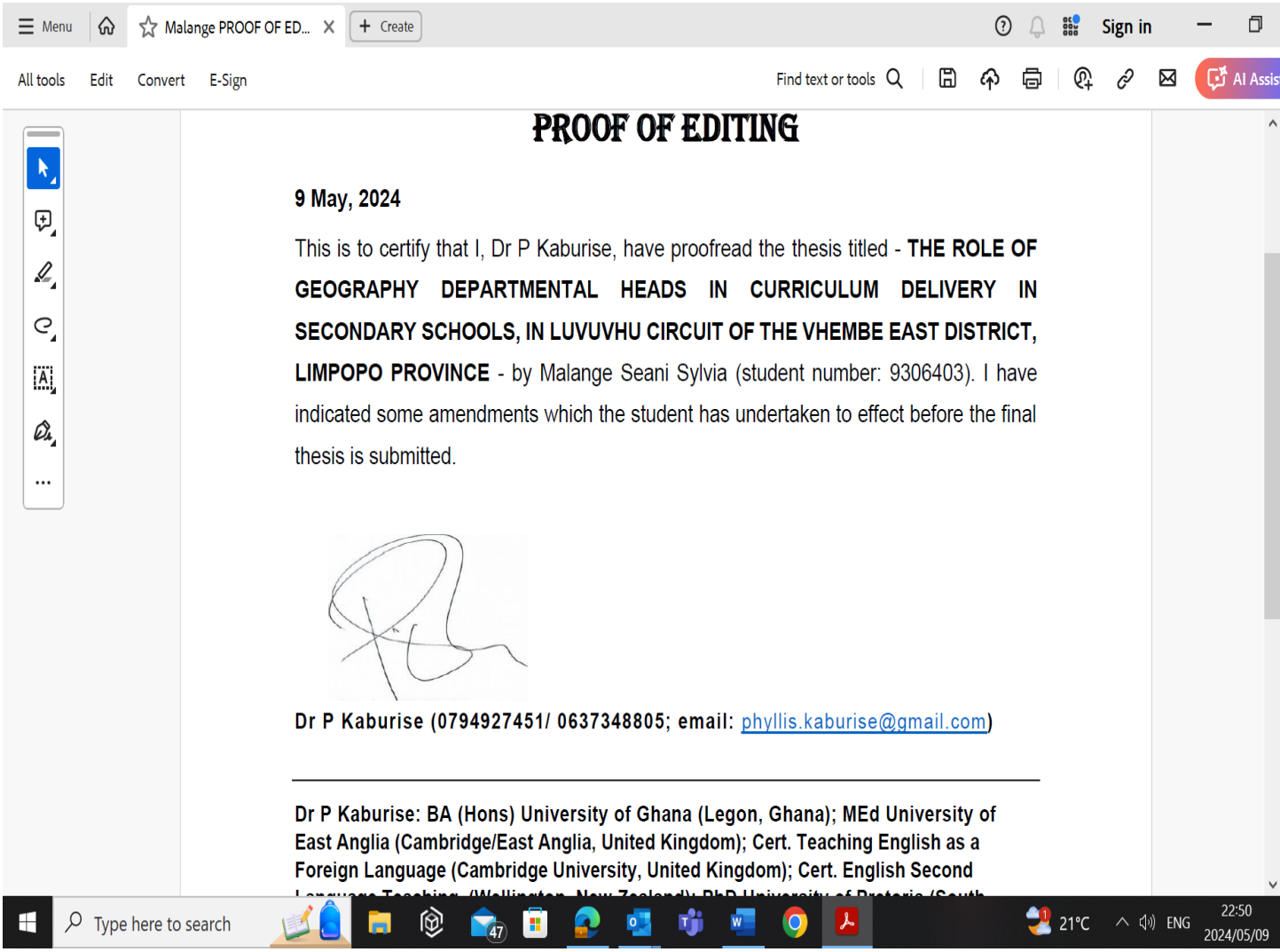
ADJUNCT 10: EDITOR'S LETTER



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PROOF OF EDITING

9 May, 2024

This is to certify that I, Dr P Kaburise, have proofread the thesis titled - **THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENTAL HEADS IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN LUVUVHU CIRCUIT OF THE VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE** - by Malange Seani Sylvia (student number: 9306403). I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect before the final thesis is submitted.

Dr P Kaburise (0794927451/ 0637348805; email: phyllis.kaburise@gmail.com)

Dr P Kaburise: BA (Hons) University of Ghana (Legon, Ghana); MEd University of East Anglia (Cambridge/East Anglia, United Kingdom); Cert. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Cambridge University, United Kingdom); Cert. English Second

Type here to search | 21°C | ENG | 22:50 2024/05/09

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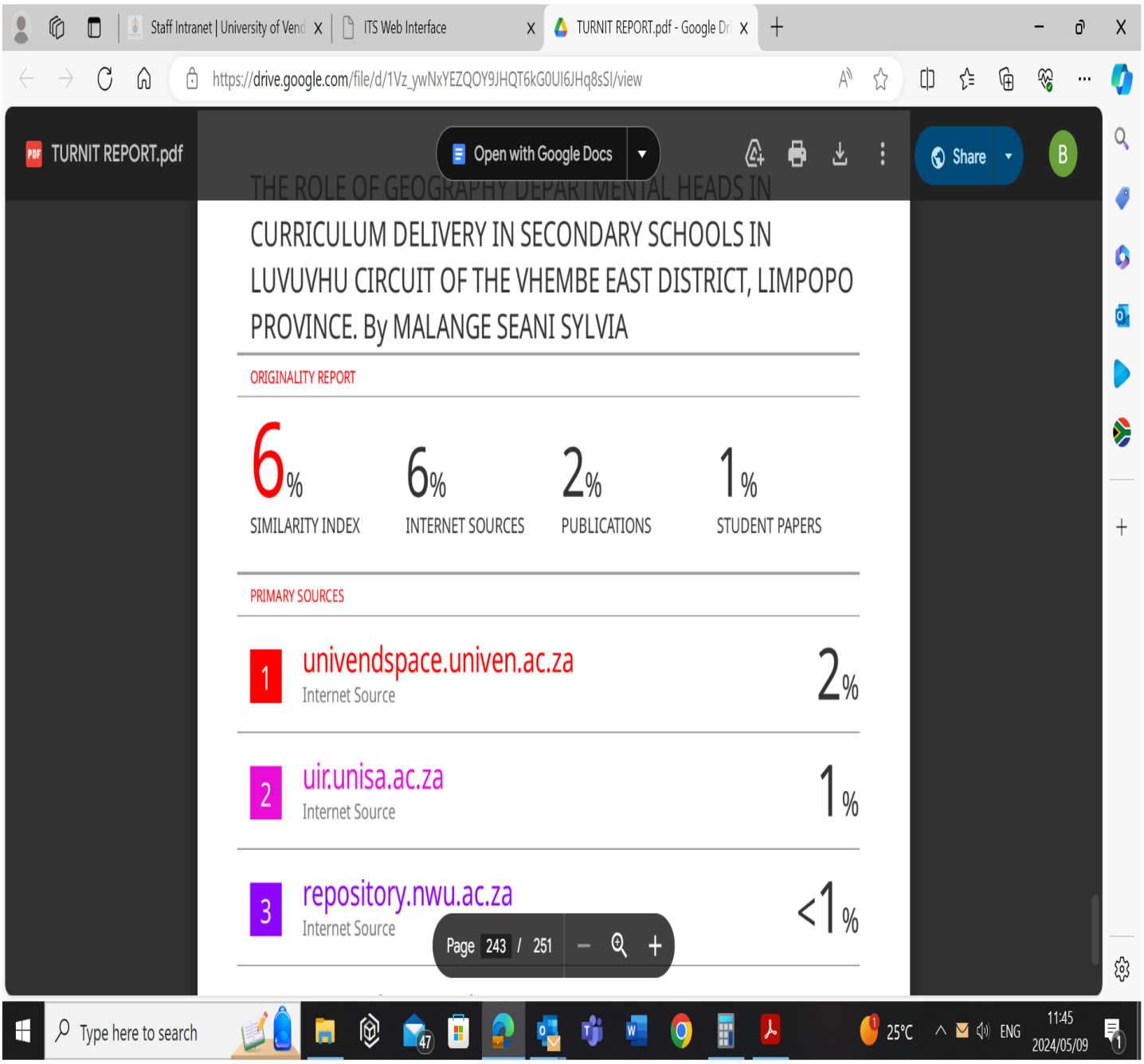
ADJUNCT 11: TURN-IT-IN REPORT



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