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Instructional Leadership and Its Effect on the Teaching and Learning Process: the Case of Head teachers in Selected Basic Schools in the Central Province of Zambia

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Abstract: ***Research asserts that instructional leadership by head teachers affects the teaching and learning process positively and consequently leads to high pupil performance. The National Education Policy of 1996 in Zambia identifies instructional leadership by head teachers as a priority in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in schools. The purpose of this study was to establish whether instructional leadership was being practiced in the selected Basic schools as stated by the National Policy on Education in Zambia. Thirty-two head teachers and one hundred and sixty teachers made up the sample and were selected using purposive sampling. Questionnaires, face to face interviews, focus group discussions and observations were used to collect data. The findings indicated that the head teachers who participated in this study were not practicing much instructional leadership and that this negatively affected the teaching and learning outcomes. The findings further indicated that the majority of the head teachers who participated in this study did not receive any training that prepared them for this role. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education needs to review its policy to see whether its policy objectives are being implemented and the extent to which the policy is achieving its desired effects. The Ministry needs to review pre-service training programs in order to incorporate training in education administration and leadership and further to expand and strengthen the in-service training programmes for head teachers at the National In-service College and create more institutions that will offer similar programmes.***

Keywords: Instructional leadership, teaching-learning process; classroom instruction, pupil performance, Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale, School leadership

1. Introduction

Background

One of the challenges facing schools is the demand for the provision of quality education. Schools are being challenged by educational reformers to implement teaching and learning strategies that will prove effective for both teachers and pupils. As the calls for the provision of quality education are growing louder, the linkage between school leadership and the quality of teaching and learning in schools is a growing concern as well.

Research shows that one of the factors that can influence the quality of teaching and learning in schools is the nature of leadership. According to Harris et al (2003), the most important factor in the success of the schools is the quality of leadership of the head teacher. Fullan (2001) also supports this when he states that increasingly, research has been associating school leadership with the quality of learning and teaching, the motivation of teachers and the ethos of the school. The operative notion is that the quality of teaching and learning is largely dependent upon an individual or group that exercises supervisory responsibility for the core business of schools; namely, curriculum, teaching and learning. Research further shows that effective schools do not only have good managers but also those who stressed the importance of instructional leadership (Brookover & Lezotte, 1982).

Instructional leadership is defined as that leadership that puts teaching and learning in the school as a priority in order to improve student learning. Stronge (1988) states that if principals are to heed the call from educational reformers to become instructional leaders it is obvious that they must take on a dramatically different role. According to Fullan (1991), improved education for our children requires improved instructional leadership. He goes on to say that instructional leadership calls for a shift of emphasis from school leaders concentrating on managerial and administrative tasks to focus more on instruction and academic issues.

Even though research stresses the importance of instructional leadership responsibilities of the principal; the consensus in literature is that it's seldom practiced. Interestingly, among the reasons cited for less emphasis given to instructional leadership is the lack of in depth training for their role as instructional leaders, lack of time to execute instructional activities, increased paper work and the community's expectation that the principal's role is that of a manager (Flath, 1989; Fullan, 1991). Berlin et al (1988) state that if schools are to progress, the principal cannot allow daily duties to interfere with the leadership role in the curriculum.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MOESVTEE) in Zambia has not been left behind in the calls for the provision of quality education. The Ministry of Education National Policy on Education entitled *Educating our Future* (MOE, 1996) identifies the vital role that the school head must play in the pursuit of excellence and quality in education. The policy acknowledges that the person with the major responsibility for this excellence is the school head teacher. The policy document further identifies instructional leadership by head teachers as a priority in enhancing the quality of education in schools.

2. Statement of the Problem

Although, the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational, Training and Early Education's National Policy on Education of 1996 acknowledges the need for head teachers to be instructional leaders in order to improve the quality of education, not much research has been done to establish whether head teachers are instructional leaders. Most of the research that has been carried out in Zambia largely ignores the role of the head teacher as an instructional leader. The studies tended to have focused mainly on their managerial and administrative practices.

Therefore, despite the policy expectations, it is not clear whether head teachers are instructional leaders and the extent to which they are. We also do not know the effect of the head teacher's instructional leadership practices on the teaching and learning process and whether these head teachers received relevant training prior or after their appointment to their position.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish whether head teachers in selected basic schools in the Central Province of Zambia were instructional leaders as stated in the National Policy on Education of 1996 *"Educating Our Future"* and also to establish the extent to which these head teachers practiced instructional leadership. In addition the study sought to establish the effect of instructional leadership practices by head teachers on the teaching and learning process and further to determine whether these head teachers received any training that prepared them for this role either at pre service or in service levels.

4. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the perceptions of head teachers and teachers in the selected basic schools of Central Province about the instructional leadership role of the head teacher.
2. Establish the extent to which instructional leadership was being practiced by head teachers in the selected basic schools of Central Province.
3. Assess the perceptions of the head teachers and teachers about the effects of instructional leadership on the teaching-learning process in the selected basic schools.
4. Establish whether head teachers in the selected basic schools had received any training that prepared them for this role either at pre service or in service.

5. Significance of the study

To our knowledge, there has not been any study undertaken to establish whether instructional leadership is being practiced in basic schools as outlined by the National Policy on education in Zambia, therefore the findings of this study might be useful to the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education policy makers to determine whether its policy objectives are being implemented and the extent to which the policy is achieving the desired effect in schools. The findings may also provide the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders with more insights and evidence on the role of instructional leadership in the teaching and learning process in schools. The findings may provide feedback to develop and refine the training programmes for teachers and that such components like instructional leadership may be incorporated in the training programmes that offer courses in educational administration. The study may be useful to head teachers and help them to reflect on their leadership practices and this would help them see their strengths and weaknesses and thus work on the aspects of their leadership that may need improvement. The study may also be a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge in the area of instructional leadership.

6. Literature Review

Leadership Theories

Researchers define instructional leadership (IL) through the traits, behaviours and processes a person needs to lead a school effectively (Figure 1). This study drew from various leadership theories such as trait, behaviour, contingency, charismatic and transformational leadership theories in order to provide a framework for understanding the historical perspective of instructional leadership. The instructional leadership construct combines many of these theories and puts them into practice.

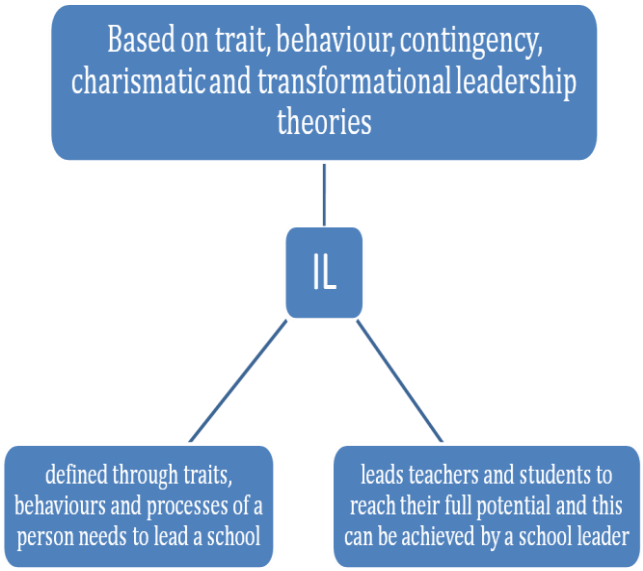

Figure 1: Theoretical framework of instructional leadership

The premise of instructional leadership is to lead teachers and students to reach their full potential by creating conducive learning environments, defining and communicating shared goals, monitoring the teaching and learning process and providing continuous development to teachers and other stakeholders. In order to be an instructional leader a school leader needs to exhibit a combination of different behaviours or practices which are exemplified in the above leadership theories. Alig-Mielcarek (2003) states that effective instructional leaders demonstrate behaviour theory as they initiate structure through behaviours that develop and communicate shared goals with staff, students and community.

Conceptual Framework

This study has been guided by the conceptual framework proposed by Hallinger (2000). This conceptualization transformed the abstract term *instructional leadership* into three dimensions namely: *Defining the School Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate.* The conceptual framework enabled the researcher to observe and measure the presence and practice of instructional leadership. These dimensions were further delineated into 10 instructional leadership functions as shown in the figure below:

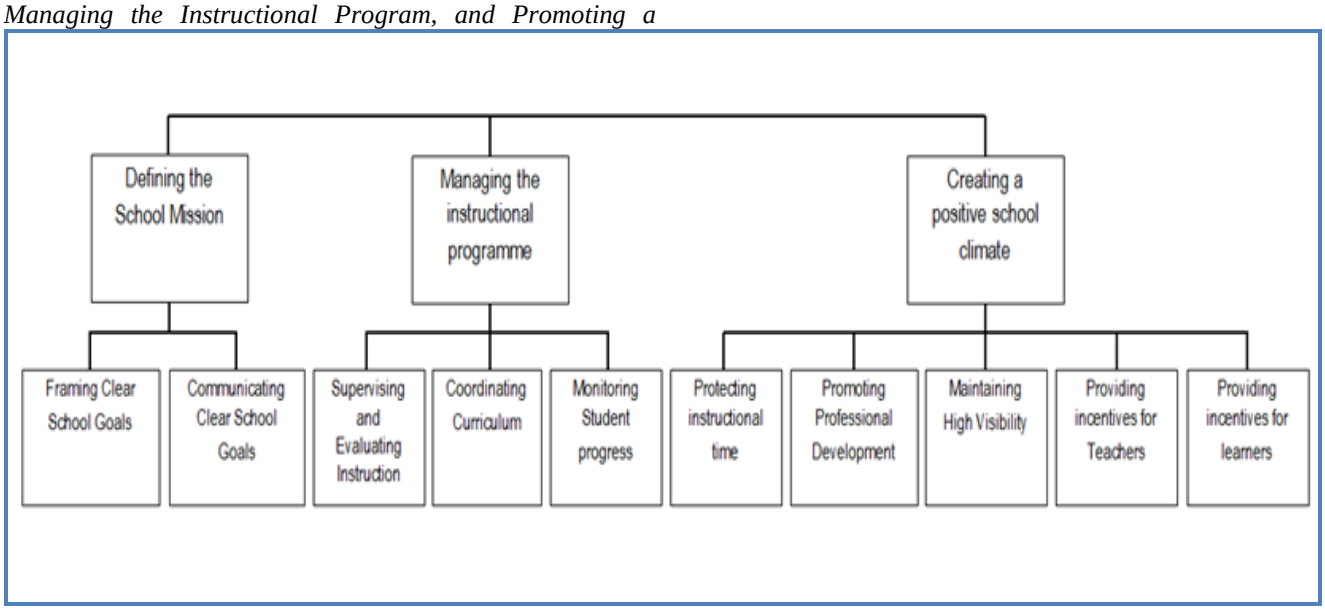

Figure 2: PIMRS Conceptual Framework (Hallinger & Murphy, 2000)

The two functions, Framing the School's Goals and Communicating the School's Goals, comprise the dimension *defining the School's Mission*. These concern the principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has a clear mission and that the mission is focused on the academic progress of its students. Hallinger (2000) notes that this dimension does not assume that the principal defines the school mission alone, instead it proposes that the principal is responsible for ensuring that such a mission exists, for communicating it widely to staff, and ensuring that there is a shared purpose underlying staff efforts to improve teaching and learning in the school. This dimension is the starting point for creating a learner- centred school.

The second dimension is *managing the Instructional Program.* This incorporates three leadership functions: Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, and Monitoring Student Progress. This dimension focuses on the role of the principal in "managing the technical core" of the school. Although in larger schools it is clear that the principal is not the only person involved in monitoring and developing the school's instructional program, the principal is expected to ensure that these tasks are carried out.

The third dimension, *promoting a Positive School Learning Climate*, includes several functions: Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Teacher Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility, Providing Incentives for Teachers, and Providing Incentives for Learning. This dimension is broader in scope and intent than the second dimension and overlaps with dimensions incorporated into transformational leadership frameworks (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2004).

These three dimensions and their composite functions represent a research- informed framework conceptualizing the principal's role as an instructional leader. Although this framework proposes that coordination and control of the academic program of the school remains a key leadership responsibility of the principal, in practice many specific activities and tasks may be shared, delegated, or distributed (Hallinger, 2003; Marks &Printy; 2003, Spillane, 2006).

Effect of Instructional Leadership on Teaching and Learning

Many studies of effective schools emphasized instructional leadership as one of the features of effective schools. It has been identified as the driving force behind the principal to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place in a school. Principals who possess instructional leadership qualities show concern for the students and what teachers do by being visible, they walk around the school to observe how teaching and learning are occurring and when there is something good occurring, they will praise the teachers (Blasé & Blasé, 1998).

Instructional leadership may not encompass all the other aspects of a school; however, it focuses on the core business of a school which is teaching and learning**.** As an instructional leader, the principal is the pivotal point within the school who affects the quality of individual teacher instruction, the height of student achievement, and the degree of efficiency in school functioning. Findley and Findley (1992) state that "if a school is to be an effective one, it will be because of the instructional leadership of the principal" (p. 102).

Flath (1989) concurs: "Research on effective schools indicates that the principal is pivotal in bringing about the conditions that characterize effective schools" (p.20). Ubben and Hughes (cited in Findley &Findley, 1992) claim that:

Although the principal must address certain managerial tasks to ensure an efficient school, the task of the principal must be to keep focused on activities which pave the way for high student achievement (p. 102). Kruger (2003: 207) suggested the presence of the following aspects in a school in order for instructional leadership to succeed:

- All the role players value the processes of teaching and learning
- Practices reflect a commitment to teaching and learning
- The resources needed to facilitate the process of teaching and learning are available
- The school is structured to facilitate the processes of teaching and learning.

Purkey and Smith's review (1983), as well as other studies discussed (Brookover and Lezotte, 1982; Edmonds, 1979), provide significant evidence that instructional leadership impacts the technical core of schools. The influence that an instructional leader has on the teaching and learning is extensive. Researchers have studied this influence with positive results.

Many studies of teachers' perceptions about characteristics of school leaders that influence the teaching and learning process have concluded that behaviours associated with instructional leadership positively influence classroom instruction (Blasé&Blasé, 1999, 1998; Sheppard, 1996; Chrispeels, 1992).

Blasé and Blasé's (1998, 1999) findings indicate that when instructional leaders monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process, there were increases in teacher reflection and reflectively informed instructional behaviours, a rise in implementation on new ideas, greater variety in teaching strategies, more response to student diversity, lessons were prepared and planned more carefully, teachers were more likely to take risks and had more focus on the instructional process, and teachers used professional discretion to make changes in the classroom. Teachers also indicated positive effects on motivation, satisfaction, confidence, and sense of security.

Conversely, principals that did not engage in monitoring and providing feedback of the teaching and learning process had a negative effect on teachers and classroom practice (Blasé&Blasé, 1998). Teachers with non-instructional leaders felt a sense of abandonment, anger, and futility, as well as lower levels of trust and respect for the principal, motivation and self-efficacy.

7. Methodology

Research Design

The survey and case study designs were used in this study. The survey design was used because collection of information was done through interviews and questionnaires while case study was used because the study only focused on instructional leadership and was based on one province out of the ten provinces.

Target Population, Sample and Study Sites

The target population was the head teachers and teachers in all the basic schools in Central Province. The sample comprised 32 basic schools. The study site constituted all the six districts of the province categorized as urban, peri-urban and rural schools.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was used to select 32 head teachers and 160 teachers; targeting 5 teachers per school. Purposive sampling was used because the study required participants to have worked in a given school for one or more years. This was because such a sample enabled the teachers assess their head teachers and also the head teachers to evaluate themselves.

Research Tools and Data Collection Procedure

A questionnaire, the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) was used to collect quantitative data. The PIMRS contains 10 subscales and 50 items. The assessor rates the frequency with which the principal enacts a practice associated with that particular instructional leadership function. Each item is rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from (1) almost never to (5) almost always. The instrument was scored by calculating the mean for the items that comprised each subscale and this resulted in a profile that portrayed perceptions of principal performance on each instructional leadership functions. Interview guides and focus group discussion guide were used to collect qualitative data. Face to face interviews were conducted with head teachers and focus group discussions with teachers. This allowed the researcher to have thorough and detailed information as follow up questions could be asked. The researcher took down notes during the interviews. Both the interviews and focus group discussion were recorded and later transcribed. Observations and document analysis were also used.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics using SPSS and qualitative data was analysed through categorization, finding common patterns and themes and synthesis.

Findings

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and categorized into three segments namely head teachers' responses, teachers' responses and combined responses. Independent sample t tests were run to compare the mean differences in the ten instructional leadership functions and Pearson correlations were also done.

Overall, the head teachers rated themselves higher than their teachers did. The mean scores for head teachers' ratings were between 18.03 and 21.03 (Table 1). The head teachers rated themselves highest in providing professional development, second highest in supervising and evaluating instruction and framing school goals and they rated themselves lowest in providing incentives for teachers, maintaining high visibility and providing incentives for learners.

Table 1: Head teachers' rating of their own instructional leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Promote Development	32	14	25	21.03	2.989
Supervise Evaluate	32	8	25	20.50	3.121
Frame Goals	30	15	25	20.40	2.387
Coordinate Curriculum	31	14	25	20.03	2.331
Protect Time	32	10	25	19.34	3.470
Communicate Goals	31	12	23	18.87	2.566
Monitor Progress	29	14	22	18.69	2.407
Incentives for Learning	32	10	24	18.22	3.643
Maintain Visibility	32	9	24	18.06	3.435
Incentives for Teachers	30	12	24	18.03	3.068

The teachers on the other hand rated their head teachers highest in the category of providing professional development and lowest in maintaining high visibility (Table 2). They further rated the head teachers highly in framing school goals, communicating school goals and coordinating curriculum. Combined ratings showed the lowest categories as maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and for learning. The functions that were rated lowest by head teachers, teachers and the combined ratings mainly belong to the third dimension on the PIMRS which is promoting a positive school climate showing consistence in the pattern of the ratings

Table 2: Teachers' rating of their head teachers' instructional leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Promote Development	158	10	25	20.45	3.790
Frame Goals	150	10	25	19.74	2.998
Communicate Goals	152	11	25	19.36	3.155
Coordinate Curriculum	150	7	25	19.29	3.575
Supervise Evaluate	157	7	25	19.23	3.960
Protect Time	154	10	25	18.62	3.280
Monitor Progress	151	7	25	18.36	4.004
Incentives for Learning	155	5	25	17.64	4.436
Incentives for Teachers	155	5	25	16.83	4.672
Maintain Visibility	156	5	25	16.47	4.592

Independent samples t tests were conducted to establish the differences between the ways the teachers rated their head teachers' instructional leadership and the way the head teachers rated themselves. The tests were conducted at a significant level of 0.05. The results are summarized in Table 3 below. Independent sample t-tests were significant in only one category which is maintaining high visibility (t=-2.246; DF=56.375; p=.029, p< .05), confirming that teachers strongly felt that their head teachers were not highly visible in schools. This significance was very cardinal because almost all the other functions were depended on the availability and visibility of the head teacher.

Table 3: T test results on head teachers' instructional leadership

	Status of participant	*N*	*Mean*	*t value*	*df*	*p value*
Frame Goals	teacher	150	19.74	-1.135	178	.258
	head teacher	30	20.40			
Communicate Goals	teacher	152	19.36	.813	181	.418
	head teacher	31	18.87			
Supervise & Evaluate	teacher	157	19.23	-1.709	187	.089
	head teacher	32	20.50			
Coordinate Curriculum	teacher	150	19.29	-1.461	63.386	.149
	head teacher	31	20.03			
Monitor Progress	teacher	151	18.36	-.588	62.386	.558
	head teacher	29	18.69			
Protect Time	teacher	154	18.62	-1.129	184	.260
	head teacher	32	19.34			
Maintain Visibility	teacher	156	16.47	-2.246	56.375	.029
	head teacher	32	18.06			
Incentives for Teachers	teacher	155	16.83	-1.781	58.651	.080
	head teacher	30	18.03			
Promote Development	teacher	158	20.45	-.956	53.357	.343
	head teacher	32	21.03			
Incentives for Learning	teacher	155	17.64	-.693	185	.489
	head teacher	32	18.22			

Pearson correlation coefficient tests were conducted to establish whether there were associations between the instruction leadership subscales. The tests were conducted at a significant level of 0.01. The results are presented in Table 4 below. Pearson correlations revealed significant relationships between all subscale pairs in all samples with some sub scales showing stronger relationships: incentive for learners and teachers were strongly correlated to maintaining high visibility, supervising and evaluating instruction are strongly related to maintaining high visibility.

Table 4: Correlations between leadership subscales

	FG	CG	SE	CC	MP	PT	MV	IFT	PD	IFL
FG	1	.520**	.589**	.557**	.359**	.473**	.342**	.383**	.458**	.299**
		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	180	173	178	170	170	174	176	173	179	176
CG	.520**	1	.564**	.536**	.490**	.268**	.438**	.352**	.495**	.432**
	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	173	183	182	173	172	177	179	176	181	180
SE	.589**	.564**	1	.494**	.525**	.300**	.534**	.478**	.446**	.367**
	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	178	182	189	180	179	183	185	182	187	184
CC	.557**	.536**	.494**	1	.506**	.352**	.410**	.390**	.525**	.432**
	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	170	173	180	181	171	176	177	174	179	176
MP	.359**	.490**	.525**	.506**	1	.349**	.542**	.480**	.455**	.457**
	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	170	172	179	171	180	174	176	175	178	175
PT	.473**	.268**	.300**	.352**	.349**	1	.357**	.342**	.375**	.258**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000

	174	177	183	176	174	186	182	179	184	181
MV	.342**	.438**	.534**	.410**	.542**	.357**	1	.536**	.452**	.580**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	176	179	185	177	176	182	188	181	186	183
IFT	.383**	.352**	.478**	.390**	.480**	.342**	.536**	1	.512**	.552**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	173	176	182	174	175	179	181	185	183	180
PD	.458**	.495**	.446**	.525**	.455**	.375**	.452**	.512**	1	.432**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	179	181	187	179	178	184	186	183	190	185
IFL	.299**	.432**	.367**	.432**	.457**	.258**	.580**	.552**	.432**	1
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	176	180	184	176	175	181	183	180	185	187

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Key: FG=Frame goals; CG=Communicate goals; SE=Supervise/evaluate; CC=Coordinate curriculum; MP=Monitor progress; PT=Protect time; MV=Maintain visibility; IFT=incentives for teachers; PD=Promote development; IFL=Incentives for teachers.

Qualitative Data

The findings from qualitative data revealed that contrary to the high ratings on the PIMRS, both head teachers and teachers said that the instructional leadership functions of framing school goals, coordinating school goals and coordinating the curriculum were not in the domain of head teachers and also that issues of the curriculum and goals were dealt with at the national level and head teachers were usually not involved.

The findings further revealed that the majority of head teachers did not supervise and evaluate the teaching and learning, monitor student progress, protect instructional time and teach because they were too busy with administrative work. Both the head teachers and teachers felt that a head teacher who teaches would be a motivating factor to both students and pupils and that this would have a positive impact on teaching and learning and consequently pupil performance.

The provision of incentives for both teachers and learners was very minimal and that this demotivated teachers and had a negative effect on teacher performance. The findings further revealed that the continuous professional development that was provided in the schools was a directive from the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MOESVTEE) and not really the initiative of the head teachers and thus it was compulsory to do it. The majority of head teachers who participated in this study did not receive training prior or after their appointment. Further that the head teachers were not very familiar with the term instructional leadership and that most of them were coming across it for the first time and that they were not very conversant with the National Policy on Education *"Educating Our Future".*

According to the observations by the researcher, the majority of the head teachers were not highly visible in the schools and that pupils in most schools would be roaming about or doing general cleaning while classes were going on. The observations revealed that in some schools, the pupils that would be roaming about would actually be waiting for their turn to get into class because due to shortage of classroom space the pupils learned in sessions. These sessions actually led to a reduction in the teaching and learning time. It was clear too that in most cases, the school's instructional tasks did not take precedence over other activities such as sports which would even lead to the cancellation of teaching and learning. The observations also revealed that the head teachers did not supervise the teaching and learning and that this task was almost completely delegated to senior teachers. In the majority of the schools, the environments were not really conducive to teaching and learning, infrastructure was dilapidated especially in rural schools while in urban schools the location of schools close to residential townships, central business centres and churches disturbed and interrupted the teaching and learning time.

However, in a few schools, the head teachers were available and seemed to be on the ground and familiar with what was going on in their schools. The premises in such schools were quiet and orderly and appeared conducive to teaching and learning. In two schools, the researcher found the head teachers teaching.

8. Discussion

The first objective was to assess the perceptions of head teachers and teachers about the instructional leadership role of head teachers in the selected basic schools

The data obtained quantitatively revealed that the head teachers perceived themselves to be practising instructional leadership more than their teachers did. The head teachers rated themselves much higher than their teachers did. This is consistent with documented literature that in studies about instructional leadership, head teachers tended to over rate themselves (Hallinger, 2010) and that credibility should be given more to the teacher ratings .Contrary to the high ratings on the PIMRS, qualitative data showed that the majority of the head teachers were not performing most of the instructional leadership functions as presented on the PIMRS and that most of them accepted that they were not highly visible in the schools because they had to attend to administrative issues. Yet documented literature states that the importance of head teacher visibility throughout the school has been well established as being a key to successful schools (Whitaker, 2003). Gentilucci & Muto, (2007) stated that students have reported that principals who were highly visibly and approachable positively influenced their academic performance.

The second objective was to establish the extent to which instructional leadership was being practiced by the head teachers in the selected basic schools.

Quantitative data suggested that the head teachers who participated in this study did not practice much instructional leadership because most of the key instructional leadership functions that were rated lower in all the three categories fell into the third dimension on Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale conceptual framework. The t-test results were also significant in the instructional leadership function of maintaining high visibility, confirming that teachers who participated in this study felt that their head teachers were not highly visible. Pearson's correlation tests showed that there were significant relationships between all

the subscale pairs in all the samples, implying that the non-performance of a function would affect the other. Some subscales had stronger relationships such as: provision of incentives for teachers and learners was strongly related to maintaining high visibility, supervising and evaluating instruction also is strongly related to maintaining high visibility. Qualitative data also confirmed that most of the head teachers were not highly visible and that they rarely supervised the teaching and learning in their schools and that this had a negative impact on the teaching and learning. According to available literature, there is a significant relationship between the head teachers' instructional leadership and the teachers' job performance, and that this led to improvement in teachers' classroom performance and consequently leads to improved pupil performance. (Enueme & Egwunyenga, 2008; Sergiovanni, 1996)

The **third research objective was to assess the perceptions of head teachers and teachers about the effects of instructional leadership on the teaching and learning process.**
The data obtained qualitatively revealed that both head teachers and teachers overwhelmingly agreed that instructional leadership by head teachers would have a positive effect on the teaching and learning process. However, there was evidence from the responses to the interview questions that the head teachers who participated in this study did not practice most of the key instructional leadership functions as indicated on the PIMRS. Quantitative data also supports this because the key functions of maintaining high visibility, protecting instructional time, providing incentives for both teachers and learners and monitoring student progress are rated much lower in all the three categories of head teacher, teacher and combined ratings, implying that head teachers do not give much attention to these functions. Qualitative data further revealed that the head teachers rarely supervised and evaluated the teaching and learning in their schools because they were mostly busy with office work yet this is a function that Hallinger (2000) ties directly into the classroom level of teaching and learning.

Blasé & Blasé (1998, 1999) indicate that when instructional leaders monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process, there were increases in teacher reflection, lessons were prepared and planned more carefully, teachers were likely to focus more on the instructional process and teachers indicated positive effects on motivation, satisfaction, confidence and sense of security. They further state that school leaders that did not engage in supervising and evaluating instruction had a negative effect on teacher performance and pupil performance.

The fourth research objective was to establish whether the head teachers who participated in this study received relevant training that prepared them for their role either at pre service or in service.
The data obtained qualitatively revealed that the majority of head teachers who participated in this study did not receive training that prepared them for their role prior to the appointment or after. The data further showed that the training that the teachers received during pre-service offered very little and inadequate content on school leadership and that the training in education management and leadership was available mainly through in-service. The findings further revealed that the head teachers depended on the experience of working under what they referred to as "experienced head teachers" and also that there was a lot of trial and error in doing their jobs. The responses further revealed that the education system in Zambia did not have much provision for training head teachers and that there was only one major in-service training institution in the country that offered training in education management and leadership to head teachers.
Documented literature from the national policy on education in Zambia; 'Educating Our Future'(1996) states that head teachers in Zambia are appointed based on their seniority not performance and as a result they lead and manage their schools through trial and error. Research also indicated that among the reasons cited for less emphasis on instructional leadership is the lack of in depth training for their role as instructional leaders. (Flath, 1989; Fullan, 1991)

9. Conclusion

This study concluded that the head teachers who participated in this study perceived themselves to be practising instructional leadership more than their teachers perceived them, on the contrary, the perceptions of the teachers and the data obtained qualitatively revealed that the head teachers were not actively practising much instructional leadership. The data further showed that the key instructional leadership functions were not actively practised and this was confirmed by data obtained qualitatively and also that the head teachers were detached from academic tasks in their schools and that these were mostly delegated to deputy head teachers and senior teachers. This was because the head teachers were too busy with administrative tasks.

The findings from this study showed that instructional leadership would have a positive effect on the teaching and learning process and that the inadequate provision of instructional leadership by the head teachers impacted negatively on the teaching and learning process and consequently led to poor pupil performance.

The study further concluded that the majority of head teachers who participated in this study did not receive training that prepared them for their role. The study also revealed that training was not a requirement for one to be appointed as a head teacher and also that there was only one major institution; the National In-Service Training College that provides in-service training for head teachers in Education Management and leadership and therefore training opportunities were limited.

This study therefore recommends that the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MOESVTEE) should review the national policy on education to see whether its policy objectives on instructional leadership are being implemented and the extent to which they are and that the Ministry of Education should revisit the policy statement on effective schools and the role of head teachers as instructional leaders and ensure that it is implemented. The Directorate of Standards and Curriculum of the Ministry of Education should strengthen

the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning in schools which seem to be relaxed in the urban schools and almost non-existent in the rural schools so that head teachers do not work in isolation. Further that training opportunities in education management and leadership should be expanded and also that such training should be a pre-requisite to appointment as head teacher.

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