

**Leading From the Middle: An Analysis of the
Role and Impact of Academic Middle
Leaders in the Kenyan Secondary School**

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Abstract

Many organisations such as schools are characterized by hierarchical structures. Within these structures are various management positions held by individual post holders with titles such as principal, deputy principal, head of department and even governor. By extension, these individuals have various responsibilities and duties, and play different roles within their respective contexts. This study explores the role of Academic Heads of Departments (AHoDs) in six secondary schools in Kenya; their impact; and, challenges they face within their contexts. The research issues in this study are a result of the realisation that AHoDs are under-utilised and yet they are vital in school improvement (Jones and O’Sullivan, 1997). There is a widely held view that schools rely on the dynamism and leadership qualities of AHoDs for their success (Wise and Bennett, 2003; Busher and Harris, 1999; Sammons et al, 1996; Harris et al, 1996a & b; Harris 1998). These observations show an increasing recognition of the pivotal role AHoDs play in the effective management of the modern school.

However, accompanying middle level management and leadership is the view that the concept of leadership is complex, evolving and likely to be viewed differently in different cultures. This study has adopted the western cultural understanding of leadership. This is cautiously done as Dimmock (2002) warns that issues of ‘cultural transferability’ should be handled with care. It has taken a broad (geographical) and in-depth systematic review and has relied on documented data, questionnaires and interviews to inform its conceptualisation.

This study is significant because it shows firstly, that AHoDs provide leadership and are ready to transform departments in their schools. They do this by facilitating the work of teams of teachers. Secondly, it shows that AHoDs are important elements who complement their senior leadership teams as they strive to improve teaching and learning. Finally, recommendations based on this study have been made and areas for further research identified that, if undertaken, will enhance more the understanding of the role of AHoDs in this new context.

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Abbreviations used in this study

- AHoD -----Academic Head of Department
- BoG -----Board of Governors
- CIS-----Chief Inspector of Schools
- DEO -----District Education Officer
- HMI-----Her Majesty Inspectorate
- ILO -----International Labour Organisation
- KAME-----Kisii Association of Mathematics Association
- KCSE----Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
- KIE-----Kenya Institute of Education
- KNEC-----Kenya National Examination Council
- ML----- Middle Leader
- MOE ----Ministry of Education
- MPET----Master Plan on Education and Training
- MSS-----Mean Standard Score
- NCEOP ---National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies
(Also called the Gachathi Report)
- Ofsted----Office for Standards in Education
- PDC-----Professional Development Coordinator
- PDE -----Provincial Director of Education
- SMASSE--Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary
Education
- SMT ----Senior Management Team
- TTA-----Teacher Training Agency
- TSC- ----Teachers Service Commission
- UNESCO--United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization
- UPE -----Universal Primary Education

Chapter 1

Background to the Study

1.0 Introduction

Evidence from research studies done in the past decade on school leadership in Western countries shows that power and authority are increasingly being decentred from headteachers to other school staff in a context where school based management (SBM) is being emphasised (Maxcy, 2006; MacBeath, 2005; Weller, 2001). The wisdom appears to be that no single headteacher has absolute expertise in all aspects of the vast and complex modern school (Hatcher, 2005; Okumbe, 2001; Bell, 1992). Much of what is known on this subject is based on the European and American contexts with practice in sub-Saharan Africa being largely unexplored. This study addresses part of this gap by analysing how Academic Heads of Department (AHoDs) implement their role in six secondary schools in Kenya. Throughout this thesis, the phrase ‘Academic Head of Department’ (AHoD) will be used to denote the head of a specific curriculum area, such as Maths or Science, in contra-distinction to among others Pastoral Heads, Heads of Year and School Counsellors. Although in much of the literature emanating from the West the term ‘Head of Department’ is used to mean what I have called ‘Academic Head of Department’, in Kenya, the addition of the word ‘Academic’ is needed because the phrase ‘Head of Department’ can include pastoral heads.

1.1 Contextual Overview of Secondary Education Reforms in Kenya

Like many countries in the West, educational reform and development in sub-Saharan Africa is a prominent feature. Much of the discourse highlights the prioritisation of the battle with illiteracy, inequity, inadequate quality and irrelevance of the education provided with basic education being largely emphasised (Kivuvani, 2002). There is also evidence that attention has been given to vocational education and higher education (UNESCO, 1999; World Bank, 2000). This is consistent with the assertion in UNESCO that much emphasis has been put into basic and higher education while neglecting the young people in the middle (UNESCO, 1999). Nonetheless, three factors appear to have spurred an interest in enhancing access to secondary education in Kenya. These are firstly, the considerable progress towards providing universal primary education (UPE), secondly, a global economy that demands higher levels of knowledge and skills than are usually acquired in primary schooling (Fuller and Habte, 1992) and finally, a

desire to achieve an ‘industrialized country’ status by 2020 (Ministry of Education, 1998). It is on this basis that the government has turned its attention in the past two decades to aggressively invest in and reform secondary education (World Bank, 2000).

1.1.1 A Historical Perspective of Education Reforms in Kenya

Colonialism and the struggle for political independence are frequently cited as the key foundations for Kenya’s educational development and change (Eshiwani, 1993). The system of education in British colonial Kenya is viewed locally as having been tailored to exploit African labour and resources. As such, it has been criticised for its lack of comprehensive and integrated programmes to serve the nation as a whole (Eshiwani, 1993; Indire, 1982). By contrast, education in post-independent Kenya has been used as a means of promoting both economic and social development (Sifuna and Otiende, 1992; Eshiwani, 1993).

A review of pre-independence literature shows an emphasis on primary education (Bogonko, 1992; Indire, 1982). Evidence of pressure to increase school populations so as to ensure universal primary education (UPE) is documented. However, a number of factors, notably the report of the Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa held in Addis Ababa in May 1961 highlighted the urgency for secondary and post-secondary education (UNESCO, 1961; Indire, 1982). It stated that this had to be put before the goal of achieving UPE (UNESCO, 1961). The predominant view during this period was that the organization of education is inexplicably linked to the management of human resources and the labour market (Rharade, 1997; Bogonko, 1992). This view of education, influenced by human capital theory, led to the growth of enrolments in secondary schools that continued to be experienced into the 1980s (Kivuvani, 2002).

Arguably, reforms in the secondary education sector in Kenya can be attributed to the task forces that have been set up over time to tackle emerging issues with a view to improving the quality and delivery of education services. For instance, the *Ominde Commission* appointed in 1964 recommended free UPE which, it observed, was aimed at creating a reservoir of candidates for secondary education (Sifuna and Otiende, 1992). However, it also warned that too much effort should not be put into attaining

UPE at the expense of economic growth in other sectors. The government subsequently chose to emphasise the expansion of secondary and higher education to meet its manpower needs while at the same time providing facilities for a slower but steady increase in primary school enrolment (Sifuna and Otiende, 1992). The government, in line with these manpower priorities, made major expansion in secondary education.

From 1964-1975 the education structure and development in Kenya was based on the educational goals and objectives outlined in the *Ominde Commission* of 1964. However, from 1975 the government realized that education was not doing much to achieve the stated objectives and, worse, that it was too academically-oriented. Consequently, the third development plan (1974-78) broke new ground in terms of educational policy. It stressed the constraints imposed on development by the underutilization of human resources and the lack of appropriate skills at all levels. The education system was called upon to provide among other things, the skills for economic growth, the vocational/technical training for employment and the promotion of attitudes favourable for development (Eshiwani, 1993; Indire, 1982). With this in mind a second commission on education, the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (NCEOP) was convened and *The Gachathi Report* was produced in 1976 (MOE, 1976). This report reviewed the education goals and suggested a restructuring of the education system to meet the demands of the country while relating education to employment opportunities.

1.1.2 The 8-4-4 Education System

It became apparent that education, viewed by Kenyans as a vehicle for social mobility and national economic development in the 1960s and 1970s, was unsuccessful in meeting its objectives as the number of unemployed school-leavers rose. Several schools were also displaying wide inequalities in provision and most community sponsored schools were closing due to lack of funding. Accordingly, a 'Presidential Working Party' later called '*The Mackay Report*' was commissioned in 1981 to look at both reforming the whole education system and the possibility of setting up a second university in Kenya. This commission concluded that the kind of formal education provided tended to concentrate on imparting knowledge 'for the sake of passing examinations' (Eshiwani, 1993:29). While stressing the importance of education in

serving the needs of national development, it recommended an overhaul of the education system to 8-4-4 (8 years in primary, 4 years in secondary, and a minimum of 4 or more years in university education) with an emphasis on lifelong education that aimed to make individuals self sufficient and productive in agriculture, industry and commerce. At its inception, the 8-4-4 system was regarded as providing education with production in mind because it emphasised a balance between practical and academic learning. The 8-4-4 system remains in place today.

1.1.3 The Organisation and Structure of the Education System in Kenya

Traditionally, Kenya's Education system has been managed through a network that extends from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) headquarters, through the Provinces to Districts as shown below (Figure 1). Parallel to this structure is The Teachers Service Commission (TSC), a semi autonomous body whose mandate is to carry out all aspects of teacher management (MOEST, 2006). Other Ministries, for example, The Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development (MLHRD) do also provide education, especially, in technical areas through Youth Polytechnics and Industrial Training programmes. Public pre-employment training is also provided by specialized institutions under other ministries such as those of Health and Agriculture. Vocational education and apprenticeship, especially at lower levels, is however less developed and focused than the general education system (MOEST, 2006). Generally, the provision of education at all levels is a partnership exercise between the Government, communities, the private sector and civil society (MOEST, 2006).

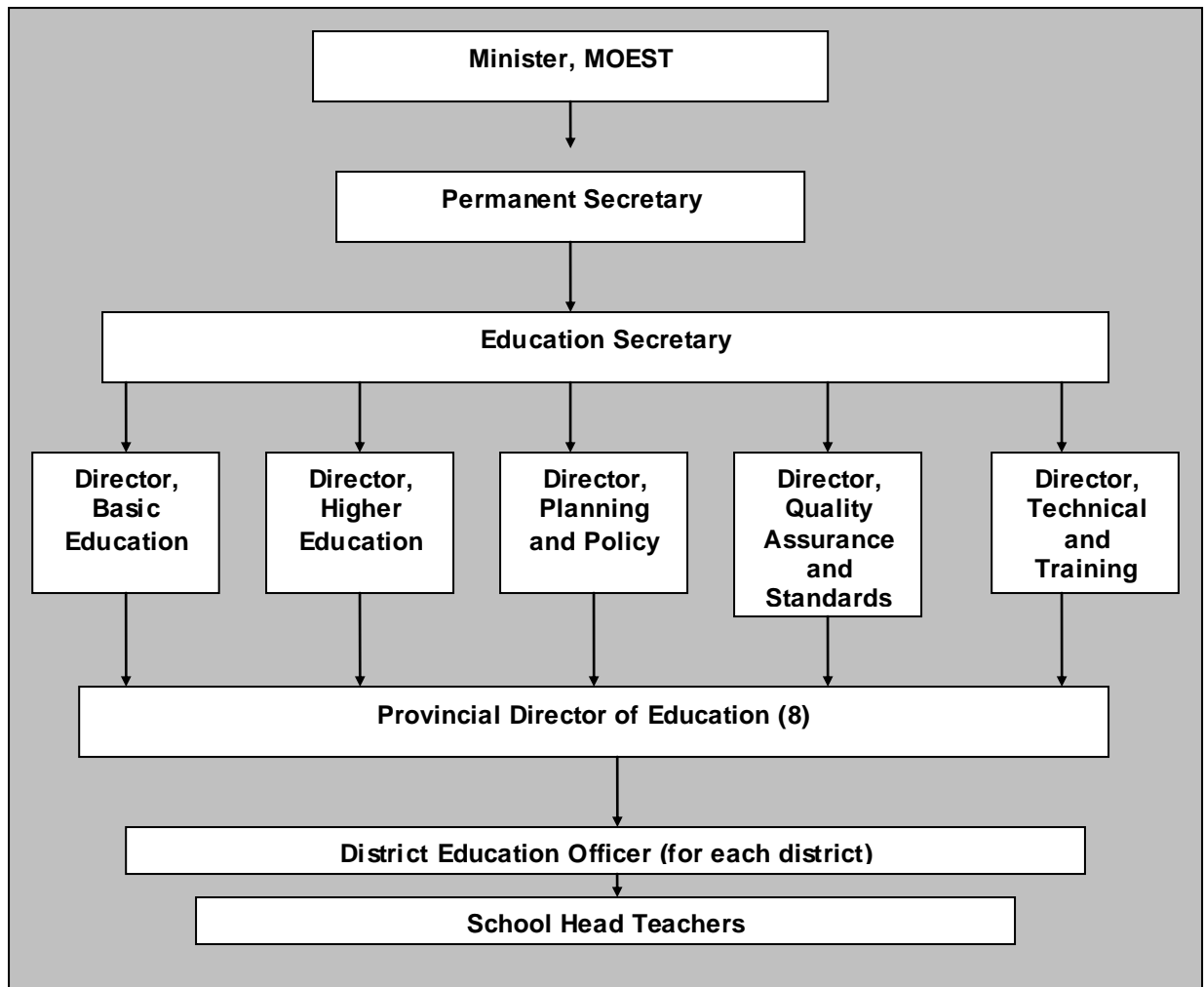


Figure 1 Organisation and structure of education management in Kenya

1.1.4 Inside the Secondary School

Presently, secondary schools in Kenya are categorised as either public or private (Ministry of Education, 2006). The government sponsors all public schools by providing their teaching staff. Beyond this, public schools are self-funding, mostly through fees paid by students. Funds so raised are used to buy and maintain facilities and pay workers who assist in the provision of services to students. Generally, public schools may be boarding, day or both, and, single or mixed sex. Each belongs to one of the following sub-groups:

- *National schools* – these admit students from all districts and municipalities in the Republic of Kenya;
- *Provincial schools* – these admit students from the province in which the school is located; and
- *District schools* – these draw students from the district in which they are

situated.

Like many schools in England, a Board of Governors (BOG) manages each of these public schools. The headteacher, who is also the Secretary to the BOG, is delegated powers to administer the school on a daily basis (Eshiwani, 1993). Headteachers are appointees of the Teachers Service Commission. People who have had some considerable experience as teachers are usually, but not always, appointed school heads (Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen, 1997).

This study focuses on the role of the Academic Head of Department (AHoD). To appreciate this post, it is important to understand the current Teachers Service Commission's Scheme of Service which provides the career structure, standards for recruitment, training and advancement, and, job descriptions and specifications of teachers in secondary schools. According to this body, teachers in secondary schools serve at any eight grades set out below.

1. Untrained Graduate Teacher [Job Group 'J']
 2. Graduate Teacher II [Job Group 'K']
 3. Graduate Teacher I [Job Group 'L']
 4. Senior Graduate Teacher [Job Group 'M']
 5. Principal Graduate Teacher II [Job Group 'N']
 6. Principal Graduate Teacher I [Job Group 'P']
 7. Senior Principal Graduate Teacher [Job Group 'Q']
 8. Chief principal Graduate Teacher [Job Group 'R']
- (TSC, 2006).

The post of AHoD has long been characterised by confusion and ambiguity. For example, teachers who qualified for promotion to this post after the posts were first advertised in 1990 were placed in Job Group 'L'. After stagnating in this Job Group for over seven years, the TSC through circular 5 of 1997 promoted all graduate teachers who had served in the lower Job Group 'K' for two years by July 1999 to Job Group 'L'. This meant that several 'Assistant' teachers found themselves in the same job group with AHoDs who were already in service by July 1999 and in Job Group 'L'. In spite of this 'confusion', the role and significance of AHoDs in secondary schools in Kenya cannot be overemphasised. Research findings in the West indicate that individuals occupying similar posts play a crucial role at both the school and

department levels. The Kenyan Ministry of Education (1998) has recognised this and has subsequently outlined for them various duties (see Chapter 2).

The education sector in Kenya faces multiple problems in which poor management features prominently. According to the Koech Report (Koech, 1999), inertia within the Kenyan schooling system is due to incapable leadership. As a result, this report recommends that, if a revolution is needed in education, then it is within educational management and leadership that a beginning must be made (Koech, 1999). Similarly, the Master Plan on Education and Training (MPET) 1997-2010 (MOE, 1998) and the Koech Report (Koech, 1999) agree that to raise the quality of education, the Ministry of Education must improve its management down to the institutional level, effectively focusing on the BOG, the headteacher and all AHoDs. One of MPET's suggestions is that AHoDs in secondary schools should play a leadership role (MOE, 1998), a view echoed in sentiments expressed by Abagi (Daily Nation, 2001, May 14) who argues that for any improvement to be made, for example in school discipline, there needs to be a holistic and systematic approach to school management and governance that incorporates the use of AHoDs.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The general tendency among many researchers with an interest in educational administration in sub-Saharan Africa has been to focus on school headteachers as the only providers of leadership (see Bush and Oduro, 2006; Herriot et al, 2002; Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen, 1997). It is also true that research in the past decade into effective schools and recent calls for school reform appear to support this position (Anderson, 1991; Dadey and Harber, 1991; Kitavi, 1995). In contrast, there is also research evidence in the West dating to the 1980s that shows that apart from the headteacher, there are AHoDs who play a significant role in improving the quality of teaching-learning processes in schools (Bennett et al, 2003; Leask and Terrell, 1997; Earley and Fletcher-Campbell, 1989). Whilst this holds true for the West, there is minimal research evidence available on AHoDs in Kenya. Nonetheless, there is a slight mention by MPET (MOE, 1998) who have recommended that AHoDs should be utilized to assist with the inspection and guidance of other teachers to supplement the work of inspectors. The challenge is whether these teachers are doing this, and if so, whether they are trained and supported to perform such roles.

It has become evident from research in the West that the education sector can be transformed through participatory processes (Hatcher, 2005). The predominant position is that within the school, decision-making needs to be an all inclusive process. The experience of the researcher as an AHoD is that this hardly ever happens in Kenya. Similarly, if we accept the argument by Turner (1996) that AHoDs have a responsibility for the introduction, implementation and evaluation of a variety of educational policies at the subject level, which is a vital aspect of school improvement, then they play a crucial role in the effective operation of the work of the secondary school department. This requires not only subject knowledge and teaching expertise but also the ability to lead and manage. Research in England and Wales suggests that AHoDs can make a difference to departmental performance (Busher and Harris, 1999) in much the same way as headteachers contribute to overall school performance (Sammons et al, 1996; Harris et al, 1996a & b; Harris 1998). While this has been acknowledged, researchers in Kenya have virtually ignored this critical group with headteachers receiving all the attention. In other words, AHoDs are a forgotten tier. For this reason, this study examines the research questions set out in section 1.3 below.

1.3 Research Questions

This study offers a critical analysis of research evidence of the role, impact and challenges faced by AHoDs in Kenya with the aim of understanding their contextual interpretation of the role in regard to school leadership. To achieve this, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

- i. Who are the middle leaders in Kenyan Secondary schools?
- ii. What are said by AHoDs, headteachers and other teachers to be the responsibilities and practices of AHoDs?
- iii. How do AHoDs define and execute their role?
- iv. What factors influence the ways in which AHoDs define and execute their role?
- v. What are the barriers/tensions/conflicts that AHoDs face and how do these affect their role?
- vi. How might AHoDs contribute better to school improvement?

1.4 Delimiting the Study

A few issues need to be clarified before proceeding further. First, the literature

reviewed in this study predominantly relates to secondary schools. Second, this study focuses almost exclusively on AHoDs. Research papers reviewed for this study show that the terminology used to describe the AHoD has changed over time and space from teachers in charge, heads of department, heads of faculty (or departmental chairs in North America), to middle managers by the mid-1990s and to subject leaders by the end of the 1990s. Contemporary literature influenced by the NCSL now refers to the generic role of ‘middle leaders’ (Bennett et al, 2007). Consequently, whenever the term ‘academic head of department’ appears, it is used to refer to individuals who, though expected to have responsibility for one or more teachers, in practice could also be in charge of any of the following curriculum areas: a single subject area; an area where the subjects are closely related; an area where the subjects are not closely related; or a cross-curriculum area (after Busher and Harris, 2000). Finally, this study focuses on AHoDs selected from six secondary schools. Further details of the criteria used for selecting the schools studied are found in Chapter 3 (3.4.1 - ‘Sampling’).

1.4.1 The School as a ‘Social Organization’

Schools are by their nature complex organisations with set goals. They possess both rules (designed to anticipate and shape behaviour in the direction of these goals) and a formal status structure with clearly marked lines of communication and authority (Scribner et al, 2007; Robbins, 1990). Departments within schools are themselves structures meant to attain these goals. This conceptualisation has four implications. Firstly, schools have stakeholders who interact and their interaction patterns do not just emerge, rather they are premeditated. Secondly, school boundaries can change over time and may not be perfectly clear but they are essential as they help to distinguish members from non-members. Thirdly, stakeholders have a continuing bond to the school, which means they participate with some sense of regularity and finally, their goals are either unattainable by individuals working alone or if attainable individually, are achieved more efficiently through group effort. This means that a school has a set of interrelated and interdependent parts arranged in a manner that produces a unified whole (Robbins, 1990).

It should be clarified, however, that while it is doubtful whether members within the school can actually agree on goals, an orientation towards goals is invaluable. For

example, through them, it is possible to view the school holistically and explain the perceptions of employees in relation to the jobs they do. In a word, goals provide us with a way by which to judge the school in comparison with others. In addition, schools are characterised by formality in their internal social relationships hence hierarchy of office-holders who have very specific functions (after Weber, 1964). This means that a consciously organised pattern of relationships characterised by a systematic ordering of positions and duties exists in schools (Firth, 1964). Nonetheless, there is also evidence that sometimes there is no clear-cut hierarchy of authority in organisations as officials can have very diffuse functions (Crozier, 1964).

1.4.2 Culture and Context

Much of the literature which informs this study is Western in orientation because the field of educational leadership and management has generally developed along ethnocentric lines, being heavily dominated by Anglo-American paradigms and theories (Walker and Dimmock, 2002). Much of the existing literature is decontextualised and therefore does not give a feel of a developing nation. Nonetheless, it is used on the understanding that there exists in studies a reciprocal tendency to look beyond national boundaries for answers to educational problems (Dimmock, 2002). In fact, many developing countries have for a long time looked to Europe and North America for their policy models. This study presupposes that ‘to gain a better understanding of school leaders in societies outside the Anglo-American world, research must be contextualised and take account of culture’ (Walker and Dimmock, 2002:1).

Although there is a desire to cultivate a ‘Kenyan culture’ in Kenya’s secondary schools, much of the current practice reflects the effects of British colonialism and cultural imperialism. Importing management structures formulated elsewhere under different economic, political and cultural conditions has presented several challenges to Kenyans. For this reason, systems currently in operation in Kenyan schools are adaptations of the British system of education. Given these reasons, it is apparent that the application and practice of the borrowed Western culture of school management, especially middle leadership in secondary schools should be approached with care. It has to be done in the Kenyan context and reflect its cultural understanding.

1.4.3 Position and Role in Schools

To appreciate the role of the AHoD, a distinction is drawn in this study between the terms 'position' and 'role'. Burnham clarifies the distinction thus:

Positions are collections of rights and duties, distinguished from one another, and designated by a title such as principal, deputy head teacher or teacher... Within the organisation, positions are ordered hierarchically in terms of status, and may be thought of as locations on an organisational chart (Burnham, 1969:72)

He contrasts this with 'role' by arguing:

Associated with every position in an organisation is a set of expectations concerning what is appropriate behaviour for a person occupying that position, and those appropriate behaviours comprise the role associated with the office. In order to differentiate these two terms – position and role – one might say that a person occupies a position but plays or performs a role... a role is the dynamic aspect of position (Burnham, 1969:72-73).

The notion of role is difficult to define. Maw argues that no individual can define role alone (Maw, 1977). This is because role definition is a process of negotiation that involves not only the expectations of others, but also how the individual perceives these expectations, which s/he perceives as legitimate and the manner in which s/he responds to them. Roles in schools are networks of relationships, reciprocal rights and responsibilities negotiated in a particular social situation (Maw, 1977). Therefore, the term role is used with a double significance in this study. Every individual has a series of roles deriving from the various patterns in which s/he participates. At the same time, a role represents what one does for his organisation and what he in return expects from it. Hence, a close relationship between role and position is evident. The influence of role definition is made clear in Chapter 2.

1.5 Significance of this Study

Teachers everywhere have important leadership functions to perform and their role is changing and leadership demands increasing. Traditionally, leadership has been associated with the headteacher, a clear hierarchy, an emphasis on setting standards and making difficult decisions (Day et al, 2000). More recently, an understanding has

emerged suggesting that leadership involves shared practices, ideals, concerns and successes (Scribner et al, 2007; Barth, 1990). This conception poses a challenge to long-standing notions of leadership and, as Busher and Harris (2000) point out, represents a shift from understanding leadership as a series of transactions to understanding leadership as something with the power to alter the cultural context of the school.

Within this current conception, it is recognised that those leading and developing effective classroom practice are AHoDs. It is these individuals who lead their teams and are responsible for aspects such as the schemes of work for their curriculum areas. It is felt that whilst they need to expand their role on instructional leadership in subject areas, they also need to be provided with more authority than they presently have. This is because they are the pedagogical leaders, the managers closest to the classroom teacher, with detailed technical expertise and a remit to manage the people who teach the areas for which they have responsibility. It is clear that while they are overworked, whether in their subject specialisms or cross-disciplinary areas, they also appear to lack sufficient support from the government and their head teachers.

Having established general grounds for studying AHoDs, a critical review of the existing literature is presented in Chapter 2. The review examines AHoDs in relation to school structures, tasks and roles in both the Western and Kenyan contexts. Chapter 3 explains the methodology of this study while Chapter 4 looks at the first three research questions - examining the constitution of middle leaders in Kenyan secondary schools; the responsibilities and practices of AHoDs; and how they define and execute their role. Chapter 5 examines the last two research questions - sources of influence for the AHoDs as they perform their roles, and, hurdles and tensions that they face while executing these roles. This is followed with a discussion about how they could better contribute to school improvement. Chapter 6 provides a critical reflection on these findings and outlines the limitations of the study while it points out areas for further research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, a review of the nature and composition of middle leaders (MLs) is attempted. Section two reviews tasks AHoDs as middle leaders perform and their impact on various outcomes. This is enabled through the analysis of Wise's (2001) model which also helps us to link tasks and 'role'. Section three provides a critical review of the various aspects of the role of AHoDs and these are linked to the tasks highlighted in section two. Within this, the concept of 'role' is defined, various sources of influence on role are reviewed as they impact on role performance, and the inherent conflicts and tensions during role performance explored. A generic model of roles is generated from the literature reviewed and this is used to analyse the various roles AHoDs perform. As indicated in the introduction, this study focuses on teachers who have oversight over designated areas of the curriculum. While middle leaders are wide ranging in spectrum, the emphasis here is on AHoDs (after Wise and Bennett, 2003).

2.1 School Structure and Middle Leadership

Departmental structure by subject, specialization, hierarchy of authority and regulations characterize the modern secondary school (Hoy and Miskel, 2000; Turner and Bolam, 1998). Embedded in departmentalisation is the leadership role which symbolizes the ability and right of the department to govern itself. In fact, reference to 'Head of Department' or 'Subject Head' (Gold, 1998) suggests that someone is in a position of leadership (Turner, 2003). Hence, in reviewing the post of AHoD, a combined consideration of structure and professional expertise are necessary. Before outlining the relationship between academic departments and middle leadership, a conceptualisation of the nature of the 'academic' department is attempted using Busher and Harris' (2000; 1999) taxonomy (see Table 1 below). This taxonomy is useful because one, it reflects both the Western and Kenyan school contexts, and two, the realm of academic departments in secondary schools presents a considerable range of organisational differentiation. This variation extends to size, configuration, staff membership and subject expertise.

Department	Characteristics
'Federal' department (e.g. science faculties or humanities departments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These contain and support the teaching of several allied subjects. They work closely together because their subjects and pedagogies are perceived as cognate and their cultures are substantially homogeneous.
'Confederate' departments. (e.g. design and technology departments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large multi-subject departments seen as primarily an administrative convenience; • subject areas are allied together but share little in common; • Confederate cultures are heterogeneous with individual subject areas creating their own identities that may be in conflict.
'Unitary' department (defined by a single subject area e.g. English or mathematics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one area of subject knowledge would be taught within the unitary department and this is likely to have strong influence on its culture.
'Impacted' departments (e.g. music, history and geography).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller than unitary departments, also teach only a single subject area. • These have very few staff, some of whom are part-time and/or teach other subjects too. • They have a few rooms in which to teach and have relatively small budgets. • Although this type of department can be freestanding within a school's organisational structure - including departments such as music, history and geography - it can also be part of a larger federal department - a biology department in a science faculty, for example.
'Diffuse' department (e.g. ICT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has no identifiable base in a school and is taught by a wide variety of staff under the guidance of a school co-ordinator.

Table 1: A conceptualisation of the taxonomy of the subject department

Are the people heading these departments 'middle leaders'? Research evidence suggests some ambiguity. For example, Glover et al (1999) concluded in one of their studies that in some schools middle leadership was provided by all those individuals with subject responsibilities, whether or not they also held other management responsibilities, together with other staff having whole school responsibilities of a pastoral or administrative nature. They also noted that other schools tended to distinguish between 'subject leadership' and 'middle management'. In this case, the subject leadership 'team' differed from the 'middle management' team who, in one example, were drawn from representatives of subject areas, pastoral areas and those with whole school responsibilities (Glover et al, 1999). This suggests that middle leadership is not limited to the subject leader but could include all 'other' department heads including those having pastoral responsibilities such as heads of year or house. As already mentioned, this study focuses on AHoDs, rather than middle leaders in any wider sense.

According to White (2003), departmental structure affects leadership. It has been argued, for example, that the extent to which cognate subjects within a 'federal'

department work together in various strategic and operational ways depends on the quality of leadership both of the whole department and of the semi-autonomous subject areas within it, as well as the demands made by the SMT and the external environment (Busher and Harris, 1999). One assumption is that in an effective 'federal' department, for example, the 'centre' held by its head is sufficiently powerful to ensure that members of the department work as a unit (Busher and Harris, 1999). For the confederate departments, however, the 'centre' may not be sufficiently powerful because of the heterogeneity inherent in the subjects which form such departments (Busher and Harris, 1999). Consequently, leadership is subject to micro-political activity between allied subject areas, a situation that means each subject makes its own arrangements as far as possible.

On the the other hand, 'unitary' departments are likely to display more central leaderships and less of micro-political activity because of a higher possibility that departmental colleagues share values than the previous two structures (Busher and Harris, 1999). For the much smaller 'impacted' departments, many of the dimensions of leadership may be constrained to a network of informal processes because there may be too few staff or staff may have other duties in other departments to make formal processes worthwhile except as a gesture to the administrative demands of the school. Although the norms and procedures of the department are likely to be strongly upheld by the few full-time staff, they are held progressively more weakly by those with lesser organisational commitment to it (Busher and Harris, 1999).

A contrast may be drawn between the categories highlighted above and the more recent pastoral oriented group of middle leaders. The pastoral structure is not clear. For years now, pastoral leaders have been associated with maintaining the ethos of the school and encouraging appropriate behaviour. A major feature of their role in England is dealing with individual children and groups who do not conform to school norms as well as working with staff to develop skills in dealing with these individual pupils (Wise and Bennett, 2003). The implication here is that heads of year, who oversee the duties of form tutors, could be regarded as middle leaders. These individuals' privileges such as a reduced timetable, own rooms, special meetings in school time with deputies or their headteachers suggests possession of real power and this separates them from class teachers or form tutors. In essence, the word 'head' of year or 'coordinator' signals that

these individuals are in charge of something (Wise and Bennett, 2003).

The significance of departmental and pastoral leadership is apparent. This is given impetus by research in the UK which suggests that AHoDs can make a difference to departmental performance in much the same way as headteachers contribute to overall school performance (Sammons et al, 1996; Harris et al, 1996a and b; Harris, 1998). It is important to note though that certain individuals on the leadership spine such as Assistant and Deputy Headteachers in both England and Kenya fail to fit into any of these typologies perfectly. This is because their circumstances within the whole school environment are different (Wise and Bennett, 2003). In this case, they are classified as part of the SMT though they grapple with middle leadership roles. Having concluded from this structural perspective that AHoDs are MLs, (though not all MLs are AHoDs), the next part examines tasks that AHoDs perform and subsequently offers a task 'oriented' conceptualisation of their middle leadership role.

2.2 What Tasks do AHoDs Undertake?

The literature reviewed shows that AHoDs in the West are not only a conduit between SMTs and classroom teachers but also perform tasks associated with the realms of both these groups (Scribner et al, 2007; White, 2003). Research portrays them as doing multiple tasks in a diversity of roles (Glover et al, 1998) while writers like Wise and Bennett (2003) and Wise (1999) show that the job itself is much more than the administrative tasks that job specifications tend to enumerate. While reviewing the tasks that AHoDs perform in different contexts, several 'task models' reflecting an ever-expanding portfolio of responsibilities emerge. We emphasise Wise' (2001) model which reflects current practice.

Evidence from research studies shows that AHoDs' traditional responsibilities are teaching and subject development (Wise, 2001; Adey, 1988), evaluation and planning (Gold, 1998), development of departmental policy, setting departmental aims and objectives, devising and revising of the syllabus, developing and supervising of departmental teaching methods and monitoring class work, homework and marking (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2002). Others include the management of resources (Hammersley-Fletcher 2002), departmental staff (Turner, 2002; Turner, 2003; Adey, 1988) and the preparation and conduct of examinations (Turner and Bolam, 1998;

Hammersley-Fletcher, 2002). This is in addition to allocating departmental staff teaching groups, supervising of probationary teachers, organising for professional development and assisting in departmental staff discipline of the pupils. Some responsibilities take a whole school perspective and include liaising with other departments, participating in meetings with senior staff, informing departmental staff of school policy and representing views of the department staff to the senior management (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2002). Pastoral responsibilities such as assisting in the discipline of pupils also feature as whole-school tasks.

A comparison across these responsibilities and tasks with those outlined by The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in Kenya shows a striking similarity (see Appendix 13). Figure 2 below is Wise and Bennett’s (2003) model that is built upon Wise’ (1999) research. It refines the tasks AHoDs perform and offers a conceptualisation that reflects the multiplicity of these tasks in both English and Kenyan schools.

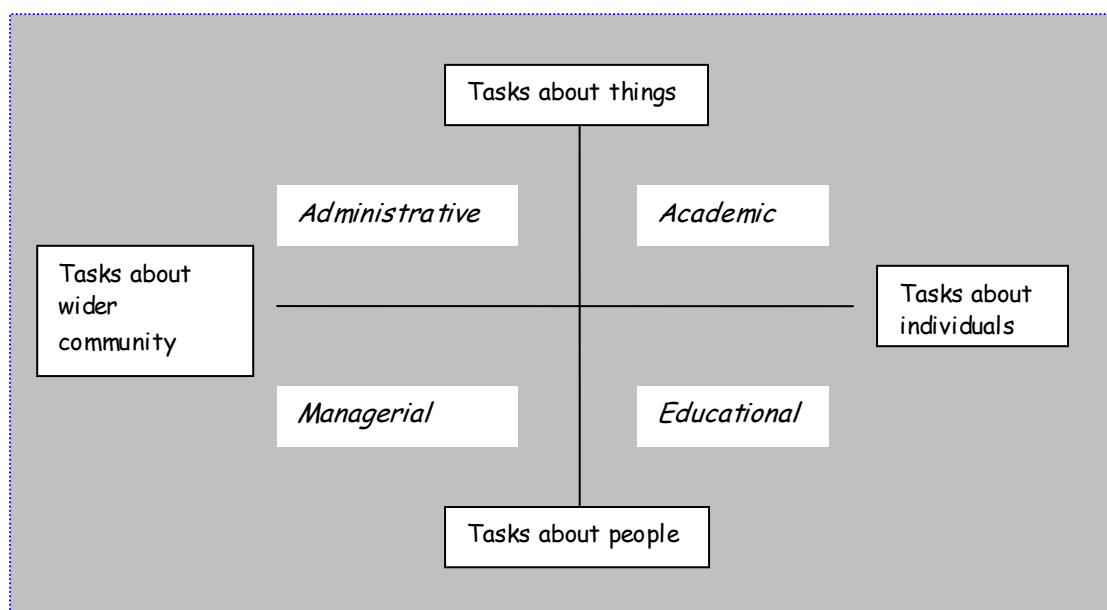


Figure 2: Wise and Bennett’s (2003) conceptualisation of the AHoDs’ tasks

Broadly, Wise (1999) argues that there are two perspectives to the AHoD’s tasks: the instrumental and expressive. Citing Taylor (1964:193), she argues that instrumental tasks are associated with bureaucratised procedures, subject to more or less formally stated and generally understood procedural rubrics. Many of the tasks that fall into this

category are either *academic* or *administrative* in nature and both deal with the organisational, paperwork, non-personnel aspects of the AHoD's role (Wise, 1999). In contrast are the expressive tasks, so called because they are 'more expressive in character...involving a more flexible relationship between persons and groups' (Taylor, 1964:193). Two sets, *managerial* and *educational*, both of which might be considered 'managerial' because they are people centred are identified in this group.

2.2.1 Instrumental Area Tasks

Instrumental tasks are twofold: *administrative* and *academic* in nature. Both of them deal with the organisational, paperwork, non-personnel aspects of the AHoD's role (Wise, 1999). However, they are different in that *academic tasks* are directly supportive of the learning of the pupils within the subject whilst the *administrative tasks* are concerned with the whole school aspects of the role and paperwork which, whilst required, is not directly related to the learning process (Wise, 1999).

i. The academic tasks

Tasks in this category are similar to those identified by Lambert and include: the formulation of policy, aims and objectives of the department; the preparation of the syllabus and its regular review; the development of new curricula and teaching techniques; and the organisation of educational visits and visiting speakers (Lambert, 1972:79). The recent version of these tasks include maintaining knowledge of the subject area, ensuring that courses cater for a range of abilities, checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies, formulating curriculum aims, objectives and content and ensuring continuity of education between schools and phases (Wise and Bennett, 2003). These tasks are not new to the role of the AHoDs since they have always been expected to, for example, develop the curriculum (see Chamberlain, 1984, Earley and Fletcher-Campbell, 1989).

ii. Administrative Tasks

Various writers define administration in different ways. According to Bennaars et al (1994), it involves controlling, supervising, planning, organising, managing and making decisions on the functions and activities of an organisation. Taking Lambert's (1972:79) view of the school context, this area involves 'the choice and care of textbooks, apparatus and materials, stock and audio-visual aids; the deployment of

teaching staff and ancillaries... testing, timetable, safety and records'. It is also concerned with, among others, making decisions about what resources to buy and organising for their storage, maintaining records of schemes of work, minutes and doing classroom observations (Wise and Bennett, 2003).

The distinction between these two forms of tasks is that administrative tasks focus on the wider school, which suggests the need for the AHoD to contribute to whole school policies and activities. Academic tasks focus on the department. Marland and Smith (1981) suggest that it is important for AHoDs to assist in school leadership and Bennett (1995) adds that they should be concerned with spreading the vision and delivering it in practice. Vision and its transmission to others is only part of the role of leadership (Adams, 1991).

2.2.2 Expressive Area Tasks

There are two expressive areas: *managerial* and *educational*, both of which might be considered 'managerial' because they are people centred. These tasks have become the responsibility of the AHoDs as expectations have changed over recent years and their role has changed from managing a subject to leading and managing a team.

i. Managerial Tasks

According to Bennaars et al (1994), management is viewed as a system of working with individual persons and groups for the purpose of achieving the established goals of an organization. Some of the functions of management are planning, organizing, directing and controlling. In Wise's (1999) view, the tasks which appear appropriate within the 'managerial' aspect of the AHoD are functions which bring him/her into contact with people in an institutional context. These include aspects such as holding regular departmental meetings, inspiring and guiding the department, and taking of responsibility for probationers. Others include the supervision of staff and their teaching, taking responsibility for the work of the department and assessing the teaching competence of departmental staff. This is in addition to keeping staff within their area informed of whole school matters, encouraging debate and leading/promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities (Wise, 1999).

Whilst Tyldesley (1984) does not explicitly include any items from this area in his list

of tasks, he does say however that the '[AHoD's] task is to bond a team of teachers together and ensure that a department works towards a set of agreed and clearly understood objectives' (Tyldesley, 1984:254). Similarly, Marland and Smith's (1981) list of ten tasks of the AHoD include six items which fall within this area. Whilst many of them are similar to those of Lambert such as monitoring the teachers' work, there is an emphasis on assisting with professional development and, once again, structuring a departmental team (Marland and Smith, 1981). Bell agrees with the need 'to lead and manage a team of professional colleagues' (Bell, 1992:7) whilst Donnelly suggests the main task of the AHoD is to 'lead staff towards the realisation of a common vision' (Donnelly, 1990:11).

ii. Educational Tasks

This aspect of role covers those tasks that are to do with the individual student, the person side of the role. This is the area all teachers usually train in before they qualify and is much closer to what many would call the 'core' tasks. These tasks include organising testing of pupil attainment, providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that could affect their schoolwork and behaviour, monitoring classes' progress through syllabuses or schemes of work, deployment of pupils into teaching groups and implementing homework policy (Wise and Bennett, 2003). Effective classroom management is not only important (Donnelly, 1990) but it is also the duty of the AHoD to know what is going on in other classrooms.

The literature reviewed thus far attests that teachers assume responsibility for various areas of the school curriculum based on either their degree expertise or interest. The following section demonstrates that academic middle leadership is a dynamic function that encompasses what other people expect post holders to do within their set up as well as what the post holders themselves think should be done.

2.3 Conceptualising the Role of AHoD

To start with, schools are bureaucratic organizations and individuals like AHoDs occupy *positions* within their hierarchies, but, with obligations (Stewart and Zepeda, 2002). According to Burnham (1969:72), these positions are in essence 'collections of rights and duties'. This contrasts with 'role' which he argues are 'a set of expectations concerning what is appropriate behaviour for a person occupying that position'

(Burnham, 1969:72-73). In order to differentiate these two terms – position and role – one might say that a person occupies a position but plays or performs a role, role being the dynamic aspect of position. In the context of this study, this suggests that ‘position’ refers to the location of the AHoD in the school system viewed from the perspective of social relationships. On the other hand, ‘role’ is seen as the set of expectations applied to the incumbents of this particular status. For this reason, ‘role’ and ‘position’ are conceived as two sides of the same coin even though they are separate concepts. What Burnham (1969) expresses here is best articulated by Katz and Kahn (1966) who have conceptualised role as a function of multiple factors (see Fig 3 below).

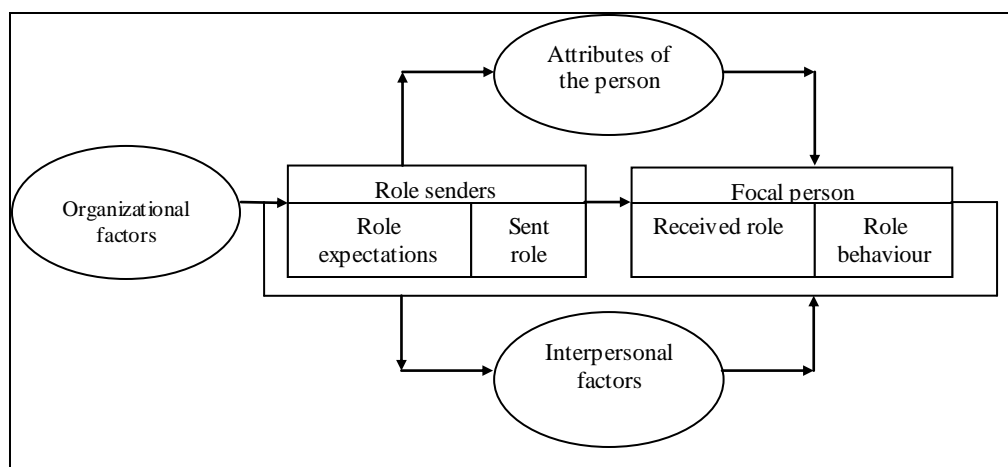


Figure 3: Katz and Kahn's (1966) framework for conceptualising 'role'

This framework depicts role as being a cyclical process. The circles represent the contextual features of the role sending cycle – organisational, interpersonal and personal influences and the boxes represent the role set and the focal person. In the cycle, the sent role is influenced by the personal attributes of the focal person, the perception of the sent role by the focal person (the received role) and interpersonal factors between the role senders and the focal person. Both the role senders and the focal person are influenced by organisational factors. The role set's expectations create demands and constraints on the job holder, while the focal person's behaviour provides the role set with information about the extent of the compliance with expectations (Smith, 1996). Hoy and Miskel (2000) citing 'role theory' agree that role is determined by social norms, demands and rules, by the role performances of others in their respective positions, by those who observe and react to the performance and by the individual's capabilities and personality. The resultant view is that roles in schools are

determined by networks of relationships, reciprocal rights and responsibilities negotiated in a particular social situation (Maw, 1977) coupled with one's professional experience. It is therefore important to note that the concept of role is vital for the integration of the AHoD with the school as an organization since both are enjoined by role.

2.3.1 Role Sets

A review of the literature suggests that AHoDs are torn in their loyalties between headteachers and their teachers as they perform a range of responsibilities that call for the allegiance of both administrator and peer alike (see Weller, 2001). It is clear that they constantly make decisions about whose opinions are the most legitimate and therefore who influences their decisions most (Wise and Bennett, 2003). Conceptually, this could be attributed to the fact that their office becomes a role because it is actually defined and determined by the expectations of other office holders (as reflected in the way an office is discharged by the concerned office holder) (after Katz and Kahn, 1966). Each role has its own system, consisting of the role occupant (AHoD) and those who have a direct relationship with him (other teachers, headteacher etc), and thereby certain expectations from the role. In effect, it is a reflection of Maw's idea that role is a function of 'role-set' (Maw, 1977).

The argument here is that the position of AHoD is defined by the expectations (stated or not) that different persons have and the expectations the AHoD in turn has from the role. In this sense, the role gets defined each time by the role senders, including the role occupant. Katz and Kahn (1966) emphasize that role is a function of 'role expectations', which are the perceptions of what the focal person should do during their (role senders) inter-personal encounters; and the 'sent' roles, which are the acts of communication and influence by the role set to convey their expectations. Finally, what the focal person does in response to the messages he/she receives and in response to his/her own perceptions of the job forms 'role' behaviour (Levinson, 1959).

An analysis of the literature reveals key role sets which derive from both the wider national context and from within the school. In England and Wales, aspects such as compulsory appraisal of staff, curriculum changes, Ofsted and the TTA statements about the 'core purpose of the subject leader' appear to have had a lot of influence on

AHoDs (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002). In these two cases, the headteachers and their overall school leadership style have also been cited as within-school factors that shape role (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002). Wise and Bennett (2003) have recently shown that role sets vary with the decisions being made and the area of the AHoD's responsibility. They have demonstrated that staff within departments, the head teacher and SMTs, students, advisors and inspectors, subject associations, other teaching staff, parents, guardians and governors are all key members of role sets in secondary schools. However, like Wise and Bush (1999), they conclude that subject or area team members are more influential than the SMTs reflecting the fact that each role has its own system, consisting of the role occupant and those who have a direct relationship with him, and thereby their expectations are considered most influential.

Thus far, the concept of 'role set' appears to accord little value to the role incumbent's own assessment of how role should be performed. In practice, however, a post holder usually has ideas about the nature of the role based on professional experience, beliefs and attitudes. These personal conceptions combined with the perceived views of the role set determine how a role is played out in each individual case (Smith, 1996). The influence of the individual is most evident when a new person takes up a position (Smith, 1996). Emergent differences between the former and present incumbents could be attributed to different personal assessments of how a role should be performed and to differences in perceptions about the collective views of the role set. Nonetheless, when an individual is subject to a range of formal expectations, colleagues, personal experience and value system, it is likely that there will be conflicting expectations that the role holder has to resolve in order to be able to carry out work.

2.3.2 Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity

Citing Kahn et al (1964) and Katz and Kahn (1978), Stewart and Zepeda (2002) define role conflict as the simultaneous occurrence of two or more sets of pressure such that compliance with one would make compliance with the other more difficult – incongruities arising out of perceptions of role requirements. For example, Stewart and Zepeda (2002) argue, the work of AHoDs requires them to be both administrators and teachers. The tension between these two roles can result in the AHoDs not being fully accepted by either teachers or administrators. This incompatibility could be due to

conflicts between organizational demands and one's own values, poorly written job descriptions, or conflicts between obligations to several different people. This is also called 'role strain' and can create significant problems for any role holder.

On the other hand, role ambiguity results from lack of information that is necessary in order for one to fulfil the obligations of the organizational position (Kahn et al, 1964). In adopting this view, it is apparent that within schools AHoDs undertake various role responsibilities that are inextricably linked with other members of their groups (Johnson and Johnson, 1997). When AHoDs experience *role ambiguity*, both individual and collective functioning suffers (Carron and Hausenblas, 1998). This is usually manifested in negative consequences such as tension, anxiety, dissatisfaction, absenteeism, or lowered levels of commitment, performance, involvement, and autonomy (Schmidt, 2000).

A critical perspective of role conflict/ambiguity is best obtained by revisiting Figure 3. While examining role conflict within organisations, Katz and Kahn (1966) emphasise the concept of 'role episode'. Role episode is a term they use in referring to a complete cycle of role sending, response by the focal person and the effect of that response on the role senders. Their model (Figure 3 above) has its core expanded in Figure 5 below. The boxes in Fig 3 represent events that constitute a role episode and the arrows connecting them imply a causal effect. Role pressures originate from expectations held by members of the role set. Role senders have expectations about the way the focal person role should be performed and perceptions about the way the focal person is actually performing. They compare the two and exert pressures to make the focal person's performance congruent with their expectations. The adjustive responses of the focal person are observed by the role senders and their expectations are adjusted accordingly. For the role senders and the focal person the processes therefore involve experience and response (Smith, 1996).

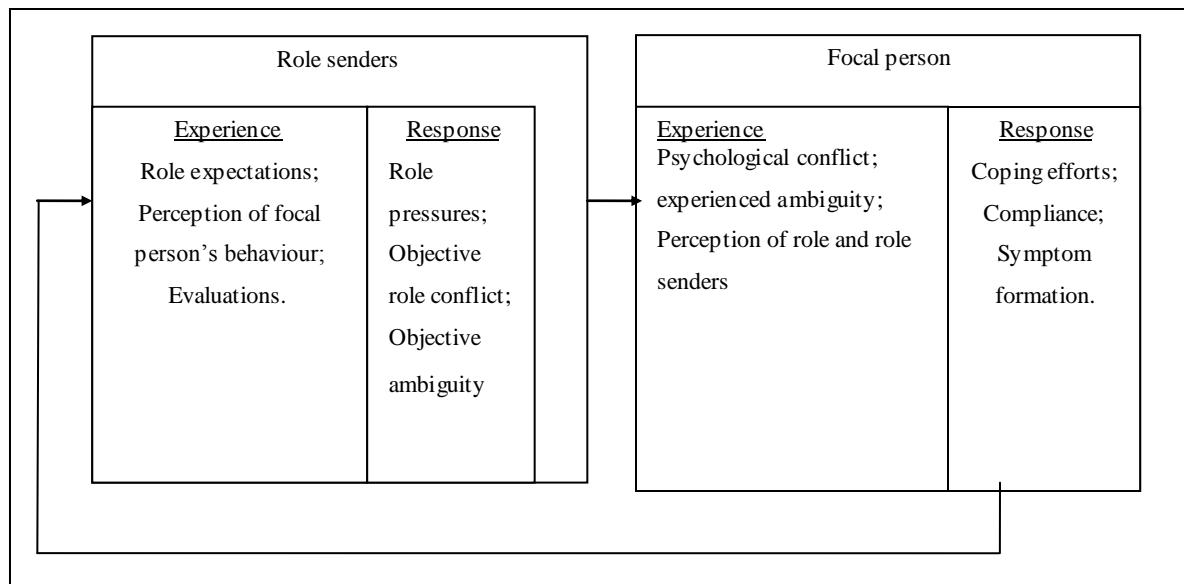


Figure 5: An expanded core of Kahn et al's (1966) framework

Of note, however, is that role ambiguity perceptions are multidimensional in nature. Beauchamp et al (2002) suggest that role ambiguity may be attributed to a lack of clarity associated with (a) the scope of one's responsibilities, (b) the behaviours associated with one's role, (c) how one's role performance is evaluated, and (d) the consequences of failing to fulfil one's role responsibilities. Peeke (1983), citing Hargreaves (1972) specifies them as: where an actor simultaneously occupies two positions whose roles are incompatible; there is lack of consensus amongst the occupants of a position about the content of the role; there is lack of consensus amongst the occupants of one of the complementary role positions; an actors' conceptions of his role conflicts with the expectations of a role partner; various role partners have conflicting expectations; a single role partner has incompatible expectations; role expectations are unclear; and where an actor lacks basic qualities required for adequate role performance.

Research evidence suggests that AHoDs experience role ambiguity to different degrees (Schmidt, 2000). For example, Wise and Bennett's (2003) study reveals that most AHoDs have various line managers including Heads and Deputy or Assistant Heads yet, it is also evident that many others are unclear on who line manages them making line management one of the recent contentious issues they face. Secondly, according to Brown et al (2000), AHoDs have been asked to take on many additional responsibilities including discipline and finance that in the past were widely accepted as being within

the domain of members of the SMT. Nonetheless, it appears these additional responsibilities are not matched with either sufficient authority or adequate time to enable them to be carried out properly. Besides, in situations where subject leaders see their role as traditionally limited to organising resources and schemes of work, it is obvious that tensions would emerge.

The one place where AHoDs are granted full recognition as professionals is in the classroom. However, as a matter of policy and in ensuring accountability, AHoDs are now being asked to monitor their staff (Webb et al, 2004). Monitoring is problematic (Glover et al, 1999). Evidence suggests that teachers want to feel trusted to do their work, a fact that highlights continuing tension between the professional and line manager view of accountability. From their study, Glover et al (1999), for example, indicate that not only in many schools is monitoring and evaluation being perceived as professionally intrusive but also that responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation are being shunned by some AHoDs. In fact, some AHoDs maintained that any attempt to enter the classroom of another teacher or to take part in appraisal or evaluation compromises professional relationships (Glover et al, 1999).

Closely related to the above is the problem of job-structuring versus person-job integration. One dilemma AHoDs are confronted with is how to achieve a balance between their need for individual identity and autonomy, and the school's need for collective coordination and control. AHoDs as professionals expect to be recognized as possessing expertise, earning them the right to a high level of work autonomy (Hackman and Oldham, 1980) and the ability to both regulate themselves and to be highly involved in decision-making (Bacharach et al, 1990). The rights that AHoDs as professionals expect however are often in conflict with their roles as members of a bureaucratic organization (Bacharach et al, 1990). In a bureaucracy, policies are directed toward the creation of certainty through such mechanisms as the routinization of work (Bacharach and Aiken, 1976), the placing of restraints on autonomy and the placing of limitations on professional influence in decision-making (Bacharach et al, 1990). For teachers, the creation of certainty through bureaucratic job structuring comes into direct conflict with the professional ethos that maintains that control of uncertainty is the prerogative of the individual professional (Bacharach et al, 1990c). Bureaucratic job structuring is hence associated with role ambiguity because these same attributes are

likely to limit the AHoDs' certainty regarding the amount of discretion and decision-making power they have as professionals employed in a bureaucracy.

Another source of contention is career development. The hierarchical structure of public school teaching is extraordinarily flat; teachers have few opportunities for promotion (Conley et al, 1989). Research suggests that when promotions are scarce, teachers are likely to experience uncertainty, that is, ambiguity with respect to their current and particularly future role in the organization (Milstein and Golaszewski, 1983). Furthermore, because the evaluation of teaching is itself often viewed by teachers as inherently uncertain (Milman and Darling-Hammond, 1990), teachers are likely to view any promotion system based on such evaluation also as uncertain and irrational. Anything based upon evaluation criteria is likely to generate mixed or conflicting perceptions with regard to the teacher's role in the organization. Minimally, a promotion system that is viewed as uncertain and irrational is likely to heighten not only the level of general confusion and unpredictability (ambiguity), but also the perceived incongruence between administrator and teacher role expectations (role conflict).

Needless to say, the need for clarity in communication is paramount if role conflict and ambiguity are to be avoided. From the observations above, it is arguable that information plays a big role in role playing. If information concerning role expectations is insufficient or inconsistent or lacking in clarity, role conflict and role ambiguity are likely to result (Rizzo et al, 1970). That is, the role incumbent is likely to view himself as being faced with incongruent role demands (role conflict) or as a result of some sort of restriction in the flow of information, he is likely to be disturbed by a lack of a clear idea of the scope and responsibilities of the job (role ambiguity).

One assumption is that within organizations such as schools exists some communication structure, that is, a relatively stable configuration of communication relationships between entities within (Johnson, 1993). If we conceptualise a school as a communication network, which comprises of individuals whose communication is structured by their patterns of interactions (Monge and Contractor, 1987), then a network consisting of interconnected individuals who are linked by patterned communication flows (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981:82) becomes evident. Given that

communication within organizational contexts can occur through either formal (that is, communication that is prescribed by a person's position on an organizational chart) or informal (for example, communication within a group or dyad not required by the organizational chart) settings, then chances of behavioural contradiction are higher when messages are vague or contradictory. As Johnson (1993:45) puts the matter, 'an individual's communication role is determined by the overall pattern of his or her communication linkages with others.' In total, people's interaction patterns with others within the organization create and maintain harmony if the organization's communication structure is expressly clear.

Before embarking on the analysis of AHoDs' roles, it should be noted that the approaches used vary according to the stance of the observer. Some typologies in the literature are holistic while some imply that AHoDs may perform some functions and not others. The following model (Figure 6) is the researcher's conceptualisation of the AHoD's role. It has taken into account the literature reviewed and summarises the roles that appear most frequently with the TTA's (1998) standards for subject leaders making a strong influence. This model is centred on the argument that leadership and communication (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002) infuse all AHoDs' activities in four areas of responsibility (pupils, staff, curriculum and resources) that are attended to within the contexts of the department, the school and beyond the school.

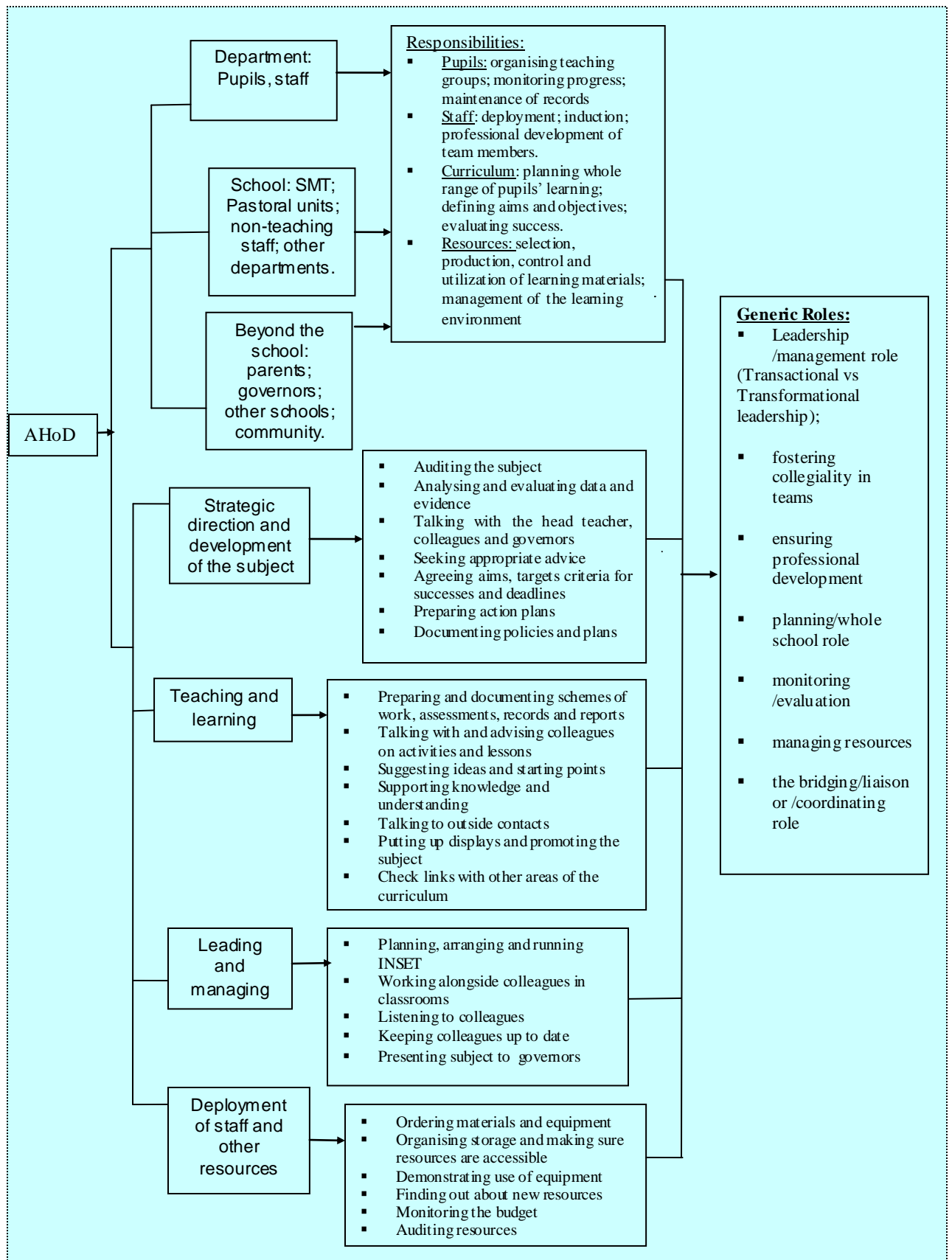


Figure 6: The researcher's conceptualisation of the AHoD's role

Glover et al (1998:286) see school AHoDs as 'translators and mediators, rather than

originators of policy and culture'. Busher and Harris' (1999) four dimensions of the AHoD's role follow a similar theme: they translate the perspectives and policies of senior staff into the practices of individual classrooms. This 'bridging' or 'brokering' role is perceived by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA, 1998) and Ofsted in England as one of the functions of AHoDs and also remains a central responsibility to department heads in Kenya (TSC, 2006). It implies a transactional leadership role where AHoDs make use of power - usually 'power over' others (Blasé and Anderson, 1995) - to attempt to secure working agreements with departmental colleagues about how to achieve school and departmental goals and practices. Part of this role encompasses the management and allocation of resources.

The second dimension of this aspect of role is how AHoDs encourage their staff to cohere and develop a group identity (Busher and Harris, 1999). A majority of academic theorists of educational management share the view that the compliance of teachers is most effectively accomplished by securing their commitment, and that this can be achieved through the exercise of 'transformational leadership' (Thrupp and Willmott, 2003). The area of subject knowledge that the department shares usually defines the boundaries of the group. An important role for the AHoD then becomes to foster collegiality within this group by establishing a shared vision. Hallinger and Heck (2003) state that 'achieving results through others is the essence of leadership' (p. 229) and that the role of transformational leadership is 'to help others find and embrace new goals individually and collectively' (p. 222). This calls for a leadership style that empowers others and that involves subject leaders using 'power with' or 'power through' other people to generate collaborative departmental cultures (Blase and Anderson, 1995). This style of leadership is people-oriented and requires a leadership approach that helps other people to transform their feelings, attitudes and beliefs.

A third dimension concerns improving staff and student performance. At one level it implies a transactional leadership role where, for instance, the AHoD not only monitors the attainment of school goals but also strives to meet particular prescribed levels of curriculum performance. This role extends to what Glover et al (1998) call a mentoring or supervisory role in which the AHoD supports his/her colleagues' development and the development of pupils academically and socially. By its nature, this role draws on the expert knowledge of AHoDs and that of their referent power as sources of power to

bring about improvement in practice (French and Raven, 1968). Finally, the AHoD has the task of liaising (Busher and Harris, 1999) with a variety of actors and sources of information in the external environment of the school. This involves negotiating, where necessary, on behalf of the other members of the department (Busher, 1988; 1992; TSC, 2006). One aspect of this dimension is helping departmental colleagues keep in touch with others in their subject area and with the views and needs of colleagues in other school departments as well as representing the views of departmental colleagues to senior staff and other middle managers within the school (Busher, 1992).

Since it is impractical to fix a model that lists every possible role in which an AHoD might become engaged, we have created the generic framework above (Figure 6) in which it is possible to identify roles as they develop. This allows scope for the model to evolve (Bell and Ritchie, 1999). The following section examines these roles.

2.3.3 The Leadership Role of AHoDs

One of the most readily identifiable ‘claims’ to successful schools is strong leadership (Leithwood et al, 2008). While this claim could be true, it is a fact that as a concept, leadership is a complex, contested and changing notion (Woods et al, 2004; Southworth, 2002). As Yukl (2002:4-5) testifies, its definition is ‘arbitrary and very subjective’. This suggests that it is inappropriate to offer a singular definition of teacher leadership especially now that the past decade has seen an emerging view that leadership involves a complex process of mutual influence (Simkins, 2005). This in turn suggests that anyone can be a leader (Simkins, 2005). Overwhelmingly, leadership is now perceived as ‘a social influence process [that] permeates organizations rather than residing in particular people or formal positions of authority’ (Smylie, Conley and Marks, 2002: 167). This partly explains the present preoccupation with distributed leadership (Bennett et al 2003; Harris, 2004).

Clearly, when leadership is viewed in terms of ‘what school personnel do, more than who is doing it’ (Scribner et al, 2004:4), in our context, it decentres school leadership. Informed by activity theory (Harris, 2003a; Woods, 2004), the view adopted here is that ‘life in a school is a continuous flow of mediated activity; a process of ever-moving relationships between different actors according to the social and environmental

context' (Woods, 2004: 5-6). The belief in the dominance of the heroic leader (headteacher/ AHoD), an individualised role (Crawford, 2002) is therefore questioned (Hatcher, 2005; Woods et al., 2005) with Gronn (2000) suggesting that it is actually naive. Yukl (2002) explains it thus:

An alternative perspective [to the heroic single leader]...is to define leadership as a shared process of enhancing the individual and the collective capacity of people to accomplish their work effectively... Instead of a heroic leader who can perform all essential leadership functions, the functions are distributed among different members of the team or organisation (Yukl, 2002:432).

Spillane et al (2001: 20) describe this approach to leadership as 'practice distributed over leaders, followers in their situation and incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals'. More recently in a review of the literature relating to successful school leadership, distributed leadership was described as 'being a web of leadership activities and interactions stretched across people and situations' (Leithwood et al, 2006).

This view of leadership raises three distinct issues relevant to this study. First, it portrays leadership as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals (Woods et al, 2004) and this contrasts with leadership as a phenomenon which arises from the individual. What is most distinctive is summed up in what Gronn (2002b:3) terms 'concertive action'. This is contrasted with numerical or additive action, which represents the aggregated effect of a number of individuals contributing their initiative and expertise in different ways to a group or organization. Concerted action is about the additional dynamic which is the product of conjoint activity. Where people work together in such a way that they pool their initiative and expertise, the outcome is a product or energy which is greater than the sum of their individual actions (Woods et al, 2004). Secondly, it suggests openness of the boundaries of leadership. This means that it is predisposed to widen the conventional net of leaders, thus in turn raising the question of which groups and individuals are to be brought into leadership or seen as contributors to it (Woods et al, 2004). Of itself, this leadership does not suggest how wide that boundary should be set. This study focuses on leadership in relation to teachers. However, it recognises that there are other members of the school community whose roles need to be considered such as the student body.

Finally, it entails the view that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many, not the few (Scribner et al, 2007). Related to openness of the boundaries of leadership is the idea that numerous, distinct, germane perspectives and capabilities can be found in individuals spread throughout the organization and its stakeholders (Woods et al, 2004, Leithwood et al, 2008). If these are brought together it is possible to forge a concerted dynamic which represents more than the sum of the individual contributors. Initiatives may be inaugurated by those with relevant skills in a particular context, but others will then, within a mutually trusting and supportive culture, adopt, adapt and improve them. Whatever specific definition of teacher leadership one chooses to adopt, it is clear that participative leadership means moving away from a 'single person' leadership to an approach which stresses collaborative decision-making (Leithwood et al, 2008). Thus, it 'calls on everyone to take responsibility for student achievement and to assume leadership roles in areas in which they are competent and skilled' (Neuman and Simmons 2000:10). In any case, people are more likely to accept and implement decisions in which they have participated, particularly where these decisions relate directly to the individual's own job (Savery, Soutar and Dyson, 1992; Hatcher, 2005).

While participative leadership is a compelling notion because of its democratic ideals, evidence of its successful implementation in schools is sparse (see Hatcher, 2005; Leithwood et al, 2008). A review of the literature shows that much of what is written is dominated by empirical studies derived from headteachers and not AHoDs. The former insist on individual impetus rather than collective action. In fact, the idea of the 'head' as the solitary dynamic leader does still persist (Harris, 2003; Day et al, 2008) which reinforces the top-down nature of leadership. Day et al (2008:84) argue in this regard that their recent research findings suggest that school staff perceive that it is headteacher leadership that remains the major driving force and which underpins school successes. This means that leadership is equated with status, authority and position. According to Busher (2005), this means some people in the school system tend to have greater access to power and authority than others which makes it doubtful that genuine collegiality can be achieved in such hierarchical organisations.

What is clear though is that AHoDs are by virtue of their positions expected to be both organisational managers and leaders of effective teaching and learning (Southworth, 2002). Evidence suggests that they identify more with the latter role (Weller, 2001;

Brown and Rutherford, 1998). This is attributed to the relative closeness they have to those who teach in classrooms, the level where there is the greatest influence on pupil progress (Scheerens, 1992). It is in this regard that Sergiovanni (1984b) views their purpose as that of offering coordination, supervision and evaluation of the curriculum and instruction within an academic discipline. It also implies that as 'leading professionals', they demonstrate a commitment to high quality teaching through their own practice that could be emulated (Weller 2001; Storey, 2004) as well as creating a culture of high expectations and a commitment to good performance.

As long as the traditional 'leader' view persists (predicated on the school structure where accountability is mostly seen to rest in individuals located in formal positions of delegated authority) then individuals, especially AHoDs, will always be expected to manage both people (their followers) and, resources (Simkins, 2005). However, there appears to be a blurred distinction and understanding of the terms *management* and *leadership*. According to Schon (1984), leadership and management are not synonymous terms. He argues:

One can be a leader without being a manager. One can, for example, fulfil many of the symbolic, inspirational, educational and normative functions of a leader and thus represent what an organization stands for without carrying any of the formal burdens of management. Conversely, one can monitor and control organizational activities, make decisions and allocate resources without fulfilling the symbolic, normative, inspirational or educational functions of leadership (Schon, 1984:36).

The implication of this argument is that there are distinct differences between leadership and management. West-Burnham distinguishes leaders from managers in curriculum leadership thus:

It is the role of leaders to secure agreement on the destination, to ensure that the purpose of the journey is kept firmly in mind and provide guidance and support. Managers ensure that all the resources are available in the right place at the right time, to sort out any detours and obstructions and to ensure that timetables are adhered to (West-Burnham, 1996:54).

Realistically, a firm distinction between leadership and management is not feasible because the two have an intimate connection and a great overlap (Fidler, 1997).

In many ways this argument represents the ‘traditional’ conception of middle leadership. What is apparent here are some of the problems that come with this view. For instance, in the traditional understanding of schools leadership, there is undue emphasis on the formal authority delegated from above on the basis of position, while we know that the authority in professional organizations typically depends on a much more complex range of factors, not least perceptions held by professional colleagues of the expertise and performance exhibited by those holding these roles. Secondly, this view rests on an over-simplified hierarchical conception of organizational structure, whereas in reality formal line structures rarely represent adequately the complexity of organizational forms in schools. Nonetheless, both leadership and management are required if departments are to be successful. Consequently, since we expect managers to lead, it may be permissible to treat management and leadership as two sides of a coin. Dressler’s (2001) review of leadership in Charter schools in the United States provides a perspective which suggests that leadership is a ‘management plus’ approach. According to Leithwood et al (1999), leaders need to adopt a ‘bifocal’ perspective, management and leadership. Therefore, not only is the AHoD a manager-leader in the department but also his/her influence is exerted through positional authority within the organisational hierarchy.

Perhaps the most dynamic aspect of this leadership debate is the argument that successful leaders have a vision for their institutions (Leithwood et al, 2008), a view that is linked to the concept of transformational leadership. In practice, this is about the establishment of a shared purpose and therefore, necessarily, incorporates bending the motivations of others to achieve specific goals (Simkins, 2005; Stoll and Fink, 1996). Transformational leaders adapt their behaviours to situations while trying to transform them (Bass, 1985). They take a proactive stance towards an organisation’s vision and in the process shape members’ beliefs, values and attitudes, as well as developing options for the future. They motivate people, raise their level of awareness and consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes and ways of reaching them, and get them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the team. Following this, it could be argued that outstanding AHoDs are those who have a clear vision for their departments that is shared with all in the department (Penlington et al, 2008). It is important to note here that the effectiveness of the distribution of leadership in the department or school is linked to the clarity of roles and responsibilities. This is

important in that when lines of communication are clear, leaders know what their responsibilities are, and staff members know who to approach for support and guidance.

Transformational leadership is often contrasted with transactional leadership. According to Miller and Miller (2001), transactional leadership is based upon an exchange for some valued resource; interaction is episodic, short-lived and limited to the exchange transaction. In contrast, transformational leadership is more potent and complex and occurs when teachers engage with others in such a way that administrators and teachers raise one another to higher levels of commitment, dedication and motivation, and, through this transforming process, the motives of the leader and follower merge (Miller and Miller, 2001:182). Evidence from research such as Day et al's (2001) shows successful leaders are both transactional (ensuring that systems are maintained and run smoothly) and transformative, that is build on esteem, competence, autonomy and achievement. In the context of AHoDs, the conceptualisation is that their role is to influence those they are leading in such a way that they achieve their desired purposes. The purpose of this influence is to increase the commitment of teachers to school goals. In this case, the AHoD's objective is seen as seeking and engaging the support of teachers for his/her vision for the department and the school whilst enhancing their capacities to contribute to goal achievement. This vision is based on personal and professional values and should be articulated at every opportunity.

All the forms of leadership examined hitherto are partial, though they provide valid and helpful insights. In fact, no one form provides a complete picture of school leadership. It is for this reason that we turn to another form - contingent leadership - which recognises the diverse nature of school contexts and the advantages of adapting leadership styles to the particular situation rather than adopting a 'one size fits all' stance to account for contextual behaviours unique to leading the department. Leithwood et al offer a definition of this model:

What is important is how leaders respond to the unique organisational circumstances or problems... there are wide variations in the contexts for leadership and that, to be effective, these contexts require different leadership responses (Leithwood et al, 1999:15).

Yukl (2002:234) adds that ‘the managerial job is too complex and unpredictable to rely on a set of standardised responses to events... Effective leaders are continuously reading the situation and evaluating how to adapt their behaviour to it’. An eclectic stance is at times required where leaders adapt their styles to the context in which they are operating (Bolman and Deal, 1984). Morgan (1986) and Bush (1995) seem to agree with this since both authors argue that leadership requires an effective diagnosis of problems followed by the adoption of the most appropriate response to the issue or situation.

There is a reason to link participative, transformational and contingent leaderships. Leithwood suggests that transformational leadership practices are themselves contingent:

Whereas the dimensions of transformational leadership offer a coherent approach to school leadership, specific practices within each dimension vary widely. So advocating a transformational approach to school leadership does not entail the specification of a uniform or rigid set of leadership behaviours (Leithwood, 1994:515).

Therefore, contingent leadership is necessary because AHoDs face unique organisational circumstances or problems. The wide variation in school contexts means effective AHoDs need to be able to adapt their approaches to particular requirements of the school and situation or event requiring their attention. Given all these aspects of leadership, it is only reasonable to view leadership in a more inter-related way and this has been adopted here.

2.3.4 Ensuring Cohesion in the Department Team

The concepts of ‘team’ and ‘teamwork’ used in relation to ‘creating cohesion’ among colleagues have largely been adapted from management theories of organisations that do not necessarily deliver education as their basic concern (Katzenbach and Smith, 2003). Their relevance to the context of the school department is not in dispute however because these have typical team characteristics such as ‘small numbers of people with complimentary skills committed to a common purpose, goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable’ (Katzenbach and Smith, 1993:45). Departments also fit into Everard and Morris (1990:172) prescriptive conception that

‘the contribution drawn from each member of the team is one which cannot be called into play other than in the context of a supportive team’. It is in this respect that an aspect of the AHoD’s role is to organise, manage and lead teachers in their departments which vary considerably in size and cohesion. The most important aspect of this role is creating cohesion (Busher and Harris, 1999).

While uncertainties resulting from change could best be tackled through departmental teamwork (Scribner, 2007; Critchley and Casey, 1984), teamwork demands that democratic rather than autocratic ways of making decisions are adopted. This calls for the adoption of collegial authority in which teachers integrate their work into an internal democracy (Scribner, 2007; Bell, 1992). It also means that departmental members access their leaders’ thinking, in which case, open discussion within the department is emphasised. There is evidence that teachers may be hostile to pseudo-decision making such as when managers conduct a cosmetic consultation in spite of the final decisions having already been made (Earley and Fletcher-Campbell, 1989). Bennett et al (2007) indicate that team-based approaches to leadership and management appear to be preferred in educational institutions. Brown and Rutherford (1998; 1999) studies show that it is not only a precondition for effective change processes but also a necessity if there is going to be a commitment to the outcomes (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002). In fact, Metcalfe and Russell’s (1997) study shows that a thorny issue like monitoring is acceptable in a culture of collegiality because it is viewed as collective learning from one another. Nonetheless, the following three observations cannot elude our attention.

First, the degree of collegiality and collaborative culture varies. This has been found to be the case in research in England and USA (Scribner, 2007; Brown, Boyle and Boyle, 2000). Secondly, there is an ambiguous relationship characterised by contradiction between collegiality and hierarchy whenever line management responsibilities are exercised. For example, evidence from Wise and Bush’s (1999) study shows a strong emphasis on collegiality in teachers’ discussions of their departments’ culture and practice. However, they argued that this prevented them from undertaking systematic evaluation. It is in this context that the discharge of line management responsibilities within the collegial climate is described by Wise (2001:340) as ‘generally one of informal casual inquiry’. Thirdly, there is the question of the ‘need’ for strong

leadership and authority within collegial frameworks (Sammons et al, 1997; Harris, Jamieson and Russ, 1995) - the AHoD has to have subject expertise, which implies a non-collegial role. Unlike primary schools where teachers would emphasise teaching excellence (Fletcher and Bell, 1999), secondary teachers rate subject expertise more as a measure of competence for leadership (Little, 1995).

There are underlying difficulties in the concept of collegiality. For example, it assumes that common values, understanding and priorities are obvious and that its micro-political structure is integrative and exclusive (Hargreaves, 1995) which is not necessarily true. In this regard, a warning is sounded about the extrapolation of the department collegium to a level where it becomes a sub-group within the school (Brown et al, 2000) because this could lead to balkanization. Again, there is concern that a strong collegium may lead to complacency, restricting the ability of the department to respond to change (Hargreaves, 1995). This has a number of implications for AHoDs and teachers. The most effective departments collaborate in the shared management of responsibilities (Scribner et al, 2007). However, collaboration within a department is more difficult to achieve if the individual members of the department are reluctant to participate (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002). In order to achieve this collaboration, a competent AHoD needs to show care and concern for staff while exercising other management and leadership competencies such as organising departmental work fairly, establishing good referral processes, liaising with outside agencies, running meetings effectively and efficiently and being constructive while expecting high standards.

2.3.5 The Role of AHoDs in Professional Development

Research in the West shows that whereas leadership in schools starts with the headteacher, (Stewart and Zepeda, 2002), AHoDs are also increasingly accepting responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning within the department although it is a responsibility they feel ill-equipped to bear effectively (Adey, 2000). This is because some headteachers have failed to provide the necessary 'scaffold' for these teachers to enhance their understanding and professional awareness (Stewart and Zepeda, 2002). The observation by Adey and Jones (1998:134) that 'staff appointed to academic middle leadership roles may have the potential to do well but not the

necessary skills to be successful initially' suggests a need to prepare teachers for this role (Brown et al, 2000). Fitzgerald (2003:1) argues that 'if schools want effective middle managers, relevant and meaningful professional development is critical'.

Fitzgerald's (2003) argument stems from a realization that responsibilities being shouldered by AHoDs are growing in number, complexity and as Schmidt (2000) adds, increasingly politicized. For AHoDs, especially newly appointed ones, to confront the expectations attached to this role, they need some training (Turner, 2006). Schmidt (2000) maintains that a career move from teacher to administrator is, in general, an unnatural transition and there is a misconception about the readiness of new administrators for leadership. A positive development however is that in a recent study of AHoDs, Bennett and Wise (2003) observed that more than half of their respondents had gained further qualifications since entering teaching. Nonetheless, they indicated that there was need for initial and frequent training.

While the foregoing is not disputable, Marland and Smith (1981:45) argue that 'the moment a teacher becomes an AHoD, he has entered into the in-service training business' a view echoed by Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989) who observed in their study that the organisation of staff continuous professional development (CPD) was seen by SMTs as the 'hallmark' of a successful department. However, they found like Bullock (1988) that AHoDs did not see CPD as part of their role or they were not happy with it because of a lack of training. However, Glover et al (1999) observed in the subject leaders they studied that they had some autonomy in CPD. In fact, there was a realisation that once appointed the deployment and CPD of staff was a matter for subject leaders in 19 of the 24 schools studied.

Although this and evidence from Adey's (2000) survey show that AHoDs are adapting to changing role expectations in some aspects of their work in the West, there is no evidence of any increase in responsibility for CPD. The TTA (1998) expectations that the AHoD should appraise staff and use the process to develop the personal and professional effectiveness of the appraisee(s), audit training needs of subject staff and lead CPD of subject staff through example and support, and co-ordinate the provision of high quality CPD are not being shared by AHoDs. Among the items identified as areas of least confidence in Adey's (2000) study are 'identifying professional

development needs of subject staff’ and ‘managing the professional development needs of subject staff’ but neither of these is rated as a priority training need. This low priority given to fostering the professional development of the subject team could be attributed to AHoDs’ lack of confidence in the appraisal process as an instrument of CPD.

2.3.6 AHoDs and the Liaison/Bridging Role

AHoDs are channels of communication between various groups within the school community linking teachers with administrators, their departments with parents and with other departments within the school (Weller, 2001; Wettersten, 1994). Terms such as, ‘buffers’ (Gleeson and Shain, 1999), ‘conduits’ and ‘intermediaries’ (Bennett et al, 2003) are frequently used in the West to describe the way in which all middle leaders act as connections between various groups. Wettersten (1992) opines that by perceiving the visions and needs of both administrators and teachers and by communicating and interpreting information between both groups, AHoDs are able to bridge or link two different but related bodies in their environments.

It is apparent that by operating at the interface between different levels and sources of influence, AHoDs sometimes feel ‘caught in the crossfire’ between senior and departmental staff’s expectations (Weller, 2001; Harvey, 1997). If they also have a feeling that they have limited formal authority (Wettersten, 1994), then they are likely to be vulnerable to the consequences of changing loyalties between department staff and the SMTs (Weller, 2001). Research shows that tight managerial control has created an expectation that AHoDs implement policy directives faithfully and monitor their translation into practice (an implementing role). However, there is evidence that instead, they are interpreting their role as a buffer and bridge, significantly influencing the impact of external pressures on their departments. Glover et al (1998) describe this aspect of the AHoD’s work as a ‘bridging and brokering role’ characterised by the filtering of external demands in ways that make them acceptable and practical within the department. This also means representing departmental needs and expectations to the wider school community so that whole-school values and expectations take account of departmental values and teachers’ interests. Where AHoDs share the vision of the headteacher, Abolghasemi et al (1999) suggest, the subject teachers are likely to align to it through the AHoD’s mediating influence.

2.3.7 The Role of AHoDs in Managing Resources

A number of studies (Glover and Miller, 1999; Harvey, 1997; Fletcher and Bell, 1999) suggest that acquiring and managing curriculum and other resources is a key dimension of the AHoD's work. However, it is also apparent that when considering the resources available to them for carrying out their leadership role, time is clearly one of the main issues. In most Western countries, it is the major issue for secondary AHoDs (Wise and Bush, 1999) as well as primary school subject leaders (Fletcher and Bell, 1999) and not money as the study of Department Chairs in secondary schools in the United States by Wettersten (1994) found. There is a clear case for AHoDs to have more non-contact time than other teachers. However, there is an argument that time and energies of the AHoD could be augmented if rather more of the administrative chores of the department were tackled by secretarial staff and having a genuinely departmental team that shares responsibility and provides mutual support, relieving unreasonable burdens from the AHoD or any of the members.

Acquiring finances for the department is the other important dimension of the AHoD's roles. According to Glover et al (1999), whereas resource acquisition mechanisms in schools and departments are varied, AHoDs in the West have to bid for funding for their departments. Similarly, it is the responsibility of AHoDs to manage their physical resources. This is supported in Western countries, unlike most schools in Kenya, by existing purpose built 'subject suites' incorporating ancillary rooms for storage, reference and administration purposes which greatly assist in the effective use of resources.

2.3.8 AHoDs and their Role in the Whole School

School leadership, according to Sergiovanni (1984b), is difficult to implement in situations where departments are considered separate entities and their leaders are concerned primarily with the welfare of their own departments. In respect to this view, it is now apparent that changes in the last decade have seen AHoDs work positively within and contribute towards the shaping of whole school policies and priorities. It is now clear in England, for example, that in striving to give strategic direction and development of the subject (as well as in other non-academic departments) AHoDs are

expected to contribute to whole school aims, policies and practices. According to the TTA (1998), AHoDs have a major role to play in the development of school policy and practice. However, as the TTA insists, the responsibility for influencing whole school policy decisions is matched by an expectation that AHoDs plan departmental developments carefully within the constraints of the whole school framework.

Effective AHoDs should be able to adopt a whole-school perspective in determining priorities. The dilemma for AHoDs though lies in the knowledge that on one hand, they are expected to represent the department's interests and yet, they are more highly regarded by SMTs if they show willingness to compromise in the wider interests of the whole school (Turner, 1996). Research portrays a mixture of feelings about this issue. Recently, for example, Day et al (2008) have shown from their studies the recognition by headteachers of the importance to the success of the school in broadening participation of staff, consulting with them on a regular basis and, in some cases, the increased involvement of students in school wide decision-making processes. However, there is documented evidence by Glover et al (1999), for example, that sometimes senior staff do not bother to involve AHoDs in designing whole-school aims and objectives. The AHoDs themselves indicated that they were not involved, either because of a lack of time, or because they had little interest. Similarly, a substantial number of the senior managers in Glover et al's (1999) study spoke of the need for AHoDs to make a more practical contribution to the strategic development of the school. However, AHoDs observed that the opportunity to contribute to strategic direction depends upon the willingness of the SMT to establish procedures that involve them.

Although there is evidence of a growing acceptance of the need to plan departmental developments within the context of whole-school priorities, there is little evidence of a widespread acceptance that part of the AHoD's role is to contribute to the development of whole-school policy-making (Adey, 2000; Glover et al, 1998). There is evidence in Glover et al's (1998) study that most of them have no wish to get involved on anything beyond their own subject domain. This reluctance is not confined to AHoDs. There is evidence that many senior leaders also wish to exclude them from this process. The implication is that contributing to whole-school policy-making is not perceived by senior managers to be part of the AHoD's role. This was certainly the view of one

headteacher in Glover et al's (1998:286) study who commented that 'we would not want to see each department develop its own vision except as a mirror of what we are doing as a school'. This suggests that most SMTs and AHoDs were viewing the role of the AHoD as that of a line manager responsible for ensuring that institutional policies and priorities were being translated into appropriate action at the departmental level.

2.3.9 The Monitoring Role of AHoDs

The move in the UK towards AHoDs becoming accountable to line managers for the quality of work in their areas reflects policy changes in the late 1990s (Fletcher and Bell, 1999; Glover et al, 1998; Metcalfe and Russell, 1997). The expectation is that AHoDs monitor their colleagues' work (Wise, 2001). Whilst this is recognised by AHoDs as one of their responsibilities, most studies show that they have reservations about entering a colleague's classroom even when the nature of the observation is agreed in advance (Glover and Miller, 1999; Metcalfe and Russell, 1997; Fletcher and Bell, 1999). There is also evidence in Glover et al's (1999) study that many AHoDs are reluctant to hold members of their team accountable for what happens in the classroom. AHoDs still generally define their role as subject administrators looking after human and teaching resources (Glover et al, 1998). According to some senior staff, they use this though as a refuge to avoid the awkwardness of entering the classroom of another to engage in monitoring.

Reticence by AHoDs to monitor and evaluate their staff remains an issue. Bennett et al (2003) observed recently that there is great resistance to the idea of monitoring the quality of colleagues' work, especially by observing them in the classroom. This is supported by Wise's (2001) findings that monitoring through classroom observation is seen by many teachers as demonstrating a failure of trust and to be replacing trust with surveillance. The general perception is that observation is a challenge to professional norms of equality and privacy and is sometimes seen as an abrogation of trust. This reluctance to change the AHoDs' traditional view of their role and their relationship with their colleagues upon which it rests brings to the fore questions relating to ideas of collegiality and professionalism and how these are differently understood. Torrington and Weightman (1989:168) regard this 'as a very sensitive issue' because it runs counter to the culture of teachers enjoying professional autonomy. When done, it risks

damaging interpersonal relationships.

This evidence demonstrates a continuing tension between monitoring and evaluation and the concepts of professional accountability which have the effect of inhibiting the AHoDs' work. This is also highlighted by Turner (1996) although, in the same breathe, he criticises AHoDs for lacking the goodwill to engage in monitoring. These observations demonstrate that AHoDs are under considerable amount of stress because while they are being told to monitor, on the other hand, they are concerned that it will damage good working relationships with their team members. The lack of time allocated to them to carry out their management tasks makes alignment with their perception of their teams' opinion easier to justify but may not improve effectiveness (Weller, 2001).

2.3.10 The Role of AHoDs in Implementing School Policies and Curriculum

Reforms in schools resulting from legislated policies require particular persons to implement them. The process of implementing such changes rests with the leadership and management capacities of managers, especially AHoDs. At the outset of any implementation process, participants usually explore new ways of doing things in their departments. This means a cultural adaptation where, for instance, collaboration with colleagues about issues related to teaching and learning takes centre stage. Evidence from Hannay et al's (2001) study suggests that to facilitate cross-curricular teaching, for instance, requires collaboration which is an element of the leadership role. A participant described the interaction:

We sit down and talk about individuals [students]. We can talk about common strategies for students who aren't the quickest learners. We sit down and talk about using strategies for people who have discipline problem. In my judgement, the maximum benefit ...is you can sit down and you can compare students in their various classes, and say this works here, this doesn't work (Hannay et al, 2001:102).

Teachers working collaboratively on implementing cross-curricular approaches realise quickly their learners' weaknesses and find it easier to explore the needs of individual learners, the best means of addressing these needs and the impact of revised teaching practices on the learner.

The same applies to implementing change at the whole school level. Some AHoDs face a mode of operation that is beyond the givens of a subject based culture and this can be challenging. A participant in Hannay et al's (2001) study argued:

The role is getting much more important and it's much more school centred than department centred, and I think this is a problem that some department heads are having because with the changes ... it means that the department heads have to look at the whole school and not their own little bailiwick and empire (Hannay et al, 2001:103).

The implementing role can be problematic, for example, when super-ordinate structures are created to manage change (Hannay et al, 2001). Some of these structures tend to challenge the right of AHoDs in guiding their staff in implementing specific changes. In such a case, some AHoDs could feel unsure of their leadership role in certain subjects. The problem of super-ordinate structures is that they cannot be sustained as they lack goodwill from critical role players - the AHoDs. To support this role and its demands, professional development outlined earlier is required to assist AHoDs in learning about change planning and the change processes themselves.

2.4 Role of AHoDs in the Kenyan Context

The role of AHoDs in Kenyan schools is better appreciated by first contextualising the wider concerns of school leadership here. A growing body of research on effective schools and recent calls for school reform have both identified the headteacher in Kenya, and in many parts of Africa, as the key person in efforts to improve the quality of schools (Dadey and Harber, 1991; Beeson and Mathews, 1992; Kitavi; 1995; Bush and Oduro, 2006). The fact that every school has a headteacher who is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the school partly helps to justify this trend. Kitavi and Der Westhuizen (1997) citing Weldy (1979) argue that:

In many ways, the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school...It is his/her leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for the learning, the level of professionalism and morale of the teachers and degree of concern for what students may or may not become (Kitavi and Der Westhuizen 1997: 251).

Nonetheless, the same literature shows that these individuals face a daunting challenge (Bush and Oduro, 2006). For instance, they often work in poorly equipped schools,

sometimes with inadequately trained staff; they are rarely given formal leadership training, and, basically, most are appointed on the basis of their teaching record rather than their leadership potential (Bush and Oduro, 2006). In a word, there are numerous challenges facing the headteachers and AHoDs in Africa.

The arguments advanced for the close relationship between school leadership, understood in its widest sense, and effective schools (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996; NCSL, 2001; Bush, 2003) also apply to the context of the AHoD. The problems headteachers face are replicated at lower levels of the school hierarchy. For example, the means by which most headteachers in Kenya are trained, selected, inducted and in-serviced are portrayed in the literature as ill-suited to the development of effective and efficient school managers (Kitavi and Der Westhuizen, 1997). There is evidence that throughout Africa, there is no formal requirement for headteachers to be trained managers. Most are appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with an implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership. In Kenya, deputy headteachers as well as good assistant teachers, for example, are appointed to head schools without any leadership training. As may be concluded from circulars and other directives from the MOE, the same is true to AHoDs. Most appointments to positions of responsibility are based on good teaching abilities which are not necessarily an indication that the person appointed will be a capable educational leader (Kitavi and Der Westhuizen, 1997).

The appointment of any AHoD in Kenya is largely based on a teacher's seniority in 'rank' and 'teaching experience'. The TSC, for example, in its scheme of service stipulates that an individual who has attained a senior Graduate Teacher status (Job Group M) may qualify to take responsibility for an academic department. To attain this level, one shall have taught for a period of at least three years in a lower rank of Job Group L; have demonstrated outstanding competence by improving and maintaining high standards in examination results; and be able to organize and administer curricular and co-curricular activities, as well as being knowledgeable in stores, supplies and making requisitions. This individual would in normal circumstances be deployed as an AHoD in a school with one or two streams or as a subject head in a National School, or school with three or more streams. Bush and Jackson (2002:408), commenting on headship, observe in this regard that 'training in many countries is not a requirement for

appointment (to principalship) ...and there is still an (often unwritten) assumption that good teachers can become effective managers and leaders without specific preparation'. Although referring to headteachers, Bush and Jackson's (2002) point is equally true of AHoDs in Kenya.

Due to the paucity of research evidence on AHoDs in Kenya, this study has reviewed standards set in the West. It has examined the theory, policy and practice of the Anglo-American world from which the current practice in Kenya has been borrowed. For example, it is evident that in Kenya, like in the UK, departmental management and coordination aimed at promoting effectiveness in the teaching process with regard to syllabus coverage, formulation of schemes of work, maintenance of records of work and records of tests and examinations is emphasised (TTA, 1998; MOE, 1987; TSC, 2006). There is also an agreement that specifying subjects' syllabuses for each class, determining what aspects of a subject curriculum shall be covered in each class, and maintaining textbook, equipment inventories and ledgers for the department are aspects of the management role of AHoDs. Similarly, both countries list their other responsibilities as working out needs and priorities in the departmental stores; maintaining records of internal and external examinations; coordinating the maintenance of pupil performance records by all in the department; and, coordinating teaching in the department (TSC, 1993).

With regard to human resource management, the Kenyan AHoDs have the responsibility for inducting new members of staff into the department, supervising and carrying out internal inspection of subject teaching - especially among new members of staff, and, stimulating interest, work morale and enthusiasm of staff in the department. This does not exclude instructional leadership in which the AHoDs are expected to be the leading professionals by teaching their subjects of specialization and motivating students to learn (Ministry of Education, 1987). Much of the information about the role of AHoDs in Kenya is inferred from government circulars and the TSC Scheme of Service, which are directives, rather than empirical documents. This makes it difficult to assess their formal and informal roles.

2.5 Conclusion

A review of the nature and composition of AHoDs has been attempted in this chapter. It

has been demonstrated that departmental structure by subject has for years been the characteristic organizational model for secondary schools (Siskin, 1994; Turner and Bolam, 1998). Reference to 'head of department' or 'subject head' (Gold, 1998) suggests that embedded in this structure are the management and leadership roles that symbolize the ability and right of the department to govern itself.

It has also been demonstrated that structurally, AHoDs occupy a position within the school organization but play different roles. Conceptually, they have obligations within these schools which in turn give each of them a defined place (Stewart and Zepeda, 2002). Their role becomes problematic when the expectations that different people have in them are conflicting or contradictory; when they are far-ranging and limitless and virtually impossible to fulfill; when other people's defined expectations for the role and its purposes are at odds with one's own; when the ideal role is repeatedly confronted by its actualities; and when the purposes one is meant to fulfil through the role are vague and ill-defined (Schmidt, 2001). Hence, their position is characterised by role ambiguity and role conflict.

In spite of this, the AHoD provides the essential link on a continuum of the management and leadership responsibilities held by the headteacher (Scribner et al, 2007). However, they often find themselves performing at least some tasks that have been traditionally relegated to assistant headteachers. It is on this basis that Weller (2001), for example, characterizes the AHoD's post as a 'between' position - between their administrators and their teaching peers. The result is that AHoDs are confused as to their precise placement on line-staff organizational charts (see Gold, 1998). They are torn in their loyalties between their headteachers and assistant teachers as they perform a range of responsibilities that call for the allegiance of both administrator and peer alike.

Nonetheless, they are in a unique position of being potentially the most influential people in a well-organized secondary school, if their role is properly defined and their responsibilities clearly delineated (Weller, 2001; Gold, 1998). The importance of teacher participation in determining a vision for the school is well documented (Stewart and Zepeda, 2002). However when AHoDs are reluctant to offer for any reason, their participation, the result is certainly tension because decisions are not shared. This is

made worse if there is insufficient knowledge of expectations of the job hence role ambiguity. This is true because of their proximity to teachers and subjects' area expertise. Problems arise when, as indicated above, the expectations of the job are not clearly articulated; when AHoDs are not given professional development opportunities to prepare them for their role; or when they miss resources for implementing the curriculum. This is made worse if they are burdened with clerical tasks, multiple sets of paperwork and inventories which could take away the necessary time for them to perform their more important instructional leadership role.

With the above in perspective, this study examines six interrelated research questions. The first question is: **Who are the Middle Leaders in Kenyan Secondary schools?** - emanating from the fact that whereas Western countries have identified post holders who provide middle leadership in their schools, there is less clarity as to who offers the same in the Kenyan context. The second research question is: **What are said by AHoDs, headteachers and other teachers to be the responsibilities and practices of AHoDs?** It has been demonstrated that AHoDs perform multiple tasks. Beyond identifying tasks they perform, an analysis shows how critical their role is. It is also important to know if what these AHoDs do justifies their position.

There has also been a review of evidence in the published literature on how AHoDs in Western schools define and execute their role. Following this understanding, this study also seeks to explore the same in the context of Kenyan schools, hence the third research question: **How do Kenyan AHoDs define and execute their role?** Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that various sources of influence impact on how they perform their role. Evidence gathered from research studies indicates that whilst performing their duties, AHoDs constantly make decisions about whose opinions are the most legitimate and therefore who influences their decisions most (Wise and Bennett, 2003). In pursuit of this agenda, this study seeks the Kenyan perspective and hence the fourth research question: **What factors influence the ways in which AHoDs define and execute their role?**

This review has also shown that there are several inherent tensions in the AHoD's role performance. It has been concluded that this can create significant problems for a role holder. According to Stewart and Zepeda (2002), there are several sources of role

conflict. This study seeks to investigate the sources of conflict through the fifth research question: **What are the barriers/tensions/conflicts that the AHoDs face and how do these affect their role?** Finally, the study aims at contributing to school improvement. In putting the findings into their rightful context and through the question: **How might AHoDs contribute better to school improvement?** - the researcher hopes to contribute to the debate on school improvement in Kenya. These six research questions are listed at the beginning of Chapter 3 which also looks at the rationale of this study, the research strategy used and the way data is analysed. The generic model of roles (Figure 6) generated from the literature reviewed is used to analyse the various roles AHoDs perform in Chapter 4 and 5.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 has demonstrated that devolution of power and authority away from the principal as the sole locus of control towards middle leaders is being emphasised in the modern secondary school. This study analysed the implementation and impact of the role of AHoDs in six secondary schools in Kenya with the aim of understanding their role in the context of a developing country. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

- i. Who are the middle leaders in Kenyan Secondary schools?
- ii. What are said by AHoDs, headteachers and other teachers to be the responsibilities and practices of AHoDs?
- iii. How do AHoDs define and execute their role?
- iv. What factors influence the ways in which AHoDs define and execute their role?
- v. What are the barriers/tensions/conflicts that AHoDs face and how do these affect their role?
- vi. How might AHoDs contribute better to school improvement?

The study was carried out in two phases and data was collected through interviews, questionnaires and documents. The first phase involved the administration of a questionnaire returned by 4 headteachers, 31 heads of departments (of all types) and 90 Assistant Teachers. Phase two involved face-to-face interviews with 4 headteachers and 21 AHoDs. In the process, various forms of documents relevant to the study were examined.

3.1 A Philosophical Background to the Research

Research literature has an evolving debate about aligning research studies to a particular paradigm (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Silverman, 2001). While the debate on the suitability of positivist or interpretivist paradigms is on-going, the available literature shows that each emphasises specific types of data collection and construction modes (Erckan and Roth, 2006). For instance, the ontological and epistemological tenets of positivism show an inclination towards the use of experimental methods and quantitative measures because the objective of positivism is to discover causal relationships between observable phenomena. This means positivists emphasise ‘truth’

as an objective reality (Myers, 2000) thereby dismissing the self-consciousness of human beings as insignificant in our ability to understand social behaviour. Epistemologically, researchers who hold this view believe knowledge of the social world is based upon empirical principles in which evidence must be capable of being tested scientifically and shown to be not 'false'. Consequently, anything that is not observable cannot be considered as a valid explanation of social phenomena (Myers, 2000).

In contrast, interpretivists argue that findings cannot necessarily be arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), and so they downplay statistical techniques and the mechanics of quantitative methods. In fact, they emphasise that people understand phenomena in different ways (Livesey, 2003; Creswell, 2002; Wildemuth, 1993) with the effect that individuals create different realities as they interact in a social environment. In this regard, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest the existence of multiple realities that can be studied only holistically and not by the analytic methods of positivist research. The argument here is that if social reality is created by people, we can only understand the subjective experiences and interpretations of these people. The researcher shares this view and has adopted it in this research.

3.2 Implications of Adopting the Interpretivist Paradigm

The aim of this study was to identify and decode the meanings of relationships occurring in a normal school context (Fryer, 1991), that is, a natural setting (Denzin, 1971; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Marshall and Rossman, 1989). The researcher recognises that the phenomena investigated were not only complex but also experienced and interpreted differently because 'reality' for AHOs is not 'out there' as an amalgam of external phenomena waiting to be uncovered as 'facts', but a construct in which they understand their situations in different ways (Neill, 2003). From this understanding, a strategy that emphasised the AHOs' perspective was adopted (Morrison, 2002).

While the study adopted the qualitative paradigm, the researcher was aware that what constitutes a 'qualitative method' is contestable because phenomena are by their nature quantitative and qualitative and data construction processes are based on subjective

judgements (Erckan and Roth, 2006). Nonetheless, the fact that this study sought to provide a holistic view of the AHoD's work situation (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Patton, 1980) meant that individual behaviour had to be perceived not as an outcome of a finite set of discrete variables but rather as a 'lived experience' of the social setting (Giorgi, 1970).

The objective of this research has been outlined and the distinctive principles of the interpretivist paradigm seemed conducive to achieving them. The emphasis was in interpretation and a concern with context – regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience and an explicit recognition of the impact of the research process on the research situation (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) were key factors. An absence of a specific hypothesis driving the study is also noted. This should not be misconstrued as a reluctance to be systematic because as shown in the 'pre-structured design' below, the emphasis in the study was on an exploration of meanings of events and phenomena from the research subjects and their role-sets' perspectives and therefore textual analysis predominates. The conviction embraced is that realities cannot be studied independently from their contexts and the appropriateness of a research tool is context-specific (Crompton and Jones, 1988; Patton, 1988).

3.3 Research Approach

This is an exploratory multiple-site case study focusing on six schools. The aim of the study was to provide an in-depth account of relationships, experiences and processes occurring in the workplace of AHoDs (see Denscombe, 1998). According to Anderson and Arsenault (1988), this calls for the use of multiple sources of evidence to analyse a specific phenomenon in its natural setting that is normally 'contemporary in context'. Yin agrees that the case study investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, 'especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident ... (and) copes with a situation in which there are many more variables of interest than data points' (Yin, 1994:13).

This understanding suggests significant traits of this approach. One is that the school, as a case is a 'bounded system' hence making this strategy appropriate when one wants to cover contextual conditions. This contrasts with approaches such as the experiment which divorces a phenomenon from its context or a history, which deals with the

entangled situation between phenomenon and context but usually with non-contemporary events. Secondly, in an attempt to preserve the wholeness, unity and integrity of the case, it relies on multiple sources of evidence with data converging in a triangulating fashion (Yin, 1994). This means that this approach is an all-encompassing method. Its design incorporates (see below) specific approaches to data collection and to data analysis. Thirdly, it focuses on each one instance and involves a detailed study of its targeted subjects. The logic is that there are insights gained since the researcher has an opportunity to delve into details and discover things that might not become apparent through superficial research.

Importantly, the focus in this study is on relationships and processes of those who provide leadership in these schools. This approach is suitable here because issues within social settings tend to be inter-connected and inter-related. To understand one thing, it is important to understand many others and how they are linked. In this respect, the case study offers a better understanding because it goes into details to unravel complexities of a situation. As a result, it tends to be ‘holistic’ rather than deal with isolated factors and it explains ‘why’ certain outcomes might happen rather than just focus on ‘what’ outcomes are (Denscombe, 1998). This is particularly true with respect to role play in schools. Finally, because the schools already exist in their natural environment, and are not artificially generated like an experiment, they are seen to be realistic.

3.4 Research Design

The aim of this study was to explore and explain the complex interactions, tacit processes, beliefs and values held by AHoDs while playing their role and the challenges that hindered effective role-playing. Consequently, it was deemed necessary to view their role from as many perspectives as possible (Briggs, 2003) thereby increasing the opportunity to see and report the situation through the eyes of the participants (Morrison, 2002). Multiple sources of evidence were necessary not just for triangulation but also to increase construct validity (Briggs, 2003).

3.4.1 Sampling

As noted in Chapter 1, secondary schools in Kenya belong to various groups:

- *National schools* - these admit students from all districts and municipalities in the Republic of Kenya. Of the 16, 3 are in Central Province, 4 in Nairobi Province, 4 in the Rift Valley Province, 2 in Eastern Province, 1 in North Eastern Province and 1 in Nyanza Province. Out of eight provinces, two do not have a National school. The number of students enrolled is over 600 in each of these schools.
- *Provincial schools* - these admit students from the province in which the school is located. They are well distributed and each province has a substantial number of them. There are 283 provincial schools countrywide with varied enrolment in each school, with some having as many as 1000 students while others have as few as 300 students.
- *District schools* - these draw students from the local District and totalling 3001, they form the bulk of the schools in Kenya. The number of students on roll in each of these schools is varies.
- *Private schools* - these are owned and managed by individuals or organisations that determine their own admission criteria. They are unevenly spread across the country (Kenya High Commission, 2005).

The total number of secondary schools in Kenya in December 2004 was 3,400 and 300 Public and Private Secondary schools respectively (Kenya High Commission, 2005). This study focuses on public secondary schools.

3.4.2 Sampling Frame and Sample Size

This study focused on schools with ‘exemplary’ or ‘average’ performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination. Given that academic performance in every school in KCSE was the only factor that was consistently analysed throughout the country, the researcher felt it was the most appropriate measure to benchmark the study. In any case, in an environment where many variables are difficult to compare because of incompleteness, inconsistent record keeping and unbalanced resourcing of institutions, ‘productivity’ measured by a uniform national examination over a period of three years seemed the ‘fairest’ measure to act as a benchmark.

Literature on school effectiveness does emphasise academic achievement although

there is a view that other supportive conditions need to be considered as well. Cohn and Rossmiller (1987) support this notion when they argue that effective schools can be defined primarily in terms of gains in cognitive knowledge rather than by broader, more inclusive measures of the outcomes of schooling. Scheerens and Bosker (1997) echo what much of the literature in the developed world tacitly accepts - that one defining characteristic of a successful school is that it uses an outcome measure as its criterion. Given that KCSE examination is done countrywide, 3400 schools were too many to study. Consequently, one administrative region - Kisii District - was chosen since school ranking is based on Districts and the researcher was familiar with the territory. Data on each school is stored in the local District Education Office. For this study, consideration was limited to the data for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004.

According to Cohen et al (2000), there is no clear-cut answer as to how large a sample size should be. However, the correct sample size depends on the nature of the population, the sort of relationships that one would like to explore within subgroups of the eventual sample, the style of the research, representativeness of the sample, accessibility and costs (Cohen et al, 2000). Bearing these factors in mind, first, the average mean standard score (mss) for each school based on KCSE results (the higher the mss, the better the school's academic performance) were derived and three categories 'created'.

- Category A: ≥ 7.0 (4 exemplar schools - most students achieved excellent grades that could take them to university and other institutions of further education);
- Category B: $4.5 \leq 6.9$ (20 average schools – a number of students performed well but not as many could proceed to university level because of their 'average' grades. Nonetheless, most qualified for middle level colleges);
- Category C: ≤ 4.4 (84 below average schools – characterised by low level grades among the majority of the students with very few qualifying with grades that could take them to university. Some of them qualified to join middle level colleges while a majority had very weak grades).

Given the objectives of this study, 108 schools were too many for study and this called for further purposive sub-sampling that resulted in the choice of six schools.

School	Characteristics
KH	Single sex (Boys); KCSE average for the past 3 years >7 [exemplar]; Urban; Boarding; Provincial school
KE	Single sex (Girls); KCSE average for the past 3 years >7 [exemplar]; Urban; Boarding; Provincial School
NYABS	Single sex (Girls); KCSE average for the past 3 years >7 [exemplar]; Urban; Boarding; Provincial School.
CARD	Single sex (Boys) ; KCSE average for the past 3 years >7 [exemplar]; Rural; Boarding; Provincial school.
SUN	Mixed sex; KCSE average for the past 3 years 5>6 [average]; Rural; Day school ; District School
NYAN	Mixed sex; KCSE average for the past 3 years 5>6 [average]; Urban; Boarding; District School

Table 2: Criteria used for selecting schools where study was carried out

KH and CARD, Boys only schools of equal status, were selected because of their consistency in high achievement levels in KCSE (see Creemers, 1994). Secondly, these schools were considered efficient in their management processes, including efficient resource deployment. Despite the fact that much of the data available about schools in Kenya is fragmentary, perusal of inspection reports in the Kisii District Education Office for the years under consideration revealed that these schools had been inspected and inspectors shared this view. Thirdly, their headteachers were known for providing firm and purposeful leadership (Rutter et al, 1979; Mortimore et al, 1988; Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993; Sammons et al, 1997). This was thought to enable the aspects outlined above to be achieved (see Hopkins et al., 1994). Although documentation of this was not uniform because some schools were inspected more often than others and different inspection reports emphasised varied issues, the District Education Officer and researcher concluded that these schools displayed appropriate purposeful leadership characteristics and therefore qualified for inclusion in the study.

KE and NYABS, Girls only schools of equal status (see table above), were also selected because of their consistency in high achievement levels in KCSE and their efficiency in organisation processes (Cheng, 1996) 'reflected in their internal practices

such as purposeful leadership, sound communication channels, participation in decision-making and social interactions'. These schools had been inspected regularly and given positive reports to this effect. The rationale for using these criteria emanates from the argument that effective schools display such elements that accord with positive educational outcomes. Although documentation of this, as was for KH and CARD, was not uniform because some schools were inspected more often than others and different inspection reports emphasised varied issues, the District Education Officer and researcher concluded that both schools displayed them and therefore qualified for inclusion in the study.

Schools NYAN and SUN presented mixed fortunes. The two were included on the grounds that they presented unique circumstances in terms of composition, location and performance. NYAN is a Boarding mixed school in an urban setting while SUN is a mixed Day school in a rural setting. Their performance in KCSE was average (see table above) although both schools were considered efficient in their management processes, including efficient resource deployment. Despite the fact that much of the data available about them was fragmentary as any other school above, it was clear that for the years under consideration, SUN had had firm and purposeful leadership provided by its headteacher while NYAN had had a turbulent time but, was stabilising. There was evidence from the inspection reports that both, nonetheless, enjoyed a participative approach to leadership. Even so, there were issues of indiscipline highlighted among students in NYAN. Again documentation was not uniform across schools.

There is no satisfactory consensus in the literature on what a 'good' school should look like (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993). The researcher is of the opinion that many dimensions were included here, a view shared with other researchers (see Cameron and Whetten, 1983; Scheerens, 1993). Emerging here is the idea of multiple criteria to measure these schools' 'goodness'. What is important is that besides the typical issues of performance and leadership, the selected sample was sensitive to the issues of school classification, gender, location and nature of the school. In view of this cross-spectrum of factors and, on the basis of accessibility and convenience, these 6 schools were selected. Each of these schools was conceptualised as a specific functioning, bounded system with boundaries and working parts in an integrated system (Stake, 1995).

However, a criticism that could be levelled on this approach is that there is little basis for generalization, here understood as ‘the degree to which findings could be generalized from the study sample to an entire population’ (Polit and Hungler, 1991:645). While this is true, the effect on this study is limited because the objective was to explore meanings and actions in real life contexts. A related criticism could be that if quantitative approaches were employed, one could have made generalizations about the sample to the population. While this is true, it is important to note that the sample in this study is not typical and its emphasis is to account for the processes underlying relationships (Hartley, 1994). An examination of processes in context revealed several peculiarities and the resultant knowledge about AHoDs, especially the knowledge about processes underlying their behaviour helped to specify conditions under which the behaviour might be expected to occur. In other words, the generalization in this context tends to theoretical proposition and not about populations.

3.5 Research Tools

In this study, a questionnaire was administered, interviews conducted and an analysis of documents undertaken. The questionnaire and interview schedule appear in the Appendix (1-5).

3.5.1 Piloting the Tools

Prior to this study, the researcher had undertaken a small survey involving 60 schools in Nyanza province in Kenya using the ‘congruence model’ of effective and ineffective schools espoused by Cheng (1996). It emerged from this survey that ‘school effectiveness’ is a multifaceted phenomenon with diverse definitions, models and criteria (Cameron and Whetten, 1983:263). Importantly, the study offered the researcher an opportunity to understand prevalent views and attitudes towards school leadership, curricula, discipline, resource management, climate and cultures. While the study could not claim to offer a blue print for school effectiveness in developing countries, its findings were nonetheless important and were relied on. Two questions, 1 and 2, of the questionnaire used in this earlier study were also used in the current study (see Appendix 7). Notably, it was inconclusive from the forty headteacher respondents’ data to say that a school was overwhelmingly effective because some schools appeared to be effective in some respects but not in others.

Similarly, the researcher used part of his Research Methods Module assignment (RMO7) to make a case for the appropriateness of using a 'case study' in regard to studying AHoDs. As part of this modular assignment, the researcher distributed questionnaires among five headteachers and six department heads of all types. None of these people participated in the current study, but the questionnaires used with them (see Appendix 8 and 9) were incorporated into this study, with some adaptation. Most of the questions in the final questionnaire for headteachers and department heads were adopted from this assignment (Compare Appendix 1-3 and Appendix 7-9). Specific changes were made to the wording of some questions while others were completely done away with (See Appendix 7-9 - all questions highlighted in grey were done away with while phrases in turquoise were reworded in the final questionnaires). It should be noted, however, that the Assistant teacher's questionnaire was not piloted but questions asked were offshoots of the headteachers' and department heads' questionnaires.

3.5.2 The Questionnaire

The first phase of the study was the administration of a questionnaire. The questionnaire's intention was not to describe particular individuals, rather to obtain a composite profile of information about various issues related to AHoDs from headteachers, all department heads (both Academic and Pastoral) and Assistant teachers' perspectives (American Statistical Association, 2004). The questionnaires were administered to all 6 headteachers, 80 department heads of all types, and 200 Assistant teachers in the 6 schools. A total of 31 department heads (of which 23 were AHoDs), 4 headteachers and 90 (45%) Assistant teachers responded.

Using the questionnaire was useful because it was relatively inexpensive to administer (it was self-administered) and helped to gather pertinent information from the entire population of department heads, teachers and headteachers which no other method could provide (Walonick, 2003). And for practical purposes, it was possible to administer from a remote post (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998). There were various options to administering the questionnaire such as through post, fax, telephone, the internet or face-to-face interactions. The current trend in developed countries is using internet tools such as e-mails (Sheehan and McMillan, 1999). A major limitation in adopting these was that not all members of the population could access the e-mail and

world-wide web (Dillman, 1999). The option of using a mixed-mode that could employ telephone, post, fax and e-mail altogether or in different combinations (Dillman and Tarnai, 1988; Beck, 1996; Dillman, 1999) was not pursued either because these technologies were not available to all members of the population. Given this, a postal questionnaire was used and proved to be cost effective in terms of time and money (The American Statistical Association, 2004) apart from its preparation that was costly (a feature shared by all other tools). Similarly, the idea that the researcher could single-handedly conduct the task and reach many people while offering effective protection to the privacy of respondents was appealing (The American Statistical Association, 2004).

To ensure a high response rate, prestamped return envelopes were sent with questionnaires, reminders and personal visits to schools made. Secondly, from the knowledge that postal questionnaires have the inability to probe responses because they are structured instruments, offering little flexibility to the respondent with respect to response format, the researcher allowed limited unrestricted respondent comments (Walonick, 2003) while other issues were followed up in interviews. Thirdly, the likelihood of a questionnaire being handed to a 'colleague' for completion could not be ruled out. Triangulation with interviews and an analysis of documents meant that misinformation resulting from this possibility was reduced substantially. Similarly, the possibility that some respondents could be turned off because of fear of misuse of information was allayed by a personal undertaking to the respondents that the information they provided would be confidential and used only for the purpose outlined (Walonick, 2003). While the researcher acknowledges these weaknesses, the alternatives were unsuitable and costly.

3.5.2.1 Issues Addressed in the Questionnaire

Generally, the questionnaires (see Appendix 1-3) sought to address various issues in response to specific aspects of the research questions, many of which were followed up in interviews. Chief amongst them was a description of the nature of positions held by individual department heads, other responsibilities, if any, held by the incumbents and if there were 'special' allowances for the management responsibilities undertaken. It also sought information about the amount of time each one of the three aspects of management, human relations and teaching took in the working week of the department head. In addition, it sought to identify the department heads' line managers and this

information was important in helping locate the department heads within the wider school management structure and within departments. Questions 1-5; 1-4 and 9-11; and 1-5 of the headteachers', department heads' and assistant teachers' questionnaires address these issues respectively.

Each questionnaire placed an emphasis on various perspectives. To take the headteacher's questionnaire, for example, 8 items were presented. Questions 1-7 gathered factual data about department heads in order to place their other responses in context. Question 1 asked for a pictorial sketch of the management structure in the Kenyan secondary school. This helped to locate all department heads within their rightful contexts. When combined with questions 2 and 3 which aimed at ascertaining the respondent's perception of their positions in the structure and their other responsibilities, they provided data that enabled a discussion of the potential correlation between post and role and tensions due to additional responsibilities and time available. Question 4 provided information about allowances for management responsibilities undertaken and this was used to assess the relationships of seniority within school leadership and the importance attached to specific responsibilities.

One of the objectives for the questionnaire was to establish who the AHoDs considered influential in their decision-making. The literature reviewed suggests that there are expected differences of influence amongst colleagues at different levels in the staffing structure (Wise, 1999). This is so because role, as shown in Chapter 2, is a negotiated concept. The assumption is that people nearest to the AHoD in the staffing structure, such as line managers and team members, are most likely to influence the development of their role. Whether these AHoDs realised that these groups had different expectations and therefore introduced role conflict was an important issue. Certainly, various groups of people were bound to shape the AHoD's definition of their role. What is significant is that these groups form part of the wider role-set. The same question asked to various respondents addressed these issues: question 8 of the headteacher's questionnaire; 5-7 and 13-16 of the department head's' questionnaire; and 11-12 of the assistant teacher's questionnaire. As for how influential these groups were, their style and method was pursued in the interviews.

To get a picture of this for each school, they were followed up in interviews with

AHoDs and headteachers. A correlation between the two was sought with the assumption that the wider school mission and vision could determine to a certain degree how AHoDs perform their tasks and roles. The researcher also focused on aspects of the school mission and vision; shared leadership; staff collaboration; and personal commitment. These have been cited in the School Effectiveness debate as being powerful in influencing those working in learning communities. To this end, headteachers and AHoD interviewees were asked relevant questions (see Appendix 4 and 5). At the same time, the 'liaison' role was investigated by presenting to all interviewees situations that suggested deliberate communication with the internal and wider communities during interviews. All questions were configured to suit various interviewees. Descriptive data arising from the questionnaires were used in conjunction with data from interviews to identify and assess how the AHoDs perceived and implemented their role.

In order to understand how AHoDs got to learn to lead and manage, it was important to investigate how these individuals might have gained the knowledge to undertake their responsibilities. For this, a series of questions were presented as 'individual post-holder' (8-12 in the department head's questionnaire) and were similarly configured for the assistant teachers (questions 6-10). From these, several issues were focused on including initial training, experience, further training and in-service training. Within these, relationships were sought between position held, training undertaken and impact on role performance. Much of the latter was followed up in interviews.

3.5.3 Interviews

Since the focus of the study was on AHoDs and considering issues of accessibility and time, 21 AHoDs were finally interviewed. Of these, 5 were AHoDs in 'federal' departments (e.g. science faculties or humanities departments); 3 were in charge of 'confederate' departments (e.g. design and technology department) while 8 were in charge of 'unitary' departments (defined by a single subject area e.g. English or mathematics). 4 were in charge of 'impacted' departments (e.g. music, history and geography) while 1 was in charge of a 'diffuse' department (Examinations). Whereas the researcher took every possible step to be as inclusive as possible, these interviewees were selected on the basis of who was willing to be interviewed. It must also be pointed

out that to provide a maximum degree of anonymity, interviewees have not been matched with particular schools deliberately. Similarly, out of the 6 headteachers, 4 were interviewed, 1 declined because he rightly argued that he had been recently moved to the school, and the other could not be reached. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, and took about 45 minutes to 1 hour. In adopting this stance, three possible sources of error were considered and included:

- respondent behaviour, [as when the respondent gives a ‘socially desirable’ response to please the interviewer or omits relevant information to hide something from the interviewer];
- the wording of the questions; and
- flawed interviewing techniques, or change of the wording of the interview (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998).

A personal semi-structured interview schedule was adopted for both the headteachers and AHoD interviews (see Appendix 4 and 5). The mixture of structured and open questions had the advantage of flexibility. For instance, it made it easier to control the order the questions were asked and yet got clarification by probing for additional information. Secondly, it was possible to ‘standardize’ the environment by ensuring that the interviews were conducted in private. Because respondents could not have the opportunity to consult one another before giving their answers, it was felt this ensured validity of findings. Finally, it was much easier to get ‘supplementary’ information about the respondents including their backgrounds, characteristics and their environment.

These interviews had their weaknesses. Chief among them were high costs in time, travelling, recording and processing the information obtained. In addition, interview bias arose as a result of several factors. These included the personal influence of the researcher who had previously taught with some of the AHoD interviewees in this region, cues from the researcher which could have influenced responses, the desire by some interviewees to appear ‘politically correct’ in their work stations, and fears about lack of anonymity that made one interviewee refuse to be recorded. Nonetheless, information gained from the interviews was insightful and when corroborated with other sources firmly grounded the evidence and helped to advance the arguments in

Chapters 4 and 5.

3.5.4 Documentary Analysis

Various forms of documents from the 6 schools were a source of data in their own right. Documents sought and provided included memos to and from department heads of all types, minutes of academic departments' meetings, Ministry of Education and TSC circulars on AHoDs' responsibilities, staff handbooks, school inspection reports, newsletters and other relevant policy documents. The researcher was aware of the possibility of bias in what each school emphasised and ignored, particularly when the types of documents provided at each school were identical. Consequently, it was thought prudent to triangulate this with questionnaires and interviews. According to Denscombe (1998), there is ample evidence that records tend to be partial and some things may never be recorded or could be consciously edited to exclude what is not 'proper' for the 'public' in a given time and social sphere hence the need for triangulation. Nonetheless, documents enjoy unique advantages such as ease of accessibility, minimal delay in acquiring them, minimal costs and ethical problems. Denscombe (1998) confirms that documents pose considerably fewer problems than people as a source of data. However there was the inherent difficulty in classification to contend with. Regardless, they provided data on management issues, communication and tasks that middle managers engaged in.

3.6 Data Analysis

The analysis of data collected for this study began as soon as the researcher started collecting the data, it was ongoing and inductive. Thus data collection, analysis and interpretation of the perspectives of those interviewed were simultaneous. The early and ongoing analysis was necessary as the researcher was able to 'shift emphasis towards those experiences which (bore) upon the development of (his) understanding, and generally, enabled control over emerging ideas which he 'checked' (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:103) with more data being collected. The overlapping activities of data collection, analysis and interpretation which occurred in this study are supported by Lofland (1971:121) who argues that when undertaking qualitative research, 'during the observation or interviewing phase, one is at the same time trying to make some kind of (abstract) sense ... of the raw reality one is encountering'. This way of collecting the data and analysis suited the fluctuating and emergent nature of the social networks

being explored. On a practical level, the 'massive volumes of information' (Patton, 1987:297) generated demanded that analysis was not delayed until the completion of the collection of primary data.

The analysis of qualitative data consisted of three key activities. It started with the reduction of data to a form suitable for analysis. The inductive process of analysis was guided by research literature (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Lofland, 1971; Marshall and Rossman, 1995; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). It recommends that the analysis of qualitative data involves the reading and re-reading of transcripts and field notes (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991); use of codes to bring order, structure and meaning to the raw data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990); the constant comparison of the codes and categories which emerge with subsequent data collected and also with concepts suggested by the literature (Glaser and Strauss, 1967); and, the search for relationships among emerging categories of data (Marshall and Rossman, 1995).

From this understanding, the analysis involved selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming the raw data into written up transcripts. This was followed by creating a transcription scheme based on emerging themes and patterns for each of the research questions. This meant displaying the data in such a way that permitted the identification of emerging themes, patterns and conclusions. As much as possible, relevant information was cited in response to each of the research questions. Direct quotes were preserved whenever possible to reduce the amount of questionable inference. In the process, personal interpretations were typographically differentiated from actual data by highlighting them electronically in different colours. The aim was to draw a distinction between the data provided by participants and the personal opinion of the researcher, thereby rendering the interpretation more objective. Finally, decisions were drawn regarding the meaning, regularities, patterns, explanations and possible causal configurations. Conclusions were not drawn until data collection and analysis was over

It should be noted that in analyzing transcribed notes, the approach of Hycner (1992) was used to identify general and unique themes. Generally, the process involved reading and rereading the transcripts and field notes and this served two related purposes. The first was to familiarise the researcher with the data (Easterby-Smith et

al., 1991) and the second was to start the process of structuring and organising the data into meaningful units. The familiarity created by rereading transcripts heightened the researcher's awareness of emerging 'patterns and categories' (Patton, 1987:150) in the data. The purpose of this phase in analysis was to take the data apart and then piece it together in a number of ways, each of which was potentially important in answering the various research questions. This stage was followed by noting key phrases and sentences which were classified into units relevant to each research question. Thirdly, clusters of units of relevant meaning were grouped together to determine general themes relevant to each research question. At this stage some chunks of data were discarded on the grounds that they were not relevant to the study and, as a whole, the data collected so far were reduced to a more manageable level.

More analysis was focused on issues central to understanding the research questions. This was done by concentrating on relevant information from other sources and constantly comparing these data with previously coded sections. The method of analysis used during this stage is the 'constant comparative method' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). By systematically comparing similarities and differences between sections of coded data, some data was disregarded as irrelevant to the study, others were expanded upon and additional codes emerged. This process continued until coded sections became saturated, that is, no new patterns or themes emerged. At this stage, the analysis focused on 'core' codes around which deeper analysis and interpretation concentrated.

Having grouped slices of data into core categories and organised coded data into a meaningful structure, the analysis was deepened by interpreting the relationships between the core categories hence explaining why notable relationships existed. During this stage, the researcher engaged in the prolonged and systematic search for similarities and differences. The purpose was to understand the meaning and nature of these relationships. The systematic comparison of categories with relevant concepts in middle leadership literature was important for two reasons. First, comparisons between existing concepts with the relationships that had emerged between categories of empirical data were useful in re-evaluating the reasons why these relationships existed. Second, comparisons with the concepts used in academic middle leadership literature revealed the extent to which the understanding of the role of AHoDs emerged from this

in-depth, qualitative study thus making a contribution to current knowledge and understanding of the substantive area. Table 3 below summarises this interview data analysis.

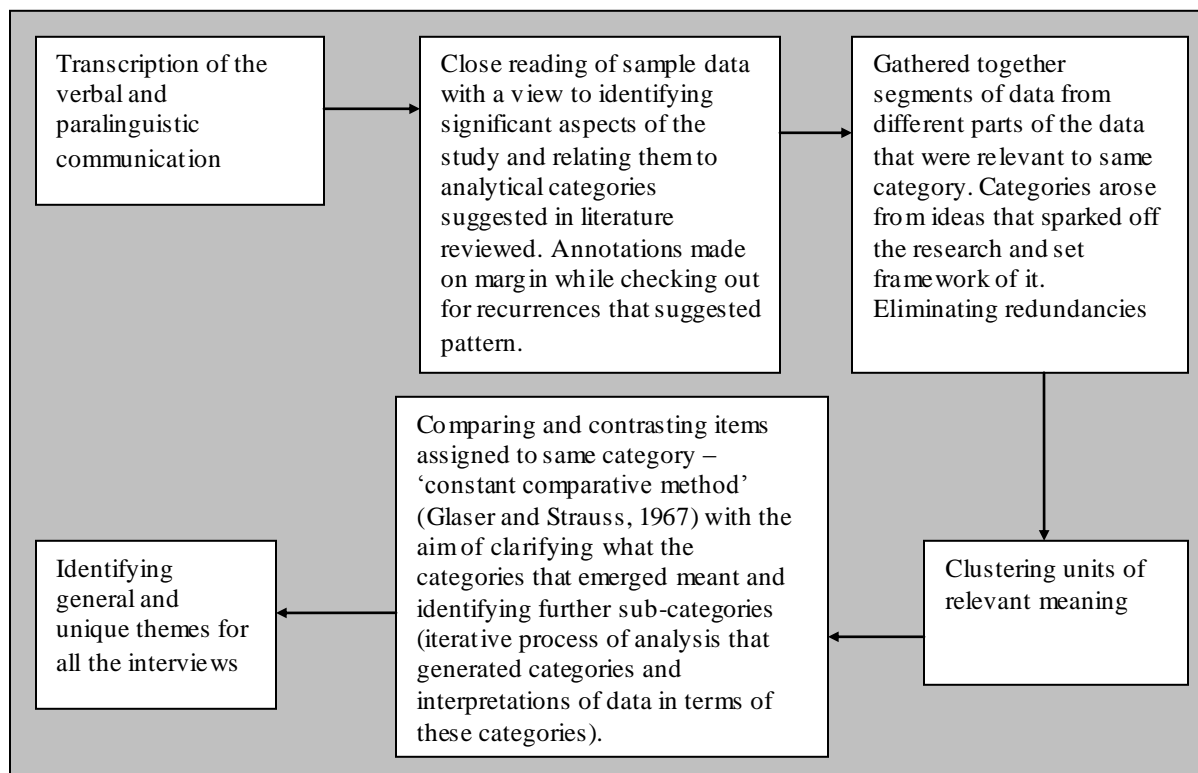


Table 3: Summary of the interview data analysis, after Boulton and Hammersley in Sapsford and Jupp (eds.) (1996) and Nunan (1992:292)

Running simultaneously with these processes was the analysis of statistical data. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyse quantitative data in terms of percentages. Most relationships were examined through cross-tabulation. Nevertheless, interpretation of data was a challenge for the researcher because of the many documents, transcribed interviews and field notes. The analysis done here reflects a general understanding that there is no ‘right way’ (Tesch, 1990) of doing data analysis rather ‘...it is an eclectic process in which you try to make sense of the information’ (Creswell, 2002: 258) which to the researcher meant an intuitive and inductive process.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Early proposals addressing concerns for validity in qualitative research focused on internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity, issues that are traditionally addressed in quantitative studies. These have changed over time (Lincoln, 2001) with

Lincoln and Guba (1985) retreating from the language of experimental inquiry to restate it as the ‘trustworthiness criteria’. Given the fact that the validity debate is evolving and it is difficult to reach a consensus on qualitative validity (Creswell, 1998), the researcher adopted multiple perspectives rather than a standard protocol (Creswell, 1998). This is because qualitative inquiry as a whole is a compilation of data collection techniques all used within a variety of traditions hence a variety of different perspectives. Creswell and Miller (2000) have identified eight verification (a term they prefer to validity) procedures often referred to in the literature and make the point that different procedures are more appropriate for different traditions within qualitative research. Creswell (1998) recommends that researchers engage in at least two of these verification procedures in any given study. The researcher engaged the following procedures: a prolonged engagement with the data and research subjects, triangulation of data collection instruments, peer review, clarification of the biases in the research and the giving of thick description.

A criticism of qualitative researchers might be that they do not always provide readers with detailed explanations of how research questions are related to data sources, how themes or categories are developed, and how triangulation is accomplished. As demonstrated earlier, a mechanism that linked these as a part of the research design was put in place. Yin (1994:8) argues that a research design should be seen as ‘the logic that links the data collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study’. This is clear as shown in Chapters 4 and 5. The research questions for this study were designed in a way that they provided a scaffolding for the investigation and formed the cornerstone for the analysis of data.

As noted earlier, a common criticism directed at qualitative research is that it fails to adhere to the positivist canons of reliability and validity (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). The ways the researcher has tried to achieve these include giving multiple sources of evidence, an established chain of evidence, pattern-matching, use of proper research protocol, a developed data base and member checks. Multiple sources of data used include face-to-face interviews with key informants, questionnaires administered to the relevant sample and an examination of a wide assortment of documents. Each data source provided evidence that was corroborated. This triangulation prevented reliance on a single data collection method and therefore neutralized any bias inherent in a

particular data source.

A thorny issue in this research regards generalizability, here taken to mean the degree to which findings could be generalized from this study sample to the entire population (Polit and Hungler, 1991). Yin expresses this as a criticism that questions the value of dependence on small samples which is believed to render a study incapable of generalizing conclusions (Yin, 1994). The fact is 'partial' generalization is possible to similar populations. In any case, the knowledge generated by this research is significant in its own right (Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis, 1980). Besides, the value of this study lies in its objective of accounting for the role of AHoDs. Problems related to sampling and generalization have little impact to the goals of the study and the reality of the situation. In fact, the sample studied was very useful in providing depth in various perspectives. In effect, the goals of this study dominated over other issues.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns in educational research can be complex, sometimes placing researchers in moral predicaments. Researchers have to strike a balance between the demands of telling the truth and their subjects' rights and values. In theory, this means that each stage in the research sequence is a potential source of ethical problems. Consequently, the following potential sources were considered: the context for the research, the nature of the research project, access and acceptance, the procedures to be adopted, methods of data collection, nature of the participants, type of data to be collected and what would be done with the data.

Issues of access and acceptance started with sampling. But these are ethical issues too. For example the principle of informed consent started at the initial stage of access to the institutions where the research was conducted. Acceptance by those whose permission the researcher needed before embarking on the research was imperative. This meant that, first the researcher received official permission from the Kisii District office of the Ministry of Education to undertake research in the targeted community. This was also enabled by contacting the headteachers of the schools in context and it created no hindrance. This was followed up with contacting specific AHoDs who assisted in the organisation and administration of the research questions within each school. Access was maintained through these AHoDs.

Issues about informed consent, confidentiality, emotional safety and reciprocity were also taken into account. The research subjects were informed through letters about the possible effects of participating in the research and only those who consented wilfully were interviewed. Four issues were addressed during this process: the researched's competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension. Bartunek and Louis (1996) emphasise that prospective participants often do not have full knowledge of the types that will unfold during the qualitative research study. Informed consent must then reflect awareness that such events cannot entirely be predicted. This meant that consent had to be renegotiated at different points in the research cycle. At one point, an interviewee refused to be tape-recorded. This was agreed to and the researcher had to write notes instead. This prompted the researcher to use numbers to identify department heads rather than schools where they belonged. A third issue regarded the right to anonymity. While I granted confidentiality to all respondents, it was possible though that anonymity could be insufficient for this to be safeguarded. Consequently, the research subjects were so advised to give consent prior to starting the research. Besides, audio tapes used during the data collection were only accessible to the researcher in order to protect the identities of the interviewees. The next two chapters present the findings and analysis of the data collected.

Chapter 4

Findings and Analysis

This chapter examines the first three research questions namely:

- i. Who are the middle leaders (MLs) in Kenyan Secondary schools?
- ii. What are said by AHoDs, headteachers and other teachers to be the responsibilities and practices of the AHoDs?
- iii. How do AHoDs define and execute their role?

4.1 Who are the MLs in Kenyan Secondary Schools?

The first phase of this study involved the administration of a questionnaire to 6 headteachers, 80 department heads (of all types) and 200 Assistant teachers. An initial composite profiling of all department heads was done based on the data from the 4 headteachers, 31 department heads and 90 Assistant teachers who responded (Table 4 below).

	Type of Department	No. of Department Head Respondents	%
1	Head of a single subject-department e.g. English, Maths	10	32%
2	Head of department where the subjects are closely related e.g. Science, Humanities	7	23%
3	Head of an area where the subjects are not closely related e.g. Technical subjects	5	16%
4	Cross-curricular co-ordinator e.g. Information Technology	1	3%
5	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator	0	0%
6	Leader of a pastoral area e.g. Guidance and Counselling, Boarding or Co-curricular	8	26%

Table 4: Table showing the response pattern of various department heads

Departmental structure by subject and pastoral needs appeared to be the key characteristic organizational model in all the 6 schools, a finding similar to that of Turner and Bolam (1998). This was confirmed by headteacher interviewees who also ranked Heads of Departments (HoD) below their Deputy Headteachers and above Subject Heads and Assistant Teachers. They also confirmed that all HoDs were not part of their SMTs which comprised of the headteachers, deputy headteachers and Board of

Governors. This suggests, as the following hierarchical management configuration confirms (Figure 7), a ‘bureaucratic’ pattern emphasising hierarchy of authority and ‘middleness’ of HoDs. Of the 31 HoDs that responded, 23 had oversight over designated areas of the curriculum hence Academic Heads of Department (AHoDs). As shown earlier, this study focuses on this group of department heads.

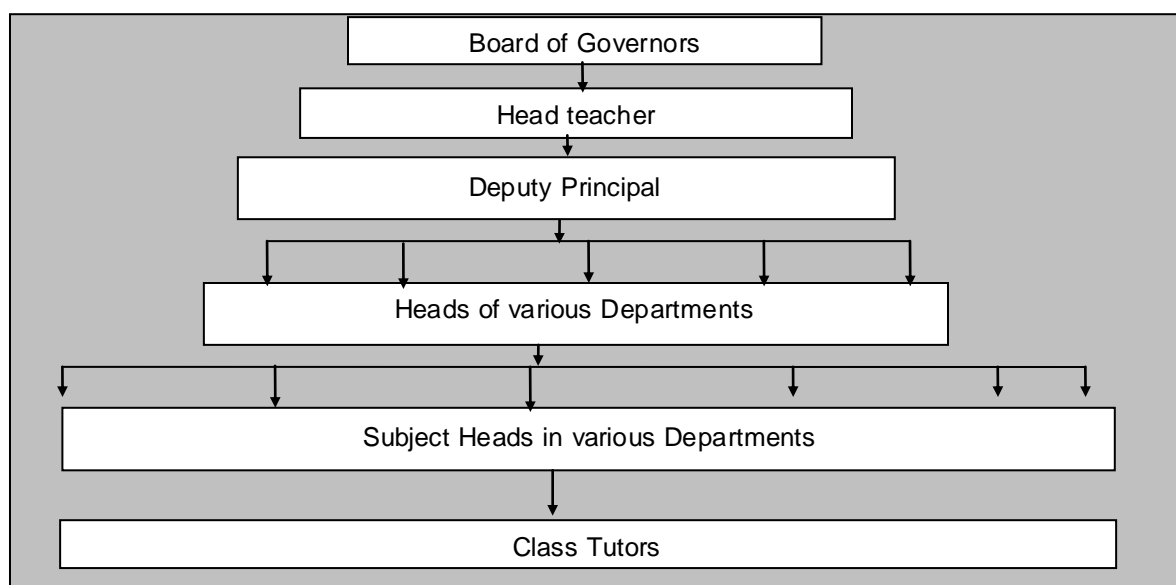


Figure 7: Hierarchy in the schools’ management structure

The academic departments in the schools studied appeared to share many similarities with Busher and Harris’ (2000) taxonomy. For example, most of the Humanities and Science departments displayed characteristics consistent with the ‘federal’ department (see Busher and Harris, 2000). The former offered Geography, History, Religious Studies and Social Education and Ethics while in 3 schools the latter taught Chemistry, Physics and Biology. Again, consistent with what Busher and Harris (2000) call the ‘impacted’ department, Geography and Biology were in some schools independent departments. Clearly, although freestanding, these two could also be part of the larger ‘federal’ Humanities or Sciences departments respectively.

There were also 8 ‘unitary’ departments (see Busher and Harris, 2000) that taught either Maths or English. However, in two schools English was grouped under a wider ‘Languages’ department that also taught Kiswahili and French and could therefore be considered a ‘federal’ department. In two other schools, English was combined with the Library and the result was the ‘English and Library’ department. In addition, all the six

schools had each a 'confederate' department (Busher and Harris, 2000; 1999) here called the 'Technical, Creative and Applied department' (TCA). The subjects taught in this department included Home Science, Art and Design, Music, Agriculture, Business Education, Woodwork, and Metalwork. Only one school had a cross curricula department - the Examinations Department - responsible for the organisation and administration of exams in the whole school.

While pastoral departments such as Guidance and Counselling, Co-Curricular and Boarding were noted, these were beyond the scope of this study and were not included beyond this point. The range of differentiation observed here could be attributed to, as the literature reviewed suggests, meeting these schools' specific administrative needs (Cardno, 1995; Gold 1998; Turner, 1996; Turner and Bolam, 1998). It could also be attributed to inheritance from the West and/or a historical evolution. The researcher felt that embedded in these structures were issues related to leadership. Given the diversity of the academic departments, an attempt was made to see if there were any patterns across those heading them and if these had any special implications for their positions. Unless otherwise stated, the data cited henceforth is that of individuals with oversight over designated areas of the academic curriculum - AHoDs - and not those with responsibility for pastoral areas.

4.1.1 AHoDs, Staffing levels and Circumstances of Appointment

The researcher observed that every academic department had one head and the staffing levels in different departments varied. There was evidence that some departments had as few as one teacher while others had upto 17. A case in point for the latter was KH where the student population was 1200 and individual departments had on average more teachers in each department than in NYAN with a population of 300 students. The same was true with CARDS and NYABS where the population was over 1000 in each case. This raised the question of how these schools had chosen to departmentalise. Evidently, there was no straight link between departmentalisation and the number of teachers in each department but staffing appeared to be influenced more directly by the number of students in a school and the number of subjects offered by each department in each school. Consequently, a direct link between the number of teachers in the department and the post of AHoD could not be established.

Nonetheless, it was apparent that AHoDs were appointed to their posts after, as headteachers of schools CARD, KE and NYAN pointed out, they had demonstrated their teaching competencies over time, including, demonstrating their potential abilities by acting 'second-in-the-department'. Even so, a few had been appointed by their respective schools because their employer -TSC- could not find suitable candidates to fill their posts. Outstandingly, however, qualifications and experience appeared to significantly contribute to one's appointment to this post (see Fig 8). This appears to be the case because AHoDs' interviewee data suggests that those who started with a professional qualification in education (a Bachelor's degree in Education; a Post Graduate Diploma in Education; and a Master's degree in Education) were promoted sooner than their counterparts with 'non-education' qualifications (Bachelor of Arts or others) (see Table 5 and Figure 8 below). However, given that 4 individuals who had previously been headteachers or deputy headteachers had been redeployed as AHoDs suggested some ambiguity. A beneficiary in the latter case indicated that once one had been a headteacher and was redeployed to teach in a secondary school, s/he was automatically given departmental headship (Respondent 5) though not necessarily in an academic department. If as shown TSC AHoD appointees moved a notch higher in the job group once their appointments took effect, denoting a promotion and recognition for competence, then the same could not be said of individuals who had been demoted from school headship.

Notable, however, all interviewees constantly used the term 'department head'. Whereas one could discern an implied management responsibility from the AHoDs interview data, there was no evidence that they were being paid for it. AHoDs' remarks such as 'there are no allowances' (Respondent 8) 'other than the promotion you get' (Respondent 12) reflected this position. In the words of the headteacher of NYAN, 'TSC appointments are substantive'. This means that upon being appointed an AHoD one is not only promoted to the next job group but also gets a remuneration package which does not specify what amount is meant for what duties. Nonetheless, the headteachers of schools CARD and KE were paying some 'allowance' to a number of their AHoDs for what the headteacher of KE termed their 'sacrifice' to stay in school and work for long hours than the rest of their colleagues. This was internal and school specific. Respondent 9 admitted to receiving this 'allowance'.

Number of years before appointment/ Qualification	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
BEd/BA with PGDE/Masters	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BA/other	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Table 5: Number of years before appointment vs. Qualification at point of entry

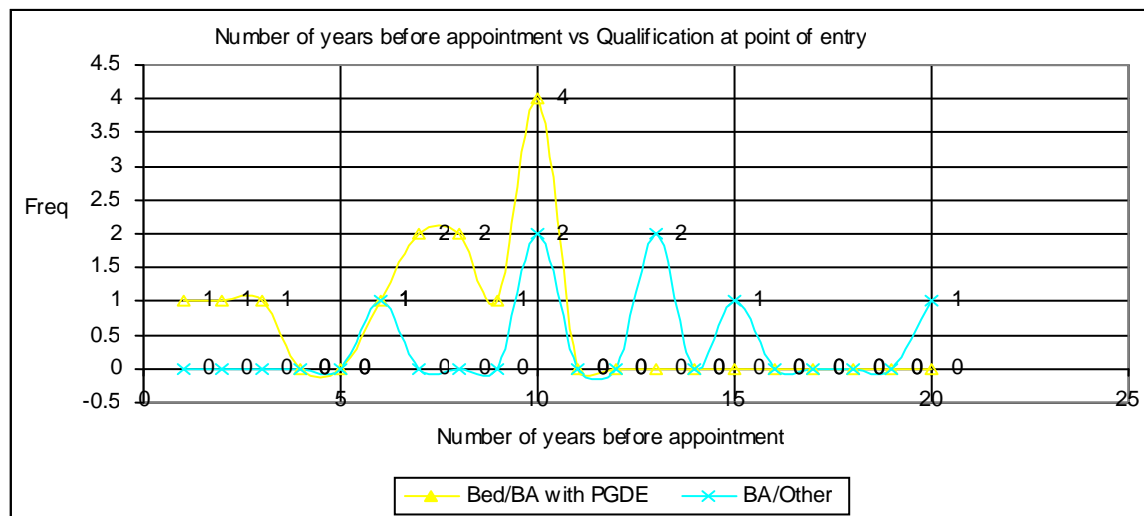


Figure 8: Number of years before appointment vs. Qualification at point of entry

Three conclusions are drawn here. Firstly, these schools have hierarchical management structures similar to those identified by Glover et al (1998; 1999) and Wise (2001). Secondly, their prevalent organizational unit is the ‘department’ based on subjects or pastoral needs. Thirdly, a common factor across them is the position of HoD. Occupants of this post are, as Wise and Bennett (2003) also found, readily identified as the unit heads. Whereas it was not possible to determine at this point whether they were providing ‘leadership’, it could be argued that the phrase ‘head of’ suggests that someone was in a position of leadership (see Turner, 2003). Certainly, AHoDs were responsible for subject heads and their Assistant teachers even though they were also classroom teachers in their own departments or taught other subjects in other departments. This implies that at some point they are accountable to other AHoDs. Therefore, it is reasonable to view AHoDs as leaders.

4.2 What are said by AHoDs, headteachers and other teachers to be the responsibilities and practices of AHoDs?

To understand the AHoDs’ responsibilities and practices, this study zeroed on two aspects: the tasks AHoDs performed and how they performed them. To determine the former, 21 tasks, part of those frequently cited in the literature were presented and analysed from five perspectives (see key below). The emerging data was corroborated with interview and documentary data. The researcher based his analysis on Wise and Bennett’s (2003) model. This model recognises that AHoDs perform instrumental and expressive tasks. Instrumental tasks are by their nature ‘relatively bureaucratized, subject to more or less formally stated and generally understood rubrics’ (Taylor, 1964: 193) and could be categorised as either *academic or administrative*. These tasks, by their nature, deal with the organisational, paperwork, non-personnel aspects of the AHoD role (Wise, 1999). Expressive tasks, on the other hand, are those that in their nature involve ‘a more flexible relationship between persons and groups’ (Taylor, 1964: 193) and are either *managerial or educational* in nature.

Column A: Tasks that headteachers said their AHoDs should be responsible for
(Responses from 4 headteachers)

Column B: Tasks that AHoDs said their headteachers expect of them
(Responses from 23 AHoDs)

Column C: Tasks which AHoDs expect to do
(Responses from 23 AHoDs)

Column D: Tasks that AHoDs said teachers expect of them
(Responses from 23 AHoDs)

Column E: Tasks teachers expect of the AHoDs
(Responses from 90 Assistant Teachers)

F: Frequency

	Tasks	A		B		C		D		E	
		F/(4)	F/(23)	%	F/(23)	%	F/(23)	%	F/(90)	%	
Academic tasks	1. Ensuring continuity education between different forms	4	22	96	21	88	19	83	67	80.7	
	2. Ensuring that subjects offered cater for the various range of student abilities	4	15	65	13	56	15	65	61	73.4	
	3. Formulating school's overall curriculum aims, objectives and content	1	12	52	11	49	13	56	25	30.1	
	4. Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies	4	18	78	18	78	21	88	72	86.7	
	5. Leading the planning of the curriculum within the department	2	19	83	-	-	-	-	45	50	
Administrative Tasks	1. Organising the storage of area resources	4	15	65	21	88	13	56	60	72.3	
	2. Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources	4	10	43	11	49	16	70	59	71	
	3. Preparing the departmental timetable	4	17	74	-	-	-	-	66	73.3	
	4. Maintaining records of classroom observations	4	15	65	13	56	12	52	66	79.5	
Educational Tasks	1. Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area	4	21	88	20	87	19	83	64	77.1	
	2. Implementing homework policy	4	22	96	15	65	18	78	66	79.5	
	3. Organising the testing of pupil attainment	4	22	96	18	78	20	87	47	56.6	
	4. Monitoring classes' progress through syllabus or schemes of work	4	23	100	21	88	18	78	53	63.8	
	5. Deployment of pupils into teaching groups	4	12	52	13	56	14	61	78	86.6	
	6. Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour	4	16	70	12	52	13	56	40	48.2	
	7. Inducting new staff	4	21	88	18	78	16	70	40	48.1	
Management Tasks	1. Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters	4	15	65	14	61	17	74	64	77.1	
	2. Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities	4	6	26	14	61	11	49	36	43.4	
	3. Providing support for colleagues facing discipline problems in their teaching	2	9	39	8	35	18	78	48	57.8	
	4. Assisting in the overall leadership of the school	4	21	88	-	-	-	-	48	53.3	
	5. Taking part in appointing teachers	1	10	43	-	-	-	-	58	69.8	

Table 6: Data on 21 tasks cited in the literature analysed from five perspectives.

Following the response pattern in Table 6 above, it is apparent that instrumental tasks are a realm of the AHoD. This is given impetus by AHoD interviewees who viewed academic tasks such as teaching, evaluation and planning for learning in their particular subject areas, as the key part of their role. These views are similar to Gold's (1998). Remarks such as 'I have to ensure that they actually make schemes of work' (Respondent 20) which they do 'in accordance with the objectives of the subject as well as the national objectives' (Respondent 18, 19) and that 'the syllabi is adhered to and students given the material as required by the syllabus' (Respondent 5) were typical during interviews. Similarly, the response pattern in the 'administrative tasks' quadrant suggests that stakeholders expected AHoDs to not only perform such tasks but the latter knew this was their responsibility. Observations such as AHoDs were 'in charge of procuring relevant textbooks' (Respondent 10) and 'ensuring that there were enough books in the department' (Respondent 15) in AHoDs' interviews confirmed this.

Nonetheless, the task of formulating the school's overall curriculum aims, objectives and content was contentious (see table 6). This could be accounted for by the fact that what the AHoDs were implementing was a rigid curriculum formulated by the Ministry of Education and brought down to teachers as a package ready for implementation. Consequently, AHoDs had negligible space to manipulate anything. Similarly, a sizeable disagreement in expectation between teacher respondents and AHoDs regarding the latter's role in ensuring that classrooms were suitable and had adequate resources emerged. A similar view was observed in the task of maintaining records of classroom practice. In fact, only 2 AHoD interviewees mentioned record keeping which they confined to mark-book records, schemes of work and attendance of teachers (Respondent 15, 19). Respondent 18 saw this as a general practice where he was 'also meant to keep an inventory of the things' in the department. Bennaars et al (1994) argue that AHoDs have the responsibility of control, supervise, plan, organise, manage and make decisions on the functions and activities of the department. The disagreement above implies that some aspects in this quadrant were potential sources of role ambiguity for the AHoD.

There was a wide agreement among stakeholders about the role of AHoDs in performing expressive tasks (see Table 6 above). For example, most agreed that in order to achieve the departmental vision, AHoDs had to perform a number of

'management tasks' (see Table 6). These tasks fit into Bennaars et al's (1994) view that the AHoD's role includes working with individuals and groups for the purpose of achieving established goals of their schools. Donnelly calls such goals a 'common vision' (Donnelly, 1990:11). AHoD interviewees suggested that they were exemplary teachers who inspired and guided their members. They also inducted and supervised staff and their teaching while they kept them informed of whole school matters. They also led in promoting the development of their staff's professional abilities while providing support for individuals who faced problems in their teaching. Notably, some AHoDs had been trained in their respective specialities and were now trainers in their departments (Respondent 8). Besides, conscious planning for professional development in a few departments had been attempted with mixed fortunes. What is apparent here is the view that these AHoDs were not just managing their curriculum areas and resources but were leading and managing people as well. This seems to agree with Donnelly's (1990:11) view that the main task of the AHoD is to lead staff towards the realisation of a common vision, a sentiment also expressed by Bell (1997).

Nonetheless, there were some huge disparities in expectation in some of the expressive tasks. For example, whereas the headteachers expected AHoDs to support pupils with personal difficulties, and 70% of the AHoDs owned up to this responsibility, only 52% were doing it. Similarly, all the headteachers and 93% of the teachers expected their AHoDs to deploy students into teaching groups but only 56% of the AHoD respondents were doing it. If the AHoDs are to be believed, then headteachers were not communicating their expectations clearly and potentially, this is an issue of role ambiguity. Nevertheless, while the response pattern across various stakeholders concurred that AHoDs had a duty to monitor both the activities of their teaching staff and related aspects, a closer look at the interviewee data exposed deep tensions (see Chapter 5). Despite all these observations, most AHoDs expressed their priority as teaching. They argued that foremost, they were teachers with the responsibility of teaching their respective specialisms before taking up other tasks. Statements such as 'I teach ... that is my main duty' (Respondent 13) were evident. Nonetheless, with statements such as 'am in charge of staff' (Respondent 1) and 'I manage the department' (Respondent 8) in interviewee data gave an impression of individuals who were also aware that they had to provide leadership in the department.

4.2.1 Delegation

What was apparent in this study was that while performing their role, AHoDs had in many ways distributed leadership amongst their staff. There was evidence that teachers were responsible for, or at least had a significant voice in decisions about what happened in their respective departments. This had been achieved through devolving and distributing specific tasks to teachers. For example, although AHoDs indicated that they performed many of the academic tasks, there was evidence that in reality a task distribution system similar to that observed by Harris et al (1995) operated in most of the departments. Hence, designing schemes of work, setting examinations, invigilation, marking and recording marks were all delegated. Other AHoDs had delegated to subject heads the task of ensuring that colleagues recorded work they had covered. The latter accounted for 7.5% of all tasks delegated. Tasks centred on the management of physical resources (2.5%) and monitoring (2.5%) were hardly delegated. Notable though is the fact that these AHoDs had entrusted specific tasks to their teachers for diverse reasons.

Most of the AHoDs delegated tasks because they could not be able to ‘do everything nor be everywhere’ (Respondent 1) especially given that they also had an equally high number of lessons as their assistant teachers. Others had realised that one could not do everything effectively (Respondent 4). Therefore, in delegating some of their duties, they freed themselves of some of their obligations. In fact, when the delegated duties were those from SMTs, they had the dual benefit of contributing to the teachers’ own career development and ‘opening the door’ to an increased knowledge and understanding of the whole school issues (Turner, 2006; Adey and Jones, 1998). Almost 40% of the AHoD interviewees agreed that through delegation, they were exposing ‘teachers to know how to lead’ (Respondent 1). One AHoD opined that it was necessary to let other teachers understand and control things since the only way most of them received training was on the ‘on the job’ (Respondent 11). This position is echoed by Penlington (2008) and Adey and Jones (1998) who argue that participation at the departmental level serves to heighten awareness and increases the understanding of teachers within the department about the nature and responsibilities of the managerial role. It could also be used to help staff increase their knowledge and develop understanding and skills relevant to department leadership.

The predominant argument in Chapter 2 is that researchers have for many years been discussing the concept of distributed leadership (see Copland, 2003; Pearce and Conger, 2003; Penligton et al, 2008). Over the past decade, the literature has supported the notion that distributed, or any of its overlapping concepts (Leithwood et al 2006) is fit for schools because it helps to improve interactions, ownership and sharing. True to this view, this was echoed by 25% of the AHoD interviewees. Respondent 9 argued that whenever teachers were given work to do, they not only felt part of the department but it also increased their commitment because they felt involved in the policy making processes. Others argued that it facilitated ownership of decisions by all teachers and did not appear as though decisions were being imposed by the AHoD. Because of this, Respondent 21 felt participation in the department affairs encouraged teamwork.

Utilising talent and expertise were the other two reasons AHoDs cited for delegating tasks. In the case of the former, Respondent 13 argued that delegation was ‘a way of tapping talent for the benefit of the students and the wider school from teachers who were well-endowed’. In addition, Respondent 3, who only taught English added that he needed Kiswahili and French specialists to coordinate things in these subjects respectively, a recognition of the notion that ‘if you are teaching a subject, you are the best person to make decisions in that subject’ (Respondent 5). This reflects MacBeath’s (2005) argument that while delegation carries with it the attendant expectation of delivery, it is also accompanied by a recognition that others have expertise that the AHoD may not have. Nonetheless, while the subject teachers did the work, Respondent 9 still had ‘to look at the books and know the work that had been covered’. When combined with other formal monitoring strategies, it reflects the view that AHoDs were acutely aware they had to hold their staff to account. It is for this reason, among others, that they insisted on knowing ‘who was to do what’ (Respondent 5) - a way of ensuring accountability.

4.3 How do AHoDs Define and Execute their Role?

It is evident that AHoDs were constantly engaged in performing multiple tasks which called for appropriate behaviour in their varied contexts. This part examines the correlation between the post of AHoD and the post occupant’s dynamic aspect of putting his rights and duties into effect, hereafter called ‘role’. The following are some

of the roles teased from the findings: providing instructional leadership, monitoring, implementing the curriculum, and resource management.

4.3.1 Providing Instructional Leadership

AHoDs indicated they were ‘in charge of’ or ‘heads of’ their respective departments. They perceived their role as that of ‘coordinating’ ‘what goes on in the department’ (Respondent 7), that is, making decisions which affected both teaching and learning. There was evidence that AHoDs were under constant pressure to excel in their national examinations. Using their schools’ ranking in the national league table, they were always monitoring performance. Consequently, most of them emphasised departmental policies regarding teaching procedures, setting targets, using appropriate resources and, where necessary, having teachers take charge of tasks in their specialisms. They argued, for example, that targets made ‘everybody to be responsible in their work’ partly because they had to account for their performance (Respondent 21). This not only made them to work hard but also spurred innovativeness (Respondent 1). The argument advanced was that unless there were targets, students and teachers could not know what they were working towards. Notable here is the fact that some teachers worked into weekends or early in the mornings during working days to meet such targets (Respondent 20).

Hence, AHoDs ensured that teaching was done appropriately and in line with the MOE guidelines. This included outlining specific policies regarding requirements prior and during actual teaching. Generally, department-specific strategies in teaching, appropriate resource provision, professional development and streaming classes were all evident and emphasised. Reference to competition within and between subjects, classes, departments and schools was also made and this was not limited to ‘within the subject’ per se but involved ‘students competing amongst themselves’ (Respondent 3), between subjects and schools (Respondent 7). Importantly, AHoDs were responsible for developing, writing and reviewing departmental teaching-learning policies. Remarks such as it is the ‘head of subject through the guidance of the AHoD responsible for writing policies’ (Respondent 1) and it is ‘upon the AHoD to see if these policies are working’ (Respondent 2) suggested a leading role they played in formulating and reviewing such policies. While a strong sense of teamwork was

evident, AHoDs were categorical that they provided the necessary leadership in their review committees. This illustrates that they had accepted the responsibility of teaching and learning and were prepared to be held accountable for it. It also portrays them as instructional leaders who understood not only how to formulate and operationalize policies in the department, but developed the procedures necessary for effective teaching-learning processes.

Clearly, the AHoDs' main role is portrayed as that of improving teaching and learning, a fact also articulated in findings from Sammons et al (1997), Brown and Rutherford (1998) and Harris et al (1995). They appear to perform what Brown and Rutherford (1998) call the 'leading professional role'. Display of curriculum based skills such as the ability to interpret data from which one draws, manages and assesses programmes in the department suggests that the leadership of the AHoD provides impetus for maintaining and raising academic standards. The literature reviewed shows that as leading professionals, AHoDs are responsible for designing strategies which, for example, cater for children with various needs (differentiation) (McGarvey et al, 1997). The notion that the AHoDs have a key role in curriculum leadership means that it is upon them to create programmes that can accommodate various progress rates among students and this is reflected in, say, schemes of work and other organisational aspects.

The above can only be accounted for by their relative closeness to those who teach in classrooms, the level where there is the greatest influence on pupil progress (Scheerens, 1992). When seen from the perspective of tasks that they perform, it confirms Sergiovanni's (1984b) view that the purpose of the AHoD is to offer coordination, supervision and evaluation of the curriculum and instruction within an academic discipline which as Sammons et al (1997) would argue, means demonstrating a commitment to teaching through own practice. This means that a good AHoD is an instructional leader who understands not only how to formulate policies and operationalize them in the department but develop the procedures needed to make teaching-learning processes effective through determining appropriate roles of staff members.

4.3.2 Monitoring the Curriculum and Teacher Performance

Most AHoDs were responsible for monitoring ‘the teaching and learning processes’ (Respondent 2) which involved ensuring that not only ‘teachers taught what they had planned’ (Respondent 3) but also kept records of the work covered (Respondent 6, 7). Interviewee and documentary evidence confirmed that AHoDs used various strategies including checking students’ exercise books (Respondents 12 and 19), scrutinising students’ performance in examinations (Respondent 2), students’ feedback on teachers’ performance; and even observing teachers (6 respondents). Observation in the classroom was certainly the least preferred strategy. Not only was it perceived to be unsettling for the teachers, but some AHoDs questioned the image it portrayed of teachers to pupils. In fact, Respondents 12 and 20 suggested that it made learners question the teacher’s competence. Because of this, some AHoDs opted for ‘informal’ strategies such as listening to what was being taught from their offices next door. Notably, whichever form it took, AHoDs used the information they gathered not just to say ‘so and so had not done this or had done well’ but as a forum for informed sharing aimed at improving teacher performance.

These findings portray AHoDs as being aware of their responsibility to monitor although the TSC manual is less specific on how this should be done than is the case in England (Wise 2001; Glover et al, 1998). Again, while these AHoDs argued that they were duty-bound to monitor their staff, they could not demonstrate that their monitoring was systematic with a ‘regular and purposeful agreed criteria’ (CIS, 1997). Adey (2000) argues that well-managed departments include systematic monitoring of the quality of good teaching and observation of lessons, accompanied by debate about good practice. There would seem to be little evidence of this in Kenyan schools.

Secondly, there was a clear indication of resistance to the whole idea of monitoring. This echoes McGarvey et al (1997), Glover et al (1999) and Turner’s (1996) findings who also observed that AHoDs had reservations about entering a colleague’s classroom even when the nature of the observation was agreed in advance. This is also observed by Bennett et al (2007) and Turner (1996) in their review of the literature and Wise’s (2001) research findings which show, as in this study, that monitoring through classroom observation is seen by many teachers as demonstrating a failure of trust and

to be replacing trust with surveillance. The general perception appears to be that observation is a challenge to professional norms and borders on mistrust which several respondents called 'witch-hunting' that risks damaging interpersonal relationships.

While the above shows that these AHoDs were aware that they should monitor their staff's activities, it is evident that most preferred to monitor by checking exercise books, work covered and assessments. In doing this, they wished to avoid damaging their good relationships with colleagues by instituting formal monitoring procedures although in some cases they were constrained by internal school systems that limited their non-contact time because of timetabling, a finding that echoes issues raised in the West (CIS, 1997). This means that these AHoDs were under a considerable amount of stress. On one hand, they were being told to monitor while on the other, they were concerned that this would damage good working relationships with their team members. The lack of time allocated to them to carry out their management tasks made alignment with their perception of their teams' opinion easier to justify.

Finally, it could be argued that lack of a clear purpose for monitoring accounted for some of the challenges these AHoDs faced in discharging this role. This is because monitoring is wrongly perceived by the teachers here as a check on their competence. But since some studies in the West (see McGarvey et al, 1997; Wise, 2001) show that well-managed departments include systematic monitoring of the quality of good teaching and observation of lessons accompanied by debate about good practice, then it could be argued that these AHoDs should have no reservations about entering a colleague's classroom to see how teaching is done. In any case, those who had attempted it used the information they gathered not just to say 'so and so has not done this or has done well' (Respondent 8) but as a forum for informed sharing aimed at improving teacher performance.

4.3.3 Managing Resources

Two views emerged in respect to managing finances. One emanated from 6 AHoDs who contributed to preparing their budgets while the other was from those who did not. In the case of the former, Respondents 7 and 19 summarised this task as being characterised by uncertainties because they did not know their quotas. Otherwise, the

majority of AHoDs did not draw their departmental budgets, and as Respondent 2 argued, he could not come up with a budget because he neither knew his department's quota nor did he handle finances. Some, such as Respondents 1 and 8, felt well-provided for because they received whatever they asked for. Others, such as Respondent 4, felt inadequate funding had compromised both teaching and learning activities. Many of the AHoDs who neither received adequate funding nor drew up their own budgets were desperate to control their own finances. Respondent 4, for example, explained that Art and Design exam materials had been bought late, something which had inconvenienced teachers and affected lesson delivery. His wish was for each AHoD to manage his/her departmental budget. Inadequate funding was frequently cited as the reason why basic resources such as books were in short supply.

Beyond the micropolitics of managing funds, data suggested mixed expectations on the role of the AHoDs in the procurement and management of other resources. According to TSC (TSC, 2006), it is the duty of the AHoD to not only ensure proper care and maintenance of tools, equipment and other facilities within the department but also coordinate the identification and procurement of appropriate materials, tools, equipment and other facilities which will improve and uphold high teaching standards. 17 AHoDs indicated that they performed this role. However, only 4 did the actual purchasing. Amongst the rest, 6 indicated that this was the work of the 'purchasing officer' read the 'school bursar'; the other 6 inferred that it was the work of the head teacher, while the rest 6 wrote more vaguely of the 'school' being responsible. Similarly, only a few cases were identified where AHoDs took direct responsibility for keeping textbooks, a fact reiterated by Respondent 2 who was in charge of reference books. He indicated that his school storekeeper 'kept and issued stationery from some central school store'. In most departments, only a few 'strategic apparatus' were given to the AHoD to keep. This practice was observed in Respondent 3's school where books belonging to the department were also 'recorded and kept in the library' and teachers could borrow from there.

It was indicated in Chapter 2 that a number of studies in the West (see Stewart and Zepeda, 2002; Glover et al, 1999) and the TSC in Kenya suggest that acquiring and managing resources is a key dimension of the AHoD's work. The findings here do not seem to reflect this. The headteacher interviewees were vague in their explanations

about funding their departments and AHoDs were also indifferent about bidding for their quotas, even though there was evidence that inadequate funding in some departments was putting a lot of strain on the AHoDs and compromised both teaching and learning activities. Beyond funding, these findings also reflect mixed expectations in managing other resources. Only in a few cases were AHoDs in charge of textbooks and stationery and kept an inventory of their books. The implication here is that resource management was viewed by AHoDs as an incidental task. This is not what Russell (1985) and the TSC in Kenya advocate since they argue that AHoDs should manage physical resources. However, it could also be argued that unlike the West where purpose built 'subject suites' incorporating ancillary rooms for storage, reference and administration purposes assist greatly in their management, all the schools studied lacked such provisions. It is probably for this reason that most of the AHoDs could hardly engage in the actual management of these resources, leaving them to the school librarian or the school Storekeeper.

4.3.4 Recruitment of Staff

Recent changes to teacher recruitment had seen 13 AHoDs participate in hiring staff, especially when the teachers were to be based in their respective departments. The AHoDs' role ranged from testing the candidate's knowledge of the subject s/he intended to teach, to 'suggesting the appropriate subject combination' (Respondent 4). This notwithstanding, Respondents 5 and 7 felt their input was at times overlooked. This led to tension between SMTs and themselves. Headteachers defended themselves against this accusation by arguing that while they valued the AHoDs' specialist input, what an AHoD wanted in a teacher was possibly only one aspect of a set of requirements which the favoured candidate could not necessary possess. Even so, 3 AHoDs had not taken part because an opportunity had not risen in their departments to recruit (e.g. Respondent 6). Nonetheless, one newly appointed AHoD was not sure whether he was supposed to participate, if at all (Respondent 19).

Until recently, teacher recruitment and posting in Kenya was highly centralised with the TSC doing all the work. TSC often found itself handling many complaints because of its policy of posting teachers anywhere irrespective of their choice. Subsequently, they were considered to be insensitive to those with health problems and marital

commitments. The result was that certain schools and regions ended up being overstaffed while others went without teachers. Presently, teacher recruitment is school-based. One fundamental aspect of the new process is that teaching jobs are advertised with specifications on the regions where they are tenable and qualifications sought. Any teacher applying for a job is clear about the location of the school and is assumed to be prepared to serve in that station. This is not unique to Kenya (Bennell, 2004). Although recruitment has been decentralised to the school, there seems to be poor accountability which was noted by Respondent 7. A few AHoDs complained about 'patronage' in the recruitment processes. What is clear from the 13 respondents who had taken part in the recruitment process is that their role is limited. This concurs with Glover et al's (1999) findings that show that AHoDs have limited autonomy in the recruitment of staff although once appointed, deployment of staff was a matter for AHoDs in these schools. The deduction though is that AHoDs now have a role to play in staff recruitment and deployment.

4.3.5 Ensuring Teamwork

The AHoDs interviewees cited various occasions when they performed tasks as a team. It was apparent though that most of these were curriculum based. For example, Respondent 1 observed that various teachers agreed on 'who was to set what exams' and 'moderate both the exam and marking scheme'. In agreement, several AHoDs and headteachers argued that if there was no team approach to standardising examinations, students could be disadvantaged. Apart from the department, Respondent 2 observed that some whole-school responsibilities required teamwork. The understanding displayed here relates well to the idea of networked leadership (Scribner et al, 2007) reflected in the fact that decisions were not being made by one individual; rather these emerged from collaborative dialogues between many individuals, engaged in mutually dependent activities. The emphasis tended to what school personnel did together more than who was doing it. This view challenges the conventional belief that leadership is associated with particular positions. Collaboration seen here meant members were united in the department to foster working relationships that helped 'students to do better'.

It emerged that teamwork was prominently associated with the success and satisfaction

teachers enjoyed in their respective departments. Respondent 3 felt that it helped ‘to improve standards of individual teachers’ as well as enabling new teachers to learn from the older ones. For Respondent 2 and 6, team marking in their respective departments had enhanced their teaching because it helped them to easily detect common problems among their students. It was obvious that through this approach, teachers not only got the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern (Respondent 7) but also gave those who had not had an opportunity to do certain tasks the opportunity to do them under guidance, while those eager to learn got to do it. In essence, teamwork did not just tie teachers to a particular goal rather it offered an opportunity for them to know that the department worked as an integral system (Respondent 13).

AHoDs attributed enhanced teamwork to the ‘department family’ (Respondent 1); their desire to better the lives of their students; an understanding of their colleagues’ individual strengths and weaknesses; and the utilisation of the latter in a complimentary way. This is in addition to establishing cordial relationships between members and a sense of shared objectives to decision-making processes. Respondent 13 explained:

There is a cordial relationship and our goals do not emanate from the department head, the teachers own them...despite the commitments each one of us has, we have agreed that as a department we can make sacrifices... doing remedial teaching when others have left for their homes is indeed a sacrifice.

Nonetheless, most of the AHoDs also expected their teachers and other staff in their respective departments to show commitment to their work demonstrated by ‘improved performance’ (Respondent 20). Consequently, teachers were obliged to teach; make up for any lessons missed within some agreed time; prepared before going to class; and marked student scripts appropriately within a set time. Others expected their staff to ‘finish the syllabus and set the exam in the required time’ (Respondent 4). When asked about their goals, most were categorical about being ‘exemplary’ which Respondent 3 expressed as ‘competing favourably with other schools and/or popularising subjects perceived to be difficult (Respondent 2).

These findings suggest that AHoDs were attracted to approaches which emphasised interaction between individuals and participation in group activities, reflecting what Scribner et al (2007) call the interdependencies between people and activities in

distributed leadership. The wider picture is that the department comprises of teachers with complimentary skills and a common purpose, performance goals and approach. This not only echoes Katzenbach and Smith's (2003) conceptualisation of a team but also suggests a close relationship between performing tasks successfully and an environment of teamwork. The understanding displayed by these AHoDs was that at this time of uncertainty and increasing change, departmental teamwork was the best way of coping. This influence accorded to the departmental team could be interpreted to mean that if the AHoD's opinions differ from those perceived by the departmental team, then it is likely that any change they wish to introduce would meet with resistance.

This is not the picture one gets when s/he looks at the management hierarchies in the schools studied in which the idea of a hero/heroine system is conjured. Far from it. In the interviews with AHoDs, abundant reference to 'we' was noted every time they talked about decision-making. One of the AHoDs' leadership traits that came out was the 'involvement' of others (Scribner et al, 2007). There was evidence of delegation done on the basis that it made the AHoDs' work easier. A prevalent view was that participation increased responsibility on an individual, leading to consensus and also left 'everybody satisfied' (Respondent 1). Copland (2001) adds that this form of leadership has the potential to ease the burden on leaders. Similarly, the fact that AHoDs had to agree, for example, on 'who was to set what' (Respondent 7) suggests an emphasis on complimentary skills. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) have argued that successful teams have the right mix of skills. In the case of these AHoDs, technical expertise was called upon whenever decisions concerning subject teaching were made. Middlewood and Lumby (1998) and Coleman and Bush (1994) agree that technical ability is central when choosing team members and a team will succeed partly through the knowledge, abilities and skills of those who work in it. This means that AHoDs were aware of the implications of adopting strategies which acknowledge that issues could arise from different parts of the organisation and be resolved in a complex interactive process (Lambert, 2003; Leithwood et al, 1999). At the same time, as Respondent 3 argued, the same teamwork provided 'opportunities for teachers to learn' which Bell (1992) calls a vehicle for personal learning and development.

4.3.6 Implementing the Curriculum

Some tasks outlined in Table 6 portray AHoDs as implementers of school policy and, as the interviewee data shows, the recently restructured National Curriculum. Interviewees were implementing a new version of the curriculum that had been revised many times. Whereas data indicated that teachers and AHoDs had little autonomy in determining what was or not taught - as this was determined by the government - they nonetheless had to rewrite, for instance, schemes of work. This involved looking 'back to the old syllabus and the available schemes to pick out what was relevant to the new syllabus' (Respondent 20). It also meant setting examinations to conform to the new syllabus requirements. Respondent 22 who was in charge of an Examinations department explained her role here as that of reminding teachers to set their exams in conformity with the new examination format.

Most AHoDs expressed this role by talking about impediments they had to overcome. For example, while a few indicated that their teachers were willing to adapt to the new initiatives others had to contend with staff that were either reluctant to teach certain aspects of the new syllabus or failed to live up to set expectations. For many, resource provision was a serious handicap. An equally large number including Respondent 22 and 7 found implementing the curriculum difficult because they were neither trained nor consulted prior to the implementation:

Most of the changes are designed at the Ministry of Education level and they are brought to us for implementation...they don't tell us this is how you are going to implement these things...you get these things in schools and you work your way out (Respondent 7).

The result was confusion (Respondent 7) characterised by teachers teaching wrong things in the wrong classes (Respondent 21). In fact, testing was a big issue and Respondent 13 argued in this respect that although KNEC had sent some sample papers to her school, she felt this happened too late into the year.

This evidence suggests that AHoDs occupy a pivotal position in relation to change and restructuring in the education system (see Bennett et al, 2003; Stewart and Zepeda, 2002). The task of implementing the new changes appeared to rest with the leadership and management capacities of AHoDs. What is apparent though is that implementing

change is quite challenging and AHoDs had to endure pressures from all areas. In fact, most like in Hannay et al's (2001) study expressed this role through identifying barriers such as having to deal with individuals who were reluctant to teach certain aspects of the syllabus, failed to live up to the AHoD's expectations or using materials that were not very relevant to the new curriculum (Respondent 20). The result was confusion that was characterised by some teachers teaching wrong things in class.

4.3.7 The Professional Development Role

In terms of taking responsibility for this aspect of role, only one AHoD was directly responsible for organising for continuous professional development (CPD). Otherwise, most aspects of CPD were organised by the Ministry of Education (Respondent 13) or one of its affiliate bodies such as SMASSE (Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education) that was being supported by the Japanese government. Teachers of Maths and Sciences were as a matter of policy required to attend training sessions organised by this body. Respondent 14 argued that because of this, he had little to organise since SMASSE did everything. In fact, most AHoDs had no departmental plans where in-service training was addressed. Where this had been attempted, objectives had not been fully met because, as one AHoD explained, the headteachers insisted that 'the Ministry of Education catered for seminars'. Respondent 18 argued that whereas CPD planning was 'technically' put on paper, they could not actualise it because in reality, the Ministry of Education which was the main provider did not have a timetable of its schedule. Secondly, some had serious inadequate financial resources which made Respondent 22 reluctant to take lead, having previously been embarrassed for failing to pay a resource person.

When these AHoDs were asked if they had undergone any 'management training' prior to taking up their posts, it was also apparent that their training, if at all, was not necessarily related to their current posts (Respondent 1, 5 and 14). Nonetheless, a few AHoDs had attended CPD sessions where incidentally management issues such as conflict resolution had come up. In this way, they learnt how to deal with people. Respondent 11 observed in this respect that he had 'been encouraged to let people own decisions'. Nevertheless, while 9 AHoDs had not undergone any training prior to their current posts, Respondent 6 had been second-in-the-department. It was conclusive that CPD sessions were rare (Respondent 7) and as Respondent 15 observed, they were not

only irregular but attendance was dependent on invitation. Two AHoDs had not attended any training while Respondent 22 indicated that sometimes her previous headteacher deliberately refused to inform them of any forthcoming training sessions.

In contrast, 3 AHoDs appeared to have had CPD sessions regularly. For instance, Respondent 9 had attended 'several' in the previous two years while Respondent 10 had accessed more training than other AHoDs because he was also a senior master which meant he had more opportunities by virtue of this wider school responsibility. Asked if the training they had undertaken had satisfied their management needs or made them better leaders, 7 AHoDs suggested they had become better leaders while Respondent 2 termed his 'helpful'. 3 AHoDs had not had their needs met 'fully' and Respondent 5 now felt 'confident' out of it.

These findings suggest a lack of systematic CPD for the in-post AHoDs. When offered, it was haphazard, externally generated and curriculum oriented. Lack of training for in-post AHoDs has long been recognised (Schmidt, 2000). The instance most AHoDs cited CPD was in relation to the new National Curriculum as opposed to any other aspect. Even then, it is noticeable that a number of teachers had not had an opportunity to attend any of these sessions. Nevertheless, there was evidence of two AHoDs taking direct responsibility for organising professional development while two others indicated that their schools sponsored them for training so that they could later train their staff. The implication of the latter case is an awareness of the AHoD's role in CPD. Regardless, given that much of the CPD was arranged by agencies such as SMASSE, some AHoDs felt that issues regarding staff development were not part of their role, an attitude similar to that Bullock (1988) detected in his study. This is given impetus by the realisation that most of the AHoDs had no departmental plans where CPD was addressed. In any case, those departments where this had been attempted, training objectives had not been fully achieved.

As for the 'personal professional development', it was evident most of the AHoDs learnt to lead by watching others perform their role (Adey, 2000) what Turner (2006:421) calls 'informal learning' that included performing delegated duties. In fact, for some it was a matter of learning on the job once in post. Nonetheless, some had attended various CPD sessions, although not necessarily tailored for 'management' per

se. It is from these sessions that they had become trainers in their areas of specialisation and now in-serviced their own staff. The argument by a number of AHoDs was that one, CPD sessions were rare and two, much of the training was based on subject pedagogy and not leadership. These findings echo the 1980s England (Earley and Fletcher-Campbell, 1989) where many new AHoDs found themselves ill-prepared for the role at the point of appointment partly because they were not offered relevant training prior to the appointment.

The researcher felt that despite the fact that CPD was going on, AHoDs were not fully engaged in the sense of Marland and Smith's (1981) assertion that the moment a teacher becomes an AHoD s/he has entered into the CPD business. In fact, while the findings here show that AHoDs were willing to participate in CPD as part of their role, they were not being given the right support, an idea against Schmidt's (2000) recommendation. Similarly, although they, like in Adey's (2000) survey, show that AHoDs were adapting to changing role expectations, there is no evidence in this study of any increase in responsibility for CPD of departmental staff nor is there evidence that anybody had set expectations such as appraisal of staff from which personal and CPD could be followed up. Their acceptance of responsibility for staff 'performance' did not extend to responsibility for the overall CPD of these subject teachers. What appears prevalent is 'informal learning' (Turner, 2006) or what Adey (2000) calls *reactive management to professional development*. The latter is a case where training was being offered because teacher performance in a given year had produced poor results and therefore needed fixing. The researcher felt there was need for *proactive leadership* in which schools and AHoDs could take responsibility for a planned programme of CPD which addressed not only the remedying of weaknesses but also the nurturing of strengths.

4.3.8 The Liaison and Communication Role

An analysis of copies of staff minutes, letters and memos, and messages posted on the notice boards corroborated with interviewee data portrayed AHoDs as being in the middle of a communication web, linking teachers with SMTs, other department heads within the school, with parents and the wider community. Interviewee data shows that much of the communication was on formal issues and occurred in fora such as staff

meetings. For example, 10 and 6 AHoDs held two and one formal meetings respectively in every term. A lot of attention was paid to these meetings because they were the 'fora for influencing practice in the department' (Respondent 1). For Respondent 15, they provided not only a forum for discussing what teachers had to cover in their schedules but also whether teachers could put a united front to implementing decisions. The indication was that AHoDs used formal fora to communicate their expectations and to address various issues in their departments.

Interviewee data emphasised both informal and formal communication. Informal meetings were usually held 'over lunch or break time' (Respondent 2) or any time members were free 'within the lessons'. AHoDs used the informal sessions to communicate and resolve issues. There was also a view here similar to that of Wright (2002) that significant knowledge transfer among staff occurred during these sessions. However, AHoDs expressed varied opinions about the suitability, openness and conduct of members during such meetings. Nonetheless, many a time, the meetings were described as friendly, well received by the teachers and open. Others described them as brief, convenient and offering helpful communication. Respondent 5 found them important because issues that could normally make people uncomfortable in formal settings were easily discussed in such settings.

Beyond the department, AHoD interviewees were in constant communication with their headteachers, other AHoDs, parents and teachers from other departments. This communication included submitting 'a copy of the department meeting minutes to the headteacher' (Respondent 1) which indicated the department head's role in linking the department to the SMT. Similarly, 'official matters' concerning teachers were communicated to the SMT through Respondent 2. Respondent 19, who much of the time liaised with the headteacher, argued that many a time she had had to liaise on performance and rewarding of the students in the department. Sharing information concerning the department with the SMT was as important as sharing information with parents (Respondent 3). Citing an example of students who cheated in exams or performed continuously poorly, one AHoD argued it was imperative he involved parents.

Liaison between AHoDs and their colleagues over wider school issues also emerged in

cases such as when resolving student and teacher problems in the department (Respondent 14, 6 and 7), resourcing the department, and, in implementing whole school policies (Respondent 9). It was clear that many of the experiences shared by AHoDs were helpful in running their departments. In fact, before some of them went to the SMTs, they preferred to consult their peers. In contrast, interaction with parents appeared to be limited to 'when need arose'. According to Respondent 15, liaison with parents was nonetheless important because they 'made a difference in motivating students or in helping teachers manage challenging behaviour in students'.

The evidence here suggests the important role AHoDs here have in linking their departments to various stakeholders. Clearly, they are not just agents of their SMTs hence communicating downwards to their departmental members, but also representatives of their departments and therefore communicate upwards to the SMT. It is in this context that they sometimes felt 'caught in the crossfire' between senior and departmental staff's expectations (Harvey, 1997). The downward communication was usually, but not always, aimed at gaining consent of the SMTs' views while integrating the teachers' interests and thereby softening the management hierarchy. Glover et al (1998) describe this aspect of the AHoD's work as a 'bridging and brokering role'. Where AHoDs shared the ideals of the headteacher, as Abolghasemi et al (1999) suggests, the subject teachers were ready to align to them. AHoDs could be in this context judged to have had a mediating influence.

This chapter has examined a wide range of issues, from determining the composition of MLs in the Kenyan context to assessing the tasks AHoDs perform. How AHoDs define and execute their roles has also been considered. The following chapter examines sources of influence for the AHoDs as they perform their role and the hurdles and tensions that they face while executing them. It also engages in a discussion about how they could contribute better to school improvement.

Chapter 5

Findings and Analysis

This chapter dwells on three issues. First, it examines the sources of influence for AHoDs as they perform their role and, second, hurdles and tensions that they face while executing the roles. This is followed by a discussion about how AHoDs could contribute better to school improvement.

5.1 What Factors Influence the Ways in which AHoDs Define and Execute their Role?

Table 6 (in Chapter 4) and interviewee data concur that various stakeholders have diverse expectations of AHoDs which suggests that decisions they make are largely dependent on whose opinions they believe are the most legitimate (Wise and Bennett, 2003). This study identified the headteachers, subject associations, reforms in the curriculum, targets and external inspection as some of the most significant sources of influence in the way AHoDs executed their role.

5.1.1 The Headteacher's Influence

AHoDs in this study were ultimately answerable to their headteachers especially on issues of resource provision and monitoring. In the case of the former, most of them commended their headteachers for being supportive in providing resources that in turn enabled teaching and learning activities to take place. Nonetheless, their role in monitoring attracted divided views. For instance, there was proof that headteachers checked the extent to which departmental policies were being implemented (Respondent 13); went round to check that teachers were in their classrooms (Respondent 3); or suggested to AHoDs how best to monitor activities in their respective departments (Respondent 6). In cases where problems were noted, this was brought before the staff or individual AHoDs. Nonetheless, 4 AHoDs were content in resolving most shortcomings within their departments only referring problematic teachers to their SMTs when they could not agree on a solution.

Most headteachers were characterised as ready to help (Respondent 20), motivating and/or inspirational (Respondent 11; 21). AHoDs knew that their respective headteachers expected them to perform tasks outlined in the Head's Manual – a

handbook from TSC that spelt out the duties of each teacher in the school. Nonetheless, not many AHoDs could readily cite these tasks and when they did, they were inconsistent. The most cited however were making schemes of work, maintaining records of work (Respondent 8 and 5), allocating duties in the department (Respondent 5), monitoring the coverage of the syllabus while ensuring that all 'classes were attended' and ensuring the resources in the department were well managed (Respondent 6). This was echoed by Respondent 9 and 13 who argued that AHoDs were supposed to supervise on behalf of the headteacher. This meant that to manage an academic department one had to work in liaison with the headteacher. Nevertheless, a few AHoDs did not have kind words for their headteachers. For instance, Respondent 19, was furious because her headteacher did 'things in a very unofficial way and treated her so casually'. This AHoD was appointed by the SMT and did not have her job description, something she felt made her confused leading to feelings of frustration and insecurity.

Thus, headteachers and their overall school leadership style seemed to influence the AHoDs and this was cited by Aubrey-Hopkins and James (2002). As in Penlington et al (2008) and Lunn's (1998) findings, there is an understanding here that headteachers were influential to their AHoDs and this was reflected in the way they communicated their wider school vision, the allocation of resources and how carefully they prioritised issues. For example, whenever there was a high level of agreement between the AHoDs and their headteachers regarding the former's responsibilities, their tasks appeared to be accomplished more easily. When the AHoDs lacked a clear understanding of what was expected, there were expressions of frustration as shown by, for example, Respondent 19. Because headteachers help determine the quality of role related information teachers receive, then the clarity with which they communicate their vision and its relevance to their contexts are likely to have an impact upon their AHoDs' roles (Hallinger, 2003; Penlington et al, 2008). Nevertheless, if and when they fail to establish and communicate a clear strategic vision for the school, they may then be viewed as contributing to role conflict and role ambiguity (Penlington et al, 2008; Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

5.1.2 Subject Associations and Reforms in the National Curriculum

Nine AHoD interviewees suggested that subject associations helped to boost their performance while Respondent 10 called theirs ‘the engine’ without which they could not improve. They not only provided fora for sharing general pedagogical ideas but also facilitated teachers’ teaching by providing new ideas, resources and skills (Respondent 15). These observations show the influence subject associations had on the AHoDs’ way of running their curricula, even though this was varied. In some ways, as Respondents 2 and 4 observed, their influence went as far as determining the pace at which teaching was done and the way it was approached since most of these schools did joint exams based on a common syllabus. In this respect, 5 AHoDs observed for example that the Kisii Association of Mathematics Education (KAME) usually produced a teaching framework for the subject including coordinating the scheme of work centrally. This meant AHoDs were compelled to ensure that teachers covered the right amount of work. In spite of this usefulness, some AHoDs felt that ‘unjustifiable’ interference from their local office of the Ministry of Education had contributed to some associations’ failure to meet certain objectives. In fact, this interference had contributed to the collapse of some of the associations (Respondent 13). The above could be attributed to lack of clarity and inconsistency in direction from the MOE, especially in regard to subject associations’ objectives and leadership. Generally, there appeared to be no clear guidelines on the purpose and goals of most associations cited and what AHoDs were articulating appeared to be personal in origin, which explained in part why their associations were collapsing. Similarly, the MOE had failed to give clear and consistent communication by setting and defining the purpose of such associations. This was also evidenced in curriculum change.

AHoD interviewees’ opinions on the effects of the ever-changing curriculum reforms in Kenya ranged from ‘so many effects’ (Respondent 13) to ‘unsure’ of its effects. Respondent 13 explained:

When the new curriculum was effected... it threw us into a state of confusion... they did this without ensuring that there were materials to be used to effect the changes... It took us over one term to have relevant materials in which time we were in total confusion.

It appeared as though the MOE sent confusing messages to the implementers about

changes in their curriculum and, while curriculum content had changed affecting how teaching had to be done, the time frame within which this was to be implemented appeared to be very limited. The case was the same with the Kenya National Examinations Council which had failed to provide adequate time for teachers to test a new format of setting exams. Nonetheless, other interviewees had their work minimally affected (Respondent 1) although as Respondent 2 observed, students had to buy new books and calculators.

5.1. 3 Targets

There was compelling evidence that targets were partly used in all the schools to achieve better performance in the national examinations. Credence to this was the way they were expressed - achieving a set 'mean standard score' (Respondent 1). In two Maths departments, this was expressed as 'no candidate failed completely' and to increase 'powerful grades' (Respondent 2). Four AHoDs indicated that their targets were for both teachers and students, set by department members and were of the nature 'to move from one grade to another' (Respondent 4). There was also evidence that 'teachers were held accountable' if they failed to meet their targets (Respondent 9). Because of this, the process of setting targets was elaborate. Lurking behind accountability were feelings of anxiety when planned goals and tangible accomplishment did not meet and AHoDs could not provide an acceptable explanation. This was one source of tension for many AHoDs that was taken for granted.

These observations are similar to those of Harris et al (1995) who found that AHoDs in the schools they studied knew they were being held accountable for the results in their subjects. This impacted on the way they, for example, resourced their departments and approached relevant issues that could affect performance. Similarly, Respondent 1 was of the opinion that everybody had to take responsibility for how they taught and motivated students in class. In this regard, Respondent 20 had witnessed teachers working into weekends to meet their targets. She and Respondent 10 argued that targets were a source of motivation as they made people work harder but meeting them was not a one man's job - both the student and the teacher were involved. Interview data shows that in cases where some teachers failed to work hard enough to meet their targets, AHoDs challenged them to catch up with the rest (Respondent 8) or else account for

their failure to meet their targets. Of note, however, were variations in targets, which implied role ambiguity. Some AHoDs criticized their SMTs for setting unrealisable targets considering they lacked resources and had a huge number of students - factors that were working against them. This incongruity contributed to the frustrations some AHoDs were expressing.

5.1.4 External Inspection

The other source of influence on AHoDs was external inspection. This was done either once or twice a year (9 AHoD interviewees) or sporadically (6 AHoD interviewees) with some schools going without it in some years. In fact, sometimes a year or even three passed before some schools could be inspected (Respondent 5). Nonetheless, external inspection appeared to have a great deal of influence on AHoDs' way of managing their respective departments. For example, 3 AHoD interviewees believed it helped them to improve the way they taught while Respondent 11 who had his department rarely inspected observed:

When the teachers know that there is inspection from outside, they want to look efficient...in the process they become better teachers...my problem is that the inspectors are not coming here!

Nonetheless, in two cases AHoDs felt they were not influenced as much because they had not been inspected.

It was observed that respondents reacted variedly to inspectors' recommendations. Some, upon reflection found them to be realistic, useful and accepted their shortcomings (Respondents 1; 3, 2). On the hand, 6 AHoDs felt that at times inspectors' recommendations conflicted with their way of working. For example, Respondent 3 felt they failed to recognise that his teachers had too much to take on. Because of this, he opted to ignore 'lesson plans' they had recommended. Respondents 13, 18 and 20 felt that the inspectors' recommendation to split double lessons in the Languages and Maths subjects while ensuring vertical teaching (a teacher always teaches from Forms 1 to 4) was cumbersome and not valuable. The implication of these findings is clear. Whenever there is a lack of clarity in relation to professional judgement, and this inconsistency is reinforced by an influential external agency's insistence in the messages they give, it is a sure source of role ambiguity and conflict. The external

agency's lack of understanding about the contextual reality of the departments appeared to contribute to this ambiguity. It is a scenario where one feels the role of AHoD in making key decisions is not sufficiently defined. This is made worse because the demands made by the external agencies were lacking in coordination and were often incompatible with AHoD's professional view of teaching the curriculum.

The above is a reflection of the role incumbents' own assessment of how their roles should be performed. The literature shows that a post holder usually has ideas about the nature of the role based on professional experience. This personal conception combined with the perceived views of the role set determines how a role is played out in each individual case (Smith, 1996). Subtle references to personal traits as the AHoDs expressed how they performed various tasks were discernible. This brings to the fore Williams' (1989) assertion that role is dependent on individual ability and expertise. However when this disagrees with the role senders, it becomes a source of conflict.

What is apparent is that as a 'focal person' (Katz and Kahn, 1966) within the context of the school, the AHoD's role is a function of several factors acting collectively. There is no doubt that this study, like that of Wise and Bennett (2003), shows that while performing their duties, AHoDs constantly made decisions about whose opinions were the most legitimate and therefore who influenced their decisions most. In effect, it is a reflection of Maw's suggestion that role is a function of 'role-set' (Maw, 1977). The evidence above shows that key influences ranged from both the wider national context and from within the school. Aspects such as the TSC's guidelines that were similar to the Teacher Training Agency statements about the 'core purpose of the subject leader' (Turner, 2003; Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002) seem to have had a lot of influence on how they executed their role.

5.2 What are the Barriers/Tensions/Conflicts that the AHoDs are faced with and of what Consequences are they to their Role?

Although teacher performance was rated 'above average' in some departments, Respondent 21 found 'excellent' a term difficult to use because sometimes she had had to resolve problems (even though most teachers were willing to work), an acknowledgement that sometimes AHoDs faced tensions while executing their role. As shown in Chapter 2, when AHoDs are subjected to a range of expectations deriving

from formal requirements, a range of colleagues, personal experiences and value systems, there is a possibility of conflicting expectations that have to be resolved in order for one to be able to carry out work. Participants in this study experienced role conflict on two different levels (a) between their role as instructional leaders and the reality of the clerical demands on their time and (b) between their work as AHoDs and their work as teachers. There are instances where perceptions of the role by the role set were outrightly at odds with the incumbents' own preferences. Such hurdles were a source of significant problems for the AHoDs. The following conflicts were teased from this study.

5.2.1 Tensions Arising from Lack of Commitment

Lack of commitment manifested by some teachers wanting to have less work (Respondent 1), not taking their work seriously (Respondent 5) or being reluctant to be part of a team (Respondent 8) was raised by 57% of the AHoD interviewees. If challenged, Respondent 20 argued, these teachers were adept at giving excuses. This implies one had to keep pressuring them. In fact, some noted a tendency where teachers avoided doing set tasks unless everything was committed in writing. Such teachers, were usually elusive, had many excuses (Respondent 11), became personal when challenged (Respondent 5) and could not subscribe to the ideals of the school, let alone the department. Respondent 12 argued that supervision became a problem in this context. It was noted though that whenever teachers did unsatisfactory work, it was because some of them knew that at the end of the day AHoDs were the ones held to account (Respondent 22). This implies that while the AHoDs took all the accountability, they did not have the authority to enforce decisions. Respondent 15 was then faced with the challenge of motivating such staff because his school did not have a policy for motivating staff and students.

Lack of commitment could be attributed here to either *task* or *affective* conflicts within these departments. The former, possibly due to disagreements 'about the content of the tasks being performed, differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions' (Jehn, 1995: 258) and, the latter probably due to 'interpersonal incompatibilities' (Jehn, 1995: 258). In arguing that teachers were not committed, it was apparent that AHoDs must have observed decreased performance, lower levels of decision quality and acceptance,

decreased satisfaction and increased work stress, all side effects of such conflicts (De Dreu and Van Vianen, 2001; Duffy et al, 2000).

These findings also reflect failure which is partly due to some teachers' reluctance to utilise a team approach to their work (see Scribner et al, 2007). What teamwork does is to provide an opportunity for everyone to contribute fairly to decision-making and giving excuses does not hold. Scholarship on professional learning communities suggests that teamwork is more likely to be effective when those responsible for implementation are included in a shared decision-making process (Scribner, 2007). Studies also suggest that in schools where teachers work in self-managing teams to develop goals, instructional strategies, budgets, and staff development programs, commitment levels are higher. This is because teams are more creative, improvisational and accountable than traditional hierarchical leadership structures are (Scribner et al, 2007; Weick, 2001).

5.2.2 Tensions Arising from Implementing the Curriculum

It is apparent that AHoDs were at the time of this study implementing a new curriculum. While 16 AHoD interviewees were still studying its implications, others were faced with 'a lot of confusion' and 'lack of relevant books and funds' (Respondent 12). The problem with books extended to lack of funds to procure them and/or 'publishers had not come up with materials that were appropriate to the new curriculum'. This tension is best accounted for by revisiting Kahn et al's (1964) definition of role ambiguity. They state that 'certain information is required for adequate role performance, that is, in order for a person to conform to the role expectations held by members of his role set... First of all, he must know what these expectations are...Second, he must know something about what activities on his part will fulfil [these] responsibilities ... In other words, he requires various sorts of means-ends knowledge' (p. 22). The absence of this knowledge here coupled with inadequate information on how to accomplish some of the key tasks appeared to be the key problem among most AHoDs. Certainly, delays experienced meant that by the time AHoDs received the right resources, teachers would have taught irrelevant aspects in their subject (Respondent 5). The fact that there was a 'shortage of resources' and in a situation where the publishers were seen as 'being in a confusion' about what to publish (Respondent 13) meant 'the reorganisation process was characterised by disorder and

delays' (Respondent 13).

5.2.3 Tensions Arising from Managing Staff and other Resources

AHoDs were asked if their teachers were working partly in their departments and partly in others and, if any, what problems this presented. One AHoD suggested this did not present a problem because partly, 'staff always turned up for meetings' and did not bring in 'issues from other departments' (Respondent 1). Besides, once allocated duties 'they accepted' (Respondent 1). The rationale, according to this AHoD, was that these teachers knew duties had to be shared in the department and best of all, he felt, they were positive in their work.

In contrast, Respondent 2 felt teachers involved in more than one department failed to meet their targets and ended up being overworked (Respondent 4). Because of this, Respondent 6 argued that it could be better for a teacher to be in one 'department teaching a particular subject instead of being used everywhere'. Besides, some teachers tended to be inclined to one subject and not the other. To this end, Respondent 11 indicated that those who were working fulltime in his department had no problems because they were working as a team. Most AHoDs supported this view. The general thinking appeared to be that working with teachers who had responsibilities in other departments was 'not good' (Respondent 6). AHoDs like Respondent 9 did not understand 'why a teacher had to teach two subjects' given the inherent problems in this practice. She indicated that occasionally she had been forced to sit with other AHoDs to sort problems arising from this.

Nonetheless, 3 AHoDs disagreed with these views. They argued that because of acute understaffing in some departments, it was necessary that teachers with a relevant second subject covered for the shortage. Whilst Respondent 4, for example, had cooperative colleagues who were teaching in other departments, he was nonetheless very understaffed. This was made worse by the SMT's unrealistic targets and lack of resources. He summed his experience as very 'frustrating'. Following on this theme, lack of office space was equally a big concern. According to Respondent 2, there was inadequate office space that could accommodate all teachers. The feeling among most AHoDs was that they needed more space so that they could free their current rooms for

other uses.

The predominant view here is that the availability of resources determined the range of obligations that AHoDs assumed and how effectively tasks could be accomplished. There was a significant agreement among the AHoD interviewees that the resources provided to support their departments were inadequate. These included, among others, lack of qualified teachers and clerical staff support, books, instructional materials, time and staff development. Modern technology was scarcely used with AHoDs relying on centrally pooled resources that were, many a time, outdated. Notable here were the effects of this. Lack of clerical support, for example, implied that AHoDs had to perform or delegate a variety of tasks which distracted them from and often contradicted with their behaviour as instructional leaders. There was equally a demand that AHoDs push for the acquisition of more textbooks which could greatly impact upon their fulfilment of instructional expectations.

5.2.4 Tensions Arising from Monitoring

Some of the challenges AHoDs had to contend with while monitoring included negative comments from teachers (Respondent 1). Seven AHoDs felt teachers viewed them as people on a 'witch-hunting mission' or were after undermining them (Respondent 5). Even in a context where AHoDs thought they had cooperative teachers in their departments, Respondent 7 argued:

Sometimes I think they will not want to be observed. If you told someone how to teach a topic, I think they might say is this a 'teaching practice' lesson?

This interviewee entered a teacher's classroom for observation if only things got out of hand. Otherwise, he argued, 'you may not want to create a conflict' (Respondent 7). The inference here is that not all the teachers felt secure to be observed and this was possibly out of the apprehension they had that AHoDs could find out their inadequacies (Respondent 7). In this context, monitoring was comparable to fault-finding. Questions such as 'why should you monitor, why doubt?' were raised by Respondent 13.

Clearly, AHoDs were worried about the effects of monitoring. Many were wary of 'making enemies' and did not want a situation where teachers could get 'confrontational' leading to poor relations (Respondent 4). According to Respondent

13, if the teacher's view was that the AHoD was observing because he had detected something wrong, then relations could be compromised because teachers then felt uncertain about their competence. Even though 15 AHoD interviewees indicated that teachers had come to accept that the latter could monitor their work, they were still finding it hard to assert themselves. They felt that at the end of the day they sounded bothersome and at times, they could only put pressure to some extent and not beyond (Respondent 22) although the task was made easier when the SMT reinforced the AHoD's position (Respondent 10). Similarly, AHoDs felt they were being overworked and as Respondent 14 argued, having a workload of 28 lessons a week without enough manpower meant it was not practical to monitor.

A notable observation by Siskin (1991) and Turner (1996) is that in the area of supervision of instruction, AHoDs are in an ideal position to facilitate instructional improvement because of their daily contact with teachers and because of their own instructional expertise. Nonetheless, it appears that few AHoDs enjoyed this unique assignment. This was mainly because, among many other factors, mistrust was rampant. It is indisputable that teachers with high levels of trust are less likely to make negative attributions concerning the intent of AHoDs engaging in monitoring (Simons and Peterson, 2000). Trust as an interpersonal factor can moderate the link between the AHoD's right to monitor and the teachers who are wary of being observed (MacBeath, 2005; Simons and Peterson, 2000). Consequently, an assurance would make them respond constructively and accept stated disagreements at face value rather than responding as if having been attacked.

5.2.5 Time

Apart from 3 AHoD interviewees who were adequately staffed and had delegated many of their duties, there was a suggestion by 17 others that they did not have sufficient time to teach and do management tasks at the same time. The latter finding echoes that of Stewart and Zepeda (2002) who also realised that time allotted to AHoDs in their study was insufficient for the completion of both departmental and teaching responsibilities. Respondent 18 observed:

The time I have is all spent moving from lesson to lesson... sometimes I am the manager, the messenger, tutor... at the end of the day I get worn out.

For some AHoDs, teaching responsibilities prior and after being appointed to their posts had not changed. Documentary evidence confirmed that AHoDs were supposed to teach 18 lessons and regular teachers 27 yet some AHoDs taught up to 28 lessons implying that they lacked the necessary time to manage the department. This, according to Respondent 13, meant that many management tasks were compromised. The fact that AHoDs were supposed to teach, meet parents, pass information concerning the department to the school, coordinate other teachers (Respondent 22) was an indicator that there was a lot to be done. One effect of this was that they, like Respondent 7, had to create time after school to catch up with missed lessons.

One conclusion drawn from this study is that conflicts characterised departments. Most AHoDs experienced obstacles to different degrees and this compromised teaching and learning. Lack of time, curriculum instability and to a large extent lack of opportunities for professional development at the departmental level, factors also identified by Brown and Rutherford (1998) are repeated. Similarly, AHoDs had taken up additional responsibilities including discipline which Brown et al (2000) also observed in their study. However, these additional responsibilities are not matched with either sufficient authority or adequate time to enable them to be carried out properly. Wise and Bennett (2003) and Turner (1996) make a similar observation. The former realised in their study that over 50% of the AHoDs they studied claimed to have had additional responsibilities over and above those expected as part of their role for which they were answering. The latter observed from his study that what is clear is that the AHoD has a very extensive set of responsibilities placed upon him/her. The major constraint is clearly the amount of time available to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning undertaken within the department. Constraints of time only serve to reduce the direct influence of an AHoD over what might be judged to be their major concern, that is, the quality of teaching and learning in the department (Turner, 1996).

Even more problematic is monitoring. The findings here suggest that teachers want to feel trusted to do their work, a fact that highlights continuing tension between the professional and line manager view of accountability. Again, this study, like that of Glover et al (1999) indicates that in many departments, monitoring is perceived as professionally intrusive. This issue has been around for several years and early researchers such as Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989) and Torrington and

Weightman (1989) observed in their studies that monitoring and evaluation by the AHoD was potentially in conflict with notions of professional autonomy and this had led to damaging of professional relationships between colleagues in departments. Given this understanding, it is apparent that the role of the AHoD is not only complex, varied and demanding (Blandford, 1997) but also involves working across boundaries within a complex web of responsibilities (Turner and Bolam, 1998).

5.3 How might AHoDs Contribute Better to School Improvement?

There are several models for school improvement (Brown and Rutherford, 1995; Brighouse, 1994; Hopkins et al, 1994). Brown and Rutherford (1998) have proposed a two-fold strategy for developing successful schools that requires departments to not only improve their teaching and pupils' learning but also their capacity to both make and implement policy and therefore facilitate the process of change. This proposition suggests that AHoDs, being leaders of departments, are the best positioned to develop successful departments and hence successful schools. The importance of the role of the AHoD in bringing about change and improving pupil achievement is well documented (see Harris, 2001; Sammons et al, 1997; Connolly et al, 2000). Their potential influence could be explained, as cited earlier, by the relative closeness in management and leadership terms they have to those who teach in classrooms, for it is at that level that there is the greatest influence on pupil progress (Scheerens, 1992).

However, as this study shows, the AHoD's role is complex and demanding, a fact supported by several researchers (see Bolam and Turner, 1998; Glover and Miller, 1999). The 'leading professional' role that the AHoD has means that s/he is expected to act as an exemplar to department members and other colleagues (Sammons et al, 1997). Since the role demands that they be close both to those they lead and to the locale of pupil learning, the lines of leadership, management and accountability are typically intertwined. Nonetheless, there is a worrying observation that the AHoDs studied appeared to be more preoccupied with instruction and administration than strategic thinking.

5.3.1 Effects of the AHoD's Leadership

One of the fundamental tenets of school effectiveness and school improvement research concerns the impact of leadership. Research findings from different countries and

school contexts draw similar conclusions (Penlington et al, 2008; Leithwood et al, 2006). UK research, as indicated in Chapter 2, suggests that AHoDs can make a difference to departmental performance in much the same way as headteachers contribute to overall school performance (Sammons et al, 1996; Harris et al, 1996a and b; Harris 1998). This departmental sphere of influence has been termed the 'realm of knowledge' because of the importance of the subject boundary (Siskin, 1994). Furthermore, it has been suggested that at the department level there is a major potential and possibility to influence whole school development. However, it is apparent that AHoDs operate in variable contexts determined by such factors as subject epistemology, departmental membership, individual competence and expertise (Bennett, 1995), different structures of subject areas (Busher and Harris, 1999) and their organisational situations (Bolam and Turner, 1999). Research such as that of Sammons et al (1995) shows that school and departmental conditions facilitate other conditions which impact directly on student outcomes, particularly, the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. This has strong implications for AHoDs who are essentially instructional leaders.

The first implication is on their leadership in relation to school improvement. Their 'bridging' or 'brokering' function (Busher and Harris, 1999) seen in Chapter 4 suggests a transactional leadership role, where they make use of their 'power' to secure working agreements with departmental colleagues about how to achieve school and departmental goals and practices. However, this implies they need to make their teams coherent. Clearly, the area of subject knowledge that the department shares define the boundaries of the group. An important role for the AHoD therefore, is to foster collegiality by shaping and establishing a shared vision. This implies a leadership style that empowers others and that involves subject leaders using 'power with' or 'power through' other people to generate collaborative departmental cultures (Blase and Anderson, 1995).

The second implication is on staff and student performance. At one level it implies monitoring attainment of school goals and meeting particular prescribed levels of curriculum performance while on the other hand, as Glover et al (1998) note, it suggests an important mentoring or supervisory leadership role in supporting colleagues' development and the development of pupils academically and socially. It

also draws on the expert knowledge of AHoDs to bring about improvement in practice. The final implication is how they could liaise with a variety of actors and sources of information in the external environment of the school in order to improve the department's resources and performance (Busher, 1988, 1992). One aspect of this dimension is helping fellow teachers to keep in touch with others in their subject area and with the views and needs of colleagues in other school departments. The second aspect is representing the views of departmental colleagues to senior staff and other middle leaders (Busher, 1992).

One observation made in this study is that in some departments, the AHoDs were expert practitioners, having been appointed following their good record as exemplary practitioners and were therefore well respected by departmental colleagues. However, there is also evidence of failed headteachers who were redeployed as AHoDs. Evidence in the West shows that AHoDs should demonstrate professional knowledge and understanding, as well as possess the necessary skills and attributes prior to qualifying to be AHoDs (TTA, 1997). Expertise in subject leadership is valued and is seen to be demonstrated by the ability of the AHoD to apply professional knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes to the identified tasks to bring about the desired outcomes. When AHoD appointments are done on some other consideration other than this, it is likely this will compromise the quality of leadership as any attempts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the department is likely to be undermined.

The leadership style used by particular AHoDs vary with issues like the size and type of school, the particular subject involved, the personality and experience of the AHoD, the physical location of the AHoD's teaching room in relation to the location of the other departmental staff and whether the AHoD has other whole-school responsibilities. Because of these and other unique contextual conditions that the AHoDs studied operated in, the researcher could not recommend a specific type of leadership. Nonetheless, AHoDs should be flexible and display appropriate styles related to both context and task. This means that they be aware of contextual factors such as the nature of the work performed (in the subject department), the nature of the external environment and the characteristics of the followers (the departmental staff) (Yukl,

1994). While doing this, they should be role models for their teachers, what Bolman and Deal (1994) call providing 'symbolic' leadership.

AHoDs could also improve their departments easily if they won over their teachers to their ideals. Teachers are vital not because individually they accept or reject the leader but because as a group, they can actually determine whatever power the leader may have. The leadership style adopted by the AHoD should therefore take into account the circumstances which pertain not only to themselves as leaders but also the teachers in any given situation. It is in this context that 'readiness', (associated with *willingness* or the extent to which an individual has the confidence, commitment and motivation to accomplish a specific task) and *ability* (which is the knowledge, experience and skill that an individual brings to a task) are of importance. The argument here is that AHoDs have to win their teachers' confidence and be understanding because departmental staff will almost inevitably be at different levels of readiness to try out, for example, new teaching or monitoring strategies. Thus, the AHoD should be ready to lead the departmental team in one way although s/he could be working with individuals in quite different ways. The proposition here is therefore providing situational leadership emanating from the understanding that:

Organisations are open systems, influenced by their environments and have overlapping goals. Whilst all organisations have universal problems, they also face problems which are unique. Hence, effective performance requires a match between external requirements and internal constraints. This has to be achieved in a context in which a manager can rarely take on problems from the outset and never knows all that is going on around him. Thus, leadership style needs to vary with the problem (Hoyle, 1986:42-43).

This proposition is based on the understanding that while there is a general view among the respondents that AHoDs should provide curriculum leadership, manage change, resources, personnel, among others, on the other hand, there is a realisation that departments are unique entities operating within a particular set of circumstances prevailing in any school at any given time. Secondly, there is a realisation that various teachers within a department may, in reality, have quite different sets of goals which co-exist side-by-side. Thirdly, performance within the department is often judged on

the basis of the match between external requirements and internal state (Hanson, 1979) although departments in some schools also generate their own targets for improvement.

5.3.2 Whole School Role

The schools studied could be described as complex organisations segmented into several departments that typically isolated teachers from each other. In fact, departmentalisation appears to have created ‘distinct and competing realms’ (Avila de Lima, 2007: 295) which made the very notion of a whole school community one that was difficult to sustain. No wonder most AHoDs identified a major weakness in their understanding of the operations regarding whole-school budgeting and budgeting for the department in line with whole-school priorities. This was made worse by the paucity of training they received in relation to issues of finance and budgeting. Nonetheless, they recognised that they needed to develop their understanding of whole-school financial issues. This suggests that there is an acceptance to meet the demands of their changing role.

While the above is true, the whole school concept appeared to be a problem for a few AHoDs. For instance, Respondent 19 accused her headteacher of doing ‘things in a very unofficial way’ and treating her ‘so casually’. As seen earlier, this AHoD did not have her job description, something she felt made her confused leading to feelings of frustration and insecurity. The result was her isolation and that of her department and its teachers from the wider school. This made it very difficult for her teachers to belong to the ‘global’ school and possibly any meaningful suggestion to her department’s improvement. Similarly, when AHoDs were asked how often their headteachers consulted them over whole school issues, most indicated they were hardly consulted or when done, it was episodic. This also raised a number of questions regarding the place of the AHoD in the wider school.

There is an expectation that AHoDs have a responsibility to work positively within and contribute towards the shaping of whole school policies and priorities (MacBeath, 2005). The TSC (2006) stipulates that it is imperative that AHoDs contribute to whole school aims, policies and practices. Similarly, both MacBeath (2005) and TTA (1998) in England agree that the AHoD has a major role to play in the development of school

policy and practice. Going by their recommendations, any AHoD would contribute better to school improvement if s/he pursued the needs of his/her area while recognising that these must be related to the overall needs of the school. Hence, it is important that AHoDs understand how their areas contribute to school priorities and the overall education and achievement of pupils. Clearly there is evidence here of a desire by some AHoDs to be instrumental in the formulation of whole-school policies but the practical reality for most of them appears to be closer to Glover et al's (1998: 286) conclusion that 'the essential feature of 'middleness' appears to be that the subject leaders and others are translators and mediators rather than originators of the policy and culture of the schools'. There is little evidence that these AHoDs were playing *a major role* in the development of their schools' policies and practices.

There are various whole-school ways that AHoDs could contribute to school improvement. Cross-border meetings with other middle leaders and action plans based on inspection reports could play an important part in drawing up priorities for departments. Participating in the wider formulation of whole-school policies could also be of great influence on the work done by AHoDs since they often lead to the drawing up of departmental policies on important issues such as discipline and assessment, things that have a bearing on successful teaching and learning outcomes. Nonetheless, while these AHoDs were accepting their changing managerial responsibilities and recognizing the need to understand whole-school issues, they could be better off in understanding as well the constraints and priorities these impose upon them. That is why they should be ready to abandon the notion of the autonomous department and ensure that school priorities are addressed at departmental level (Avila de Lima, 2007).

5.3.3 Use of Inspection Reports

Findings in this study show inconsistencies in the number of times various departments were inspected. However, when done, these inspections were being used by the AHoDs to influence practice through such tasks as the preparation of schemes of work that could be legitimately required prior to the inspection/review. In general, these AHoDs felt post-inspection feedback was useful in influencing the practice of members. However, there were instances where its influence was negative, echoing the findings of Fidler et al (1998) in England. What was apparent was that the process of inspection

was presumably thorough and, as shown in Chapter 4, inspectors made specific demands. It is imperative that AHoDs interpret correctly and wisely implement inspectors' demands. This means they should have a clear awareness of what the inspection process expects of them and their colleagues and hence avoid unnecessary ambiguities. This will contribute to school improvement.

5.3.4 Relationships with Teachers and the SMTs

Many of the AHoDs had positive views about the role that headteachers played in improving the work of individual department members, particularly in relation to the headteachers' role in supporting monitoring. There were, however, significant expressions of frustration and disappointment especially in those instances when the headteachers failed to resource departments. Similarly, most AHoDs indicated that their colleagues were good at their work, ready and willing to respond to the need to change and were team players contributing fully to the collective effort. However, there were some teachers whose practice was not fully, reliably or consistently satisfactory. As they always missed deadlines, used inappropriate teaching methods or could not teach effectively. Working with these teachers posed many challenges.

The task for the AHoDs here was how to motivate them. Strategies such as giving direct explanations to individual members about expectations including, for example, setting targets, could help to resolve this. Other strategies such as building a strong AHoD-member of staff relationship, time-limited action plans and discussions following classroom observations might help. Requesting adherence to departmental policies, group norms, collaboration, team-working and developing accepted rituals and routines could also influence the unsatisfactory performance of these individuals.

5.3.5 Implementing the Department Vision and Policy

A common view expressed in the literature is that the concept of middle leadership 'assumes a hierarchy of status in the organisation, with those in the senior positions providing leadership and direction and those in the middle ranking positions having the responsibility for spreading understanding of the leadership and support for that direction so that everyone works to the same objectives' (Bennett, 1995:137). The assumption here is that the SMTs will make decisions and decide on policies. The

actual work is done by AHoDs. Bennett (1995:18) argues that ‘leaders need assistants who can transmit the vision on through the organisation, articulate it in practical terms, and work with their colleagues to turn it into reality’. He concludes that this is the key role of middle leaders.

While this is true, it will be minimalist to view the AHoDs’ role solely in these terms as they also have a pivotal role in passing ideas and information up the line to the SMTs. Naturally, SMTs rely on AHoDs to keep them informed of what is going on in the department. The implication for the AHoD is that having a vision from which could be developed a department policy under which everybody operates is important. Research evidence (see Harris et al, 1995) suggests that effective departments have a clear wider and shared vision that they propagate. Bennett (1995) argues that as power brokers, AHoDs are potential agents of change through their ability to control and influence the flow of information. A school’s success will therefore depend on the degree to which AHoDs and their teams share the goals and intentions of their headteachers. This vision embraces the nature of the subject and how it should be organised for teaching purposes.

To this end, it is commendable that the AHoDs had policies that covered a range of issues, including teaching, assessment and discipline. Policies, especially on schemes of work jointly developed by the AHoD and department members are important in ensuring a consistently high standard of practice across the department. They provide agreed standards and requirements to which all teachers are expected to conform, and are therefore important as they influence individuals. However, ensuring sufficient flexibility within any policy for teachers to exercise autonomy, say in the choice of a teaching method, is also important. This is all done with the understanding that leading and managing any department is influenced first and foremost by its size given that, for instance, regular formal and informal contacts with only two or three other members of staff are far easier to achieve than in departments where there are 10 to 12 people.

5.3.6 Communication

The school structure outlined by both headteachers and AHoDs puts a lot of emphasis on hierarchy (vertical differentiation) and departmentalisation (horizontal

differentiation). Jointly, they reflect the organisational complexity of the school (Avila de Lima, 2007). One of the AHoDs' onerous tasks is to integrate through communication both dimensions. Integration here encompasses the 'achieving unity among the various subsystems while working towards the accomplishment of the department and school's goals' (Avila de Lima, 2007: 275). Although there were not many cases identified where formal discussions between AHoDs and individual members took place, the data does show a general trend that AHoDs were aware of the importance of communication. For instance, there is evidence that they considered departmental meetings important especially in influencing practice, giving formal opportunities to develop conformity, consistency and collegial commitment. Similarly, there was evidence of informal communication that was characterised by brevity and which occurred in range of places and at various times.

What is apparent is that being in charge of a department implies for the AHoD that his/her area of jurisdiction is an arena for communication between colleagues within the department and staff in distant parts of the school. If communication is not managed well here, different interpretations of organisational values and events are likely to develop (Rentsch, 1990). In order to improve performance, the AHoD as the manager of formal communications is in an influential position to shape the professional interactions and perceptions of staff. Unquestionably, in controlling effectively the communication channels, the AHoD is likely to have more influence over issues such as claims for increased resources (Busher, 1992). AHoDs who know how to make contact and bargain with colleagues through an array of micro-political processes are in a stronger position to implement or defend the policies of their departments than those who do not (Busher and Harris, 1999).

5.3.7 Decision-Making and Collaboration

There is evidence that many of the AHoDs were involving teachers in decision-making. This had contributed to their engagement in change processes and commitment to targeted outcomes. Consequently, it had enabled a greater range of expertise to be brought to bear on departmental problems. The rationale appeared to be to establish legitimacy in decision-making and thereby ensuring subsequent compliance. Collaborative working was also aspired to and espoused by AHoDs as a way of

influencing and developing practice especially in tasks such as the production of schemes of work, marking and moderation of exams. Nevertheless, this was applied to a limited extent and was episodic. There is a potential for more use.

The rationale for promoting a culture of collaboration is to influence department members and thereby improve their practice by establishing norms, expectations and routines. This involves a culture with a control mechanism where shared standards and values guide behaviour rather than bureaucratic constraints (Ouchi, 1982). This influences the practice of the department members and hence ensures conformance. This does not imply, however, that collaborative culture will always secure compliance from all the members for there are limitations to voluntarism. Nonetheless, it is one way that could be used to improve teacher performance more and therefore contribute in one sense to the wider school's improvement.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Reforms based on initiatives to restructure school systems are now evident in Kenyan schools. Although devolution here, especially in decision-making, appears to be in its infancy, it has become a common feature (Bennett et al, 2007; O'Donoghue and Dimmock, 1998). A key attribute of school reforms in the West is, among others, an increase in authority for middle leaders to closely supervise and monitor staff under their domain (Weller, 2001; Morris 1992; Dimmock and Walker, 1997). This is relatively a new development in the Kenyan secondary school where the post of department head, for example, has recently been recognised. In fact, there remains a dearth of studies on, for example, AHoDs as scholars have paid surprisingly little attention to this fundamental group of individuals in schools.

Nonetheless, the importance of the AHoD's role cannot be underestimated. Indeed, as noted in Chapter 2, various studies portray AHoDs as coordinators, change agents, enforcers of policy, disseminators of information, and motivators (Schmidt, 2000). They are also planners, supervisors of instruction, and teacher evaluators. They schedule classes, prepare budgets, help select new teachers, and compile reports. Their role reflects what Weller (2001) terms as both manager and leader because they perform tasks assigned to both categories and, therefore, provide that 'vital link' that promotes continuity between teachers' and SMTs' expectations. However, it is their 'in-the-middle' position that makes their role most difficult, what Schmidt (2000:828) refers to as 'one with a high degree of ambiguity and role stress'. Looking at the tasks they perform, one can only conclude that this position is characterised by great variation and inevitable ambiguity.

This study has shown that the post of AHoD is a hierarchical position (office) albeit with limited powers and privileges. Following Katz and Kahn's (1966) conceptualisation of role, it could be argued that firstly, this post defines the AHoD in the school system as a whole. Secondly, there is the dynamic aspect of this 'position' characterized by the functions the holders perform (Schmidt, 2000). As shown in Chapter 2, role is a function of multiple factors (Katz and Kahn, 1966). Hoy and Miskel (2000) citing role theory agree that role is determined by social norms, demands and

rules, by the role performances of others in their respective positions, by those who observe and react to the performance and by the individual's capabilities and personality. The resultant view is that roles in these schools are determined by networks of relationships, reciprocal rights and responsibilities negotiated in a particular social situation (Maw, 1977) coupled with the AHoDs' professional experience. An analysis of the literature and data collected during this study reveals key influences which derive from both the wider national context and from within the school.

Again, the literature reviewed (see Wise and Bennett, 2003) and this study's findings largely concur that role sets vary with the decisions being made and the area of the AHoD's responsibility. Both sources have demonstrated that AHoDs value input from staff within departments, their headteachers, inspectors, subject associations, other teaching staff, parents, guardians and governors. However, unlike in the case of Wise and Bush's (1999) study, it was not possible to conclusively say whether subject or area team members were more influential than the headteachers. Nonetheless, it was demonstrated that each role has its own system, consisting of the role occupant and those who have a direct relationship with him, the departmental team. It is arguable that the departmental team is closest to the AHoD. This could be interpreted to mean that if the AHoD's opinions differ from those perceived by the departmental team, then it is likely that s/he would meet a lot of resistance.

Given that the AHoDs studied undertook various roles that were inextricably linked with other members of their groups, there was evidence that their perception of role could at times be odd with some incumbents' own preferences. For example, there were inconsistencies in expectations between some AHoDs and their headteachers that contributed to role ambiguity. There was also evidence that AHoDs had been delegated tasks and were performing duties that they had picked up by default (such as budgeting), yet they did not have the necessary skills (and sometimes authority). When professional roles are characterised by conflict and ambiguity, consequences could be intense and negative reactions (Schmidt, 2000). The tension between instruction and management tasks was evident, placing a strain on most AHoDs. Management tasks frequently demanded that they diverted their attention from instructional activities. Some AHoDs felt unsure in fulfilling their curriculum functions effectively when occupied with management responsibilities. This resulted in confusion as to which area

should be emphasised. The conclusions drawn below are based on the foundations of 'role theory' and as conceptualised by the researcher in Chapter 2.

6.1.1 Are AHoDs Middle Leaders?

Three broad observations lead us to conclude that AHoDs are MLs in the schools studied. Firstly, in agreement with the literature reviewed, AHoDs in this study appear belong to a layer of individuals lying between their SMTs and teachers at the chalk face. Secondly, they hold responsibility for some aspect of the school remit – a curriculum area (Bennett et al, 2007; Hammersley-Fletcher and Kirkham, 2007). Thirdly, the Headteachers in this study placed them below their deputy headteachers but above the subject heads, a management structure that reflected hierarchy, power and privileges. This is consistent with Glover et al's (1998) findings on school leadership in which they found middle leaders consisted in the schools they studied of all AHoDs, together with those having pastoral responsibilities such as heads of year or house.

A common factor in the schools studied is departmentalisation and the recognition of the 'department head' as a unit head. Although departmental configuration in terms of size, membership and subject affiliation was varied, it nonetheless fits into Busher and Harris' (1999) typology which concurs with De Brabander's (1993:56) conclusion that 'departmentalization in secondary schools is an almost universal feature'. Importantly, the AHoDs appeared to play a vital role in moving their respective schools towards achieving their goals through, for example, ensuring the smooth day-to-day operation of their departments while monitoring the progress of those under them. In fact, there was evidence that most AHoDs were working towards some sort of ideal target and that they had put in place strategies to enthuse others with their 'vision' which is clearly an aspect of leadership.

Similarly, most AHoDs were clear about what constitutes good practice, bringing the notion of having specialist knowledge to the fore and trying to use it. Even though they faced numerous hurdles, most of them worked hard towards being effective in leading and managing people and resources. They displayed this in the way they were able to plan, motivate and encourage good practice, challenge bad practice, solve problems and

see tasks through. It is in this sense that the researcher concluded that embedded in departmentalisation is the leadership role which symbolizes the ability and right of the department to govern itself (after Turner, 2003). And, since the common understanding here is that in hierarchical terms, AHoDs were not part of the SMTs rather, they are responsible for the operational work of classroom teachers then it makes sense to view them as MLs.

6.1.2 Leadership

The evidence in this study portrays AHoDs as playing what Siskin (1993) calls hermaphroditic roles, that is, they are neither fully teachers nor fully administrators yet they operate as a conduit for all the tensions in the relationships between the two. It also suggests that their leadership has important effects on the quality of the learning processes (Day et al, 2008). There are various dimensions to the AHoD's leadership role including the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring good planning and promoting better teaching. Their role is therefore to bring about improvement in pupil achievement (see Day et al, 2008; Sammons et al, 1997; Brown and Rutherford, 1998) through providing professional leadership. In fact, this study has shown that most of them aimed at being professional exemplars to their department members and other colleagues.

Similarly, AHoDs were not only engaged in performing multiple tasks and roles but also involved other teachers while doing this. Their behaviour suggests that life in their schools involved a continuous flow of mediated activity characterised by a process of ever-moving relationships between different actors (Woods, 2004: 5-6). It is for this reason that leadership activities were being shared amongst teachers in the department teams. The rationale here, as supported by the research evidence, was that participation ensured utilization of expertise, talent and a feeling of belonging and ownership. The implication, therefore, is that most of the AHoDs adopted strategies which acknowledged that issues could arise from different parts of the school and that these were best resolved in a complex interactive process (Leithwood et al, 1999). They were in this context viewed by the researcher as facilitators of an essentially participative process (Bush, 1995). Nonetheless, a few AHoDs were reluctant to engage in wider school activities. This was partly because of their headteachers' reluctance to involve them. A consequence of this behaviour was passivity.

Although the AHoDs possessed formal responsibility for their departments, it was clear that this formal position was not the only basis for their authority. There was evidence of exchanges based on departmental agreements, reflected in minutes of meetings, and the consequent expectation that each teacher ‘read from the same script’ (Respondent 8). This raises the issue of what makes an AHoD a good leader. Research in England suggests, like in this study, that human relationships characterised by good interpersonal skills, trust (Harris et al, 1995), and teamwork (Sammons et al, 1997) are crucial. Nonetheless, on their own, they cannot give authority to AHoDs. When AHoDs observed that they were ‘first and foremost teachers teaching their specialities’, they were emphasising the importance of their subject knowledge and expertise as teachers. This has also been cited by Hammersley-Fletcher and Kirkham (2007), Fletcher and Bell (1999b) and Flecknoe (2000). This expertise-based authority means that AHoDs led not just by example (Sammons et al 1997; Bell and Ritchie 1999) but must have earned the ‘leading professional’ tag in order to legitimise their posts.

6.1.3 Leading the Department Team

There was evidence in this study of a large number of cohesive departments where members met frequently, formally and informally, under the chairmanship of their AHoDs. Some of them shared a collective view of their purpose and actions, which helped harness the creative energies of their staff in achieving specific goals. Most AHoDs appeared committed to their department teams. Consequently, one of the AHoD’s functions appeared to be creating team expectations, bringing staff together, and generating a collaborative culture that valued people, used their skills and created empathy within the department (Briggs, 2002), making them ‘transformational’ leaders. The literature on teams, with its emphasis on collaboration, multiple and complementary strengths and expertise, and the need for all members to share a common view of both the purposes of the team and its means of working, has similarities to much of the discussion on distributed leadership in Chapter 4 (see Katzenbach and Smith, 2003).

Although teams were led in slightly different ways by different AHoDs, most of the AHoDs could be described as ‘leading professionals’ in the sense that their own mode

of practice was regarded as the model to follow, particularly in teaching. Even then, some (for example Respondent 8) were more inclined to see themselves as coordinators of other professionals. Evidently, most AHoDs encouraged teamwork and there was proof that teachers had been allocated various team activities. Nonetheless, the biggest threat to teamwork was monitoring because it put the professional status of staff in question when viewed as a check on their competence. This is not a recent problem (see Bennett et al, 2007; Wise, 2001). Formal teacher monitoring is a leadership function typically under the purview of headteachers. Teachers have traditionally viewed professional obligations to one another as intrusive at worst and loosely invitational at best, what Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) term a norm of non-interference.

Bennett et al (2003) have noted that monitoring the quality of classroom practice should not necessarily be a matter that devolves to the AHoD alone, becoming an *individuated responsibility* and generating tension between colleagues. There is the option of approaching it collectively, dealing with it as a collegial responsibility. One policy approach to improving educational quality over the past two decades has been to distribute leadership responsibility beyond administrators to include teachers. Research evidence suggests that increasing the leadership responsibility of teachers has positive outcomes for teacher quality and professionalism (Hart, 1995). There is evidence in the West to suggest that when monitoring is presented as a collective activity within the subject area, staff feel more at ease with each other and the resulting discussions deepen the degree of collegiality (see Fletcher and Bell, 1999; Wise, 2001; Metcalfe and Russell, 1997). The recognition that everyone has something to learn from and teach their colleagues has the potential to deepen existing collegial practice and to move departments that do not reveal a culture of collegiality towards creating one.

6.1.4 Professional Development

This study found that there was little to aid transition between roles – from teacher to department head. There were no formal induction programs; little informal kinds of assistance at the school level; and no job descriptions available for AHoDs. It also found that very few AHoDs had received management or leadership training, and that, in general AHoDs did not have a wide responsibility for staff development. There was no evidence that the schools had staff development policies, nor were there any

instances of a member of the SMT being made responsible for identifying in-service training needs and arranging for them to be met. None of the AHoDs acknowledged the importance of auditing colleagues' training needs. Instead, much concern was expressed about lack of money for professional development. This is despite the fact that teachers needed continuous professional development during their careers which could both enhance and update their subject knowledge and develop their understanding of the processes of teaching and learning (see Turner, 2006).

Moreover, a majority of these AHoDs identified several areas where they felt they needed training, indicating that training at this level was either unavailable or inadequate. Their needs echoed Adey and Jones' (1998) findings that staff appointed to middle leadership roles may have the potential to do well, but not the necessary skills to be successful initially, and that they therefore tend to flounder. Because many of these AHoDs were appointed without much preparation for the post, it is as if they were *thrown in at the deep end* and were therefore not confident in terms of their past experience (Schmidt, 2000; Turner, 2006). The need to prepare in advance for the assumption of academic middle leadership responsibilities needs to be addressed now, more than ever before. Success as a subject teacher (although still important) cannot be the sole criterion for appointment to the post of AHoDs. As the whole school leadership role of the AHoD has increased over the years, so too has the need for traditional processes to adapt to these changes.

Training might be offered in a variety of ways. Short, formal courses run by reputable agencies on 'preparing for academic middle leadership' could be attempted. These courses would be useful but are not a substitute for longer-term, on-going professional development which should meet the needs of those who want to be AHoDs. Harris, Busher and Wise (1999) did conclude from their study of secondary school subject leaders that the most effective mode of professional development, as reflected in pupil outcomes and changes in AHoDs' practice and values, is when the individual school collaborates with external agencies such a higher education institution on a long programme that results in some form of accreditation. This implies that higher education providers have the task of crafting courses to cater for AHoDs and schools have to associate positively with them if teachers are to be offered improved training.

Clearly, there is need for CPD and yet the current view among most AHoDs is that they work in schools that have an atomised and unplanned approach to it, with the government being the main provider. As shown in the findings, private sector involvement is minimal. Given that staff development resources are finite, it follows that when undertaken, it provides value for money. It is good that some AHoDs had become trainers and the rest could emulate this. The researcher recommends, in addition to this, that mentoring could be a valuable source of support and guidance for AHoDs. A more experienced AHoD could be assigned to assist newly appointed ones in learning the informal aspects of the job in the first few months as well as providing important technical advice on various tasks, rules, procedures and expectations (Turner, 2006). This would also provide an opportunity of having an experienced professional in whom one could confide, seek advice and discuss problems and concerns. Secondly, an approach similar to that of Brown, Boyle and Boyle (2002) could be used. They advocate for a 'collaborative' approach to school leadership where members of the SMT meet regularly with AHoDs to discuss professional development needs and resources needed to meet those needs.

6.1.5 Liaison and School-wide Role

The understanding thus far is that departmentalisation according to subject dominates the organisational structure of the schools studied. There is evidence from Glover et al's (1999) findings that structure influences what AHoDs perceive and enact as their role and, in this connection, Little (1995) argues that subject departments are likely to be barriers rather than facilitators of change. The implication is that the arrangement in these schools tends to make AHoDs play little part in whole-school issues. While Brown and Boyle (1999) argue that headteachers should actively seek the involvement of AHoDs in whole-school decision-making processes, the latter's input is limited by the balkanised nature of their departments (see Brown, Boyle and Boyle, 2000). Hannay (1994) views this as a consequence of organisational structure.

Therefore, while the literature advocates that AHoDs should recognise that their departmental planning must take account of whole school priorities and policies, there is little empirical evidence to suggest these AHoDs were involved in influencing whole-school issues in terms of school policy-making, planning and finance. The

AHoDs in this study had little opportunity to contribute to school-wide policy and did not, therefore, have a significant impact on management concerns beyond the sphere of their individual responsibilities. It is not that they did not feel capable of doing so; rather they frequently played little, if any, part in their school's wider decision-making processes because they were not invited and did not feel that their job was to help frame the wider school policies. This seems to support the argument that AHoDs' contribution to whole school policy development is not fulfilled properly (Adey and Jones, 1998) yet as Brown (2000) indicates, these AHoDs need to be involved in the wider management of the school.

There is certainly a hierarchical approach to school leadership here similar to that identified by Brown, Boyle and Boyle (2000) and Glover and Miller (1999). This might make it harder for these AHoDs to contribute to whole-school development. While there has been some limited downward delegation of operational responsibility from the headteachers, as this study shows, there is a feeling that the AHoDs still operate within a hierarchical framework. Whilst school departments were often collaborative, rarely were there signs of moving to more participative regimes with the SMT. This is complicated by the fact that subject departments are a central feature of these schools' structures. The more focused around the subject structure the schools are, the less opportunity there is for the AHoDs to engage in cross-curricular work and assume a wider school role. In fact, Dimmock and Lee (2000:354) view subject departments in this connection as the linchpin of 'strong, robust, rigid and bureaucratic organisational structures' which inhibit change. They suggest that AHoDs have to be reconceptualised as team leaders within a more flexible structure in order for them to contribute to the wider school. In order to engage these AHoDs in wider school issues, a restructuring that flattens the school decision-making arrangements is necessary. According to Hannay et al (2001), restructuring is a crucial element of change. Without restructuring, the role of the AHoD will remain a barrier to change. A restructuring that both flattens the school decision-making arrangements and also makes them more collective would ensure that responsibilities and structures are more fluid and dependent on targets set collectively. Increased involvement in decision-making and teacher leadership would ultimately contribute to a growing sense of empowerment (Hannay et al, 2001).

Since this study and the literature reviewed concur that the AHoD is a leader of a part

of the school, this means that s/he operates at the interface between different levels and sources of influence and change. Thus, as first line supervisors they occupy a critical position linking staff and the SMT. These AHoDs communicate to their staff the SMT plans and give a feedback to the SMTs on staff reactions. They also present the views of departmental colleagues to other middle leaders within the school (Busher, 1992) and become the spokesmen for their departments. It is in this context that they are viewed as a 'link-pin' (Adey and Jones, 1998), with a representational and interpretational role or as the sandglass 'filter between the teaching-learning life of a school and the running of the organisation' (Sayer, 1978:107). Clearly, this aspect of the role necessitates that they are in touch with a variety of actors and sources of information in the external environment of the school and that they negotiate, where necessary, on behalf of the other members of the department (Busher 1988, 1992). One aspect of this dimension as seen in the findings is in helping departmental colleagues keep in touch with others in their subject area and with the views and needs of colleagues in other school departments. Similarly, maintaining links with professional associations helps the department members to keep abreast of pedagogical and curriculum developments.

6.1.6 Sources of influence for the AHoD

i. The National Curriculum

The Kenyan teachers have for the past three decades been subjected to continuous policy shifts resulting from recommendations by various reform organizations bent on reforming the Education sector. These have had a significant effect upon the operational activities of school leaders. The most recent change is the adoption of a new National Curriculum that was being implemented during the time of the research. Over the past two decades, the syllabus itself has been re-engineered and the effects are profound. Presently the central control and accountability for teaching and learning are emphasized through the National Curriculum. However, this lack of curriculum stability has meant that for many AHoDs, meeting ever changing curriculum demands has been the main priority. One of the consequences is that time and energy have not been focused on improvement at the school level as these AHoDs have been constantly rewriting schemes of work at the expense of debating how to improve delivery. This dampens the AHoD's enthusiasm for curriculum change because as soon as schemes of

work are re-written, further changes are required.

ii. Inspection/External Influences

Among the range of external sources that appear to have impacted upon the AHoDs are the demands of parents and the Quality Assurance and Accountability body. The latter, a government agency, is the equivalent of Britain's Ofsted. There was evidence of sporadic and incidental inspections taking place. When this happened, the AHoDs used the opportunity to influence practice, typically through the development of policies and schemes of work that could be legitimately required prior to the inspection. These AHoDs also used post-inspection feedback to influence the practice of members in their departments and, were therefore, improving practice. However, there were instances where inspection typically failed to help the AHoDs in their attempts to influence department members, echoing the findings of Fidler et al (1998) on Ofsted inspections in England.

The main difference between the Kenyan and English inspection systems is that the latter has stated clearly the role of the AHoD (Webb et al, 2004). In contrast, it is not always clear what the Kenyan AHoD's role and responsibilities are, and whether they are fully understood by headteachers or accepted as appropriate. Unlike Kenya, the TTA standards for subject leaders, for example, were produced as far back as 1998 in England (TTA, 1998). Adey (2000) saw this as a major step towards clarifying the role and responsibilities of the subject leader in both primary and secondary schools. The dynamism in expectations is captured by Bell (1996) who argues that the post of the AHoD has evolved from the informal 'subject specialist' to the present day 'manager'. This dynamism has not been documented in the Kenyan context which suggests that it is difficult to appreciate the AHoD's role here.

iii. The Headteacher

Many of the AHoDs had positive views about the role that headteachers played in improving the work of individual department members, particularly in relation to the headteachers' role in supporting the monitoring of classroom practice. Research in the West shows that where there is a strong partnership with the headteacher, departmental planning is generally well linked to whole school developments, and subject and

pastoral heads are held accountable for their teams. There were, however, significant expressions of frustration and disappointment, especially in those instances when the headteachers failed to act decisively in dealing with teachers whose performance was not satisfactory or when they had appointed teachers to posts without giving them proper job descriptions. In the case of the latter, embarking with no job description aggravated the uncertainty experienced. This suggests that where communication with the SMT is not clear; where the role of the AHoD is not sufficiently defined; or where the headteacher does not monitor the implementation of whole school policies at the department level, departments tend to act autonomously, set vague or unrealistic targets with the result that progress towards raising achievement is uncoordinated.

6.1.7 Managing Tensions and Conflicts

The findings in this study show that AHoDs constantly switched roles according to the different aspects of their work. For example, a number of them were responsible for what happened in their departments while they were also classroom teachers in their own or other subject areas. Heads of other departments and senior staff sometimes worked in other AHoDs' areas of jurisdiction and were accountable for this aspect of their work to these AHoDs. The demands of these various arenas sometimes conflicted. In fact, the very fact that departments varied in size, configuration, resources and staff expertise made the job of each AHoD contextually different from that experienced by other AHoDs either within the same school, or in other schools. Consequently, there were almost as many key challenges voiced as the number of AHoDs interviewed.

Lack of time, resources and personnel management featured most. The findings here are similar to those in the West showing AHoDs as 'busy' people, but with little time, for example, to monitor (see Wright, 2002). While the tasks these AHoDs performed demonstrated they were at the forefront of ensuring and supporting classroom teachers who had the responsibility for teaching and learning, the former also taught full time or close to it. This means they had very minimal time to perform leadership tasks. Time was a key issue for everybody, with particular concern expressed about finding the time to complete tasks that could only be done during school time. AHoD interviewees complained about lack of time to implement the new syllabus. Similarly, teacher resistance to changes taking place could be attributed to a reaction to workload and lack

of time (Gitlin and Margonis, 1995) just as monitoring and evaluation, it was pointed out, were often neglected because sufficient time was not allocated.

The lack of time for AHoDs to carry out their duties as teachers and as curriculum and pedagogical leaders is a key point made by many researchers (Wright, 2002; Adey, 2000). The time-poor problems AHoDs faced in Britain a decade ago (Earley and Fletcher-Campbell, 1989, 1990) appear to have relocated to the present Kenyan secondary school. This is made worse when these AHoDs undertake additional whole school responsibilities. The problem with this is that when these AHoDs see themselves as administrators and managers, they complete the administrative tasks leaving out the more important but long term and time-consuming professional leadership roles concerning people and pedagogy. Thus, time needs to be created for the AHoDs to perform their leadership tasks. In the Kenya secondary school, the AHoD roles have expanded while time allocation has remained static. School work is swallowing up the AHoDs' spare time. This has implications for their health. A conscious approach to relieving them of some of their teaching is necessary. This means rethinking the staffing formulae and providing greater investment in education so that non-teaching staff do more paper-type tasks, thus making AHoDs more effective.

Reticence by the AHoDs to monitor staff remains an issue. They were quick to explain the multiple problems associated with monitoring, particularly lack of time and poor relationships. There is an argument that each AHoD should have more non-contact time, in proportion to the size of the department, in order to deal with the twin demands of administration and monitoring the work of colleagues in the department. However, there was one AHoD who had fewer lessons but still did not observe his colleagues' teaching. This brings to the fore Earley and Fletcher-Campbell's (1989) early realization that even if AHoDs are allowed additional non-contact time, they may not necessarily use the extra time to observe their colleagues because such visits conflict with more traditional notions of teacher autonomy.

This reluctance to change their traditional view of their role, and their relationship with their colleagues upon whom it rests, bring to the fore questions relating to ideas of professionalism and how this is differently understood. The traditional understanding of teacher professionalism places individual autonomy at the centre of organisational

practice. This creates a climate in which the idea of monitoring individual action tends to be viewed as unacceptable and to be avoided. However, as in the West, there is an understanding that AHoDs are accountable to their line managers for the quality of the work in their responsibility area (Fletcher and Bell, 1999; Glover et al, 1998; Metcalfe and Russell, 1997). This creates a managerial expectation that they monitor their colleagues' work (Wise and Bush, 1999; Wise, 2001; Glover et al, 1998).

6.2 Major contribution of this Study

It is evident that there is lack of research on the role of AHoDs in improving schools in Kenya and the problems faced by those who provide this leadership. This is unlike the role of headteachers, which has compelling research-based evidence (see for example Legotlo, 1994; Kitavi, 1995; Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen, 1996). Virtually, every line of inquiry in the West identifies both the school head and the AHoDs as the key ingredients for successful schools. This study has for the first time presented empirical data unravelling the concerns of AHoDs in the Kenyan secondary school. It has demonstrated that academic middle leadership here is characterised by considerable anxiety and frustration. This becomes clearer if we ask the question: *Is the AHoD here a teacher or leader?* The discrepancies that have emerged between the two roles and their associated expectations are limitless. What is evident is that when the AHoD combines two roles into one (that is, teacher and leader), the result is a hybrid teacher-leader. Since these roles make demands that are hard to reconcile and compete strenuously for the individual's allegiance, any attempts to reconcile them is painful and disturbing (Schmidt, 2000). The result is role diffuseness where individuals attempt the impossible, that is, to meet all expectations in both roles that end up being far-ranging and seemingly limitless. A picture emerges of AHoDs who are trying to provide leadership in a context characterised by feelings of stress associated with their role.

It is also evident that AHoDs have a difficulty understanding how they may make use of their authority. There is evidence that some have limited technical expertise about how to do things they are supposed to and new ones have difficulties with adjustment to their posts once appointed, due to lack of preparation for leadership. Nonetheless, while these issues may be considered problematic, the dilemma is that programs and strategies that are labelled good abroad may not simply be transferred and implemented

in Kenya without modification to suit local needs. Additionally, it would be presumptuous to prescribe common problems and standard training programs, including induction strategies for beginning AHoDs since their problems and needs are not standard. With a better understanding of the problems AHoDs face, Kenya may consider altering the current practices of preparing, selecting and inducting new AHoDs. In addition, colleges, universities and other educational institutes involved in the professional development of school leaders may use this study's findings to design programs that would assist individuals after they assume leadership posts.

6.3 Limitations of this Study

Whilst this study has attempted to heighten the plight of a forgotten category of teachers, who potentially could be used to change schools, it is important to appreciate its limitations. First, most of the literature cited here is research that has been carried out in the United States and UK. Nonetheless, this literature raises important issues relevant to both worlds. Secondly, this study has focused on issues related to AHoDs. There is no significant tackling of pastoral leadership. Thirdly, this is a small-scale study, providing a 'snapshot' of 6 schools and limited by several pragmatic issues. More in-depth studies of schools need to be conducted in order to confirm or refute the findings presented here and, also, to provide a fuller understanding of the complexities of middle leadership in the Kenyan secondary school.

6.4 Further Research

This study has raised a number of issues that need to be followed up. Areas worth immediate study include the following:

1. A *longitudinal study* of AHoDs to help us to examine ways in which they perform their roles in the wider organisational context and how they may influence areas of responsibility within them.
2. How the pace of change (mainly generated by the implementation of the National Curriculum and the expectation of improving examination results) and the resultant pressure on time for effective administration, management and leadership of the department are impacting on the AHoD.
3. How Kenyan AHoDs attempt to influence the quality of teaching and learning in their departments.

4. Whether experienced AHoDs in a particular subject area in Kenya view their influence differently compared with less experienced colleagues.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Headteachers

School context

<u>School category</u>	<u>Nature of population</u>	<u>Nature of school</u>	<u>Location</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> District secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> National secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> Boys only <input type="checkbox"/> Girls only <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed (boys and girls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Day school <input type="checkbox"/> Boarding school <input type="checkbox"/> Both Day and Boarding school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5km from city centre <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 km from city centre <input type="checkbox"/> over 11km from city centre

1. Please draw a sketch of your school's management structure in the space below.

2. Heads of Departments are in charge of many areas. Below are some of them. Mark those present in your school.

- Head of a single subject-department e.g. English, Maths
- Head of an area where the subjects are closely related e.g. Science, Humanities
- Head of an area where the subjects are not closely related e.g. Technical subjects
- Cross-curricular co-ordinator e.g. Information Technology
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Leader of a pastoral area e.g. Guidance and Counselling
- Other (specify).....

3. Do these Heads of Departments have other responsibilities? (Do not include those which a large number of staff might have, such as being on daily, weekly or monthly duty).

- Yes
- No

If your answer is 'YES' what are they?

-
-
-
-

4. Do these Heads of Departments receive allowances for the management responsibilities undertaken?

- Yes
- No

If your answer is 'YES', comment on the nature of the allowances.

.....
.....
.....

5. What is your school's Curriculum Based Establishment (CBE) for Heads of Departments?.....
.....
.....

6. It is recognised that *Academic Heads of Departments* need time to perform various duties in areas of their responsibility. How much time (in hours) within the working week is specially meant for them to

i. Carry out management responsibilities?
.....
.....

ii. Counselling or meeting individual students?
.....
.....

iii. Actual teaching of their subject?
.....

7. As a head teacher, you expect your *Academic Heads of Departments* to do several tasks. Indicate (✓) on the list below those tasks which you believe they should ensure are done for their area of responsibility. The expectation may be communicated verbally or in written form. Not all tasks listed here may be pertinent.

- i. Preparing the departmental timetable
- ii. Ensuring continuity of education between different forms
- iii. Making decisions about what to buy
- iv. Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area
- v. Implementing homework policy
- vi. Organising the testing of pupil attainment
- vii. Organising the storage of area resources
- viii. Ensuring that subjects offered cater for the various range of student abilities
- ix. Inducting new staff
- x. Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters
- xi. Monitoring classes' progress through syllabus or schemes of work
- xii. Deployment of pupils into teaching groups
- xiii. Formulating school's overall curriculum aims, objectives and content
- xiv. Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meetings
- xv. Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies
- xvi. Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources
- xvii. Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities
- xviii. support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour
- xix. Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching

- xx. Leading the planning of the curriculum within the department
 - xxi. Maintaining records of classroom observations
 - xxii. Assisting in the overall leadership of the school
 - xxiii.
- part in appointing teachers

8. **Priorities and expectations of Academic Heads of Departments**

Below is a list of some of the tasks that might be expected of *Academic Heads of Departments*. Please rank them in order of priority as you would expect your *Academic Heads of Departments* to perform them (1– the most important, 14 – least important). Please do not indicate any tasks as being of equal priority.

- i. Devising and monitoring pupil records
- ii. Devising and leading In-service Training and Education with your area staff
- iii. Implementing the wider school policy
- iv. Supervising/monitoring colleagues' work to ensure that policies are followed through
- v. Teaching a subject throughout the school
- vi. Collaborating in whole school planning
- vii. Monitoring and controlling the use of stock and other resources
- viii. Liaising with outside agencies and other schools
- ix. Co-ordinating and overseeing marking in line with school policies
- x. Overseeing or assisting with the maintenance of the fabric and facilities including health and safety duties
- xi. Leading and/or carrying out curriculum development including teaching and learning strategies
- xii. Being in charge of funds for the area
- xiii. Assist the overall leadership of the school
- xiv. Preparing the teaching timetable

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for all department heads

School context

<u>School category</u>	<u>Nature of population</u>	<u>Nature of school</u>	<u>Location</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> District secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> National secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> Boys only <input type="checkbox"/> Girls only <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed (boys and girls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Day school <input type="checkbox"/> Boarding school <input type="checkbox"/> Both Day and Boarding school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5km from city centre <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 km from city centre <input type="checkbox"/> over 11km from city centre

Personal context

1. Which of the following best describes your position?

- Head of a single subject-department e.g. English, Maths
- Head of an area where the subjects are closely related e.g. Science, Humanities
- Head of an area where the subjects are not closely related e.g. Technical subjects
- Cross-curricular co-ordinator e.g. Information Technology
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Leader of a pastoral area e.g. Guidance and Counselling.
- Other (specify).....

2. Do you have other responsibilities? (Do not include those which a large number of staff might have, such as being on daily, weekly or monthly duty).

- Yes
- No

If your answer is 'YES' what are they?

-
-
-
-

3. Do you receive allowances for the management responsibilities undertaken?

- Yes
- No

If your answer is 'YES', comment about your Job Group and the nature of the allowances.

.....

4. It is recognised that you need time to perform various duties in your area(s) of responsibility. How much time (in hours) within the working week is specially meant for you to

i. Carry out your management responsibilities?

.....

ii. Counselling or meeting individual students?

.....

iii. Actual teaching of your subject?

.....

5. Who are you answerable to for the responsibilities undertaken? (Position rather than name)

.....

6. How many teaching staff are working in your area of responsibility this year?

i) all the time.

ii)some of their time (actual numbers).

iii) Of the teaching staff working in your area of responsibility this year, how many have their main teaching commitment elsewhere?

.....

7. How many non-teaching staff are working in your area of responsibility this year for some or all of their time?

i) all of their time

ii) part of their time (actual numbers)

iii) Of the non-teaching staff working in your area of responsibility this year, how many have their main commitment elsewhere?

.....

Individual post-holder:

8. In your working life,

i) How many years have you been teaching?.....

ii) Have you taken any breaks in service?.....

iii) If your answer is 'Yes', how many months or years?.....

9. While working in this profession,

i) For how long have you held your current post?.....

ii) Have you held any posts of responsibility before?

Yes

No

iii) If 'Yes', what were they?

-
-
-
-

10. Which category best describes your qualification on entry to teaching? (tick one)

i) No professional qualification

ii) Diploma in Education

iii) Bachelor of Education degree

iv) First Degree without Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PDE)

- v) Higher degree without PDE
- vi) First Degree plus PDE
- vii) Higher degree plus PDE
- viii) Other (please specify).....

11. Which category best describes your current level of educational qualification?

- i) As on entry to profession
- ii) First degree
- iii) Further first degree
- iv) Advanced work in education
- v) Higher degree
- vi) Further higher degree
- vii) Higher degree directly related to education
- viii) Other.....

12. What leadership and management training have you received? (Tick all that apply)

- i) None
- ii) School based course (single day or less)
- iii) School based course (more than one day)
- iv) School based training as part of In-service Education and Training
- v) Out of school course (single day)
- vi) Out of school course (more than one day)
- vii) Part of a qualification course (below Masters level)
- viii) Part of a qualification course (at Masters level)

13. Influences over priorities

i) Some individuals or groups may influence the way a post holder makes decisions within his/her area of responsibility. Have you had a similar experience?

- Yes
- No

ii) If your answer is 'Yes', set in the table below are various school stakeholders. Label the groups 1, 2, or 3 where 1 is the highest priority to indicate the three most influential groups of people when you are making decisions on each of the following:

[NS] - Adopting new syllabus change (e.g. across Form One).

[RES] - Purchase of resources to support the teaching in your department.

[PROF] - Professional development plan for your area staff or team.

[DSP] - Discipline of a pupil being difficult within your area of responsibility.

	NS	RES	PROF	DSP
i) Subject area staff				
ii) Other teaching staff				
iii) Students/pupils				
iv) Parents/guardians				

v) Governors				
vi) Advisory/inspectorate				
vii) Subject association				
viii) Head and senior staff				
ix) Examination board				
x) Other (specify)				

14. Expectations of Your Headteacher

Your headteacher expects you to do certain tasks. Indicate (√) on the list below those tasks which you believe the headteacher expects you to ensure are done for your area of responsibility. The expectation may be communicated verbally or in written form. (Not all tasks listed here may be pertinent).

Task	√
▪ Preparing the departmental timetable	
▪ Ensuring continuity of education between different forms	
▪ Making decisions about what to buy	
▪ Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area	
▪ Implementing homework policy	
▪ Organising the testing of pupil attainment	
▪ Organising the storage of area resources	
▪ Ensuring that subjects offered cater for the various range of student abilities	
▪ Inducting new staff	
▪ Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters	
▪ Monitoring classes' progress through syllabus or schemes of work	
▪ Deployment of pupils into teaching groups	
▪ Formulating school's overall curriculum aims, objectives and content	
▪ Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meetings	
▪ Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies	
▪ Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources	
▪ Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities	
▪ Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour	
▪ Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching	
▪ Leading the planning of the curriculum within the department	
▪ Maintaining records of classroom observations	
▪ Assisting in the overall leadership of the school	
▪ Taking part in appointing teachers	

15. Expectations of other teachers

Indicate (√) on the list below those tasks which people under you expect, as a HoD, to ensure are completed for your area of responsibility. (Not all of the tasks listed here are pertinent).

Task	√
▪ Ensuring continuity of education between forms	
▪ Making decisions about what resources to buy	

- Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area
- Implementing a homework policy
- Organising the testing of pupil attainment
- Organising the storage of area resources
- Ensuring that courses cater for the range of abilities
- Inducting new staff
- Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters and encouraging debate
- Monitoring classes' progress through syllabuses or schemes of work
- Deployment of pupils into teaching groups
- Formulating curriculum aims, objectives and content
- Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meetings
- Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies
- Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources
- Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities
- Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour
- Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching
- Maintaining knowledge of the subject area
- Maintaining records of classroom observations

16. Priorities and expectations of self

As a head of department, you have several tasks to complete. Below are listed some tasks that might be expected of you. Please rank them in order of priority (1– the most important, 14 – least important). Please do not indicate any tasks as being of equal priority.

Task

- Devising and monitoring pupil records
- Devising and leading In-service Training and Education with your area staff
- Implementing the wider school policy
- Supervising/monitoring colleagues' work to ensure that policies are followed through
- Teaching a subject throughout the school
- Collaborating in whole school planning
- Monitoring and controlling the use of stock and other resources
- Liaising with outside agencies and other schools
- Co-ordinating and overseeing marking in line with school policies
- Overseeing or assisting with the maintenance of the fabric and facilities including health and safety duties
- Leading and/or carrying out curriculum development including teaching and learning strategies
- Being in charge of funds for the area
- Assist the overall leadership of the school
- Preparing the teaching timetable

√

Indicate (√) on the list below those tasks which you believe to be your responsibility as *head of department* to ensure are completed for your area. (Not all of the tasks listed here may be pertinent).

Appendix 3

Assistant Teachers' Questionnaire

1. Which of the following categories best describes your position?

- Teacher of a single subject-department e.g. English, Maths
- Teacher in an area where the subjects are closely related e.g. science, humanities.
- Teacher in an area where the subjects are not closely related e.g. technical subjects.
- Teacher in a cross-curricular department e.g. Information Technology
- Teacher in Special Educational Needs
- Teacher in a pastoral area e.g. Guidance and Counselling
- Other (specify).....

2. Who are you answerable to? (Position rather than name).

.....

3. Do you have any other responsibilities? (Do not include those which a large number of staff might have such as being on duty).

Yes

No

If so what are they?

-
-
-
-
-
-

4. How much time in your working week do you devote to working in your specialities?

.....
.....
.....

5. How many teaching staff are working in your area of responsibility this year?

a) all the time.

b)some of their time (actual numbers).

c) Of the teaching staff working in your area of responsibility this year, how many have their teaching commitment elsewhere?

.....

Individual post-holder:

6. About yourself!

a) How many years have you been teaching?.....

b) Have you taken any breaks in service?.....

c) If your answer is 'yes', how many years?.....

d) How long have you been in your current post?.....

e) Have you held any posts of responsibility before?

YES

NO

f) If so, what were they?

.....
.....
.....

7. Which category best describes your qualification on entry to teaching? (tick one)

- a) No professional qualification
- b) Diploma in Education
- c) Bachelor of Education Degree
- d) First Degree without Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PDE)
- e) Higher degree without PDE
- f) First Degree plus PDE
- g) Higher degree plus PDE
- h) Other (please specify).....

8. Which category best describes your current level of educational qualification?

- a) As on entry to profession
- b) First degree
- c) Further first degree
- d) Advanced work in education
- e) Higher degree
- f) Further higher degree
- g) Higher degree directly related to education
- h) Other.....

9. What leadership and management training have you received? (Tick all that apply)

- a) None
- b) School based course (single day or less)
- c) School based course (more than one day)
- d) School based training as part of In-service Education and Training
- e) Out of school course (single day)
- f) Out of school course (more than one day)
- g) Part of a qualification course (below Masters level)
- h) Part of a qualification course (as Masters level)

10. Individuals or groups who influence decisions within your area of work are potentially many. Set in the table below are some of them. Label the groups 1, 2, or 3 where 1 is the highest priority to indicate the three most influential groups of people when your head of department is making decisions about:

[CH] - Adopting new syllabus change (e.g. across Form One).

[RES] - Purchase of resources to support the teaching in your department.

[PROF] - Professional development plan for your area staff or team.

[DSP] - Discipline of a pupil being difficult within your area of responsibility.

	CH	RES	PROF	DSP
i. Subject area staff				
ii. Other teaching staff				
iii. Students/pupils				
iv. Parents/guardians				
v. Governors				
vi. Advisory/inspectorate				
vii. Subject association				
viii. Head and senior staff				
ix. Examination board				
x. Other				

11. **Expectations Teachers have for their AHoDs**

Teachers expect their AHoDs to do several tasks. Indicate (√) on the list below those tasks which you believe the head of department in your area(s) should ensure are done. The expectation may be communicated verbally or in written form. Not all tasks listed here may be pertinent.

Task	√
▪ Preparing the departmental timetable	
▪ Ensuring continuity of education between different forms	
▪ Making decisions about what to buy	
▪ Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area	
▪ Implementing homework policy	
▪ Organising the testing of pupil attainment	
▪ Organising the storage of area resources	
▪ Ensuring that subjects offered cater for the various range of student abilities	
▪ Inducting new staff	
▪ Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters	
▪ Monitoring classes' progress through syllabus or schemes of work	
▪ Deployment of pupils into teaching groups	
▪ Formulating school's overall curriculum aims, objectives and content	
▪ Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meetings	
▪ Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies	
▪ Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources	
▪ Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities	
▪ Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour	
▪ Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching	
▪ Leading the planning of the curriculum within the department	
▪ Maintaining records of classroom observations	

- Assisting in the overall leadership of the school
- Taking part in appointing teachers



Appendix 4

Headteacher Interview Schedule

TIME INTERVIEW BEGAN..... (AM/PM)

School Number

Type of school number

Interviewee number

1. The nature of the school.
 - i. What is the category of your school? Day or Boarding or both?
 - ii. How many students are on roll?
 - iii. Is yours a single sex student population or both?
2. What are the middle management positions in your school?
3. Do teachers receive allowances related to their middle management positions?
4. How many teachers are AHoDs in your school presently?
5. Do they have more than one area of responsibility?
6. The TSC has recommended that the head teacher may delegate tasks/responsibilities when necessary. Thinking about your AHoDs
 - What kind of responsibilities have you delegated to them?
 - What problems have you experienced while delegating these responsibilities?
 - Could you comment on your confidence on those to whom you have delegated duties?
 - Do you think you have spelt out clearly the responsibilities and accountabilities of AHoDs?
7. What administrative tasks are AHoDs responsible for?
8. Who do they manage?
9. Are AHoDs trained to lead/administrate/manage?

Monitoring role

1. Do you expect AHoDs to formally check the work of the staff in their area of responsibility?

Formal monitoring

2. How do AHoDs check the work of staff in their areas? (e.g. classroom observation)
3. Do they find it difficult to do it this way? Why?
4. Is it official that AHoDs can check what everybody, including those senior to them e.g. the deputy or headteacher, does in the department?
5. Do you get to discuss with your AHoDs issues of practice arising from the monitoring? Why do you find it necessary to do so?
6. Do you have a situation where, apart from the AHoDs, fellow staff members formally observe each other while performing tasks e.g. teaching?

Informal monitoring

7. If your AHoDs do not observe teachers' work, how do you know that they are doing the right things e.g. properly writing schemes of work, lesson plans, teaching methodologies?
8. What evidence do you look for to show that AHoDs is not doing satisfactory work in his/her area of responsibility?

Target setting/standards and teaching quality

Performance in KCSE is a big issue in this country's secondary education sector.

- i) How would you rate performance in KCSE last year in your various departments within the school?
- ii) Given the existence of ranking in exams, the logic is that you would probably want to perform better. In this case, academic departments are players to this objective. Now, do you have targets for each of your academic departments?
- iii) For whom? [Teachers/students].
- iv) Who has set these targets, are they internally or externally imposed?
- v) Thinking about AHOds, do you have specific targets for each of them?
- vi) Why do you have these targets for individual AHOds?
- vii) How do you hope to improve teaching quality this year? [E.g. praise for work well done; introduce classroom observations; INSET; competition between subject areas etc].

Influencing individual middle management members

1. AHOds deliver to different levels – some are sound, good at their work, ready and willing to respond to change, others may not.
 - i) How well do your AHOds perform their responsibilities?
 - ii) What are the specific shortcomings of those whom you feel are not adequately delivering?
 - iii) What measures have you put in place to improve their performance e.g. setting targets, time-limited action plans, or adherence to departmental policies?

Transformational leadership

1. Thinking about the long term prospects of your school, what are your objectives for this year and in the near future – two or three years? (articulating vision)
2. What are the goals that you have set for your AHOds that will help you realise this?
3. Do you have a mechanism to support underperforming heads of departments?
4. Do you think the way you manage the wider school should be emulated?
5. What do you and AHOds share in common as a management team?
6. Do you let them make decisions to which you hold them accountable?

External influences (role sets)

1. Now let's talk about the school's stakeholders and how they relate to your staff and specifically the AHOds.
 - i) How often do you have external inspections in your school?
 - ii) Do you think this influences your AHOds' work, or it doesn't matter?
 - iii) Are post inspection reports provided? How soon after?
 - iv) Of what purpose are these post-inspection reports to you?
2. Changes in the national curriculum affect practitioners in schools a lot.
 - i) What specific effects has this had on the way AHOds perform their duties?
3. A common feature locally is the existence of subject associations.
 - i) To what extent do subject associations affect your AHOds' way of performing their duties?

Funding

1. Do you provide enough funding for each department?
2. How does this affect the departments?
3. What any other factors external to the department do you feel influence the way your AHOds perform their role?

Departmental processes (Role-sets)

- i. Department policies/schedules etc influence practice
- ii. Do you have a policy for each of the departments?

- iii. Are all staff members aware of their respective policies?
- iv. What are some of the issues addressed in the academic departments' policies on
 - exams
 - teaching
 - discipline
 - schemes of work and their development

Implementing role

1. There are apparent recent policy changes in many aspects of the curriculum. Has this affected your departments? How?
2. Could you cite a recent incident when AHOds spearheaded the implementation of change in their areas of responsibility?
3. How did they go about it? (Adaptation to new cultures, collaboration on ways of teaching and learning etc).
4. What problems did they encounter that you are aware of?

Communication (Liaison)

As a headteacher, you are constantly sending and receiving all sorts of communication.

- i) How do you communicate to your AHOds – memos, notice boards, letters, and written notes circulated to staff?
- ii) How regularly do you hold formal discussions with these members?
- iii) Do these help to influence practice in their respective portfolios?
- iv) What kind of informal communication occurs with AHOds e.g. during break time, lunchtime meetings etc?
- v) How would you characterise much of it?
- vi) Does it help you to address the unsatisfactory performance of some of the individual members?
- vii) How often are you in formal contact with your AHOds?
- viii) Do your AHOds have direct contact with parents?
- ix) If not so, how do you communicate with parents?
- x) Do you think their views influence how AHOds perform their roles?

Professional development

Upon entering the profession, teachers have various qualifications. After sometime, there are promotions and new appointments in the profession. Now,

- i) Who has appointed your AHOds to their current posts?
- ii) What role have you played in the appointment processes?
- iii) What kind of 'management training' did any of your AHOds undergo prior to taking up their posts?
- iv) How often do your AHOds attend management training seminars or In-service training?
- v) Which was the last training attended that you are aware of?
- vi) Does the training undertaken satisfy their management needs? Has it made them better leaders?
- vii) Who arranges for the in-service training of other staff?
- viii) Do you have INSET as one of the issues addressed in each departmental plan?
- ix) (YES)- Have you met the objectives as set out in the plan?
- x) (NO) – How do you choose who is to attend, say, a course without any planning?
- xi) Which areas do you feel your HoDs need more skills so that they can be better leaders?

Whole school role (and link to departmentalisation)

By the nature of your post, it is apparent that you deal with many issues within and outside the school and sometimes other persons hold information crucial to the kind of decisions you make. Thinking about your AHOds,

- i) How often do you consult them on whole school issues?
- ii) Does each of the departments in the school have a development plan?

- iii) Who draws these plans? Who are the participants?
- iv) Do your departmental plans match well with the whole school development plan if any?
- v) Do you utilise the two plans wherever you are making key decisions e.g. INSET, resource requisitions?
- vi) Could you cite a case(s) when you felt AHOds ideas were put into use by the SMT?
- vii) What kind of skills do you think AHOds need to develop that will help them to do better in planning for both the department and the wider school?

Managing Resources

Looking around your school, there are all sorts of resources. Thinking about this,

- i. Whose responsibility is it to manage resources in individual academic departments?
- ii. Who draws the budget for each of your departments?
- iii. What is the procedure in drawing up the budgets?
- iv. What role do you play in it?
- v. Obviously, the physical, teaching and similar resources in the departments are very important? Who manages these at the department level?
- vi. What kind of skills do you feel AHOds need to develop to be good managers of finances in the department?
- vii. Recent changes in teacher recruitment procedures are being effected. What part do AHOds play in the present recruitment process?
- viii. Newly qualified teachers are at times posted to your school. Who inducts these new teachers?

Challenges to the role

- i. What do you see as the greatest challenges AHOds in your school face?
- ii. Do you think the time allocated in the timetable is enough for them to do both teaching and leading?
- iii. How do they cope with both the teaching and administrative responsibilities?
- iv. Do you feel they have enough authority to effect changes within their areas of responsibility?
- v. What would you like the school to do to make AHOds better managers?

View of effective AHOds

- i. What is your view of the characteristics of an effective AHOd?
- i. Do you feel your AHOds meet these effectiveness criteria?

Appendix 5

AHOds Interview Questionnaire

TIME INTERVIEW
BEGAN..... (AM/PM)

School Number

Type of school number

Interviewee number

1. How long you have been in the teaching career.
[CODE 'i' BELOW, AND ASK 'ii' THROUGH 'v']

i. Number of years in teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16>
ii. How long did it take you to get appointed to the post that you currently hold?				
iii. Does this relate to your Job Group? How?				
iv. What is the status of your department within the national curriculum?(core subject etc)				
v. Do you have any allowances for this post?				
vi. How many teachers work under you?				

2. How would you describe your post?
3. What are the specific responsibilities bestowed in your office? [management of support staff, head of year, teaching, responsibility for organising cover; developing the curriculum; supporting colleagues in their classroom practice; professional development of colleagues etc]
4. Who assigns teachers in your department classes to teach or other duties?
- a. In case of classes, do you vary the classes taught by each teacher? Why?
- b. Do you do the same with other tasks?
5. According to the TSC, the head teacher can delegate to you tasks or responsibilities he deems fit. Do you as a HoD delegate tasks to your area staff in return?
- i. Which tasks have you delegated? To whom have you delegated these tasks?
- ii. Why have you thought it important to delegate these particular responsibilities/tasks?
- iii. What are some of the common problems you experience in delegating?
- iv. Could you comment on the confidence level of those to whom you have delegated previously?
6. Obviously, there is a lot of work going on in your department and individual teachers may or may not be working hard to realise the school objectives. Do you have a procedure for checking each teacher's work and the appropriateness of subject materials in your area of responsibility?
- [If so continue on formal monitoring below]*
- [If not so, continue on informal monitoring below]*

Formal monitoring

- i. How do you do it? (e.g. classroom observation)
- ii. Do you find it difficult to do it this way? Why?
- iii. Do you give feedback to the teacher?
- iv. How long does it take before you give a feed back?
- v. Do the procedures you have in place involve everybody including those senior to you e.g. the deputy or head teacher?
- vi. Do you discuss issues of good practice from such an exercise with the other teachers? Why?
- vii. Do you have a situation where, apart from you, fellow staff members formally observe each other while performing tasks e.g. teaching?
- viii. What problems do you encounter in such processes?

Informal monitoring

- i. If you don't observe your teachers in class, how do you know that they are doing the right things e.g. properly writing schemes of work, lesson plans, teaching methodologies?
- ii. What evidence do you look for to show that a member is not doing satisfactory work in your area of responsibility?

7. Given the context of your department within the wider school, how would you compare performance in KCSE last year in your department with the rest of the other departments in the school? How about the past two years?

[Proceed with A to E]

- A) Do you have targets in your department? *[if no proceed to G]*
- B) For whom? [Teachers/students].
- C) Who has set these targets?
- D) Do you think they influence departmental practice?
- E) Do you have specific targets for individual teachers? *[if so proceed to F through H]*
- F) Why do you have these targets for individual members of staff?
- G) How do you hope to improve teaching quality this year? (E.g. praise for work well done; introduce classroom observations; INSET; competition between subject areas etc).
- F) What arrangements do you have to cater for different abilities in your population?

Influencing individual members of the department

8. Teachers deliver to different levels – some are sound, good at their work, ready and willing to respond to change. Others may not.
- i. How well do the members in your department perform their responsibilities?
 - ii. What are the specific shortcomings of the members of staff whom you feel are not adequately delivering?
 - iii. How do you strive to improve their performance e.g. setting targets, time-limited action plans, or adherence to departmental policies? Could you cite a case when this happened?

Transformational leadership

9. Where do you see yourself as a department headed at the end of this year, two or three? (articulating vision)

[proceed A through]

- i. What are the goals that you have set for your team?
- ii. Do you have a mechanism to support underperforming members within your department?
- iii. Do you think the way you run your department should be emulated?
- iv. What do you think other departments could learn from yours?
- v. What do you share in common as a team?

- vi. What are your expectations of your team members?
- vii. Do you let members in your departments make decisions to which you hold them accountable?

External influences (role sets)

10. As an AHoD, you get to deal with many people at different levels.
- i. How often do you have external inspection in your department or school?
 - ii. Does this influence your work? How? (E.g. preparation of schemes of work)
 - Do you use the post-inspection reports?
 - For what purpose do you use them?
 - Are the reports useful all the time?
 - If not, why?
 - iii. What is your view of subject associations?
 - Do you find them influential in the way you manage your curriculum?
 - iv. Thinking about the ever-changing reforms in the national curriculum, do these affect how you perform your duties? Cite an example.
 - v. Funding is a much talked about issue in all organisations. Do you receive enough funding?
 - vi. How does this affect your department?

Headteacher/Senior Management Team (Role sets)

11. The headteacher is an important person within the school management team.
- v. Do you find your headteacher influential in the way you perform your duties?
 - vi. How does s/he influence you e.g. through monitoring?
 - vii. Who is the person that you are answerable to?
 - viii. What happens when the headteacher fails to take action against a member you consider unwilling to perform his duties effectively?
 - ix. Do you know what the headteacher requires of your role?
 - x. What does s/he require?

Departmental processes

12. Many teachers would talk about 'policy' when they want to justify some of their actions.
- a. Do you have a departmental policy?
 - b. Are your area staff members aware of it?
 - c. What is the department policy on
 - exams
 - teaching
 - discipline
 - schemes of work and their development
 - d. Is there room for flexibility in these policies such as autonomy of a subject teacher's approach to a teaching method?
 - e. Whose duty is it to plan, write, develop and review the department's policy?

Implementing role

13. There have been several changes to the curriculum in the past and probably some are ongoing
- i. Has this affected you individually as an AHoD? How?
 - ii. Could you cite a recent incident when you spearheaded the implementation of change in your area of responsibility?
 - iii. What problems did you encounter?
 - iv. What any other problems have you encountered while implementing decisions?

v. Do you have teachers working with you partly, and working in other departments at other times? What specific issues would you raise about this juggling of responsibilities as related to you as a head of department? Is it bothersome? If so, how?

Communication (Liaison)

14. It is apparent that in your daily routine, you get to communicate with various people.

i. How do you communicate to your area staff – memos, notice boards, letters, and written notes circulated to staff? Whom are you officially allowed to share information with outside the department? What sort of information do you share?

ii. How regularly do you hold departmental meetings in a term?

iii. Do they help you to influence practice in your area?

iv. Apart from the formal departmental meetings, is there any kind of informal communication in your departments e.g. during break time, lunchtime meetings etc?

v. How would you characterise much of it?

vi. Is this informal communication helpful? How?

vii. How often are you in formal contact with the head teacher?

viii. How do you communicate between you, teachers in your department and the head teacher?

ix. Do you have direct contact with parents? [*if 'No' proceed to K through I*]

x. What sort of issues do you discuss with the parents?

xi. If not so, how do you communicate with them?

xii. Do you think their views influence how you perform your duties?

xiii. What problems do you have regarding the whole issue of communication as a responsibility?

Collaborative working (positive culture)

15. Thinking about the wider school and its routine, there are many things that go on especially in the department. Many require all sorts of approaches in tackling them. Thinking about this,

i. Do you at times collaborate collectively in performing specific tasks? [e.g. in moderating exams or designing a marking scheme]

ii. Could you outline when you did this?

iii. How successful were the tasks undertaken?

iv. Do you think collaborative working influences the practice of your team members?

v. Are you always honest and candid to members of your department whenever you give them feedback to say, a post inspection report?

vi. How do you celebrate departmental success?

vii. How do you inspire children to perform well in all areas within your area?

viii. What about teachers?

Professional development

16. It is striking that you hold a very important managerial post.

i. What kind of 'management training' did you undergo prior to taking up this post?

ii. How often do you attend management training seminars or In-service training?

iii. Which was the last training you attended?

iv. What sorts of things do you learn in these seminars?

v. Does the training you have undertaken satisfied your management needs?

vi. Who arranges for in-service training for members in your area of responsibility?

vii. Do you have INSET as one of the issues addressed in your departmental plan?

viii. (YES)- Have you met the objectives as set out in the plan?

ix. (NO) – How do you choose who is to attend, say, a course without any planning?

x. Which areas do you feel you need more skills so that you can be a better leader? **Whole school role (and link to departmentalisation)**

17. By the nature of your post, it is apparent that you deal with many issues within and outside the department.

- i. How often does your headteacher consult you on wider school issues?
- ii. What are the sort of issues that he consults you on?
- iii. Do you have a departmental development plan? [if 'No', move to the next part]
- iv. How was your plan crafted?
- v. Who participated in deliberating its contents?
- vi. Does your departmental plan match well with the whole school development plan?
- vii. Do you utilise the two plans wherever you are making key decisions e.g. INSET, resource requisitions?
- viii. Could you cite a case(s) when you felt your ideas were put into use by the SMT?
- ix. What kind of skills do you think you need to develop that will help you do better in planning for your department and the wider school? [Prioritising of aims within the planning process].

Managing Resources

18. There are all sorts of resources in the school. In your department,

- i. Whose responsibility is it to manage issuance of text books, pens, chalks and other stationery?
- ii. Whose duty is it to purchase these resources?
- iii. Who keeps the information about how they are used, what is available, and what is required?
- iv. Who manages the physical, teaching and similar resources in your department?
- v. Thinking about replacing unsuitable equipment or buying better ones, whose responsibility is it to do this?
- vi. Recently, the government has adopted a new system of recruiting teachers. What part do you play in the recruitment processes?
- vii. Once recruited, whose responsibility is it to induct these new teachers?
- viii. Given that you are in charge of your department, who draws the budget for your department? What role do you play in it?
- ix. What kind of skills do you feel you need to develop to be a good manager of finances and other resources in your department?
- x. What about for the other resources that you are in charge of?

Challenges to the role

19. Clearly, being in a leadership post is not without challenges.

- i. What do you see as your greatest challenges in the department you are leading? (Time, acceptance by other members; lack of cooperation; resources etc).
- ii. Do you find the time allocated in the timetable enough to do both teaching and leading duties? [Why not?]
- iii. How well do you cope with both the teaching and administrative responsibilities?
- iv. Do you feel you have the authority to effect changes within your area of responsibility?
- v. What would you like to be done by the school to make you a better middle manager?

View of effective AHoD

20. What is your view of the characteristics of an effective head of department?

- a. Do you feel you meet these effectiveness criteria?

Appendix 7

Piloted Questionnaire for Headteachers in 1st Study

Section A

1. In the following table tick the box that corresponds to your school's mean standard score (mss) for the Kenya Certificate Secondary Examination in the year 2003? Comment on improvement from previous year.

Below 3.9	Between 4.0 – 6.9	Over 7.0	Comment

2. In the following table, tick the mean standard score (mss) target for the Kenya Certificate Secondary Examination in the year 2004?

Below 3.9	Between 4.0 – 6.9	Over 7.0	Comment

3. Based on the form one selection criteria, how would you rate the general academic ability of your students?

Tick one box that most represents your views.

Very high ability	
High ability	
Mixture of all abilities	
Low ability	
Very low ability	

Comment

Section B

School curriculum inventory

For each given statement, select and tick (√) one response from the choices given that best represents your opinions about curricula in your school. Comment about your choice.

4. In my opinion, the programmes in this school do

	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree.	Comment
Meet the needs of students who will be living and working in the 21 st century						
Address the aims/purposes/goals of the government						
Deal appropriately with ability differences of individual students						
Deal appropriately with learning style differences of individual students						

5. In my opinion, the programmes in this school should

	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comment
Meet the needs of students who will be living and working in the 21 st century						
Address the aims/purposes/goals of the government						
Deal appropriately with ability differences of individual students						
Deal appropriately with learning style differences of individual students						

Section C

Discipline

Respond to each item below according to the statement that best represents your views on discipline. Mark the corresponding letter by using a tick (✓) in the appropriate box given.

	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comment
Penalize students who constantly misbehave						
Develop students who trust their own feelings in making decisions						
Develop students who rely on their own judgement in making decisions						
Provide appropriate punishment and penalties to students who violate school rules						
Demand that teachers treat students fairly when they do wrong						
Provide special rewards for students who act appropriately						

Section D

Resources

	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comment

1. The students in my school use library materials to prepare classroom projects and research papers.						
2. The library in my school has enough books						
3. The school is adequately staffed in all curriculum areas						
4. Textbook provision in the school is adequate						
5. The rooms in the school satisfy our needs.						
6. I have a reliable source of energy for my school						
7. The school buildings are modern.						
8. The school is well resourced in media equipment						
9. Parents pay school fees promptly.						

Respond to the statements below according to your perception of each aspect at your school.

Section E

Around my School

Below are descriptive statements of characteristics found in schools. Select by ticking (✓) one response from the following choices which best represents your current opinion in relation to your school.

In my opinion in this school, I am...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Tend to agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comment
Encouraged to use consistency in handling students who constantly violate rules.						
Encouraged to consider my role as one possible cause of school problems.						
Encouraged to examine my own work performance.						
Awarded special rewards when my work is outstanding						
Encouraged to give my opinion in solving school problems.						

Section F

School culture

Respond to each item below independently according to your perception of each aspect at your present school. Select one response from the choices given that best represents your view:

Section G

	Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comment

▪ My policies and behaviours convey the importance of teaching.								
▪ I am treated as an equal among others.								
▪ Student behaviour reflects a belief in the purposes for this school								
▪ the school's physical conditions support learning.								
▪ roles and responsibilities of the school's administrators are clear.								
▪ An attitude exists that people are basically considered worthwhile, competent and good.								
▪ Teachers share a focused intensity towards their work.								
▪ The environment in the school is orderly.								
▪ Procedures and processes for anticipating and resolving problems are in place.								
▪ Students share a commitment towards their work.								
▪ The librarian has communicated to the staff the expectations for student behaviour in the library.								
▪ The school has few or no gang related activities.								
▪ Students believe that their primary goal is to learn.								
▪ Parents visit the school to be kept informed about how students are doing regularly.								
▪ Teachers closely review the students' work and assist students when required.								
▪ The school I work in is an excellent school.								
▪ The school building is clean and neat.								
▪ I feel proud about heading this school.								
▪ Activities in the school run smoothly.								
▪ Students feel like they belong to this school.								

Leadership

Would you please give your opinion on the following traits in a school head teacher?

Attribute	Undesirable	Indifferent	Important	Most important	Comments
Cheerfulness					
Optimism					
Persistence					
Warmth					
Caring					
Solve problems					
Ignore problems					
Plan ahead					
Listen to others					

Indicate the extent to which you believe you have enabled each outcome listed below using the following letter codes:

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
--	-------	--------	-----------	---------	--------

A clear understanding of the aims of the school					
Perceptions that as the administrator, I support the learning and work activities of the school.					
A norm for people to go beyond the 'call of duty'.					
Consistency in the handling of day-to-day events.					
As a head teacher, I create and maintain among personnel in the school:					

END

Appendix 8

Piloted Questionnaire for Headteachers in 2nd Study

School context

<u>School category</u>	<u>Nature of population</u>	<u>Nature of school</u>	<u>Location</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> District secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> National secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> Boys only <input type="checkbox"/> Girls only <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed (boys and girls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Day school <input type="checkbox"/> Boarding school <input type="checkbox"/> Both Day and Boarding school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5km form city centre <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 km from city centre <input type="checkbox"/> over 11km from city centre

1. Please draw a sketch of your school's management structure in the space below.

2. Heads of Departments are in charge of many areas. Below are some of them. Mark those present in your school.

- Head of a single subject-department e.g. English, Maths
- Head of an area where the subjects are closely related e.g. Science, Humanities
- Head of an area where the subjects are not closely related e.g. Technical subjects
- Cross-curricular co-ordinator e.g. Information Technology
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Leader of a pastoral area e.g. Guidance and Counselling
- Other (specify).....

3. Do the AHoDs have other responsibilities? (Do not include those which a large number of staff might have, such as being on daily, weekly or monthly duty).

- Yes
- No

If your answer is 'YES' what are they?

-
-
-
-
-

4. Do these AHoDs receive allowances for the management responsibilities undertaken?

- Yes
- No

8. Priorities and expectations of heads of departments

Below is a list of some of the tasks that might be expected of a middle manager. Please rank them in order of priority as you would expect your heads of departments to perform them (1– the most important, 14 – least important).

Please do not indicate any tasks as being of equal priority.

- i. Devising and monitoring pupil records
- ii. Devising and leading In-service Training and Education with your area staff
- iii. Implementing the wider school policy
- iv. Supervising/monitoring colleagues' work to ensure that policies are followed through
- v. Teaching a subject throughout the school
- vi. Collaborating in whole school planning
- vii. Monitoring and controlling the use of stock and other resources
- viii. Liaising with outside agencies and other schools
- ix. Co-ordinating and overseeing marking in line with school policies
- x. Overseeing or assisting with the maintenance of the fabric and facilities including health and safety duties
- xi. Leading and/or carrying out curriculum development including teaching and learning strategies
- xii. Being in charge of funds for the area
- xiii. Assist the overall leadership of the school
- xiv. Preparing the teaching timetable

9. Following are several statements related to school management. For each statement, tick the box that you feel most closely describes what goes on in your school.

Agree very strongly
 Agree strongly
 Agree
 Disagree
 Section 1.01 Disagree
 Strongly

▪ Parents, students, community members and business partners participate in developing/reviewing the mission/vision statement of the school.						
▪ Parents, students, community members and business partners agree with and understand the mission/vision statement of the school.						
▪ The school mission /vision statement is aligned with curriculum, teaching and professional development.						
▪ All members of the school staff share a common understanding of what needs to change at my school to improve learning.						
▪ The community shares an understanding of the strengths and needs of the school.						
▪ All constituent parts are invited to participate in planning school improvement efforts.						
▪ The school has a culture of data-based decision making.						
▪ We have developed a plan for shared responsibility in implementing decisions and agreements.						
▪ Staff members are encouraged to express opinions and share ideas with one another and school administrators.						
▪ School administrators and staff members serve as role models for students in terms of effective and respectful communication						
▪ I provide multiple opportunities for staff members to share authority and resources.						
▪ I encourage individual and group initiative by providing access to resources, personnel and time.						
▪ I participate with staff members in collaborative innovations and encourage them to do this on their own.						
▪ I provide opportunities for all staff members to develop criteria for monitoring, assessing, and accounting for their individual and shared work.						
▪ Teachers and the principal share ideas on effective curriculum and teaching strategies.						
▪ I can count on other teachers to do their share to implement school improvement initiatives						
▪ We often meet as teams to develop strategies for improving student learning.						
▪ I am respected for my ideas in group meetings.						
▪ We work as a school team to plan and implement professional development.						
▪ All staff members feel a sense of loyalty to the school and ownership of their work.						
▪ I rarely feel isolated from other staff members.						
▪ We provide systematic feedback to students and families about student progress.						
▪ Assessment results and other school data are understandable and made available to parents so that they can make informed decisions.						
▪ Parents, business partners and community members are treated respectfully and their suggestions are taken seriously.						
▪ The school provides parents and community members with frequent, clear and positive communication.						

Appendix 9

Piloted Questionnaire for all department heads in 2nd study

School context

<u>School category</u>	<u>Nature of population</u>	<u>Nature of school</u>	<u>Location</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> District secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> National secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> Boys only <input type="checkbox"/> Girls only <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed (boys and girls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Day school <input type="checkbox"/> Boarding school <input type="checkbox"/> Both Day and Boarding school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5km form city centre <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 km from city centre <input type="checkbox"/> over 11km from city centre

Personal context

1. Which of the following best describes your position?

- Head of a single subject-department e.g. English, Maths
- Head of an area where the subjects are closely related e.g. Science, Humanities
- Head of an area where the subjects are not closely related e.g. Technical subjects
- Cross-curricular co-ordinator e.g. Information Technology
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Leader of a pastoral area e.g. Guidance and Counselling.
- Other (specify).....

2. Do you have other responsibilities? (Do not include those which a large number of staff might have, such as being on daily, weekly or monthly duty).

- Yes
- No

If your answer is 'YES' what are they?

-
-
-
-

3. Do you receive allowances for the management responsibilities undertaken?

- Yes

No

If your answer is 'YES', comment about your Job Group and the nature of the allowances.

.....
.....

4. It is recognised that you need time to perform various duties in your area(s) of responsibility. How much time (in hours) within the working week is specially meant for you to

i. Carry out your management responsibilities?

.....

ii. Counselling or meeting individual students?

.....

iii. Actual teaching of your subject?

.....

5. Who are you answerable to for the responsibilities undertaken? (Position rather than name)

.....

6. How many teaching staff are working in your area of responsibility this year?

i) all the time.

ii)some of their time (actual numbers).

iii) Of the teaching staff working in your area of responsibility this year, how many have their main teaching commitment elsewhere?

.....

7. How many non-teaching staff are working in your area of responsibility this year for some or all of their time?

i) all of their time

ii) part of their time (actual numbers)

iii) Of the non-teaching staff working in your area of responsibility this year, how many have their main commitment elsewhere?

.....

Individual post-holder:

8. In your working life,

i) How many years have you been teaching?.....

ii) Have you taken any breaks in service?.....

iii) If your answer is 'Yes', how many months or years?.....

9. While working in this profession,

i) For how long have you held your current post?.....

ii) Have you held any posts of responsibility before?

Yes

No

iii) If 'Yes', what were they?

•

•

•

10. Which category best describes your qualification on entry to teaching? (tick one)

- i) No professional qualification
- ii) Diploma in Education
- iii) Bachelor of Education degree
- iv) First Degree without Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PDE)
- v) Higher degree without PDE
- vi) First Degree plus PDE
- vii) Higher degree plus PDE
- viii) Other (please specify).....

11. Which category best describes your current level of educational qualification?

- i) As on entry to profession
- ii) First degree
- iii) Further first degree
- iv) Advanced work in education
- v) Higher degree
- vi) Further higher degree
- vii) Higher degree directly related to education
- viii) Other.....

12. What leadership and management training have you received? (Tick all that apply)

- i) None
- ii) School based course (single day or less)
- iii) School based course (more than one day)
- iv) School based training as part of In-service Education and Training
- v) Out of school course (single day)
- vi) Out of school course (more than one day)
- vii) Part of a qualification course (below Masters level)
- viii) Part of a qualification course (at Masters level)

13. Influences over priorities

i) Some individuals or groups may influence the way a post holder makes decisions within his/her area of responsibility. Have you had a similar experience?

- Yes
- No

ii) If your answer is 'Yes', set in the table below are various school stakeholders. Label the groups 1, 2, or 3 where 1 is the highest priority to indicate the three most influential groups of people when you are making decisions on each of the following:

[NS] - Adopting new syllabus change (e.g. across Form One).

[RES] - Purchase of resources to support the teaching in your department.

[PROF] - Professional development plan for your area staff or team.

[DSP] - Discipline of a pupil being difficult within your area of responsibility.

	NS	RES	PROF	DSP
i) Subject area staff				
ii) Other teaching staff				
iii) Students/pupils				
iv) Parents/guardians				
v) Governors				
vi) Advisory/inspectorate				
vii) Subject association				
viii) Head and senior staff				
ix) Examination board				
x) Other (specify)				

14. Expectations of Your Headteacher

Your headteacher expects you to do certain tasks. Indicate (√) on the list below those tasks which you believe the headteacher expects you to ensure are done for your area of responsibility. The expectation may be communicated verbally or in written form. (Not all tasks listed here may be pertinent).

Task	√
i) Preparing the departmental timetable	
ii) Ensuring continuity of education between different forms	
iii) Making decisions about what to buy	
iv) Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area	
v) Implementing homework policy	
vi) Organising the testing of pupil attainment	
vii) Organising the storage of area resources	
viii) Ensuring that subjects offered cater for the various range of student abilities	
ix) Inducting new staff	
x) Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters	
xi) Monitoring classes' progress through syllabus or schemes of work	
xii) Deployment of pupils into teaching groups	
xiii) Formulating school's overall curriculum aims, objectives and content	
xiv) Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meetings	
xv) Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies	
xvi) Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources	
xvii) Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities	
xviii) Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour	
xix) Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching	
xx) Leading the planning of the curriculum within the department	
xxi) Maintaining records of classroom observations	

- xxii) Assisting in the overall leadership of the school
- xxiii) Taking part in appointing teachers

15. Expectations of other teachers

Indicate (√) on the list below those tasks which people under you expect, **as a middle leader**, to ensure are completed for your area of responsibility. (Not all of the tasks listed here are pertinent).

Task	√
i) Ensuring continuity of education between forms	
ii) Making decisions about what resources to buy	
iii) Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area	
iv) Implementing a homework policy	
v) Organising the testing of pupil attainment	
vi) Organising the storage of area resources	
vii) Ensuring that courses cater for the range of abilities	
viii) Inducting new staff	
ix) Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters and encouraging debate	
x) Monitoring classes' progress through syllabuses or schemes of work	
xi) Deployment of pupils into teaching groups	
xii) Formulating curriculum aims, objectives and content	
xiii) Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meetings	
xiv) Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies	
xv) Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources	
xvi) Leading and/or promoting the development of area staff's professional abilities	
xvii) Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour	
xviii) Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching	
xix) Maintaining knowledge of the subject area	
xx) Maintaining records of classroom observations	

16. Priorities and expectations of self

As a **middle manager**, you have several tasks to complete. Below are listed some tasks that might be expected of a **middle manager**. Please rank them in order of priority (1 – the most important, 14 – least important). Please do not indicate any tasks as being of equal priority.

Task	√
i) Devising and monitoring pupil records	
ii) Devising and leading In-service Training and Education with your area staff	
iii) Implementing the wider school policy	
iv) Supervising/monitoring colleagues' work to ensure that policies are followed through	
v) Teaching a subject throughout the school	
vi) Collaborating in whole school planning	
vii) Monitoring and controlling the use of stock and other resources	
viii) Liaising with outside agencies and other schools	

- | | | |
|-------|--|--------------------------|
| ix) | Co-ordinating and overseeing marking in line with school policies | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| x) | Overseeing or assisting with the maintenance of the fabric and facilities including health and safety duties | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xi) | Leading and/or carrying out curriculum development including teaching and learning strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xii) | Being in charge of funds for the area | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xiii) | Assist the overall leadership of the school | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xiv) | Preparing the teaching timetable | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Indicate (✓) on the list below those tasks which you believe to be your responsibility as **a middle leader** to ensure are completed for your area. (Not all of the tasks listed here may be pertinent).

- | | | |
|---------|--|--------------------------|
| xv) | Ensuring continuity of education between different classes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xvi) | Making decisions about what resources to buy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xvii) | Monitoring the teaching of staff whilst working in your area | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xviii) | Implementing a homework policy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xix) | Organising the testing of pupil attainment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xx) | Organising the storage of area resources | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxi) | Ensuring that subjects being offered cater for the range of abilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxii) | Inducting new staff | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxiii) | Keeping staff within area informed of whole school matters and encouraging debate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxiv) | Monitoring classes' progress through syllabuses or schemes of work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxv) | Deployment of pupils into teaching groups | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxvi) | Formulating curriculum aims, objectives and content | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxvii) | Maintaining records of schemes of work and minutes of meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxviii) | Checking teaching methods are in line with area and school policies | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxix) | Ensuring teaching rooms are suitable and offer adequate resources | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxx) | Leading and/or promoting development of area staff's professional abilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxxi) | Providing support to pupils facing personal difficulties that affect their school work and behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxxii) | Providing support for colleagues facing disciplinary problems in their teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxxiii) | Maintaining knowledge of the subject area | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| xxxiv) | Maintaining records of classroom observations | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17. Below are several statements about school management. Tick the one that best describes your situation

Agree very
strongly
Agree
strongly
Agree
Disagree
Disagree
Strongly

- *The school mission/vision statement is aligned with curriculum, teaching and professional development.*
- *Teachers feel a sense of ownership and control over their own success in the department.*
- *All members of the department staff share a common understanding of what needs to change in the department to improve learning.*
- *The senior management team shares an understanding of the strengths and needs of my department.*
- *All constituent parts in the department are invited to participate in planning departmental improvement efforts.*
- *The department has a culture of data-based decision making.*
- *We have developed a plan for shared responsibility in implementing decisions and agreements.*
- *Staff members are encouraged to express opinions and share ideas with one another and school administrators.*
- *The Head of Department and staff members in the department serve as role models for students in terms of effective and respectful communication.*
- *As the head of department, I provide multiple opportunities for staff members to share authority and resources.*
- *As the head of department, I encourage individual and group initiative by providing access to resources, personnel and time.*
- *As the head of department, I participate with staff members in collaborative innovations and encourage them to do this on their own.*
- *Teachers in the department, the principal and myself share ideas on effective curriculum and teaching strategies.*
- *I can count on other teachers to do their share to implement departmental improvement initiatives.*
- *We often meet as teams to develop strategies for improving student learning.*
- *I am respected for my ideas in group meetings.*
- *We work as a departmental team to plan and implement professional development.*
- *All staff members feel a sense of loyalty to the department, school and ownership of their work.*
- *I rarely feel isolated from other staff members.*
- *The school frequently invites parents, community members and business partners to attend celebrations where students' work is showcased.*
- *We provide systematic feedback to students and families about student progress.*
- *Assessment results and other school data are understandable and made available to parents so that they can make informed decisions.*
- *Parents, business partners and community members are treated respectfully and members in the department take their suggestions seriously.*

Appendix 10
Letter to all Department heads and Assistant Teachers

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
2A BECKINGHAM ROAD
LEICESTER
LE2 IHB
UNITED KINGDOM
20/08/05

Dear Research Participant,

My name is Joshua Mose, a Doctorate student in the School of Education at the University of Leicester - United Kingdom. I am currently undertaking a study on 'middle management' with a special emphasis on secondary schools in Kenya. I am interested in learning about how various teachers with middle leadership responsibilities execute their role. Your school has been chosen to take part in this research. I am asking for your help and cooperation in this study. The research is important in understanding various aspects of school leadership and how these impact on school performance.

The only thing you are required to do is to fill in this questionnaire as honestly as you can. This should not take much of your time. A decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. To ensure anonymity, please do not write your name or any identifying information on any portion of the questionnaire. All responses will be completely anonymous and it will not be possible to match you with your data in any way.

In this project, there are no known economic, legal, physical, psychological or social risks to participants in either immediate or long-range outcomes. While I understand that it is not possible to identify all potential risks, I believe however that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and the potential, but unknown risks.

Please use the self addressed, pre-stamped envelope enclosed to return your questionnaire to the researcher. If you have any questions about your participation in this research or concerns about the nature of this study, please ask before you begin. You can contact the researcher on e-mail jnyakundimose@yahoo.com or Tel: 0733946594. Thank you for cooperating in this research.

Sincerely,

Researcher

Appendix 11
Letter to AHoD Interviewees

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
2A BECKINGHAM ROAD
LEICESTER
LE2 IHB
UNITED KINGDOM
20/08/05

Dear Research Participant,

My name is Joshua Mose, a Doctorate student in the School of Education at the University of Leicester - United Kingdom. I am currently undertaking a study on 'middle management' with a special emphasis on secondary schools in Kenya. I am interested in learning about how various teachers with middle leadership responsibilities execute their role. Your school has been chosen to take part in this research. I am asking for your help and cooperation in this study. The research is important in understanding various aspects of school leadership and how these impact on school performance.

The only thing you are required to do is to fill in this questionnaire as honestly as you can. This should not take much of your time. The researcher requests that you participate in a one-to-one interview session at a later date. If you are willing to participate in this second part, please put a tick at the bottom of the first page of the questionnaire. Your identity will be known to me only through the responses you give in your questionnaire. A decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. To ensure anonymity to any other person, please do not write your name or any identifying information on any portion of the questionnaire. All responses will be completely anonymous and it will not be possible to match you with your data in any way.

In this project, there are no known economic, legal, physical, psychological or social risks to participants in either immediate or long-range outcomes. While I understand that it is not possible to identify all potential risks, I believe however that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and the potential, but unknown risks.

Please use the self addressed, pre-stamped envelope enclosed to return your questionnaire to the researcher. If you have any questions about your participation in this research or concerns about the nature of this study, please ask before you begin. You can contact the researcher on e-mail jnyakundimose@yahoo.com or Tel: 0733946594. Thank you for cooperating in this research.

Sincerely,

Researcher

Appendix 12
Letter to Headteachers

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
2A BECKINGHAM ROAD
LEICESTER
LE2 IHB
UNITED KINGDOM
20/08/05

Dear Head Teacher,

My name is Joshua Mose, a Doctorate student in the School of Education at the University of Leicester - United Kingdom. I am currently undertaking a study on 'middle management' with a special emphasis on secondary schools in Kenya. I am interested in learning about how various teachers with middle leadership responsibilities execute their role. Your school has been chosen to take part in this research. I am asking for your help and cooperation in this study. The research is important in understanding various aspects of school leadership and how these impact on school performance.

The only thing you are required to do is to fill in this questionnaire as honestly as you can. This should not take much of your time. The researcher requests that you participate in a one-to-one interview session at a later date. If you are willing to participate in this second part, please put a tick at the bottom of the first page of the questionnaire. Your identity will be known to me only through the responses you give in your questionnaire. A decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. To ensure anonymity to any other person, please do not write your name or any identifying information on any portion of the questionnaire. All responses will be completely anonymous and it will not be possible to match you with your data in any way.

In this project, there are no known economic, legal, physical, psychological or social risks to participants in either immediate or long-range outcomes. While I understand that it is not possible to identify all potential risks, I believe however that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and the potential, but unknown risks.

Please use the self addressed, pre-stamped envelope enclosed to return your questionnaire to the researcher. If you have any questions about your participation in this research or concerns about the nature of this study, please ask before you begin. You can contact the researcher on e-mail jnyakundimose@yahoo.com or Tel: 0733946594. Thank you for cooperating in this research.

Sincerely,

Researcher

Appendix 13

Duties and Responsibilities of AHOs

The duties and responsibilities will include:

- Administering a teaching or research department in a technical institution.
- Allocating duties of staff within the department as well as undertaking research, consultancy and teaching duties in the field of specialisation.
- Co-ordinating teaching and research activities within the department
- Co-ordinating student admissions, tuition and examinations within the department.
- Co-ordinating student admissions, tuition and examinations within the department.
- Co-ordinating consultancy and research activities undertaken within the department in liaison with other institutions, Government departments and industry.
- Providing leadership in curriculum design, development and review in a particular field.
- Co-ordinating the development and production of course materials to be used within the department
- Ensuring the maintenance of high standards of professionalism in setting, supervision and marking of examinations within the department.
- Undertaking general duties relating to student welfare and academic development
- Ensuring proper care and maintenance of tools, equipment and other facilities within the department
- Co-ordinating the identification and procurement of appropriate materials and supplies, tools, equipment and other facilities in order to improve and uphold high teaching standards.
- Maintenance of proper inventories of equipment and supplies entrusted to the department.
- Stimulating the publication of written materials and other professional endeavours undertaken by staff within the department.
- Co-ordinating staff development activities within the department
- Co-ordinating income generating activities within the department.
- Responsible for planning, acquisition, development and maintenance of physical facilities at the institution.
- Co-ordinating specific training and learning activities in the institution
- Promoting positive linkages between the institution and the neighbouring communities or other nearby organizations
- Promoting liaison between the institution and the local industries or other private sector organizations
- Promoting good industrial relations
- Promoting the welfare of all staff and students within the institution