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THE SCHOOL HEAD AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER IN ZIMBABWE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Levi M. Nyagura and Jerald L. Reece
Department of Science and Mathematics Education
University of Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

This paper presents evidence obtained from a survey of secondary school heads in government schools, church schools, and rural day schools about functions performed by those heads, characteristics of secondary school heads and problems constraining heads from discharging their duties effectively and efficiently. The evidence shows that:

1. The majority of rural secondary schools are administered by inexperienced and lowly qualified and untrained heads who also have heavy teaching loads.

2. The majority of school heads possess minimal or no knowledge in technical subjects, a situation which appears not supportive of the implementation of the policy of vacationalization of secondary school education.

3. While the thrust in secondary school education is on technical education, school heads do not consider the training of students in technical fields as a top priority for secondary schools. To the contrary, heads consider character building and preparation for post-secondary programmes as top priorities for secondary schools.

4. Secondary school heads devote most of their time on administrative duties thereby neglecting the critical activities in the curriculum and instructional domains

5. Library facilities in secondary schools are poor. The situation is extremely critical in rural secondary schools where the majority of the schools have no libraries.

6. School heads use staff meetings mainly to deal with administrative matters. Little attention is given to curricular and instructional activities directed at improving the quality of educational experiences in the school.

7. Heads of secondary schools expressed great concern about serious shortages of textbooks, equipment, funds, and trained and qualified teachers.

8. Heads of rural secondary schools were greatly concerned about the lack of professional assistance and guidance. In addition, heads in those schools were seriously concerned about poor transport and communication facilities that are essential for a smooth running institution.

9. The majority of secondary school heads are seriously concerned about the inability of most teachers to develop effective lesson plans, to use a variety of teaching methods for enhancing students' understanding, to maintain good classroom discipline, and to translate national syllabuses into operational documents (i.e. schemes of work).

INTRODUCTION

A key function of a head of school is supervision directed at improving the quality of education in the school. In performing this role, the head of school undertakes planning, organizing and evaluating instruction and learning. As highlighted by Wiles and Bondi (1980), the planning phase of improving teaching and learning is most often administrative in nature while the organizing function is most often curricular in character with the evaluating function being directed at instructional activity. In categorizing the specific supervision activities within the administrative, curriculum and instruction domains, Wiles and Bondi (1980)

provide the following tasks (modified for contextual meaning) which heads of schools should be able to perform:

1. ADMINISTRATION

Administrative supervision tasks discussed include:

1.1 Establishing standards and developing policies directed at translating national education goals into standards of pupil achievement.

1.2 Identifying and securing resources to support quality education activities in the school.

1.3 Selecting personnel and staff needed for implementing the school curriculum.

1.4 Providing adequate facilities that match educational activities provided by the school.

1.5 Organizing for instruction by assigning teachers to appropriate class levels and content subjects.

1.6 Promoting school-community relations by establishing and maintaining contact with those who support educational programmes.

2. CURRICULUM

Curriculum oriented supervision tasks discussed include:

2.1 Determining instructional objectives as a basis for the school syllabus.

2.2 Surveying school needs to determine how the implementation of the school curriculum can effectively meet learner needs.

2.3 Developing school syllabuses so as to organize instructional content for greater relevance and effective development.

2.4 Selecting curriculum materials by analyzing available instructional materials and assigning them to appropriate class levels.

2.5 Orienting and renewing instructional staff through school based inservice programmes in order to upgrade their teaching capacity.

2.6 Suggesting modification in facilities to fit the instructional programmes.

2.7 Preparing for instructional programmes by forming various instructional units and teams and by providing in-service opportunities for instructional development.

2.8 Developing and disseminating information about school curriculum activities highlighting the successful ones.

2.9 Estimating expenditure needs for instruction and making recommendations for the use of existing and anticipated funding.

3. INSTRUCTION

Supervision tasks that are instructional in nature which are highlighted include:

3.1 Developing instructional plans by closely working with teachers in the production of schemes of work, lesson guides, and assessment tools.

3.2 Evaluating and monitoring instructional activities to determine whether they are meeting the set or expected standards.

3.3 Redesigning instructional organization by reviewing deployment of staff, curriculum materials, and allocating physical facilities in order to enhance the provision of quality learning experiences.

3.4 Delivering instructional resources to ensure that teachers and pupils have necessary instructional materials and to prepare for future material needs.

3.5 Advising and assisting teachers in professional and academic matters through meetings, scrutiny of pupils' work, and visits to classrooms.

3.6 Evaluating educational facilities to determine their adequacy and appropriateness to instruction.

3.7 Conducting and co-ordinating school based inservice programmes directed at meeting instructional needs.

3.8 Reacting to community needs and enquiries with a focus to creating a conducive school atmosphere which optimizes efforts by teachers and pupils.

3.9 Dispersing and spending school funds in an acceptable manner.

The Ministry of Education's Standards Control Unit published a "Job Description For a Head" which highlights main functions and duties of a head of school (1987). We have used the foregoing administration, curriculum and instruction domains discussed by Wiles and Bondi (1980) as a means of classifying the main functions and duties of a head of school spelt out in this Ministry document.

Table 1:
Classification of Duties and Functions of Zimbabwe Secondary School Heads

Key: A = Administration
B = Curriculum
C = Instruction

Task	Category
i. To supervise and direct the general running of the school.	A
ii. To be a link between the school and the ministry and with the community and the general public.	A/I
iii. To ensure that school buildings, equipment and all other facilities are maintained in good and proper order.	A/C/I
iv. To see to the safety and welfare of the staff and pupils during school hours.	A
v. To supervise, assess, direct and assist teaching and non-teaching staff and to report of their performance as may be required.	I/A
vi. To ensure correct interpretation and implementation of syllabuses.	C
vii. To ensure that pupils learning is maintained at acceptable levels.	I
viii. To maintain good discipline among pupils and staff.	A
ix. To keep records up-to-date according to official requirements.	A
x. To make periodic reports on aspects of the school as may be required.	A
xi. Allocating teachers and pupils to various classes.	A

xii. Assigning and delegating duties to staff.	A
xiii. Convening and chairing meetings	A
xiv. Receiving, keeping and spending school funds in an acceptable manner.	A/I
xv. Enforce relevant discipline to pupils and staff.	A
xvi. Ordering, purchasing and acquiring textbooks, furniture, stationery and other school equipment.	A/C/I
xvii. Ensuring the maintenance of correct records by all staff, professional and non-professional.	A
xviii. Providing for curricular activities.	A/I
xx. Deciding how schemes, lesson plans and records will be produced and maintained within the framework of official practice.	I

From the analysis of the twenty functions and duties described by the Ministry of Education, sixteen (80%) are administrative in nature, only nine (45%) are curriculum-oriented and only four (20%) are instructural in nature. The minimal emphasis on curriculum-oriented and instructional-related tasks suggests limited involvement of the head of school in the planning, organizing and evaluating of instruction and learning.

Literature appears to emphasize instructional leadership as encompassing those actions that a head of school takes or delegates to others in order to promote growth in student learning. The important tasks of heads highlighted in the literature include: setting schoolwide goals; defining the purpose of schooling; providing the resources needed for learning to occur; supervising and evaluating teachers; coordinating staff development programme in the school; and creating collegial relationships with and among the teachers.

In attempting to elaborate on how principles (i.e. heads of schools) contribute to effective instruction, Duckworth and Carnine (1983) cited in De Bevoise (1984) have stressed the importance of providing consistent standards and expectations for teachers who, despite their need and desire for autonomy, require the backbone of organizational policy to sustain their efforts. According to Duckworth (1983), staff meetings, staff development activities, and observation of and consultation with individual teachers provide opportunities for the head of school to encourage and recognize good work and show determination to remedy slack teaching.

Bossert and others (1981) and Dwyer and others (1983) cited in De Bevoise (1984) have argued that personal, district and community characteristics influence the management behaviour of a head of school and that this behaviour affects the school's climate and the organization of instruction. These factors in turn affect student outcomes. Dwyer and others (1980) found that heads of schools felt that their personal traits, experience, training and beliefs influenced the nature of activities they performed. In the same study, Dwyer and others found that the community had a dramatic impact on the work of each head of school observed.

In a study carried out by Gersten and Carnine (1981), the following six administrative and supervisory support functions, not necessarily to be carried out by the head of school, were defined:

a. Implement programmes of known effectiveness or active involvement in curricular improvement,

b. Monitor student performance,

c. Monitor teacher performance,

d. Provide concrete technical assistance to teachers,

e. Demonstrate visible commitment to programmes for instructional improvement,

f. Provide emotional support and incentives for teachers.

The concept of support functions propounded by Gersten and Carnine (1981) suggests the use of the team approach through sharing the leadership role. The following operational assumptions for the team approach appear to be important:

- The head of school has abilities to identify knowledgeable and experienced teachers to serve as members of a team.
- The school has experienced, well-trained and qualified teachers who can function as competent team members to discharge duties delegated to the team.
- The head of school believes in the involvement of teachers in the running of the school.
- The teaching responsibilities of teachers make it possible for teachers to participate in time consuming administrative activities.

The lack of emphasis on curriculum oriented and instructional tasks in the foregoing job description made it desirable to investigate how heads of schools in Zimbabwe were performing tasks in the curriculum and instruction domains to improve teaching and learning. This study was then launched to obtain information regarding various aspects of the role of secondary school heads in various types of schools in Zimbabwe.

THE STUDY

In October, 1988, the Department of Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education, University of Zimbabwe, began an extensive collaborative research project in secondary schools. Research teams within the Department designed 15 sets of questionnaires, each focussing on various aspects of the secondary school. This study focusses on heads of schools. Other studies focus on teachers, curriculum implementation, pupils and selected subjects offered in

the secondary school programme. Reports of these studies will appear in subsequent issues of the *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research* or in other journals and technical reports. Approval to carry out the research was received on 6 February 1989 from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. In addition to the Department of Curriculum Studies staff, generous support in use of computers required in carrying out the research project was received from the staff of the Human Resources Research Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Zimbabwe.

The population for this study consisted of 1133 heads of secondary schools offering technical subjects during 1988 as reported by the Ministry of Education. Technical subjects included: Agriculture; Building; Home Economics; Metalwork; Technical Drawing; and Woodwork.

The main concerns of the study were to:

1. Determine the experience, qualifications and the administrative responsibilities of heads of secondary schools.

2. Determine staff development activities in secondary schools.

3. Determine purposes of staff meetings.

4. Determine how frequently teachers were observed by the head of school.

5. Determine curricular oriented activities in secondary schools.

6. Assess the contribution of the school library in the provision of instruction and learning.

7. Assess pupils', teachers', and parents' attitudes as perceived by the head towards subjects offered in the school curriculum.

8. Determine the views of heads of schools regarding functions of secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

9. Assess the relationship between the head of school and the community as perceived by the head.

10. Identify problems and concerns of heads of secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

THE METHOD

Using stratified random sampling techniques, a 25% sample was selected form the Ministry's 1988 listing of 1133 heads of schools offering technical subjects. After an analysis of this sample of 258 schools, it was discovered that 100 of those schools offered only one technical subject, usually agriculture. Since it was the policy of the Ministry of Education to encourage secondary schools to offer at least two technical subjects, only the 158 secondary schools listed as offering at least two technical subjects in 1988 were sent questionnaires. Questionnaires sent to one of those schools were returned by the Post and Telecommunications Commission stating that the school did not exist. This left a total of 157 schools in the study. Table 2 shows the distribution by province of these secondary schools.

The heads of schools in this study were in charge of schools with student numbers ranging from 79 to 2598. Size of the teaching force in each school ranged from 4 to 78. Rural Day school teaching staff ranged from 4 to 33 with a mean of 15. Conventional Church school teaching staff ranged in number form 12 to 34 with a mean of 22. Former Group B school teaching staff ranged from 8 to 78 teachers with a mean of 44. Of the 78 schools, 52 were reported to have double sessions (i.e. two sets of pupils and teachers use the school every day) with the remaining 26 schools operating on single sessions. Obviously, heads who are responsible for schools with double sessions have a mammoth task with regard to providing adequate instructional leadership.

Questionnaires were mailed to schools in April, near the end of the first school term. The first completed questionnaires were received 17 April. Reminder letters were mailed the latter part of June to heads of selected schools from which questionnaires had not been received. Questionnaires were received from various participating schools until 30 September 1989, an extensive period of over five months.

Although 83 (52.9%) of the schools in the sample returned questionnaires completed by teachers and pupils regarding various facets of the school programme, only 78 (49.7%) school heads returned completed questionnaires. Of these 78 heads, four were at former Group A (previously all white) schools, 25 were at former Group B (previously all black) schools, 11 were at conventional church schools, and 38 were at Rural Day secondary schools. In terms of school location, 13 heads were at schools in urban high density areas, three at schools in urban low density areas, 13 at boarding schools, and 49 at schools in the rural areas. In terms of school authority, 30 heads administered government schools, 13 were heads of mission schools, and 34 heads were in private schools. The designation for one school was not given.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR THE STUDY

	Province Number									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Total Schools	49	215	96	120	108	144	82	87	232	1133
Number Selected	13	31	11	12	18	15	13	13	31	157
Number of Schools responding	8	15	5	7	7	7	9	4	19	83

A number of reasons appear to have contributed to the low percentage of returns. Among those reasons were: an unknown number of questionnaire packets were apparently lost in the mail; some heads indicated that "teachers had too many responsibilities without completing questionnaires"; other heads indicated that they preferred not to "pressure" teachers to complete questionnaires; and questionnaires arrived at "a bad time" since they were received just at the end of a school term. Even in view of such reasons for the teacher and pupil questionnaires not being returned, it was hoped that the heads at least would complete the questionnaires designed for heads of schools. In only one instance did a head of school return the "Heads Questionnaire" without being accompanied by at least some completed teacher and pupil questionnaires. In five instances, the head of schools returned questionnaires from staff but did not complete the questionnaires designed for heads.

The data collected from the survey was analyzed using frequencies and corresponding percentages.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Qualifications, Experiences, Teaching and Administrative Responsibilities of Heads

The data on qualifications, age and experience of school heads revealed that Rural schools were led by individuals who were both young and inexperienced in the field of education. In addition, these individuals held only minimal, and sometimes not even minimal, academic and professional qualifications. Table 3 provided a summary of data on characteristics of heads of secondary schools.

TABLE 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF HEADS BY TYPES OF SCHOOLS

Characteristic	Percentage of Heads				
	Former Gp A	Former Gp B	Conventional Church	Rural Day School	Total
Ageyears	N=4 %	N=25 %	N=11 %	N=36 %	N=76 %
Under age 29	0	0	0	41.7	19.7
Under age 39	25	40	45.5	77.8	57.9
Over40	75	60	54.5	22.2	42.1
	Higest Academic Qualifications				
	N=4	N=23	N=10	N=37	N=74
Grade Eleven	0	0	0	3	1.4
Form 4 or less	0	30.4	18.2	73	48.6
High School Certificate or less	0	43.5	3	86.5	60.8
Bachelor's or Master's Degree	100	56.5	60	13.5	37.8
Other			10		1.4
	Highest Professional Qualifications				
	N=4	N=24		N=11	N=37
Not trained as teacher	0	4.2	0	10.8	6.6
Certificate in Education or less	0	29.2	9.1	73	46.1

Grad.Cert. in Ed. or Diploma in Education	100	41.7	45.5	10.8	28.9
B. Ed.		29.2		10.8	19.7
M. Ed.					1.3
Other					3.9

Experience As Head of Current School

Years	N=3	N=19	N=10	N=32	N=64
First year	33.3	26.3	30	40.6	34.4
Second year	0	10.5	10	21.9	15.6
Third year	0	10.5	0	12.5	9.4
Fourth year	0	5.3	0	9.4	6.2
Five or more	66.7	47.4	60	15.6	34.4

Zimbabwe Secondary School Experience

Years	N=3	N=18	N=9	N=28	N=58
1 to 4	0	0	11.1	42.9	22.4
5 to 9	0	44.4	22.2	46.4	39.7
10 or more	100	55.6	66.7	10.7	37.9

Teaching periods Per week

Periods	N=2	N=14	N=9	N=35	N=60
1 to 5	0	35.7	0	5.7	11.7
6 to 11	100	28.6	33.3	17.1	25.0
12 to 17	0	28.6	44.5	40.0	36.7
18 to 23	0	0	22.2	8.6	8.3
24 to 29	0	7.1	0	22.9	15.0
30 to 43	0	0	0	5.7	3.3

Academic qualifications of heads of Rural Day schools ranged from Grade 11 to the master's degree with the majority of heads

in rural secondary schools holding only the High School Certificate (HSC). Professional qualifications ranged from "not trained as a teacher" to the B.Ed. degree with the Certificate in Education (T1) being the most common level of qualification.

The situation in the other secondary schools is significantly different from that in the Rural Day secondary schools. In those schools, a majority of the heads possessed the Bachelor's degree in terms of academic qualifications and the B.Ed. or Graduate Certificate in Education as professional qualification. It is noted, however, that the academic qualifications of heads in Former Group B schools ranged from Form 4 to the Master's degree and the professional qualifications ranged from "not trained as a teacher" to the Bachelor of Education degree whereas the Former Group A heads held the Bachelor's degree in terms of academic qualifications and the Graduate Certificate in Education degree or Diploma in Education for professional qualifications.

In terms of age, 41.7 percent of the Rural Day school heads were under the age of 29 with 77.8 percent under the age of 39 while 75% of former Group A heads, 60% of Former Group B heads, and 54.5% of Conventional school heads were over 40 years of age. Only 22.2% of the Rural Day school heads were over 40 years of age.

Experience of Rural Day school heads is also significantly different from that of other heads of secondary schools. Nearly 62% were in their first or second year as head of the current school as compared to 33% of the former Group A heads, 37% of the Former Group B heads, and 40% of the Conventional Church school heads. In the Rural Day schools, only 15.6% of the heads had served as head of the school five or more years. Years of experience both as a teacher and administrator in Zimbabwe schools also showed much difference between Rural Day school heads and their counterparts in other schools. Nearly 43% of the Rural Day school heads have four or fewer years of experience at the secondary school level and only 10.7% of the Rural Day school heads have ten or more years of secondary school ex-

perience, experience of the three Former Group A heads ranged from 15 to 30 years, while 55.6% of the Former Group B heads and two-thirds of the Conventional Church school heads had more than ten years secondary school experience.

Teaching responsibilities of Rural Day school heads is another factor which differs from that of other heads. Thirteen (37.2%) of the 35 heads of Rural Day schools reported that they taught 18 or more periods per week while 27 (77.2%) taught 12 or more periods per week. In other schools, teaching loads of heads were much less with only five (35.7%) of the Former Group B heads teaching 12 or more periods per week, and with one of the three Former Group B heads responding to this item teaching as many as 12 periods per week. It was noted that 6 (66.7%) heads in Conventional Church schools taught 12 or more periods per week. Only one Former Group A school head taught 24 or more periods per week while 10 (30.6%) of the Rural Day school heads taught 24 or more periods per week with one teaching 43 periods per week.

According to the findings of Dwyer and others (1983), experience and training of heads affect the instructional activities undertaken by heads. At the present time in Zimbabwe, the typical head of the Rural Day school lacks extensive school experience, is lacking in both academic and professional qualification, and must teach a heavier load than is true of his counterparts in other secondary schools of Zimbabwe. This suggests that the situation in Rural Day secondary schools is extremely critical and therefore requires urgent attention.

A somewhat starting observation which is difficult to explain is why underqualified and untrained teachers were appointed heads of Former Group B schools, since most living and job conditions in these schools are much better compared to those existing in the Rural Day schools.

Unsatisfactory conditions in Rural Day secondary schools may be a contributing factor in recruiting and retaining qualified heads in those schools. Conditions which may contribute to the inability to attract qualified heads and to short terms served by heads once recruited might include: heavy teaching loads in addition to administrative responsibilities; large numbers of untrained and underqualified teachers to supervise; lack of learning resources in the schools; lack of adequate housing; lack of transport; lack of communication; lack of electrical power; and inadequate or non-existent health service.

The analysis of the academic areas of specialization of the heads revealed that the majority of heads have minimal knowledge or training in technical subjects. Only seven (9%) indicated that they hold either a major or a minor in one of the technical subjects while 31 had a major or minor in English, 22 in geography, 20 in history, 15 in mathematics, 14 in religious education, 11 in science, and 10 in Ndebele or Shona. In view of the strong movement to vocationalize secondary education, it is appropriate to ask whether such leadership is well suited to launch and convincely promote technical education in both the school and the community.

In the study, we found that 60 (76.9%) of the 78 heads had teaching duties in a content subject with 31 teaching at least two subjects. Of the 60 who taught, the following factors were noted: 40 heads were teaching subjects other than a subject classified as a major subject; 17 heads were teaching subjects in which they listed neither a major nor a minor; and six heads, due to lack of academic qualification, indicated no major or minor subject yet were still teaching one or more subjects. These conditions add to the complexity of administering a school because planning and teaching subjects in which little knowledge had been acquired consumes much more preparation time than would normally be expected of a qualified teacher. Such heavy demands on the school head should have some serious effects on his/her supervisory, instructional and curriculum responsibilities. Again,

these conditions occur more frequently in the Rural Day secondary schools than in the other types of schools.

Staff Development in Secondary Schools

Evidence obtained in the study shows that minimal inservice training is done in secondary schools. Only 39.5% of the school heads stated that their teachers had participated in half-day inservice seminars or workshops during school terms over a period of two years. Another 52.6% stated that their teachers had participated in full-day inservice while 19.2% stated their teachers attended after-school inservice seminars or workshops over the same period of time.

During school vacation periods over a period of two years, only 7.7% of the heads stated that some of their teachers participated in half-day inservice seminars with 38.5% reporting teachers involved in full-day inservice, 42.3% in week-long inservice, 9% in college vacation courses, 19.2% in university vacation courses, and 11.5% reported teachers participating in other types of inservice during the vacation periods. During the two year period, Rural Day school teachers participated least often in school vacation period inservice activities. Rural Day school heads reported more often that teachers participated in full-day inservice (42.1%) and in week-long inservice (36.8%) than in the other types of vacation inservice activities. It appears that those teachers in greatest need of inservice training are those least likely to have opportunities to participate in that training.

Heads were asked to rate topics for inservice training in terms of those which would be of great value to their teachers, would be of value, of little value, or of no value to their teachers. The responses are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Needed Activities To Improve Teachers Institutional Effectiveness As Reported by 78 Heads of Secondary Schools

	Extent of Value					Ranking Based on GV by Type of School				
Value By Type of School Instructional Activity	of Great value %	of value %	of Little value %	of No value %	Missing value %	Total	Former Gp A	Former Gp B	Conv. Church	Rural Day
Use of variety of teaching methods	70.5	21.8	2.6	0	5.1	1	6	1	5	1
Developing scheme of work based on on the subject syllabus	65.4	29.5	1.3		3.8	2	6	3	1	2
Developing effective lesson plans	64.1	25.6	5.1	0	5.1	3	2	3	1	4
Maintaining effective classroom discipline	62.8	25.6	7.7	0	3.8	4	2	6	1	3
Updating or increasing subject content knowledge	61.5	26.9	5.1	1.3	5.1	5	6	3	4	4
Effective use of learning resources other than textbook	55.1	37.2	5.1	0	2.6	6	2	2	5	9
Counselling pupils with personal problems	48.7	34.6	10.3	2.6	3.8	7	10	9	8	6
Counselling pupils with academic problems	46.2	41.0	7.7	1.3	3.8	8	10	9	9	7
Effective use of audio and /or visual aids	46.2	38.5	7.7	3.8	3.8	8	1	9	12	8
Effective use of textbooks	42.3	41.0	7.7	1.3	7.7	10	10	7	5	14
Understanding growth and development of adolescents	41.0	39.7	3.8	6.4	9.0	11	10	13	12	8
Effective teaching in laboratories and/or workshops	38.5	46.2	6.4	5.1	3.8	12	2	8	9	16
Effective use of small group learning activities	34.6	44.9	14.1	1.3	5.1	13	10	9	12	15
Implementing Education with Production	33.3	42.3	12.8	7.7	3.8	14	6	16	16	8
Working with handicapped pupils	32.1	25.6	15.4	15.4	11.5	15	10	15	9	13
Effective use of community resources for learning	30.8	53.8	9.0	5.1	1.3	16	17	14	15	12
Working with parents	20.5	48.7	15.4	1.5	3.8	17	16	17	18	16
Implementing language policies	12.8	51.3	19.2	7.7	9.0	18	17	18	16	18

In reviewing Table 4, it is evident that topics considered of most importance (those rated as being of great value by at least 60% of the heads) include: use of a variety of teaching methods: developing schemes of work based on the subject syllabus; developing effective lesson plans; maintaining effective classroom discipline; and updating or increasing subject content knowledge. Research has shown these areas to be important elements of variables that contribute towards effectiveness of a school (Cohn nd Rossmiller, 1987).

Table 4 is presented with instructional activities ranked on the basis of "greatest value" as indicated by school heads. A ranking by school type of these activities by heads is also included in Table 4. The reader must be cautious in interpreting this portion of the Table since only four heads of Former Group A schools provided information relating to inservice needs. Such a small number of heads in the one type makes it difficult to provide any meaningful ranking of 19 topics for inservice, but the information is included along with that from the other types of schools. Little difference appears in the ranking of needed inservice among the first nine instructional activities, except that Rural Day school heads rank "Effective use of learning resources other than textbooks" as being of less importance than did other school heads. Two other instructional activities "Implementing education with production" and "Understanding growth and development of adolescents" were rated as more important needs for inservice by Rural Day school heads than was the case of heads in other schools.

While only 20.5% of school heads rated the topic "Working with parents of pupils" as of great value, research on effective school has shown that parental involvement and support are important factors in student achievement (Cohn and Rossmiller, 1987). In viewing the ranking assigned to this topic, it is noted that heads in each type of school ranked the topic equally low.

By combining the two categories "Of great value", it is observed that seven topics were considered to be of value by more than

87% of the school heads. Fourteen of the 19 topics were considered to be of value by 80% or more of the heads. The seven topics ranked as having most value of inservice training include: developing schemes of work based on the subject syllabus; use of a variety of teaching methods; developing effective lesson plans; effective use of learning resources other than the textbooks; maintaining effective classroom discipline; updating or increasing subject content knowledge; and counselling pupils with academic problems.

It must be noted that while school heads have indicated instructional areas of concern in their capacity as instructional leaders, surveys of needs of teachers should be carried out before any inservice programmes are planned. Furthermore, there must be close collaboration between participants and programme planners, and some provision should be made for both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as a consequence of up-grading skills through participation in inservice seminars and/or workshops.

This overall rating of inservice needs for teachers by heads of schools could be a reflection of the shortage of qualified and trained teachers in the secondary schools. Heads in this study reported that the highest academic qualifications of 72.7% of their teachers was Form 4 or less, 5.6% had Grade 11 as the highest academic qualification. In terms of professional qualifications, heads reported that 44.2% of their teachers were untrained with 54.9% having T1 or less. Here again, the least qualified are found in the Rural Day secondary schools with 80.7% of these teachers in the schools in this study reported as having Form 4 or lower as the highest academic qualification.

In regard to professional qualifications, 46,4% of the Rural Day school teachers were untrained with 53,2% having T2B or less as the highest professional qualification. Such high percentage of untrained, unqualified or lowly qualified teachers stresses the need for an active, long term inservice programme to be developed

within reach of teachers in rural schools. See Table 5 for a summary of teacher qualifications in the various types of schools.

Table 5:
Academic and Professional Qualifications of Secondary School Teachers by Type of school as Reported by Heads of Schools

Qualification	Type of school Former Grp A	Former Grp B	Conv. Church	Rural Day	Total no. of teachers
	%	%	%	%	
Highest Qualifications held (N = 1783)					
Grade 11	0	6.2	4.9	6.2	5.6
Form 4	36	66.3	54.9	80.7	67.1
HSC	15.4	18.6	13.2	8.1	14.6
BSc/BA	42.6	7.5	19.8	4.7	10.6
MA/MSc/MPhil	5.1	1.2	4.9	0.2	1.6
PhD/D.Phil	0	0.1	0	0	0
Other	0.8	0.1	2.2	0.1	0.3
Highest Professional Qualifications Held (N = 17)					
Untrained	36.8	26.5	18.3	46.4	37.5
Underqualified (T2B or less)	1.8	14.5	15.7	6.8	11.1
T1	0.6	1.7	7.3	0.6	1.9
STC	10.0	27.0	22	13.1	20.7
Certification in Education	18.1	9.8	2..6	21.5	13.3
GraduateCertificate in Education	17.0	3.2	5.2	1.2	4.2

Diploma in Education	0	0.4	2.6	0	0.5
B.Ed.	10.5	3.9	7.8	1.4	4.3
M.Ed.	0.6	0	0.5	0	0.1
Other	4.7	12.9	17.8	9.0	11.4

On the question of who should provide inservice support functions, the school heads provided responses summarized in Table 6. Based on the "greatly valued" instructional areas for inservice training given in Table 6, we speculate that the choice of groups or organizations to provide inservice support functions was made on the basis of available expertise in and relevant experience of the group or organization. As is evident form Table 6, groups or organizations selected by more than 55% of school heads include: Education Officers (62.8%); the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Curriculum Development Unit (61.5%); subject associations (60.3%); Heads and Teachers working collaboratively (56.4%); and the University of Zimbabwe Department of Curriculum Studies (56.4%).

Table 6
Suggested Organizations to Provide Inservice Support Functions to Secondary Schools

Group of Organization	Response by Type of School				
	Former Grp A %	Former Grp B %	Conv. Church %	Rural Day %	Total %
Education Officer	50	68	27.3	71.1	62.8
Ministry of Education Curriculum Development Unit	25	76	45.5	60.5	61.5
Subject Association	0	76	72.3	52.6	60.3
Head and teachers	25	64	54.5	55.3	56.4
University of Zimbabwe Department of Curriculum Studies	0	68	54.5	55.3	56.4
EducationRegional Officers	0	48	63.6	55.3	51.3
Teachers' Associations	0	52.	27.3	44.7	42.3
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education -Head Office1	25	44	36.4	36.8	38.5
Other Groups and Organizations	0	16.	9.1	0	6.4

While 56.4% of school heads indicated that the head and his teachers should provide inservice seminars or workshops, it is most unlikely that such inservice training would address the key instructional areas indicated in Table 3. The reasons for this reservation are that:

- most school heads are not sufficiently trained in instructional and curriculum theories and practices.
- the majority of teachers lack adequate specialized training in content subjects. Of the total secondary school teachers in 1988, only about 3.8% had university degrees.
- the majority of teachers are untrained and therefore lack basic knowledge in the foundations of education. In 1988, about 54% of secondary school teachers were reported as being untrained by reports from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. In this study, heads of the 78 secondary schools reported that 32.9% of their teachers were untrained. Heads of the Rural Day schools in this study reported that 55.4% of their teachers were untrained.
- A significant number of teacher's are underqualified. For the 78 schools in this study, about 11.1% were underqualified. The indication by more than 56% of school heads to involve teachers in the provision of inservice training suggests a willingness by some school heads to employ the so-called shared leadership approach which literature shows to be most effective (Wiles and Bondi, 1980, p. 143). Even untrained and unqualified teachers can offer valuable input in planning inservice seminars or workshops although they lack the expertise to conduct some of the training sessions themselves.

Purposes of Staff Meetings

The frequency of holding staff meetings was found to vary between one meeting per week to one meeting per term. Fourteen school heads reported that they held staff meetings twice month-

ly with 37 holding meetings once per month, 18 twice per term, two once per term, and two school heads held meetings weekly. Because of the amount of time involved in holding staff meetings, some guidelines should be provided in regard to what is considered an appropriate number of staff meetings per school term. It would appear that holding staff meetings on a weekly basis is too excessive while holding such meetings once per term seems inadequate.

Whatever the number of staff meetings held per week, month or term, the critical issue is "What is the primary purpose of these staff meetings?" In this study, it was found that 76 (97.4%) school heads held staff meetings to inform staff of new policies and to review existing policies, 74 (94.9%) to get input from staff for solution of problems in the school, 72 (92.3%) to involve staff in the development of school policies, 56 (71.2%) to involve staff in the selection of textbooks, 53 (67.9%) to involve staff in developing schemes of work of various subjects, 52 (66.7%) to make announcements, 51 (65.4%) to provide inservice training, 43 (55.1%) to involve staff in the selection of learning materials other than textbooks, and 30 (38.5%) to facilitate collaborative study of research findings in education.

The evidence clearly shows that staff meetings are more heavily used to support administrative functions of the school head than for curriculum oriented or instructional-related issues. It is regrettable that curriculum-oriented and instruction-related issues seem to carry insufficient weight to claim primary importance on staf meeting agendas. This situation appears contrary importance on staff meeting agendas. This situation appears contrary to the claim by Duckworth (1983) that the school head can use staff meetings to encourage and recognize good work, and to correct slack instructional work.

Observation of Teachers

In this study, it was found that the frequency with which heads make classroom observations of each teacher was dependent upon

whether the teacher was new (i.e. with only one or two years experience) or experienced (i.e. with more than two years experience). For new teachers, the frequency ranged from once per year to nine or more times per year with a modal frequency of six times per year. For experienced teachers, the number of classroom observations per year ranged rom one to six with a modal frequency of three times per year. The modal frequency of six times per year for new teachers, double that for experienced teachers, may be explained by the rapid and dramatic expansion of secondary education since 1980. This expansion has led to the hiring of many untrained and unqualified teachers who therefore require much professional and academic advice and assistance.

The question to be posed here relates to the competence of inadequately qualified school heads who also are faced with heavier than normal teaching loads, especially those in the Rural Day secondary schools where the majority of the untrained and unqualified teachers are found, to provide effective professional and academic advice and assistance to their teachers. The evidence obtained in this study suggests that some of these school heads are insufficiently prepared to perform this very crucial instructional tasks. Research on effective schools has stressed, however, the importance of instructional leadership particularly by the school head (Cohn and Rossmiller, 1987).

Curriculum-Oriented Activities

The analysis of data related to curriculum-oriented activities in secondary schools revealed that nothing significant was taking place. In particular, minimal participation by teachers on national subject panels was observed. School heads (60%) felt that more opportunities should be created to enable teachers to participate in national syllabi activities. Such participation is believed to be valuable for the ariculation and organization of the school curriculum directed at achieving agreement on goals, developing purposefully programmes of instruction coordinated across the form/class levels, and providing sufficient time for instruction.

On the question of clarity of national syllabi aims and objectives, 65.4% of the school heads indicated these to be sufficiently spelt out to guide teachers in their day to day teaching. On the question of the existence of school syllabi derived from national syllabi, 86% of the school heads confirmed existence of such syllabi with objectives and content arranged by Form levels.

In determining the variables that influenced the selection of subjects offered in the implemented school curriculum, it was found that parents, students, teachers, and availability of textbooks had played an insignificant part. The dominant variable was found to be the Ministry of Education directives (71.4%). While such directives help in regulating the range of subjects offered in schools, the issue of matching available resources and demanded subjects becomes very critical. Incompatibility between school resources and the implemented curriculum could have disastrous consequences on pupil achievement.

School Library

Evidence obtained from this study showed that school libraries were totally inadequate. Of the 78 school heads, 20 (25.6%) reported that their schools had no library with another 38 (48.7%) reporting that libraries in their schools were inadequate for enhancing pupil learning in most subjects. Fifteen (19.2%) indicated that their school libraries contained general references of use to pupils in most subjects, while only five (6.4%) reported that their libraries had excellent references for pupils in most subjects.

Data obtained regarding library holdings by type of school are summarized in Table 7. Former Group A and Conventional Church secondary schools reported greater adequacy in terms of collections of books than did either Former Group B or Rural Day secondary schools. It is noted that Rural Day secondary schools have extremely inadequate libraries in comparison with other schools and certainly in comparison with what can be considered an adequate minimum standard for a school library. The most disturbing reality is that Rural Day schools are situated in com-

munities without community libraries, with the greatest financial limitations, and with the most inadequate facilities. Thus, the inadequate library situation in Rural Day schools is likely to remain as it is or even worsen unless some planned intervention is instituted. The important question is the extent to which the inadequate number of books affect pupil achievement and the quality of instruction.

TABLE 7

Adequacy of Secondary Libararies and Numbers of Books Included in Holding By type of School As Reported By Heads

	Type of school				
	Former Gp A	Former Gp B	Convention Church	Rural Day	Total
	%	%	%	%	
States of Library:	N=4	N=25	N=11	N=38	N=78
No library in the school	0	16	0	42.1	25.6
The library is very inadequate	0	60	45.5	47.4	38.7
Generalreferences of use in most subjects	50	20	45.5	7.9	19.2
Excellent references of use in most subjects	50	4	9.1	2.6	6.4
Number of books in the library					
Fiction Books					
Less than 100	0	4	0	23.7	12.8

101 to 600	0	16	18.2	13.2	14.1
1201 to 1200	25	20	27.3	0	11.5
1201 to 2000	25	4	9.1	10.5	0
More than 2000	25	16	0	0	5.1
General Reference Books:					
Less that 100	0	32	9.1	36.8	26.9
101 to 600	50	24	63.6	13.2	25.6
601 to 1000	25	6	0	0	5.1
Academic Books:					
Less than 100	25	12	9.1	36.8	24.4
101 to 600	0	28	26.4	2..6	15.4
601 to 8700	50	20	9.1	2.6	11.5
More than 8700	0	0	9.1	0	1.3

Attributes of Pupils, Parents and Teachers As Perceived By School Heads

In this study, we posed questions to heads of schools related to their perceptions of the attitudes of pupils, parents and teachers toward various aspects of the school programme. In regard to pupils' attitude toward learning, 37% of the school heads reported that pupils were eager to learn the subjects offered by the school, and 46% reported that pupils were reluctant to enrol in some subjects, while less than 8% reported pupils as being indifferent toward learning.

In reporting their perceptions of the school community toward the school curriculum, 43 (55%) of the school heads indicated that parents were eager to have their child(ren) study most subjects offered by the school, 22 (28%) felt that parents were indifferent about which subjects their child(ren) studied, 11 (14%) felt parents were reluctant to have their child(ren) study some subjects offered by the school, and only one school head reported that parents often refuse to let their child enrol in some subjects offered.

A most positive aspect was seen in that 69 (88.5%) of the heads reported that teachers and pupils respected each other, while only 16 (20.5%) reported that most pupils resent teachers' efforts to help them learn and 12 (15%) reported that most pupils resent having to learn.

A matter of concern in this study was attitudes teachers and parents held toward pupils enrolling in technical subjects offered by the school. When queried about attitudes of teachers of "academic subjects" toward the importance of technical subjects for all pupils, 52 (66.7%) of the heads reported these teachers held the view that technical subjects were important for all pupils while 14% felt these teachers believed technical subjects should be taken only by less able pupils. Another five percent indicated that academic teachers believed that technical subjects should be taken only by the brightest pupils.

On the attitudes of parents toward their children taking technical subjects, 45 (57.7%) of the school heads believed parents were eager to have their child(ren) study technical subjects while 25 (32%) felt parents were indifferent toward their child(ren) enrolling in technical subjects.

The important observation is that, according to the perceptions of the heads of schools, favourable attitudes among teachers of academic subjects and parents appear to be developing. Such an acceptance by these two groups should be of tremendous value in raising the status of technical subjects within the school and community.

Functions of Secondary Schools

Heads of schools were asked to rank five functions of secondary schools according to importance. Of the five functions, heads indicated that highest priority was "to prepare pupils to be honest, reliable and contributing citizens," second highest priority was "to prepare pupils for successful entry into society," third priority was to "to prepare pupils for entry into post-secondary education," fourth was "to prepare pupils to gain paid employment after From 4," and fifth, and last, was "to prepare pupils for employment in the technical fields."

In spite of the policy of vocationalization of secondary education and the fact that each of the 78 schools was reported to have offered at least two technical subjects in 1988, the role secondary schools as places to produce manpower in technical fields seems not yet appreciated by heads of schools. Possible explanations of this anomaly may include:

- There are numerous problems preventing schools from offering technical subjects on a large scale.
- The provision of facilities and equipment is so inadequate that heads do not perceive that their schools can impart any worthwhile practical skills to enable pupils to enter employment in the technical fields.

Relationship Between School Heads and the Community

In assessing their relationship with the community, 63 (81%) of the school heads asserted that they were accepted as important members of the community, and 13 (16.7%) indicated that they were respected but not accepted as full members of the community. The partial acceptance of a school head by the community could make it difficult for the head to create a conducive learning atmosphere which optimizes efforts by teachers and pupils.

Problems and Concerns of School Heads

On the basis of the data collected in this study, major areas highlighted as being problems or concerns by the school heads were staff development, learning facilities, physical facilities and equipment, curriculum, transport and communication. Each of these problems and concerns are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Staff Development

The need for more inservice workshops and seminars was greatly emphasized as was the need to train more teachers. A significant number of school heads felt strongly that present opportunities for inservice education were a privilege of only a small percentage of the secondary schools. A further concern raised by Rural Day secondary heads was that no significant effort was being made to help the most needy and remote schools where the majority of untrained and unqualified teachers exist. Another concern expressed by the heads was that priority for the Bachelor of Education degree programme should be given to secondary *trained* teachers to increase the depth of their subject knowledge.

Heads of schools were greatly concerned that no B.Ed. inservice programmes existed in areas such as school administration, guidance and counselling, instructional supervision, and social psychology which they believe would be of great value to both new and experienced heads and deputy heads. It is most appropriate to illustrate the seriousness with which school heads view the need for staff development for themselves and their teachers as summed by one school head:

> I feel inservice education could improve the standard of teaching of most untrained teachers if it is implemented. For example, at this school, the number of untrained teachers, including those who completed their 'O' levels last year is so large, and most of them have never had any

> form of teaching experience short of what they observed from their teacher during their period of secondary education. I feel if inservice is introduced, their teaching methodology can be greatly improved. As teacher-in-charge, I have never had any training or inservice teaching short of a few seminars. Assessing teachers is difficult for me.

The quotation from this concerned head provides a vivid picture of the sad situation existing in a large number of secondary schools in Zimbabwe. What merits recognition here is that he school heads appear to becoming more aware of competencies needed to provide instructional leadership in schools, and are willing to undergo training to gain those competencies.

Learning and Teaching Materials

Shortage of textbooks and equipment, especially in the Rural Day secondary schools, was considered a very critical problem. A further problem highlighted by school heads was the high cost of commercially produced books which had to be paid for from the meagre financial allocations given to schools. Additional problems mentioned were inadequate library facilities and lack of teaching materials, lack of adequate teaching equipment, and lack of classrooms.

Transport and Communication

The problems related to transport and communication were raised primarily by heads of Rural Day secondary schools. The inadequacy of both transport and communication in rural areas greatly affect the smooth running of those schools. Limited regular transport within rural areas force many pupils to walk long distances to and from school.

Curriculum

Heads expressed concern about their inability to select suitable main textbooks from those on the market. This problem often led to an inappropriate use of the meagre financial resources in the school when unsuitable books were purchased. A concern was also raised about the national syllabi which, according to school heads, did not cater for individual differences of pupils because the content is academic rather than practical. Considering that each of the 78 schools had offered at least two technical subjects in 1988, this concern could only meaningfully imply that the number of practical subjects offered compared to the number of academic subjects is small. It could also imply that little practical application of content is integrated into the academic subjects. The concern, however, might also imply that within the practical/technical subjects too much theoretical work was being emphasized.

Conclusions and Implications

While literature on effective schools emphasizes the importance of the school head as an instructional leader with responsibilities of promoting good teaching and effective learning opportunities, supervising teachers, organizing and coordinating staff development programmes directed at improving instruction, creating a school environment conducive to learning, and using available resources effectively to support academic activities, the results obtained from this study revealed that all these crucial activities are receiving either minimal or no attention from school heads. It was found that the contributing factors to this inability by school heads were poor academic and professional qualifications, undue emphasis in the job description of school heads on administrative duties, limited educational experience, and serious deficiencies in critical facilities such as textbooks, libraries and equipment. To correct the current situation in secondary schools, especially in the Rural Day schools, there appears to be a great need to increase inservice training for both school heads and teachers. Only through such inservice efforts can the capacity of the schools increase so that critical issues in the domains of curriculum and

instruction can be dealt with. The lack of quality of school libraries should be of great concern to all persons engaged in activities directed at improving the quality of education.

Some key questions which need immediate attention are:

- How enriching are the academic activities given to pupils if the latter are deprived of essential resources of information?
- What is the quality of intellectual training given to pupils by untrained and unqualified teachers who have no access to basic sources of information?
- To what extent will the poor learning methods and styles of learning acquired by pupils affect their future successes in education?

Corrective measures, which must take into consideration the meagre financial resources of schools, should be immediately instituted if the severe shortage of books in secondary schools is to be reduced. While function of Ministry of Education directives, greater attention should be paid to the available resources in schools in order to match demands or directives with inputs.

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