Role of Head of Departments and Their Impact on The Teaching-Learning Process and Related Policy A study in One Private School in Al Ain City

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دور رؤوساء الأقسام وتأثيرهم على عملية التعليم والتعلم ضمن السياسات ذات الصلة

دراسة في احدى المدارس الخاصة في مدينة العين

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by

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Abstract

This research study investigates the nature of the role and position of the HoDs within a school policy in one private school in AL Ain City in UAE based on their influence in performance of the teaching staff and their impact on the students' achievement. Additionally, the study highlights the challenges that HoDs face in their position as school middle leaders. The study employs a triangulation method to secure compliance and validation of the data collected. The quantitative data was collected through a close-ended questionnaire of 10 questions using the Survey Monkey software. This questionnaire was sent anonymously to the emails of 77 teachers in the mentioned school where the researcher received 65 responses only. The qualitative data was collected through open-ended questions of a semi-structured interviews that were conducted with 4 HoDs of the same school who are still on the head of their positions. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS, while the qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The quantitative data analysis reveals that there is clear relationship between the role of the HoDs and the overall improvement of the teaching-learning process. On the other hand, the qualitative data analysis affirms and reconsolidates the quantitative data analysis findings and also indicates the existence of clear policy regarding HoDs' role in addition to certain challenges associated with this role like time constraints due to teaching load and teachers' reluctant. The study limitations along with recommendations for future studies that may influence the school development of policies in UAE schools were highlighted at the end of the study.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة للبحث في طبيعة دور رؤوساء الاقسام ضمن سياسة المدرسة . لقد أجريت هذه الدراسة في احدى المدارس الخاصة في مدينة العين في الإمارات العربية المتحدة بناءً على تأثيرهم في أداء المعلمين و على إنجازات الطلاب. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، تسلط الدراسة الضوء على التحديات التي قد يواجهها رؤوساء الأقسام في مسار عملهم. تستخدم الدراسة طريقة المثالثة لضمان التحقق والبرهان من صحة البيانات التي تم جمعها. لقد تم جمع البيانات الكمية من خلال استبيان مغلق من 10 أسئلة باستخدام برنامج Survey Monkey. تم إرسال هذا الاستبيان بشكل سري إلى البريد الإلكتروني لـ 77 معلمًا في المدرسة المذكورة يتضمن رابط الاستبيان حيث تلقى الباحث 65 إجابة فقط. تم جمع البيانات النوعية من خلال أسئلة مفتوحة لمقابلات شبه منظمة أجريت مع 4 من رؤوساء الأقسام من نفس المدرسة الذين لا يزالون على رأس مناصبهم. تم تحليل البيانات الكمية باستخدام نظام SPSS ، في حين تم تحليل البيانات النوعية بتاءً على النقاط الأساسية للموضوع. يكشف التحليل الكمي للبيانات عن وجود علاقة واضحة بين دور رؤوساء الأقسام والتطور الشامل لعملية التعليم والتعلم. ويؤكد هذه الننتائج التحليل النوعي للبيانات والذي بدوره يشير أيضًا إلى وجود سياسة واضحة فيما يتعلق بدور رؤوساء الأقسام ضمن نظام المدرسة . كذلك ألقى التحاليل النوعي للنتائج على ابعض التحديات المرتبطة بهذا الدور مثل قيود الوقت بسبب عبء التدريس وعدم التجاوب من قبل بعض المعلمين لاي نوع من التغيير واستخدام أساليب جديدة. انتهى البحث بتسليط الضوء على محدودية الدراسة إلى جانب تقديم اقتراحات وتوصيات للدراسات المستقبليةفي هذا المجال التي قد تساعد على تطوير السياسات المدرسية و خاصة فيما يتعلق بالمهام الادارية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة في نهاية الدراسة.

Dedication

My sincere gratefulness to Dr. Emad Ayyash my supervisor in my dissertation who in-spite of his excessive workload dedicated me time for guidance and support with targeted constructive comments. Additionally, my gratitude extends to all my professors in British University in Dubai for all their support across the modules. Furthermore, appreciation is extended to my school staff that supported me in conducting the research and perform my study. Finally, my love and serenity for my family in my beloved country for their encouragement and trust.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The concept of effective leadership is considered to play a significant role in shaping and contributing to the development of the educational system within schools, studies have emphasized the deep connection between the school leadership and its effect on both students and teachers as (Vidoni & Grassetti ,2003). The principal of the school, along with the senior leadership, is, therefore, a focus of many studies as these people are majorly involved in decision making. Howeve, Head of Departments (HoDs) also have a major influence on the improvement and success of the school as they are at the core of any school of the hierarchy. On this basis, it can be stated that the leadership style of HoDs is also an important factor in the development of the education system in schools. Therefore, the study is devised to highlight the major contribution and importance of HoDs, their role in devising the school's policy and implementation, their role in student performance and teachers' development. The significance of the role of HoDs in schools is that they form the connection between the senior leaders and the students and teachers which are the core of the school. HoDs are the middle managers and therefore, their responsibilities are to ensure teaching and learning activities within the school are improved with the help of focused control and supervision. HoDs are required to be punctual and must utilize time in the best possible manner to execute the overall duties/ responsibilities. According to different academics, the instructional leadership and capabilities of the HoDs must be utilized to develop a more basic and improved system of education. The role of HoDs in determining whether the teachers are teaching students effectively is significant. Also, it can be stated that HoDs of the school can help to devise possible approaches, standards, and techniques for teachers of a school (Smith et al., 2013). Research studies by Mestry, Isavanie, and Michèle, (2014) help to develop an understanding that academic focus is provided to shift the supervision of learning and teaching to HoDs. Along with that, the research study helps to identify the duties of HoDs like teachers' supervision and monitor and control the practices of teachers following the standards and best practices mentioned by the schools (Mestry et al., 2014). Academics also have a viewpoint that the improvement in

instructional leadership can help to raise the level of the teacher as well as students' performance (Sergiovanni&Starratt, 2007).

Bush et al., (2010) helps to develop an understanding that the prime role of teachers is to manage and implement the curriculum in the class and the prime responsibility for HoDs is to ensure that things are going as per plan. The researchers also raise the point that the learning/ teaching hours for HoDs must be decreased since their other responsibilities are ignored, which can have a direct impact on the performance of the school (Bush et al., 2010). It is also noticeable that the responsibilities of a principal are passed on to the head of the department to release some pressure from principals. The roles and responsibilities of HoDs have undergone some changes from the administration to the management of students, finance, curriculum development, instructions, and teachers (Gold, 2000). The analysis of literature helps to realize that the role of HoDs has changed to a significant level in the western world and requires a specific focus in the UAE. It is, therefore, anticipated that research would help to develop an understanding of the role of HoDs in UAE more effectively and efficiently and also, the outcomes would help to add to the literature for UAE perspective.

1.2. Research Background

The education in UAE was confined to the urban areas and in case a student wanted to pursue higher education then he would have to go abroad. There were highly successful and efficient education systems adopted and implemented by UAE right after the establishment of the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1971. The prime objective of the development of MOE was to ensure that students are provided with effective skills and education not only to improve the literacy rate but alsoto improves their contribution to the economic stability and growth (Emirates NBD, 2019).

The economic growth in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has led to transform the region from previously being a backwater desert to a vibrant and rich economic centre. The population has also been increasing drastically from 279,000 in the year 1971 to 9 million in 2018 (Kamal, 2018). The residents in the UAE are majorly foreign-born and therefore, it can be noticeable that the level of migrants within the UAE is greater than the native-born population. In recent times, the focus on education is the priority as the government believes that it can help to further improve the economic growth of the country. The revenues generated from oil exports are well

utilized by the government to improve and increase the educational attainment rates and are more focused on developing a high-quality education system in the region. The main focus of the founder of UAE (Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan) was on education as it can help in economic modernization. The investment in education is considered as the generation of trained and educated people who can lift the internal and external matter further to boost economic growth. The government has devised an education plan for 2017-2021, which is primarily focused on raising the upper secondary education of UAE to 98% from 96.7% in the year 2016. Also, the initiative by the government is to increase the rating within OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) specifically for PISA (Program for International Student Assessment). Along with that, the initiative of the government for National Higher Education Strategy 2030 can help to provide a specific focus of the government on the authorization of the standards, increasing the outputs, creating a curriculum with outputs for employment, and also to establish a level of qualification frameworks. The internationalization policy of the UAE is also effective as it is one of the most transformational educational hubs in the world at the current time (Kamal, 2018; Emirates NBD, 2019). The education policy of the UAE allows offering more focused and favourable regulatory, mobility, openness, recognition, and highly improved assessment policies and procedures for foreign degrees. All this has led to an increased inflow of students both from the local community and internal students (Kamal, 2018). All this and within the last four decades, there has been a great focus on school leadership and their role in improving the education system in their schools and thus, new leadership approach is required, particularly the exact role and policy related to the middle leaders or HoDs.

1.3 Rationale of The Study

Being an educator with many years of experience in different academic positions, the researcher has realized that there is no clear policy as for the school leadership concept, particularly the role of the middle leaders or HoDs. The researcher strongly believes that HoDs employ an important role in conducting essential leadership role and indulge huge influence on the school culture and the implementation of the school vision. She also believes that HoDs are the core of the school leadership and the core of the school improvement journey particularly the pedagogy and academic aspects. The researcher aims from this study to emphasize on the importance of the

role of the HoDs in enhancing the teachers' performance, improving the students' academic achievement within the challenges that HoDs face. Also, her aim is to inform school policy makers to employ a clear feasible policy in this regard that secures equity of learning among schools in UAE.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are linked to determining the importance of HoDs and their role in schools and student's performance and achievements. The research objectives are subcategorized as under;

- To highlight the significance of HoDs contribution within schools of UAE.
- To determine the role of HoDs in devising the school policies and their implementation.
- To evaluate the role of HoDs in student's achievements and teachers' performance.

1.5 Research Questions

The prime research question for the study is;

1. What is the role of HODs?

Moreover, the detailed research questions devised are as follows.

1. What is the influence of HODs in the teacher's performance?
2. What is the impact of HODs on student's achievement?
3. What are the major challenges HODs face in schools?

1.6 Significance

The research paper helps to determine the significance and importance of the role of HoDs in schools in UAE. There are outcomes of the research that would help to improve the education system by highlighting and offering insights on the role of HoDs within the school leadership hierarchy and the teacher's leadership style on the education system. The research outcomes can be beneficial to devise strategies to improve the role of HoDs and offering detailed recommendations to improve the overall powers and autonomy of HoDs in schools in the UAE.

The outcomes of the research would be beneficial to highlight the significance of HoDs and their role in schools and also would be equally beneficial for policymakers to better devise the roles and responsibilities for the HoDs. Also, it can help to offer an insight into how the relationship between HoDs and practitioners including school teachers and principal can be improved.

1.7 Outline

The research study consists of five chapters including the introduction, literature review, methodology, results and analysis, and conclusion and recommendations. All these chapters are subdivided into further detailed headings that facilitate the readers and audience to derive specific information.

The introduction chapter is devised to provide the basic information relating to the subject topic and what made it an interest for the researcher. The literature review chapter represents the theories and empirical justifications relating to the research topic, objectives, and questions. The methodology chapter helps to identify the pathway for the current research as it provides the details for research design, philosophy, and other approaches and techniques adopted by the researcher to evaluate the data. The result and analysis chapter helps to provide detail interpretations and representation of the data and outcomes. The chapter helps to determine and discuss the overall link between the outcomes of the current research with work already done on the subject topic (presented in the Literature Review). Finally, the conclusion and recommendations chapter of the study helps to conclude and provide recommendations for future researchers and business level implications.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Facing many challenges, the role of HoDs, middle leaders, in schools play a very complicated role. Due to massive education changes and reforms that began in the 1980s, educational leaders have been loaded and pressurized with more tasks and responsibilities. This resulted in the distribution of some of these responsibilities to other phases in the hierarchy of the school, including middle leaders. Thus, the scope and volume of the expected work the middle leaders have to carry out made their role increasingly demanding (Bassett, 2016).

It is very hard to exactly specify the role of middle leaders in schools (Koh, 2018). (Hannay and Ross, 1999) describe the role as being "ill-defined and highly variable"; Weller (2001, p.3) characterizes the role as completely undefined, open to perception and interpretation, and multibranched tasks in nature. The varied and complex role of middle leaders includes but not limited to working with obstinate students, supporting subject colleagues, managing the subject area and providing material resources, offering expert knowledge, liaise senior staff policy to departmental staff, planning effectively, support teachers in understanding the school system, cascading the interests of the subject area, creating a collaborative culture, formulating curriculum aims and objectives, organizing the testing of pupil attainment, recording and monitoring students' progress and attainment, and maintaining external relations (Koh, 2018).

The HoDs are positioned in the core of the school hierarchy below the senior leader's team which includes the school principal and vice-principal (Fitzgerald, 2009). In this context, the middle leaders work directly in managing, monitoring, and developing teachers, and play a pivotal role in passing and translating the school policies to teachers; a role that is described by (Busher& Harris, 1999, p. 10) as 'bridging and brokering', that is , the HoDs are the negotiators and translators of how the school leadership perceive the school policies and the requirement of implementing them to their departments. In her study of three secondary schools, (Robson, 2012) describes the demanding role of middle leaders as 'multi-faceted', stating some of the HoDs' role capacity and duties which are challenging multitasks. To explain it more, she stated one of the middle leaders'

functions of the role which includes: behaviour management, performance management of staff, appraisal, regular observations, monitoring and checking units align with requirements, and moderation (p. 38).

Wright (2002) emphasizes the intense and complex nature of the middle leaders' role in which they have to balance between the departmental specific needs and the wider needs of the school in a time-poor context where relationships with others are essential. In such a tense context where middle leaders function as leaders and managers, many middle leaders remark that they do not have enough skills to deal with the increasing challenges of the role, and indicate that they require more specific professional development that helps them manage the very demanding tasks of their position (Adey, 2000; Dinham, 2007).

Although the role of the principal's leadership is crucial for effective education, they are not completely in direct contact with the classrooms (Lingard et al., 2003). Conversely, the middle leaders (for example Head of Departments and Subject Leaders) are placed in the center of the education process, having direct contact with classroom and a leadership role with teachers (Grootenboer, 2018).

The middle leaders' role functions differently from that of the principal. Working closely and directly with teachers requires a negotiable attitude when carrying out tasks and responsibilities (Grootenboer et al., 2014). Additionally, being in the classroom with teaching loads makes middle leaders more aware of the impact of any educational initiative or curriculum reform on students. This dual nature of middle leaders' role makes it more challenging and demanding (Lipscombe, Tindall-Ford and Grootenboer, 2019). One of these challenges that are highlighted by (Grootenboer et al., 2014) is that middle leaders' attention is divided between their leadership and teaching roles.

For political, historical, and organizational purposes, the middle leaders' role is defined and functioned differently in various educational contexts. For example, and as one aspect of this role ambiguity, is the various titles it has encountered, including teacher leader, mid-level leader, head of the department, middle leader, departmental chair, subject coordinator, year leader and many others according to the school system. (Farchi and Tubin, 2018). The title and job description depend mostly on school size and level, school system and educational policy, and national and

local context (Gurr and Drysdale, 2013). Despite these differences, the role imposes shared characteristics, including being responsiblefor specific staff and tasks, being appointed by senior management (not elected by teachers), and acting as a mediator between school senior leadership team and teachers, with the authority of distributing work and rewards and imposing endorsements (Bidwell, 2001).

In this chapter, the researcher will amply cover the related domains. The major targets in research are to highlight the influence of HoDs in the improvement of the learning process generally, and their influence in teachers' performance and professional development. Additionally, the researcher aims to study the challenges facing the HoDs and the effectiveness of policies in palce. Head of Department position, which is mostly referred to as middle leaders in many research, is an essential concept that related to many different leadership theories like distributed leadership, instructional leadership and others.

Furthermore, the researcher will highlight similar research studies that have been conducted in different regions that leads to the study significance.

2.2.Expectations of middle leaders

Literature discussing middle leadership position confirms the following to be among middle leaders' functions: interpersonal interactions; instructional leadership; developing staff; developing a department vision; monitoring and evaluating staff performance; strategic planning; budgeting; administration (Bassett, 2016). These functions indicate that middle leaders' influence is exerted vertically as well as horizontally (Dinham, 2007). Particularly, the following three functions are perceived to be vital to the role of the middle leader: influencing teaching and learning by the means of instructional leadership; the interrelation nature of the majority of the tasks undertaken by middle leaders; the reinforcement of educational aims through middle leaders' administrative tasks (Bassett, 2016). Although this list of functions is not comprehensive, it reflects the complex and demanding nature of the middle leader's position (Bassett, 2016).

The impact of the middle leader position depends mostly on the role definition and expectations (Gurr, 2018; Leithwood, 2016), for example, distinguishes two types of middle leaders: the middle

leaders whose role mainly revolves around supervising and evaluating teachers against those who work sincerely to guide and support teachers, indicating that the second type of middle leaders has a greater impact on teaching and learning. Reviewing 42 studies on the impact of secondary school principals and department heads, Leithwood (2016) concluded that both instructional and transformational leadership practices of department heads make powerful contributions to secondary school improvement and have consistent positive effects on students.

Similarly, exploring the impact of the leadership practices of 50 subject department heads across 38 secondary schools which demonstrated outstanding educational outcomes over the course of at least four years, Dinham (2007) found that the leadership of the Heads of Departments was important for students' success. The success of the middle leaders was found to be promoted through focusing on students and their learning; demonstrating high-level interpersonal skills; being well-accepted and trusted; demonstrating strong professional capacity; maintaining good internal and external relations; prompting department planning and organization; developing common goals; promoting collaboration and team spirit within the department; encouraging teacher learning; fostering a culture of shared responsibility, trust, and success; having and sharing a clear vision; setting high expectations for themselves and others Gurr, (2018).

2.3. Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership has become one of the most emerging and desirable leadership styles in the field of education in the twenty-first century (Bush & Glover, 2014). This model of leadership has appeared as a response to the critics of other styles of leadership (e.g. transformational leadership) which revolve around the charismatic style of the heroic figure of the leader, namely the principal. This dissatisfaction grew up with the need for developing the leadership capacity for school improvement in more than just one leader (Koh, 2018)

There are several ways to define distributed leadership in literature. While (Spillane, 2005), for example, focused on the interactions taking place among those who are guiding the instructional development process in the school, (Fletcher and Kaufer, 2003) focused on the direction of leadership practices that occur by people at all levels; (Bennett, Woods, and Harvey, 2003) claimed that distributed leadership is a way of thinking rather than an alternative technique or practice.

Although there is no one agreed definition of the term distributed leadership (Turner, 2011), there are certain elements of this model that distinguish it from other leadership styles (Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016). One of these main elements is the focus on leadership as a practice rather than a post or position Koh (2018). Another core element is the focus on leadership as interactions rather than actions Koh, (2018). This means that leadership practices are not exclusively performed by those who hold leadership positions, but they are widely shared to involve other school personnel Harris (2014).

Similarly, being a collective activity, focusing on collective goals and resting based on expertise rather than hierarchal authority are identified by Copland (2003) as common understanding within the concept of distributed leadership. Thus, Leadership is no longer practised by an individual, but it extends within the organization, with overlapping leadership roles that change with the various needs that arise Harris (2003).

The increasing shift towards and interest in distributed leadership arise from the assumption that this model has a great impact on students' learning and achievement (Bush and Middlewood, 2013).(Leithwood et al., 2008) have shown that widely distributed school leadership has a great impact on school and students. Different studies have highlighted an effective relationship between certain students' outcomes and distributive leadership in addition to its effective influence on teachers' self-efficacy and motivation (Koh, 2018). For example, the research of (Day et al., 2009) showed that distributed leadership contributed to a school's achievement in improving students' outcomes.

A distributed leadership style where authority is distributed across all levels of hierarchy is very crucial for middle leaders to influence others, as leadership influence is generally related to power (Lipscombe, Tindall-Ford and Grootenboer, 2019). The level of authority middle leaders has usually determined the level of influence they have when persuading their subordinates to achieve common goals (Jarvis, 2012). Middle leaders are highly experienced teachers, but in most cases with a limited level of power (Leithwood, 2016) - a limitation that may restrain their influence on their colleagues. (Hammersley-Fletcher and Strain, 2011) also explained that to effectively lead, middle leaders need both resources and power.

Leithwood (2016) emphasized that distributed leadership practices of the middle leaders are likely to have a greater impact on students than practices carried out only at the school top leadership level. As their work is usually carried out too far from the classroom, even successful principal- although they positively influence their schools - cannot solely sway teaching and learningin school(Renihan et al., 2006).As a result, distributed leadership approach – where middle leaders utilize their educational experience to positively influence students' outcomes and teachers' development- is becoming more vital (Grootenboer, 2018).

2.4.Instructional leadership

Instructional leadership was the central leadership model in the 1980s and the most frequently studied approach in the field of educational leadership in the past years (Hallinger, 2005). The term "instructional leadership" is derived from North America and is referred to in other contexts as "educational Leadership" (Gurr, Drysdale, & Mulford, 2007, 2010).

Leithwood and Duke's (1999) definition of instructional leadership focuses on teachers' activities and their direct interactions with students in the class, impacting students' growth and learning. Ideally, instructional leaders deal directly with teachers and focus on classroom practices that ensure quality education in the school (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985). In literature, school leadership that caters for teaching and learning particularly is introduced as academic leadership, pedagogical leadership, student-centred leadership, curriculum leadership, professional leadership, or instructional leadership (Bassett, 2016).

Although researchers have proposed different approaches of instructional leadership, all these models assert that school leaders should have the knowledge, experience, and authority to strongly influence teachers (Koh, 2018).The influence of instructional leadership can be direct or indirect (Koh, 2018). The direct instructional leadership focuses on teachers' practices inside the classroom to ensure quality instruction; this includes professional development, goal setting, developing shared responsibility, and quality lesson delivery. Indirect instructional leadership focuses on creating an encouraging teaching conditions and motivating learning environment; this includes: conducting strategic resourcing, ensuring systematic environment, solving complicated problems (Koh, 2018).

Nowadays instructional leadership is viewed as an influential process through which school leaders derive clear directions for school improvement, motivate teachers, coordinate school strategies, and facilitate effective classroom practices aiming at improving teaching and learning (Hallinger and Murphy, 2013). Conceptualizing state of the art instructional leadership, Hallinger and Murphy (2013) highlighted the following: providing conditions that ensure positive learning environment for students; developing an academic media where high expectations are embedded in curriculum standards and processes; adopting improvement strategies that are congruent with the changing conditions of the school overtime; promoting the ongoing professional development of staff that enhances school efforts in commencing and sustaining development.

(Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe, 2008) indicated that t instructional leadership has influence that is three to four times more than the impact of transformational leadership and other leadership models on students' outcomes. While transformational leadership model is more focused on the relationship between the leaders and followers, instructional leadership, on the other hand, is more focused on the educational work and relationships of school leadership, and the quality of these educational relationships is, consequently, predictive of the quality of students' outcomes (Robinson et al., 2008). Being focused on very specific pedagogical work, educational leadership helps build collegial, loyal and cohesive staff who shares the same stimulating vision. The practices involved in such educational relationships are better captured and measured by instructional leadership than by transformational leadership (Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe, 2008)

Although school principals are traditionally the instructional leaders in the school, the increasing demands of the principals' role have made instructional leadership more difficult for principals (Bassett, 2016). Thus, instructional leadership, which comprises leading the improvement of teachers' practices to positively impact students' learning outcomes, has become a focus function of the school middle leaders (Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2006). Bush (2008) believes that middle leaders are ideally eligible to take over the instructional leadership role in the school, due to their significant middle position within the school hierarchy and their influential role with teachers.(Bryk et al., 2010) stated that middle leaders as pedagogical or instructional leaders have a direct and positive impact on teachers' classroom practices.

According to Bush (2008), the aim of instructional leadership is to raise teachers' motivation, commitment, and capacity. This will consequently influence the performance of the whole school. In their description of high performing schools, the Education Review Office (2015) indicated that the leaders of these schools are handling curriculum planning, coordinating and evaluating. With the increasing workload of school principals, it is obvious that the instructional leadership functions of these successful schools are delegated to middle leaders (Bassett, 2016).

Some argue that school administrative activities may hinder the school core task of teaching and learning. Thus, middle leaders must be more focused on school pedagogical practices (Farchi and Tubin, 2018). This comprises leading teachers' professional development to improve teaching and learning, being able to address questions about classroom practices, and determining their own professional development needs (Harris and Jones, 2010). A successful instructional leader promotes teachers' capacity to identify individual student's strengths and weaknesses and raises teachers' professional abilities to develop and follow up plans that address individual student's specific needs (Farchi and Tubin, 2018).

2.5. Developing staff

Staff development is an important function of school leadership (Bassett, 2016). (Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd, 2009) Specified enhancement and participation in professional development as the greatest leadership function to influence students' outcomes. Middle leaders are traditionally responsible for leading department-based professional learning and encouraging teachers to participate in school-based professional development initiatives (Dinham, 2007). Similarly, (Kemp and Nathan, 1995) emphasized that developing staff is the major task of middle leaders; they asserted that teachers' development at the department level is a key element of the whole school effectiveness.

Cascading staff development to middle leaders at the department level permits teachers' development to take place by an informal means through teachers' daily interactions with middle leaders (Blanford, 2006). Instead of influence underpinned by a power paradigm, middle leaders can influence and develop staff with collaborative approaches and trusting relationships; such type of influence can develop a more interactive and multidimensional approach to influence (Lipscombe, Tindall-Ford and Grootenboer, 2019). Likely, in addition to their direct influence on

staff, (Shaked and Schechter, 2017) clarify thatmiddle leaders can influence indirectly if they are aware of the wider interrelated influences at different levels of the schools. Wylie's (2013) survey findings highlight that one-third of teachers depends solely on the feedback they take from their managers as a means of professional development.

2.6.Administration

The administration is very crucial in constructing the context where teaching and learning take place (Bush, 2008). The administration is also described by(Bush, 2008) as a function that supports school educational purposes. Similarly, Lumby (2017) emphasized that school administrative activities have great contributions to school organizational stability and legitimacy. From this perspective, it is very critical for middle leaders to be able to undertake such administrative tasks effectively (Bassett, 2016). From carrying out department meeting to developing central management systems, middle leaders have a considerable collection of administrative tasks (Dinham, 2007).

The aim of administrative activities carried out by middle leaders is to reduce the ambiguity and increase consistency and regularity among teachers and among those who work with the same age group or ability level (Bidwell, 2001). In order to achieve this goal, middle leaders conduct a significant number of administrative tasks that include: developing tests and examinations schedules, designing and organizing curriculum, managing human and teaching resources, monitoring teachers' performance, handing over administrative information, checking staff attendance, monitoring students' progress, and setting the pace of department performance(Farchi and Tubin, 2018).

In addition to being responsible for students' learning outcomes, schools gain legitimacy by preparing and allocating students for positions in the social structure (Farchi and Tubin, 2018). Middle leaders' administrative performances help schools operate as institutions within the community, preparing students for future positions, and helping students define themselves as graduates who possess distinguished rights and capacity in society. Thus, one of the middle leaders' administrative work is to maintain school policies in choosing, sorting, and allocating students according to their ability groups. This is another important area where middle leaders' administrative behaviour supports school effectiveness (Farchi and Tubin, 2018).

2.7. Quality school management

MacBeath (1999) identifies school culture, organizational communication, human relationships, working with parents, and dealing with classroom environment as the key performance indicators of the school quality. It is the job of school leaders at all levels to ensure that these areas of performance are well maintained in their schools. For quality school management and guidance, both senior and middle leaders should share clear visions and values and provide strategic direction to ensure that the school is functioning to achieve its goals (Ng and Kenneth Chan, 2014). Also, both school principals and middle leaders - the key partners in the school management- should be well equipped with the capacities of the four types of leadership identified by (Caldwell, 2003) for the school to realize its vision (Ng and Kenneth Chan, 2014). These leadership types are strategic leadership, educational leadership, cultural leadership, and responsive leadership (Caldwell, 2003).

Koh et al., (2011) identified major areas of a middle leadership role. As perceived by school principals, these major areas include learning process; establishing vision; providing directions; communicating; leading and guiding teachers; changing role; continuing leadership development; challenges. Aspiring for a principal position, middle leaders should also noticeably consider the skills of crisis management; working with parents; human resourcing; financial management (Ng and Kenneth Chan, 2014).

2.8. Middle Leaders Challenges

2.8.1. Lack of Preparation and training

Although middle leaders' role has become more tangled, effective leadership training has remained incapable of coping with the increasingly demanding tasks of the role (Robson, 2012). Although middle leaders should be qualified and well equipped to undertake the role responsibilities, this is not always the case (Brown et al., 2002). In (Adey, 2000; Dinham, 2007) research, only half of the middle leaders reported that their learning needs are being met; the research findings also indicated that middle leaders are not well prepared for major aspects of the role. Likely, Fitzgerald (2009) referred to the uncertainty many of middle leaders have when they first hold middle leadership

positions. Lack of preparation is one of the most important factors that make middle leadership role more challenging (Bassett, 2016).

In the literature, many studies reported inadequate training and preparation for middle leader positions (Koh, 2018). For example, 70% of middle leaders surveyed by Weller (2001), and nearly six out of ten middle leaders surveyed by Adey (2000) reported that they didn't get any formal training before being appointed to their positions; approximately half of middle leaders surveyed in Cardno and Bassett's (2015) study stated that they received inadequate training for their middle leadership role. Reporting on their middle leadership research, Gurr and Drysdale (2013) confirmed the scarcity in middle leadership training and development. Due to the lack of training and developmental programs targeting middle leaders, Kedian (2006) assumes that middle leaders will have to develop their leadership capacities themselves.

In his study of professional development, Adey (2000) categorized the training of middle leaders into three groups: the first group of middle leaders take their training through watching and observing other middle leaders performing their leadership tasks; the second group of trainees are the middle leaders who are, in addition to watching other middle leaders, cascaded some leadership tasks; the third group are the middle leaders who get their training while in the post carrying out a leadership role. Turner (2006) claims that without prior formal training, these three types of informal training are effective and have enabled middle leaders to carry out the leading and managing responsibilities of their role. Gurr and Drysdale (2013) emphasized that this apprenticeship model of training is the dominant type of preparation and development for leadership.

However, these forms of informal training, due to the increasing challenges and complex responsibility loaded on middle leaders shoulders, are not sufficient to keep middle leaders going forward (Koh, 2018). (Adey, 2000) confirms that in order for middle leaders to effectively lead their department, they always need to gain knowledge and develop new skills. (Leithwood, 2016) suggests that in order to enhance middle leader's impact, they need to be provided with adequate opportunities to acquire and develop needed leadership skills. (Fitzgerald et al., 2006) emphasized the importance of professional development for teachers as leaders for continuous change and innovation.

Adey (2000) states that middle leaders have diverse training needs. This diversity is reflected in the study of (Brown et al., 2002); they highlighted that middle leaders need training on:

- planning, budgeting, and financial management
- using performance criteria for evaluation
- developing short, medium, and long-term plan
- linking department aims to bigger aims
- promoting shared planning at subject level
- prioritizing objectives

In addition to the list of training needs listed above, (Brown et al., 2002) asserted that middle leaders should develop their ability to work within a whole-school perspective. Similarly, Adey and Jones (1998) argued that middle leaders should not work separately, and they need to improve their ability to view their work within the whole school development planning and to contribute to the whole-school improvement process.

Recently there has been an increase in the provision of formal preparation programs for middle leaders around the world (Koh, 2018). These programs are either school-based or as a partnership with local educational authorities or higher educational institutions (Koh, 2018). Evaluating the effectiveness of one of these preparation programs in the UK, Naylor, Gkolia and Brundrett (2006) reported that middle leaders who received such preparation program perceived a considerable increase in their confidence when undertaking middle leadership responsibilities. However, not all these formal preparation programs are effective and have the same positive impact (Koh, 2018). Harris, Busher and Wise (2001) found that many of the formal preparation programs offered by educational authorities or higher educational institutions are of a broad or wide nature and adopt a "one size fits all" approach to middle leaders training. Such type of formal preparation is ineffective in meeting the very specific needs of each group of middle leaders (Koh, 2018).

Harris et al. (2001) conclude that a proper training program for middle leaders should: include action research where trainees focus on a specific problem or issue; require participants to develop an action or implementation plan when they go back to their schools; involve discussions about pedagogy and quality teaching and learning within the subject area; be corresponding with the school improvement programs; support participants to follow up their job responsibilities; support

participants in analyzing data and scrutinizing evidence; provide participants with supportive networks; help build a good rapport among participants.

Despite the importance of former preparation programs of middle leaders, (Turner, 2000) found that former middle leaders training helped middle leaders in building understanding of their role, yet doesn't have the same direct effective impact on middle leaders' capacity to improve teaching and learning in their departments. Other studies have supported Turner's view, suggesting that working with and observing teachers have a better impact on improving teaching and learning than formal preparation programs (Koh, 2018).

2.8.2. Developing interpersonal relationships

Busher (2005) asserts that negotiation and building strong relations with a colleague are core skills for middle leaders. The range of strong relations middle leaders have to build is very broad; this includes relations with other leaders, support staff, teachers, parents, students, and community groups (Bassett, 2016). Cardno (2012) highlights that one of the most significant things middle leaders can do is to solve problems involving people. Similarly, Bush (2008) and Busher (2005) confirm that interrelation skills are very important for middle leaders to motivate others to accomplish educational goals. Also, Wright (2002) figured out that connections in schools are located within complex micro-political contexts which are rarely taken into consideration within the organizational structure. However, unfortunately, (Dinham, 2007) found that many middle leaders do not have the required social skills to build such important relationships, and to bring together such diverse to achieve educational goals.

2.8.3. Conflicts between collegiality and accountability

While building strong relationships is essential for the success of middle leaders, middle leaders carry out functions which may demoralize such collegial relationships – a further challenge for middle leaders (Bennett et al., 2007). Successful middle leaders are expected to support their departments, motivate their staff and build strong relationships; simultaneously, they act as line managers who should monitor and evaluate the performance of their colleagues (Fitzgerald, Youngs, and Grootenboer, 2003) – a practice that is important to hold teachers accountable for their performance (Cardno, 2012). This tension is highlighted by Forrester (2011) who states that

performance appraisal declines professional relationships between the appraiser and appraise. This supports Adey's (2000) argument that if middle leaders are responsible for developing staff, they shouldn't be charged with evaluating staff performance which may damage collegial relationships between middle leaders and their teams. This tension occurs when middle leaders find themselves in an undesirable position of evaluating the performance of their colleagues whom they supported (Bassett, 2016). This conflict makes Busher (2005) raise the question of whether collegiality between middle leaders and teachers can even be achieved in such a hierarchical organization.

2.8.4. Lack of Time

Many studies have reported that there is always a lack of time to effectively carry out the demanding responsibilities of the middle leader's role (Koh, 2018). Bassett (2016) confirmed that lack of time is a major difficulty facing middle leaders. Lack of time is described by (Collier et al., 2002) as the enemy of middle leaders. Although middle leaders are usually allocated non-contact time to carry out their responsibilities, Deece's (2003) study figured out that the majority of HoDs had almost a full teaching load, with only one class fewer than normal teachers. With a significant teaching load that requires planning, preparation, conducting assessment and marking, little time is left for middle leaders to effectively carry out their actual role as educational leaders of their subjects, and, thus, compromises have to be made (Deece, 2003). This was also reflected in Bassett's (2016) study where middle leaders indicated that due to the lack of time they couldn't carry out both their teaching and leading responsibilities satisfactorily.

Researchers have reported that workload pressures negatively affect middle leaders' performance within their departments (Koh, 2018). Fitzgerald (2009) confirms that middle leaders are overwhelmed with compliance tasks that dominate their time. Similarly, Dinham (2007) highlighted that one of the major challenges that face middle leaders to effectively undertake their role is the lack of allocated time. Therefore, half of the middle leaders interviewed in Collier et al.'s (2002) study suggested reducing their teaching loads and other administrative tasks in order to have more time so that they can improve their performances in other responsibilities.

2.8.5. Role Ambiguity

In middle leader literature, role ambiguity comprises lots of issues, including the lack of formal job description (Koh, 2018). Even when a job description of the middle leaders' role has already existed, there is a range of differences in how these job descriptions are interpreted by middle leaders (Adey, 2000). A number of studies have shown that middle leaders have a range of complex and conflicting duties that include: teaching; staff supervision and development; students' discipline; curriculum leadership; school administration (Koh, 2018). Other studies have asserted that middle leaders' role is challenging and unpredictable (Koh, 2018). Weller (2001) reported that middle leaders' role is usually expanded beyond what is stated in their job description. White (2002) suggested that middle leaders' effectiveness can be enhanced with more role clarity. This is what makes Cardno and Bassett (2015) suggest that senior leaders should clarify what is particularly expected by middle leaders within the specific institutional context.

One aspect of middle leaders' role ambiguity was highlighted by Abolghasemi McCormick and Connors (1999) who claimed that the lack of middle leaders' involvement in the overall school strategic planning leads to the difficulty of enacting the school vision for the whole school. Dinham (2000) have drawn the attention to another aspect of this ambiguity, which is the lack of communication vertically among departments and horizontally among teachers, department heads, and senior leaders. Also, Irvine and Brundrett (2016) have referred to the conflicting position of the middle leaders: on the one hand, they are the leaders of their department and its representative at the senior leadership; on the other hand, they are supposed to be the voice of the senior leadership to the department. This sandwich-like position was, similarly, referred to by ten middle leaders who were interviewed by Marshall (2012).

Collier (2002) blames role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload for the negative experiences middle leaders have. In their study of middle leaders, (Ingvarson et al., 2005) found that 84% of middle leaders felt that their workload was heavy and 47% felt that it was badly affecting their health. This workload and pressure, according to Campbell (2003), is due to the high expectations of school principals for middle leaders. In a context where there is a communication problem or a lack of mutual trust between principals and teachers, middle leaders can act as a bridge to resolve the communication issue (Ng and Kenneth Chan, 2014). This, however, is not an easy task. In his

study, (Kwan, 2009) highlights the difficulties the middle leaders have in staff management. Previously, Ribbins (1997) reported that middle managers always face problems in managing teachers' complaints, observing and evaluating teachers' performance, and allocating teaching and administrative tasks to staff. Since that middle leaders have encountered a lot of challenges and pressures in today's educational environment, there is a difficulty in building an effective middle management workforce (Grissom and Harrington, 2010).

2.9. UAE Schools' leadership

This study conducted in Al Ain City within the Emirates of Abu Dhabi in UAE and thus, it is essential to highlight the present conditions of the school leadership in UAE context. The country's context has a kind of specific requirements due to the current educational policies in the country. First, schools in Abu Dhabi are evaluated based on six educational standards, one of them is the leadership capacity, through Irtiqaa inspection, ADEK Inspection and Monitoring Division, every other academic year. For this reason, school leaders are exposed to various challenges and demands to maintain solid school performance that is aligned with the educational standards outcomes. On the other hand, UAE vision 2021 that has been launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum within the National Agenda. The educational indicators of this agenda emphasize on a kind of distributed leadership within the schools, decentralization approach, which means that it is a requirement from school leadership to give space for innovative, distributive, instructional and transformational leadership styles. Furthermore, one of the major targets of the UAE National Agenda is education sustainability and developing a first-rate educational system (UAE National Agenda Document, 2017) which emphasizes on the quality of the learning process with all its aspects. That is why school leaders in UAE need to align their school operating systems with approaches that support the legislations and demands and employ more instructional and democratic leading styles to secure innovative and sustainably school systems.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1.Introduction

The research methodology is beneficial to offer an in-depth analysis of the design, instrument used for analysis, and other details that can be considered as the base for data analysis. The researcher aims to carry out mixed-method research as it can offer a more in-depth analysis of the opinions of respondents concerning the subject topic. Mixed-research method also empowers, according to Jick (1979), Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner (2007), and Greene (2016) the social science researches. The prime instruments used for the research include questionnaire and interview moreover; the researcher uses a deductive approach to reach the outcomes of the research. The aim of the study is to determine the extent to which the HoDs have an impact on school-related performance. The researcher aims to specifically reflect the role of HoDs to the development, application, and implication of the policies and their significance in achieving teacher and student performance. Moreover, the researcher aims to specifically investigate the role of HoDs on the teacher's performance, student achievements, and prime challenges faced by the HoDs in UAE Schools.

3.2. Design

The research design helps to represent the customary methods adopted by the researcher to conduct the study. The procedures are associated to the overall collection of data and analysis of the variables. The researcher aims to carry out mixed research which includes data collected from HoDs and teachers of one private school in the UAE with the help of Survey and semi-structured interviews. The use of qualitative research is beneficial to use open-ended questions and other conversational communications to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding of the subject topic. The research can help to offer an insight not only on what do people think about a topic but also to identify the main reasons why they think like that(Quinlan et al., 2019). It can be stated that qualitative research can help to get details and observations primarily that are non-numeric and also help to focus on the research topic and to reach to the detailed outcomes for the

research. On the other hand, the use of quantitative research helps the researcher to collect data for numbers that can be easily justified by statistical analysis(Quinlan et al., 2019; Brannen, 2017). The use of a quantitative approach for research can allow the use of numeric data to reach the conclusion using more logical and systematic methods. The use of quantitative research would be done using a survey questionnaire with close-ended questions. The questionnaire is expected to be divided into two sections. The second portion/ section or division of the questionnaire would contain questions for the dependent and independent variables of the study. The answer to the questions would be provided using a 5 Likert Scale questionnaire in which 1 would represent Strongly Disagree whereas, 5 would represent strongly agree option. The respondents would be required to select the option which is best suitable for the question.

3.3. Instrument

The instruments applicable to the current research include a questionnaire and interview. The survey questionnaire is expected to benefit the research study by offering numeric details (opinions) from teachers. The analysis of the data can help to support the outcomes from the interview and also will offer an effective comparison to be done from the data analysis of both the instruments. The data collected from the questionnaire is analyzed through the Survey Monkey tool and will be used for the statistical analysis.

On the other hand, the qualitative data for the research is to be gathered in the form of interview scripts from the HoDs. It also tempts to investigate how much the HoDs are aware of the importance of their role, the tasks they have and their influence on the teachers' performance and the students' achievement in addition to the challenges they face. The outcomes of the interviews would be listed and further compared with the outcomes of the research questionnaire. The comparison and contrast would result in a better understanding of the viewpoint on how HoDs can be considered an important part of the schools.

The interview questions along with the questionnaire with close-ended (5 Likert Scale) questions are aligned with the research objectives and questions. The answer to the questions would help to identify and answer the research questions on which the conclusions would be derived. The analysis carried out with the help of a mixed methodology/ approach would be beneficial to provide a justifiable (supported by statistical analysis) and to gain insights into the subject topic with interview questions. The questionnaire would contain 10 questions, to analyze each

dependent and independent variable. Along with that, the interview questions would also be devised using the main theme from the research objectives and questions for the research. The use of specific and detailed questions derived from the research objectives would help the researcher to reach the conclusions that are most appropriate for the research. Also, it would allow increasing the level of validity/ credibility of the research outcomes.

3.4. Approach

The research approach for the study is beneficial to highlight the main themes and application of the most relevant data collection and data analysis methods. The data collection methods adopted by the researcher are mixed (i.e. the use of quantitative and qualitative data) methods. The application of the mixed approach is to highlight and determine the most relevant and accurate outcomes. The deductive approach is used for data analysis. The deductive approach helps to test the research hypothesis using statistical methods. The analysis is more specific and systematic as the researcher aims to use an already existing phenomenon/ theory to test it for a given scenario (i.e. to highlight the role of HoDs in UAE schools). The literature review for the research study would help to highlight the theoretical and empirical justifications that would allow the researcher to make a more detailed research approach to reach specific outcomes. The use of the deductive approach is beneficial for the current research since it would offer the researcher to carry out a more detailed analysis of the subject topic and based on those future implications and recommendations would be provided to improve the overall performance of teachers and also the students in the schools of UAE.

3.5. The validity of collected data

The validity of the data helps to describe the soundness of the research. The validity is beneficial to be fitted to both the methods as well as to the design and allows to increased audience's sense of trust(Alshenqeeti, 2014). In the case of the current research, it can be stated that validity is a representation of how valid the responses and data collection is with the requirements (objectives/ questions). The validity of the current research is very important and is measured by the potential of the questions asked to get to the desired results and outcomes which were a part of the research objectives and questions. The researcher is willing to carry out the research based

on a more systematic manner. It is made possible that the research/ interview questions reflect the essence of the research questions. The aim is to derive the outcomes by answering the research questions mentioned in chapter 1 and providing future implications and recommendations based on the outcomes collected. Moreover, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire are to be derived from the analysis of Cronbach's alpha value. The value must be greater than .70 so that the testing can be carried out.

3.6. Ethical considerations

The thought is present that ethical considerations are to be deemed as one of the most important and significant parts of the whole research. The participants of the research should not be harmed in or through any means or ways. There is a need to offer dignity and respect to the research participants since they are providing the most important factors (data) for the research(Ketefian, 2015). It is believed that the respondents must be provided with whole information on the motive and aim of the research before offering them the questionnaire and/ or asking interview questions(Connelly, 2014). The researcher aims to carry out qualitative research and therefore, is likely to provide detailed information regarding the motive and objective of the research to the respondents. The researcher aims to provide autonomy and confidentiality prospects to the respondents. The detail of the name and designation is not to be provided to anyone and also the data is kept confidential as it can harm the respondents in one way or the other. Moreover, the researcher himself collects the data which allows the researcher to make sure that the dignity of the respondents is maintained and also, the questions raised and confusions of the respondents can be answered in the best possible manner and promptly.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, quantitative and qualitative analysis have been performed. This analysis is significant to explore research questions and enable the resolution of the research problem. The findings sourced from primary data have been discussed in the light of literature to highlight supporting and contradictory evidence from previous studies.

4.2 Quantitative data analysis

Demographic analysis

The purpose of this scrutiny is to divide the data by the type of respondent; a respondent might be not educated or experienced enough. Both these instances can affect the quality of response to question that in return can influence the objective achievement of the research. Moreover, the nature of the respondent's position can also influence the quality of the data because the position of the respondent describes closeness to the aim of the research. Following is the break-up of respondents:

By Age

Age group	Count
20 to 30 years	10
31 to 40 years	41
41 to 50 years	11
51 to 60 years	3

By age
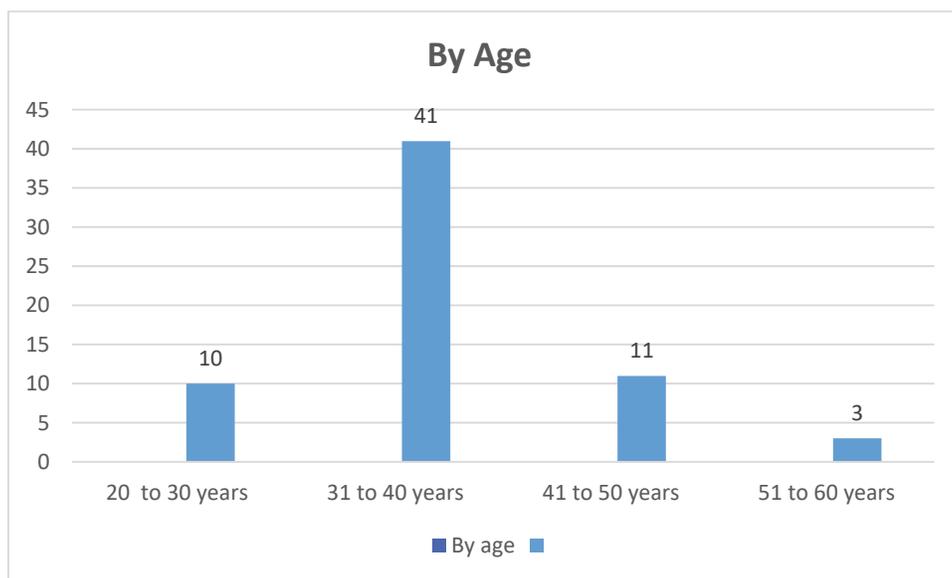
Since even the teachers responded to the survey questionnaire enthusiastically. Therefore, their age too had been mentioned in analysis to allow the research readers to know about the quality. The purpose of including teachers in the survey was to give the data an impartiality touch. Thus, a view to the impact of policies on educational quality from their side allowed gaining about research objective from the realistic side.
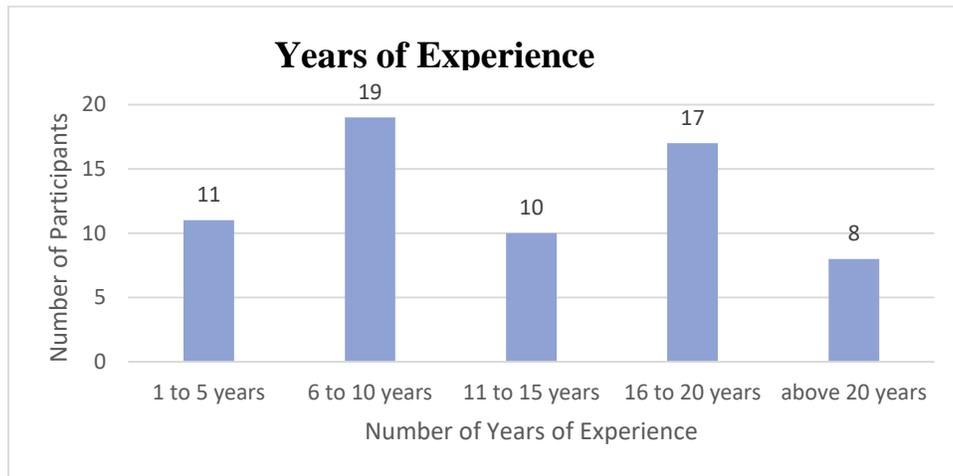
A number of years spent by the respondents in school would influence their response about the aim of the research, as it would mean the amount of time spent by the respondent through political change. Higher the time, better their knowledge about the effect would be.

Domain 1: Role of HoD questions

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Q1	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.7600	.82214	.676
Q2	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.1000	1.03510	1.071
Q3	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.7200	.83397	.696
Valid N (listwise)	50						

Frequency Table

<p align="center">**Q1**</p>

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
	Agree	23	46.0	46.0	88.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	94.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Approximately 42% percent of respondents strongly agreed with Q1 while another 46% agreed, meaning that the curriculum update is synchronized from corporate to an operational level. Thus, the educational quality is made better with time aimed at making it easier for the student.

Frequencies

<p align="center">**Q2**</p>

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	17	34.0	34.0	34.0
	Agree	18	36.0	36.0	70.0
	Disagree	8	16.0	16.0	86.0
	Strongly Disagree	7	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

34% of respondents turning to 17 people strongly agreed while 18 people reflecting 36% population of respondents agreed that curriculum up-gradation is monitored. Curriculum's implementation is not possible without strict monitoring and feedback being received from an informant.

Q3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	23	46.0	46.0	46.0
	Agree	21	42.0	42.0	88.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	94.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

23 persons making up like 46% of the entire population strongly agreed that HOD is remarkably well informed and therefore can set an example to follow. The claim had been agreed with by an additional 21 people, adding the weight by 42% to quality-based policy-related work being done by HOD. The overall outcome of the domain is on the positive side, and most of the population either agreed or strongly agreed with three questions. That is the reason the mean is in the middle range while deviation is lower than one.

Domain 2: Impact on teachers' performance questions

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Q4	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.7600	.82214	.676
Q5	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.2400	1.13497	1.288
Q6	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.1200	1.04276	1.087
Valid N (listwise)	50						

Q4

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
	Agree	23	46.0	46.0	88.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	94.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

42% of total respondents, converting to 21 people in countable terms strongly agreed with policies being adopted for continuous training in response to the upgraded curriculum. 23 people or 46% respondents of the total population agreed with the fact.

Q5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	17	34.0	34.0	34.0
	Agree	14	28.0	28.0	62.0
	Disagree	9	18.0	18.0	80.0
	Strongly Disagree	10	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Response to question about HOD providing training related to promoting learning had been strongly disagreed by 10 people or 20%. However, 17 people making-up 34% of the entire population strongly agreed and were met with agreement by 14 people turning to 28%.

Q6

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strong Agree	17	34.0	34.0	34.0
Agree	17	34.0	34.0	68.0
Disagree	9	18.0	18.0	86.0
Strongly Disagree	7	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

17 people strongly agreed and 17 people, echoing 68% view of the entire population agreed on the fact that HOD gives training related to making interpretation of data after analyzing it. In this domain, the respondents averaging between 60% and 88% strongly agreed or agreed with all three questions. Because of agreement, the standard deviation is lower from one and mean is higher from the average value.

Domain 3: Students achievement.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Q7	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.7400	.82833	.686
Q8	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.2000	1.14286	1.306
Q9	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.7000	.83910	.704
Q10	50	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.7000	.83910	.704
Valid N (listwise)	50						

Q7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	22	44.0	44.0	44.0
	Agree	22	44.0	44.0	88.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	94.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The congruence toward the school's vision is impossible without work accumulation between leadership and HODs', their work in similar direction shall eventually influence educational quality. The fact had been strongly agreed by 22 or 44% people of the entire population. While an equal number of people agreed with the presence of synchronization.

Q8

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	18	36.0	36.0	36.0
	Agree	14	28.0	28.0	64.0
	Disagree	8	16.0	16.0	80.0
	Strongly Disagree	10	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Clarity of target in education is going to improve quality, influencing the students' skills. The fact had been strongly agreed with by 36% or 18 people. Moreover, 14 people or 28% of the entire population agreed with the presence of fact.

Q9

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	24	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Agree	20	40.0	40.0	88.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	94.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

24 people or 48% of respondents strongly agreed that HOD has the greatest role to play in influencing educational quality. 40% of people converting to 20 persons agreed with the fact.

Q10

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strong Agree	24	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Agree	20	40.0	40.0	88.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	94.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The policy is the key for managing workers performance and rules related to HOD are clear, thus bringing the best in his work. While 24 persons echoing the view of 48% respondents strongly agreed, 20 people booming 40% of respondents agreed to this fact. The outcome for this domain three is on the positive side as well since almost above 60% to 88% of respondents had strongly agreed or agreed with questions. Due to this agreement, the mean is more than average and the standard deviation is lower from one as well.

4.3 Qualitative analysis

The qualitative data collected out of the semi-structured interviews was thematically analyzed according to description of the patterns in the responses that provide semantic information, and then summarizing, interpreting and theorizing around the wider meaning and inferences of the patterns found. Explication usually happens in regards to previous data and theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study emphasized on a semantic level interpretation mainly because of the intention to present the respondents opinions from a perspective aligned with the understanding of the school policy. Ther is no specific guidance for sample size for thematic analyses is directed based on the needs of the research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis is related identifying, examining and recording patterns in data patterns that refer to the research questions or a certain phenomenon.

Following are the questions that had been asked for the HoDs:

What are your qualifications?

Coding	
Qualifications	• Masters in Educational Psychology
	• Masters in Physics
	• Masters in Math
	• Bachelor Degree in Arabic Language and Literature.

How long have you been in the education system?

Coding	
Experience	• Fifteenth year
	• Eighth year
	• Tenth year

How long have you been in this school?

Coding	
Time period	• Fourth year
	• Second year
	• Third year
	• Tenth year

Have you started as an HoD or promoted? How and why were you promoted to HoD position?

Respondent one answered that "No I joined as an English teacher. The school principal has promoted me to the HoD position. I was assigned and delegated different leadership tasks like administrating the mid and final exams, train the teachers on assessment and follow up for implementation, monitor the performance of lower elementary teachers I core subjects. I tackled my tasks thoroughly and thus was promoted." Respondent two answered "No I joined as a physics teacher. The school principal has promoted me to the HoD position. Due to my previous experience as a school leader and my contributions whether in updating the school policies or generating new ones. Additionally, the principal tested my teaching strategies, subject knowledge and communication skills before I was promoted to HoD position." Respondent three answered, "Yes I started as an HoD." And respondent four answered "No I joined as an Arabic teacher. I have achieved a good improvement in the classes that I have taught and cascaded my teaching strategies and curriculum development to the other teachers in the department, this leads to getting a good evaluation in the ADEK inspection, so I was promoted as to an HoD position from five years now."

Coding	
Have you started as an HoD or promoted? How and why were you promoted to HoD position?	• Joined as an English teacher
	• Promotion done from the Principal
	• Promotion done due to improvement in performance.

What are your responsibilities towards your department? Give an example

As per respondent one "My responsibility as an HoD is to monitor curriculum mapping, curriculum implementation and to observe classes and conduct professional development to the teachers. Also, I am responsible to track the students' academic achievement." Respondent two answered that "My responsibility as an HoD is to set department goals that serve the school mission and vision, monitor and review the curriculum mapping, and implementation and to observe classes and conduct professional development to the teachers. Tracking the students' academic achievement is a major task required from us as HoDs. The students t progress and attainment are monitored through a tight system which is the full responsibility of the HoD." Respondent number three said that "My responsibility as an HoD is to build a team spirit to facilitate the department processes, set department goals aligned to the school mission and vision, enhance students' achievement through adaptation of curriculum to satisfy their needs, curriculum review, improve teachers' performance through observe classes and conduct professional development to the teachers related to teaching strategies." And respondent four said that "My responsibility as an HoD is to lead and guide the teachers through professional development and training on how to deal with the curriculum mapping, adaptation of curriculum to the students' needs and monitor curriculum implementation. I also observe classes and set a professional development plan according to their needs. Also, I am responsible to improve the students' academic achievement."

	Coding
What are your responsibilities towards your department? Give example	• Monitor curriculum mapping, curriculum implementation
	• Professional development to the teachers.
	• Set department goals aligned to the school mission and vision
	• Adaptation of curriculum to the students' needs

How do you monitor the curriculum implementation and review?

Respondent number 1 answered that "First, I train my teachers on curriculum mapping, then I monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams and align it with the curriculum

standards." Respondent two said that "First, I revise the curriculum standards answers scope and sequence with my teachers, then provide training for my teachers on how to write an effective curriculum mapping, then I monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams, analysing the students' results and align it with the curriculum standards. As per respondent third "First, the whole department will study the standards and every teacher makes sure that he/she is aware of every standard, start a meeting which target is to map the curriculum and aligned vertically and horizontally, this is related to the students learning progress and attainment. I provide training for my teachers on how to write an effective curriculum mapping, then I monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams, analysing the students' results and align it with the curriculum standards and provide training for teachers where needed." And respondent number four answered that "First, I train my teachers on curriculum mapping, then I monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams and align it with the curriculum standards."

Coding	
How do you monitor the curriculum implementation and review?	• Monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams • Analysing the students' results and align it with the curriculum standards • Provide training for teachers where needed

How do you improve the students' performance? Explain.

Respondent number one answered that "I track the students' achievement through different types of assessment like continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. The students result in analysis enables me to set plans for improvement. Respondent two said that "Students' achievement is monitored in different ways, for example, I track the students' achievement through different types of assessment like continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. I monitor their progress during my class observations, set action plans to support the struggling and to challenge the high achievers and secure their advanced learning, the students result in analysis enables me to set plans for improvement. As per respondent three "First I monitor their progress and attainment of the previous year, then we set a plan that may include projects, problem-solving

tasks to enhance their knowledge and skills. Then I track the students' achievement through different types of assessment like continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. I monitor their progress during my class observations, set action plans to support the struggling ones and to challenge the high achievers and secure their advanced learning, the students result from analysis enables me to generate checkpoints all over the year and track their academic improvement. This is a general brief of my role in the learning process in the school. And respondent four said that "The students get proper learning through curriculum implementation and development, a proper assessment that helps to track their attainment and progress. We always do our best to provide our students with 21st-century skills especially problem solving and critical thinking skills. The students result in analysis enables me to set plans for improvement."

Coding	
How do you improve the students' performance? Explain.	• Track the students' achievement through different types of assessment • These are continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. • Problem solving and critical thinking skills. • The students result analysis for the development of improvement plans.

To what extent you have contributions to the whole school? How?

As per respondent one "As an HoD we regularly meet to discuss the positive improvement of the school for example, the school development plan, we meet as a team to discuss and ensure that we are all aware of whatever need the school have and try to fulfil these needs by setting out action plans and make some changes like the whole school performance development plan and the Professional Development held by the School Principal or the HoDs to improve the teachers' performance according to the 21st century skills." respondent two answered that "We, HoDs, regularly meet with the school principal to evaluate the current situation or school performance and determine the improvement that should take place for example, the school development plan, we meet as a team to discuss and ensure that we are all aware of whatever need the school have

and try to fulfil these needs by setting out action plans and make some changes like the whole school performance development plan and the Professional Development held by the School Principal or the HoDs to improve the teachers' performance according to the 21st century skills." Respondent three said that "As HoDs, we are fully involved in every aspect that is related to students and teachers performance and well- being, so we have contribution t policies, improving the learning-teaching process, school development and school self-evaluation. We work towards achieving the goals in the school development plan, and the Professional Development held by the School Principal." And respondent number four answered that "The school has an open-door policy that allows us to express our thoughts and opinions and this enhances our contributions to the whole school improvement especially in decisions that serve the student academic achievement. I am also an active member in the school activity committee which helps to link the curriculum with proper extra-curricular activities. Also, we regularly meet the school principal and contribute to the school development plan and the school self-evaluation process."

Coding	
To what extent you have contributions to the whole school? How?	• Track the students' achievement through different types of assessment • These are continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. • Problem solving and critical thinking skills. • The students result analysis for the development of improvement plans.

How many times a week do you meet your department? Your principal?

As per respondent one "Like I have mentioned in the previous answers, we meet weekly where the HoDs and the School Principal sit and discuss the development in each department any comments made by the teachers, assessment strategies, teaching strategies, all these… additionally, we have weekly department meetings where we give feedback to the teachers regarding observations, walkthroughs, also we make sure during these meeting that teachers are well informed about any new initiative or decision in the school and all the school news."

Respondent two answered that "We meet as school leaders, on a weekly basis and according to the needs in certain situation like class observation weeks or assessment development we meet on a daily basis. As department also we meet on weekly basis in a built-in period I the schedule additionally we have one -to one meetings department meeting where we give feedback to the teachers regarding observations, walkthroughs, and convey the instructions from the school leader."Respondent three said that "On a weekly basis and according to the needs in certain situation like class observation weeks or assessment development we meet on a daily basis. As the department, all the time, even though there is a built-in period in the timetable. We have different types of meetings for example one -to one meetings department meeting where we give feedback to the teachers regarding observations, walkthroughs, and convey the instructions from the school leader." And Respondent number four answered that "We meet every week on Monday I have a fixed schedule meeting with my department. I discuss with them the positive points and the negative ones of the whole practices that I have noticed during class observations, walkthroughs, parents' feedback and the principal's observations also. I inform those if any new initiatives or decisions in the school and we set the targets to improve. According to the principal, also we meet every Sunday to discuss all school aspects. Also, the principal may call us for individual meetings most of the time."

Coding	
How many times a week do you meet your department? Your principal?	• track the students' achievement through different types of assessment
	• these are continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment.
	• problem solving and critical thinking skills.
	• The students result analysis for the development of improvement plans.

Do you feel the school leadership listens to you and gives you the freedom to manage your department?

As per respondent one "I definitely feel that leadership at Future International School gives the HoDs the necessary authority to act on their department and take decisions, for example, the way where assessment is taking place in my department specifically I have made a decision that assessment at the end of the term would be done through an open book exam to ensure that the students have optimal opportunity to answer any question with the backing of information. It was a new initiative in the school." Respondent two answered that "Sure I agree that leadership at our school gives the HoDs the necessary autonomy to manage their department and take decisions, for example, I have the autonomy in teachers' evaluation and the levels they teach, I also have the autonomy to change the type of assessment according to the subject and student's needs." Respondent three said that "Sure I agree that leadership at our school gives the HoDs the necessary autonomy to manage their department and take decisions, for example, I have the autonomy in teachers' evaluation and the levels they teach, I also have the autonomy to change the type of assessment according to the subject and students' needs."And Respondent number four answered that "Yes, she does, we have daily communication with her and the open-door policy she follows gives us more confidence to have the freedom to implement new initiatives or adjust existing ones."

Coding	
Do you feel the school leadership listens to you and gives you freedom to manage your department?	• Future International School gives the hods the necessary authority to act on their department • Gives the HoDs the necessary autonomy • Freedom to implement new initiatives

Do you think there is a clear policy in the school, regarding your role? Does this policy highlight the importance of your role as an HoD?

As per respondent one, "There are clear policies in the school regarding of HoDs role. These responsibilities are also discussed at the beginning of each academic year in the form of teachers' handbook where everyone in the school knows their role and their responsibilities." Respondent

two answered that "There are clear policies in the school regarding of HoDs role. However, this policy needs to be communicated effectively with all stakeholders particularly parents". Respondent three said that, "There are clear policies in the school regarding of HoDs role. However, this policy needs to be communicated effectively with all stakeholders particularly parents". Respondent number four answered that "To a certain extent yes, there are clear policies in the school regarding of HoDs role. The principal reminds us at the beginning of the year of this policy and our accountability in implementation. However, this policy is not clear enough for the students and parents and even to some teachers. We need to enhance this policy more".

Coding	
Do you think there is a clear policy in the school, regarding your role? Does this policy highlight the importance of your role as an HoD?	• Future International School gives the hods the necessary authority to act on their department • Gives the HoDs the necessary autonomy • Freedom to implement new initiatives

Are you involved when the policies of the school were/are developed? Give a few examples.

Respondent one answered that "At our school HoDs are a part of the creation of any new policy and the adjustment of previous ones, for example, I have the privilege to create a school guidance and counselling department where I created policies." Respondent two answered that "It is one of the major tasks of our position as HoDs is to take a part of the creation of any new policy and the adjustment of previous ones for example. I created a policy regarding the project establishing and process that was adopted by the whole school." Respondent three said that "It is one of the major tasks of our position as HoDs is to take a part of the creation of any new policy and the adjustment of previous ones for example. I created a policy regarding the project establishing and process that was adopted by the whole school." And Respondent number four answered that "As HoDs, we are involved in the creation of new policies and the revising of previous ones for example, we decided on the whole school assessment policy".

Coding	
Are you involved when the policies of the school were/are developed? Give few examples.	• *Challenges might be the parents' communication.* • *Teaching load* • *Teachers' resistant to change* • *Supporting the team to stay motivated is a big challenge*

Can you tell what type of challenges you mostly face in your position?

Respondent one said that "As an HoD you will always have a teacher or two who are reluctant to change this can be a challenge where the HoD needs to act professionally to ensure that these changes do occur. Other challenges might be the parents' communication with the teachers in some cases it is not effective the way that it should be but this also a challenge for teachers and administration. Another challenge is getting the necessary resources to ensure that optimal teaching and learning take place in the classroom". Respondent two and three answered that "Teachers' resistant to change and prefer to go the easy way. Teaching load sometimes is a time barrier to achieve more". Respondent number four answered that "Supporting the team to stay motivated, the teaching load is a big challenge".

Coding	
Can you tell what type of challenges you mostly face in your position?	• *Challenges might be the parents' communication.* • *Teaching load* • *Teachers' resistant to change* • *Supporting the team to stay motivated is a big challenge*

Discussion in light of literature

The core aim of this research is to examine the role of HoD and for this, according to the findings of the study attained through the quantitative analysis, it is identified that HoDs have a great influence on enhancing the performance of teachers. In this regards, Farchi and Tubin, (2018) said that the role of HoD has the responsibility of several significant administrative tasks which includes constructing examinations schedules, developing and managing curriculum, managing teaching resources, monitoring teachers' performance, handing over administrative information, staff attendance record maintaining, monitoring student's achievements and progress, and maintain the overall performance of the department. Furthermore, another finding of quantitative results is how the HoD improves student's performance and in this regard, the study of Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd, (2009) demonstrated that HoDs participating in the professional development of teachers is the great leadership function to influence student outcomes. Moreover, Lipscombe, Tindall-Ford and Grootenboer (2019) said that the students' achievement can be measured through different types of assessment like assignments, quizzes, small interval exams and self-assessment. The students result from analysis allows the HoD to set plans for improvement according to his strengths and weaknesses. Through his leadership skills, it is expected to produce a variety of learning innovations, so that in turn it can create an increase in the quality of student achievement (Bush and Glover, 2014).

The findings of qualitative results also showed several points from which the one major factor is school policies for the role of Hod and qualitative analysis showed the school where interviews were conducted have a clear policy for HoD role however, there is a need to communicate it with all other authorities and stakeholders. In this regard, Koh (2018) said that school policies are the vital asset for school management and it cannot be neglect. The policies should clearly define the role and responsibilities of each employee working in a school. For HoD, the schools should also provide proper consideration while making policies as this role possess the most important position in communicating between higher authorities or principals and teachers. Another finding of the qualitative data showed the challenges faced by HoDs as it is not an easy task to manage all the responsibilities associated with the role of HoD within the time boundaries. For this, that study of Wright (2002) emphasize the intense and complex nature of the role of HoDs, where they must balance the specific needs of the department with the general needs of the school in the context of

a short time where maintaining relationships with others are also very important. In such a tense context, when HoD act as managers, many middle managers say that they do not have enough skills to withstand the challenges of a growing role and show that they have more specific professional development need to manage tasks and claim their position.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall findings of the research in a meaningful manner. These findings are taken from the previous chapter and then concluded to give the audience an easy and concise understanding of the research work. Finally, the researcher presents the recommendations based on this research for future researchers as well as for the marketers and corporate institutions.

5.2 Summary of findings

With the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the analysis of literature helps to realize that the role of HoDs has changed to a significant level in the western world and requires a specific focus in the UAE. From discussing the literature, it appears that HoD leadership is basically a process of influencing others which contains a series of actions or certain behaviours towards the individuals that it influences. It is not only limited to the role of the managing the teachers in the context of the class when interacting with students but also reaches the role of the teacher in interacting with school principals and peers, while still referring to the same final goal, namely the development of the teachers' performance and improvement of student learning processes and outcomes.

In addition to this, the quantitative findings of the research also showed that HoD focuses on 3 dimensions of development, namely: individual development, group development, and school development. The individual development dimension is the main dimension related to the role is in utilizing time with teachers and students. Here the HoDs are required to demonstrate their leadership skills in understanding student's behaviour to be able to develop all their potential, in line with the stages and tasks of their development. Through their leadership skills, it is expected to produce a variety of learning innovations, so that in turn it can create an increase in the quality of student achievement. The group development dimension refers to collaborative efforts to help teachers explore and try out new ideas to improve the quality of learning, through mentoring, coaching, observing, discussing, and providing constructive feedback. The second dimension is related to efforts to develop the teaching profession. While the dimensions of the organization refer to the HoDs' role to support policies and educational programs in school's education department,

supporting school leadership to reform education in schools as well as part of the role is to maintain continuity and sustainability in school.

Furthermore from the qualitative analysis data which was obtained from an interview, it is observed that the responsibility of an HoD is to set department goals that serve the school mission and vision, manage and analysis of the curriculum mapping and its implementation, observe classes and to work on the professional development to the teachers. The findings also show that HoDs are involved in every aspect of the school related to pedagogy and management. They have a contribution to make and control policies, improving learning and teaching processes and in overall school development. HoDs have a responsibility towards achieving the strategic goals of school with a development plan, and the Professional Development offered within the school.it is observed that the effective leadership of HoDs has been proven to have an influence on innovation and creativity. HoDs' effectiveness is supported by their experience, qualifications and the school leadership structure and approach. The challenges faced by HoDs were also found from qualitative analysis which shows the biggest challenge for the HoD is to support the team to keep them motivated and maintain the load of interacting with principals and teachers by keeping the track on ongoing activities of school. Furthermore, studies of UAE school context reveal that there is a need for school leaders to adopt new leadership styles, transformational leadership as an example, in order to satisfy the innovation and creativity required to have quality sustainable education school systems which are targeted in the UAE National Agenda. Transformational leadership also has a positive influence on subordinate efforts and satisfaction and can enhance ethical behaviour Transformational leadership promotes the qualities and believes of the people, to achieve even more (Nyenyembe et al., 2016). Thus, it is the best suitable leadership style for HoDs. The challenges faced by HoDs were also found from qualitative analysis which shows the biggest challenge for Hod is to support the team to keep them motivated and maintain the load of interacting with principals and teachers by keeping the track on ongoing activities of school.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Studies

Taking into account the different results of the investigation obtained in this research, the following are carried out recommendations for assuring the HoDs' practices in school management:

Firstly and in order to overcome the problem of enhancing the role of the HODs and expanding the HOD's perception regarding this role, more detailed studies need to be conducted in different types of schools in UAE that can lead to establishing a feasible unified policy among the schools with regular seminars and meetings for HOD to discuss the duties and responsibilities given to them.

Secondly, further similar studies are essential and need to expand all over UAE schools to collect more adequate and valid data regarding the leadership styles and approaches that may help to build more systematic hierarchy and allow more systematic improvements in the schools of the country. It is evident from the research that the schools in UAE can improve the policies for the role of HoDs in order to enhance their school management, but these results can only be generalized if future research shows similar results for other regions. Thirdly, this study can be used as a source of literature for future research. Researchers can extend this research into various research fields. The last suggestion or recommendation is that it would be effective if further studies of the same topic are conducted to include different stakeholders of the school community that are linked to the HoDs performance like students, parents and local educational institutions, People of Determination centers as an example. This will help to get more insights of the school academic aspects and will inform support policy makers to reach a comprehensive policy that serves the whole school community.

5.4 Limitations of the research

The study had some limitations regarding methodological results of the selection process of participants participating in the interview and the research conducted specifically for the schooling system in UAE. The study cannot be generalized since it has been conducted in only one school in UAE. In addition to this, time is another limitation of the study, and due to this, the research study was conducted in only one school for data collection and analysis. The budget also falls under limitations for this research as most of the authentic and reliable literature is paid and limited

access to these literature studies bound the scope of the research. Although the research used mixed methodology by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, due to the limited time and small group of participants, the research is lacking behind to fulfil the broad perspectives of the research topic. Another aspect of the study limitation is that the research treated one element or factor of the school leadership which is the HoDs, it did not involve any other element like and students' and parents' leadership.

5.5. Conclusion

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the role of HoDs in schools and their impact on performance and policies, and the findings of the research showed that the HoDs have a huge impact on maintaining and improving the overall performance of the school. After performing research on the topic, it is observed that in UAE there is a culture of giving more importance to the role of principals and teachers rather than also give importance to the role of the Head of Departments as they can boost up the school management activities as they are the mediators between teachers and principals.

The research is conducted specifically for the analysis of the role of HoDs in schools in UAE, and for this, the mixed methodology was utilized to analyze the topic in more depth. The deductive approach is used for data analysis which helped to test the research hypothesis using statistical methods and offered to conduct a more detailed analysis. The survey questionnaire and interviews were conducted to gather the quantitative and qualitative data for this research. Barreiro & Albandoz (2001) stated that in complicated studies, multistage sampling is needed. A school from UAE was selected to conduct the data gathering where a survey questionnaire was distributed to 77 teachers, and interviews were conducted with the 4 HoDs of the school. The interview questionnaire has been selected as the main instrument for collecting data having a specific set of question, which was asked to respondents regarding the research topic. The questions are an open-ended question where it allows the researcher to collect insightful answers from the interview respondent. In addition to this, online secondary research is used by the researcher to formulate literature review and to support analysis and discussion chapter. For data analysis purposes, thematic analysis was used as the data analysis tools.

As a sum up, it has been concluded through this study that HoDs have effective and direct impact on the the whole school improvement. They play an important role in enhancing the teaching methods and strategies through observation, evaluation and professional development. Besides, the HoDs have clear impact on the students' performance and play a vital role in improving the students' knowledge and skills. Further, it has been concluded that HoDs encounter different challenges like time restrictions due to the teaching load they have, and teachers' reluctant of any changes and improvement. The researcher recommends Further research studies to be conducted in the future to investigate factors that may strengthen the effectiveness of the HoDs' role and come out with new approaches the school leadership can follow to eliminate the difficulties that hinder the HoDs' full potential to conducting their tasks.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

S.no	Part 1: Critical success factors that make e-commerce Nissan profitable?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	The Head of department involves you in reviewing and updating the curriculum based on results.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2	The Head of department monitors the curriculum implementation and provides constant advice needed.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3	The Head of department sets exemplary teaching standards for the team and encourage adoption of these practices.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4	The Head of department incorporates effective training on teaching methodologies.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
5	The Head of department provides effective training and guidance to how to promote learning.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6	The head of department provides effective training and guidance on data analysis and interpretation					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7	Leadership and HoDs work together towards the school mission and vision.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8	The Hod has clear target for the department to achieve					

		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9	HoD role is crucial and contributes to the whole school improvement.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
10	The school provides clear policy regarding role of HoDs.					
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Interview questions (HoDs):

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. What are your qualifications?
3. How long have you been in the education system?
4. How long have you been in this school?
5. Have you started as an HoD or promoted? How and why were you promoted to HoD position?
6. what are your responsibilities towards your department? Give example
7. how do you monitor the curriculum implementation and review?
8. How do you improve the students' performance? Explain.
9. To what extent you have contributions to the whole school? How?
10. How many times a week do you meet your department? Your principal?
11. Do you feel the school leadership listens to you and gives you freedom to manage your department?
12. Do you think there is a clear policy in the school, regarding your role? Does tis policy highlight the importance of your role as an HoD?
13. Are you involved when the policies of the school were/are developed? Give few examples.
14. Can you tell what type of challenges you mostly face in your position?

Appendix 4

HoDs' Interview Responses

HoD 1: English Department

Personal Information

Q. 1What ae your qualification

 Masters in Educational Psychology

Q. 2 How long have you been in the school?

This is my fourth year

Q. 3 How long have you been in the educational system?

This is my eighth year I started as a teacher in my country.

Q. 4 Have you started as an HoD in the school?

No, I joined as an English teacher.

Prob: How and why were you promoted to HoD position?

The school principal have promoted me to the HoD position. How? I was assigned and delegated different leadership tasks like administrating the mid and final exams, train the teachers on assessment and follow up for implementation, monitor the performance of lower elementary teachers I core subjects. I tackled my tasks thoroughly and thus was promoted.

Q.5 What is your major responsibility as an HoD towards your department? Specify and explain.

My responsibility as an HoD is to monitor curriculum mapping, curriculum implementation and to observe classes and conduct professional development to the teachers. Also I am responsible to track the students' academic achievement.

Q. 6 How do you monitor the curriculum implementation?

First, I train my teachers on curriculum mapping, then I monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams and align it with the curriculum standards.

Q. 7 How do you improve the students' achievement? How do you see the teachers' role in this aspect?

I track the students' achievement through different types of assessment like continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. The students result analysis enables me to set plans for improvement.

Response1.2

Q.8 To what extent you have contributions to the whole school performance?

As an HoD we regularly meet to discuss the positive improvement of the school for example, the school development plan, we meet as a team to discuss and ensure that we are all aware of whatever need the school have and try to fulfil these needs by setting out action plans and make some changes like the whole school performance development plan and the Professional Development held by the School Principal or the HoDs to improve the teachers' performance according to the 21st century skills.

Q. 9 How many times a week would you meet your team? Your principal?

Like I have mentioned in the previous answers, we meet weekly where the HoDs and the School Principal sit and discuss the development in each department any comments made by the teachers, assessment strategies, teaching strategies.. all these… additionally we have weekly department meetings where we give feedback to the teachers regarding observations, walk throughs, also we make sure during these meeting that teachers are well informed abut any new initiative or decision in the school and all the school news.

Q. 10 Do you feel the leadership listens to you and gives you the freedom to manage your department?

I definitely feel that leadership at Future International School gives the HoDs the necessary authority to act on their department and take decisions for example, the way where assessment is taking place in my department specificslly I have made a decision that assessment at the end of the term would be done through an open book exams to ensure that the students have optimal opportunity to answer any question with the backing of information. It was a new initiative in the school.

Q.11 Do you feel there is a clear policy in the school regarding your role?

There are clear policies in the school regarding of HoDs role. These responsibilities are also discussed at the beginning of each academic year in a form of teachers' handbook where everyone in the school clearly knows their role and their responsibilities.

Q. 13. Are you involved when policies in your schools are developed? Give example.

At our school HoDs are definitely a part of the creation of any new policy and the adjustment of previous ones for example I have the privilege to create a school guidance and counseling department where I created policies

Q. 14 What challenges do you face in your role and performance?

As an HoD you will always have a teacher or two who are reluctant to change this can be a challenge where the HoD needs to act in a professional way to ensure that these changes do occur. Other challenges might be the parents' communication with the teachers in some cases it is not effective the way that it should be but this also a challenge for teachers and administration. Another challenge is getting the necessary resources to ensure that optimal teaching and learning take place in the classroom

HoDs Interview Responses

HoD 2 : Science Department

<u>**Personal Information**</u>

Q.1 What ae your qualification

 Masters in Physics

Q. 2 How long have you been in the school? This is my second year

Q.3 How long have you been in the educational system?

This is my fifteenth year I started as a teacher in my country and then became the school prinicipal at that time.

Q. 4 Have you started as an HoD in the school?

No I joined as a physics teacher.

Prob: How and why were you promoted to HoD position?

The school principal has promoted me to the HoD position. How? Due to my previous experience as a school leader and my contributions whether in updating the school policies or generating new ones. Additionally, the principal tested my teaching strategies, subject knowledge and communication skills before I was promoted to HoD position.

Q.5 What is your major responsibility as an HoD towards your department? Specify and explain.

My responsibility as an HoD is toset department goals that serve the school mission and vision, monitor and review the curriculum mapping, and implementation and to observe classes and conduct professional development to the teachers. Tracking the students' academic achievement is a major task required from us as HoDs. The students t progress and attainment are monitored through a tight system which is the full responsibility of the HoD

Q. 6 How do you monitor the curriculum implementation?

First, I revise the curriculum standards and scope and sequence with my teachers, then provide training for my teachers on how to write an effective curriculum mapping, then I monitor implementation through class visits, checking exams, analyzing the students' results and align it with the curriculum standards.

Q. 7 How do you improve the students' achievement? How do you see the teachers' role in this aspect?

Students' achievement is monitored in different ways, for example I track the students' achievement through different types of assessment like continuous assessment, quizzes, peer and self-assessment. I monitor their progress during my class observations, set action plans to support the struggling and tochallenge the high achievers and secure their advanced learning, The students result analysis enables me to set plans for improvement.

Response2.2

Q.8 To what extent you have contributions to the whole school performance?

We, HoDs, regularly meet with the school principal to evaluate the current situation or school performance and determine the improvement that should take place,l for example, the school development plan, we meet as a team to discuss and ensure that we are all aware of whatever need the school have and try to fulfil these needs by setting out action plans and make some changes like the whole school performance development plan and the Professional Development held by the School Principal or the HoDs to improve the teachers' performance according to the 21st century skills.

Q. 9 How many times a week would you meet your team? Your principal?

We meet as school leaders, on weekly basis and according to the needs in certain situation like class observation weeks or assessment development we meet on daily basis. As department also we meet on weekly basis in a built in period I the schedule additionally we have wone -to one meetingsdepartment meetings where we give feedback to the teachers regarding observations, walk throughs, and convey the instructions from the school leader.

Q. 10 Do you feel the leadership listens to you and gives you the freedom to manage your department?

Sure I agree that leadership at our school gives the HoDs the necessary autonomy to manage their department and take decisions for example, I have the autonomy in teachers' evaluation and the levels they teach, I also have the autonomy to change the type of assessment according to the subject and students' needs.

Q.11 Do you feel there is a clear policy in the school regarding your role?

There are clear policies in the school regarding of HoDs role. However, this policy needs to be communicated effectively with all stakeholders particularly parents.

Q. 13. Are you involved when policies in your schools are developed? Give example.

It is one of the major tasks of our position as HoDs is to take a part of the creation of any new policy and the adjustment of previous ones for example. I created a policy regarding the project establishing and process that was adopted by the whole school.

Q. 14 What challenges do you face in your role and performance?

Teachers' resistant to change and prefer to go the easy way. Teaching load sometimes is a time barrier to achieve more.

Appendix 5

Participant Information Sheet
Greetings,
I am inviting you to take part in my research. It is appreciated if you read carefully the information below that will help you to take your decision. Ask any question you want for clarification.

I have been in the education system for more than 20 years now. Currently I am serving as a school leader in one private school in UAE. I am doing my Master in Education and preparing for my dissertation research paper. The research targets the school policy regarding the role of the HODs and their impact on teachers' performance and students' achievement in addition to the challenges they face in their position. and need information from schools to fulfil the study research process.

The research aims to investigate the role of subject head of departments in one of UAE private schools and its impact on the whole school performance on one hand and on the teaching-learning process on the other hand. The research questions are:
    1.What is the role of the HoDs?
    2.To what extent HoDs performance influence the teachers' performance?
   3.What is the impact of the HoDs role on students' achievement?
   4.What type of challenges do HoDs face?
The process includes a survey of 10 questions that may take between 5 to 10 minutes to be conducted by the participants. The questions target the involvement and influence of the HoDs in whole school improvement, clear policy and their influence on teachers' performance and students' academic achievement. The survey will be sent to the participants' emails where they can anonymously answer the questions.

You are selected to participate in this study as a teacher where the research topic focuses on the impact of HoDs on teachers' performance and professional development and to share your knowledge would add value to the study.
The participation in this survey is voluntary and in case of participation, you can withdraw anytime without any obligations prior to submission.
The data collected will be treated based on the ethical research standards and analyzed securely. The findings of the survey will be shared anonymously without mentioning your details nor the school details.

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