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## CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS IN EMPOWERING HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS TO EXECUTE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### ABSTRACT

This article seeks to examine the ways in which rural secondary school principals empower heads of departments (HODs) in executing their obligatory duties as instructional leaders. How principals can empower the (HODs) is the main thesis of this article. The emphasis will be on principals' experiences in executing their mandated instructional leadership responsibilities in the Tshwane-West District, in Gauteng province of South Africa. The thesis of this paper is that when principals are unable to adhere to their obligations of empowering the HODs, a culture of effective teaching and learning is compromised, and student performance is not enhanced. Therefore, it becomes an issue if the rural secondary school principal is not held accountable for effective teaching and learning in schools. Design, method, and strategy. A questionnaire was utilized to collect the data. A thorough application of the knowledge gathered from the literature review, and the questionnaire's content was made to hold up tightly. The pilot study was used to validate the questionnaires. The triangulation of data from many diverse sources, including focus-group interviews and the questionnaire, served as the foundational method of reliability in this study. Principals of rural secondary schools in South Africa's Gauteng province's Tshwane-West District made up the study's sample. All 55 secondary schools located in the Tshwane West District were included in the study using the total sample methodology.

**Keywords:** empowerment, instructional leadership, principals, head of departments, rural secondary schools