Teachers' Understandings Of The Implementation of The Curriculum And Assessment Policy Statement In secondary Schools

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Abstract. The research aimed at determining teachers' understandings, ascertain and simplify potential obstacles concerning the application of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in secondary schools.The qualitative method was used to gather information from the participants on how the new curriculum is implemented and managed. The core information gathering methods were interviews. The research established that teachers experienced problems that are connected to shortage of resources, training of teachers, resisting to changes, classroom sizes, shortage of allocated time, teacher specialized empowerment, irrational workload for Head of Departments, organizational empowerment, mentoring and language as an obstacle especially on the part of the students. Capacitation for teachers in any recently presented curriculum must be adequately done. The Department of Basic Education must guarantee provision of resources and infrastructure to institutions of learning on time in order for teaching and learning to begin promptly as soon as they open.

Keywords: Student assessment, Curriculum development, Teacher involvement, Teacher perceptions, Professional development.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is not static in nature, but always evolving through phases of changes. These changes and developments impact on how teachers respond to implementation in their daily praxis. Teachers are compelled to implement curriculum changes. With reference to the South African context, several curriculum changes were implemented. As it hadoccurred in several democratic countries in the West over the previous manyyears,with reference to the post-apartheid South Africa which isexperiencing educational transformations as well. Thus curriculum seems to be at the centre of development and education. The National Ministry of Basic Education Department'sMrs Angie Motshekga, couldn't have employed a board of specialists to examine the extent of the problems and challengesteachers were experiencing in the application of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), if this was not the case(Motshekga 2009). People (Teachers or Stakeholders) have to take into account thegoal behind the Department of Education'sFive Years Planfor educational reforms as part of the National Development Plan (2030). Ifthe Five-Year Plan program was not at the centre of educational transformation, there wouldn't be any information on the evaluation of the NCS in early 2009. Consequently the educational changes in the Republic of South Africa suggested a model from a teacher-contentfocusedprogramto an outcomes-based and student-focusedtype of learning and teaching progamme.

Even in mostinstitutions of learning and teaching in the Republic of South Africa,new curriculum and its execution has been extremelychallenging for teachers to conceptualize and to implement it successfully. Gultig, Hoadley & Jansen (2002), argue that discussionsabout Curriculum 2005 (C2005) were characterized by outlining criticisms, most strongly from Jansen, 1997. The same appeared to havehappened with the application of the National Curriculum Statement. Operating with the principles of National Curriculum Statementnecessitated teachers that were well prepared in terms of content and methodology.

In view of the latter, Hoadley and Jansen (2009), are of the view that theDepartment of Basic Education announced a radical shift that re-emphasized the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for schoolsin the Republic of South Africa. This intended CAPS as an educational policy isbased on two principles of student centeredness and problem based learning. This CAPS curriculum envisages to empower school leavers with the required skills, values and knowledge for the requirements and challenges of the world of work. Emanating from this CAPS education policy, it was implemented from Grade R to Grade 12 with specific challenges faced by teachers. In reaction to that,Beets (2005),contends that the substitutedCAPS curriculadelivered some specifications of what can be taught in a particular subject content andextensivemeaningsconcerning the goals and objectives of learning and teaching. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statementhad also revealedextraordinaryattention concerning curriculumaims as it locatedemphasis on themes and detailedgoals.

The researcher has lived experiences for past decade working with school communities and various education stakeholders in empowering in-service teachers. As part of the researcher's community engagement initiatives, several collaborative agreements were concluded with DBE and rural communities.In collaboration with educational district curriculum advisors of the DBE, several in-service training workshops were held. During this in-service training workshops, teachers lacked knowledge and skills in interpreting the CAPS policy. These teachers were trained in the previous education dispensation, before the new democratic South Africa. During the workshops it was also revealed through anecdotal views that some of the teachers received CAPS training but it was insufficient. Furthermore, the teachers lamented that the number of days for training were not enough to cover the extent of what the CAPS policy required for implementation. In case of this scenario, this prompted the researcher to explore why teachers struggle to interpret and implement the CAPS policy effectively. To achieve this objective the following questions are formulated:

- What are teachers' experiences of the interpretation of the CAPS?
- What are the challenges faced by the teachers to implement the CAPS?

To answer the above questions, the article used an interpretivist paradigm through a qualitative research approach.

In these processes, there was a need to develop policy documents for each subject that will be the ultimate guidance for each teacher and assistin addressing the complications of the National Curriculum Statement (Motshekga, 2009). There had also been significant critics of severalphases of its application, manifesting in teachers' stress, widespread learner underperformance, overload and confusion (Motshekga, 2009). As part of a resolution to the above-mentioned critics, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement replaced assessment standards with specific topics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adjustments to the National Curriculum Statement wereintended to provideextra time for learning and teaching in crucial subjects. As specifiedby the State President of the Republic of South Africa in hisState of the Nation Address (SONA)in 2010, heemphasizedthree T's, which is, Time, Textbooks and Teachers, as essentials in basic education. The message simply indicates that teacher must be in school on time and that all students must also be given all the required resources for all grades. The Department of Education'splanned changes were on track with the State's objectives. Emerging matters for failures are founded on the socio-cultural environments outside and within school environments as wellas the point that manyinstitutionsdon't possessconducive environmentsnecessary for effectivelyattaining someparticulargoals.

Maree (2019),contends that though documents on policy offercomprehensivestrategies as wellas methods to changeas predicted, it is fundamentalto get to grips with applicationthat takes place in classes through the determination of the teacher. It can as wellbe emphasized that changes are not spontaneously followed by changes in policies, however, they are caused by the transformations of cultures in classrooms. Mostly teachers play crucial roles in makingteaching and learning environments thatimprovestudents to learn. If Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement can bewell applied, thenteaching as well aslearning environments must be supportive of the particular curriculum. Teachersmight need to undergo changes in their mind-setsconcerningCurriculum and Assessment Policy Statement's application for them to transform some cultures in their classrooms in relation toprogram requirements

Luneta(2011), further argues thata soundthought of the teacher'sunderstanding, how his or her performance in his or her classroom develops as well as some aspects whichimpact on his or her development, the easier we can be able to develop, reconstruct as well asassess various theories of the teacher's professional as well as development growth which are grounded and contextualized in pertinentideas. That can improve the professional development of the teacher and direct him or her in someparticular responsibilities. Programs must be guided for the full attention of teachers, who must in turn implement them in their classes. Shalem & Pendlebury (2010),argue that the best teacher is the most valuable source of many education systems, and he or she is also required to accomplishthe functions thathinder his or hermain tasks toconsolidatelearning systematically. Nevertheless the experience the teacher has, the continued interferenceof his or her responsibilities is likely to hamperappropriateapplication of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.

Teacher efficacy and curriculum implementation

Efficacy has been defined as an individual's belief that he or she can produce an outcome by successfully performing necessary behaviours (Allinder, 1994). Anyinfluentialmodel for educatorteaching can be established on the bases of the concept of educatorefficiency. Teachers' "sense of efficacy" refers to the extent to which teachers believe that they have the capacity to affect student performance (Ashton, 1984).

Implementation is not simply an extension of planning and adoption process. It is a phenomenon in its own right (Fullan & Pomfret, 1997). Implementation refers to the actual use of an innovation or what an innovation consists of in practice (Fullan & Pomfret, 1997). According to Fullan &Pomfret(1997), the following are some of reasons to focus on implementation:

> We simply do not know what has changed unless we attempt to conceptualise and measure it directly.
> To understand some of the reasons why so many educational changes fail to become established.
> Failure to do so may result in implementation being ignored or else being confused with other aspects of the change process such as adoption (decision to use an innovation), or even the confusing of the determinants of implementation with implementation itself.
> Unless if this is done, it may be difficult to interpret learning outcomes and to relate these to possible determinants.

Theoretical framework

This research was underpinned by a dualistic theoretical frame, social constructivism and critical theory.Dualistic model comprises separating two fundamentals, in order to have a distinct margin as well as no common ground, that is, relations between them are either of a modest kind that leaves them unchanged or non-existent and that conserves their critical separation (Jackson, 1999). The embracing of a dual method can be more operational as either a down or upstream method alone is probably to be operational in addressing the difficulties of those behaviours (Noble, 2006). Social constructivist model is also founded on a communal ontologies that insist that human agent does not occur individually from its societal environments and their mutually collective system of meaning, that is, cultures in broad (Risse, 2004). Most of the critical theorists uphold that though entirely information is factually conditioned, reality rights can be reasonably arbitrated autonomously of direct social benefits (Held, 1980). In place of critical theory, an assumption is a vital component of motivation. It relates to the concept of speculation or reflection of something. In this case this research sampled teachers to investigate their views or experiences in implementing the CAPS curriculum.

First, social constructivism means that the teachers must have understanding of the existing curricula which cannot be neutral or rational, but is socially constructed through the praxis. With this in mind, teachers are compelled by the CAPS policy (DBE2011) to design lessons to accommodate diverse learner population in their respective classrooms. Therefore, teachers must allow students to reconstruct the social connotations in their classrooms through communication, collaboration and active participation to achieve the objectives of the CAPS policy. In addition, Audi (2008), contends that in educational setup the impression of teaching and learning as a productive procedure is extensively acknowledged. This means that students cannot passively obtain knowledge. They instead energetically construct information as they struggle to make intelligence of the environment they live in. Furthermore, constructivist thinking is of the opinion that understanding is not stable, but formed, created and reconstructed in various social settings and at diverse periods. In some of the National Curriculum Statement's policy official papers, there is also continuing emphasis on student construction of information, particularly in the Science subjects.

Teachers have the opportunity to use their lived experiences to empower and capacitate learners with the intended envisaged objectives as stipulated in the CAPS document. To achieve this, teachers need to create spaces for optimal learning that allows learners to explore different meanings to social reality.

Second, critical theorists are of the view that the society and the culture can be changed by critiquing and challenging the existing structures in the society. Moreover,Booyse (2008), argues that the main real concerns in the critical theories' philosophy are the emancipation and change of the society from being instructed to being questioning and critical. Furthermore, Lemmer (2000), contents that the core of education for societies is that social realities are formed by humans and can be transformed by them. It is imperative that both students and teachers view that political and social authenticity is not static, but that it can be altered. The reason behind this is because these curricula are being offered to teachers and prospective teachers in most of the underdeveloped and developing nations for them to implement without any opportunity to critique them. In view of the latter, Education Department (1997), admits that with critical theory, students obtain the skills to collect, organize, analyze and assess knowledge critically. The importance of critical approaches to any kind of understanding is crucial. Critical discourse around educational matters that affect communities is encouraged. A student must be offered activities that will enable him or her to be in discourse with nature and himself or herself. When a student starts performing as such, the teacher can then be convinced the curriculum is understood.

Third, there are some ways of scrutinizing or understanding the curriculum. Some policies play representative and political functions. Mostly the problem is when the program doesn't serve the interests and needs of the students and that of the community to which they belong. Green (2007), posits that policies are representative because they offer visions of the model teaches in ideal schools. Just to give one example, it is sometimes virtually difficult for teachers to perform all their roles meaningfully. This can be some of the many causes of the gaps between the purposes of the policies as well as their real implementations in their classrooms. Learnings usually become political issues if they entertain students to perform instructions coming from the authorities in an absolute as well as thoughtless way. Consequently that actual understanding as well as application of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement rests upon the lasting eradication of gaps in practicing policies. That kind of a gap may eventually narrow their involvements in applying CAPS. If the Education Department doesn't react speedily on such a reality, the teacher can face the impact gaps of practicing policies.

METHODOLOGY

Research paradigmis the lens that the researcher uses to critically reflect on the phenomenon under investigation. Constructivist-interpretivist is about meaning making about classroom teachers' views and what they experience when they implement the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.

Thissuggestedinvestigation was a case study, established in a qualitative approach of investigation. Hofstee (2006),replicates that in research project one is not compelled to describe the specifics of the application of procedures, but simply to deliberate systems that will be applied. The research employed a qualitative approach to explore the phenomenon, in this case classroom teachers' views regarding the

implementation of CAPS policy. This pieceresponsesto the enquiry why the researcher's investigation has beendirected in this specificway. The research also offers a signal as to the overallphases taken for the investigation and to validate it, namely, to authenticate why the process of consultations and not surveys was applied. Thesubdivision also displays how information was gathered, utilized as well asstudied. Thisalso indicates the type of procedures, instruments and methodsapplied. Thepiecereveals the circumstances in which the outcomes were construed. Thisalso providesfacts on who is involved in the sample and for what.

Sampling

The teachers that teach in grade ten were recruited. Theirunderstandings of applying Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement were assessedin contrast to their knowledge of the NCS. Teachers'clearknowledge of the NCS and their availabilityadded to them being selected or sampled. Those that participated were interviewed independently onseparate times. The process was done by choosing the schools that were within the neighborhood of Gauteng North District of the Gauteng Department of Education. Theinvestigation was done in sixdiverseinstitutions thus thatgenerated space for diverse or multiple thoughts.

The researcher used purposive samplingof teachers and students.According to Sarantakos (2013),technique allows the researchers to purposely select subjects or learning areas that, in their views, are appropriate to their projects. The investigatorassumed that the currentsubject could be systematicallydiscovered if the maincontributorswould be some teachers that could offer acceptable as well as valuable data about theirunderstandings of applyingthe CAPS. The participants' knowledge and expertise in the selected grade for Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, made them appropriate for the research.

However, a thorough coverage of the whole population is rarelyprobable. The sampled institutionsconfined about16 teachers, all of them being natural South African citizens and about 500 students. Ninety five percent of thestudents were from the local informal settlement, two townships and the town. Only six schools formed part of the sample. Sixteen teachers were selected for the investigation. The setup indicates that the sample comprised of two Grade teneducators and one Further Education and Training (FET) phase Departmental Head from each of these sixinstitutionsindividually. The researcherguaranteed that HoD's came from different levels.

Data collection tools, procedures and analysis

Informationgathering from fewpeople that participatedin this research was a sensible choice for almost any qualitative information. Everything that was observed and listened to, was recorded. The semi-structured or focus group interviews were recorded and its contents transcribed. As aninvestigator, itwas essential to play a primary role in collecting data. The keyinformationgatheringtechnique was by means of interviews. Additionalapproaches of informationgatheringtools such as diaries, audiotapes and videotapes were used. Addressing the matters that were elevated in the investigationenquiries involved anorganizedinvestigation of sources and views. A chance for the interviews delivered for face to face (F2F) communication enabled the

explanation of perceptions that were not clear for the teachers that participated in this research.

Informationexamination and clarification was finalized after data were collected. Informationadministration, which was part of informationinvestigation, intended at high quality and availableinformation. That is why information gathered was kept and repossessed for investigation. Attending matters that were elevated in the investigationenquiries involved anorganizedinvestigation of sources and thoughts. Information wasarranged accordingly, abstracted, refined and prepared into a comprehensible new structure. The recorded interviews were transcribed and analyzed. Recording and analyzing of the interviews took place while they were still fresh. Teachers' experiences transmitted into words, formed and converted into a communicable demonstration thereof. Contradictingviewpoints and new understandings were reviewed and refinedafter listening all transcriptions.Information collected was matched and amalgamated into a meaningful discussions.

Trustworthiness and validity

In order to circumventpartialities as well asto upholdtrustworthiness and validity of information, triangulation procedures weredirected. The only likelydanger fortrustworthiness of informationmighthave been the investigators' failure to makerecords during interpretations. De Vaus, Vouche & Delport (2005),describe validity as talk about the degree to which atool is doing what it is envisioned to do. Validity in this research was upheld by selecting the model that was reachable, with the expectation of saving costs and time throughout the interview procedure. As an investigator, there was a necessity to guarantee that content and sources used were valid,that is, accurate and consistent. The process demanded for accuracy in analyzing and recording of information. The investigation was approached in a manner of ensuring that members that participated in this research did not resist along the process because thatcould have adverse effectson the outcomesacquired. That was attained by guaranteeingprivacy and when the researcher disclosed the benefits that could be gained from this research. Reliability and trustworthiness of qualitative investigation depended on howcredible, applicable and reasonable the findings were. Teachers and all stakeholders could be able to positivelyuse ideas and knowledge in their classrooms.

Ethical Considerations

Initially, a letter requesting permission to conduct research was sent to the sixinstitutions that were thought to be part of the research. The letter of permissionintended to informthe teachers about their rights to anonymity, protection from reprisal as well as their privacy. The membersthat participated in this research were guaranteed that no recordings would be hidden from them. De Vaus, Vouche & Delport (2005),commend that participants that are recorded must have their confidentiality guaranteed and must also give their consent. Members that participated in this research were assured access to any part of the chronicleddata. Participants were also guided on how their answers would be used and about the worth of the enquiry as such. The researcherguaranteed each participant that they will be treated as individual human beings and not as objects. Information wasinvestigated in a way that

was not destructively revealed. It was necessary for the researcher to maintain confidentiality and trust when data were analyzed.The members that participated in this research were informed that they can pull outof the research anytime in the process of collecting data. Participants were referred to as "Teacher A, B, C, etc., to safeguard their identities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the manual analysis process of data, the following themes were identified:

Interpretation and implementation of CAPS in the classroom

Severalof the teachers that were interviewed remarked on the matters that Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement is difficult to understand, not comprehensible and that it has been hard to distinct the variousstagesin the program.
Below are some of the verbatim comment by the participants:
Teacher H said:
"I really don't like it! It is extremely lengthy. The Heads of Departments in many institutions are not able to interpretsome issuesin relation to the how and what pars of the subjects' contents in the Curriculum and AssessmentPolicy Statements".
Another teacher,(J) said:
"With me is that I don't like beating pretending, I trust in staying with the instructions.That is the reason I always perform as requested.However, one is interested in all these curricula changes".
Teacher N said:
"As a teacher, I amconfronted with somepredicament in performing things that are new while having this old mindset and very old materials. These changes aremaking me to try and improve but I amalready old to go back to institution of learning to study".

The comments above are emphases of the fact that policy is not user-friendly to the participants.

However, some commented that they interpreted it well over time.
Teacher T said:
"It is user-friendly in some ways. Though they are accompanied by many managerialresponsibilities, they are user-friendly. We interpret these documents on policies as our bibles because we strategize in relation to the policies as these bookletscompriseof planned schedules of work including dates".

On the other hand some of the participantspresented certainuncertainties with some changes because they made the comments that follow:
Teacher K said:
"However, it is as if is a singletext not like those varying texts with the National Curriculum Statement. Some of my responsibilities aresimple.The documents indicate to you when to teach and what to teach".

Usually the absence of studentinspiration and poorverbal language literacy stages were seen as a difficulty by participants. Many participantsraised up the matter of the

valuation being more and teaching being too less. The other anxietiescomprisedof recognizing best practices regarding the application of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. Most participants seemedto be prepared to admitadjustments as they have already started applyingCurriculum and Assessment Policy Statement in their respective schools. The language of learning and teaching (English), also seemed to be the key challenge to teaching and learning in South African institutions.

Lack of teaching time and resources

One of the concerns was why someannouncementscannot have been expressed in simple language from the start. Members felt that this generated a problem for schools because they had to devote more time repeating same processes. Anotherannouncement made was that teachers did not trustthat it was their duties to interpret the goals of the curriculum. Providing for a variety of students' abilities and needs within their classrooms presented another challenge to effectively implementCurriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. The diversitiesstretched from students who could write few sentences only to those that could write many well-structured paragraphs and were able to proof read their work. Approximately those remarkswere related to the teaching of visual language to the deaf and hearing impaired students that is challenging in most rural backgrounds.

Teacher H said:

"As a teacher I still struggle in completingthe syllabi. As an English teacher,I have a lot of activitiesand tasks that I must give to learners. However, these activities and tasks are must be done in a short space of time".

Participants experienced lack of time to develop exciting and new activities, and that was justified by one of the participants (Teacher O), who said:

"I might be having many thoughts but there is no enough time to put them into action".

One of the positive aspects about many participants was that they desired to gain much from experienced teachers by mentoring them. They only complained about lack of time. Some of the participants stated that teacher-professional growth, the use of subject advisors, were critical in implementing and understanding the program.

Furthermore, participants indicated that the introduction of the school- based assessment (SBA) in Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement was demanding and that this took more time instead of teaching. Dealing with more paperwork together with the assessment and planning of activities was the most demanding issue. Theydid not encounter teaching as a problem.That related to both languages and content subjects. The program for languages did not seemto be ignored by paperwork compliance and reporting. Monitoring, remedial teaching in order to cater for individual needs and timetabling issues were also indicated as problems.

Teacher G said:

"There were some challenges such as inviting subject advisors, team building, networking, well as team teaching and annual programs of assessment".

Below are some of the verbatim comments regarding resources by the participants in this research:

Teacher K said:

"NowI comprehend Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement's' issues. However, ourkey problems arethe infrastructures in many of our schools.The resources would provide helpful professional information that will increase professional knowledge. A

teacher needs resources such as computers. These must be provided by the Department of Basic Education. Even though some of the institutions have been given computers, most teachers are not computer literate.These resources or computers are packed in the storerooms".

Teacher B said:
"There is no significantassistance from the schools.The only resources provided to us are few things such as chalks, charts and marking pens".

The lack of contemporary resources such as laboratories, computers and libraries prevented quality learning and teaching. The above-mentioned aspects also indicated the implications on finances that schools in townships experienced.

Insufficient teacher training as a barrier to implement CAPS

Most teachers who participated in this investigation indicated that they were not satisfied with the development they received. That was because informationpresented that the participants were questioning the excellence of their development. Usually their motives were founded on the facts that they were given a once off training development or training that was scheduled for only two or three working days. Participants that were in the education system at the time underwent the prescribed development. Serrao (2008) indicates that meagreprofessional teacher development can be one of the problems that hindereffectiveapplication of processes. Moalosi & Molwane (2010), posit that all the time when new program is presented, very slightpreparation is given to teachers. The same had been the case in South Africa. Inappropriate teacher training activities were offered to them in order for the knowledgegap to be reduced.

This was emphasized by Teacher F when he said:
"The people who facilitated the workshops used to be teachers like usand did not attendany facilitators' workshops. In the workshops the facilitators read form the manuals with no cleardescriptions".

Development received by teachers provided elementaryunderstanding and knowledge of the adjustments to the program. Mostorganizersof the workshops just read through the papers without putting anyimportance to the principles of National Curriculum Statements that actually underpinned Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. Few class implications forthe National Curriculum Statement's principles were acknowledged throughout the sessions development or training.

Teacher D said:
"The workshopsjust began beingsignificant when they werefacilitated by relevant subject specialists".

Developmental workshops by most of the learning area or subject advisors or experts during the subject orientation training workshops wereexpected to minimize the gap between procedures and actual application.

Teacher F said:
"After discovering that the workshops were actually inappropriate to us, we registered for refresher courses on Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. The course assisted us in understanding and being able to implement the programs".
The general indication of participants' understanding is extremely insignificant. Teachers appeared to be surrounded by developing matters of disappointments that were grounded on cultural and social environments outside and within the schools.

Professional development or training workshops were not sufficient because they were only for two or three days. They did not emphasize the significance of the principles of National Curriculum Statement. Collected data exposed that though the teachers had problems with quality of development or training workshops, others were actually resisted to the changes. Application of the principles of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statementoffers rooms for manycertainties in relation to how teaching and learning could be done.

Teachers' response to reforms

Many things havebeen reformed in the teaching and learning programmes in South African schools. Procedures that have changed weresupplemented by the changes in attitudes by the implementers of the curriculum. Most implementers were not comfortable with the introduction of models such as Programmes of Assessment (PoA), Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG's), Learning Programme Guidelines (LPG's), Workbooks, Teaching Plans (TP's) and Standard Basics of Assessment (SBA's).

This was confirmed by teacher N who said:

"We aresick and tired about these curricula changes. These days is Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. I am confronted by challenges in performing current activities with old materials using old mindset. These changes are causing teachers to be frustrated".

Theinvestigationpresentedsome resistances from most secondary school teachers to reforms. Nonetheless, in this research, teachers'reluctances were not intentional. It was the system of education precisely thathad to be blamed. Most Headsof Departments indicated that they didn't have much opportunities to meet regularly.

Heads of Departments were not satisfied with many responsibilities theywere supposed to carry. The responsibilities includedthe management and development ofguidelines for the Department of Education, drawing time tables and duty loads, organizing grades meetings with parents, conducting class visits, checking lesson plans and work schedules, controlling registers as well as monitoring and mentoring of theirsubordinates. Heads of Departments used those responsibilities as scapegoats for their inabilities to monitor and supervise the teachers. Curriculum experts that were supposed to assist were also inadequately available. The inability to accomplishas expected was then seen as a form of unwillingness. Heads of Departments that participated in this research shouldreconsider their responsibilities as their behaviours werein conflict with the objectives and aims of both the South African schools' Act and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

This was evident when one of the Heads of Department said:

"I have to ask teachers to submit work schedules from so that I can monitor them regularlybut no one moderates my own work".

The participants were expected to familiarizethemselves with the administrative and heavy work load. That was also influenced by overcrowding in the classes. The inability to monitor and give support from Heads of Departments as indicated by the teachers, also impacted on the challenges for adequate development or training so that curriculum can be implemented.Some schools did not have enough teacher capacitationprogrammes to be professionally capacitated regardingimplementation of

the curriculum.That could have bridged the professional or training gaps that the participants encountered. Thecondition preserved the gap for practice of the policies.

In this research, teachers' understandings of the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement in secondary schools was investigated. The first research question reported that the participants had different thoughts regarding the way Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement was implemented. However, some teachers felt confident about Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, while some did not feel good with it. Some teachers felt Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement was not easy to implement at all. The challenges that they experienced revolved around the new approach in the sense that some of them were the challenges concerning the application of the policies, content and learners (Dube, 2016). One participant indicated that they don't hate the curriculum that much, but it has many new words and is too long. The participant further indicated that the new curriculum has many concepts and they are not able to interpret them easily.

According to Green (2007), policy is symbolic because it offers a vision of the ideal teacher in an ideal school.However, other participants indicated that it was not very difficult because they regarded the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement documents as the holy one. Another participant indicated that Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement is better when compared to NCSand the content to teach is clearly stipulated.One can attach reasons for doubts as grounded mostly on infrastructure, inadequate training and socio-political backgrounds.

Foundations for teacher professional training or development has been recognized as the most important aspect for understanding Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. Educators feel that they were not adequately trained to implement Curriculum and Assessment Policy since facilitators did not deal with problems experienced in the classroom in a practical manner (Moodley, 2013). The findings indicate that Head of Departments did not succeed in playing their roles as mentors in their schools' setup. Currently principals are not able to deal with those teachers who are lazy, corrupt, bankrupt, bunk classes, hold illegal meetings during teaching and do not teach effectively (Skosana & Monyai, 2013). One of the HoD's indicated that
they don't getenough time to hold meetings regularly in theirdepartments because of many duties they are expected to do such as administrativeresponsibilities.

The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG) and Learning Programme Guidelines (LPGs) in Grade R to12 had been discovered by many teachers as cornerstones for thorough teaching and learning in schools. The documents indicated above were meant to offer specialized information that will increase professional understanding essential for the implementation of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. That could have ensured that planned learning programs provided opportunities for students to investigate and enquire knowledge and relate what have been learnt to real life situations. However, they complained that their classes are overcrowded. Bitzer & Botha (2011) agree with the participants by reflecting that it is easy to fall back into teacher-driven learning if classes are too big.According to Dube (2016),learners seem not to be ready to take responsibility for their own learning activities.
According to Skosana& Monyai (2013), there is a gap between the policies of the Department of Education such as Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement policy documents, National Protocol for Assessment (NPA) and National Protocol on

Recording and Reporting (NPRR). As professionals teachers are equipped with expertise that will enable students to make any situations around them as challenging. The findings of this research indicate that some of the schools have resources such as computers. However, schools lack knowledge in operating the resources because they lack finance. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement had appeared to be not easy to implement because many participants regarded it as not easy.

Based on the second research question, participants indicated that mentoring of teachers' activities by Head of Department was also deemed inappropriate. That also adds to Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement to be difficult. Findings also indicate that the activities of many of the Head of Departments were not been checked by institutional heads. That resulted in participants' activities not been checked as well. Most of Head of Departments were depicted as not checking excellence or quality. That was not acceptable as it deprived students to learn. This was evident one of the participants indicated that HoDs are not satisfied with duties they are supposed to perform. Their duties include checking lesson plans and work schedules, controlling registers, monitoring, conducting class visits, meetings with parents, drawing time tables, managing and drawing policies for the department as well as mentoring other teachers.

These reports of lack of checking of the teachers' work by Head of Departments curbed the need for advanced Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement's implementation. That was due to Head of Departments' demonstrating high contradictions as they failed to check teachers' compliance with the implementation of the curriculum. Inexperience on the part of curriculum managers destroyed teachers' self-esteem that ultimately acted as a barrier for the implementation of the curriculum effectively.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This investigation established that teachers that participated have experienced problems that were associated with resistance to change, professional development, unreasonable workload for Heads of Departments, lack of time, shortage of resources, monitoring and language as a barrier on the part of the learners, teacher training, classroom sizes as well as administrative support. Furthermore, the research argues that without appropriate infrastructure, institutes cannot manage to implement Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement successfully. On the other hand, the inadequate professional capacitation or development teachers received did not prepare them to deal with unexpected problems that hinder the implementation Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. In addition to that, the Heads of Departments' lack of controlling, organizing, planning and proper leadership posed major challenges to the implementation of curriculum by participants in this research.

The findings also established that Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement has been not easy to implement. Inadequate training and increased administrative duties were portrayed as extremely contributing factors for Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement's effective implementation. Some of the positive aspects of the findings of this research reflect that teachers might have not managed to complete the syllabi and the methodologies they used also posed challenges as they were not Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement's orientated. The claim that Curriculum and

Assessment Policy Statement is easy to implement by the teachers is completely not in line with the findings of this research.

Firstly both Heads of Departments and teachers had perceptions that were promising about Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. Nevertheless, the findings of this research show that the teachers did not succeed in taking responsibility for the changes of the curriculum. The motives for not succeeding vary from lack of adequate finances to challenges of resources. The Heads of Departments and teachers that were willing to admit changes could not be able to do so because systems that were put in place were malfunctioning as well as poor support structures.

Professional development of Heads of Departments and teachers for all new curriculum that is introduced must be for at least a duration of period of ten days as opposed to the three days workshops that they obtained. The Heads of Departments' organizational duties must be attended to or reviewed as they hinder monitoring of teachers' and learners' work effectively. The Department of Basic Education needs to make sure that there is delivery of infrastructure and resources to institutions timeously so that teaching and learning is effective. Adequate effective visits to schools by departmental officials must be done so that they can motivate and guide the teachers and Heads of Departments. Department of Basic Education must make sure teams that that each time new programme is presented, learning area or subject experts make 90% of the facilitate in the workshops because they are specializing in their particular subjects. The working environment must be made conducive especially in remote areas. Department of Basic Education must consider some incentives for teachers in schools that are dysfunctional so that many skilled and qualified teachers can join in order to impart knowledge and expertise in those schools.

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