

Legal Execution of Curriculum in Primary Schools: School Management Teams' Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

In terms of curriculum management in primary schools, the study's main goal was to examine the roles and experiences of school management teams (SMTs). Therefore, it was intended to look at the functions of SMTs as instructional leaders. A qualitative research strategy was adopted, and data were gathered through non-participant observation, individual interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. The participants' meanings of their lived experiences were described using the interpretivist paradigm. The management of curriculum implementation was viewed through the lenses of instructional leadership and traditional management ideas. SMTs, or participants with plenty of information, were chosen through purposeful sampling. It was discovered that the SMTs must apply both management and leadership constructs to manage the execution of the program effectively. Ineffective management and leadership prevent effective teaching from taking hold in classrooms. For schools to be effective, leadership and management must be of a high calibre. Additionally, it was discovered that while SMTs were able to recognize their tasks, some of them lacked expertise in managing the execution of curricula. Only primary schools were examined, and the study mostly relied on the opinions of the SMTs, which include the principle, deputy principal, departmental heads, subject heads, and senior teachers.

KEYWORDS

Execution of curriculum; leadership; curriculum implementation; school management team; instructional leadership.

INTRODUCTION

In the South African context, the term school management team (SMT) include the principle, deputy principal, departmental heads, subject heads, and senior teachers in a school.

This study looked at the way primary schools in the Sekhukhune District of South Africa's Limpopo Province were using their curricula. To achieve the specified aims and objectives, curriculum management must be effective and efficient. The success of the curriculum is influenced by the administration of the curriculum, which must be effective and efficient while adhering to the intended goals. The current curriculum becomes eerily silent and shrouded in mystery if management concepts are not sufficiently included (Handayani et al., 2023). For teaching and learning to be successful in schools, there must be effective curriculum management. It is documented worldwide that managing teaching and learning is one of the most critical responsibilities of school managers (Bush et al., 2010). Accordingly, school managers must cultivate a culture of teaching and learning that enhances the quality of education in schools (Khuluse, 2004). Improved learner performance and quality teaching and learning depend on the quality of sound management plans and procedures. Sound management practices can sustain quality education. Therefore, school managers are expected to focus primarily on teaching and learning (Department of Basic Education, 2008). Moreover, SMTs have various responsibilities concerning the professional management of the school which includes managing curriculum implementation. Nwangwa and Omotere (2013) maintain that due to changes in the school system, the fundamental roles of SMTs have been expanded. They have to perform both managerial and leadership tasks. In this case, managing and leading curriculum implementation. Instructional leadership, therefore, describes the leadership and managerial facets of a school that directly influence learner achievement (Van der Bijl & Kruger, 2016). Brazer and Bauer (2013, p. 650) maintain that "instructional leadership is the effort to improve teaching and learning for learners by managing effectively, addressing the challenges of diversity, guiding teacher learning and fostering organisational learning". Therefore, this study was aimed at exploring the roles and experiences of SMTs in terms of curriculum management after the inception of the contemporary curriculum, CAPS. The study focused primarily on the SMTs, which comprise the principal, deputy principal, Departmental Heads, subject heads, and senior teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Mashile et al. (2023), curriculum implementation should correspond with the order in which students complete the curriculum as part of a school's learning program. According to Gunnulfson et al. (2023), school principals and SMT leaders are crucial change agents because of their tight relationships to teachers and their instructional methods. This implies that curriculum implementation is unlikely to be implemented as intended and is therefore likely to fail without discussion and cooperation from all role players, such as school principals and SMTs. The focus with which schools implement the curriculum and the manner

in which principals and SMTs assist teachers both affect the quality of education provided. For educational leaders, the evolution of leadership qualities is a basic challenge. According to some educational experts, the best way to improve student learning outcomes is to establish a learning organization that gives teachers autonomy, authority, and accountability (Mkpa & Anuna, 2023). Since teaching and learning are essentially the cornerstones of the entire educational process, Sari & Kasmini, (2023) discovered that one of the variables that impacts the success of the teaching and learning process in the classroom is the teacher. Additionally, teachers are expected to be able to improve their skills and job; capable educators will be better equipped to create a positive learning environment and will be better equipped to deal with difficulties.

Both administration and leadership are essential for efficient school operations. Since leadership without management does not result in a culture of ongoing teaching and learning, and vice versa, these ideas can be seen as opposite sides of the same coin (Van Deventer, 2003; 2016). Van Deventer (ibid) asserts that leadership is seen as an aspect of management, with born leaders being characterised as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and the ability to motivate and inspire others" to further demonstrate the connection between leadership and management. This suggests that management and leadership are both necessary in the educational setting (Davidoff et al., 2014).

Management focuses on making sure the school is operating efficiently and accomplishing the required goals, whereas leadership pertains to the direction to attain future purposes (Davidoff et al., 2014). The aspects of leadership and management must include keeping the situation in focus, maintaining equilibrium, having a general awareness of the problem, and pausing when it's necessary to reflect, comprehend, and consolidate (ibid). To put it another way, these ideas support one another (Fabi, 2013). According to Fabi (ibid), management and leadership share the following characteristics: both works to achieve goals; both mobilize and use resources; both have a relationship between top management and subordinates; and both inspire followers and rely on them for success.

Effective teaching and learning cannot flourish in schools without management and leadership (Van Deventer, 2003). We may therefore agree that "the quality of both leadership and management determines the success or failure of a school" (Van Deventer, 2003, p. 68). Simply put, this implies that the effectiveness of the institution depends on the calibre of leadership and management. Since effective leadership and management are essential to a school's success, managing curriculum implementation in schools clearly calls for both leadership and management experience (Davies, 2009).

Additionally, recent study demonstrates how important management and leadership activities are interconnected and equally important (Van Deventer, 2016). These include establishing goals and objectives, creating detailed work plans, making, and regulating adjustments, supporting the execution of work plans, rewarding performance, and being persistent until goals are attained.

Management-leadership tasks

Regarding the execution of curriculum management, leadership is crucial. Although not all leaders are managers and not all managers are leaders, a position of direction or management might confer this impact (Marreiros et al., 2023).

Fayol (1841–1925) is one of the founding fathers of the classical approach to management, according to Cole et al. (2004; 2011). Fayol created management activities including planning, organizing, coordinating, commanding, and regulating since his theory focuses more on enhancing management efficiency and effectiveness in organizations (Fayol, 1987). According to this view, managers are given instructions on how to carry out their duties. Fayol is well recognized for his five management activities, which include planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling (Cole et al., 2011). These activities outline the important roles of competent managers. Due to their overlap, these tasks are now referred to as management-leadership tasks (Van Deventer, 2016).

The duties, which also apply to managers like SMT members, can be considered as having a connection to the theoretical underpinnings of this study. Not only are they still relevant in the twenty-first century, but they also closely resemble modern conceptions of education management that focus on its primary functions. These include organizing, leading, or directing, managing, or evaluating, and planning, including strategic and operational planning (Van Deventer 2016).

School managers and leaders must use planning, organizing, leading, and regulating principles to the people, outcomes, and resources available at a school to manage the school successfully and efficiently (Van Deventer, 2003). These management-leadership tasks are also stressed by Dale (1978); Van Deventer (2003); Cole (2004); Cole et al., (2011), Botha et al., (2013). Management functions and managerial tasks are other terms for them. These management and leadership responsibilities are essential for every area of school management, including curriculum management.

Roles of principals as instructional leaders

Since principals are recognized as primary sources of educational expertise (Marks et al. 2003), their major responsibility as instructional leaders are to build effective schools (Leiva et al. 2016). According to Botha (2013, p. 195), the phrase "instructional leader" specifically refers to "the principal's primary role in the pursuit of educational excellence. Botha (2013) demonstrates that the principal's three action aspects, each of which has a distinct task, comprise the principal's instructional leadership position. defining the school's mission, which includes articulating and conveying the goals of the institution. Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programme, which entails being familiar with and managing the curriculum and instruction, overseeing, evaluating, and keeping track of learner progress. Setting norms and goals, preserving instructional time, and encouraging growth are all part of dimension 3—promote a good learning environment.

In support of Mafora and Phorabatho (2013), Kruger (2003), and Botha (2013), this study suggests the principals' primary responsibilities for overseeing the curriculum's implementation. These include preparing for the execution of the curriculum, organizing the workload of the teachers, and allocating the right resources. This include directing the curriculum's implementation, offering ongoing professional development, overseeing, and assessing the curriculum's implementation, keeping track of learners' progress, using effective communication, and safeguarding instructional time. The following section goes into further detail about these fundamental tasks.

For successful teaching and learning to occur, "learners' interpersonal skills, including their ability to interact positively with peers and teachers, to resolve conflicts, and to work in teams must be nurtured" (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018, p.7). This is the principal's primary role. Effective teaching and learning require a supportive learning environment to succeed (Mtsweni, 2008). Additionally, ineffective teaching and learning are significantly impacted by the management of safety and security in schools (Gina & White, 2014). Therefore, school leaders must maintain order in the building to guarantee that teaching and learning can take place in a secure setting. It is important to keep in mind that one of a school's main goals is to offer a secure and disciplined setting where learning and teaching may occur (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Mtsweni, 2013). The argument put up by Mestry et al., (2013) that the successful implementation of a curriculum depends on the school environment within which it is implemented is supported by Mafora and Phorabatho (2013). A clear goal and mission, as well as strict discipline, should define the educational environment.

The school's mission should be clear to the teachers, students, and the entire school community, claims Botha (2013). This includes articulating and conveying the principal's desired outcomes for the school. Therefore, the administrator must be able to foster positive relationships between the school and the entire community through honouring and recognizing others' efforts. Realizing that they are responsible for promoting harmony and a sound work ethic within the school community and beyond is important for the school principal (Grobler, 2013). According to Kruger (2003) and Mestry et al., (2013), the school principal oversees fostering a supportive working and learning environment.

Burden and & Byrd (2013) state that preparing for curriculum implementation entails demonstrating understanding of the subject matter and teaching, students, teaching objectives, and resources, as well as establishing consistent instruction and learner assessment. In addition to the aforementioned factors, the principal must see to it that teaching personnel that is both pertinent and qualified is hired, and that the systems in place to support teaching and learning are operational. Subject committees and SMT could serve as an illustration. Additionally, the curriculum must receive a budget allocation of 60% of the school budget, according to the principle. Infrastructure, learning and teaching support materials (LTSM), and other pertinent resources may be helped by the financial resources.

To achieve predetermined goals, organizing is more concerned with dividing up the work, assigning duties, authority, and responsibility, allocating resources to pertinent departments or individuals, and establishing relationships between different teachers (Cole, 2011). Therefore, the administrator must maintain a profile for each teacher to outline the division of labour and responsibilities. Additionally, it is the principal's duty to see that teachers who adhere to the school's curricular standards are hired.

The principal is also responsible for making sure that all subjects are included in a general timetable and are given the appropriate amount of time according to CAPS policy. To ensure the effective use of these materials, enough Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) must be purchased and handled. The school principal oversees planning every activity at the school and coordinating it with the intended objectives. According to Mestry et al. (2013), the principal can influence learning through organizational management, which entails making sure teachers have the support they need to be successful in the classroom by allocating budgets and resources.

The principals and SMTs must lead and guide teachers about correct content and method of implementing the curriculum in classrooms," claim Mafora and Phorabatho (2013). As a result, the principal must make sure that all curriculum policies and plans are created and carried out in accordance with expectations as part of the leading and guiding process. On the other hand, the principal must make sure that the material taught by the instructors complies with NCS Grades R–12, CAPS. Finally, they must make sure the SMTs frequently visit teachers in their classrooms to offer support. To ensure high learner attainment, the school principal must, above all, collaborate with heads of department, deputy principals, and senior teachers. Second, he or she must oversee teachers to ensure that they carry out their responsibilities with diligence and manage their workload well. To improve the quality of instruction at the school, the principal will eventually need to communicate with private businesses, community organizations, and institutions of higher education.

According to Clarke (2012), in addition to the idea that teachers must spend 1,720 hours a year on their numerous activities, 80 of those hours must be set aside for professional development outside of the classroom. Teachers require chances for professional development, and school principals should support them in attending sessions planned by the circuit, district, and provincial offices (Li et al., 2016). Activities designed for teachers must be connected to their needs and experiences with teaching and learning in the classroom. To empower individuals, modern curricular modifications must also be communicated to teachers. Good teaching and learning depend on an efficient staff professional development program, according to Clarke (2012).

The school supervisors monitor the employees through evaluation to determine whether the predetermined goals have been met (Zengele, 2013). Principals may be able to review their plans through this procedure and make necessary adjustments. Principals must make sure that opportunities are given for students to acquire information, skills, and values

during this process and that they are evaluated accordingly. For the curriculum to be implemented, both students and teachers must be respectful of their classrooms. In addition, monitoring and assessing curriculum implementation may help principals spot problems and effective strategies (Mafora & Phorabatho, 2013).

It is the duty of principals to keep an eye on student progress, provide comments, and implement corrective actions. They must discuss analyses of the learners' performance with the staff and develop improvement plans for increased learner accomplishment. As part of this procedure, principals can keep an eye on and evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment forms and instruments used to gather and gauge student achievement (Clarke 2012). Communication is a component of leading or guiding (Van Deventer, 2016). As a result, leading requires directing the team (Davidoff et al., 2014). Giving instructions involves sharing the tactics designed to enable successful curriculum implementation inside the school. This suggests that all school stakeholders, including the SMT, teachers, School Governing Body, and parents, need to be informed about the school's vision, curriculum policies, and strategies. Additionally, the principle, who is an instructional leader, is accountable for this. To avoid inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum and to ensure that everyone is aware of what is expected of them, an instructional leader must make sure that all school activities are clearly conveyed.

'Protecting instructional time' was listed as one of the instructional leaders' job tasks in the models of instructional leadership developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and Botha (2013, p.195). As a result, instructional leaders must make sure that both teachers and students respect the allotted instructional time. The most crucial step is setting up systems that will help reduce occurrences of truancy. It has been discovered that preserving instructional time is crucial for efficient teaching and learning.

SMTs as curriculum managers

SMTs are responsible for a variety of tasks related to the effective management of the school, including overseeing the execution of the curriculum. Under the direction of the school principal, the SMT oversees all operations pertaining to the provision of high-quality education (Joubert & Bray, 2007). This suggests that SMTs and principals are equally accountable for overseeing the implementation of the curriculum (Bush et al., 2010). It is the duty of SMT to promote efficient teaching and learning. SMTs need to be more knowledgeable, professionally, and administratively competent, as well as resourceful to complement the efforts of the provincial department towards achieving the goals of the schools and districts (Lumadi, 2012), which emphasizes the need of their development. This shows that SMTs are viewed as the stewards of the standard of instruction and learning in their own schools. According to Nwangwa and Omotere (2013), because of modifications to the educational system, the SMTs' core responsibilities at a school now include: Leader educators, like Departmental Heads, continue to maintain and carry out their legal responsibilities. For example, SMTs at primary schools were aware of distributed leadership

concepts and, to the extent that they were comfortable with them, partially applied them. This implies that, despite being allowed and given the option to lead, teachers' participation in leadership is at the discretion of the SMTs and school administrators (Sasere & Makhasane, 2023). All activities inside the school need to be planned for and overseen by the SMT (Lumadi, 2012). They oversee organizing the school's efficient administration and making sure that there are enough resources and qualified people on hand. To prepare for the following year, they must start the time-tabling process each year's end so that every teacher is aware of the demands placed upon them. This provides teachers with plenty of time to get ready before the start of the school year. Re-equipping the teachers for the work ahead is the SMT's primary duty. Additionally, in advance, Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) must be purchased.

The SMT is responsible for overseeing collaborative curriculum design under their purview and setting up and hosting regular subject meetings with departmental teachers. For effective teaching and learning, they must also collaborate with teachers and provide support for them.

Teaching is the school's primary duty (Kruger, 2003). The SMT must then make sure that effective teaching and learning triumph despite all the obstacles. The key to maintaining discipline, according to Rogers (2002), is to understand that good teaching naturally leads to proper discipline. Discipline may become the norm if teachers properly instruct by making the work understandable and engaging, assisting students in staying on task by engaging them in the lesson, and helping as needed with the job.

Given the increasing diversity of primary school learning courses, it is important to give instructors' knowledge, education, and teaching techniques more weight. When creating curricula, learners' backgrounds and needs must be properly considered (Yeh, 2023). Understanding outcomes is the starting point for great lessons (Mendler et al., 2008). Teachers need to be very clear about what they are going to teach and what they hope to accomplish in their courses. As a result, it is crucial for a teacher to have a rationale and goal behind what they do in the classroom. According to Oosthuizen (2010), teachers need to possess three sets of abilities to be successful in instilling excellent discipline in their students. They must, first and foremost, be experts in their field. Second, they must understand how to convey their material so that lessons go smoothly, and the students' attention is held. Finally, they require abilities in group management.

According to Li et al., (2023), teachers' emotions, which affect how their students interact with their environment, may provide them the power to use alternate ways of thinking, seeing, and behaving to control the students in the classroom. In great part, discipline-maintaining is a by-product of effective teaching. To keep things in order, a great curriculum is required (Porter, 2007). Therefore, schools must make sure that a top-notch curriculum is provided to pique students' interests. Each instructor should be responsible for making sure that the lessons are prepared in an engaging manner. To make teaching and

learning more engaging, a variety of instructional techniques must be used. As a result, students could discover a motivation to cooperate and practice good discipline.

The teacher should establish the tone for classroom management, claim Roberts et al. (2023). Curriculum development, teaching design, and classroom management are the three main facets of an instructor's job. For these methods, rules and processes must be developed. The rules and procedures should include everything, including expectations, transitions, supplies and equipment, group projects, and teacher-led activities. Positive interactions between teachers and students are essential for efficient classroom management and student growth. Teachers must clearly transmit the right degrees of power to keep control of the classroom.

In order to accomplish their main purpose, SMTs must prepare how to deal with disciplinary issues and reduce their occurrence. According to Clarke (2012), SMTs must create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning to improve school discipline. The constant need to deal with student behavior, according to Colvin (2010), is one of the major issues that instructors face today. It is clear that poor discipline management in schools could ultimately compromise the effectiveness of curriculum implementation (Ntuli, 2012). According to Joubert et al. (2005), the purpose of discipline in schools is to foster an atmosphere that is favourable to teaching and learning as well as to ensure the security of both staff and students. Colvin (2010) also agrees that a setting that is peaceful, organized, secure, and respectful is necessary for good teaching and learning.

SMTs must be proactive; they should not wait for difficult behavior to occur before thinking about how to handle it (Leaman, 2005). They must create a discipline strategy to prevent hasty, fearful, or violent reactions to student misbehaviour (Porter, 2004). As a result, good management and teaching do not occur by accident but rather require planning (Oosthuizen, 2010). Rules, positive reinforcement, and repercussions for breaking the rules must all be included in the strategy.

Among the most annoying habits among primary school students are talking in class, not paying attention in class, napping in class, roaming around the classroom at will, disobeying the teacher's directions, arriving late, and leaving early (Ke & Wang, 2023). The most significant reason why schools must have rules is to manage student behavior (Ndamani, 2005). As a result, these established guidelines may help in resolving disciplinary issues that arise at the school. In addition, setting clear boundaries in the form of school regulations may help teach students what they should and shouldn't do. Managing discipline and curriculum execution clearly can result in good teaching and learning.

The National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996 must be used as a guide when the SMT monitors the performance of the school's instructors and students.

According to Affuso et al. (2023), several elements, such as those pertaining to the classroom, the home, and the specific student, such as teacher support, have an impact on academic achievement. Visits to the classroom, observation, and evaluation of their work are

all part of the performance monitoring process (Bush et al., 2010). Additionally, teachers might be expected to participate in the assessment of their own professional development efforts and follow the corresponding staff development plan.

Subject improvement plans may be required in specific circumstances, and the SMT may thus supervise the process of producing such plans by the relevant subject teachers, particularly those whose subjects are performing poorly. To reduce underperformance, teacher-parent conferences on a regular basis where student performance is discussed are needed to be encouraged.

The SMT has a duty to ensure that the infrastructures and other assets of the school are properly managed and maintained. They must set up a system for compiling information on items that require maintenance or replacement (Clarke, 2012). To properly manage the assets of the school, they must make sure that there is an efficient "stock-taking" method. To maintain school facilities in the best possible functioning condition, the maintenance plan must be created and carried out. The SMT can raise money from the local community and alumni group to upgrade the school's facilities. Funds for the school may be increased by fundraising.

The staff development programs in schools must be geared towards helping teachers to deliver the curriculum more effectively. When there is a common commitment to one's career growth and to the sharing of resources, such as time, ideas, and talents, professional development operates most successfully (Clarke, 2012). SMTs are therefore in charge of making sure that teachers receive continual training and development, especially with regard to the implementation of curricula. It is their responsibility to encourage teachers to attend conferences and workshops organized by the province, district, and circuit curriculum officials, as well as other relevant stakeholders. SMTs need to respond to the professional development needs of subject teachers as indicated in feedback from their IQMS.

Support from other individuals can improve teachers' ability to cope, functioning as a buffer against stress (Jensen, 2021). Pupil-teacher ratio, disciplinary problems, classroom emotional climate, and turnover intention: Evidence from a randomized control trial.

According to Mafora and Phorabatho (2013), SMTs are advised to organize school-based workshops where they can instruct and guide teachers on the pertinent subject matter and methods for putting the curriculum into practice in classrooms. Through supporting continual training and growth, SMTs are educating teachers about the curriculum, teamwork, resource development, and management. It also aids in the development of managerial, leadership, and instructional skills. The teachers are accountable for fostering lifelong learners. Msila (2011) asserts that staff members must actively engage in ongoing self-development through opportunities for enrichment and creativity to demonstrate the significance of lifelong learning in light of the significant changes that have occurred in education. In order to improve student learning and school performance, it is also critical to see teacher development as an ongoing process (Agi & Harrison, 2016).

Teachers' professional practice should involve, to a considerable degree, interpreting a shifting array of policies that govern every aspect of the educational process, with assessment being a prominent dimension (Finefter-Rosenbluh & Perrotta, 2023).

It is without a doubt crucial to ensure that all teachers adhere to the rules set forth by the Department of Basic Education. Teachers must instruct students in the disciplines, grade levels, and stages in which they are most proficient, according to Clarke (2012). SMTs are in charge of making sure that only qualified and compatible instructors are hired as a result. SMTs must carry out the main tasks of supervision which consist of carrying out academic supervision activities and managerial supervision as well as optimal mentoring and teacher professional training activities and to be supported by standard competency dimensions of the required prerequisites (Sutarno, 2023).

The SMTs are in responsibility of ensuring that the rules set forth by the Department of Basic Education are strictly followed when implementing the curriculum. Effective management and oversight are essential to a school's effectiveness (Nengwekhulu, 2008). The SMTs are therefore obligated to consistently stress the need of having an effective curriculum and teaching methods and to closely monitor how the curriculum is being used. They must supervise teachings, observe classes, and assess the testing supplies utilized in classrooms. The SMTs are responsible for ensuring that all of the teachers in their department possess the necessary policy documents. They must also periodically assess adherence to departmental policies and strategies in order to ensure efficient curriculum implementation. In a word, the SMT's job is to motivate, empower, and equip employees with the knowledge and abilities necessary to apply curriculum more successfully.

The purpose of the study

The study's goal was to investigate how SMTs are managing the curriculum in schools following the implementation of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). The study also sought to distinguish between the SMTs' various functions to solve the issue of role confusion with relation to curriculum management, which was brought to light by Rakoma and Matshe (2014). This suggests that another goal of the study was to define the duties of principals and other SMTs in terms of overseeing the implementation of the curriculum.

METHOD

It was decided to use a qualitative research strategy, and information was gathered through focus groups, individual interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. As a result, the constructivist or interpretivist paradigm, which is utilized to comprehend and characterize human nature, is incorporated into this study. The SMTs were chosen as the information-rich participants because of their expertise and understanding of the management of curriculum implementation in schools. Sekhukhune District is one of the districts in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. The Greater Tubatse, Ephraim Mogale, Elias Motswaledi, Makhuduthamaga, and Fetakgomo local governments make up this district. The

research investigation was conducted in these localities. Five primary schools were carefully selected for this study, one from each town. These schools were selected based on their performance; of the four years of Annual National Assessment (ANA) results, three were positive and two were poor. The district's Department of Basic Education provided support in the selection of these schools. This examination was entirely focused on the 23 SMT members from the selected institutions. During the interview process, five SMT members—including one principal—decided against the study. Five small municipalities make up the Sekhukhune District. Each local municipality's primary school was specifically chosen. Five primary schools were chosen for this study's purposes as a result.

The sample consisted of all SMTs including the principals of those selected schools. A predetermined sample of 23 people was employed for this investigation. Based on the number of SMT members who were pertinent to the study and who oversaw the execution of the curriculum in the classrooms that were identified in the selected schools, this figure was calculated. Each school hosted one of the four focus groups, which each included three to five SMT members. The principals of the four selected schools were contacted for four different interviews. Individual interviews with the principals allowed them to disclose their views on curriculum management without fear of how other participants would feel.

For this study, documents were used to confirm data collected through individual interviews, focus group interviews and non-participant observation. These documents included curriculum policies, for example, teaching and learning policies, and assessment policies. The Academic Improvement Plan, Curriculum Management Plan, and School Improvement Plan were just a few of the curriculum-related plans that were offered. The minutes of the meetings were used to oversee curriculum activities, along with monitoring strategies like subject coverage, an audit of written work, pre- and post-moderation of formal tasks, and classroom observations. For this study, four focus group interviews consisting of three to five SMT members from each of the sampled schools were also conducted even though some participants withdrew their participation during the interview process.

Analysis

Large amounts of narrative data must be reduced for qualitative data analysis, typically through the process of categorizing and grouping related categories of data (Mertler & Charles, 2011). Transcripts, audio recordings, and field notes were used in this instance to organize the material that had been gathered to provide the conclusions. Working with the data includes organizing, explaining, and breaking it down into manageable pieces as part of a qualitative data analysis. In a nutshell, this refers to the regularities, themes, genres, and patterns of recording. Since data analysis requires "breaking up" the data into manageable themes, trends, and linkages, the researcher selected and listed the categories during and after the data collection procedure. Inductively classifying data into categories to find patterns between the categories is the method of qualitative data analysis. The researchers used

coding, categorization, and data interpretation to explain how curriculum implementation was managed.

FINDINGS

Observation

Field notes were taken during the interviews with the participants to observe and capture their body language, facial expressions, and voice to aid in the analysis of the verbal data. The researchers therefore watched the participants as they discussed their ideas.

The principal of School A appeared to speak with assurance and candour throughout the conversation. He stated that "HODs are not equipped to manage the implementation of the curriculum". During focus group interviews, it became clear that some SMT members were unsure of their responsibilities as curriculum managers. Some of the SMT members were quiet the majority of the time as the SMTs took their time to respond to inquiries. The frustration of one of them even reached the point of saying, "This is another issue because you find yourself in SMT because you are thought of as one of the senior teachers. We are not required to give workshops to educators right now. Some of us are present due to our status as senior teachers (S4 in School A). The researcher could tell that they wanted to respond to the questions but lacked the words to do so, as well as the irritation that was evident on their expressions. Therefore, it was determined that the majority of the SMT members in School A lacked training on how to supervise the execution of the curriculum.

In School B, the headmaster went into explicit detail about how his school handled curriculum implementation. Even though the SMT members indicated that they were unsure of the curriculum plans that were retained at the school to aid them in managing curriculum implementation, the researcher found that the curriculum was well managed in this school. The principal and the SMT members of School C were able to discuss how the curriculum was implemented at their institution with ease. They were merely angry about the obstacles preventing their school's advancement.

In School D, the SMT and the principal gave a thorough explanation of how their school controlled the curriculum. The entire interview saw them contributing actively. The principal of School E abstained from the study. The SMT actively participated in the investigation. They were able to discuss how their school handled the implementation of the curriculum.

In general, the researchers saw that most of the participants gave hesitant answers to queries on curriculum plans and policies, particularly when it came to how they were applied. This may have an impact on how the curriculum is delivered and student achievement if some of those plans and policies are not properly executed in the schools. Again, the researchers could tell that some individuals were being rather careless with their responses when it came to curriculum management.

Finally, while most principals seemed to be more knowledgeable in managing the implementation of the curriculum, some SMT members demonstrated a lack of competency in this area.

According to the study, SMTs must apply both management and leadership components to manage the implementation of the curriculum effectively. Ineffective management and leadership prevent effective teaching from taking hold in classrooms. Furthermore, a requirement for the effectiveness of schools is the calibre of management and leadership in those institutions. This implies that good management practices can support high standards of education. Additionally, it was discovered that while SMTs were able to recognize their tasks, some of them lacked expertise in managing the execution of curricula. The principals consisted of two males and two females and were referred to as P1, P2, P3 and P4. Their ages were between 50 and 64 and the SMT members were referred to as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 in school A/B/C/D/E. There were three females and two males. Their ages ranges from 35-64 years.

The questions that guided the study are mentioned and the responses in italics are provided below:

RQ: What are the roles of principals as instructional leaders?

P1 said that “A principal needs to ensure that policies work well and they are effectively implemented to allow conducive teaching and learning environment. I must also ensure that I distribute work equally among teachers so that every teacher can be able to manage his/her work as expected”.

P2 stated that stated: “What is important is to strive to make sure that harmony prevails at all times. It starts with the leader himself, what kind of a leader are you, are you leading as an example or as an exemplary or are you practicing what is maybe called autocracy. In the first instant the principal should be open, transparent. He must always make sure that he interacts with his educators. He must make sure that his educators believe and trust in him”.

P3 said: “Even the allocation of the duties, we give them the allocation, the teachers must ensure that the allocation of duties is adhered to”

P4 said: “We start by allocating responsibilities, we have got responsibilities. We firstly allocate responsibilities to individual teachers and then thereafter we draw down the timetable”.

RQ: What are the roles of the School Management Teams in terms of the effective management of curriculum implementation?

S1 said: “SMT helps with administration of the school to make sure that the school is running properly, and they also have that mandate of representing the principal in (his)/her absentia”.

S2 said: "In terms of monitoring we check their lesson plans, formal and informal assessment tasks to check whether they have covered the written work prescribed for a week on a monthly basis and on a quarterly basis".

S3 replied by saying: "You only find that other teachers are always left behind, they are not going with other teachers in the expected pace, meaning when the quarter ends, they have not yet finished the syllabus for that quarter. I think some details in the syllabus are not eh.....properly taught or well finished".

S4 answered by stating the following: "The school is having an annual plan where now we indicate from day one to the last day of the year what is expected, that on this day we are going to do this, month end we are going to write so many tests".

S5 responded by saying: "I think the monitoring and the class visits are also helping the educators. If the HOD conduct class visits she/he can detect any problems the educator is having. If you find that the educator is having a problem, you mentor the educator and then you discuss the problem and then try to get the ways to solve the problem".

DISCUSSION

Notions of Leadership and Management

At first, leadership was referred to as a personal trait, with an emphasis on specific leaders. In this article, SMTs are the leaders, but more recently, the concept has expanded to cover a wider and more varied group of individuals who can be leaders, independent of gender, ethnicity, or country origin (Zhao et al. 2023). According to Lipscombe et al., (2023) SMTs are recognized as having a significant impact on student achievement, teacher effectiveness, and school effectiveness. Leadership is about direction and purpose, while management is about efficiency and effectiveness" (Clarke 2009). Despite the fact that these ideas are distinct from one another, they are occasionally used in the same sentence (Van Deventer, 2003). Both administration and leadership are essential for efficient school operations. Since management without leadership does not result in a culture of continuing teaching and learning, these ideas might be seen as "opposite sides of the same coin" (Van Deventer, 2003; 2016). Van Deventer (ibid) continues to prove that leadership and management are interrelated by asserting that Leadership is seen as an aspect of management, with born leaders being characterised as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and the ability to motivate and inspire others. This indicates that the school setting requires both leadership and management (Davidoff et al., 2014).

While leadership relates to the direction to achieve future goals, management concentrates on making sure the school is working effectively and achieving the necessary goals (Davidoff et al., 2014). In addition, "leadership and management are about balance and equipoise, about holding the centre, having a picture of the whole, and standing still when it is time to reflect, understand, and consolidate" (ibid.). In other words, these concepts complement each other (Fabi 2013). Fabi (ibid.) claims that both management and leadership

depend on their followers for success, and both work to achieve goals, organize and use resources, establish a relationship between top management and subordinates, and inspire their respective audiences.

Effective teaching and learning cannot flourish in schools without management and leadership (Van Deventer, 2003). So, it seems sense to draw the conclusion that "the success or failure of a school is determined by the quality of both leadership and management" (Van Deventer, 2003, p. 68). Simply put, this implies that the calibre of the institution's management and leadership determines how effective it is. Since good leadership and management are essential to a school's success, overseeing the implementation of curriculum in schools obviously demands both leadership and management experience (Davies, 2009).

Management-Leadership Tasks

Leadership plays an important role about the execution of curriculum management. This influence can be conferred by a direction or management position, although not all leaders are managers, not all managers are leaders (Marreiros et al., 2023).

Cole et al. (2004; 2011) cite Fayol as one of the pioneers of the classical approach to management (1841–1925). In order to improve management efficiency and effectiveness in organizations, Fayol developed management tasks including planning, organizing, coordinating, commanding, and regulating (Fayol, 1987). This viewpoint claims that managers receive instructions on how to do their tasks. The crucial duties of capable managers are defined by Fayol's five management activities, which include organizing, motivating, and controlling (Cole & Kelly, 2011). These duties are now referred to as management-leadership tasks because of their overlap (Van Deventer 2016).

The responsibilities listed above, which also pertain to managers such as SMT members, might be seen as having a connection to the theoretical foundations of this study. In addition to being still applicable in the twenty-first century, they also closely mirror contemporary views of education administration that put a strong emphasis on its fundamental duties. These include planning, particularly strategic and operational planning (Van Deventer, 2016), organizing, leading or directing, managing or reviewing, and so forth.

To manage a school, managers and leaders successfully and effectively must use planning, organizing, leading, and regulating concepts to the students, outcomes, and resources available (Van Deventer, 2003). These management-leadership tasks are equally significant to Dale (1978), Van Deventer (2003), Cole (2004), Cole and Kelly (2011), and Botha et al., (2013). Managerial tasks and management functions are other terms for this. It is obvious that these management and leadership duties are crucial for every aspect of school administration, including curriculum administration.

The Roles of Principals as Instructional Leaders

Principals' main duty as instructional leaders is to create effective schools since they are seen as "primary sources of educational expertise (Marks & Printy, 2003) (Leiva et al., 2016). Botha (2013, p.195) claims that the term "instructional leader" clearly 'refers to the role of the

principal in the quest for excellence in schools. According to Botha (2013), the three action components of the principal, each of which has a specific responsibility, make up the principal's instructional leadership position. Dimension 1: Defining the school's mission, this includes framing and communicating the school's aims. Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programme, this includes knowing and coordinating the curriculum and instruction, supervising, and evaluating instruction and monitoring learner progress. Dimension 3: Promoting a positive learning environment by setting standards and expectations, protecting instructional time, and promoting improvement.

The results of this study confirm Mafora and Phorabatho (2013), Kruger (2003), and Botha (2013)'s assertions that principals are primarily responsible for monitoring the application of the curriculum. These include planning for the curriculum's implementation, managing the instructors' workloads, and allocating the appropriate resources. This includes leading the implementation of the curriculum; providing ongoing professional development; supervising and evaluating curriculum implementation; monitoring learner progress; effective communication; and protecting instructional time.

Creating a favourable educational environment

"The principal has the primary responsibility for the creation of a safe, nurturing and supportive learning environment, which enables effective teaching and learning to take place" (Department of Basic Education, 2014, p. 7). Effective teaching and learning require a pleasant learning environment (Mtsweni, 2008). Ineffective teaching and learning are also significantly impacted by the management of safety and security in schools (Gina et al., 2014). Employees at the school are required to keep the area neat so that instruction and learning can take place in a safe atmosphere. As you read this, keep in mind that one of a school's main goals is to offer a secure setting where students can study and teachers may share their expertise (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Mtsweni, 2013). According to Mestry & Khumalo, (2012) and Mtsweni et al., (2013), a curriculum's ability to be successfully implemented depends on the school environment in which it is taught. Strict guidelines and a clear objective should be used to define the educational environment.

According to Botha (2013), the faculty, students, and the entire school community should be aware of the school's mission. The core values of the school should be made explicit and generally known. The administrator can strengthen relationships between the school and the larger community by applauding and acknowledging others' accomplishments. Understanding that they are responsible for promoting harmony and a sound work ethic within the school community and beyond (Grobler, 2013) is vital for the school administrator. According to Kruger (2003) and Mestry et al., (2013), the school administrator is in responsible of establishing a supportive working and learning environment.

Planning for curriculum implementation

According to Burden et al., (2013), developing consistent instruction and learner assessment is part of preparation for curriculum implementation. It also requires demonstrating

understanding of the subject matter and teaching, students, teaching objectives, and resources. The principle must ensure that the mechanisms in place to support teaching and learning are operational in addition to the considerations, and that teaching personnel who is both relevant and qualified is hired. SMT and subject committees could be used as examples. The concept also stipulates that 60% of the school money must be allocated to the curriculum. The financial resources could be used to support infrastructure, learning and teaching support materials (LTSM), and other important resources.

Organising teaching workloads and suitable resources

To achieve predetermined goals, organizing is primarily concerned with segmenting the job, assigning tasks, authority, and duty, delivering resources to the appropriate departments or persons, and creating links between different teachers (Cole et al., 2011). Each teacher's profile must be maintained by the administration in order to indicate the division of labour and duties. The school's academic requirements must be upheld by the teachers that are chosen, according to the principal.

The principal is also responsible for making sure that all subjects are covered in a general timetable and are given the appropriate amount of time in compliance with CAPS policy. To ensure the effective use of these resources, enough Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) must be obtained and handled. The principal is responsible for organizing every event at the school in accordance with the stated objectives. According to Mestry et al. (2013), the principal can affect learning through organizational management, which includes making sure that teachers have the resources and assistance they need to be successful in the classroom.

Leading the implementation of the curriculum

According to Mafora and Phorabatho (2013), the principals and SMTs must lead and guide teachers about correct content and method of implementing the curriculum in classrooms. As part of the leading and directing process, the principle must therefore ensure that all curriculum policies and plans are developed and implemented in compliance with expectations. On the other hand, the principal is responsible for ensuring that the course content adheres to NCS Grades R–12, CAPS. Finally, he or she must ensure that SMTs routinely stop by teachers' classrooms to provide help. The school principal must work closely with DHs, deputy principals, and senior teachers in order to achieve high learner attainment. Second, he or she must supervise teachers to ensure that they manage their workload effectively and diligently carry out their duties. The principal will eventually need to get in touch with commercial companies, local groups, and higher education institutions in order to raise the standard of instruction at the school.

Providing ongoing professional development

In addition to the 1,720 hours a year that teachers must spend on their multiple duties, 80 of those hours, according to Clarke (2012), must be put aside for professional development outside of the classroom. School administrators should provide opportunities for teachers to

participate in professional development activities, and they should also encourage them to go to events organized by the circuit, district, and provincial offices (Li et al., 2016). Activities created for instructors must relate to their wants and needs when it comes to instructing and learning in a classroom. Modern curriculum changes must also be communicated to teachers in order to empower students. A successful staff professional development program is a crucial element of good teaching and learning (Clarke, 2012).

Supervising and evaluating curriculum implementation

In order to ascertain whether the predetermined goals have been attained, school principals must assess the staff members (Zengele, 2013). Principals may be able to review their plans through this approach and make the necessary adjustments. Principals are responsible for making sure that students receive fair evaluations and for giving them opportunities to develop their knowledge, abilities, and morals. For the curriculum to be implemented, both students and teachers must respect their classrooms. By monitoring and assessing how the curriculum is being used, principals may also be able to spot problems and solutions (Mafora & Phorabatho, 2013).

Monitoring learner progress

Principals have a responsibility to monitor student achievement, offer feedback, and put corrective measures into place. They must collaborate with the staff to design improvement strategies and discuss analyses of the learners' performance. Principals can monitor and review the efficiency of the assessment tools and forms used to gather and evaluate student achievement as part of this process (Clarke, 2012).

Effective communication

Leading or directing involves communication (Van Deventer, 2016). As a result, managing the team is a component of leadership (Davidoff et al., 2014). Sharing strategies for successful curriculum implementation inside the classroom is part of giving instructions. This emphasizes that the school's vision, curriculum policies, and initiatives need to be communicated to all key stakeholders, such as the SMT, teachers, School Governing Body, and parents. The principle, who is a leader in education, is also responsible for this. An instructional leader must make sure that all school activities are clearly communicated in order to prevent inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum and to guarantee that everyone is aware of what is expected of them.

Protecting instructional time

In Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and Botha's (2013) models of instructional leadership, 'protecting instructional time' was declared as one of the instructional leader's job functions. Therefore, instructional leaders need to ensure that teachers and learners adhere to the instructional time. And most importantly, putting in place systems that will assist to curb instances of truancy. Protecting instructional time is found to be of utmost importance for effective teaching and learning to take place.

The Roles of SMTS as Curriculum Managers

SMTs are responsible for a number of tasks necessary for effectively managing the school, including keeping an eye on how the curriculum is delivered. Under the direction of the school principal, the SMT is in charge of overseeing all activities connected to the provision of high-quality education (Joubert et al., 2007). This demonstrates that SMTs and principals are equally accountable for overseeing the implementation of the curriculum (Bush et al., 2010). SMT has a responsibility to encourage effective teaching and learning. It is, therefore, crucial that SMTs “need to be more knowledgeable, professionally and administratively competent, as well as resourceful to complement the efforts of the provincial department towards achieving the goals of the schools and districts” (Lumadi, 2012). This denotes that SMTs are regarded as the custodians of the quality of teaching and learning in their respective schools. In support of Nwangwa and Omotere (2013), the SMTs’ fundamental roles must include: Managing academic and administrative affairs of the school.

Managing academic and administrative affairs of the school

Leader teachers, such as Departmental Heads, continue to hold and perform their statutory obligations. For instance, SMTs in primary schools were aware of and, to the extent that they were comfortable with them, partially implemented distributed leadership ideas. This suggests that, despite being permitted and given the chance to lead, teachers' involvement in leadership is up to the SMTs and school administrators' decision (Sasere & Makhasane, 2023). The SMT is expected to plan for and direct all activities within the school (Lumadi, 2012). They are in charge of setting up the effective administration of the school and ensuring that there are sufficient resources and qualified personnel on hand. Each year's end, they must begin the time-tabling process so that every teacher is aware of the demands placed on them for the upcoming year. Teachers now have plenty of time to prepare before the start of the academic year. The SMT's main responsibility is to retrain the teachers for the task that lies ahead. Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) must also be purchased beforehand.

The SMT oversees organizing and hosting frequent subject meetings with departmental teachers as well as supervising collaborative curriculum creation that falls under their responsibility. They must cooperate with teachers and offer assistance to them in order for teaching and learning to be effective.

Creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning

The core function of the school is teaching (Kruger, 2003). The SMT is then responsible of ensuring that effective teaching and learning continue, notwithstanding any challenges. According to Rogers (2002), understanding that effective education inevitably results in suitable punishment is the key to maintaining discipline. If teachers correctly engage students in the content, help them stay on task by involving them in the course, and offer help with the assignment, when necessary, discipline may become the norm. The expertise, education, or learning method of teachers must be given more weight given the increasing diversity in primary schools. The backgrounds and requirements of learners must be carefully considered

while developing curricula (Yeh, 2023). Great lessons begin by understanding outcomes (Mendler et al., 2008). Teachers need to know precisely what they intend to teach and what they need to achieve through lessons. Therefore, it is imperative for a teacher to have a reason and a purpose for everything done in the classroom. Oosthuizen (2010) further stipulates that to be an effective teacher who succeeds in inculcating good discipline in their learners, teachers must possess three sets of skills. Firstly, they must be masters of their subject. Secondly, they must know how to present their subject in such a way that lessons may progress smoothly, and the learners' attention is retained. Lastly, they need to have group management skills.

Li and Huang (2023) found that teachers' emotions, which influence how students interact with their surroundings, might provide them agency to exercise alternative ways of thinking, seeing things, and acting in order to manage the pupils in the classroom. Maintaining discipline is, in a large measure, a by-product of good teaching. An excellent curriculum is necessary for maintaining order (Porter, 2007). Schools need to, therefore, ensure that an excellent curriculum is offered to arouse learners' interests. It needs to be the duty of each teacher to ensure that the lessons are prepared interestingly. Various methods of teaching need to be employed to make teaching and learning more interesting. Consequently, learners could find a reason for being cooperative and well-disciplined.

According to Roberts et al. (2023), the teacher should set the tone for classroom management. The function of a classroom instructor is divided into three different areas: curriculum creation, instruction design and classroom management. Rules and procedures must be created for these techniques. Expectations, transitions, resources and equipment, group projects and teacher-led activities should all be covered in the rules and procedures. For effective classroom management and student development, there must be positive interactions between teachers and students. To maintain control of the classroom, teachers must clearly convey the appropriate levels of power.

To accomplish their core objective, SMTs must practice managing disciplinary matters. Additionally, they must learn how to reduce their frequency. According to Clarke (2012), SMTs need to provide a favourable environment for teaching and learning if they want to improve school discipline. The constant need to manage students' conduct, according to Colvin (2010, p.1), is one of the main issues instructors face today. It is obvious that inefficient methods of dealing with punishment in schools have the potential to lessen the effectiveness of curriculum implementation (Ntuli, 2012). According to Joubert et al., (2005), the purpose of discipline in schools is to ensure both staff and students' safety and to foster a climate that is favourable to teaching and learning. Colvin (2010) agrees that an atmosphere that is tranquil, orderly, secure, and respectful is necessary for good teaching and learning. SMTs need to be proactive; they need not wait for challenging behaviour to happen before they contemplate dealing with it (Leaman, 2005). It is imperative that they develop a discipline plan to avoid hasty, timid, or hostile responses to learner misbehaviour (Porter, 2004). Thus, effective

education and management are not things that happen by chance – they must be planned (Oosthuizen, 2010). The plan needs to consist of rules, positive recognition and consequences that result when learners do not follow the rules.

Talking in class, not paying attention in class, napping in class, moving around the classroom at will, ignoring the teacher's instructions, showing up late and departing early are among the most bothersome behaviours among primary school pupils (Ke & Wang, 2023). The main purpose of regulations in schools is to control student conduct (Ndamani, 2008). As a result, the school's disciplinary problems may be resolved with the use of these set rules. Additionally, establishing firm limits in the form of school rules may aid in teaching pupils what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Good teaching and learning can be achieved by effectively managing discipline and curriculum execution.

Monitoring teachers' and learners' performance

The National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996 must be used as a guide when the SMT assesses the performance of the teachers and students at the school.

According to Affuso et al., (2023), a number of elements, such as those pertaining to the classroom, the home, and the specific student, such as teacher support, have an impact on academic achievement. Visits to the classroom, observation, and evaluation of their work are all part of the performance monitoring approach (Bush et al., 2010). Teachers could also be expected to participate in the assessment of their own professional development efforts as well as the associated staff development plan.

The SMT must oversee the process of the relevant subject teachers, particularly those whose topics are performing poorly, drafting such plans. In some circumstances, topic improvement plans may be required. To reduce underperformance, teacher-parent conferences that discuss student performance on a regular basis must be encouraged.

Maintaining the school assets and infrastructure

The SMT is responsible for making sure that the school's infrastructure and other assets are appropriately managed and maintained. They must establish a strategy for gathering data on equipment that needs repair or replacement (Clarke, 2012). They need to make sure that there is a productive "stock-taking" mechanism in place so that the school's assets are effectively managed. The maintenance plan must be developed and implemented in order to keep school buildings in the best possible operational condition. To fund facility upgrades at the school, the SMT might solicit donations from the neighbourhood and alumni groups. Fundraising may help the school raise more money.

Providing continuous training and development of teachers

The school's staff development and training programs are designed to improve teachers' efficacy in carrying out the curriculum. Professional development works effectively where there is a common commitment to personal improvement through professional development and to the sharing of resources, including ideas, skills, and time (Clarke, 2012). As a result, SMTs are responsible for ensuring that teachers receive ongoing training and development,

particularly on the implementation of curricula. It is their duty to motivate teachers to attend meetings and workshops hosted by the circuit, district, and provincial curriculum consultants, education specialists, and other pertinent stakeholders. According to feedback from their IQMS, SMTs must address subject teachers' requirements for professional development.

Support from others can help teachers cope better by acting as a stress-relieving buffer (Jensen, 2021). Evidence from a randomized control experiment on the pupil-teacher ratio, behavioral issues, emotional atmosphere in the classroom, and intention to leave.

It is advised that SMTs plan school-based workshops where they can instruct and direct teachers on the pertinent subject matter and strategies for putting the curriculum into practice in classrooms (Mafora & Phorabatho, 2013). SMTs are teaching teachers in the curriculum, teamwork, resource development, and management through facilitating ongoing training and growth. Additionally, it helps to develop managerial, leadership, and teaching abilities. The development of lifelong learners is the responsibility of the teachers. According to Msila (2011), because of the profound changes in education, staff members must demonstrate the value of lifelong learning by actively engaging in continual self-development through chances for enrichment and innovation. Additionally, teacher development must be viewed as an ongoing process with the goal of implementing the curriculum effectively and efficiently, which could result in improved student outcomes and school performance (Agi & Harrison, 2016).

Compliance with the conditions of service

Teachers' professional practice should involve, to a considerable degree, interpreting a shifting array of policies that govern every aspect of the educational process, with assessment being a prominent dimension (Finefter-Rosenbluh & Perrotta, 2023).

All teachers' compliance with the regulations set forth by the Department of Basic Education must be unquestionably ensured. According to Clarke (2012), teachers must instruct students in the subjects, grade levels, and stages in which they are most proficient. Therefore, SMTs are responsible for ensuring that only competent and compatible teachers are hired.

Supervising curriculum implementation

SMTs must carry out the main tasks of supervision which consist of carrying out academic supervision activities and managerial supervision as well as optimal mentoring and teacher professional training activities and to be supported by standard competency dimensions of the required prerequisites (Sutarno, 2023).

When putting the curriculum into practice, the SMTs are in charge of making sure that the Department of Basic Education's regulations are carefully adhered to. The efficiency of a school depends on effective management and monitoring (Nengwekhulu, 2012). As a result, the SMTs are required to regularly emphasize the importance of having a successful curriculum and teaching methods and to keep a close check on how the curriculum is being used. They have to observe classes, monitor lessons, and evaluate the testing materials used in classrooms. The SMTs are in charge of making sure that each teacher in their department

has the required policy documents. In order to guarantee effective curriculum implementation, they must also regularly evaluate adherence to departmental policies and plans. In a nutshell, the SMT's role is to encourage, empower, and give staff the skills they need to implement curriculum more successfully.

CONCLUSION

The study displayed how the principals and other SMT members share their curriculum management and leadership roles. It is, therefore, concluded that management and leadership tasks of a school are all interrelated and equally crucial (Van Deventer, 2016) for curriculum implementation. It is further maintained that without leadership and management, effective teaching and learning cannot prevail in schools. The introduction of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) required SMTs to adjust their roles in terms of curriculum implementation management. The SMTs, which have a supportive role to play in creating, maintaining, and facilitating quality education in schools (Khuluse, 2004), had to change the way they implemented and managed the curriculum. They were now compelled to familiarise themselves with the National Curriculum Statements which were introduced in 2012 (Department of Basic Education, 2011a). They were duty-bound to refine their roles in the effective management of the implementation of the CAPS and to ensure that the curriculum was adhered to and implemented efficiently. Eventually, the SMTs are expected to put in place systems, structures, and policies to ensure the effective and efficient curriculum implementation and management in their schools.

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