

The responses of primary school Heads of Department to curriculum changes since 2005

by
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Declaration of originality

I, Stephanie Cornelissen (student number 27155235), herewith declare that this dissertation for the degree Magister Education at the University of Pretoria has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that this is my original work in design and execution and that all material from published sources contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature:

Date:

Signature of Supervisor:

Date:

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- My principal – Mrs Van Pletzen
- Parents
- Family
- MJ

Abstract

With nineteen years of democracy behind us, South Africa has experienced uncountable changes within its borders and on various playing fields. One of the most memorable changes, in my opinion, was in education. This motivated me to embark on a study about the responses of Heads of Departments (HoDs) to curriculum changes. I especially wanted to focus on the management of those changes.

The focus on HoDs arose from the devolution of responsibility from the principal to the HoD with regard to curriculum change. This uninterrupted cycle of curriculum change that South Africa is experiencing occupies the HoDs to a large extent. They have to ensure that the changes take place as smoothly as possible with as little resistance as possible. In order to accomplish this, one would think that the HoD would be trained in managing a department and curriculum changes. This is unfortunately not the case, and they are following their own guidelines that they have constructed through trial and error.

This study was conducted through a narrative design within a qualitative framework, allowing me to give a voice to those who have none. It required me to have focus group interviews, which laid the foundation for my semi-structured interview. The use of documents assisted with the crystallisation of the data. This research was conducted in the Lady Frere district of the Eastern Cape. There were two sets of HoDs from different schools, and one participant willing to participate in a semi-structured interview.

The purpose of this study was to find out what guidelines HoDs had constructed by looking at HoDs' responses to, and management of curriculum changes since 2005. It became very clear that there is some confusion about what is expected of the HoD during the change process and the HoDs in this study felt it better to follow traditional methods of teaching, as this was all they knew. However, the focus on producing quality education was very important to them.

Keywords:

Curriculum changes, HoD (Head of Department), traditional methods of teaching, quality in education, confusion about changes, narrative design, focus group interviews, globalisation, qualitative methodology, policy implementation

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 An introduction to my study.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Rationale for this study	1
1.3 The demands of globalisation	3
1.4 The HoD as the centre of communication	5
1.5 Problem statement.....	7
1.6 Research questions.....	8
1.6.1 Primary research question	8
1.6.2 Secondary research questions.....	9
1.7 Aims.....	9
1.8 Methodology.....	10
1.9 Conceptual framework.....	11
1.10 Theoretical framework.....	12
1.11 Concept clarification.....	13
1.11.1 Globalisation	13
1.11.2 Schools as organisations.....	13
1.11.3 Leadership and management.....	14
1.11.4 Curriculum changes.....	14
1.12 Credibility and trustworthiness	16
1.13 Ethical considerations	17
1.14 Working assumption	18
1.15 Limitations of the study	18
1.16 Significance of the study.....	18
1.17 Organisation of dissertation	19
1.18 Conclusion	20
Chapter 2 The road to curriculum change.....	21
2.1 Introduction.....	21

2.2	The phenomenon of curriculum changes	21
2.3	Influences of curriculum changes	22
2.4	The process of curriculum changes.....	25
2.4.1	Initiation	25
2.4.2	Formulation	27
2.4.3	Implementation.....	27
2.4.4	Involvement in curriculum changes	30
2.4.5	Time frame and frequency of curriculum changes.....	33
2.5	What is needed for successful educational change?	34
2.6	Conclusion	35
Chapter 3 The management of curriculum changes		36
3.1	Introduction.....	36
3.2	Devolution of responsibility	36
3.4	Curriculum changes in South Africa and other countries	39
3.4.1	The case of South Africa.....	39
3.4.2	Italy.....	40
3.4.3	China, Shanghai	40
3.4.4	Argentina.....	41
3.4.5	Botswana	41
3.5	Lessons learned through curriculum changes	42
3.6	Conclusion	44
Chapter 4 Research design.....		45
4.1	Introduction.....	45
4.2	Qualitative research	45
4.2.1	Characteristics of qualitative research.....	46
4.2.2	Qualitative research designs.....	48
4.2.3	Ensuring trustworthiness and credibility.....	49
4.3	Methodology	50
4.3.1	Sampling.....	50
4.3.2	HoDs as data instruments.....	51

4.3.3	Introduction to sample.....	53
4.3.4	Data collection.....	53
4.3.5	Interviews.....	54
4.3.6	Documents.....	56
4.3.7	Data processing and analysis.....	57
4.4	The role of the researcher	60
4.5	Ethical considerations	61
4.6	Conclusion	62
Chapter 5 Data presentation and interpretation		63
5.1	Introduction.....	63
5.2	Approaching the data	64
5.3	Analysis of data from focus groups	65
5.3.1	Confusion about changes	66
5.3.2	Traditional methods of teaching.....	69
5.3.3	Quality in education	70
5.4	Data analysis from semi-structured interview and documents	73
5.4.1	Confusion about changes	75
5.4.2	Traditional methods of teaching.....	75
5.4.3	Quality of education	76
5.5	Interpretation of data.....	78
5.5.1	Responses of HoDs	78
5.5.2	Management by the HoD during changes	80
5.6	Conclusion	84
Chapter 6 Overview, findings, and conclusion.....		85
6.1	Introduction.....	85
6.2	Overview.....	85
6.3	Findings.....	87
6.4	Conclusion about working assumption.....	89
6.5	Limitations of the study	89
6.6	Significance of the study.....	90

6.7	Recommendations for future research	91
6.8	Recommendation for improvement of practice	91
6.9	Concluding remarks	92
	 Bibliography	 93
	 Appendix 1: Ethical clearance and permission	 99
	Appendix 2: Newspaper headings	101
	Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview questions	103
	Appendix 4: Interviews	104
	Appendix 5: Development of themes	113
	Appendix 6: Documents	116

List of figures

Figure 1.1: The influence of globalisation on HoDs.....	11
Figure 1.2: The types of curriculum changes.....	15
Figure 2.3: Interactive factors affecting implementation (Fullan, 2007, p. 87).....	28
Figure 5.5: Confusion about changes.....	66
Figure 5.6: Traditional methods of teaching.....	69
Figure 5.7: Quality in education	71
Figure 5.8: Managing changes systematically and successfully.....	83

List of tables

Table 5.1: Themes with subthemes.....	65
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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

C2005	Curriculum 2005
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Standards
DoBE	Department of Basic Education
EFA	Education For All
GET	General Education and Training
HC	Horizontal Communication
HoD	Head of Department
MM	Middle Management
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
RNPE	Revised National Policy on Education
SGB	School Governing Body
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
VC	Vertical Communication

Chapter 1

An introduction to my study

1.1 Introduction

Change is always experienced differently by each of us because of our uniqueness. The management of change is influenced by our own interpretation of the world. This makes change a unique experience as no two people have the same idea about what the world is and how it functions. The purpose of this study was to examine and understand how the Heads of Departments (HoDs) within schools in the Eastern Cape have responded to and managed changes in the curriculum between 2005 and the beginning of 2011. Research has been done on how teachers experience this high impact policy environment. Bantwini (2010) studied teachers' experiences in the Eastern Cape, but very little is to be found on how HoDs experience curriculum changes, making this study distinctive.

1.2 Rationale for this study

Since the end of the cold war, education has experienced many changes. Among the changes was the breakaway from state funding due to the move away from a liberal state to a more globalised nation. This caused schools to start functioning as independent organizations in a competitive market. Being part of the market place brought new demands for the schools and they had to restructure their modus operandi. They had to obtain funding from the private sector that requested them to become more competitive and produce top results in an effort to recruit top students and, with them, funding (Halsey, 2006).

South Africa was not excluded from these events taking place on a global scale. Not only did South Africa have to deal with these changes, it also had to deal with the legacy of apartheid. We have now had eighteen years of democracy in South Africa in which we have experienced a great deal of change. Amongst the biggest changes we have experienced is the overhaul of the educational system. Much has been said about how it has changed, for better

and for worse. One thing remains constant: the presence of an outcomes-based education (OBE) curriculum in our education system.

On 16 November 2009 the newspaper *Beeld* published a column about the changes that were possibly going to be made to the curriculum. In the Government Gazette of 29 December 2009 (Department of Education, 2009) and in August 2010 the Department of Basic Education made a number of curriculum changes based on the suggestions of a task team that was specifically created for that purpose. Some of these changes were fewer portfolio obligations for both teachers and students as well as fewer subjects for the GET phase. At the beginning of 2011, a new curriculum plan was once again introduced: Schooling 2025. All these changes are more than likely to have had an effect on the management of schools and more specifically on the work of the subject department heads (HoDs) within a school.

The aim of this study was to find out what the effects of the changes were by exploring the HoDs' experiences and responses to them, and their management thereof.

By doing this research I have not only satisfied my own curiosity, but have also made a contribution to the body of knowledge towards the understanding of why HoDs feel and act as they do. Better understanding can lead to improved methods of development and implementation of policies by making policy developers aware of how these changes influence the management team of a school and thus better prepare them for changes about to take place in the curriculum. I do understand that there are many role players in policy development and not all parties can be satisfied.

This research was worth doing because of the possible contribution it may make towards understanding how HoDs responded to, and managed changes in the curriculum within their departments. It might enrich our knowledge of curriculum change, implementation challenges, and opportunities, and of the role of HoDs therein. It can also assist other HoDs and teachers to better prepare themselves for coming changes in the curriculum, especially with the envisaged commencement of Schooling 2025 in 2014.

By exploring the experiences of HoDs during curriculum changes, one can interpret the reality within which they function. People construct their knowledge and their truths about the world through the experience they have of specific phenomena. Through the interpretation of those knowledge constructs, one can see the creation of reality within those

experiences. By making use of an interpretivist paradigm, I was able to analyse the data to “understand social reality as [HoDs] see it and to demonstrate how views shape the action they take within reality” (Cohen, Lawrence, & Morrison, 2005: 22). Due to the subjective nature of a qualitative study I, the researcher, immersed myself in the data collection and analysis process, whereas a quantitative study calls for a more objective stance. This study, conducted within an interpretivist paradigm, allowed me to “work in an interrelated, dialogical fashion” (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010: 15) with the HoDs in order to understand how they construct their knowledge.

My role as researcher in a qualitative study was to act as the research instrument which entailed conducting interviews with the participants in an attempt to collect data on how they, the HoDs, experienced and responded to the changes and how they managed the changes that occurred in the curriculum. In short, I collected their truths, and tried to understand how they made sense of those truths.

1.3 The demands of globalisation

Globalisation is demanding a new kind of educational organisation causing a high impact policy setting that possibly creates policy fatigue among HoDs. The world governance and economy have changed to those of a globalised world. One of the key changes was in education and the influence politics has on it. As mentioned earlier (see par. 1.2) the end of the cold war brought with it the rapid expansion of the world economy resulting in more emphasis being placed on how governments control and contain the flow of educational practices. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) highlights the importance of “international testing and benchmarking for global economic competition competitive, but they are increasingly interested in using education to produce ‘social cohesion’” (Mundy, 2007), an ideal of globalization.

Another ideal of globalisation is the utilisation of the belief that “market values and practices can promote [our] efficiency, effectiveness and economy” (Mok, 2005) in turn causing governments to question their state-centred approaches to education and their effectiveness. Governments who adopted these market ideologies and practices to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and the economy are reshaped by deregulation, privatization, liberalization, new public management, the scaling back or privatization of welfare and social services,

revitalization of non-state sectors, and marketing (Mok, 2005). The privatisation and the marketisation of individual states have a great effect on education: privatisation leads to making state or public enterprises such as schools private, forcing them to adopt and use business principles to govern themselves, which may have an impact on the resources and the acquisition thereof. Monkman and Baird (2002) point out that moving towards the privatisation of the income of schools, which is *expected* from globalization, may not necessarily lead to a higher quality of education. It may cause a bigger rift between the haves and the have-nots, resulting in inequality when it comes to the access to quality and affordable education. Ozga (in Brisard, Menter, & Smith, 2007) points out that “globalization redefines and reinforces the links between education and the economy thereby shaping education policy and driving the modernization agenda in education.”

In a world dominated by the idea of a global knowledge economy, education plays a vital role in the growth of the economy. In order to play this vital role, education must be able to adapt to the requirements the knowledge economy places on it. The World Bank is offering developing countries funds to enhance their education systems, especially the primary system, on condition that they conform to the privatisation of certain publicly-funded services (Halsey, 2006), allowing an education system that is more market driven to develop. This requirement of the World Bank caused some countries to adapt their education systems to serve the needs of the market and individualism, which service the knowledge economy development (Robertson, 2005) and require a new kind of leader and a new kind of structure to cope with all these curriculum changes. “Ideally educational change represents a process which involves people defining what is effective education; what now exists in the schools; and what alternative strategies or designs are available for improving current practice” (Nur, 2001).

For schools to provide the best possible education they need to have effective leaders and managers. They also need effective teachers who are well trained and committed to their jobs. It is very important to the education process and the organisation process underpinning it that there are clear aims for that organization. Cuban (in Bush, 2007) links leadership with change and in return, management is seen as a maintenance activity. He distinguishes as follows between the two: “leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others,” whereas managers are responsible for “maintaining efficiently and effectively organizational arrangements” (Bush, 2007: 392). In the case of South Africa, we should be

more focused on basic management, making schools more functional, than having a visionary approach. Once the schools are functional, we can start focusing on our vision for the school as an organization (Bush, 2007: 393).

1.4 The HoD as the centre of communication

The HoD finds himself or herself in middle of the centre of communication between the strategic apex and the operational core (see par. 4.3.2). According to Kerry (2005), the HoD not only has to deal with *juggling* the communication of information between the strategic apex and the operational core, but also has two other prominent roles: one as a subject leader promoting learning and teaching in a specific subject; and one as a middle manager. These two roles often clash due to their nature and the requirement of commitment towards the school. One advocates the expansion and improvement of the curriculum whereas the other focuses on maintaining the budget and looking after the financial well-being of the school.

Kerry (2005) further talks about how HoDs are seen as transactional leaders through the tasks they perform; including balancing the books, filling in forms, keeping records, etc. These are basically bureaucratic tasks. In contrast, HoDs must also act as transformational leaders who are seen as having a motivational and supportive role in regard to their *followers*.

It is a useful skill to be able to switch between the different types of leadership when you find yourself in a peculiar situation as the HoD often does. Not only must the HoD act as a leader, but he or she must also be able to act as a follower. However, everything the HoD does is determined by the mission and vision of the school as well as those of the more senior managers. Even if the HoD leads his or her department well, the result often coincides with the *quality* of his/her followers. “Leaders work more effectively where there are effective followers” (Kerry, 2005: 70). Nonetheless, the HoD is accountable for the performance of that specific department and has to work together with the strategic apex to bring about change in the school.

Chatwin (2004) describes middle management (MM) as agents of change, making them the core condition for the initiation of change in a school. Strategy for change is then seen as a “conversation” between the senior management and middle management. MM also acts as subject leaders and teachers and has a lateral as well as an upward influence in the

organization. The demonstration of “political competence” is necessary for influencing others when it comes to change, and thus is a key feature for MM. Busher and Harris (1999) have identified four dimensions with regard to the HoD’s work:

1. The translation of perspectives and policies of senior staff into individual practices, thus acting as a transactional leader.
2. The encouragement of staff to develop a group identity. “Foster[ing] collegiality within the group by shaping and establishing a shared vision” among staff (transformational leader).
3. Improving staff and student performance. This involves both transactional leadership and transformational leadership.
4. Acting as a liaison and a representative. “This requires [HoDs] to be in touch with a variety of actors and sources of information in the external environment of the school and to negotiate, where necessary, on behalf of the other members of the department” (Busher & Harris, 1999: 308).

Ganguly (2001) proposes that the success of a curriculum does not solely rest with the management, but also with the teachers’ training, commitment, and competence. However, he puts the ball into management’s court by emphasising the importance of “spelling out the curricular contents, training and re-training of teachers, curriculum delivery and transactions, and providing learning materials” (Ganguly, 2001: 50), for which the HoD can be held accountable as he or she is a subject expert. It is expected of the HoD, as part of his/her management duties with respect to curriculum changes, to understand the need for change, and work collaboratively with teachers to select appropriate content creating conformity among teachers, and to organise content to ensure that learning experiences are optimal and that evaluation is taking place efficiently (Ganguly, 2001).

Having established the uniqueness of HoDs and their management requirements, it seems clear that they are vital in the adaptation to the requirements of the knowledge economy.

Several studies have been done about how *teachers* experience the changes in the curriculum and how they have dealt with them. Among them is Bantwini’s (2010) research on how

teachers perceived the new curriculum reform in the Eastern Cape Province. Bantwini discovered several reactions to experiences about curriculum reform. Among others change/reform was seen as a burden, the shortage of teachers caused a serious problem, moving from the known to the unknown too quickly, lack of parental support, time being seen as an enemy and inadequate remuneration. HoDs are *classified* as teachers as well, and I have to assume that they had similar experiences with the changes with which they had to cope. However, HoDs are also seen as part of the management and as agents of change, making their experiences unique and researchable.

1.5 Problem statement

The focus on HoDs is due to the peculiar situation in which they are. A school functions mainly as a bureaucratic organization due to the nature of dividing responsibility (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008) where there are two or more important role players: the strategic apex (principal and the senior management team) and the operational core (the teachers). Figure 4.1 illustrates how the communication between HoDs, the strategic apex, and the operational core takes place within the area of curriculum changes. Communication takes place vertically (VC) between the strategic apex and the HoDs, as well as horizontally (HC) between the HoD (who assumes the role of a manager and a teacher) and the other teachers within the department. HoDs themselves are still teachers in that specific subject, making them part of the operational core, but they have to report to the strategic apex and relay their policy decisions to the operational core (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). This makes the HoD pivotal in the success of curriculum changes.

When changes in policy take place, either internally or externally, HoDs are responsible for communicating these decisions and the procedures to be followed to the operational core. Research has been done about how teachers experience these changes (Smit, 2001) and how they perceive the curriculum of South Africa (Bantwini, 2010). South Africa finds itself in a high impact policy setting, where new policies are constantly introduced or old ones amended. Torres *et al.* (2008) suggest that managers tend to choose policies that are more visible but create less controversy hoping that it will have a more positive effect on staff. It is the job of the HoD to communicate those policy choices as well as to promote his or her

subject at the same time (Kerry, 2005). This opens the door to internal conflict which may lead to resistance of change.

We have seen huge attempts to make education comply with the demands of the “new” economy in the form of deep-seated changes in curricula to lead to the production of a new kind of learner who is a more skilled and critical thinking labourer (Tabulawa, 2009), but it seems we have not taken into account what it might imply for teachers and their managers. The ever-changing curriculum indicates to me that the initial choices made for the direction and shape of a post-apartheid education system in a new South Africa, did not and still do not yield the results initially expected, thus creating a high impact policy setting which might possibly cause policy fatigue among managers, teachers and the community of a school. The responses to, and the management of the peculiar situation in which the HoD found him- or herself during these changes is what I wanted to find out and understand.

During this research, it was assumed that HoDs have to cope with the demands of an ever-changing curriculum and that they know how to manage it and lead the teachers in their department to greater heights. However, I wanted to explore the possibility that this might not be the case and that HoDs are trapped between the leadership that is required from them by the DoBE and the strategic apex of a school and the leadership they are capable of providing to the teachers who report to them.

1.6 Research questions

I have developed a research question that aims to explore the role of HoDs during the changes and how they experienced curriculum changes from their middle management position.

1.6.1 Primary research question

How have Heads of Departments from schools responded to, and managed changes in the curriculum since 2005?

1.6.2 Secondary research questions

- a. What is the rationale behind the curriculum changes in South Africa?
- b. What does the literature say about the effective management of change?
- c. How equipped were the HoDs to successfully and effectively implement the new parameters required by the curriculum changes?
- d. How has the HoDs' management of their departments changed with respect to:
 - i. Motivation of self,
 - ii. Motivation of teachers, and
 - iii. Assistance to teachers when changes occurred?
- e. What are the HoDs' perceptions and experiences of the curriculum at this moment in time?

For me it was of vital importance to get to know the middle manager's position is between being a teacher and being the manager, especially when it comes to curriculum changes.

1.7 Aims

The aim of this study was to determine HoDs' responses to, and the management of changes in the curriculum since 2005. More specifically I was interested in the motivation of self, other teachers and the assistance that was lent to those teachers during transition periods. During the data analysis it became evident that most HoDs were focused on the quality of education that his or her department was able to provide.

The following aims were also pursued namely to:

- i. Determine what changes to the curriculum were brought about between 2005 and the beginning of 2011.

- ii. Assess how equipped the HoD was when it came to implementing the new parameters required by the curriculum changes.
- iii. Find out what experiences equipped the HoD to deal with the implementation of the curriculum changes.
- iv. Determine how the HoDs' management of the department has changed with respect to motivation of self, administration of teachers and assistance to teachers when changes occurred.
- v. To explore how the HoDs feel about the curriculum at this moment in time.

1.8 Methodology

Due to the nature of my research question, I made use of a qualitative research approach, which allowed me to describe and understand the phenomenon through the experiences of the HoDs within the natural setting of the school environment and how the respondents construct their reality through their experiences (Maree, 2007). My chosen research sites were schools in the Lady Frere District of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. I chose a narrative design, as it gave me the opportunity to analyse the data in such a way that I will be giving the voiceless a voice. A three tier approach to data collection enabled me to look at the data from different angles providing a clarified interpretation thereof. The use of focus group interviews, a semi-structured interview, and document analysis ensured the triangulation and therefore the data gave a reliable understanding of the phenomenon. The focus group allowed me to build a skeleton of key words and the semi-structured interview placed some flesh on these identified categories. The document analysis was purely for the crystallisation of the data ensuring that a reliable picture of what was being experienced was reflected.

1.9 Conceptual framework

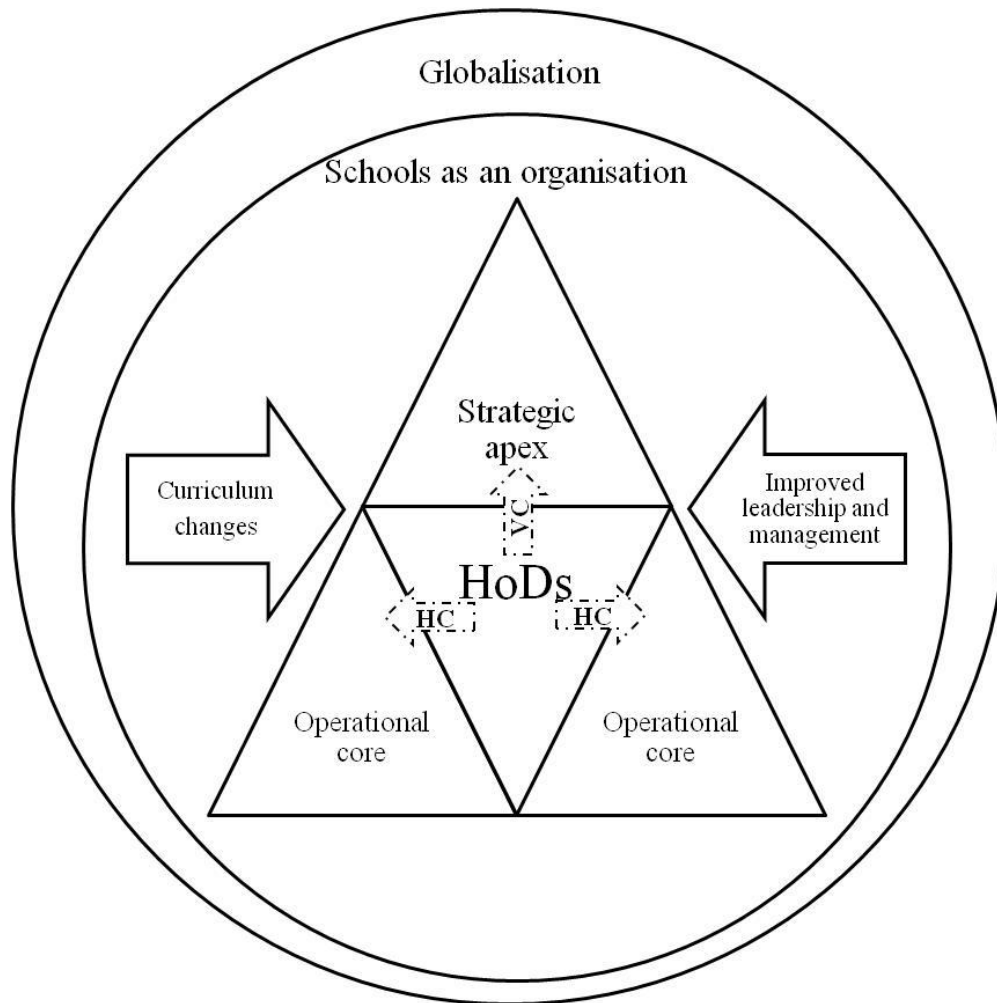


Figure 1.1: The influence of globalisation on HoDs

The effect of globalisation is greatly visible in today's world. It affects most government sectors and the operational spheres within them. The one government sphere I am focusing on is education and schools as organizations. There is constant change within that sphere, specifically concerning the curriculum. A school being an organization requires constant improvement of the leadership and the management of the organisation for it to survive in an extremely competitive market. HoDs are placed in a very peculiar situation within a school. They are seen as part as the management (the strategic apex), but are also part of the teachers (the operational core).

Figure 1.1 attempts to illustrate how globalisation influences HoDs within the sphere of a school, including the influence of curriculum changes and the demands for the improvement of leadership and management.

1.10 Theoretical framework

When one is looking at how HoDs responded to and how they managed curriculum changes, one has first to understand what curriculum changes are before trying to understand the way they were managed. In this dissertation I made use of two theoretical frameworks in an attempt to get better clarity about the change process and the management thereof.

The first theoretical framework focused on how the characteristics of implementation affected HoDs. The dynamic process of curriculum change requires continued evaluation of the process. The implementation phase of curriculum changes has many characteristics. Among these characteristics is included need, clarity, complexity and quality or practicality (Fullan, 2007). Before implementation can be successful these characteristics of change need to be identified and resolved. During the research it became very evident that HoDs are very focused on producing quality education but were struggling with confusion and their only resolve was to apply the traditional methods of teaching.

The second theoretical framework was focused on how the HoDs managed their departments during times of change. Van der Merwe (2005) suggested that management of change can be put into five distinct steps. It was very evident that even though these five steps were present in the HoDs' management of curriculum changes, it was not as straight forward as was implied.

By applying these two frameworks I was able to construct an understanding of how HoDs responded to and managed curriculum changes.

1.11 Concept clarification

1.11.1 Globalisation

Global, being the root word of globalisation implies that it has to do with taking the whole world into account, but more specifically the trade and industry of the international community. It strives to link national communities to the international community through mass communication and economical conformity; thus, the concept of neoliberalism comes into play as well. Jansen (2007: 22) describes neoliberalism as the “dominant mode of conducting political and economic organization in a globalized world.” However, the one big drive behind globalisation is capitalism, which implies the privatization of companies formerly government operated, for optimal growth and expansion of the nation’s capital in a global market. One example of such an effort is the promise of funds to developing countries by the World Bank to enhance their education systems, especially the primary systems, on condition that they conform to the privatization of certain publicly funded services (Halsey, 2006). However, globalisation does not only strive to unite the world economically, but also culturally through the idea of a global culture (Christie, 2008): a fusion of cultures from all over the world into one mega-culture community.

For the purpose of this research, globalisation can be described as the main influence for schools to become functional in a market driven arena. It is a global event driven by the need to unite, not only economically, but also culturally.

1.11.2 Schools as organisations

Schools are seen as complex systems, which interact with the community around them. The composition of these organisations is made up of specific elements; when one of these elements is not functioning properly, it might have a ripple effect on the wider community around the system. These elements include the principal, the deputy principal, HoDs, and educators. Within this organisation, the structure is a vertical hierarchy where responsibility and authority are allocated to each element (Van Deventer, 2005). Everybody contributes towards, and is accountable for the success of the organisation. The goals of this organisation are “shaped by national and regional policies, influenc[ing] the particular way in which the

school as an organisation is structured and functions”(Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2004: 145).

For the purpose of this research, schools as organisations can be described as organisations which are greatly influenced by internal and external changes.

1.11.3 Leadership and management

Management is seen as an activity where the manager directs people; whereas leadership is about guiding, encouraging, and facilitating people within an organisation (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2007). Prinsloo (2005) associates management with words like efficiency, planning, paperwork and control, etc. whereas leadership is related to words like risk-taking, dynamic, creative, etc. Thus, these two concepts are very different, but they are linked together by the accountability they place on the strategic apex in regard to efficient and effective operation of an organisation such as a school.

For the purpose of this research, leadership and management can be described as two activities intertwined with each other with one goal in mind, namely the effective management of the school as an organisation.

1.11.4 Curriculum changes

The idea of educational reform is 1) to address the inequalities of the past and 2) to battle current skills shortages experienced (Bantwini, 2010). Another reason for curriculum reforms, as Bantwini (2010) points out, is to produce “citizens capable of competing nationally and internationally and who will contribute towards the economic growth of their country.” However, change is seen as subjective by Fullan (Bantwini, 2010) where individuals construct their own milieu from their experiences. For the purpose of this study, curriculum changes can be defined in terms of the changes announced by the Department of Education as “adjusting structures, programs, practices, or replacing them with better ones” (Mphahlele, 2009).

For the purpose of this research, curriculum changes can be described as changes to the *modus operandi* of schools concerning what and how they teach students.

Below is the chronological order of chosen curriculum changes since 2005 that directed my understanding of what curriculum changes are:

- Changes on how assessment should be conducted in the GET band at schools: Government Gazette No 29002, 7 July 2006
- The introduction of CTAs: Government Gazette No 2962, 12 February 2007
- The ceasing of learner portfolios: Government Gazette No. 32836, 29 December 2009
- The discontinuation of the CTAs: Government Gazette No. 33160, 6 May 2010
- Introduction of the idea of Schooling 2025: Government Gazette No. 33434, 2 August 2012
- Introduction of the national curriculum and assessment policy statement: Government Gazette No. 33528, 3 September 2010

Figure 1.2 summarises the changes selected. To change a curriculum fully or even to introduce the idea thereof can have a significant influence on the motivation of HoDs. The introduction or deletion of a subject or the changes to assessment may once again have a significant effect on HoDs' motivation.

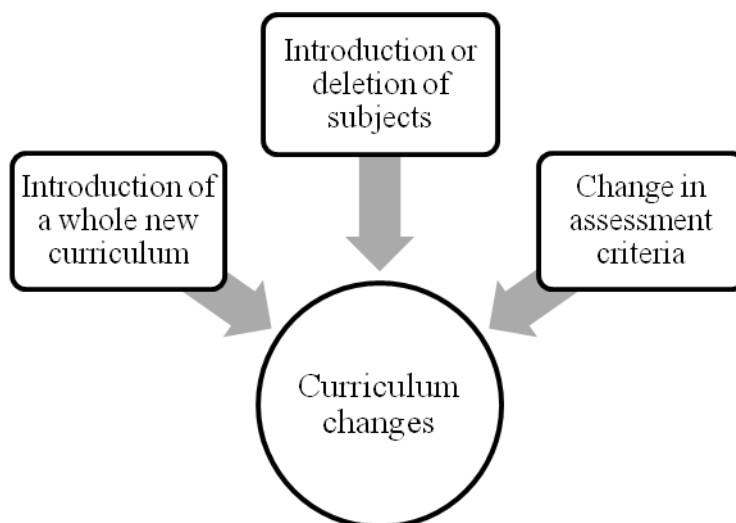


Figure 1.2: The types of curriculum changes

1.12 Credibility and trustworthiness

When data is collected during quantitative research, the instrument used must be valid and reliable; meaning, the instrument must measure what it is meant to measure, repeatedly yielding consistent results when similar samples are used: the trustworthiness of data. When conducting qualitative research, the researcher is seen as the instrument. The validity and the reliability of the research can then be seen in qualitative research as credibility and trustworthiness of the research (Maree, 2007).

It is accepted that making use of different data-gathering techniques leads to trustworthiness (Maree, 2007). Triangulation is a technique where the researcher makes use of more than one data gathering technique to ensure trustworthiness, allowing for the proving and improving of the validity and reliability of the research; which is a way of convincing the researcher and the audience that it is a true account of the phenomenon investigated (Webster & Mertova, 2007: 91). However, “qualitative research sets out to penetrate the human understandings and constructs” (Maree, 2007: 81) making way for the crystallisation of data, rather than the triangulation thereof. The data gathered and processed from the focus group interview served as scaffolding for possible themes identified and elaborated on during the semi-structured interviews with the chosen participants. This allowed data gathered and themes identified to become clearer during the semi-structured interview. The third step of document analysis helped to confirm what has been said by putting “action” to the words of the participants confirming events or an action with the HoDs’ documents, therefore crystallising the data.

I made use of audio recordings of all the interviews and transcribed them to ensure that I captured the participants’ actual responses and meaning. After summarising the transcriptions, I invited HoDs concerned to read the transcriptions to contribute to the accuracy of the data.

1.13 Ethical considerations

When collecting data for the purpose of conducting qualitative research, it might be required of the participant to convey private experiences to me as the researcher. This requires the existence of trust between the participant and the researcher. Creswell (2008: 238) mentions the following key issues and considerations when doing qualitative research:

- Informing the participant about the purpose of the study
- Refraining from deceptive practices
- Sharing information with the participants
- Being respectful towards the participant
- The use of ethical interview practices
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Collaborating with participants

Before any data gathering could start, I had to obtain ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria, and permission to conduct research from the Eastern Cape Department of Education (see appendix 1). Permission also had to be obtained from the school principals where the HoDs work. Before the focus group interviews, as well as the semi-structured interviews, took place, all the participants signed a letter of consent where the purpose of the research, the protection of anonymity and the storage of data after the research has been completed, were outlined. Another purpose of this letter was to make the participants aware that their participation in the research was voluntary and that they could withdraw any time they chose. I, as the researcher, was bound by the Code of Ethics for Research set out by the Ethics Committee of the Education Faculty of the University of Pretoria.

1.14 Working assumption

During this research I assumed that HoDs are experiencing difficulty with the demands the ever-changing curriculum makes on them concerning the management of their department. I also assumed, in terms of policy fatigue, with every change in the curriculum HoDs respond less positively and less enthusiastically than the previous change, causing them to become a negative influence on the teachers in their department.

1.15 Limitations of the study

Before I conducted the research I foresaw some challenges that might come to pass during the research. They were as follows:

- Lack of participants
- The participants not being Heads of Departments but rather subject or phase heads
- Incorrect interpretation of newspaper headings

These limitations are discussed in more detail in paragraph 6.4.

1.16 Significance of the study

Doing research is about breaching a gap that might exist in our current body of knowledge or creating new knowledge. The contribution of this research was towards understanding how HoDs responded to and managed curriculum changes. The responses of the HoDs revealed that they are confused by the changes and that they prefer the traditional methods of teaching. However, their main focus was on producing quality education in the midst of it all. The study also revealed that the management of changes was not as straightforward as it is suggested by theory. However, this contributes towards our understanding of how HoDs are in fact struggling to make sense of the necessity of changes. This can lead to including training opportunities for HoDs when new changes to curriculum are suggested.

1.17 Organisation of dissertation

Chapter 2: The road to curriculum changes

This chapter is a literature review for the basis of my first theoretical framework. It explores how changes are brought about in South Africa, how they are expected to be implemented, and the different role players in each stage of the implementation

Chapter 3: The management of curriculum changes

During this second literature chapter I explored the management of curriculum changes and how the HoD can play a very significant role during that time. I noted here how other countries experienced changes on a national level and the difficulties which occurred in the implementation phase.

Chapter 4: The research design

My study lends itself to a narrative framework within a qualitative sphere. During chapter four I utilise the opportunity to express my motivation to make use of this methodology and the way I went about collecting and analysing my data.

Chapter 5: Data presentation and interpretation

For this chapter I made use of the theoretical frameworks to analyse the data collected and to build first the framework required for making sense through using content analysis and then secondly adding “flesh” to that framework by utilising discourse analysis. The documents collected were useful and demonstrated the amount of work the HoD had to deal with. It is also here that I interpreted the data analysis.

Chapter 6: Overview, findings and conclusion

The final chapter not only gave me the opportunity to give my interpretation of the data but also identified the further studies to which I am drawn.

1.18 Conclusion

During this chapter I aimed to set out the framework for my research. It focused on why I did this research and briefly summarised every aspect thereof. Doing qualitative research requires analysing not only what the participants said, but also what was observed which led me as the researcher to reach my conclusion. In the chapters that follow, I aimed to inform you as the reader why I conducted this research and what guided my opinion about the conclusions.

Chapter 2

The road to curriculum change

2.1 Introduction

This literature review is divided into two chapters because I am utilising two theoretical frameworks to analyse the collected data: 1) the effect the characteristics of change have on implementation and 2) the management of changes. Chapter 2 serves as a platform for curriculum changes and chapter 3 for the management of those changes.

In this chapter, I will construct a road to curriculum change. It is important to identify first the phenomenon of curriculum change, and how the modernisation of the global society calls for constant improvement. I then move on to discussing how the perceptions and beliefs of teachers and other role players influence curriculum change. The focus is then shifted to how changes are brought about through a process of initiation, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Involving role-players in curriculum changes and the period required to initiate these changes supports the argument of just how important it is to consider all factors when embarking on educational change.

2.2 The phenomenon of curriculum changes

Change can be construed as reform, which according to Fullan “is not just putting into place the latest policy, [but] changing the cultures of classrooms, schools, districts, [and] universities” (Fullan, 2007: 7). In South Africa, one of the first changes the newly elected-government of 1994 carried out was to get rid of offensive language in, and to *modernise* the curriculum to fit their agenda and their vision of a citizen of the new South Africa. They aimed for a total reform of the education system by choosing Curriculum 2005 (C2005). The idea was to unify all syllabuses and remove all aspects of apartheid, which were manifested through the apartheid era. It also aimed at changing how a learning programme assessment was done. They moved from summative assessment, which was done at the end of the

programme, towards formative assessment, which was done continuously, informing educators and learners about their progress and in the process improving the teaching-learning process (Nakabugo & Sieböger, 2001).

When a curriculum has to change, there are two foci: 1) policy and 2) knowledge. Education policy is mostly symbolic and is fed by political agendas “that reflect the struggles of opposing groups to have their interests, values, histories, and politics, dominate the school curriculum” (Chisholm, 2005: 194). The other focus (that of knowledge) is more about “how knowledge is constructed and what the role of the school is in teaching and learning” (Chisholm, 2005: 194). In my opinion, the focus of policy appears to carry more weight than that of knowledge when curriculum decisions are taken.

2.3 Influences of curriculum changes

Apart from the political motivation to make changes to a current curriculum or some of its programmes, curriculums can also be adjusted to deal with the diversity of needs among learners. Learner diversity is experienced in every classroom and organisation due to differences in ability, interest, motivation, social-economic status, and the culture of the learner (Saskatchewan, 1992). Countries, like South Africa, have changed their educational system not only according to international agencies, such as the World Bank, to address these issues, but also to rectify the wrong-doings of apartheid. Now students’ illiteracy is seen as a “fundamental weakness within the post-apartheid education system” (Gilmour & Soudien, 2008). However, these proposed changes, such as C2005, were too symbolic in nature, and did not allow for grassroots transformation (Gilmour & Soudien, 2008). It is important to analyse the relations of social-economic and racial inequality when the need for educational change is being addressed, making educational change a process of rectifying social justice in South Africa (Gilmour & Soudien, 2008). England and Wales, for instance, are currently focused on reforming to address inequalities, “as part of broader agendas to improve national productivity and social well-being” (Fenwick, 2011: 679).

The rate of change is increasing exponentially in today’s world. “Organisations need to learn at least as quickly as the prevailing rate of change” (O’Sullivan, 1997: 3). You can almost say that schools are becoming “change junkies” not knowing what to do when there are no changes for a while. Principals, middle managers, and teachers need to know why they have

to change in order for them and the change process to be successful. To change in education, one must change in practice (Fullan, 2007). Not only is the translation of policy into practice problematic to policy makers, but the changing of core beliefs also seems to be challenging. There are many factors involved when educational change or transformation takes place.

There are three ways teachers can change when a new policy or a new program is introduced: 1) use new materials; 2) use new teaching approaches; or 3) alter their beliefs. Educational change can only take place when individuals embrace change by changing their beliefs and when there is a change in an individual's practice.

To make such a personal change becomes increasingly complex and it can be argued that such change occurs on three levels: symbolic, linear and appropriation (Fullan, 1991, 2003). As is the case with South Africa, educational change is often the face of political symbolism. By changing the teachers, students, classrooms and communities, it might be plausible to change a curriculum and the way teachers teach and students learn. The linear level of change is a top-down process of curriculum change. The final level is the meaning of a teacher's experience of change. An individual's life-stage has a great effect on how he or she experiences and perceives change. For change to be successful and achieve lasting reform, it is fundamental to change an individual's beliefs first. Change begins with a transformation of people's perceptions and projects outwards into the social and institutional domain (Vandeyar, 2008).

Blignaut questions the non-penetration of policies into the classroom (Blignaut, 2007). He notes several factors that contribute to this unwillingness to change or even accept change. The source of this might be the assumption of policy makers that teachers are "highly skilled practitioners with excellent subject content knowledge, working harmoniously with fellow colleagues" (Blignaut, 2007: 49) in a school with classes no greater than 25 students per classroom. Resistance to change can occur when the subjective meaning of educational change is ignored by policy makers and the personal engagement of those involved is deemed unimportant (Blignaut, 2007: 50):

At a political level, it can be argued that if teachers do not feel a sense of identification with the policy, its goals may be undermined by practitioners who understand and accept neither its conceptual underpinning nor its curricular

imperatives. In such circumstances a façade of reform is created, as teachers ignore or even resist what is asked of them, or as they engage in [superficial mimicking], playing out a role that has been legislated for them by the state. Teachers have varied and complex reasons why they do or do not feel committed to a new policy conceptually, politically or in practice.

It may also be a case of teachers not seeing a problem with the current state of affairs, making changes unwelcome and unappealing.

“Change occurs more rapidly when people want to change, when they see some benefit in doing so... new reform programmes demand that [teachers]... employ different testing procedures or submit themselves to different types of instructional supervision, all in response to a problem that teachers may not see as existing” according to Chapman in Blignaut (2007). These suggested changes may conflict with what teachers believe and inhibit the appreciation of educational change, and cause great emotional discomfort to the individual. In America, educational change failed because they tried to change the core of schooling; meaning they tried to change how teachers understand the epistemology of learning and the student’s role therein (Chapman in Blignaut, 2007).

The stress caused by educational change may lead to avoidance of change, which creates feelings of “hopelessness, as well as feelings of guilt and shame” (Blignaut, 2007: 53). It communicates to teachers that their past practices were either incorrect or ineffective, causing disagreement with a teacher’s professional, emotional, and political identities that are recycled into more emotional stress and resistance.

Apart from the emotional stress caused by changing one’s beliefs, the lack of provision made for the differences between schools causes even more resistance to curriculum changes. The social complexity of change does not allow for as smooth a transition as policy makers would like. Every school differs: in size, teacher experience, location etc. Context and culture plays a great role in the success of change, and it has often been overlooked as in C2005 (Blignaut, 2007). According to De Clercq (, 1997) there is a great danger that the restructuring of education can cause more harm by assisting the privileged education sector while making it more difficult for the underprivileged as was the case of Italy (Polesel: 2006).

2.4 The process of curriculum changes

Educational change is a complicated process with many role players that need to be continuously taken into account. Policies can be viewed as sound actions taken to resolve inequalities and re-establish unity in a community or using one's authority to divide resources among social groups as favoured. As evident in most literature, South Africa is currently experiencing a series of symbolic policies aiming to rectify the injustices of the past such as C2005.

For a policy to be successful, it needs to follow a certain path to ensure that the *correct message* gets out there. Policy development or curriculum changes can have four distinct stages: initiation, formulation, implementation, and evaluation (De Clercq, 1997). The first three stages will now be discussed in more detail excluding evaluation. The reason for this is that the evaluation of the curriculum change process is cyclical (par. 2.4.5) and throughout this process every step must be evaluated to ensure the success of change.

2.4.1 Initiation

The identification of a need is the first and most important step of policy development and curriculum changes. A group or a person is tasked with the identification thereof thus starting the process of educational change by “promoting a certain program or direction of change” (Fullan, 2007: 66). The desire to keep up with a changing global economy is one of the main reasons for change, but South Africa is still focused on rectifying the injustices of the past according to Gilmour and Soudien (2008).

Fullan identified eight key reasons affecting the initiation of change (Adapted from Fullan, 2007: 67-79):

1. Existence and quality of innovations: the social demographic make-up of the global community allows for many different innovations to exist, all varying in quality and focus.
2. Access to innovation: due to the varying of social-economic status within the world, the access to all different kinds of innovations is hindered by the lack of access to schooling and technology. The meanings people assign to events in their lives are directly informed

by their experiences. The lack of access to information puts certain groups of people at a disadvantage for the development and growth required by a globalised world.

3. Advocacy from central administration: the advocating for change is an important part of the initiation process. The impact and success thereof is however affected by the position within the government or change agencies of the person advocating that change.
4. Teacher advocacy: teachers might not have a large impact on change on a national level; they do however, have numerous opportunities to initiate change in their classrooms even if it is little things to assist the students and improve their and other teachers' methodology. Still, teacher unions are becoming very prominent in the initiation of any new policies or changes. Through this process, the voice of the teacher is heard by the government officials, granting them more power than in previous years.
5. External change agents: there have always been external change agents with an opinion about the proposed innovation. In the last decade, these change agents have started donating heavily to their preferred innovation, giving that particular change a greater chance of being implemented successfully.
6. Community influence: communities play an essential role in the initiation of new educational changes. Communities have the ability to make or break an innovation for change by putting pressure on district officials through the school board, opposing certain changes, or doing nothing. When a community does get involved with developing innovations for educational improvement in their community, their role widely depends on the demographics of the community and the education of the community. The school governing body (SGB) provides the bridge between the school and the community in South Africa.
7. Mandating new policy: governments are demanding accountability from teachers, especially on issues such as literacy and numeracy, special needs, teacher education etc.
8. Problem-solving and bureaucratic orientations: innovations are either characterized by “an opportunistic (bureaucratic) or problem-solving orientation,” as discovered by Berman and McLaughlin (cited in Fullan, 2007: 78). Bureaucratic innovations are policies that give the

school or district an opportunity to obtain funds, whereas a problem-solving innovation is an opportunity to solve actual problems within that district.

When the need has been identified by choosing a successful innovation, it is time to plan how this innovation will be set into motion.

2.4.2 Formulation

When a need has been identified and the innovation properly advocated to the correct agencies or policy developers, it can be formulated into action. It seems that the formulation of policies is “the responsibility of politicians and their representative institutions” (De Clercq, 1997: 129). The next step is to start deliberating the proposed policy or change. This is done by cabinet members and committees through public hearings and community forums after which parliament have to clear the policy and formulate it as a White Paper. The White Paper is then published to measure its attainability within the wider social structure. If considered successful by various agencies it will be written into bills and legislation (Moyo, 2008). When this marker is met, they move towards the implementation of the policy or changes.

2.4.3 Implementation

Implementing a curriculum change can be a very traumatic experience for teachers because it is sometimes expected of them to change their beliefs or values about certain things. “Implementation consists of the process of putting into practice an idea, program, or a set of activities and new structures by the people attempting or expecting to change” (Fullan, 2007: 84). It is important to consider that curriculum changes can be a learning curve for even the most experienced. Adopting this as the basis of making changes to curriculums might change the way implementation strategies are approached.

Implementation can be seen as a dynamic process influenced by several factors affecting what determines the success and direction thereof. These factors can be divided into three, each with an underlying characteristic. Figure 2.1 exhibits the three factors with their underlying characteristics. Each of these characteristics has an influence on the success of curriculum changes:

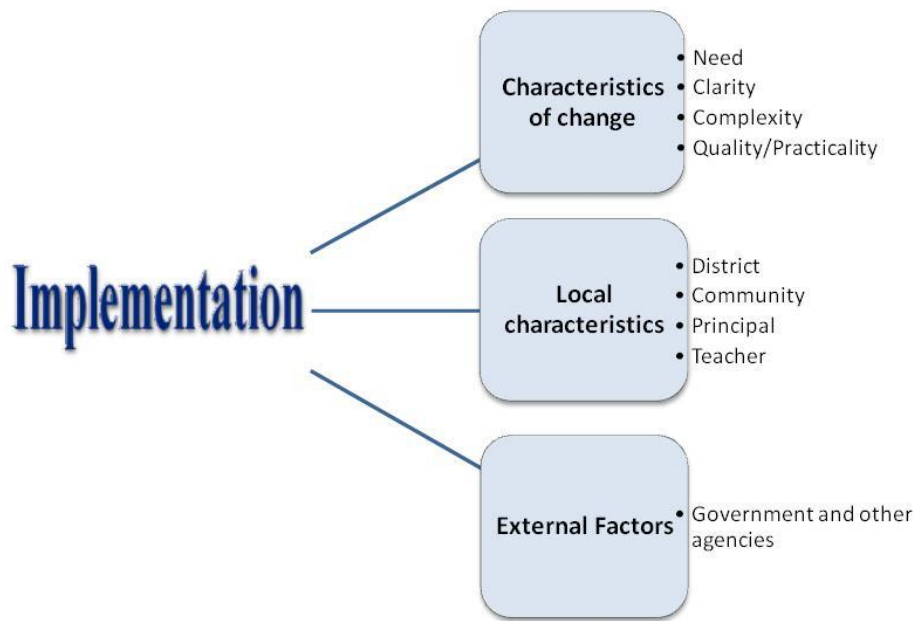


Figure 2.3: Interactive factors affecting implementation (Fullan, 2007, p. 87)

Before continuing with the explanation of these interactive factors affecting implementation, it must be taken into consideration that Fullan’s book *Education Change* (2007) is based on the educational change in Canada and the United States of America. However, this does not imply that South Africa’s implementation process is vastly different from theirs. Each of these factors is evident in our own society and has its own influences.

Characteristics of change:

1. Need: as has been mentioned earlier, change is all about satisfying an existing need. Due to each group or person having their own specific need, it can occur that the other role-players in the change do not recognise that need and thus do not see the necessity thereof. For example: teachers do not always recognise the political need for change, whereas policy makers who are not on the ground level do not see the need that exists for changing. This can cause a clash between ideas of what should be changed in the current curriculum (Fullan, 2007).

2. Clarity: not all the role-players are clear on what the specific need is, causing confusion, and resistance to the change proposed by the policy makers (Fullan, 2007).
3. Complexity: the complexity of the proposed change must be recognised. Not all changes to the curriculum are simple. The removal of student portfolios was a simple process, whereas the introduction of CAPS is more difficult and requires more time.
4. Quality/Practicality: the availability of resources when change is required contributes greatly to the quality and practicality of the change. With C2005 there was a lack of material and resources, especially in the previously disadvantaged communities, causing great resistance to the changes and a lasting negativity among teachers.

Local Characteristics:

5. School district: implementation at district level is very important, as the district office officials greatly influence the success of change. They “set the conditions for implementation to the extent that they show specific forms of support and active knowledge and understanding of the realities of attempting to put a change into practice” (Fullan, 2007: 94). It is interesting how teachers have become used to the idea of change, and the attitude of the district officials towards a specific change indicates to them the importance requisite of the change. It is important to remember that these school districts Fullan refers to are not South African, but the South African districts are just as important.
6. Community: the school governing body (SGB) plays a role not only in the initiation of a curriculum change but also in the implementation thereof. It can cause a great upset if it is not satisfied with the proposed change, as was the case with the school in Grabouw in March 2012 (Police monitor Grabouw protest, 2012). When the community and the SGB are not happy with the change, they can put their energy into making it very difficult for the district officials. It is the officials’ duty to inform the community and the SGB accurately and truthfully whilst attempting to transform the energy put into resistance into energy for implementation by getting them involved in the decision making process.
7. Principal: the attitudes of a principal will determine the seriousness of teachers’ approach to the proposed change. What often happens is that the principals are not always prepared

to handle the complexity of change causing severe negativity towards change as a whole (Fullan, 2007).

8. Teachers: the teachers' personality and previous experiences greatly influence their attitudes towards curriculum changes. "The quality of working relationships among teachers is strongly related to implementation. Collegiality, open communication, trust, support, and help, learning on the job, getting results, and job satisfaction and morale are closely interrelated" (Fullan, 2007: 97).

External Factors:

9. Governments and provincial agencies: any policy or curriculum change is politically orientated where it should be the duty of politicians and their representative institutions to listen to the lobbying of interest groups (Fullan, 2007). The biggest obstacle governments have had to overcome has been the underestimation of implementation problems and processes. However, they have realised the necessity for adequate resources and training and are allocating "resources to clarify standards of practice, to requiring accountability-based assessments, to establishing implementation units, to assessing the quality of potential changes, to supporting professional development, and to monitoring implementation policies" (Fullan, 2007: 100).

2.4.4 Involvement in curriculum changes

There are different role players in the initiation and implementation of curriculum changes. As demonstrated by figure 2.2 the role players are government, districts, communities, principals, and teachers.

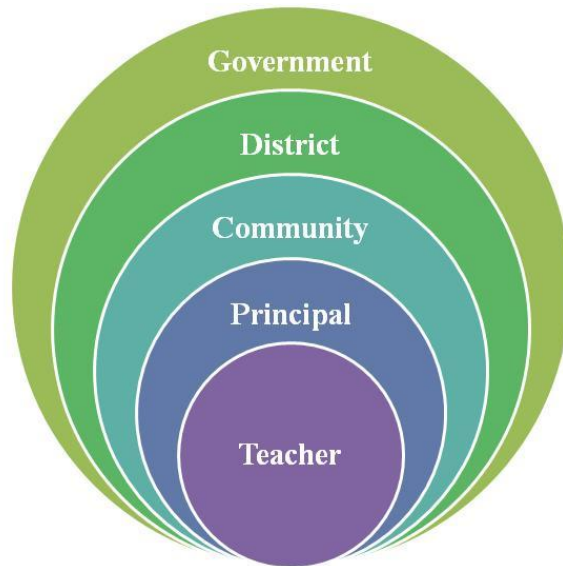


Figure 2.2: The group of actors involved in curriculum changes

- The government (national as well as provincial) is involved in deciding on which policy they would like to implement or what changes are required to the current curriculum to comply with investors or political pressure.
- The districts (or whatever they are called in the various provinces) are in turn responsible for communicating these changes to the school and guiding them to successful implementation.
- The communities are not always directly involved in the creating or implementing of the changes, but their support is vital to the success of a school.
- Principals are responsible for communicating these changes to their staff, and motivating them as needed.
- The teachers are at the core of these changes as they are the on the ground implementers of any change proposed or set by the government. Teachers can be the difference between success and failure.

I have taken some guidance from Fullan (2007), to explain what the functions of these role players are and how they fit in with curriculum changes:

Government

“*[Q]uick solutions for urgent problems*” (Fullan, 2007: 236): That is the modus operandi of government, even though changes to the curriculum are complex procedures due to the thousands if not millions of people involved in these transformations. With the implementation of C2005, it was evident that the quick solution to do away with everything pre-1994 resulted in unsuccessful strategies to reform the education system.

Districts

The administrators of districts are in charge of districts and can contribute greatly to the success or failure of curriculum changes (Fullan, 2007). The American trend is for district administrators to deal with curriculum change with few resources in a large district where they constantly have to solve conflicts and crises pertaining to financial and/or personal issues through a complex bureaucracy (Fullan, 2007). The administrator must be responsible for guiding the school and its staff in the right direction by providing them with information from the government (the top-down process of implementation) and guidance on how to improve the school by the implementation of changes.

Community

The success of education depends greatly on the involvement of all stakeholders in the process (Fullan, 2007). Parents and communities do not have much influence in the decision-making process when it comes to policy development concerning curriculum changes. However, they have a responsibility to assist the teachers with the motivation of the students. Parents and a community can, however, make a stand against the government and certain decisions with which they do not agree. Some communities with strong and influential ties to the government might be more successful than poverty-stricken communities. Nonetheless, as in the case of Grabouw during the 2011 protests, public demonstration by parents and student can make an immense difference to the direction in which their community is heading.

Principals

Change is not at the top of a principal’s priority list according to Fullan (2007). There are other factors demanding more attention than change initiated by the government. However,

there is a tendency to prioritise improvements to the school, whether it is discipline procedures, teaching methods, or updating the school grounds.

Teachers

Apart from the main responsibility of teaching, teachers are required to perform other duties as well. Every time the government deems it fit to make changes to the curriculum, teachers are required to make a paradigm shift to adopt these changes. Sometimes these changes only require minimum changes to classroom functions, or including or excluding certain features of the curriculum. Sometimes it is required of teachers to transform their teaching or change their belief systems in order to *fit in* with the new curriculum requirements. This can cause great emotional stress and negativity towards changes, causing more resistance to change than necessary.

2.4.5 Time frame and frequency of curriculum changes

The period of change to a curriculum depends largely on the scale of the change. A minor change can be completed within a year, whereas changes that are more complex require a period of two to four years. Major changes can (and I feel must) take five to ten years to implement completely and to evaluate if they are going to be successful (Fullan, 2007). C2005 can be seen as a major curriculum change, whereas the removal of student portfolios was a quick change that took less than a year.

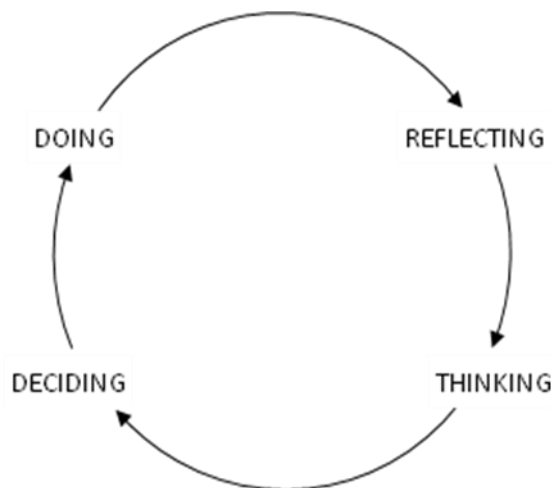


Figure 2.3: Cyclical process of educational change (O’Sullivan, 1997, p. 12)

The frequency of changes depends on the desire and need for change. When a new government comes into power, the newly appointed Minister of Education will start to evaluate the current state of affairs in the education system and if it suits government’s agenda. Curriculum changes are an on-going process where reflection takes place after every implementation process and new needs are identified leading to re-formulation of policies. “[W]e might assume that specific educational changes are introduced because they are desirable according to certain educational values and meet a given need better than existing practices do” (Fullan, 2007: 69). For that reason educational change can be seen as a cyclical process as demonstrated by figure 2.3. Within this cycle we think of the needs to be addressed within the education system, a decision is made and formally put into a policy ready for implementation, we do it by implementing the recommended changes and then it must be reflected upon, starting the whole process over again if additional changes are required (O’Sullivan, 1997).

2.5 What is needed for successful educational change?

It would be an ideal world if every change implemented was successful, but then no need for change would ever be required again. Pam Christie (2008) highlights two aspects that can contribute greatly to successful educational change:

1. Committed government:

UNESCO’s *Global Monitoring Report* of 2005 revealed that both Education For All (EFA) and non-EFA countries displayed certain characteristics: (UNESCO, 2005)

- The teaching profession is held in high esteem,
- There is continuity of policy over time,
- They try to achieve access to school before attempting high quality, and
- Supply of well-supported and motivated teachers.

2. Changing core activities:

The government has found it difficult to change classroom practices and structures. It has become known that it is easier to change governance arrangements than to change classroom practices. Changes on the surface may give the appearance that change is taking place, but in the classroom the old way of teaching is still practiced; it is necessary to change not only management, but also how teachers do things. In South Africa the government has failed to change the core activities of teachers and thus the changes of the curriculum were only symbolic and superficial (Christie, 2008).

2.6 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to emphasise the importance of the implementation process and what influences its success. I have paved the way for interpreting what is important for successful change: the beliefs of teachers, the ground implementers of a curriculum change, and informing all the stakeholders truthfully and accurately about the changes. Educational change can be interpreted as a cyclical process where there is a constant construction of a need, thus making way for new opportunities to bring about changes. The question asked then is whether the high quality teaching or the number of students determines the success of education in the classroom. In addition, how are HoDs motivating changes in classroom practices when we have failed to change the core activities of teachers?

Chapter 3

The management of curriculum changes

3.1 Introduction

The idea of chapter 2 was to set the scene for curriculum changes and how this influences the people who are involved in it. This chapter focuses on the management aspect of curriculum changes. By delegating the responsibility of the management of curriculum changes to the HoD, a principal has more time for the daily management of the school. Unfortunately, change can be challenging and it is the HoD's responsibility to ensure that there is as little resistance as possible to change. The psychological and organisational reasons for change might delay the change process, resulting in an inability of the organisation to keep up with global demands. Even though South Africa's situation may seem unique, there are many examples of change on a national scale; some not as effective as others. However, valuable lessons can be learned from them. It is important to learn from one's own past mistakes and to try not to repeat them.

3.2 Devolution of responsibility

The newly-elected government of 1994 attempted to “transform [a] broken-down and corrupted system of separate and unequal education provision” (Beckmann, 2002: 157). This transformation included the healing of the divisions of the past, laying the foundations for a democratic and open society, improving the quality of life, and building a united and democratic South Africa (Beckmann, 2002). The South African Schools Act (1996) provides for the vesting of the governance of the school in the SGB and the professional management in the principal and his or her team of subordinate managers under the authority of the provincial head of education, increasing the autonomy and accountability of schools. The principal, being the educational leader of the school, is responsible for facilitating implementation that is “shared and supported by the school community” (Fullan, 2007: 294). Including the principal in the curriculum design process or in the decision about amendments

to the curriculum, may assist to shed light on the difficulties of changing school culture (Fullan, 2007). Sammons (cited in Fullan 2007) says that she knows of no successful implementation where both the primary and secondary leadership were not open and involved in the process of change. Adapting this statement to South Africa: the principal and the HoDs have to be involved in the change process in order for it to be successful. By delegating some of his or her responsibilities to the HoDs, the principal is devolving the responsibilities of curriculum changes and implementation that is essential for effective and efficient administration and management (Beckmann, 2002). The department head can then shape teachers' attitudes towards curriculum changes by giving them the opportunity to express their concerns about these changes (McLaughlin and Talbert cited in Fullan, 2007)

It is important that teachers receive good pre-service training, which provides knowledge for effective practice, and in-service professional development in order to construct a solid professional identity as well as the skill to deal with changes (Christie, 1996). Certain knowledge constructs that are necessary for good teaching were identified by Pam Christie (1996):

- Subject content knowledge
- Pedagogic content knowledge; knowledge about how to teach a particular subject
- A repertoire of pedagogical skills that teachers are able to use or adapt
- Knowledge of assessment
- Knowledge of how students learn and different theories of learning
- Knowledge of educational aims and purposes
- Knowledge of educational contexts

In the South African context we can also add knowledge of (Christie, 1996):

- Working with cultural and linguistic diversity
- Teaching students at different educational levels in the same classroom

- Dealing with the complexity of HIV and AIDS in the classroom
- Understanding the challenge of recognition and redistribution in the complex South African context

If teachers have this knowledge it can assist the HoDs to facilitate curriculum changes more effectively and efficiently.

3.3 Resistance to change

Change can have an immense effect on an individual especially if it is in contrast to his or her own belief system (see par. 2.3) causing great resistance to change. Regrettably, “no change occurs without sacrifice and adjustment” (Van der Merwe, 2005).

The cause for resistance to change can be divided into two categories: psychological reasons and organisational reasons (adapted from Van der Merwe, 2005).

Psychological reasons

- Loss of the familiar and reliable
- Loss of personal choice and values
- Loss of authority
- Not understanding the reasons for change
- Lack of skills and motivation

Organisational reasons

- Lack of leadership skills
- Lack of effective management skills
- Failure to recognise the social aspect of work

- Inappropriate working procedures
- Informal grouping (cliques)
- Preference for tradition

The devolution of authority with regard to curriculum changes makes it the HoD's responsibility to ensure that these psychological and organisational reasons affect the process of change as little as possible. The HoD can help a teacher adjust to the new way of doing things by systematically breaking down the barriers built up.

3.4 Curriculum changes in South Africa and other countries

South Africa has had a range of experiences when it comes to curriculum changes. However, Italy, China, Argentina, and Botswana have also had unique experiences with regard to changes brought to the curriculum. I would like to present some of the changes that took place in South Africa, but also in other countries to convey the commonalities of curriculum changes.

3.4.1 The case of South Africa

Since 1994, education in South Africa has experienced many changes, especially legislative, administrative, and curricular in nature (Gilmour & Soudien, 2008). One of these changes was the introduction of a set of measures to redress the teacher-pupil ratio inherited from apartheid and the redeployment of teachers. Another big effort to change the result of apartheid was the introduction of C2005 in 1997 and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002, which aimed to reform the divisions created by apartheid's curriculum (Gilmour & Soudien, 2008). There have been some positive outcomes of both these curriculums, specifically the increased pass rate of matriculants from 47,4 % in 1997 to 73,3 % in 2003. However, the cause of these increases cannot be pin-pointed directly.

The problems experienced with C2005 and the RNCS might have been due to the neglect of managerial matters of schooling, teachers, and textbooks; there is a general lack of concentrated and co-ordinated management. Another problem experienced is the failure of

the curriculums to recognise the social landscape inherited from apartheid, amplifying the poor and radicalised society; contradicting the curriculums' aim to move “away from a racist, apartheid, rote learning model of learning and teaching to a liberating, nation-building and learner centred outcomes-based one” (Gilmour & Soudien, 2008). After extensive critique, the opaqueness of the policy was recognised and it was admitted that C2005 was inappropriate for the country and it might be responsible for the current challenges faced by the country and education system. The building of a new curriculum and the success thereof will rely on the teachers' strengths and weaknesses, which are at the grassroots of implementation.

3.4.2 Italy

The passion for educational reform in Italy was overtaken by the concern for dismantling structures symbolising social inequalities and differentiation (Polesel, 2006). The changes brought about in Italy during the past forty years did not guarantee equal access to higher education for all social groups due to the symbolic nature of policies. The translation of family privilege into education privilege (Polesel, 2006) is still a major cause of students leaving school early, confirming that the change in educational policies does not understand the processes of social reproduction in Italy. Italy's educational reform is also very silent on the improved training of teachers as emphasised by the European Union.

3.4.3 China, Shanghai

Curriculum change is an attempt to ease the pressure when social transformation takes place as in China, and South Africa post-1994. A way to address this is to make use of a three-tier state approach (Luo, 2011). This approach makes it possible for the education authority to delegate these changes more effectively, thus improving implementation. Luo explains how this three-tier state approach was used in China's curriculum reform. The Ministry of Education was responsible for the planning of the “basic education curriculum, establishing the management policy, stipulating the categories and learning hours, and setting curriculum standards and evaluation process” (Luo, 2011: 44). The regional authorities were “responsible for implementation of the plans devised by the state, development of regional curriculums, reposting to the Ministry of Education, and the organisation and implementation of the reform” (Luo, 2011: 44). The schools may choose the appropriate curricula to “suit the

specific needs of the local society, economic development, school tradition, and interests of their students” (Luo, 2011: 44).

South Africa also makes use of a three-tier state approach, however, due to the major inherited and created inequalities we should, in my opinion, have more emphasis on specific planning to cater for our needs within the community, especially at lower levels..

3.4.4 Argentina

Like South Africa, Argentina also went through political turmoil. They restructured the state, which included education. This reform focused on improving the quality of education research and effective regulation of the education system; including decentralisation of secondary schools and the retraining of educators in their specialist subjects. It also included creating a new structure for basic education complying with the World Bank’s philosophy of free basic education for all; modernising administration of provincial education departments; creating new procedures for curriculum design; designing assessment and evaluation levels for students; and improving school management. All these changes can be seen as an adaptation to the demands of the international economic competition; thus, schools are becoming more market driven. These changes are driven by the World Bank which has assumed leadership in international educational development, making them the “main expert” when it comes to educational reform (Gorostiaga, Pini, Donin, & Ginsburg: 120).

3.4.5 Botswana

“Botswana’s Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) of 1994 represents the country’s response to globalisation. It purports to produce the self-programmable learner for an economy undergoing rapid transformation” (Tabulawa, 2009: 87).

There has been an unprecedented attempt to change education to fit the agenda of globalisation in Botswana. The idea of the RNPE is to change the students and teach them skills such as innovativeness, critical thinking, problem-solving, believed necessary by today’s globalised nations. There is a call for a multi-skilled, adaptable, and flexible workforce (Tabulawa, 2009) due to constant technological changes and intense competition in global markets. It is the duty of the education system to produce this workforce engaging in lifelong education (Tabulawa, 2009). When the economy is not doing as well as expected,

it is easier for the government to blame a failing education system than to realise that a gap has been created and more low-level workers are required for labour-intensive work (Tabulawa, 2009).

3.5 Lessons learned through curriculum changes

The policy makers of reforming post-apartheid education failed to look at other countries with similar situations to South Africa post-1994 and chose to borrow from other Western and international policies. A policy was developed claiming that its main concern was efficiency, redress and equity (De Clercq, 1997). The feasibility in an unbalanced social landscape was ignored due to the lack of understanding of what was required in developing an education policy for post-apartheid South Africa where the education landscape was jam-packed with inequalities and deficiencies of resources. There was also a lack of experience in developing fitting policies for the unique situation in South Africa. These post-apartheid “policy reforms [did] not assist in mobilizing and building the capacity of educationalists and disadvantaged communities to challenge and redress the power relations” (De Clercq, 1997: 136), making this a failed symbolic policy. The most important thing about education is that it does not function in isolation; it is influenced by social, political, and economic situations (Mevorach & Ezer, 2010).

Mevorach and Ezer (2010) give reasons why educational change can be experienced as difficult:

- The rationale for change is poorly conceptualised or not clearly demonstrated
- The change is too broad and ambitious, so that teachers have to work on too many fronts
- There is no long-term commitment to the change to carry people through their anxiety, frustration and despair
- Key staff who can contribute to the change are not committed

- Leaders are either too controlling or too ineffectual, or they cash in on the early success of the innovation and move on to other things
- The change is carried out in isolation and gets undermined by other unchanged structure
- Conversely, the change may be poorly coordinated and engulfed by a tidal wave of parallel changes, to the point that teachers are unable to focus their efforts.

There are several lessons that we can learn from past experiences when it comes to policy change and implementation (Christie, 2008):

- Policy implementation **IS** extremely difficult to achieve. It is important for policy developers and implementers to anticipate these difficulties by looking at examples from the past.
- Policy change and implementation depend on teacher ability and motivation. It is important to persuade people to support new policies but it is more difficult than just training them.
- It is important to use both pressure and support. Teachers must be pressured by policy developers and implementers to change their beliefs and core activities, but support is important to build motivation by focusing on what is required to change the beliefs and values of people.
- Change occurs at the lowest level, and teachers need to be convinced that the new policy will be beneficial and more productive than the previous one, helping to relax the resistance to change due to personal and professional beliefs.
- It is important to remember that policy change and implementation must consist of negotiation and bargaining to make the process more acceptable to teachers. The change and implementation must be a process of participation and negotiation.

During Berryhill, Linney, & Fromewick's study, their respondents made some suggestions regarding the development and implementation of policies (2009):

- Intervention for the reduction of stress
- Making changes “*for* teachers rather than *in* teachers”
- Increase interaction between teachers and policy developers
- Professional development of teachers
- Teacher education as well as the education of younger minds cannot be separated from the social, political, and economic happenings of the world.

3.6 Conclusion

The experiences of HoDs during curriculum changes are of great importance and the lessons learned through the process can be invaluable for future reference. It is important that HoDs take note of how they persuade, through motivation, the teachers in their departments to be open to these changes. Development of a professional identity is essential in dealing with the psychological as well as the organisational resistance to change. I would believe that the key to the successful management of change is to know and understand the knowledge constructs involved in good teaching. This allows the HoD to successfully lead his or her teachers towards the effective and efficient implementation of curriculums.

Chapter 4

Research design

4.1 Introduction

The primary aim of research is to answer a question emanating from a specific problem. According to Creswell (2008) “research is a process of steps used to collect and analyse information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue. Research consists of three [fundamental] steps: 1) pose a question, 2) collect data to answer the question, and 3) present the answer to the question” (Creswell, 2008: 3). The question I have posed relates to the responses of HoDs to curriculum changes. To answer this question, I used a narrative design within a qualitative framework by conducting focus group interviews and a semi-structured interview. This allowed me to present the answer through the views of HoDs.

There are three reasons according to Creswell (2008) why we do research. We want to add to our knowledge, improve our practice and research can inform policy debates. With this research I aimed to inform the policy debate with regard to curriculum change and how it affects the middle management of a school.

4.2 Qualitative research

To fully understand what makes qualitative research suitable to this research it must be compared to quantitative research. The quantitative researcher directs the research by setting narrow questions for the participants and relies heavily on statistics to give him or her results. In contrast, the qualitative researcher is subjected to the views of the participants to guide the research study and makes use of inductive practices to reach conclusions about the set question (Creswell, 2008). If one wants to understand how HoDs responded to curriculum changes, qualitative research will be ideal as the methodology lends itself to allow interpretations of the participants’ views and not simply reducing their views to numbers and percentages. Qualitative research aims to understand and interpret the narratives of the participants by giving them a voice which otherwise would not be heard. It creates an

opportunity not only to look at the data and reach a conclusion, but also to understand why the data exists and how it will influence the way forward. By using the evidence from data and literature, the aim is to explain what the understanding and the interpretation of a certain phenomenon is (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010).

In this research my aim was to understand how HoDs reacted to curriculum changes and why they acted in that manner. To better understand the *why*, I conducted focus group interviews with HoDs from the Lady Frere district in the Eastern Cape to examine how they interpret changes in the curriculum and how it affects their reality.

4.2.1 Characteristics of qualitative research

If we look at the historical development of qualitative research, we find that there was a continuous effort to understand, clarify, and identify the underlying nature of people's actions and their interactions with their environment. The historical development of qualitative research has moulded it into what we recognise today as qualitative research:

- Listening to the views of participants
- Asking open, general questions while collecting data in a natural environment
- Campaigning for change (Creswell, 2008)

Creswell (2008) identified six main characteristics of qualitative research:

1. Identifying the research problem: when conducting qualitative research, the variables are unknown and it is the researcher's job to explore the phenomenon to identify the variables. By reading literature you might get an idea of what the nature of the phenomenon is, but only after interaction with the participants, will you better your understanding and create knowledge, or add to the knowledge of that specific phenomenon.
2. Reviewing the literature: the literature reviewed prior to the study is not the only factor that guides the direction of the study, but it does assist with identifying the research problem and justifying the need for the study of the particular phenomenon.

The interview questions are also not born out of the literature only, as is the case with quantitative research. The participants' views are the bulk of the study and play a major role in the direction and the outcome of the study.

3. Specifying a purpose: the purpose of a qualitative study is broad and general. This study seeks to understand how HoDs experienced and managed curriculum changes. The theoretical frameworks guide the purpose more specifically: seeking to understand how HoDs' experiences of curriculum changes are linked to the characteristics of change, and how they are managing resistance to change. In qualitative research the researcher is always seeking to understand the experiences of his or her participants.
4. Collecting data: when it comes to the collecting of qualitative data, the researcher makes use of several methods. These methods can be data in the form of words or images. The collection also takes place in small quantities, by interviewing only a small number of people. Assumptions are deduced from transcribed data. The collection process continues until the data is saturated, and then only will the researcher stop collecting data.
5. Analysing and interpreting data: raw data was transcribed into text. The researcher divided the text into meaningful segments that form parts of the phenomenon. These segments or categories were interpreted and linked to existing research. What makes qualitative research even more unique and suitable for my research, is that the researcher is able to associate personal reflections with the lessons learned during the data collection. Data is not converted into numbers which are crunched to prove or refute a hypothesis, but rather compiled into a meaningful depiction of the phenomenon underpinned by other research studies exploring the same or similar phenomenon.
6. Reporting and evaluating research: due to the nature of qualitative research, the reporting also tends to be subjective with a flexible format as to how the reporting takes place. The aim of the report must be to have sufficient data to convince the reader that it is a true and realistic account of the phenomenon.

4.2.2 Qualitative research designs

The nature of qualitative research lends itself to a multitude of designs, standing on their own or combined with quantitative designs. When doing qualitative research you make use of the three characteristics of research: collecting data, analysing and interpreting data, and reporting and evaluating. For the purpose of this study I will only make use of a qualitative design approach. There are, among others, three designs that can be used for a qualitative approach: grounded theory, ethnographic, and narrative.

Grounded theory design

Grounded theory is a design that aims to explain the phenomenon it seeks to study. It is mostly used when there is no other theory that can be associated with the phenomenon. The research therefore creates a theory to explain the phenomenon. This process is linked with repetitive data collection and analysis. (Creswell, 2008)

Ethnographic design

Ethnography is used when a researcher wants to describe the cultural relationships of a certain group. This type of research is mostly associated with prolonged fieldwork where the researcher submerges him- or herself in the cultural community. (Creswell, 2008)

Narrative design

For the purpose of this study I used a narrative design. Before I can say why I employed this design, it is important first to communicate what narrative design is and how it fits in with qualitative research. The most important and distinctive part of narrative design is that it describes the experiences of participants about real life situations. This research utilises stories or narratives from an individual's life to explain a certain phenomenon. I was looking for "personal experiences in [an] actual school setting [and] narrative research offer[s] practical, specific insights" (Creswell, 2008: 512). This method "assumes that people construct their realities through narrating their stories" (Marshall, 2011). I thus collected and analysed the HoDs' stories about how they experienced and managed curriculum changes.

The use of certain methods (the exposure to newspaper articles - see par. 4.3.5) creates a unique environment for reliving the experience, making data collection much more authentic. The uniqueness of a narrative framework permits the handing down to future generations of the lessons learnt during a specific period and the answering of social questions about certain life experiences. The focus of this research was on how HoDs managed these curriculum changes, that is the actions they took and what their experiences were. A narrative framework “highlights the uniqueness of each human action [or event (such as curriculum changes)], organising these events into a meaningful whole, and connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time” (Chase, 2005). A narrative framework will give a voice to those who have none.

4.2.3 Ensuring trustworthiness and credibility

As described in chapter one (par. 1.9), qualitative research sets out to crystallise the data collected rather than to triangulate it with other sources to show the credibility and trustworthiness thereof. However, I made use of focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews and document collection to make my data more believable and trustworthy. It is argued by Polkinghorne (cited in Webster & Mertova, 2007) that the validity of a narrative is linked to the importance of the analysis and the reliability and trustworthiness of the data collected and not the amount collected.

The scope of my research ended up being smaller than I expected due to the scarcity of participants (par. 4.3.1), however, it still gave me enough data to make a meaningful conclusion regarding the phenomenon I sought to investigate. To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of my research, I ensured that my findings were well-grounded in the literature and supported by the data that I did collect (Webster & Mertova, 2007). During qualitative research, and more specifically narrative inquiry, humans are used as instruments and the data collected are reports of experiences. To achieve consistency (linked to the reliability of the data) with reports of experiences can become quite tedious as the account of an event will depend on the external factors at the time the account was recorded; making reliability rather difficult to achieve. This is why it is important for a researcher to ensure that there is access to the data collected and that it is accurate (Webster & Mertova, 2007) according to the audience.

Nonetheless, I did try to achieve as much crystallisation as possible, by creating three different opportunities to collect data: focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Within these three types of data it was evident that there was some coherence regarding the themes that were visible throughout.

4.3 Methodology

When conducting qualitative research there is a variety of methods one can use to collect data. However, the sample chosen is just as important as the method chosen to collect data. I chose to do a narrative inquiry into how HoDs manage and experience curriculum changes, and I chose to do it through conducting focus group interviews, a semi-structured interview and analysis of the documents collected. This method would not only ensure that I got a bigger picture of the management but would also ensure that my data collected and the findings presented were trustworthy and credible.

4.3.1 Sampling

With a qualitative study, the researcher is always trying to “develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon... [by] purposefully or intentionally select[ing] individuals and sites... that can best help [him or her] understand the central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2008: 213). I selected individuals who comply with the criteria for a suitable participant: HoDs of schools in the Lady Frere district of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. This allowed me to learn about and understand the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2008). Due to the nature of the Eastern Cape’s employment situation, not all schools had HoDs, but made use of phase or subject heads in their schools. I refer to these phase or subject heads as HoDs, as they are heads of their specific phases or subjects.

There are several ways to choose individuals that can provide information on the phenomenon being studied, but it is important to choose the correct technique to identify these individuals. Due to the nature of my data collection, I made use of a number of sampling techniques in an effort to choose the best individuals for the research. For the focus group interviews, I used a homogeneous sampling technique. This technique allowed me to sample “individuals... based on membership in a subgroup that has defining characteristics” (Creswell, 2008: 216). The subgroup I focused on was the HoDs who are heads of academic

departments in their schools. Each subgroup belongs to a community; in this case, the community I focused on was the schools of the Lady Frere district of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. I conveniently selected schools on the basis that there were HoDs within these schools and they were situated close to me. The head of that department was selected as an individual being studied from that specific school, and not as part of the school as an organisation.

The sample size has significant influence on the findings of a study. During a qualitative study a researcher aims to “provide an in-depth picture [of the phenomenon which] diminishes with the addition of each new individual” (Creswell, 2008: 217). Each school had three HoDs participating. There were two focus groups where I collected audio data. Two other focus group sessions were planned, but due to constant rescheduling and participants not showing up, they were cancelled.

The second stage of data collection, the semi-structured interview, made it possible to utilise opportunistic sampling where the sample becomes known during the investigation. This allowed me to “take advantage of unfolding events [during the focus group interviews] that will help answer the research question” satisfactorily (Creswell, 2008: 216). When I collected biographical details of the participants with the help of the consent form, they had the opportunity to indicate if they would be available for further interviews. There were several potential candidates, but when contacted for further interviews, they declined due to unforeseen circumstances. By complying with ethical considerations, I could not force any person to participate in my research. Nonetheless, my willing candidate was able to give me great insight into the identified themes of the focus group interviews.

The sample for the document collection and analysis stage consisted of the same sample used for the semi-structured interview.

By making use of these sampling techniques, depth was added to my study, which allowed me to understand how these HoDs responded and managed the changes in the curriculum.

4.3.2 HoDs as data instruments

Human beings are good sources of information, especially when it comes to our experiences of certain events. We have the ability to express our own views and feelings about certain

things in many different ways, including the social media. The media has perfected the way to obtain information from us about our daily lives and our opinions without us even realising it. When this mass expression of attitudes and beliefs develops a trend, it unites our common views about a particular event (Henning, et al., 2010).

When interviewing people about a specific event we start to notice commonalities and identify certain patterns and trends applicable to certain situations. The idea of using human participants (HoDs of schools) is “to bring our attention to what [these] individuals think, feel

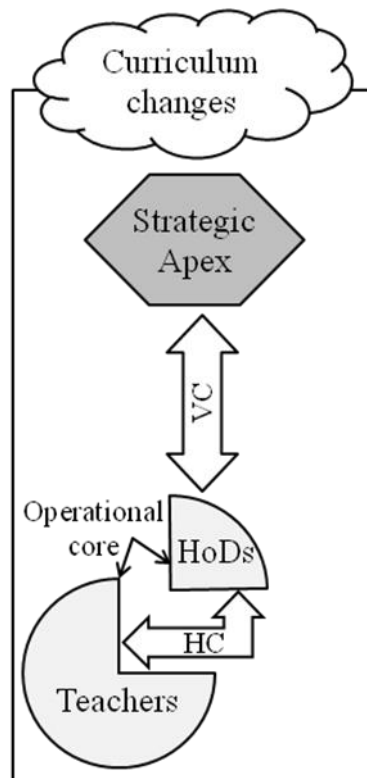


Figure 4.1: Communication during curriculum changes

and do and what they have to say about it in an interview [by] giving [me] their subjective reality” (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010: 52). The focus on HoDs, also known as Middle Management (MM), is due to their peculiar situation. A school functions mainly as a bureaucratic organization due to the nature of dividing responsibility (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008) where there are two or more important role players: the strategic apex (principal and the senior management team) and the operational core (the teachers). Figure 4.1 above illustrates how the communication between HoDs, the strategic apex, and the operational core takes place within the area of curriculum changes. Communication takes place vertically (VC) between the strategic apex and the HoDs, as well as horizontally (HC) between the HoD (who assumes the role of a manager and a teacher) and the other teachers within the

department. HoDs themselves are still teachers in that specific subject, making them part of the operational core, but they have to report to the strategic apex and relay their policy decisions to the operational core (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

4.3.3 Introduction to sample

I made use of two schools within the Lady Frere district of the Eastern Cape. Both these schools are situated in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape with very little access to the services enjoyed by schools closer to the cities.

School 1 is a primary school consisting of approximately 500 learners from grade 1 to grade 7. The participants from this school teach only primary school children of varying grades. The interview took place during school hours, as this was the only agreeable time for them. The time of the interview caused interference with regard to focusing on the interview itself, causing a stressed and hurried environment with short answers and not much elaboration on detail.

School 2 is a combined primary and high school consisting of approximately 700 learners. The participants teach various grades from the foundation phase to the FET phase. The interview took place after hours, as this was the only agreeable time for them. This resulted in a more relaxed environment and more elaborate responses to questions.

4.3.4 Data collection

The aim of the research was to answer a question arising from a problem as stated in par. 4.2. By collecting and analysing data you try to find a pattern in the conversations to find out the reason why a phenomenon exists. “In [a] qualitative study... we want to find out what actions of the people in the setting are, what they think and maybe also what they feel” (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010: 6). The researcher is the main instrument during data collection making the data collection and processing very subjective in nature because a qualitative researcher allows for connecting his or her personal experiences to the research.

There are several methods of collecting data for a qualitative study (Creswell, 2008):

1. Observation: it is a first-hand experience where the researcher spends time in the field observing the participants by taking field notes and using pictures/drawings
2. Interviews and questionnaires: the researcher engages with one or more of the participants by asking them a set of predetermined open-ended questions while recording their answers. (Creswell, 2008)
3. Documents: documents can be a very useful tool for the researcher, especially to verify data collected during observations or interviews. These documents can include newspapers, minutes, personal journals, letters, etc. (Creswell, 2008)
4. Audio-visual materials: these are images or sound that the researcher collects to enhance his or her understanding about a certain phenomenon. (Creswell, 2008)

For the purpose of this study I made use of interviews to collect the raw data and documents to assist with the crystallisation of data.

4.3.5 Interviews

Interviews are commonly used in creating field texts for narrative research. “The way the interviewer acts, questions, and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experience” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000: 110). The place and the time also have an effect on the direction of the interview. Current events, such as the state of the education system, add context to the narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), possibly influencing how the HoDs responded to the interviews. I chose to make use of the following interview types:

4.3.5.1 Focus group interviews

This type of interview method has the potential to give me rich data where the participants build on one another’s ideas. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to determine the responses of the HoDs to curriculum changes since 2005. This data gathering technique allows for the refreshing of memories of when changes happened, providing me with rich

data responses (Cohen, Lawrence, & Morrison, 2005). The experiences HoDs had when change occurred and more so how these experiences informed their reaction towards the management and motivation of themselves and their staff was of great interest to me.

These focus group interviews allowed me to develop an understanding of HoDs' responses to the curriculum changes since 2005 and to identify specific key ideas, which would be transferred to the semi-structured interviews for further probing and exploration (Vaughn, Schumann, & Sinagub, 1996). There were two groups of three HoDs each from selected schools within the Lady Frere and Queenstown districts of the Eastern Cape Department of Education.

I believe that the media has a very prominent influence by adding context to our interpretation of our surroundings. Therefore, during the focus group interviews, I exposed the participants to several newspaper clippings about changes in the curriculum. During the interviews I asked the participants to express their feelings, their emotions, and why they felt like that.

I compiled these newspaper headings (see appendix 2) into a presentation which was displayed to participants during the focus group interview. With each heading I asked the participants what their interpretation of the heading was. Some participants (especially School 2) had many things to say about those specific headings. However, there were participants that were not willing to participate. It may have been due to their unfamiliarity with me and mistrust of my intentions. To overcome that, I asked them directly for some kind of response, unfortunately not always very successfully. The participants had control over the interview at school 1. Nonetheless, those that had much to say were even more stimulated by the lack of response from the others, and added more insight to their interpretations of the newspaper headings. It was definitely a case of the interview being shaped by the participants' interest or lack thereof (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

4.3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

From the focus group interview, I selected a willing participant for my second stage of data collection: the semi-structured interview (see appendix 3 for list of questions). The semi-structured interview allowed me to engage more with a participant who had a rich experience

with curriculum changes and the management thereof (Maree, 2007). I chose this candidate because of her experience with curriculum changes and her *obvious* attitude towards handling changes: she displayed knowledge of changes and displayed the willingness to change even though she had to do so many times. It was slightly problematic having only one participant for this leg of my data collection. The unfortunate story is that none of School 1's participants was willing to further participate in the research. Their reasons were 1) that they felt they could not contribute more to the study as they did not know enough; 2) or that their contribution was not valuable; 3) or excessive workload; 4) or some provided false contact information. This might seem problematic for the trustworthiness and credibility of the research, but it is the accuracy and the accessibility of the data which contribute towards ensuring the trustworthiness and the credibility of the research (par. 4.3.2).

It was, unfortunately, very problematic to find more than one willing participant to take part in the semi-structured interview. The unwilling participants made excuses such as “not knowing enough.” I attempted to explain to the possible participants that I wanted their experiences and there is no right or wrong. However, this did not convince them to participate.

4.3.6 Documents

The final stage of data collection was the gathering of HoD documents in an effort to verify what my participants had said during the interview phases and so improve the crystallisation of the data. I was expecting to receive schedules, minutes of meetings, notices, or letters sent out to teachers, parents, or students. Instead I received moderation tools and feedback letters to teachers. The documents I received included the following (no particular order):

- Document 1: IQMS Implementation Quarterly Report (20 August 2011)
- Document 2: Feedback to a teacher (2 August 2011)
- Document 3: Feedback to a teacher (no date)
- Document 4: Feedback to a teacher (22 June 2011)
- Document 5: Moderation Tool (15 March)

- Document 6: School Moderation Tool (20 March 2012)

These documents and the lack of expected documents can say much about what is not seen here. Document collection can become a selective process where the researcher decides which documents to collect and how they are collected (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I chose to request from the participant any documents she had that would contribute to the crystallisation of her responses. This allowed the HoD to be selective in her own process and only provide me with certain documents she deemed fit. However, it was evident that very little or no recording of proceedings of meetings had been done or that no meetings between the HoD and the teachers ever took place. Still, these documents were relevant to the crystallisation process of the data collection, as they confirmed what the participant said she did with the teachers in her department.

4.3.7 Data processing and analysis

In a qualitative design, the analysis of data consists of describing the information gathered and developing themes within the data (Creswell, 2008). By making use of a narrative design, I wanted “to analyse the [data gathered during the focus group interviews and the semi-structured interviews] by identifying themes or categories of information” (Creswell, 2008). For the data collection I used three ways of data collection to ensure clarity of the data. Not only is it important to use more than one data collection method, but the researcher also needs to employ more than one data analysis strategy. By using different methods to approach the data, you are looking at it from different viewpoints ensuring that you understand the true meaning behind the data (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010).

4.3.7.1 Preparation for data analysis

Before the analysis began, I transcribed the audio data collected. The first step was to work through it manually to identify similar utterances made by both focus groups. All of these utterances were divided into colour-coded meaningful categories. The method of *open* coding enabled me to get a global picture of the stories being told by the participants. Due to the inductive nature of *open* coding, themes were selected according to what the data meant to me as researcher (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010). “The identification of themes provides the complexity of a story and adds depth to the insight about understanding

individual experiences” (Creswell, 2008: 521). When I turned my focus to the semi-structured interviews I made use of *priori* coding; I sorted my data into pre-set categories identified during the analysis of the focus group interviews.

4.3.7.2 Analysing qualitative data

The data analysis was a three step process where each set of data was analysed according to its content and discourse as demonstrated by figure 4.2. It is important to use more than one data analysis technique to ensure that there is more clarity in the interpretation of the data.

Content analysis

It is a systematic approach aimed at identifying patterns in the message content (Maree, 2007), e.g. words and concepts used by the HoDs to describe a certain process within the text and interpreting them. These words or utterances can have a multitude of meanings which has to be found within the text. Content analysis allows for a simplistic analysis of data even though these utterances from the participants are seldom simplistic and require more complex analysis procedures to illustrate the rationalisation of the reality of the participant (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010).

Discourse analysis

The discourse analysis helped me to find deeper meaning in what the participants were actually trying to communicate. When you make use of this kind of analysis, you are looking for the symbolic use of language and clues that indicate how participants interpret their reality, allowing you to see a “broader social and historical context and the conventions within which the text has been created and the way in which it has been created” (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010: 46). By identifying discourse markers and looking for re-occurrences of the same marker you can see when a dominant discourse occurs (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010). It makes use of language as its platform for analysis, in order to “move to understanding social action and the human condition” (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2010: 122).

4.3.7.3 Data interpretation

Interpretation of your data means taking a step back and forming a subjective opinion about the phenomenon. This study made use of two theoretical frameworks to inform and assist the analyses of the data.

Theoretical framework 1: the effects of implementation characteristics of change of on HoD

As described in par. 2.4, implementation is a very dynamic process with many things influencing its outcome. There are nine factors that can have an effect on the success of curriculum changes if not handled correctly. I described them briefly in paragraph 2.4.3. They are: need, clarity, complexity, quality, practicality, the district, the community, the principal, the teacher and the government and other agencies. During the analysis of my data, it became very evident that these nine characteristics play a significant role during the implementation process. The lack of clarity was quite apparent, especially where false clarity existed. Another subject was the importance of quality to the HoDs. For them it was more important that quality education must be produced rather than concerning themselves about the changes. Paragraph 5.5.1 discusses the analysis of the data with regard to the characteristics of change and the effects it has on HoDs and their management.

Theoretical framework 2: the management of changes

Not only is it important to identify the factors that are affecting the outcome of a curriculum change, but also to look at how these changes were managed. For me it was important to identify how the HoDs managed these curriculum changes concerning motivation of self, and of teachers, and the assistance to teachers. I made use of a model for managing the change process systematically (Van der Merwe, 2005). Van der Merwe (2005) talks about five essential steps to ensure the successful management of the change process. These steps entail 1) diagnosis of the problem, 2) development of alternatives and selection of the best intervention, 3) limiting the conditions of change, 4) implementation, and 5) evaluation of change (Van der Merwe 2005). These steps allowed me to identify how HoDs managed the changes in the curriculum. However, for change to be successful, the resistance to change has to be dealt with as well. As pointed out in par. 3.3, resistance can be due to not understanding why change takes place. Van der Merwe (2005) also talks about lack of skills and motivation

as well as the loss of familiarity and reliability and the preference for tradition rather than experience.

These theoretical frameworks assisted me in making sense of the themes that were identified during the focus group interviews. These themes are:

- Quality of education
- Confusion
- Traditional ways of teaching (pre-1994)

These will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5, paragraphs 5.3.1, 5.3.2, and 5.3.3.

4.4 The role of the researcher

The role of the researcher is very important, contrary to quantitative research which makes use of surveys as data collection instruments, the researcher him- or herself is the data collection instrument in qualitative studies. Not only do we collect human experiences informed by their own realities, but the researcher also analyses this data while being influenced by his or her experiences of the phenomenon. Grumet (cited in Webster & Mertova, 2007) describes the researcher as a detective: it is the responsibility of the researcher not only to describe what he or she has read and seen, but also to observe during the course of the data collection process. It is the researcher's own stories, attitudes, choices, and values that become visible in the presentation of the findings (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Before I could even think of starting to collect data, I had to broaden my understanding of the phenomenon I had chosen through conducting a literature study. Armed with a better understanding of why the phenomenon exists, it was possible for me to go into the field to collect data on it. By applying my knowledge of the phenomenon, I deduced major themes from the data that I represented as my findings (see Chapter 5). The data presents certain themes, but it was my understanding of those themes that informed the analysis thereof. The

subjective nature of qualitative studies allowed me to reconstruct the stories of my experiences to support my understanding of the phenomenon with the data collected.

4.5 Ethical considerations

We do not do research in a vacuum. We make use of humans with emotions and rights during the process. Thus it is very important to ensure that the correct steps are taken to ensure that the participants' rights are protected and that no emotional or physical harm is incurred during the research process. The following issues should be discussed when doing research (Webster & Mertova, 2007)

- Informed consent
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Honesty and trust

My research into HoDs' experiences and management of change did not involve the collection of sensitive data, and they were not in danger of developing psychological damage. However, it was my responsibility to ensure that all my participants were aware of their rights during the procedures and that it was voluntary. To ensure this, I gave each of them an information letter stating what the research was about and what their rights were during the process. Before any recordings started, I explained to the participants that this was voluntary and that they could stop proceedings at any time. For the semi-structured interview, the participants of the focus group from one school all refused to participate, which unfortunately impeded my data, but not to the extent that I could not analyse it at all. To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, I broadly described the schools as situated in the Lady Frere District of the Eastern Cape and assigned those codes: School 1 (S1) and School 2 (2). Every teacher had a code: T1, T2 etc. Thus a teacher from school 1 would be referenced as S1T2. For the semi-structured interview I assigned a pseudonym to the participant: Anna. This protected their anonymity. The documents I collected were not fully redacted; I removed all references to teachers' names and schools. I ensured honesty and trust through the use of digital recordings of the all the interviews.

These steps ensured that there would be no information about the participants as their anonymity was protected and the data I collected was accurate.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the central importance of using a narrative design within a qualitative framework to give a voice to those who have none. The purpose was to demonstrate the importance of HoDs as data instruments to get an understanding of their experiences of curriculum changes. The use of focus groups and a semi-structured interview allowed for crystallisation of data collected. The following chapter will deal in greater detail with the data that was collected and my interpretation thereof. By utilising a narrative design, it gave me the opportunity to give a voice to those who have none.

Chapter 5

Data presentation and interpretation

5.1 Introduction

When one analyses data it is to make sense of what was collected during the data collection phase. By approaching the data through an interpretivist paradigm, it enabled me to explore how HoDs' actions were informed by their experiences. It allowed me to identify three categories from the focus group interviews:

- Confusion about changes
- Traditional methods of teaching
- Quality of education

These categories informed my semi-structured interview where I directly approached the HoD about her experiences and her management of curriculum changes. Moving into the interpretation of the analysis, I aimed to answer my research question on how HoDs had responded to and managed curriculum change since 2005, by dividing the section into two parts:

- Responses of HoDs
- Management of HoDs

All research is limited in one way or another, but this creates an opportunity for other researchers to explore the new gaps created.

5.2 Approaching the data

An aim of qualitative research is to understand why your participants react to a certain phenomenon in a certain manner. By exploring the experiences of HoDs during curriculum changes, one can interpret the reality within which they function. People construct their knowledge, their truths, about the world through the experiences they have of specific phenomena. Through the interpretation of those knowledge constructs, one can see the creation of reality within those experiences. By making use of an interpretivist paradigm, I was able to analyse the data to “understand social reality as [HoDs] see it and to demonstrate how views shape the action they take within reality” (Cohen, Lawrence, & Morrison, 2005: 22).

I conducted two focus group interviews, each consisting of three HoDs. SCHOOL 1 is a primary school only whereas SCHOOL 2 is a primary and high school. Both are situated in the Lady Frere District of the Eastern Cape. Some of the HoDs were in charge of one or more subject and also had other duties at the school. One participant from SCHOOL 2 was selected for the semi-structured interview.

After all data had been collected and transcribed, I made use of *open coding* (see paragraph 4.7.1) that allowed me to identify certain themes that emerged. The first step in the analysis was to look at the content of the transcriptions of the focus groups. Several themes were identified, but after working through the data systematically it became clear that all these themes can in fact be divided into three categories: confusion about changes (paragraph 5.3.1), traditional methods of teaching (paragraph 5.3.2), and quality in education (paragraph 5.3.3). Armed with those categories, I turned my focus to the discourse of the focus groups, to find the deeper meaning of what the participants were trying to communicate.

These three categories informed my semi-structured interview and allowed me to discuss them during the interview which confirmed what was speculated during the focus group interviews. The document analysis demonstrated how the HoDs went about managing the department.

5.3 Analysis of data from focus groups

In paragraph 4.7.1 I mentioned that my plan was to make use of open coding and how useful it is for a novice researcher to transcribe the data. Doing it by hand gave me an even closer look at the data. The process was a fairly simple one, and throughout I could see there were three conspicuous and persistent themes: confusion about changes, quality in education, and the traditional way of teaching. I would like to describe the process that I followed.

The data was transcribed by my listening to the audio tapes and writing down the words using a word processing program. I took one interview at a time and read through it again to ensure that nothing was left out. After reading it while listening to the audio again, I started to notice certain patterns within the data. I made a list of certain words or phrases that I deemed important (see Appendix 3). By listening and reading again, I identified words that were constantly repeated. After doing this process with both interviews, I identified words or phrases that I dubbed the “Big Six” (see Appendix 3). Going back to the transcriptions, I highlighted the big six in colour. See table 5.1 below for the main themes and subthemes that influenced them. This served as the beginning of my framework. I then scrutinised those words again, seeing if some of them might not have a similar meaning that could be represented by a single word or expression. After both interviews had been done, I started to put the words together to see if I could not find an even bigger picture among them. From that I identified three themes: confusion about changes, traditional methods of teaching and quality in education.

Theme	Subtheme (Big six)
Confusion about changes (par. 5.3.1)	Confusion (green)
Traditional methods of teaching (par. 5.3.2)	No difference (blue) Something new (pink)
Quality in Education (par. 5.3.3)	Acceptance (dark blue) Final curriculum (red) Priority (yellow)

Table 5.1: Themes with subthemes

5.3.1 Confusion about changes

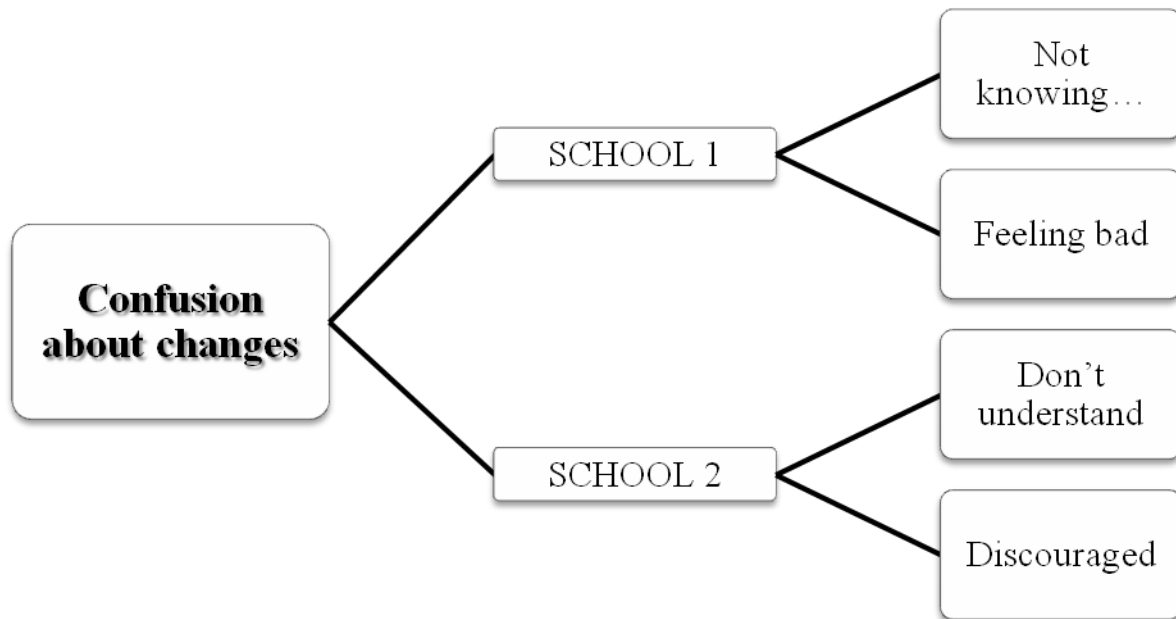


Figure 5.4: Confusion about changes

When one studies the make-up of the category confusion about change (figure 5.1) one can see it incorporates negative feelings of discouragement. It also holds an element of not understanding or not knowing. Fullan (2007) says that when change is experienced there must be focus on the clarity of the need for change otherwise you can encounter confusion and even resistance.

Confusion can be the cause of many factors and is seen as a lasting problem in the change process. One of the factors is not knowing what to do or not understanding what to do. This is evident from the focus group interviews in both schools¹.

In SCHOOL 1 there was much confusion especially when the word *curriculum* was mentioned²:

S1T2 (3-4): *We try to understand this. They come with this new curriculum that confuses us really. Don't know what to say or do to the learners. Although they have workshop you, but some of the changes really affects us.*

¹ Schools are referred to as SCHOOL 1 and SCHOOL 2 to protect anonymity. The HoDs in a specific school will be referred to as S1T2 (3): meaning that HoD is TEACHER 2 from SCHOOL 1, line 3 in the transcription.

² Transcriptions were done verbatim.

Assessment was another confusing concept:

S1T3 (33-34): *You know, teachers' anger is not over assessment. You know. In the entire curriculum there is an assessment, but you find out it is always some new concepts, there are new concepts that will be confusing.*

However, it was difficult for one HoD to see a change in her students' marks when a curriculum changes. Participant S1T2 feels that it might be because they do not understand what is expected of them:

S1T2 (60-61): *It has failed. If you look back, the children used to pass with flying colours, but now they don't want to learn. I don't know whether it is this change or not, I don't know, but now, the learners don't. They are not competent anymore.*

In SCHOOL 2 there was also confusion about the changes but not as much as in SCHOOL 1. Their focus was on not understanding what to do, rather than not knowing what to do. The thing that confused them a great deal was the *paperwork* that was expected from them during the curriculum changes:

S2T3 (25): *Dit was deurmekaar [It was confusing]. When they started with the new curriculum 2005, we were very confused. There is progress from then....*

S2T2 (26 and 29): *It's the paperwork that was confusing, not the teaching part.... It was confusing.*

However, S2T3 admits that when the "new curriculum" started [I am assuming it is C2005], she did not understand any of that:

S2T3 (27): *Nee nee nee ek praat van die kurrikulum. Ons het niks van daai goed verstaan nie toe dit begin het nie. [No, no, no, I am talking about the curriculum. We did not understand any of those things when they started]*

In both schools there were feelings of discouragement due to not being able to make sense of what was expected of them:

S1T3 (45-46): *You feel bad about this. Sometimes you feel bad. As if there is nothing that you know.*

S2T1 (62): *It is confusing, it is discouraging.*

Occasionally the HoDs can make a simplistic interpretation of the changes that they need to apply which can manifest as *false clarity*. According to Fullan teachers may dismiss certain guidelines on the grounds that they are already doing that (2005). This is also evident in SCHOOL 2 where they talked about the changes in the curriculum not affecting them:

S2T2 (48-49): *We are still doing it since the beginning in a book, because it is much easier for a small child to handle a book than to put things in files, it is difficult. We are still working that all the time. So actually nothing has changed.*

This may cause the dismissing of new teaching strategies and beliefs and prevent effective implementation (Fullan, 2005).

5.3.2 Traditional methods of teaching

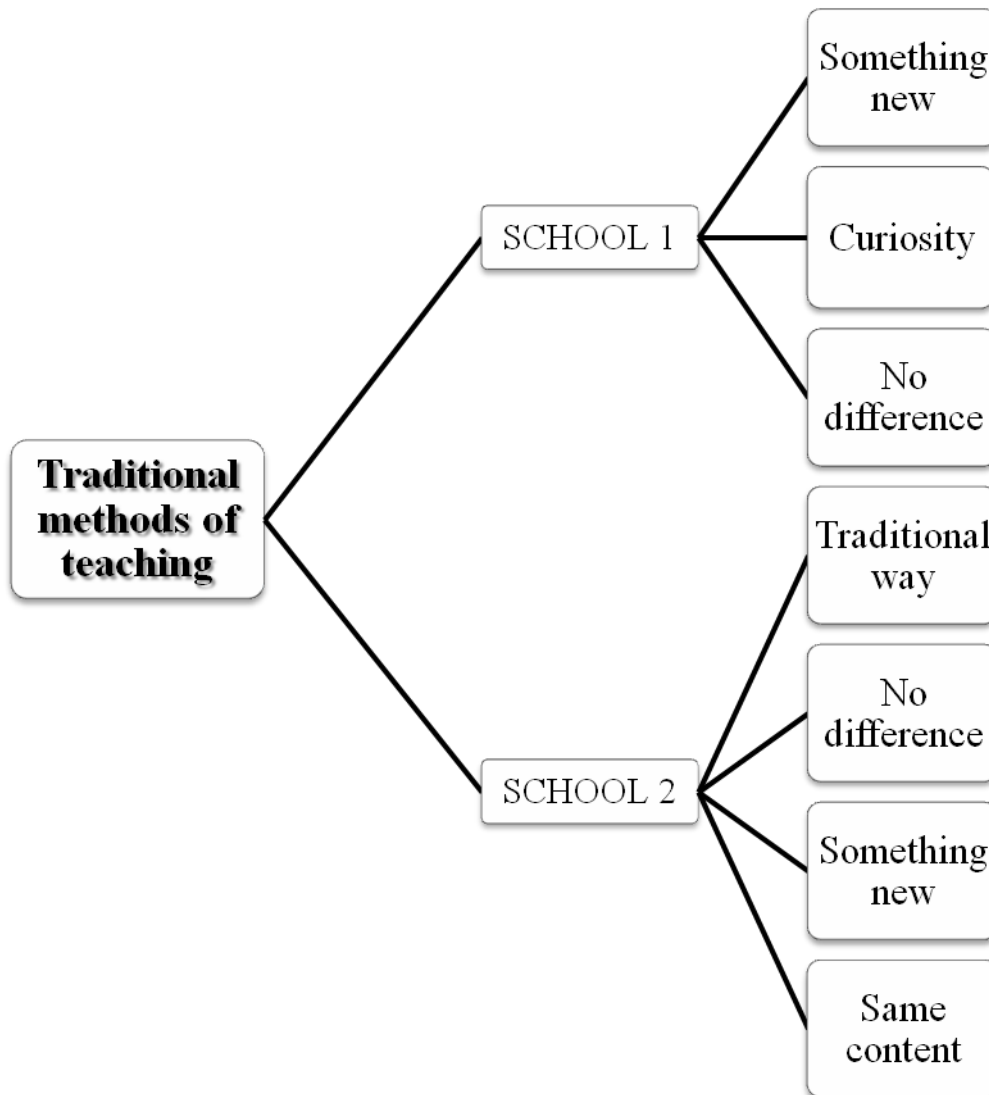


Figure 5.5: Traditional methods of teaching

To gain clarity regarding the implementation of certain curriculum changes, one has to consider the psychological reasons for resistance to change. However, when we talk about organisational reasons for resistance to change we start looking at a “preference for tradition rather than experience” (Van der Merwe, 2005: 42). It is clearly evident in the data that most of these HoDs have a preference for *the traditional way of doing things*:

S1T2 (35): *We use assessment in the traditional method of teaching*

S2T2 (21): *Take the good out and go on with the old that we still had for many years and put them together.*

S2T2 (63): *I think we are moving back to where we were in 1994*

On the other hand, both schools displayed a keen interest in curriculum changes as they stimulated their curiosity. Even with the constant changes to the curriculum the curiosity displayed by them is evidence of lifelong learning among these HoDs:

S1T3 (29): *We are just curious about it, something new.*

One HoD misinterpreted *All set for the new curriculum* (Pretoria News, 2005) by insinuating that something new is on the way:

S1T1 (26): *Maybe there is something new they are coming with now.*

Her interpretation is very interesting as it is viewed as “just another change” and that the government never seems satisfied with their choices. A HoD from SCHOOL 2 made the following remark:

S2T2 (46): *If you compare it to the new curriculum that is going to be implemented. I just hope it is better planned.*

5.3.3 Quality in education

The demands of globalisation on education may not always lead to higher quality in education (par. 1.3). Whilst interviewing the participants, quality seemed to be a major concern of both groups.

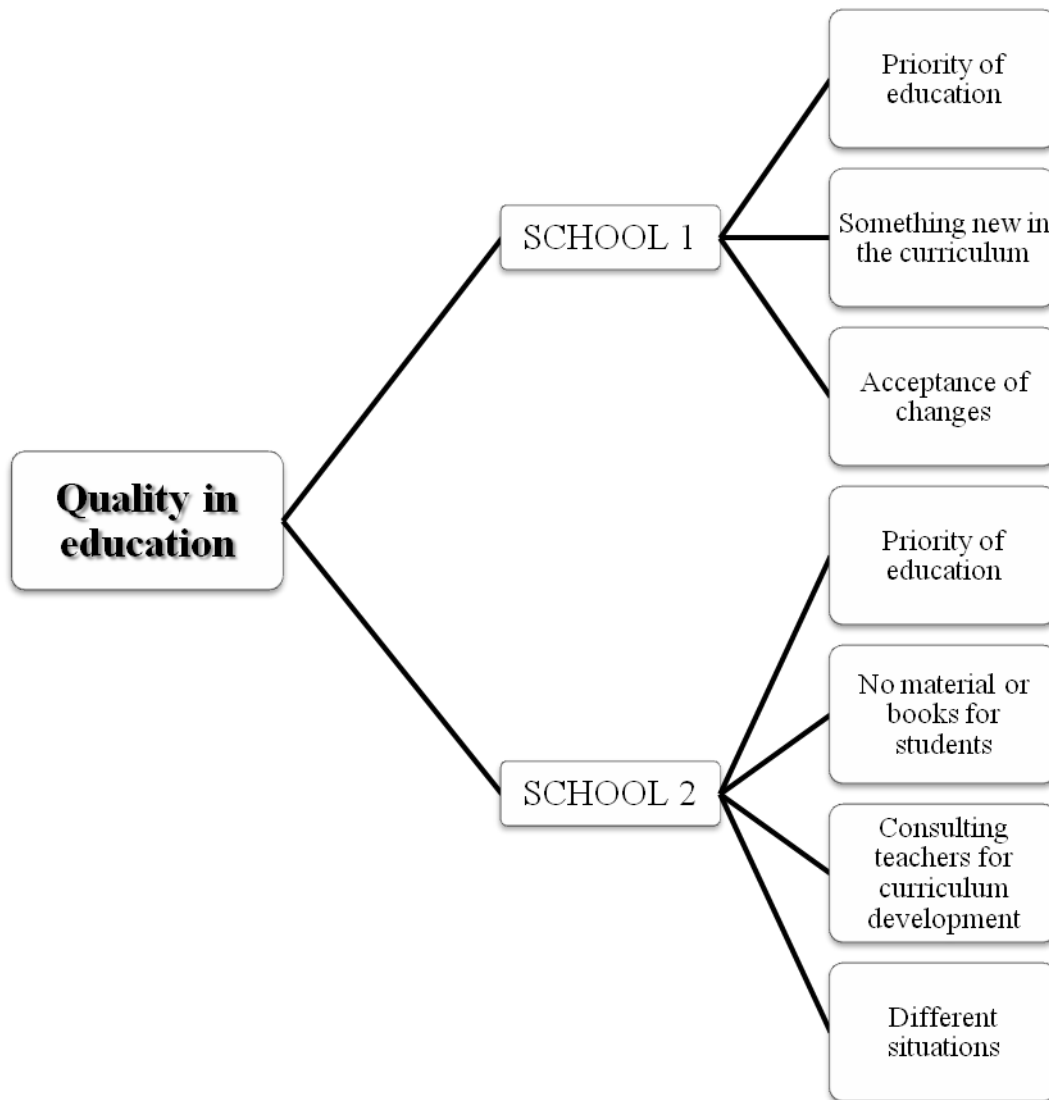


Figure 5.6: Quality in education

With the introduction of *Quality still remains a top priority* (The Mail and Guardian, 2005) there was an immediate response of how important the quality of education must be:

S1T1 (2): *Of course it still needs top priority*

S1T1 (7): *Yes, it is true that quality education still remains a top priority.*

S2T1 (2): *The aim should be in the quality.*

The elation did not last long. Both schools started questioning why the government changed the curriculum so often if their focus was on the quality from the start:

S1T3: *They always say it is a quality education, but why they change it if it is a quality education.*

SCHOOL 2 added that the government was not very successful with upholding the quality in education:

S2T2 (9): *I don't think it is successful in our country.*

The unavailability of materials contributes greatly to poor quality. SCHOOL 2 displayed great concern for the lack of materials that can affect their quality:

S2T3 (54): *The workbooks are excellent. There are a lot of very good things, but we didn't get it.*

Another issue that surfaced in SCHOOL 2 was the different situation experienced. The difference in provincial government is also of great concern for them as it affects the quality of their education.

S2T2 (36): *I don't think they have empathy with the poor children.*

S2T3 (59): *Other provinces are so much better.*

The difference between schools in the same district also becomes a quality issue when a student was transferred between them. Then it became clear that not all schools attached the same value to the quality of education:

S2T2 (123-128): *At the end of the day we end up with this whole thing. If you look at the end of the year, some years, somewhere, do you remember, the time we had to moderate each other's books, boeke omgeruil by die klasse [switch books of classrooms and this was with moderation and then you take a look at my book.] Dis drie kwart vol gewerk [It is completed three quarters]. And then you take the next one and there is 4 or 5 pages written in there. That is the year's work. Now they've set the paper up. We are complaining about this that they want to; intermediate phase must*

write from January until November's work, the whole year. Do you know how much work is that in my school? But if you take another school's books and you look at those books, then yes you can learn it. So actually I am coming back to say our levels are not the same. But when you look at the passing, puntestelsel [mark system], then their passing rate is higher than our school. How do you get these things together? So we will never ever get to the same level, because my children are working for their level, but get nothing for free.

For the sake of quality the HoDs agreed that they must accept these changes:

S1T2 (77): Everybody is expected too, to accept the changes.

S2T1 (116): I just think that as a teacher, I will have to implement, there is no way around it, and you just have to implement it to the best of my ability. That is what I will have to do.

It was evident that HoDs had vastly different responses to curriculum changes and the effects on their ability to manage their department efficiently and effectively.

The data from the semi-structured interview made it even clearer what curriculum changes meant and how they were dealt with through effective management.

5.4 Data analysis from semi-structured interview and documents

The story of Anna³

Anna is a HoD at a school in a rural area of the Eastern Cape. She has been with the school for many years, and a HoD for most of them. The town where she works is also her home.

She seems content with her position as her favourite part of the job is the challenges that arise. If the principal is not there, she has to take charge. Unfortunately with every management position there is a down side. It is her responsibility to reprimand fellow teachers which leads to conflict. At the school, Anna is in charge of overseeing the

³ Anna is a pseudonym for the teacher from SCHOOL 2.

moderation of five to six subjects as well as discipline. This sometimes makes her feel frustrated when changes occur in the curriculum, as she has to stay on top of all the requirements and ensure that the teachers do their jobs.

When changes in a curriculum occur, Anna has no formal training. She attends the workshops with her colleagues on an equal level, but back at school she resumes the responsibility of a HoD and has to ensure that all is done. She found the workshops on the new curriculum, CAPS, helpful, as they gave the teachers the opportunity to develop mock lesson plans and gave tutorials on the requirements. However, for the management of this curriculum change, she created her own way of doing things through trial and error as there was no guidance for her in the town where she is.

For Anna, a positive attitude is the key to the success of anything. She feels that the more positive you are about a situation; the more positively you will be able to influence the people around you. It is important to her always to find something good in the curriculum changes and build on what you have; otherwise you are faced with failure. When one of the teachers in her department feels discouraged or “stuck,” Anna assists them to find solutions to their problems. She feels that sometimes teachers just need a sounding board, somebody willing to listen to them.

With all the new changes, Anna is observing that it is slowly but surely going back to the traditional way of doing things and the lack of group-work required is a great relief for her. She experienced her teachers as more positive about the changes and there is an agreement that there is an overall improvement in the curriculum. When the teachers in her department talk about confusion, she feels that they might be more afraid of something new and that they are unsure what to do.

The semi-structured interview painted a different, but also similar, picture of curriculum changes. The categories identified during the focus group analysis, were very visible, but their description of each was slightly different. During the semi-structured interview, I had the opportunity to explore further the categories identified in the analysis of the focus groups.

5.4.1 Confusion about changes

When there is a lack of clarity during the implementation of a curriculum change, it may lead to confusion among HoDs and teachers (par. 2.4.3). The continued introduction of a new curriculum and the uncertainty of what to do cause confusion that was translated into immense frustration with the curriculum.

Anna revealed that she believed confusion was created by the uncertainty of something new and that the teachers were more afraid than confused (Anna, lines 65-66) about the changes that were expected from them. It is also important for her to reflect a positive attitude hoping it will spill over to the teachers in her department:

Anna (34 -35): I also think that the more positive you are about a situation, the more positive you are going to influence the people you are working with.

Anna also commented on how confusion can create frustration with new changes to the curriculum (line 12 & 65).

Throughout the documents it is evident that this HoD together with the SMT (Senior Management Team) is trying to develop teachers and phase out any confusion they experience. They have also committed themselves to mentor and support new and existing teachers during the school year. This is evident in the IQMS implementation quarterly report (Appendix 4: Document 1). When analysing the feedback to teacher C (Appendix. 4: Document 4), Anna requested that a teacher ask for assistance either from herself or from more experienced staff members when they are not sure what to do, as experience is key to gaining clarity about changes.

5.4.2 Traditional methods of teaching

By insinuating, during the focus groups that this new curriculum, CAPS, is *going back to the traditional way of doing things* most HoDs showed a clear preference for tradition over change that can become a resistance to change (Van der Merwe, 2005). Anna, on the other

hand, had a slightly different view: she saw the changes as an opportunity to combine new ideas with existing practices.

Anna (33-34): I can always try and see the good in something and I know what work and then I hope you find that in the new curriculum there must be something that will work and you combine the two.

However, Anna displayed a great appreciation for the lack of group work in the new curriculum as she felt some students rode on the coat tails of the smarter students:

Anna (51-52): But that was a bad thing, because I felt that the stronger pupil does all the work and the weak ones gets the same mark.

5.4.3 Quality of education

Being one of the eight key factors for the initiation of change (Fullan, 2007), it is not unusual for the word *quality* to be ever present when doing a content analysis of Anna's interview. The word *quality* frequently occurs, but when you start looking at her discourse, you realise that she is all about quality. She is focused on the discipline of the students as well as that of the teaching staff, even though conflict might arise. This all contributes to the quality of education the school offers:

Anna (5 - 6): So you have to sort out the stuff and if there is conflict, you have to solve the conflict, it keeps your mind up and going.

Another contributing factor is her commitment to assist the teachers in her department to understand what is expected of them and to be a sounding board for their frustration:

Anna (42 - 44): I try to encourage them, see if I can help them where they are stuck. Often they will come to me when they have assignments and stuff they are unsure of, and will go through it and I will give them advice and we will discuss it, but most of the time I think when the teachers are negative, they just need a sounding board, they just need to get rid of what they feel and then often they will pick up from where they left and build back on it.

Her positive attitude towards her work and colleagues allows for an environment laden with possibilities of quality education:

Anna (37 - 40): I acknowledge the negative way they feel, but then we try and build it into something positive. Again it boils down to the thing, that if you are not positive to what you must do and what you must implement, your thing is going to fail, the whole system is going to fail. But the most important thing I think is to listen and to try and understand and see if you cannot work with what they are unhappy with.

There is plentiful evidence that Anna was indeed attempting to create a positive environment for her teachers. When she wrote comments to them, she always started off with thanking them for their work and then gave them positive criticism:

Document 2: *Baie dankie vir jou harde en goeie werk asook jou bereidwilligheid om altyd te help.* [Thank you for all your hard and good work as well as your willingness to always help.]

Document 3: *Baie dankie vir al the ekstra klasse waar jy die leerlinge help.* [Thank you for all the extra classes where you assist the learners.]

Document 4: *Sien kritiek asseblief altyd as opbouende hulp en nie as negatiewe kritiek nie.* [Please see the criticism as constructive and not as negative criticism]

Her language indicated a non-threatening environment with positive reinforcement.

Document 3: *Loer ook asb net want ek kon nie term 2 investigation in jou graad 8 file kry nie.* [Just have a look please because I cannot find term 2 investigation in your grade 8 file]

The focus of her commentary to the teachers was always on the quality of education. However, no matter how focused the HoD is on quality, she or he needs quality staff to make changes in the curriculum successful (par. 1.4).

5.5 Interpretation of data

The question I asked in the beginning was how Heads of Departments from schools have responded to, and managed changes in the curriculum since 2005. To answer this question, I have to break it down into two parts: responses of HoDs and management of HoDs. Each part required an analysis of both the focus groups and the semi-structured interview. However, the responses of HoDs were more prominent during the focus group as the methods used during the session to seek out their responses to curriculum changes. The semi-structured interview aimed to answer questions about the management of HoDs and the document analysis aimed to verify the actions taken by the HoD.

5.5.1 Responses of HoDs

Fullan (2007) talks about the characteristics of change during the implementation phase (see figure 2.1). The need for change and clarity were two of the most prominent responses of the HoDs during the focus group interviews. However, the expression of quality in education remained a persuasive theme throughout the interviews.

HoDs constantly have to put changes into effect that were forced upon them without having a clear idea why complex reform, which might affect the outcome of education altogether, is taking place. They plainly expressed their confusion when the curriculum was changed to C2005, struggling to grasp some of the concepts, and even said that their students were experiencing problems to achieve in this ever-changing atmosphere. This underlines the importance of clarity. One of the schools was more equipped to handle these changes due to the type of school and its community. However, both schools were struggling to make sense of what was expected of them and the confusion of paperwork was an issue. For implementation to be successful the changes must be practical; confusing paperwork becomes a hindrance to successful change as well as to the quality of education produced. Lack of understanding may become a psychological reason for resistance to change which becomes what the HoD has to manage before it affects the implementation process too severely. The transformation of confusion and frustration into guilt might be a threat to change affecting the quality of education. Van der Merwe (2005) says that lacking skills and motivation to deal with these changes may also contribute to the resistance to change.

Another response identified was the nostalgia about traditional teaching methodologies. Some of the HoDs were not even troubled about changing their way of doing things because they felt they had been doing it like that for many years; that is what works. They did not see a problem with the curriculum changes therefore being resisted. Avoidance of changes may be caused by the stress during this transition period. Fullan talks about a false clarity that is created when teachers begin to argue that the changes are unnecessary or that they have been practicing the change for a period of time (2007). It becomes a threat to the success of implementation. In spite of this, there is still a display of curiosity that yearns for something that works. Therefore, a need is currently being created by these HoDs, not for a new curriculum or any changes, but for something that works, a recipe of some kind. As explained in Chapter 2 (par. 2.4.1) for change to occur a need must exist. By not including all HoDs in the initiation of curriculum changes, they might feel that they are not important to the process. This creates resistance in them.

This brings us to the issue of quality in education. Quality can only be achieved when you have met the requirements of the needs, got clarity on certain issues and the complexity of the change has been dealt with (Fullan, 2007). Both schools felt that if there was greater consultation during the developmental phase of a curriculum, its implementation would be better. There are many factors that influence the quality of education. Illiteracy is a big issue currently in South Africa, so it is important for the HoDs to be focused on quality. The HoDs are convinced that the most important factor for successful change should be the timely availability of materials to schools as well as providing more assistance to schools where the situations are drastically different compared to *former model C schools* on which the curriculum was based. South Africa's socio-economic landscape varies immensely, making consistency an important issue when changes are brought about. Differences in schools, such as exposure to technology, cause resistance to change because they view the quality of education differently. One HoD expressed it very well: *My quality is there, but I don't think the national quality is where it should be* (S2T2, Line 15). As demonstrated in chapter 2 (2.4.1), the lack of access to information can put certain communities at risk of stunted growth and development in a globalised world. However, there is an agreement among all of them that it is their responsibility to accept these changes, no matter what, in order not to sacrifice the quality of the education in the schools.

The semi-structured interviews confirmed that, when a curriculum changes, there is a great deal of confusion about what exactly to do, especially if you are set in your own ways, nonetheless the focus is always on the quality of education produced by that HoD.

5.5.2 Management by the HoD during changes

The influences of the world around us make every person's experience of change unique and it is the responsibility of the HoD to initiate and implement change in the curriculum with a diverse staff that might not always have the *quality* that is needed to be successful. The pre-occupation of the principal with maintenance activities of the school as an organisation (par. 1.3), and the devolution of authority with regard to curriculum changes, lead to the HoD making it his or her responsibility to manage change successfully (par. 3.2). If one considers the responses of the HoDs, it becomes evident that there is psychological as well as organisational resistance to change (Van der Merwe, 2005):

- Not understanding the reasons for change: Confusion is generated by negative feelings of discouragement (par. 5.3.1) that can lead to failure in the implementation of change.
- Preference for tradition: The curiosity created by the introduction of something new does not always mean that a teacher or the HoD will accept the required change (par. 5.3.2).
- Lack of skills and motivation: Even though the quality of the education produced by an HoD is of great importance, it can be stunted by the lack of materials, lack of consultation during curriculum development, and different situations in schools and areas influencing their motivation negatively (par. 5.3.3)

One of the obligations of the HoD, as an agent of change, is to deal with this resistance before it hinders the implementation of curriculum changes success (par. 1.4). The HoD is in a very fortunate position to experience first-hand the problems that there are with the implementation of the curriculum (par. 1.8). It is possible for the HoD to deal with any resistance if he or she knows enough about the change process to understand why it doesn't work (Fullan, 2007). By only focusing on the innovations (changes) that do work and rejecting the rest, he or she may avoid cynical views about the education system as a whole

among teachers (Fullan, 2007). With good knowledge of the subject content and assessment, and with a colourful pedagogical repertoire, the HoD will be able to relieve resistance somewhat (par 1.4 and par. 3.2). Unfortunately, there is nothing that can replace experience when it comes to management. Through trial and error (Anna, Line 31), the HoD will be able to anticipate the difficulties and steer his or her teachers in the right direction. It is important that the HoD apply pressure (Fullan, 2007) to the teachers but support them as well through the times of change, as is evident from the documents collected (Appendix 4: Document 4). The HoDs are accountable for the quality of work produced by his or her department (par. 1.4) and ensuring it is in agreement with the requirements of the policy by implementing changes so they are visible as well as evaluating what has been done through evidence-based management (Fullan, 2007).

Changing the curriculum sometimes requires teachers to change their beliefs (par. 2.3) in order to change their practice, which might make the teacher unwilling to accept the innovations due to emotional discomfort. The attitude of the HoD (through devolution of responsibility) (par. 3.2) towards the changes, will greatly determine the attitude of the teachers (par. 2.4.3). A positive demeanour towards the changes from the HoD may have a positive ripple effect on the teachers' behaviour (par. 5.4.3) making it more acceptable and less stressful and thus lowering the resistance to change. The peculiar position of the HoDs (par. 1.8) allows them to promote development through maintaining open department boundaries and to *just talk* (Fullan, 2007). Allowing teachers to use them as sounding boards (Anna, Line 43), teachers have the opportunity to vent and reflect on their feelings and by doing so the HoD will nurture and sustain a strong teacher community (Fullan, 2007). There are many "wills" in educational change (Fullan, 2007) but without quality action nothing will change. The HoD must advocate change (as an agent of change) but must also be clear that not all change is beneficial nor is it useless (Fullan, 2007).

Unfortunately for HoDs they are expected to take on a number of responsibilities when it comes to curriculum change, but there is very little or no training for them in this regard. Figure 5.4 (adapted from Van der Merwe, 2005) depicts how the theory compares with the reality of implementations of changes. The top row displays how a manager should systematically implement changes in five steps. The second row shows how it happens in reality as depicted by Anna during the interview. The HoDs are under extreme time constraints and workloads, and thus improvise as far as it is possible. In the case of Anna, she

handed out the documents, cleared up any misunderstandings there were with a positive attitude and sent the teachers out to do it in practice. When it became possible she called in her teachers to moderate their work and check for compliance. The feedback she gave was sufficient but it seemed rushed: the use of summarised sentences, just mentioning what is lacking in files. There is a lack of minutes to meetings that is concerning; it seems as if she did not put time into developing the teachers. This account of how curriculum changes are managed, I believe, is not unique to Anna's situation, but occurs more frequently than anyone would hope, as I have experienced myself at my school. When the HoD lacks in motivation, it can become quite problematic to implement changes successfully and as required by the government.

Managing change systematically and successfully

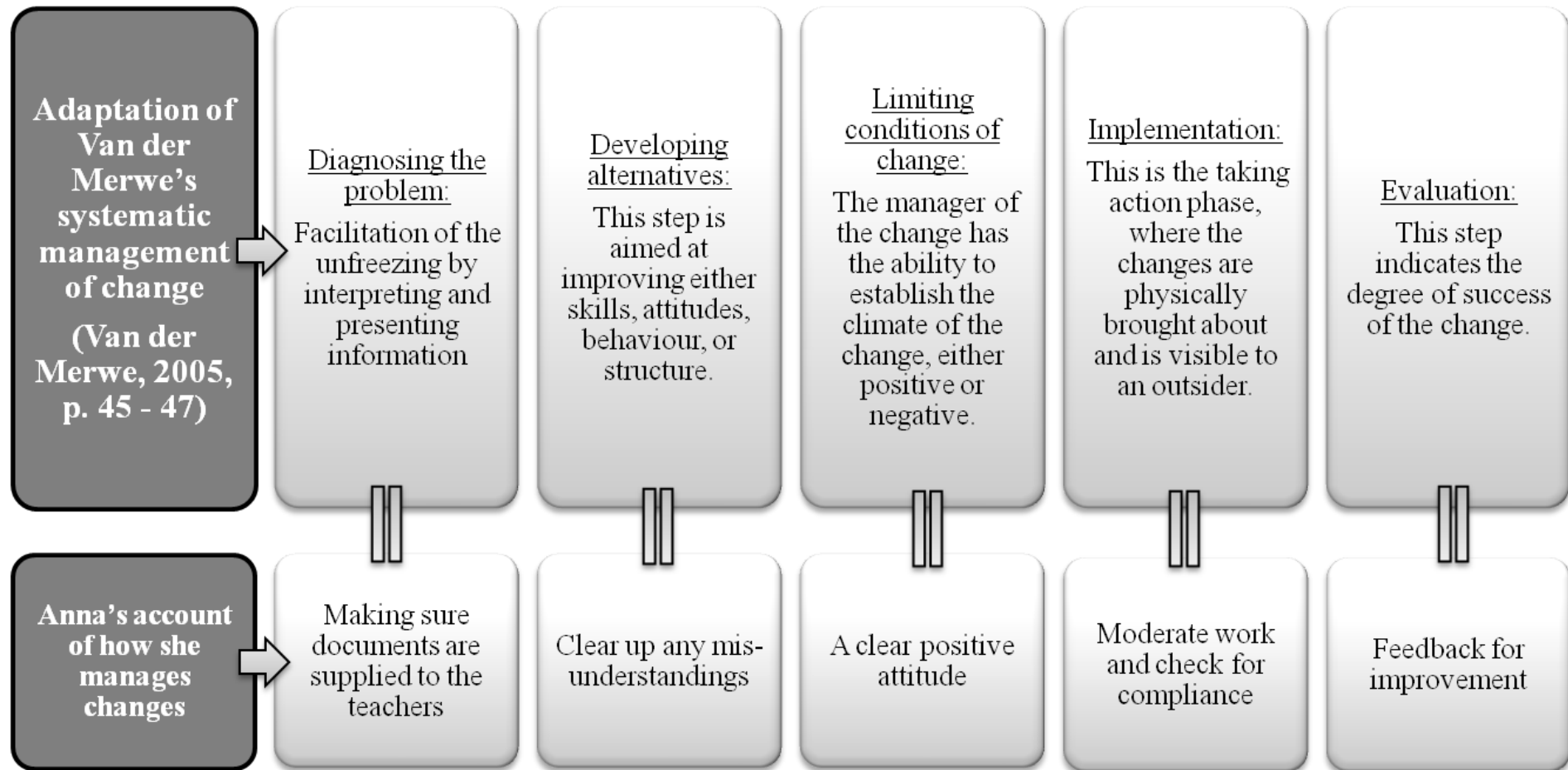


Figure 5.7: Managing changes systematically and successfully

5.6 Conclusion

The evidence from this study suggests that HoDs focus on the importance of producing quality education while trying to make sense of the changes that are expected of them. Evidence pointed to how HoDs motivated their staff through positive reinforcement. By developing a strong teacher community and recognising which changes are worth the time and effort the obstacles can be targeted.

Chapter 6

Overview, findings, and conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of my methods of conducting a literature review and collecting data during the research process and the conclusion to which I came. The presentation of my findings in this chapter will be a summary which places emphasis on the need to pay more attention to the middle management of schools. There will also be a discussion of the limitations of the research and how I overcame them. The significance of my research demonstrates how my research has contributed towards increasing our knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon as well as informing our practices and policy debates. There are many opportunities for further research on this particular topic which I highlighted as suggestions for further research and how we can improve the practices of the HoD pertaining to curriculum changes.

6.2 Overview

Every chapter of this dissertation has a significant role in creating an awareness of how HoDs managed and experienced curriculum changes. Even though each chapter can be seen as a separate unit, together they create a holistic picture of the literature, the methodology, and the findings about the phenomenon investigated.

I attempted to lay the foundation of the necessity for change in the first chapter as well as what I aimed to achieve by the end of the chapter. The importance and the influence of globalisation on the future of education is something that has to be taken into account when decisions regarding the curriculum are made. It is also important to understand that some curriculum changes stem from political motivation, as the government decides what they would like their country to achieve in the future. Even though South Africa was not particularly successful with its post-

apartheid curriculum choices, there is a great deal of evidence of numerous efforts to correct the situation by constantly amending the curriculum for improvement. Hence, I focused on how HoDs experienced and managed these changes due to their unique position as members of middle management.

To better understand how the HoDs experienced and managed the curriculum changes, I had to understand why curriculum changes come to pass and the processes involved in them. Through the literature reviewed in chapter 2, I aimed to describe the phenomenon of curriculum changes and to what extent globalisation influences these changes. Through the processes of initiation, formulation, and implementation, I attempted to illustrate who the role players in the cyclical process of educational change are. It appeared that the role of the HoD is not mentioned in any of these processes, but only those of the principal and teachers.

It is particularly noticeable how important the role of the HoD is during curriculum changes and implementation (see figure 4.1 depicting the communication of curriculum changes as explained by Hoy and Miskel (2001)). Even though curriculum implementation is part of the principal's portfolio, it becomes part of the HoDs responsibility through devolution of responsibility, as illustrated in chapter 3. The literature available on how HoDs or middle management should manage these changes is insufficient, but there is much work on how teachers and principals experience and manage changes. There is also a great deal of information on how other countries like Italy, China, Argentina, and Botswana experienced and managed educational changes. By considering how they experienced and managed these changes, I developed a framework for analysing the data.

An appropriate method to obtain comprehensive detail about the experiences of a certain phenomenon was through a narrative design. By means of focus group interviews, a semi-structured interview and document analysis, I was able to analyse the data through content and discourse analysis as explained in chapter 4. This gave me the opportunity to see how the characteristics of change affected HoDs and how they managed it.

Throughout the analysis it became very evident that there are three main things that HoDs are concerned about regarding curriculum changes: 1) confusion about changes; 2) traditional

methods of teaching; and 3) the quality of changes. In chapter 5 it became clear that HoDs are agents of change and they take on the responsibility of dealing with the resistance to change even if they do not always understand why change occurs and are not trained properly to deal with it. It was evident that the theoretical reality about how the changes should take place (fig. 5.4), does not match the reality experienced by the participants in this study.

6.3 Findings

I aimed to determine the response to, and the management of curriculum changes by HoDs. I was especially interested in their self-motivation, the motivation of the teachers in their departments and the assistance that they gave these teachers during the course of curriculum changes.

To realise these aims, I made use of a narrative design that gave me the opportunity to understand these responses and the management decisions of the HoDs. This became a story focused on confusion, tradition, and the quality of education. There are several things required for change in the education system to be successful. Within these stories of the HoDs I found that the biggest barriers for them were identifying a need for change, acquiring clarity, and producing quality education.

By collecting data through focus group interviews, a semi-structured interview and document analysis I realised that some of the participants felt curriculum changes were unnecessary because they did not see the need for change in the curriculum. They felt their methods, the traditional way of teaching, were adequate and the government was upsetting their modus operandi. Fullan (2007) refers to this as a false clarity that hinders the success of curriculum change. However, they did what was expected of them as they believed the government was trying to make things better. They accepted these changes, no matter how out of the ordinary they may have seemed to them.

From the focus group interviews, I selected one suitable candidate to further investigate why the HoD was responding in this manner. She revealed that confusion was caused by frustration because they did not understand what was expected of them. Due to the lack of training, HoDs

were not always clear on what their duties were. The principal reassigned some of his or her responsibilities to the HoDs, especially the implementation of a new curriculum. The HoD being a teacher and a manager had to implement what they had learned at teacher workshops, without having training in the management of changes.

Even if managing the change was challenging to HoDs, it still remained their responsibility to support and motivate the teachers in their departments. This can be done through having a positive attitude about changes in the curriculum. Sometimes teachers have the need to vent their frustration about the changes and the HoD might be used as a sounding board. By listening to the teacher, and being positive about what was happening, they could encourage the teacher to go back to the drawing board and try again. If a HoD is approached by a teacher about a specific problem, the HoD must assist with finding a solution. It often helps to take something new from the curriculum and combine it with the something that the teacher has been doing. For a HoD it is of great importance that the work produced by his or her department is of great quality and complies with what the Department of Basic Education is expecting of them. By accepting the changes every time they hope that the quality of education will improve.

The aim was to determine the responses of the HoDs to curriculum changes and how they kept themselves and the teachers in their department motivated. The HoDs demonstrated confusion about changes and therefore kept to traditional methods of teaching while striving to produce quality education and still comply with government regulations. Another aim was to understand the management of the changes which resulted in accepting the changes while the HoD was attempting to influence the teachers in their departments positively. Assistance lent to these teachers was in the form of the HoDs being sounding boards for them and advising them on what to do through their own experiences.

At the beginning of this study I assumed that the HoDs were not coping with these changes and that they were trapped between the leadership that was required of them and the leadership that they were capable of providing. When I look at the responses of the HoDs, there is a great deal of evidence that they felt the Department was not clear about what was required from them and the lack of workshops caused even greater confusion. The only thing that the HoDs felt they

could do was to listen to the teachers in their department and advise them through their own experiences while trying to comply with government regulations.

6.4 Conclusion about working assumption

At the beginning of this study I assumed that HoDs are experiencing difficulties with the demands of the ever-changing curriculum. I also assumed that HoDs are less enthusiastic and positive about policy changes due to policy fatigue.

My first assumption was proved to be correct through the HoDs' confusion about what is expected of them during these changes and, by keeping to traditional methods of teaching, they are making sense of what is required from them.

The second assumption was refuted by the HoDs specifically saying that by being positive about the changes, they are managing their departments more effectively and efficiently.

My conclusion is then that HoDs are in fact struggling to find their place in the process of educational change and the lack of clear guidelines makes it very difficult for them to be sure of their position in all of this. Nonetheless, a positive attitude yields better results than they hoped.

6.5 Limitations of the study

When I started with this study I was fully aware of the limitations I could experience during the research process. Some of these limitations had a great effect on the result whereas others did not.

One of the greatest limitations of this study was the lack of participants. Even though I approached several schools, only two were willing and able to assist me with my research. To make matters worse, from the two schools involved in the focus groups only one of the HoDs was willing to participate in the semi-structured interview. The compliance with ethical considerations resulted in having fewer than anticipated participants which hindered the process

of data collection. However, the data was sufficient to understand the phenomenon as intended. The pressures of being the HoD also provided poor documentation as record keeping was not up to standard; it was just to comply with government regulations. Nonetheless, the methodology of the study lent itself to ensuring that the data collected was sufficient to reach the conclusions I did.

Another limitation of this study was the HoDs not being head of departments but rather phase heads of a certain subject. The size of the schools and the current employment situation of the Eastern Cape Department of Education with regard to unfilled HoD positions due to financial constraints were the main contributors to this limitation.

I anticipated that there would be a problem with getting side-tracked during the focus groups, but this did not happen. However, some of the participants struggled to interpret the meaning of the newspaper headings used as prompts in the focus groups. They gave different data from what I expected, but it was still sufficient for the purpose of reaching conclusions.

6.6 Significance of the study

The phenomenon I investigated was to determine the response and management of HoDs during curriculum changes. A gap in the knowledge about curriculum changes exists because of the unique position in which HoDs find themselves: being a teacher him- or herself, but also being a manager and a leader of a department. There is abundant research on how principals manage their schools and how teachers experience curriculum changes but very little on how HoDs experience and manage curriculum changes. Through this research I aimed to do three things: 1) add to the knowledge base, 2) suggest possible improvements for practice, and 3) inform policy debates (Creswell, 2008).

Even though there is great confusion about the changes and what is expected of everybody, some HoDs decided to apply the traditional methods of teaching. This however did not mean that they completely ignored the changes; they were still curious and admitted that there were some good ideas in the changes. The focus on producing quality education is non-negotiable with these

HoDs. With very little guidance from the government, HoDs turned towards their own practice and taught others through their experiences. Through this understanding it might lead to other HoDs learning from these experiences and improving their own practices. To inform policy debates, this research is significant because it makes a point of the necessity of including HoDs when training of a new curriculum takes place and not only the teachers or principals. Specific training for HoDs on how to manage change in schools is essential.

6.7 Recommendations for future research

Research is an on-going process due to our nature which constantly seeks ways of bettering ourselves. I propose the following further research:

- Exploring the possibility of the Department of Education developing formal programmes to train specifically HoDs, phase heads, or subject heads, focusing on dealing with curriculum changes.
- Expanding this study to a larger part of the Eastern Cape to explore how HoDs manage curriculum change and possibly developing a training programme from the perspective of specifically the middle management position.
- Professional development of HoDs to understand what their role during curriculum changes is and how to manage these changes better by dealing with overload.

6.8 Recommendation for improvement of practice

During the research it became clear to me that the HoDs aim to just comply with the requirements set out by the government. This was evident in the documents that I have received from the participant of the semi-structured interview. This might lead to chaos when more proof is required by the government. A recommendation for improving the practice of the HoDs would be for them to be more thorough with record keeping, especially of meetings held.

6.9 Concluding remarks

People react differently to certain events because of their experiences. To understand the way in which HoDs react to curriculum change one has to understand how they practice their understanding of changes. This can be done by looking at the experiences of curriculum changes of HoDs. During this research I explored the foundation for the necessity of curriculum changes and the management of it. The lack of information on the management of curriculum changes from a middle manager's perspective suggested a platform for my research. The passion that was evident in the HoDs for curriculum change made me feel that it is important to include these middle managers in the processes of curriculum changes and to educate HoDs better. This may lead to the creation of the higher quality of education that South Africa so desperately needs.

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Appendix 1: Ethical clearance and permission

Ethical clearance



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER : <input type="text" value="EM 11/10/06"/>
<u>DEGREE AND PROJECT</u>	M.Ed The responses of primary school Heads of Department to curriculum changes since 2005
<u>INVESTIGATOR(S)</u>	Stephanie Cornelissen
<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	Education Management and Policy Studies
<u>DATE CONSIDERED</u>	
<u>DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE</u>	APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE Prof L Ebersohn

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. Ebersohn".

DATE 03 May 2013

CC Jeannie Beukes
Liesel Ebersohn
Prof J.L. Beckmann

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.

Permission from ECDE



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STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES
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Ms SR Cornelissen

P.O. Box 239

Dordrecht

5435

Dear Ms Cornelissen

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A MASTER'S THESIS: THE RESPONSES OF HEAD OF DEPARTMENTS TO CURRICULUM CHANGES SINCE 2005

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.
2. Your application to conduct the above mentioned research in 20 schools (11 Primary and 9 Secondary schools, see Appendix 1 which forms part of this letter) under the jurisdiction of Lady Frere and Queenstown Districts in the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education (ECDBE) is hereby approved on condition that:
 - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education (ECDBE) to the District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
 - d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;



- e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, as educators' programmes should not be interrupted;
 - f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to the Director: Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services;
 - g. the research may not be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where a special well motivated request is received;
 - h. your research will be limited to those schools or institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Director – Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services;
 - i. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis. This must also be in an electronic format.
 - j. you are requested to provide the above to the Director: The Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services upon completion of your research.
 - k. you comply to all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDBE document duly completed by you.
 - l. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).
 - m. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Director: Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services.
3. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDBE.
 4. The Department will publish the completed research on its website.
 5. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Dr. Annetia Heckroodt on 043 702 7428 or mobile number 083 275 0715 and email: annetia.heckroodt@edu.ecprov.gov.za should you need any assistance.


DR AS HECKROODT

DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES

Appendix 2: Newspaper headings

1. “Quality education still remains a top priority” (Weekly Mail & Guardian, 10 March 2005)
2. “All set for new curriculum” (Pretoria News, 22 November 2005)
3. “Teachers’ anger is not over assessment, but flaws in OBE” (Cape Times, 8 October 2008)
4. “The rot runs much deeper than a failed curriculum” (Business Day, 14 July 2010)
5. “Principals welcome changes announced in the new curriculum statement” (Cape Times, 7 July 2010)
6. “Final school curriculum has still not been released” (The Times, 17 January 2011)

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interviews questions

1. What are your responsibilities being a HoD?
2. What do you like about your work?
3. What aspect(s) of your work are less enjoyable than the ones described in your answer to two above?
4. How do you feel when a change in the curriculum is announced?
5. What are the procedures that you follow when a change is brought about in the curriculum?
6. How did you learn or develop these procedures?
7. How do you motivate yourself to continue adapting to the changes?
8. How do you perceive the reactions of the teachers within your department when the curriculum changes?
9. How do you motivate and assist the teachers in your department when change occurs?
10. What is your view of Schooling 2025?

Appendix 4: Interviews

Focus group interview: School 1

SCHOOL 1

- Line 1 **Me:** **Quality education still remains a top priority. What are your views about this heading? What do you think when you read this?**
- Line 2 T1: Yes of course it still needs top priority, but the changes affects us a lot. First it was OBE, it was RNCS, it was NCS, now it is going to get. It confuses us so much.
- Line 3 T2: We try to understand this. They come with this new curriculum, that confuses us really. Dont know what to say or do to the learners. Although they have workshops you, but
- Line 4 some of the changes really affects us.
- Line 5 T3: Yes, I also have the same sentiment. They always say it is a quality education, but why they change it if it is a quality education. Always changes.
- Line 6 **Me:** **What do you feel when you read this, your feelings when they say quality education still remains a top priority?**
- Line 7 T1: Yes it is true that quality education still remains a top priority.
- Line 8 **Me:** **So you agree?**
- Line 9 T3: Yes we agree
- Line 10 **Me:** **If I was to tell you that this appeared in *The Mail and Guardian* in 2005 , how does that make you feel? This was now six years ago they said this.**
- Line 11 ALL: Ooooooo.
- Line 12 T1: **You still agree with it?**
- Line 13 T1: It appeared in 2005? It still appears in the newspaper
- Line 14 **Me:** **All set for the new curriculum. What do you think when you hear those words? All set for the new curriculum.**
- Line 15 T1: Why new curriculum always?
- Line 16 T3: Which means there is something new that is going to take this.
- Line 17
- Line 18 **Me:** **If I say this was in *The Pretoria News* 2005 , what do you feel about that, all set for the new curriculum? If you can think back especially from HOD or vice principal's perspective?**
- Line 19
- Line 20 T1: But if you look at this curriculum, they said new curriculum in 2005, but there is no vast difference between 2005 curriculum and this one, but only technology.
- Line 21
- Line 22 **Me:** **Only technology.**
- Line 23 T2: 2005 was OBE ne?
- Line 24 They change the technology, if you can look at it.
- Line 25 **Me:** **What are your first thoughts when you read: “All set for the new curriculum?” How do you feel inside?**
- Line 26 T2: Maybe there is something new they are coming with now.
- Line 27 **Are you excited?**
- Line 28 T1: Yes.
- Line 29 T3: We are just curious about it, something new.

Line 30 **Me:** **Teachers' anger is not over assessment but the flaws in OBE? What are your thoughts when you read something like that?**

Line 31 **Me:** **Teachers' anger is not over the assessment. It is all those assessments that we had to do but over the flaws in OBE. How do you feel when you read this and if you**

Line 32 **think back and if you think what you have to do now**

Line 33 T3: You know, teachers' anger is not over assessment. You know, In all the curriculum there is an assessment, but you find out it is always some new concepts, there are new

Line 34 concepts that will be confusing.

Line 35 T2: Yes, we use assessment in the traditional method of teaching, but now OBE came with a lot of paperwork and a lot of specific outcomes,[in Xhosa] critical outcomes, a lot, too

Line 36 much.

Line 37 **This was published in *The Cape Times* in 2008? What do you think? Are they coming to their senses? Where are they going with this?**

Line 38 T3: It has brought about confusion

Line 39 **Me:** **If we think so far to this point, what do you think of the things that I have shown to you? What is going on in your head? What are you experiencing?**

Line 40

Line 41 T1: I experience confusion

Line 42 T3: Yes, many challenges.

Line 43 T2: Many changes, yes.

Line 44 **What emotion do you feel, if you now think what I have now shown to you, what emotion do you feel inside?**

Line 45 T3: You feel bad about this. Sometimes you feel bad. As if there is nothing that you know.

Line 46 {agreement}

Line 47 **Me:** **What is your view point of curriculum changes? What do you think of curriculum changes? What do you think of the two words: curriculum changes?**

Line 48

Line 49 T3: The fact that it is changes now. There is change in the curriculum, always change in the curriculum and it brought out many challenges. It means that there will be also a lot of

Line 50 challenges that we are going to face, if there is a curriculum change. There will be involved, there will be new concepts that you will have to familiarise yourself with.

Line 51 **Me:** **Any other opinions about ...**

Line 52 T2: But in the true sense of curriculum, there is no change in the true sense, because if you take this, the content is the same.

Line 53

Line 54 **Me:** **Why do you think they change the curriculum? Why do you think the changes occur? The government or whoever decides now we must change again. Why do you**

Line 55 **think they decided?**

Line 56 T3: There is a perception that there is not actually a right education. They are still looking for the right education.

Line 57 **Me:** **The rot runs much deeper than a failed curriculum. This was published in *Business Day 2010*. I think it was just before the release of CAPS. What do you think**

Line 58 **when you read that? "The rot runs much deeper than a failed curriculum."**

Line 59 T3: All it means is that the curriculum that has been used before 2010 has failed. .

Line 60 T2: It has failed. If you look back, the children used to pass with flying colours, but now they don't want to learn. I don't know whether it is this changes or not, I don't know, but

Line 61 now, the learners don't. They are not competent anymore.

Line 62 **Me:** **Anything?**

Line 63 T1: Maybe in this new curriculum we must expect a change even from the children, because now, since they reduced the number of the subjects to six now, maybe there will be a

Line 64 change to the children because at least they were doing nine and now they will do six and uuuhh I don't know what to say. Maybe a lot of work now has ... Maybe they will

Line 65 compete, because now ..., I don't think there is a lot of paperwork to teachers. At least now teachers now will go to the classroom and teach the children. I think it is back to the

Line 66 traditional way now, I think.

Line 67 **Me:** **Principals welcome changes announced in the curriculum statement. Now you are a vice principal, but now from a perspective of say an HOD or the teacher, the**

Line 68 **principal welcomes changes announced in the new curriculum statement. What do you think; this was published in *The Cape Times 2010*. Do you think the principals**

Line 69 **must have a big say in this?**

Line 70

Line 71 T2: They can't do otherwise because the ministers bring the new changes and the principal must accept it, because they say now we must do this and we must do it.
Line 72
Line 73 T3: I think there is also a motivation behind this that they are going to make is simpler, the approach will be simpler.
Line 74 Me: **From a middle management position, now you as an HOD and you as a vice principal, you are not the top management. You are here in the middle managing everybody. Would you agree with this kind of statement? Do you agree that the principal has the right to welcome the changes? Don't you think somebody else must**
Line 75
Line 76 T3: I think all the stakeholders, they should agree, it is not only the principal.
Line 77 T2: Everybody is expected too, to accept the changes.
Line 78 Me: **Do you think principals are the only ones to be consulted about the changes?**
Line 79 ALL: No.
Line 80 Me: **Who else do you think should be consulted?**
Line 81 T3: The parents, the learners and other interested parties.
Line 82 Me: **Like example what other interested parties are there?**
Line 83 T2: The nurses, policemen must also be involved, the social workers.
Line 84 Me: **Final school curriculum has still not been released. This was *The Times*, January 2011. The beginning of last year. Now most of us know then the CAPS already started in the schools. What do you think about the final school curriculum that has still not been released?**
Line 85
Line 86 T1: The final school curriculum that has still not been released. That means, that CAPS is not the final school curriculum. Is there anything coming? Is the new school curriculum
Line 87 coming, because we think CAPS is the final school curriculum now.
Line 88 T2: I also think so, that CAPS must be the final now.
Line 89
Line 90 Me: **Conclusion. What do you think is the next step from here? I here concerns about; is CAPS the final school curriculum? What do you think we must we do from here to get to a better place where we are currently?**
Line 91
Line 92 T3: I think we have to start with CAPS as they have said they are going to do it and save the changes locate.
Line 93 T1: And we must stick to CAPS now at least for ten years and see the results. We must not change after five years. That brings a lot of confusion. At least for ten years and we will
Line 94 see if it has been effective or not.
Line 95 Me: **What do you think Mrs. Falo**
Line 96 T2: I think CAPS must be here to stay, although we didn't start it yet, but it is promising.

Focus group interview: School 2

SCHOOL 2

- Line 1 **Me:** **Quality education still remains a top priority. What are your views about this heading? What do you think when you read this?**
- Line 2 T1: The aim should be in the quality.
- Line 3 **Me:** **What do you feel when you read this heading? Quality or education still remains a top priority?**
- Line 4
- Line 5 T2: Out of my view?
- Line 6 **Me:** **What are your view point, what do you feel?**
- Line 7 T2: I feel good about it, relieved, save.
- Line 8 **Me:** **If I told you that this was an article in the Male and Guardian 2005, how does that make you feel about the last six years that you have experienced.**
- Line 9 10 T2: I just want to make something clear, quality education is for myself. I don't think it is successful in our country. I said of my view. I am not talking about education as a hole NOW.
- Line
- Line 11 **Me:** **I want your view point, but when I tell you that this was published in 2005, how does it change, because it immediately effects what you are thinking.**
- Line 12 T2: It's not affecting me,
- Line 13 T2: I don't agree.
- Line 14 T2: My quality can't ever change.
- Line 15 T1: My quality is there, but I don't think the national quality is where it should be.
- Line 16 **Me:** **And the changes that build up to 2005?**
- Line 17 T2: I don't let the judges influenced me. It's got no influenced on me.
- Line 18 **Me:** **All set for the new curriculum. View points. What do you think about that heading?**
- Line 19 T2: They can do it.
- Line 20 T1: It is a starting point.
- Line 21 T2: It is something new. We will again like the last one select the good. Take the good out and go on with the old that we still had for many years and put them together.
- Line 22 T1: I think we will adjust without getting our quality slipped.
- Line 23 **Me:** **And if I said this was published in Pretoria News 2005, do you agree with all said for the new curriculum then?**
- Line 24 T1: No.
- Line 25 T3: Dit was deurmekaar. When they started with the new curriculum 2005, we were very confused. There is progress from then.
- Line 26 T2: It's the paperwork that was confusing, not the teaching part.
- Line 27 T2: Nee nee nee ek praat van die kurrikulum. Ons het niks van daai goed verstaan nie toe dit begin het nie.
- Line 28 **Me:** **Your thoughts about this is that the paperwork was not in order.**
- Line 29 T2: It was confusing.
- Line 30 **Me:** **Teachers anger is not over assessments but flaws in OBE. Thoughts, feelings?**
- Line 31 T2: Flaws like what? Too much admin. The intermediate phase is overloaded, totally overloaded.
- Line 32 T1: I think the time is too short to cover it, according to OBE, as you should.
- Line 33 T3: Classes are too big.
- Line 34 T2: We sit with different classes here in our Eastern Cape. We don't have the same quality child that they have in Pretoria and that makes a very big difference. Our children; jy weet hulle lewetjie is so groot.. A topic for oral or essay, you have to select so very carefully, because they don't have knowledge about these things.
- Line 35
- Line 35 **Me:** **You must please give me your opinions, that is what I want; what do you want, what do you feel?**
- Line 36 T2: I don't think they have empathy with the poor children.
- Line 37 T1: And the High School. I am talking out of an accounting and math oogpunt. The fact that they dropped the standard grade maths and the standard grade accounting makes it much
- Line 38 more difficult for your average or your lower child to grasp. You get them passed, but it is difficult to get them to obtain A's, where with the standard grade it was much easier to get
- Line 39 them to get A's.

Line 40 **Me:** **If I say this was published in the Cape Times in 2008? Do you think this heading is fitting? When they released this, you know, it's been quite a while since its been**
Line 41 **introduced.**

Line 42 T2: Well, actually they are trying now again. Let us see what is coming out of the try this time.

Line 43 **Me:** **Ok, if we refocused. What have you experienced from those headings that you have now seen? It is post 1994 but before we have now started with a new curriculum. What**
Line 44 **are your experiences with those headings? What feelings are coming up. What are your thoughts about it?**

Line 45 T2: If you compare it to the new curriculum that is going to be implemented. I just hope it is better planned.

Line 46 I don't actually think so, because they said they are going to make paperwork less for the teachers. Now on this CAPS training, now they ask what paperwork is going to be less. The
Line 47 teacher can now put FET grades put all three in one file. But it is still the same paperwork. It is only in one file. The children doesn't need to have files, they can do it in a book. We
Line 48 are still doing it since the beginning in a book, because it is much easier for a small child to handle a book than to put things in files, it is difficult. We are still working that all the
Line 49 time. So actually nothing has changed.

Line 50 T3: ek weet nie

Line 51 **Me:** **What emotions do you feel when you think of these headings?**

Line 52 T3: Frustration. [laugh] Sometimes disappointment, because sometimes they promise you it is going to be less, it is going to be better. Now we have started the CAPS, but during this
Line 53 month we received our books for the first times, but six months is ... when we had to do the training during our own holidays. They promised all in January we are going to receive
Line 54 it, we have just received it. The workbooks are excellent. There are a lot of very good things, but we didn't get it.

Line 55 T2: Up until today, I have not received one single Afrikaans book for grade 4, grade 5 or grade 6.

Line 56 T3: They promise, promise and promise.

Line 57 T2: Now we get the exam papers from Lady Frere. What 18th if September. They set it up out of those books, they used those books and my children don't have books.
Line 58

Line 59 T3: Other provinces are so much better. Not just the delivery, everything, the training.

Line 60 **Me:** **What is your view point of curriculum changes, changing the curriculum continuously. What is your view point of that?**

Line 61

Line 62 T1: It is confusing, it is discouraging.

Line 63 T2: Actually I think we are moving back to where we were in 1994, because this thing of the catalogue that we are going to order our new books out of. They only selected 4 or 6
Line 64 publishes and you have to use them. It was in 1994 the same. The department sent 4 or 6 books and the names of them and that is what they have used all over the country. And
Line 65 therefore they could write one paper all over the country and that is what it is going to be again now. They take all these little publishers, they are going to take them away.
Line 66

Line 67 **Me:** **Why do you think they changed it?**

Line 68

Line 69 T3: Because it didn't work the first time, so they try something else.

Line 70 T2: I don't know if anyone, dit was op tv ek is gewillig om dit op daai ding te sê. It was a person in out of the ANC and he asked what happened to all the things in apartheidsjare of
Line 71 education and his words was: they were not all bad, what happened to them?" So actually I think somewhere something is happening and people are busy realising but actually it
Line 72 worked and they are slowly moving back to it. Slowly, too slow.
Line 73

Line 74 **Me:** **The rot runs much deeper than a failed curriculum. What do you think? The rut runs much deeper than a failed curriculum. what do you think? The rot runs much deeper**
Line 75 **than a failed curriculum.**

Line 76 T1: The people working with the curriculum, isn't the people who are physically working in the classroom, they don't have the knowledge, they don't have the teaching experience
Line 77

Line 78 T2: and they've just got a little bit of knowledge. If you ask them a question on this side, no they will go and find out. It is people I feel, not all of them, there are some good ones, but it
Line 79 is actually people, there are people in these posts that are not successful.

Line 80 T3: Because sometimes something really works and then they change it to something (different?) We are in the classrooms and we know what works.

Line 81 T2: I don't think they come in contact with us, get our feeling enough and I don't think they work our feeling into the curriculum.

Line 82 Me: **This was released in Business Day in 2010 and that is very recent, two years ago about now. How does that make you feel?**

Line 83 T1: That rat is running only a bit slowly,

Line 84 T2: it takes long, but it is good that it gets acknowledge.

Line 85 Me: **Your emotions? Earlier T3, you said discouraged.**

Line 86 T2: It doesn't really got an influence. I think I am too old now, they are still younger, let them...They allow it to have an influence.

Line 87 T1: It is good they acknowledge it, but the question is, are they going to do something about it?

Line 88 Me: **Principals welcomes changes announced in the curriculum statement.**

Line 89 T2: No, definitely not my principal, he doesn't like changes.

Line 90 Me: **That is excellent, I love that.**

Line 91 T2: No definitely not.

Line 92 Me: **Do you agree that principles have the final say in this, in the curriculums?**

Line 93 T2: No they don't have any say in the curriculum.

Line 94 Me: **Cape Times 2010, that was also quite recent, so something....**

Line 95 T2: Perhaps in Cape Town, yes perhaps there,

Line 96 T1: die steekproef was nie reg gedoen nie.

Line 97 T2: Always remember that Western Cape is your top province. Come and do the same here in Dordrecht, where we don't even have enough teachers?

Line 98 Me: **From a middle management position, would you agree with this kind of statement?**

Line 99 T2: I don't know.

Line 100 T1: I don't think so.

Line 101 T2: It all depends on what the changes are.

Line 102 Me: **Do you think principles are the only ones to be consulted about the curriculum or about the changes?**

Line 103 T2: No. It is the one in the class

Line 104 Me: **Final school curriculum has still not been released. This was The Times, January 2011.**

Line 105 T2: Shocking. It is going to be January 2013 and it will still not be released and the catalogues are not going to be released. They warned us in Queenstown last week.

Line 106 Me: **Conclusion. What do you think is our next step from here. Where do you think we should go, looking forward?**

Line 107 T2: Now you not only have to look for yourself, you have to look at education, ne.

Line 108 Me: **Yes.**

Line 109 T2: That is a very difficult one, because I can't see it out of their point of view, I don't understand.

Line 110 Me: **Your point of view. What must we do to go somewhere?**

Line 111 T2: I think there were good things out of this old curriculum thing. If you've got only the ability to get the good things and the new things together and they must just leave you. If this

Line 112 works for me, this way of education work here. Where I've got Afrikaans home language and additional language together in one classroom and I've settled this thing and it works for

Line 113 me. Just leave me alone. Let me do my thing and let me end up at the end of the year with what they asked me. I must have this and reach this and this, it's fine. But to try to teach me

Line 114 now to be a teacher like one in (place name) for example, who work only with Xhosa little children, there are just too many levels, that's all.

Line 115

Line 116 T1: I just think that as a teacher, I will have to implement, there is no way around it, you just have to implement it to the best of my ability. That is what I will have to do.

Line 117 T2: Yes, because we are back to six subjects next year.

Line 118 T1: At least the LOs and Asss aren't there, so that takes...

Line 119 T2: Nobody mentioned that.

Line 120 T3: Clusters is weg, ja gelukkig is dit weg. We need help, because as T2 said, we are in totally different situations. If schools like ours for instance Indwe and Eliot and we come together
Line 121 and work then we can learn from each other. We had 2 courses the last month or so and we learned absolutely nothing. We just realised how many books they have received and we
Line 122 didn't get it.

Line 123 T2: At the end of the day we end up with this whole thing. If you look at the end of the year, some years, some where, do you remember, we time we had to moderate each others books,
Line 124 boeke omgeruil by die klasse and this was with moderation and then you take a look at my book. Dis drie kwart vol gewerk. And then you take the next one and there is 4 or 5 pages
Line 125 written in there. That is the years work. Now they've set the paper up. We are complaining about this that they want to; intermediate phase must write from January until
Line 126 Novembers work, the whole year. Do you know how much work is that in my school?15:57 But if you take another school's books and you look at those books, then yes you can
Line 127 learn it. So actually I am coming back to say our levels are not the same. But when you look at the passing, puntestelsel, then their passing rate is higher than our school. How do you
Line 128 get these things together? So we will never ever get to the same level, because my children are working for their level, but get nothing for free.
Line 129

Line 130 T1: Your standard is higher.

Line 131 While the other one..., well I don't know. They don't even write exams, but they've got marks on there rappsports. Actually I think that is our biggest problem, is standard. I can give
Line 132 you another example. I've got the papers, I've got the rapportcards, I've got a girl in grade 5, just coming here out of the Transkei schools. She had 68% for Afrikaans. I've just
Line 133 marked her paper, she's got 1 % for Afrikaans. She can't even answer me a question in Afrikaans. If I asked her what is her name in Afrikaans, she can't even answer that, but she's
Line 134 got 68 % for Afrikaans. She's got 92 % for maths. She had 3 % last term months. We did find the school and actually the principle comes from Dordrecht. He promised us to go and
Line 135 do some research work on this child and send it to us, but I have never received it. You understand what I mean by levels? Now the parents think we are bad teachers. How can my
Line 136 child, this excellent rapportcard! And here the teacher says the child knows nothing. And I am the wrong one, they just think I am the wrong one and it brings me back to levels. We
Line 137 don't have the same level of education. We can forget about all curriculums, before we don't fix the level, we will never be successful. Getting new children in from ... whew, whew.
Line 138 The first six months, all they speak is Xhosa.

Line 139 Me: **Thank you very much. I appreciate you guys for coming. I think I have learned a lot and I have got lots to say and write.**

Semi-structured interview: Anna

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH ANNA

Line 1 **Me: What are your responsibilities as an HOD?**

Line 2 Anna: Moderating files of the subjects, I am in charge of the IQMS, overseeing basically discipline; in charge of the discipline, making sure that detention is done, who is in charge of
Line 3 detention, what days. That is basically it.

Line 4 **Me: What do you like about your work?**

Line 5 Anna: The challenges. I would say the challenges, it is mentally challenging. For if the principle is not there, you are basically second in charge, so you have to sort out the stuff and if
Line 6 there is conflict, you have to solve the conflict, it keeps your mind up and going.

Line 7 **Me: What aspects of your work are less enjoyable than the ones described in your answer just now.**

Line 8 Anna: Going to staff member and telling them they must see to it that they are on time. Going to staff member and telling them they must think twice before taking leave, the conflict that
Line 9 can arise, that is not nice.

Line 10 **Me: How do you feel when a change in the curriculum is announced? Like what I said when they announced it in the newspapers and things, how do you feel about that?**

Line 11

Line 12 Anna: Sometimes you are frustrated, because the new curriculum brings new stuff, it brings new ways of doing stuff and it is not one subject that I moderate, it is about 5 of 6 different
Line 13 subjects and 5 or 6 different teachers and then I have to stay on top of everyone's requirements. The number of tests that they must write in, the marks they must up/write in and that
Line 14 is quite difficult.

Line 15 **Me: What are the procedures that you follow when a change is brought about in the curriculum?**

Line 16 The correct one or the one we do at school?

Line 17 **Me: How do you do it, not what they say we must do it. We are interested in how you guys do it?**

Line 18 Anna: Making sure that the teachers get the new documents. Make sure that they understand it and then once you moderate their work and go through their work, you will check and make
Line 19 sure that it complies with what is required according to the policies or assessment guidelines or whatever. And give feedback and show what changes must be made to bring it up to
Line 20 standard

Line 21 **Me: With regards to CAPS, how did you guys go about implementing this?**

Line 22 Anna: After we went to the training courses? Basically it was exactly the same. The teachers, each one of us were equipped and then the agencies went and checked the CAPS documents
Line 23 to see whether all the requirements were met. All the test, were all the controlled tests done and all the assignments done, was it the correct marks, totals.

Line 24 **Me: I am deviating a bit. The workshops, how did you find the workshops, do you think they enabled you to do your job more proficiently?**

Line 25 Anna: In a way yes and in a way no. No, I think the time that it took, the workshop was 3 days. I think in half a day they could basically give us the summary. Yes in a way that if you find
Line 26 it difficult to implement something, they did give you the guidelines. What was good about it is that they gave you the practice; they gave you tutorials that you have to work out and
Line 27 worksheets and in that, in that sense it was quite good.

Line 28 **Me: How did you learn or developed these procedures of giving the new materials and then give them to the teachers and making sure they understand and then you moderate
Line 29 this and then you give them feedback. How did you come to develop this?**

Line 30 Anna: Through trial and error. We wouldn't have any guidance on it, there was no guidance. It was basically just what I do and how the teachers I work with, who I have to moderate, how
Line 31 it looks and what is in it, is a reflection of me.

Line 32 **Me: How do you motivate yourself to continue adapting to these curriculum changes?**

Line 33 Anna: I don't think I am a negative person. I can always try and see the good in something and I know what work and then I hope you find that in the new curriculum there must be
Line 34 something that will work and you combine the two. I also think that the more positive you are about a situation, the more positive you are going to influence the people you are
Line 35 working with. So it does not help to have a negative attitude.

Line 36 **Me: How do you perceive the reactions of the teachers within your department when the curriculum changes?**

Line 37 Anna: I acknowledge the negative way they feel, but then we try and built it into something positive. Again it boils down to the thing, that if you are not positive to what you must do and
Line 38 what you must implement, your thing is going to fail, the whole system is going to fail. But the most important thing I think, is to listen and to try and understand and see if you
Line 40 cannot work with what they are unhappy with.

Line 41 **Me: How do you motivate and assist the teachers in your department when changes occur or when the negativity comes, what do you do to help them?**

Line 42 Anna: I try to encourage them, see if I can help them where they are stuck. Often they will come to me when they have assignments and stuff they are unsure of, and will go through it and
Line 43 I will give them advise and we will discuss it, but most of the time I think when the teachers are negative, they just need a soundboard, they just need to get rid of what they feel and
Line 44 then often they will pick up from where they left and built back on it.

Line 45 **Me: What is your view of school in 2025?**

Line 46 Anna:

Line 47 I was actually worrying about quite a bit. I was actually wondering if we will be replaced by more computerised tutors where each student can advance according to his ability. I
Line 48 know they have started implementing it at the flight school in Fort Beaufort where if I was a stronger pupil, I can go at my pace if I am quicker than whoever is slower than I am.

Line 49 **Me: Is there anything you want to add about the curriculum changes, how you feel about them?**

Line 50 Anna: I actually think it is basically going back to the old curriculum and I think it is definitely better than it is now. The only thing that worries me with CASS was the group work. At
Line 51 this stage I am not sure how much group work there is in CAPS, I think it is going to be less. But that was a bad thing, because I felt that the stronger pupil does all the work and the
Line 52 weak ones gets the same mark.

Line 53 **Me: So you are happy that the group work is less in the new curriculum?**

Line 54 Anna: Yes, much happier.

Line 55 **Me: So you will say there is improvement.**

Line 56 Anna: Yes, there is definitely improvement.

Line 57 **Me: And this improvement, do you think when the teachers are reading these new documents and they are going for the training, do you think they are more positive than when,
Line 58 say curriculum 2005 was released?**

Line 59 Anna: I would say they are definitely more positive with the fact that, those assessment standards, that they have done away with them, in that area I definitely think. It is much easier to
Line 60 read and understand also because there is a lot less paper work.

Line 61 **Me: What I have noticed out of the readings that I did with the other interviews and things is that the people speak a lot about confusion. That they are confused now or ...?
Line 62**

Line 63 Anna: With the new CAPS coming in?

Line 64 **Me: Yes, do you think it is creating confusion were you are or ...?**

Line 65 Anna: I think it is because it is something new and I think we are all afraid of something new. I think that is what might cause the confusion. My grade 10s is the first that are now doing
Line 66 the new curriculum and in a way yes, you are unsure, there might be a bit of confusion, but I think in the end it is going to be better than CASS.

Appendix 5: Development of themes

List of recurring words:

School 1

Words or phrases	Occurrences more than once	Link to themes (if any)
Priority of education	✓✓✓	Quality of education
Confusion	✓✓✓✓✓	Confusion about changes
Don't know what to do	✓	Confusion about changes
Effect of changes		
Why change		Traditional methods of teaching
No difference in the curriculum	✓	Traditional methods of teaching
Something new	✓✓✓	Traditional methods of teaching
Excited		
Curious		Traditional methods of teaching
Assessment is traditional	✓✓	Traditional methods of teaching
Paperwork		
Too much		
Challenges		
Many changes		
Feeling bad		Confusion about changes
Nothing that you know		Confusion about changes
Always change		
Right education		
Failed curriculum		
Learners don't know		Confusion about changes
Change in children		
"I don't know"	✓✓✓✓✓	Confusion about changes
We must accept	✓✓	Quality of education
New curriculum make simpler		Traditional methods of teaching
All stakeholders should agree		
CAPS must be final	✓✓✓✓	Quality of education
10 years to test curriculum		Quality of education

School 2

Words or phrases	Occurrences more than once	Link to themes (if any)
Aim on quality	✓	Quality of education
Feel good, relieved, safe	✓	
Not successful in South Africa	✓	Quality of education
No effect		Traditional methods of teaching
No influence		Traditional methods of teaching
Can do it		
Something new		Traditional methods of teaching
Take the good		Traditional methods of teaching
Go on with the old	✓✓✓✓	Traditional methods of teaching
Confusion	✓✓✓✓	Confusion about changes
Don't understand		Confusion about changes
Too much admin	✓	Confusion about changes
Too little time		Confusion about changes
Big classes		Confusion about changes
Student exposure		Quality of education
Dropped standard to accommodate	✓	
Planning better		Quality of education
Nothing really changed		Traditional methods of teaching
Frustration		Confusion about changes
Disappointment		Confusion about changes
No books	✓✓✓✓	Confusion about changes
Personal time for training		Confusion about changes
Other provinces better	✓✓✓	Quality of education
Discouraging		Confusion about changes
If it doesn't work, change		Quality of education
Curriculum writers has no experience		Confusion about changes
Ground level implementers know what works	✓✓	Quality of education
Ignoring us	✓	Quality of education
Too long		
I am too old to bother		Traditional methods of teaching
What are they doing?		
My principal doesn't like change	✓✓	Quality of education
Principals have no say		
Don't understand		Confusion about changes
Leave me alone		
No choice		

The Big Six

1. Priority (yellow)
2. Confusion (green)
3. No difference (blue)
4. New (pink)
5. Acceptance (dark blue)
6. Final (red)

Appendix 6: Documents

Document 1: IQMS implementation quarterly report

EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: LADY FRERE DISTRICT: IQMS IMPLEMENTATION QUARTERLY REPORT

(Submit to the District Office by the 22nd July 2011)

NAME OF SCHOOL: [REDACTED] CIRCUIT No.: [REDACTED]

REPORT FOR QUARTER ENDING 30 JUNE 2011

1. FUNCTIONALITY OF STRUCTURES:

1.1 The Staff Development Team (SDT):

1.1.1 Did your school submit a copy of the report for the quarter ending 31 March 2011 as requested? Yes If 'No', Please attach a copy of the outstanding report.

1.1.2 Give a brief but informative account on the following aspects:

1.1.2.1 List tasks undertaken by the SDT in discharging its responsibilities during the period January to June 2011:

Support given to new teachers; support given to teachers during meetings; SMT meetings are held to improve discipline of teachers and pupils; had to discuss to develop teachers with problems; SMT meetings held on a month; development of teachers

1.1.2.2 Indicate the extent to which the IQMS School Improvement Plan has been implemented and challenges (if any) during the period January to June 2011:

Developing, mentoring and support given to new and existing teachers. Internal peer control and moderation is done to improve and guide teachers. Support to teachers

1.1.2.3 Attach a copy of the 2011 summative evaluation time-table as directed in the school calendar.

1.2. The Development Support Groups (DSG)

1.2.1 Indicate the number of teachers observed in practice by DSG members in April: 0 May: 0 June: 0

1.2.2 Number of DSGs which held developmental meetings in April: 3 May: 3 June: 3

2. GENERAL COMMENTS:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

	INITIALS AND SURNAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
IQMS COORDINATOR:	20/5/11
PRINCIPAL:

Document 2: Feedback to teacher A

[REDACTED]
Skryf net jou assessment plan oor in pen as jy kansie kry.
Onthou om jou eksamen vraestel en memo in te sit.
Kry vir Hlanga Bani se toets 23/50 i.p.v. 22/50. Loer net.
Kry vir Yolanda Hotele 33/50 i.p.v. 32/50. Loer net.

[REDACTED]
Skryf net jou assessment plan oor in pen as jy kansie kry.
Onthou om jou eksamen vraestel en memo in te sit.
Onthou om tydsduur aan te dui op jou toetse en werkstukke aan te dui.
Graad 11 Maths Lit assignment nie in master portfolio nie.
Kyk of jy meer oefeninge vir die leerlinge kan gee, bietjie min in hul werkboek.

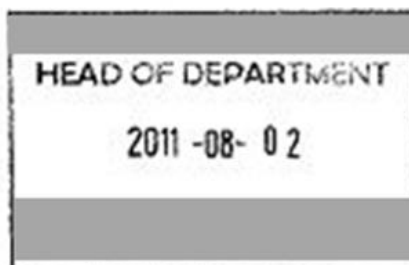
[REDACTED]
Onthou om jou eksamen vraestel en memo in te sit.
File jou praktiese ook in jou master portfolio.
Kyk of jy ander kwartale se lesson plans kan kry.
Stuur asb vir my Ann en Viwe se praktiese boeke – ignoreer asb as ek dit in tussentyd al gesien het.

[REDACTED]
Kry net vorige kwartaal se projek by Emma en file asb.
Voltooi puntelyste voor in die leerder portfolios.

[REDACTED]
Kyk asb of ek vraestel 2 gemodureer het, ek dink nie so nie.

Baie dankie vir jou harde en goeie werk asook jou bereidwilligheid om altyd te help.

— positive reinforcement



Document 3: Feedback to teacher B

Master file baie netjies, groot hoeveelheid werk gedoen in die leeders se werkboeke, toetse van hoë standaard. Mens kan sien jy sit baie tyd in met jou leerlinge. Jou kommentaar wat jy vir leerlinge skryf en jou terugvoering ook uitstekend. Baie dankie vir al die ekstra klasse waar jy die leerlinge help.

Onthou net om jou work schedules in jou masterfile in te sit. Loer ook asb net want ek kon nie term 2 investigation in jou graad 8 file kry nie. Term 3 test 2 kon e kook nie daar kry nie.

Document 4: Feedback to teacher C

22 Junie 2011

Ek is dankbaar vir die positiewe gesindheid van albei die nuwe juffrouens. Sien kritiek asseblief altyd as opbouwende hulp en nie as negatiewe kritiek nie. Alles gaan uiteindelik vir die beste onderrig vir die kind.

asking that critique be viewed as positive

Daar kan aan die volgende aandag gegee word:

1. **Nasien van boeke** moet op 'n gereelde basis gedoen word. So hou jy jou vinger op die kind se werk en kan foute dadelik reggestel word.
2. **Assesseringswerk:** gee aandag aan uitstaande take. Maak seker dat jy bewyse het dat die kind nie opdaag om agterstallige werk in te haal nie. Iets soos lees kan gou tydens 'n periode gedoen word. As ek nie my boeke gereeld nasien nie, is ek nie bewus van uitstaande werk nie.
3. **Toetse.** Toetse moenie 10 punte tel nie. 'n Klastoets kan dit wel tel, maar dit is te min leerwerk vir leerder. Ons moet hulle blootstel aan meer werk.
4. Moenie die werk so verminder dat daar omtrent niks oor is nie. Gee hier aandag aan die LO's en assesseringsstandaarde. Dit moet gedek word, anders het die kind nie genoeg kennis van die betrokke LO nie. Dit is dan ook wanneer daar te gou deur die werk gegaan word en jy nie jou tyd voluit kan benut nie.
5. Jy **MOET** die volle periode besig wees. As jou gekose taak klaar is, haal handboek uit en hersien/ gaan aan met môre se werk. As dit 'n taal is, laat hulle in groepe hardop lees; gesels in Afrikaans met hulle. Hersien daardie "iets" waarmee hulle nog sukkel; herhaal van die vorige dag se werk, ens.
6. **Handboeke:** Fotostateer aan die begin van die kwartaal jou kwartaal se werk. Asseblief, 100% grote en aan weerskante van bladsy. (so ver as moontlik, asb.) Krimp die bladsye vas en laat leerder dit in 'n sakkie sit. Dit kan dan aan die einde van die jaar weer ingeneem word totdat ons handboeke het. Onthou, handboeke wat weggraak moet betaal word, R120.00 per boek. Leerder moet die kwitansie vir jou wys om 'n ander een te kry. Ons onderstreep; krap, ens. nie in handboeke nie. As daar onderstreep moet word, doen dit dan asb. netjies met 'n liniaal.
7. **Netheid van boeke:** Boeke se netheid kort baie aandag. Dit moet opskrifte, datums, nommers, bladsynommers ens. hê. Dit moet netjies uiteengesit wees. GEEN mens kan 'n deurmekaarboek merk/ kontroleer of daaruit leer nie.
8. **Werksboeke:** Dit is 'n werksboek en daar moet in gewerk word. Ons kan nie die boek vol fotostate plak nie. Dan voldoen die boek nie aan sy naam nie. Ons moderators is baie gesteld op 'n werksboek, want dit wys WAT jy gedoen het. Hier is dan jou vrae, antwoorde, oefen voor assessorie ens. in. As ek hulle leer om 'n brief te skryf, moet hulle dit eers iewers oefen en dan vir ass. doen. As ek hulle leer hoe om % uit te werk, moet ons eers 'n paar voorbeelde daarvan doen, ens.

9. **Punte:** Jy moet probeer om jou take so op te stel dat jy nie nodig het om 10 punte na 25 punte te verwerk nie; dit kan eerder andersom wees. Assesseer hierdie jaar se werk, en nie die vorige jaar se werk nie.
10. **Take:** Die voorgeskrewe werk is die **minimum** wat jy moet doen. Breek jou take op en doen bv. elke tweede week iets. Onthou, dit is "continuous assessment." Jy kan dus nie een taak in 8 weke doen nie.
11. **Groepswerk:** Wees baie versigtig met die beplanning hiervan. Jy skep valse hoop by kinders wat bv. swak is. Doen groepswerk, maar daar moet altyd iets wees wat leerder alleen doen sodat jy sy potensiaal ook kan toets.

Ek wil dit weereens beklemtoon. As jy nie van die hulp wat aan jou gebied word gebruik maak nie, gaan jy jouself vasdraai. Hoe gaan jy leer as jy nie vra nie? Ons stel wel hoë eise aan julle, maar ons moet julle help om dit te bereik. Ek, en die ander ouer kollegas is altyd daar vir julle. Maak gebruik daarvan, asseblief. Dit neem druk van ons albei af en sodoende kan ons ons beste lewer vir die kind.

ask for assistance is key

Document 5: Moderation tool

Doc 5



MODERATION TOOL

EDUCATOR: _____
 DISTRICT: LADY FRERE
 SUBJECT: EMS

DATE: 15/03
 NO OF LEARNERS: 34
 GRADE: 7

NO. OF PORTFOLIOS SUBMITTED: 6

NAME OF LEARNERS:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

	MASTER PORTFOLIO	Y/N
1.1	Is the portfolio logically arranged: cover page, index, timetable?	y
1.2	Is the time allocation in line with policy requirements?	y
1.3	Are Assessment plans prepared according to policy?	y
1.4	Are Learner Programmes, Work Schedule and Lesson Plans available and in line with policy?	y
1.5	Do the Tasks reflect all required forms of Assessment plan?	y
1.6	Are LO's and ASS's indicated in the Assessment Tasks?	y
1.7	Are assessment tools relevant, correct to tasks given?	y
1.8	Is the standard, quality, content coverage of tasks satisfactory?	y
1.9	Are alphabetical recording sheets included?	y

COMMENTS: Investigation must be cut of 25 on recording sheet
Control test must be cut of 100.

EDUCATOR: _____
 HOD: _____
 PRINCIPAL: _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE 15/3/12
10/2/06/22

PRINCIPAL
 2012-06-22

Document 6: School moderation tool

Doc b



Province of the Eastern Cape
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ISEBE LEZEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS
SCHOOL MODERATION TOOL

DISTRICT	Lady Frere	EXAM CENTRE	[Redacted]
SCHOOL	[Redacted]	GRADE	[Redacted]
EDUCATOR	[Redacted]	SUBJECT	[Redacted]

1. INDICATION OF CASS PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT

1 st Term Components	Expected No	Actual No	2 nd Term Components	Expected No	Actual No	3 rd Term Components	Expected No	Actual No
Test	1	2	Test	1	1			
Practical	1	0	Theory	1	1			
			Practical	1	1			

Comments by HOD

Nest and organised. Mistakes on worksheet, just fix it up. Observer pic → pic of whole year assessment

[Redacted]

HOD Initial & Surname

[Redacted]

Teacher Initial & Surname

[Redacted]

HOD Signature

[Redacted]

Teacher Signature

2/3/16

Date

20/3/2016

Date