

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

The conclusion to the research is presented under sub-headings that refer to specific aspects of the research, namely syllabus implementation by school heads, syllabus implementation by teachers, and indigenous musical arts and integration of content.

6.1.1 On syllabus implementation by school heads

The fact that teachers and school heads raise grave concerns on implementation strategies does not in any way paint a gloomy picture about the current situation in schools with regard to the teaching and learning of Creative and Performing Arts. Both teachers and schools heads are optimistic that intervention by authorities could change the situation for the better. They have not lost hope about the successes that could be scored if certain concerns are addressed as a matter of urgency.

The recognition by both teachers and schools heads that the subject is interesting to pupils and teachers, and also that it is good and develops practical skills is something positive, and shows that there is a high likelihood of both teachers and school heads applying themselves more than they have hitherto done. Such self-application will make the implementation of the syllabus more effective, and ensures that the aims of the primary school curriculum in general, and the aims of the Creative and Performing syllabus in particular, are addressed.

Schools heads may not feel a sense of ownership of the syllabus because they were not involved fully from the outset in a way that recognizes their crucial role in curriculum implementation. They are however, duty-bound to see to the successful implementation of the syllabus, since they are directly and administratively responsible for all that takes place in their schools. School heads however, feel it is not too late to involve them in the ongoing implementation, and are well disposed and poised to apply themselves constructively in further implementation efforts.

Had consideration been given to strategies and evaluation approaches to be eventually employed in the evaluating the implementation of the syllabus, then the active participation of school heads would have been dictated by the management-oriented model. As school managers, school heads carry the heavy burden of curriculum implementation, and their crucial role would have therefore been recognized from the inception of the programme by having them attend the orientation and implementation workshops. The participation of teachers from that point onwards would ensure that they are conversant with what is taking place in their schools in terms of the delivery of the revised primary school curriculum in general and the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus in particular.

6.1.2 On syllabus implementation by teachers

The vast majority of the teachers in the primary schools hold the Diploma in Primary Education as their highest qualification. Although having qualified as teachers at different times, even the newly qualified teachers are expressing the fact that they face a huge challenge in teaching Creative and Performing Arts

which they all have to teach irrespective of their areas of specialization at training. For example, some teachers specialized in special education, while some have specialized in one of the areas in the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus, that is, music, design and technology, art and craft, and physical education. As a result some teachers feel inadequate and have, for that reason, suggested being provided with in-service training.

The suggestion that more time be allocated to Creative and Performing Arts is problematic in view of the fact that all curriculum subjects are competing for limited time slots in the school time-table. The time is already at a premium. However, alternatives could be considered after close scrutiny of the syllabus so that the content that should be covered within a specified time is reasonable. The involvement of the teachers in the implementation workshops coupled with the fact that they are the people on the ground directly tasked with the delivery of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus may bring them closer to the syllabus, as compared to the school heads who feel that their position as the school administrators has not received due recognition by the implementing authorities.

Also of major significance in the implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus is the community. The syllabus contains quite a substantial amount of content from indigenous culture, which exist in abundance in the community. The community is therefore a source of valuable knowledge in the indigenous arts, including the musical arts and have a role to play in implementing a syllabus with a content on indigenous arts. Arguably, members of the community could play an

important part in the implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus. What could probably be a concern is the extent to which the community could participate in the implementation of the syllabus given the educational background of some members of the community. A pertinent question which may rightly form the basis for future research in an integrated teaching of arts that draws a lot from the community is: To what extent could the community participate in the implementation of an integrated indigenous arts programme?

The implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus is at an advanced stage. In 2007, the first cohort of standard 7 pupils will be sitting the first ever Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) in Creative and Performing Arts. It would therefore be counter-productive to stop the on-going programme in order to start afresh with a pilot programme in selected schools. There is simply no turning back. However one cannot help but wonder why the implementation was not put through a pilot since the whole undertaking is an execution of a major education reform and marks a concerted effort on the part of government to promote arts education in post-independent Botswana. In fact the ongoing implementation exercise has taken the place of a pilot since the kind of difficulties that school heads and teachers have experienced are typical of any programme in a trial phase.

6.1.3 On indigenous musical arts and integration of content

One is bound to believe, judging by the indigenous musical arts that teachers have stated they cover in their lessons, that

some integrated approach, albeit not in depth, could be taking place after all. However, it may be very limited in both depth and scope owing to the teachers' own limited knowledge about the interrelationship that exists between the indigenous musical arts in microcosm and the creative and performing arts in macrocosm.

By suggesting that specialist teachers in the subject areas from which Creative and Performing Arts draws its content – i.e. music, design and technology, physical education and art craft and design – specialize in the teaching of those subjects, teachers seem to be oblivious to the fact that the subjects should be integrated and not stand out as individual subjects.

The conclusion that integration is taking place, although not as effectively as it should be, is further inspired by the realization that traditionally musical performance in the various communities in Botswana integrates the various musical arts in a way that features various elements. These elements include design - e.g. in costume design (*paka*) and the formation assumed by the performers in the performance space (*thulaganyo ya dibini le diopedi*) - and aspects of creative self-expression and performance - e.g. in singing (*moopelo*), dancing (*mmino*), clapping (*go opa diatla*), poetry (*poko*) and drama (*mothsameko*).

A major cause of the ineffective integration of content is that the teaching of content in the syllabus is largely fragmented, meaning that the various subject areas from which content is drawn are treated individually and taught as such. Teaching the various content areas as isolated units, that is, detached from

others or only being able to integrate two out of the four content areas, as has been found out with respect to music and physical education, denies the learner the full benefits of the subject being addressed as one.

The teachers' views on what content of the syllabus could be integrated with indigenous musical arts is to a great extent influenced by the organization of content in the syllabus. One can draw a link between the teachers' tendency to be mainly able to make a connection or relationship between indigenous musical arts and physical education. The link is in the manner in which music and physical education occur in the syllabus. They occur together with drama and dance under module 3 (Listening, Composing and Performing). There is therefore a propensity on the part of the teachers not to extend the relationship between music in module 3 (Listening, Composing and Performing) with the content in other modules, namely module 1 (Health and Safety), module 2 (Communication) and module 4 (Designing and Making).

Figure 6.1.3 illustrates that music could be the basis for introducing the principles of Designing and Making, Communication, Health and Safety, and Listening, Composing and Performing as presented in the four modules in the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus. Once these have been achieved in music, they could be extended to the other areas of Design and Technology, Physical Education, and Art and Craft. This kind of approach is what is lacking in the teaching and learning of the arts. If recognized and applied, this approach should enable teachers of arts to achieve integration in their teaching. What is needed is an integrated teaching of the arts

that recognizes indigenous musical arts as the binding force between the different artforms

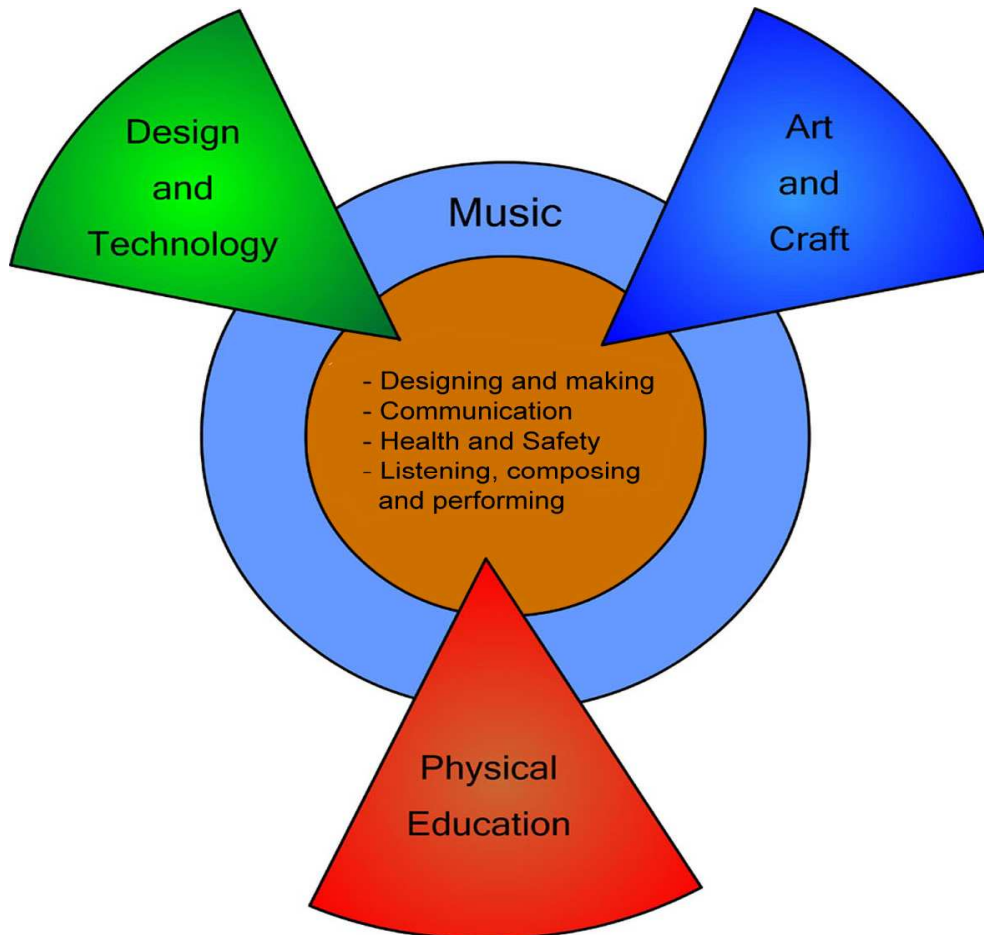


Figure 6.1.3

Themes in designing and making, communication, health and safety, and listening and performing are first introduced in music and then extended to design and technology, art and craft, and physical education.

In view of the fact that school heads and teachers have been actively involved in the implementation of the syllabus since its inception, it would only be sensible to build on the positive disposition that they have displayed. It is therefore advisable to seriously consider their suggestions since they sincerely

believe that if executed, their suggestions would improve the implementation. After all they have had firsthand experience of the implementation.

The musical arts content in the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus, as stated in part 1 of this chapter, is representative of the indigenous culture of the Batswana. It therefore means that, the musical arts covered in the syllabus are indigenous to Botswana. It has emerged from the content analysis of the syllabus that, the content is not Western in orientation and character, as had been observed when putting together the proposal for this research. The fact of the matter is that the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus follows a Western model, the model of an arts programme that has been mainly followed in the United Kingdom, and to some extent, in Australia as well. The model simply provides a guide, but strictly speaking, in terms of content, the syllabus has local flavour and has been designed such that it, as much as possible, taps local resources to render it culturally relevant and meaningful.

Drawing upon local resources from indigenous culture would enhance learner-centered learning, as the learner naturally identifies with what he or she has experienced from home and the community. The learner would therefore not be at a loss in comprehending the concepts that are being introduced in the classroom once there is an association of such concepts with what obtains in the indigenous culture.

The implementation workshops for teachers are a positive feature of the implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus. However, the workshops do not fully address the

needs of the teachers with respect to their delivery of the syllabus as evidenced by their long-standing concerns over the syllabus itself. One would hope that since the implementation of the syllabus has been gradual, starting with the lowest level (that is, standard one and proceeding to the next level up every year) the implementing department in the Ministry of Education would have by now carried out formative evaluation of implementation at the lower levels in order to be informed of the teachers' immediate needs at upper levels. Still on implementation, the logic of introducing Creative and Performing Arts at standard five in 2005 is not clear and it interrupts the smooth progression and gradual phasing in of the subject from lower primary level to upper primary level.

Contrary to Carl's findings (1995:167) with respect to effective curriculum implementation, there is no evidence to suggest that a concerted effort has been made to ensure the successful implementation of the syllabus by paying attention to the crucial determinative factors for syllabus implementation as outlined by Carl, which are:

- Continuous contact with consumers to give advice and help
- Clear communication to illustrate roles, to explain terminology, to illustrate possible means of evaluation and to supply answers to queries
- Provision of support services.

6.2 Recommendations

In the light of the observations made with regard to the findings of this research and the conclusions drawn from it, the recommendations are advanced under the following sub-

headings: syllabus review, subject panels, procurement of books and equipment, programme monitoring, provision of resources, in-service training, and further research.

6.2.1 Syllabus review

- The syllabus should be reviewed with a view to achieving the following:
 - Common themes should be identified and given prominence throughout the syllabus in order to achieve maximum integration of the subject matter across the different modules in the syllabus.
 - Content on performance of traditional music should stress the significance of costume. The costume is so important in traditional dance to the extent that a performer could be easily identified by their costume. Costume design could then be covered in more detail under topics on designing and making.

6.2.2 Subject panels

- The Panel for Creative and Performing Arts should comprise more primary school teachers, rather than teachers and personnel from other institutions, since they offer the subject and can therefore contribute significantly towards further development of the subject by drawing upon their personal and professional experiences of teaching the subject.

6.2.3 Procurement of books and equipment

- The process of communication between the various stakeholders involved in the prescription of books and

equipment, the schools that are responsible for making requisition of books and equipment, and the education authorities in the town and district councils should be expedited so that schools' administrators get to know in time what titles have been recommended for both the learners and the teachers. Further to this, the process of the procurement of books should start timeously so as to avoid the situation where schools wait for too long for books, in some cases pupils proceed to the next level before books are available.

6.2.4 Programme monitoring

- Top managers in the Ministry of Education, especially in the department of Primary Education, should undertake a tour of some primary schools in the rural, semi-urban and urban schools to observe first hand the situation on the ground regarding the implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus. Such visits to schools should be regular as they would help with monitoring and managing the implementation of the syllabus. These should be done in consultation with the department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation and other stakeholders. Any evaluation of the programme that should follow later should be based on carefully selected evaluation approaches to guide it.
- Since the implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus is a nation-wide programme, it would place a lot of strain on Education Officers who may have little understanding of arts education. There is therefore a need to train on the job the Officers who are currently serving,

as well as appoint suitably qualified individuals as Education Officers for practical subjects in appropriate departments such as Primary Education and Teacher Training and Development. Such Officers would be able to assist when schools appeal to them for support.

6.2.5 Minimum equipment list

- Whilst there are serious financial implications for the acquisition of the necessary facilities needed for the effective implementation of the Creative and Performing Arts in the primary schools, which could be considered in the long term plans, there is an urgent need to work out a minimum equipment list for the schools. The list should provide a guide on what equipment should be acquired by the schools and then be made available to the schools as soon as it is practicable to do so. With such a list, at least the schools' bare minimum of what is needed for the subject would be met.

6.2.6 In-service training

- In view of the high number of teachers who hold a Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC) qualification and lower qualifications, and also in view of the fact that Creative and Performing Arts is a new subject in the primary school curriculum, there is need to conduct a needs assessment for any future in-service training programmes so that such training is oriented towards, and aims to meet, the teachers' urgent needs.

6.2.7 Utilization of local human resource and community participation

- Schools should be encouraged to approach and request the services of individuals who are experts in different aspects of the indigenous musical arts from the local community. Such people could be singers, dancers, instrumentalists, actors and so forth.

6.2.8 Further research

- Further research in the area of the integration of indigenous musical arts into the Creative and Performing Arts syllabus is certainly needed, but should focus on specific aspects of the syllabus. Possible aspects for further research include the following:
 - Investigation into approaches to the integrated teaching of content in Creative and Performing Arts.
 - Evaluation of instructional materials for Creative and Performing Arts.
 - Needs assessment for in-service training of teachers of Creative and Performing Arts.
 - An investigation into the philosophy and theory that inform indigenous musical arts practice as well as content in the indigenous musical arts as the cornerstone for integrated arts education in the primary schools.



- The extent to which the community could participate in the implementation of an integrated indigenous arts programme.