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CHAPTER 10

Role of curriculum leadership in promoting effective education by designing and implementing school-based curriculum in South African secondary schools

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Abstract

This study explores the role of curriculum leadership in promoting effective education through designing and implementing school-based curriculum in South African secondary schools. Effective curriculum leadership is deemed to facilitate the designing and implementation of a school-based curriculum in fostering the integration of societal context in the national curriculum. Literature suggests that effective education can be attained through the implementation of school-based curriculum because it plays a key

role in enhancing the responsiveness of education to the unique contexts of specific needs and challenges of the school and society. Presently, the school management teams, through the principal's leadership, ensure that a school-based curriculum is developed and implemented. However, despite the critical importance of school-based curriculum in enhancing effective education, the South African Schools' Act (SASA) does not include curriculum leadership as jointly responsible for designing and implementing a school-based curriculum with the school management team. As a result, this exclusion of curriculum leadership in the school management teams' responsibilities of designing a school-based curriculum poses a potential obstacle to attaining effective education in schools. The study used the factor analysis approach to analyse data collected from 81 teachers in 40 secondary schools in the North-West Province. The findings reveal that curriculum leadership is insignificant in designing school-based curriculum. The study concludes that implementing a school-based curriculum through sound curriculum leadership practices is necessary for achieving effective education in schools. Strategies for promoting school-based curriculum through curriculum leadership are drawn and recommended for possible policy consideration and inclusion in the SASA.

Keywords: *Curriculum leadership, school-based curriculum, effective education*

10.1 Introduction

This study aims to investigate the role of curriculum leadership in promoting effective education by designing and implementing school-based curriculum in South African secondary schools.

Horner Sugai and Fixsen (2017) explain that implementing effective education practices require a shared understanding of the practice, its application, and its implications in different contexts. Building on the views of Horner *et al.* (2017), this study premises on the assumption that curriculum leadership ensures effective education in South African secondary schools by designing and implementing the school-based curriculum. Wiyono (2018) defines a curriculum as an educational program that is prepared and carried out to meet the purpose of education in schools. It is inferred that curriculum leadership practices in implementing a school-based curriculum are crucial for effective education. Curriculum relates to all the educational opportunities offered to learners under the control of the school (Wiyono, 2018). Curriculum leadership is multi-level and multifaceted by nature. Shan (2021) observed that curriculum leadership can be found at the organisational, classroom, individual, and social interaction levels. Wiles (2009) avers that from the perspective of social relationships, curriculum leadership relates to interactions and communication between the stakeholders inside and outside the schools. This suggests that curriculum leadership roles are not limited to the school confinements but include stakeholders outside the school, like parents and school governing bodies (SGB). Sheikh Mohammadi and Khalkhali (2018) affirm that curriculum leadership involves developing a school-based curriculum in the schools that is specific to the needs of the learners. Given the above elucidations, this study examines the role of curriculum leadership in designing and implementing a school-based curriculum in the South African context.

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According to Wiyono (2018), school-based curriculum encompasses endeavours to raise education quality by incorporating societal demands, conditions, and development. This means that integrating school-based curriculum into educational outcomes endows the educational unit with the requisite independence and autonomy to incorporate the contextual attributes of the society. Thus, a school-based curriculum is important for reinforcing curriculum creation and actualisation. Regarding education management practices in schools, such involvements are mainly to improve effective education through efficient use of all school resources, both internally and externally. Despite the importance of school-based curriculum, there appears to be a continued misunderstanding of the significance of curriculum leadership in enhancing and supporting effective education. The term “curriculum leadership” first appeared in 1952 in Hary Paso’s “Group-centered curriculum leadership” (Gao & Han, 2020). This suggests that the term curriculum leadership has existed in literature for more than seven decades. Though the word “curriculum leadership” has been theorised in literature, it is unclear how the term should be conceptualised (Lee, 2020). Sorenson, Goldsmith, Méndez & Maxwell (2011) assert that curriculum leadership has no clear definition. It can therefore be inferred from literature that there is a limited understanding of matters concerning curriculum leadership. Sorenson *et al.* (2011) puts this point clearly by linking the term curriculum leadership to the elephant and the blind men tale. Sorenson *et al.* (2011) illustrated that, when granted an opportunity to touch the elephant, each blind man feels a different portion of the elephant. Depending on the part of the elephant they have touched, they have varied definitions of curriculum

leadership. Considering the above illustration, this study thus aims to investigate the role played by curriculum leadership in supporting effective education through the school-based curriculum.

Gao and Han (2020) define curriculum leadership as a team of curriculum workers tasked with assisting in the improvement of education, build the capacity to come up with novel ideas and widen the collaborative process of curriculum development. This is linked to Wiles (2009), who posits that defining curriculum leadership at the social relationship level speaks about contacts and communication between stakeholders with interest within and outside the school. This affirms that the term curriculum leadership relates to the participation of stakeholders like the parents and the community. Therefore, the above statement infers that the concept of curriculum leadership should encompass stakeholders of the school.

10.2 Problem statement

Curriculum leadership is a concept adopted with the purpose of raising school education standards (Ganyaupfu, 2013; Singh, 2018). Curriculum leadership is a concept that promotes distributed leadership in the schools, especially in matters concerning the curriculum (DeMatthews, 2014). The other key point worth noting about curriculum leadership is that it advocates for the involvement of both internal and external stakeholders in the development of the school-based curriculum to ensure that benefits gained are towards the schools and the community (Jorgenson, 2012). Curriculum leadership promotes the design and implementation of a school-based curriculum to ensure

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learners' needs are addressed in a school (Mohammadi and Khalkhali, 2018). This entails that a school-based curriculum embodies distributed leadership of the curriculum to embrace contextual knowledge systems and experiences. Some countries have adopted curriculum leadership to improve learner performance and the standard of education through the participation of stakeholders in the development and design of a school-based curriculum (Chen, Fan, Guo & Kang, 2020; Lee, 2020). As expressed by Leong, Sim, and Chua (2011) the view held by Skilbeck (1984) in defining the emergence of a school-based curriculum is that except for internal stakeholders within the school, curriculum-made decisions are shared with external stakeholders, which includes parents, society representatives, and even the learners. This emphasises the importance of including external stakeholders such as parents and society representatives in developing a school-based curriculum. In corroborating this point further, Legbo (2022) explains that with its relevance and advancement, school-based curriculum and development significantly increases societal well-being and facilitate the change required in education.

Wang, Victor, and Neo (2019) posit that school leaders must work to address internal and external demands while fostering school visions. They must also continue to serve as a mediator between the two because outside the school, a need for school leaders exists to gather a variety of stakeholders who can support the cause of the change at the systemic level. Based on the points made above, it can therefore be deduced that the participation of external stakeholders such as parents and society representatives plays a crucial role in developing school-based curriculum. Their

role is vital since the developed school-based curriculum is used to address learners' and society's needs. Even though that is the case, it is important to point out that in South Africa, there is a shortage of research on the term curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum. Furthermore, the South African curriculum is more centralised, whereby the leadership role is not distributed in the schools (Du Plessis & Heystek, 2020). Considering how school-based curriculum improves the quality of education, this study is conducted to understand the extent to which school governing bodies (SGB) as the representative body of both the parents and the community in the schools, participate in the design and implementation of the school-based curriculum in South African secondary schools.

10.3 Hypotheses

- H0: Curriculum leadership plays a significant role in designing and implementing the school-based curriculum.
- H1: Curriculum leadership plays an insignificant role in the design and implementation of the school-based curriculum.

According to Hamatwi (2015), curriculum leadership is essential in the design and implementation of school-based curriculum, and it is upon that view the above hypothesis is designed to investigate the study outcome. Based on that understanding, this study intends to discover whether curriculum leadership plays a significant role in the design and implementation of the school-based curriculum in the South African secondary schools where this study is conducted. Alternatively, the study intends to discover

if curriculum leadership plays an insignificant role in implementing the school-based curriculum in South African secondary schools.

10.4 Theoretical framework

This study is guided by Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory based on the belief that the development of higher-order functioning results from a holistic interaction between parents, peers, caretakers, and the culture (Cherry, 2018). This theory is linked with the rationale for this study that curriculum leadership plays a significant role in designing and implementing the school-based curriculum. Based on the socio-cultural theory principles, it can be assumed that curriculum leadership practices enhance the effective designing and implementation of the school-based curriculum, enabling learners to construct knowledge that incorporates their context. Wiles (2009) emphasises that curriculum leaders must ensure that everyone involved understands the curriculum's purpose, encourage stakeholder cooperation, and outline implementation processes. This point requires serious consideration as it emphasises the need for all stakeholders to have one common goal when implementing curriculum leadership processes. Lumadi (2019) affirms this point when pointing out that learners' success in life and academics depends on schools and families working together to help their kids. This supports the belief that parental involvement is necessary for schools to adequately address concerns relating to student performance (Scherman & Tsebe, 2020). Based on these points, it becomes evident that socio-cultural theory is relevant to examining the connection between curriculum leadership and implementing a school-based curriculum to promote effective education.

10.5 Literature review

10.5.1 Curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum in a global context

To understand curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum in a global context, we look at how the concepts are perceived in Singapore and Indonesia as one of the leading international countries regarding good education systems. In Singapore, the Department of Education has adopted an approach whereby decisions around the design and implementation of the curriculum are handed to the schools (Ng, 2005). Hargreaves, Shirley and Ng (2012) in Lim-Ratman (2019) explain that such decisions are undertaken to ensure that curriculum implementers interpret curriculum goals together with desired outcomes to allow them to make learners' learning experience fruitful. This confirms that in Singapore, schools are encouraged to become curriculum interpreters and implementers who promote learners' needs in their curriculum interpretation, which is what curriculum leadership promotes. In Singapore, school-based curriculum development initiatives have long been used. Innovations involve school-focused measures involving 3 activities: New curriculum creation, adaptation, and preservation (Bezinnna in Lee, 2020). As further stated by Lee (2020), school principals must rely on middle managers to share the weight of providing leadership support for curriculum innovation work due to the enormous requests made of the school leadership to assist to support school-based curriculum innovation. The discussion suggests that effective education is attainable when curriculum leadership embraces school-based curriculum in the education system.

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The decentralisation of the curriculum in Singapore, according to Lim-Ratman (2019), has led to Singaporean school leaders just recently strengthening the realisation, development, and articulation of their role in exercising curriculum leadership within schools. A principal confirms in Lim-Ratman (2019) that the Department of Education's curriculum details must be reorganised to fit the school's needs and such choices may be made solely at the school level. The principal and the school must decide how the curriculum should be reorganised to fit the learners' needs. Countries like Singapore, entangled in the web of global talent rivalry, are aware of the significant role that innovative school-based curriculum plays in preparing learners for 21st-century society and employment (Lee, 2020). Initiatives like Teach Less, Learn More were created to ensure learners improved their 21st-century capabilities, with the development of the school-based curriculum serving as the key strategy in such a program (Chen, Wang & Neo, 2015). Specifics in the curriculum design must be tailored to the unique characteristics of the school's learners, and such choices can only be made locally at the school (Lim-Ratman, 2019).

In the Indonesian context, the Indonesian curriculum has been changed multiple times to keep up with learners' continuous needs (Putri, 2016). Since 1945, Indonesia has embraced numerous curriculum revisions, including adopting a school-based curriculum in 2006. These measures were implemented to address learners' changing needs and keep up with advances in sciences and technology (Wiyono, 2018). As further stated by Wiyono (2018), to raise the quality of education in Indonesia, schools have created and implemented a school-based

curriculum. Through the adoption of the school-based curriculum in Indonesia, schools now have some latitude in meeting the curriculum standards (Qoyyimah, 2018). One key aspect prevalent in this study is the revitalisation of social and parental participation, which is one of the 7 (seven) factors to be considered for effective development and implementation of school-based curriculum (Wiyono, 2018). This highlights that, for the development of a school-based curriculum to be effectively implemented, the representative body of the parents and the community, the SGB (in the South African context), as external stakeholders must be considered and have a role to play.

In Indonesia, the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 provides the foundation for the decentralisation of the curriculum (Akrom, 2015). Articles 38, sections 1 and 2 of this law encourage elementary and secondary schools to create their curriculum in collaboration with School Committees and local education organisations, which enables the decentralisation of curricular decision-making. This therefore grants teachers, principals, parents, and community members the right to participate in school curriculum decisions (Akrom, 2015). Considering the above highlighted factors, it can be deduced that by promoting the development of school-based curriculum in schools to address learners' needs, the Indonesian government promotes the involvement of stakeholders in the formulation and delivery of curriculum.

10.5.2 Curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum in a South African context

South African schools are still enshrined on the centralised leadership style where the leadership role is limited to the principal instead of being distributed (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). This suggests a lack of incorporation of curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum in the South African context. This misalignment is asserted by the concern expressed by Du Plessis and Heystek (2020) that in South Africa, a distributed leadership approach is given little attention since the leadership role in the schools is more centralised. Nevertheless, such a leadership approach still prevails in South Africa, though policy documents such as the Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM) highlights extension of leadership role given to teachers. It stipulates that one of the core duties of a teacher is “to take on a leadership role in respect of the subject, learning area or phase if required” (RSA, 2022: A-23). Policy on the South African Standards for Principalship (RSA, 2016) is another policy that promotes distributed leadership approach in schools.

According to South African Standards for Principalship (RSA, 2016: 23), principals should understand “methods in which shared leadership, participation in decision-making, team-building and effective teamwork may be encouraged, promoted and implemented.” This confirms that in South Africa, legal frameworks promote a distributed leadership approach, which is what curriculum leadership promotes. However, considering the observations in South Africa, schools are still preserved in a centralised leadership approach. This may translate to a situation whereby failure to adopt a curriculum leadership approach may

lead to failure to design and implement a school-based curriculum in the schools. Sheikh Mohammadi and Khalkhali (2018) argues that curriculum leadership should include the formulation of school-based curriculum that is utilised to meet learners' needs in a particular school. Therefore, this highlights that curriculum leadership plays a central role in the design and implementation of school-based curriculum. It is deduced that in South Africa since there is less consideration of curriculum leadership, there might also be less consideration of school-based curriculum to address learners' specific needs since these two concepts (curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum) are intertwined.

10.5.3 Building effective education though curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum practices

The absence of a sound curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum is a potential obstacle to attaining effective education. A curriculum is a tool that must be implemented without question and distributed, acknowledged, and covered (Shaw, 2012). Such instances explained by Shaw (2012) occur when the decisions and procedures relating to the curriculum are centralised (Lim-Ratman, 2019). As Cummings (2011) explained, the leadership structure established in schools is influenced by how the principals perceive curriculum leadership. Bradley (2004) asserts that the curriculum leader is the person consulted to analyse, synthesise, and assess the data used to describe the educational program. To explain every part of the curriculum to audiences with varying degrees of complexity, the curriculum leader must possess the knowledge and communication skills necessary. As further explained by Bradley (2004), curriculum leaders must ensure that

the mentality of not placing a high value on the curriculum does not persist. They must have faith that the anti-curriculum atmosphere will disappear once the teachers, community, and administrators recognise the value that efficient curriculum processes bring to school accountability. This points out that when it comes to school's curriculum, all parties with an interest in the school have a role to play and must all see the curriculum's significance towards the school's development.

Effective curriculum leadership is built on the participation, cooperation, decision-making, and dedication of all stakeholders, like team leadership (Gao & Han, 2020). According to Chen *et al.* (2020), demonstrating curriculum leadership is essential when developing school-based curriculum. Kihara, Yano and Mori (2013) confirm this further by explaining that curriculum leadership is a problem-solving procedure that includes more than just the school leaders while creating and innovating school-based curriculum. This confirms that the concept of curriculum leadership goes together with school-based curriculum in the sense that when developing school-based curriculum, the curriculum leadership role must be thoroughly considered. It is through effective curriculum leadership that an effective school-based curriculum can be designed and implemented to address learners' needs guided by the context of the school. However, it's critical to realize that as a curriculum leader, the principal creates detectable trails that must be adhered to as they comprehend the meaning of curriculum, curriculum reform, and curriculum renewal (Sorenson *et al.*, 2011).

When speaking of curriculum leadership, the principal must regularly engage various school stakeholders to collaborate (Lee,

2020). This is an important part of curriculum leadership since a more creative curriculum leadership notion suggests that learners, teachers, parents and the community must formulate a curriculum innovation team to cooperate to promote curriculum innovation (Chenzhi, Law & Law Yunjue, 2021). In the curriculum innovation team, parents and community members can or must collaborate with teachers to discuss the appropriate curriculum for their students, in addition to experts who created the curriculum. This allows teachers to strengthen their relationships with parents and the community and develop their communication skills when engaging in curriculum dialogue with them (Chenzhi *et al.* 2021). According to Hamatwi (2015), teachers carry out their role as curriculum leaders by performing instructional activities (like modelling lessons to peers and establishing an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching), developing a school-based curriculum, and leading curriculum activities in the community to impart curriculum development knowledge to both learners and parents. This confirms that successful implementation of curriculum leadership promotes both the development of school-based curriculum in a school and the involvement of the community. Bessong (2021) agrees that teachers see themselves as curriculum leaders, leading instructional activities, curriculum development activities inside the school, and curriculum activities outside the classroom involving the community. However, it is crucial to keep in mind that in all these measures that involve curriculum leadership and development of school-based curriculum, as stated by Wiles (2009), in every effort to improve the curriculum in schools, learners' needs come first.

10.5.4 Significance of school-based curriculum in schools

According to Chen *et al.* (2020), while creating a curriculum for use in schools, paying close attention to the learners' needs is both the beginning and the end. Qualified human resources are needed both within and externally to build an effective curriculum. Wiyono (2018) justifies the significance of school-based curriculum by mentioning that a school-based curriculum can be flexible enough to increase educational quality while a centrally administered curriculum struggles to keep up with the changing educational environment. As stipulated by Chen *et al.* (2020), it's crucial to keep in mind that the development process does not determine the quality of school-based curriculum. It frequently depends on the school's circumstances, the leader's attitude, teaching staff, practices, and thought processes. As further stated by Chen *et al.* (2020) collaboration and leadership are needed for it to be implemented appropriately, and it is significant to remember that school-based curriculum is not static; the thematic meaning will change depending on the needs of the learners and the surrounding environment.

As stipulated by Guide to Curriculum Development (2006), cited by Alsubaie (2016), no curriculum will ever be perfect or free from criticism. Still, to be successful, it must be embraced by educators and regarded as educationally valid by parents and the larger community. This affirms that curriculum validity does not only rest with those within the school confinements, but external stakeholders also have a valuable role to play. Hairon, Chua and Neo (2018) further corroborate this point by stipulating that creating a school-based curriculum requires teachers to invent and adapt the curriculum to their specific local demands. This

suggests that creating a curriculum for schools requires collaborative work from the important stakeholders involved in creating a curriculum for schools.

10.6 Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative research approach, collecting data through closed-ended questionnaires. Questionnaires used a 4 Likert-type scale ranging from almost no extent to a very high extent. Questionnaires were collected from 81 teachers in 40 secondary schools across the North-West Province. Teachers offering Business Studies at Grade 12 level across the North-West province were purposefully sampled, looking specifically at performing and underperforming schools. Five (5) performing schools and five (5) under-performing schools were purposefully sampled in each district guided by the Department of Basic Education's Circular D2 of 2017 (RSA, 2017). It states, "A secondary school should be deemed to be underperforming if its pass percentage in the National Senior Certificate examination falls below 65 per cent, and it has produced less than 30% bachelor and diploma passes, combined." Collected data from questionnaires were analysed through the factor analysis approach.

10.7 Discussion of results

Results in the study indicated that curriculum leadership plays an insignificant role in the design and implementation of school-based curriculum. Table 1.1 below demonstrates the demographical information of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers that participated in this study.

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Table 10-1: Grade 12 Business Studies teachers' demographic information

1	Gender	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
	Male	37	45.68
	Female	44	54.32
	Other	0	0
	Total	81	100
2	Age	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
	20 – 30 years	21	25.93
	31 – 40 years	26	32.10
	41 – 50 years	20	24.69
	51 – 60 years	13	16.05
	61 – 65 years	1	1.23
	66 and above	0	0
	Total	81	100
3	Highest qualification	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
	Teaching diploma	11	14.47
	Bachelor's degree	44	57.89
	Honours degree	16	21.05
	Master's degree	5	6.58

	Doctoral degree	0	0
	Total	76	100
4	Years as Grade 12 Business Studies teacher	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
	0 months – 1 year	6	7.59
	More than 1 year – 2 years	7	8.86
	More than 2 years – 3 years	6	7.59
	More than 3 years – 4 years	6	7.59
	More than 4 years – 5 years	10	12.66
	More than 5 years – 6 years	5	6.33
	More than 6 years – 7 years	3	3.80
	More than 8 years – 9 years	5	6.33
	More than 9 years – 10 years	8	10.13
	More than 10 years	23	29.11
	Total	79	100

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Table 10-1 indicates that most of the teachers that participated in the study are female teachers (54.32%), and male teachers are in the minority (45.68%). The small difference between female and male teachers demonstrates equality in the schools. Even though that is the case, according to Themane, Mabasa and Mathedimosa (2017), inequality is witnessed in schools, especially in leadership positions in the South African context. Themane *et al.* (2017) explained that leadership positions in secondary schools are mostly reserved for male teachers. As further indicated in the table, most of the teachers that took part in the study are in the age groups of 31-40 years (32.10%) and 20-30 years (25.93%). Those in the minority are 61-65 years (1.23%) and 51-60 years (16.05%). With most teachers still in their youth, this highlights the importance of ensuring that younger teachers understand matters related to curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum. This is supported by Wan and Leung (2021) who confirm that while organising and designing teacher education programs that focus on developing and implementing the curriculum, it is crucial to consider prospective teachers' conceptions of curriculum leadership. From this, it can be deduced that by considering prospective teachers' conception of curriculum leadership, younger teachers will better understand curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum at an earlier stage of their teaching careers.

The highest qualifications held by most teachers are a bachelor's degree (57.89%) and an honours degree (21.05%). The highest qualification held by minority of the teachers is a teaching diploma (14.47%) and a master's degree (6.58%). Teachers' qualifications level proves that most teachers are in positions of bachelor's

degrees and other higher qualifications. This aligns with the view held by Chval, Arbaugh, Lannin, Van Garderen, Cummings, Estapa, and Huey (2010) that those granted liberty to implement curriculum leadership must be skilled in their profession and have specialized knowledge which enhances their ongoing professional development. This confirms that most of the respondents in the study were suitable to actively participate in designing and implementing the school-based curriculum when looking at their qualifications, especially when they are provided the relevant support. Looking into the teachers' years of experience as Grade 12 Business studies teachers, those in the majority offered the subject for more than 10 years (29.11%) and more than 4-5 years (12.66%). On the other hand, teachers in the minority offered the subject for more than 6-7 years (3.80%) and more than 5-6 years (6.33%) and 8-9 years (6.33%). With teachers in the majority being those that offered the subject for more than ten years, that indicates that most of the teachers have experience in offering the subject. As stipulated by Saka, Southerland and Brooks (2019), having experienced teachers has positive contributions as the more experienced colleagues can be tasked with mentoring novice teachers so they can adjust smoothly to the field and introduce changes.

Figure 10-1 below gives a statistical indication of teachers' responses when asked about role players in the school-based curriculum development, excluding the School Management Team (SMT).

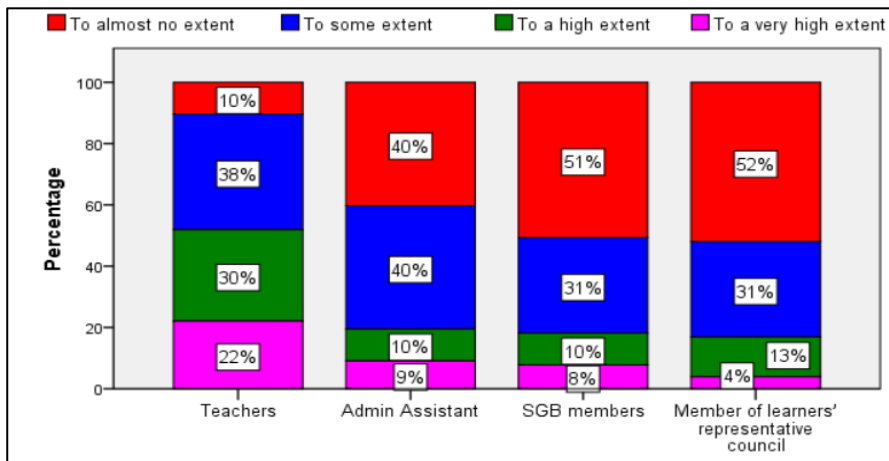


Figure 10-1: Role players in developing school-based curriculum (Stakeholders)

Figure 10-1 looks at teachers' responses about role players (excluding SMT members) in developing school-based curriculum development. Feedback received demonstrates that teachers are the ones that take a more prominent role since 30% of the respondents and 22% of the respondents indicated that teachers play a role to a high extent, respectively, in developing school-based curriculum. This low percentage of teachers in developing a school-based curriculum is testament to the point made by Wan and Leung (2021) and Wang (2020) that instead of designing the curriculum, teachers' main responsibility is to put the curriculum into practice in the classroom. This confirms that in most of the sampled schools, teachers are mainly curriculum implementers. Roles played by other stakeholders, such as administrative assistants, SGB members and learners' representative council, is less significant. Accordingly, 40% of the respondents' administrative assistants play a role to some extent and to almost

no extent, which means their role is less significant. Same applies to learners' representative council (LRC) whereby 52% of the respondents indicated that they played a role to almost no extent and 31% indicated that they played a role to some extent.

Looking at the role of the SGBs who are the external stakeholders in this study, the findings reveal that 51% of the respondents indicated that the SGB plays a role to almost no extent, whereas 31% indicated that school governing body plays a role to some extent. Only 10% and 9% of the respondents indicated that the SGB plays a role to a high extent and to a very high extent, respectively. This indicates that when it comes to the design and implementation of school-based curriculum, the school governing body plays an insignificant role in most schools, which is not what curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum aver. This is contrary to the views expressed in literature that curriculum leadership promotes the involvement of internal and external stakeholders in the designing and implementation of school-based curriculum (Chen et al., 2020; Akrom, 2015; Hamatwi, 2015; Lee, 2020; Gao & Han, 2020; Chenzi et al., 2021 & Bessong, 2021). This means that in most schools, curriculum leadership does not influence the design and implementation of school-based curriculum, especially when looking at the external stakeholders such as the school-governing body, which is a representative of the parents and community in a school. Examining the results obtained from teachers' responses, it is evident that even though curriculum leadership plays a significant role in the design and implementation of school-based curriculum (Chen *et al.*, 2020), external stakeholders (SGB in the context of this study) do not have much of a role to play. The results of this study can therefore

be aligned with the hypothesis (H1), by explaining that curriculum leadership plays an insignificant role in the design and implementation of school-based curriculum in the schools where this study was conducted.

Figure 10-2 below gives a comprehensive picture by looking specifically at the role played by SMT members.

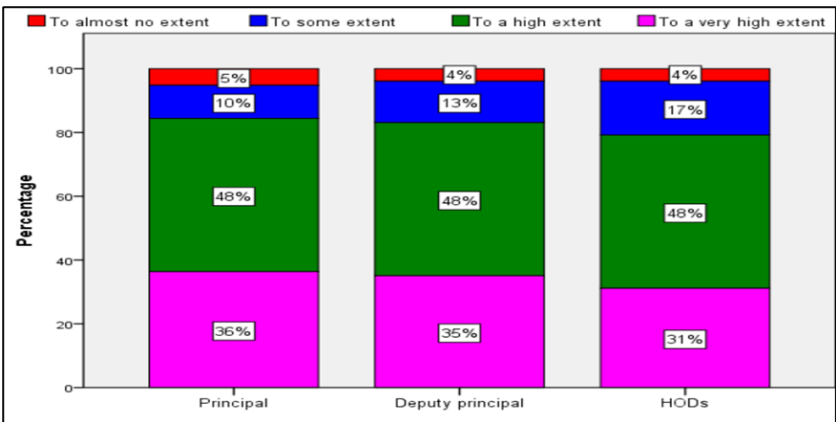


Figure 10-2: Role players in developing school-based curriculum (SMT)

Figure 10-2 provides responses focusing on the role players in developing a school-based curriculum. As stipulated in Figure 10-2, the respondents (48%) indicated that the principal, deputy principal and HODs played their role to a high extent in the development of school-based curriculum. The respondents (36%) also indicated that principals played their role very highly. In contrast, other respondents (35%) indicated that deputy principals played their role to a very high extent, and other respondents (31%) indicated that the HODs played their role to a very high extent. The important role played by the principal is supported by

Sorenson *et al.* (2011), who stipulate that the principal creates trackable footprints as a curriculum leader as they comprehend the significance of curriculum, curriculum development, integration, evaluation, reform, and renewal. This justifies the point that when it comes to the design and implementation of school-based curriculum, the SMT plays a huge role, especially when compared to other stakeholders. Lee (2020) supports the supportive role played by HODs as middle managers by stipulating that school principals must depend on middle managers to share the weight of providing leadership support for curriculum innovation work because the demands placed on school leadership to support school-based curriculum innovations are so great. This means matters concerning the design and implementation of school-based curriculum are handled more by the school management team and those outside the school management team have a minor role to play. The results concur with Du Plessis and Heystek (2020) when they mention that leadership is more centralised in the South African context. These results confirm that external stakeholders such as the parents and the SGB have a limited role in developing school-based curriculum, which is an obstacle to the effective implementation of curriculum leadership role. With that being the case, the inference can be made that effective curriculum leadership involves designing and implementing a school-based curriculum (Chen *et al.*, 2020; Sheikh Mohammadi & Khalkhali, 2018; Lim-Ratman, 2019; Chen *et al.*, 2015; Lee, 2020; Chen *et al.*, 2020). Results from this study align with hypothesis (H1), stating that “curriculum leadership plays an insignificant role in designing and implementing school-based curriculum.”

10.8 Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the quantitative results obtained from the study, it is evident that the curriculum leadership role is dealt with by the principal, deputy principal and head of department. This evidence indicates that the curriculum leadership role in the school-based curriculum is largely played internally and to a limited extent by external stakeholders. This study concluded that curriculum leadership plays an insignificant role in the design and implementation of school-based curriculum. The limited involvement of external stakeholders in curriculum leadership and school-based curriculum presents a potential stumbling block to designing and implementing an effective school-based curriculum. This is because it prevents the community (represented by the SGB) from playing an effective role in ensuring that designed and a properly implemented school-based curriculum addresses learners' and societal needs.

The study recommends that the government put clear policies in place that emphasise the importance of designing and implementing school-based curriculum through considering curriculum leadership in secondary schools. It must also be clear to the schools that when developing a school-based curriculum, the role of external stakeholders should not be overlooked. The role of SGBs as stipulated in SASA should not just be limited to the management of the school but must also involve playing a role in curriculum decision-making. The SGB's role in SASA must emphasise the inclusion of SGBs in curriculum decision-making which considers the needs of the learners.

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