



Participation of Teachers and Subject Advisers in Curriculum Development in Fort Beaufort District, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Uloma Nkpurunma Obi

Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Fort Hare, East London 5201, South Africa
E-mail: uobi@ufh.ac.za

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ABSTRACT Research and international experience suggest that stakeholders' participation in curriculum development enhances the successful implementation of the curriculum. However, the manner in which these stakeholders are involved in the curriculum development process can make a lot of difference in the outcomes. Knowledge about this is limited at present. This study examined the involvement of teachers and subject advisers in the curriculum development process in Fort Beaufort Education District. Data were obtained through interviews, document analysis and focus group discussions from 22 experienced participants that comprised of teachers, subject advisers and principals. The study revealed that teachers and subject advisers participated in the process to different degrees, being mostly involved in the implementation stage and only marginally at the design and evaluation stages. This study recommends that teachers and subject advisers be involved in all the stages of curriculum development, and on a level where their participation will have an impact on the whole process and decisions taken concerning curriculum development.

INTRODUCTION

The South African constitution which came into force in 1996 made provision for decentralization and modes of representation and participation in the educational sector. There is one national Education Department and nine provincial departments (Carrim 2001). With the decentralization of powers, the provinces are 'free to determine educational policies, curricula, manage educational institutions, employ educators and utilize educational budgets as they deem necessary' (Carrim 2001: 101). More people at the provincial level are able to make decisions and, hence, ensure their effective participation in educational transformation. Participation is also specified in policies such as the South African Schools Act (SASA) which states that all schools must be democratically governed, or managed: "A school governance structure should involve all stakeholder groups in active and responsible roles, encourage tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision making" (Department of Education 1996: 16).

Similarly, the White Paper on Education and Training emphasizes the full participation of stakeholders in the process of curriculum development (Department of Education 1995). Carl (2005: 223) defines curriculum development as "the encompassing and continual process during which any form of planning, designing, dissemination, implementation and assessment of curricula may take place. Development takes place in different areas of the curriculum ranging from national and provincial levels to schools and classrooms". Carl (2005) observes that it is within this context of curriculum development that the different stakeholders can and should become involved.

There are many stakeholders in curriculum development and they are defined as those who are affected by or can affect a decision (Bryson 2004). According to Carrim (2001: 105), stakeholders in the schools are those who have a direct 'stake' (or interest) in the affairs of the school. These include policy makers, heads of institutions (principals), curriculum specialists, and schools' management boards, educators, learners, parents, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), publishers and the community. This study examined the participation of teachers and subject advisers as stakeholders in curriculum development.

Address for correspondence:

Uloma Nkpurunma Obi
Faculty of Health Sciences,
University of Fort Hare,
East London 5201, South Africa
E-mail: uobi@ufh.ac.za

It has been observed by teachers and NGOs in different fora that although it was claimed that there was inclusivity of participation in the reviews and revisions of the curriculum development processes in South Africa, the dominant voices were often those in authoritative and higher positions mostly at the national level (Carl 2005; Chisholm 2005). The power to make decisions rested mainly on the officials in the department of Education. Concerns were also raised by the media that teachers' voices were not equally represented in the process of curriculum development. This is evidenced by the fact that some teachers do not understand the content of the curriculum, and since they cannot interpret it, they implement it as it suits them (Ramparsad 2001; Carl 2005; Chisholm 2005).

It is held that teachers and subject advisers do not understand the new curriculum and the assessment practices are not very clear to them. Hence, many of these teachers and subject advisers are not able to implement it properly (Hoadley and Jansen 2002; Department of Basic Education 2009). According to reports by NGOs and the media, the fact that teachers and subject advisers were not actively involved in the curriculum review process created a number of challenges (City Press 13 March 2011).

Researchers such as Fullan and Hargreaves (1992), Carl (1994), Kirk and Macdonald (2001), Fullan (2001) and Oloruntegbe (2011) believe that there are ways and means of involving teachers in curriculum development instead of expecting them to only implement it in the classroom. For instance, Fullan and Hargreaves (1992: 250) hold that teachers can function not only "as co-designers of expert curricular and institutional systems but also as co-researchers into the effectiveness of the implemented curricula."

Concerns have been raised in the media by different stakeholders, that poor learner performance, especially at matriculation level and in international assessment tests, is a result of a lack of understanding of the curriculum. They attribute this lack of understanding of the curriculum to the non-participation of teachers and subject advisers in curriculum development (City Press 2011). City Press (2011) provided examples of poor performance by South African learners in assessments done by the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Qual-

ity (SACMEQ) II in 2003 where South Africa was placed at the bottom in both reading and mathematics (Mail and Guardian 2011; Singh 2004). The paper also gave another example from the International Mathematics and Science Study of 1995 and 1999 where South Africa scored the lowest among the 46 participating countries in mathematics with 264 compared to an international mean of 467 (Human Sciences Research Council 2005; Reedy 2006). It attributed such poor performance to problems associated with the lack of understanding of the curriculum by teachers and the manner in which the curricula are delivered (City Press 13 March 2011; Singh 2004).

Problems in the implementation of the NCS resulted in the Minister of Basic Education in 2010 appointing a project committee to look into its implementation. The committee came up with the recommendation for a single, comprehensive and concise Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which was implemented in 2013.

Given the above limitations, particularly in the area of the implementation of the curriculum, it can be inferred that the teachers' lack of training and understanding of the curricula manifest in their inability to interpret and implement them correctly. This suggests that the extent of participation by teachers and subject advisers in the process of curriculum development, from designing, implementation to evaluation, is not clear and must have been very minimal. The literature shows that teachers' active involvement in the curriculum development process enhances the implementation of the curriculum (Taylor 2004; Mosothwane 2012). Hence, the study examined the participation of teachers and subject advisers in curriculum development in secondary schools in the Fort Beaufort district. There has been little prior research done on teachers' and subject advisers' participation in the curriculum development process in the district.

Objectives

The main objective of this paper was to investigate the participation of teachers and subject advisers in curriculum development in Fort Beaufort District, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. It explored the different degrees, where

the participants were involved in the design, implementation and evaluation stages.

METHODOLOGY

This study was designed as a case study. Yin (2008:18) states that "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." The researcher in this case examined how teachers and subject advisers are involved in the process of curriculum development. The teachers and subject advisers were examined in their natural settings - schools and offices using multiple data sources, the main ones being face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis. This enabled the researcher to gain insight into these stakeholders' involvement in curriculum development.

The sample consisting of 4 principals of the selected schools, 12 teachers and 6 subject advisers were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Interviews and focus groups were recorded and then transformed into transcripts. The transcripts were read meticulously and then organised into categories for analysis and interpretations.

All ethical procedures prescribed by the department of education for extracting views and opinions from people were observed. The relevant authorities were carried along from the planning stage of the research to the data collection and reporting stages.

The researcher made sure that individual rights were not infringed upon and the principles of confidentiality and anonymity were followed strictly.

RESULTS

Participation of Teachers and Subject Advisers in the Designing of the Curriculum

Curriculum 2005

First, the respondents were asked if they had participated in the designing of C2005. This was the first of several curriculum developments after apartheid was abolished and it was necessary to establish whether the teachers and subject

advisers participated in the designing of this curriculum. Three of the participant teachers said categorically that they were not involved. Two out of the three stated that they attended workshops organised by the subject advisers where they were informed of the developments that had taken place. In those workshops, they said they were asked to design lesson plans and work schedules that would be used for teaching. These were their forms of participation. Another respondent admitted to participating in the designing. He explained that when the Department of Education (DOE) wanted to embark on this curriculum development, they invited teachers who were experienced in the different subject areas and he was among them. They were sent on a course in Johannesburg.

Following are Responses from Some of the Participant Teachers

T1: No. I was not involved. The subject advisers call the teachers if there are changes in the curriculum and update the teachers then hold workshops, but I was not there when the curriculum was designed.

T3: I attended workshops on different lesson plans. At times we were asked to design work schedules and lesson plans.

T4: Yes. When the government wanted to change the curriculum, they invited a few of us who were experienced in the subject to attend a course in Johannesburg that will put us through the designing of the new curriculum.

Subject Advisers' Responses were as Follows

SA 1: No. It was the subject planners together with those who were in the National office that were involved. They came up with the policies. At the District office we were only contacted to make inputs in the drafts.

SA 2: Yes, I spent about 15 days working with a team on the designing of the History curriculum, checking the content/topics, the resource, the implementation and assessment.

Below is the Response of the Principal who was Involved

P2: I was involved. I was in a meeting at Port Elizabeth for Physical Sciences. I was in a committee of 20 people for Physical Sciences

who made some suggestions concerning what the content of the curriculum should be and how to implement it.

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

According to one of the respondents (T2)

"It was a government's thing. During the designing of the curriculum, there were representatives of the Unions who I think went there for their own things and not for what is going on in the classrooms. If at all they used teachers, it must be teachers who were in Gauteng".

SA1: I did not get to participate in the designing directly but I gave my inputs as a subject specialist in the following areas: I contributed towards the content of the curriculum, the method of delivery and the kind of resources teachers can use in their various environments

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The researcher interviewed the teachers, subject advisers and principals to find out if they participated in the designing of the NCS and their level of involvement. The following was one response from a participant teacher:

T1: No, the department sometimes targeted certain individuals but I was not given the chance to be there in designing. We were only asked to make suggestions in our various schools which we were not even sure got to anywhere.

P4: I provide teachers with guidance on Assessment including Continuous Assessment and other appropriate Learner Assessment strategies.

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS)

When asked their involvement in the designing of CAPS, it was found that teachers' inputs were reflected in the final documents. The teachers explained:

T3: We made inputs to the method of teaching which had to change. The issue of assessment and how clear they should be and relevant to teaching was also touched.

T4: I was involved by making sure that the syllabus is designed in such a way that the learners at the end of school come out with specialised skills.

The subject advisers responses are as follows:

SA1: I made inputs in the arrangement of the content that is knowledge mapping: The logic and sequence of the topics (progressing and sequencing); checking and making sure that the topics to be treated in the different grades are suitable.

SA2: Teachers complained of "paperwork". The department of education addressed these complaints which were submitted through the subject advisers. The teachers made inputs in workshops which we forwarded to government curriculum designers.

One principal responded as follows:

P2: In Science it is the assessment. In NCS it was general unlike in CAPS where the practical are specified. We looked into the content and stressed on the practical aspect of the subject as well.

Comments from the Focus Groups

Comments from the focus groups participants were consistent with the responses obtained from the face-to-face interviews. Two focus group participants commented as follows:

FG1: We were quite impressed with the workshops. The examiners were there. We were asked to come with past question papers and textbooks. We were hands on in the workshops planning lessons, drawing up rubrics for marking past exam papers after which we compared it with the memorandum. This helped us to come up with the content suitable for different grades and how to assess them as well. The issue of assessment, the weighting, etc. were handled. For the first time it was very good.

FG2: The issue of 'building blocks' from Grade 8-12 was considered. The content is more structured now. In the workshops we structured the content, making sure the topics follow each other properly. For the first time the Maths syllabus makes sense.

Participation of Teachers and Subject Advisers in the Implementation of the Curriculum

Teachers who worked in the schools with the learners had this to say:

T2: I attended workshops organized by South African Workers Union (SAWU) mainly for Ex-Model C schools. I also attended the

Education Department workshops at the District level where they put us through on how to teach using the Out-Based Education (OBE) principles.

T3: We attended workshops where we were encouraged by officials to use past exam papers, and do common tasks. Some teachers were not so sure of what to do due to lack of training. We were just teaching. We didn't know what to do. I attended workshops at the District level.

Another teacher reported participating in something different, which was more of subject advisers' role. He said:

T4: The Province called for workshops/training which I attended and cascaded to teachers and schools and saw to it that teachers followed and implemented the curriculum using OBE principles

Curriculum 2005

SA1: I was elected as a lead teacher in the cluster meeting. I later got trained as a facilitator at the provincial level. I facilitated workshops at the District and Province. I helped the teachers to interpret and understand the content of the curriculum and how to administer it (SA1)

SA3: "Yes, I was involved in the school where I was teaching previously. I had an influence on the staff members, my colleagues by helping them with the interpretation of the curriculum. I was a change agent. I encouraged my colleagues to follow the new curriculum. I did a lot of networking with what they have" (SA3).

"I was acting as a facilitator, facilitating workshops" (SA6).

Some of the teachers' views are reflected in the following responses:

T1: We were teaching and trying to align the assessment with the content. We were so particular about the learning outcomes. We were so interested in completing the tasks hence the learners were robbed of contact sessions with the teachers. Teachers had very little contact time with the learners.

One of the teachers (T3) stated that:

"Teachers were not really hands on in teaching. We were concerned with assessments more because government could judge a teach-

er by how the learners performed so we spent some time trying to get this right".

Another (T4) said the teachers "taught with difficulty" as they were not enough resource materials especially textbooks.

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The observations of the teachers were corroborated by some subject advisers. According to (SA1)

"Teachers were using Outcome based strategy for NCS curriculum. As subject advisers we tried to ensure the curriculum is implemented properly and assessment is done according to the new curriculum as it came with its own style of assessing. This was at the Provincial level".

But one of the principals said:

P2: They were so concerned with how Science will impact on the environment, making sure that teachers got it right.

(FG1)

"There was a lot of attention paid to the method of teaching. We were teaching using the new method of delivery."

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS)

The teachers responded thus:

T4: The fact that previously we collected a lot of files, but now there is a standard book which we consult and it has formal tasks. Teachers now try to be innovative. No more relying on past exam papers. We use different materials for example in English, magazines to get materials and passages that are current.

SA1: We are very busy running Caps workshops and training for teachers.

P4: There was a lot of paper work previously. Now we have more time to supervise and monitor what goes on in the classrooms.

Participation of Teachers and Curriculum Advisers in the Evaluation of the Curriculum

Curriculum 2005

T4: In the area of content, they took all the main facets: motor mechanics, fitting and turning and welding. There is no mastering of any.

All the important parts of each were retained. We evaluated this and found out that it was not helping the learners. The learners were not mastering any skills hence it was a problem for them getting admission into the Universities.

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

T1: "We made inputs in the structure of the topics in the content. Teachers commented on some irrelevant things that were included in the curriculum and filled the gaps that existed. Teachers also commented that the content should be richer and not the issue of skills acquisition to be reduced. Teachers pointed out that the assessment technique (the weighting of continuous assessment and end of year assessment) was not adequate and advocated for its change. CASS moderation was not really good; some teachers did not have things; some teachers submitted their CASS separately when other teachers will not see them while some did not even come at all"(T2).

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

A teacher participant commented:

T4: No, I was not involved in evaluation. But I attended many meetings where we gave our inputs, but sometimes we get to a closed door because we do not know what next. We were given some documents to complete where we made some suggestions, I doubt if those suggestions were considered.

The Subject Advisers' responses were:

SA1: My involvement was the same as during C2005 review: I looked at the materials which were developed in terms of quality assurance and the technicality involved. We also looked at the issue of the curriculum being user friendly; if the teachers could use it without any difficulty.

SA2: I was involved in the evaluation. I gave out a tool with different levels to schools to evaluate their learners' performance. For example, how many learners are on levels 7 to 1? This helped in checking how the learners performed in a particular year.

DISCUSSION

Participation of Teachers and Subject Advisers in the Designing of the Curriculum

It is imperative that teachers be involved in the designing of the curriculum considering the fact that they are the implementers of whatever is designed. Involving teachers in the designing stage, could help foreshadow some of the problems that may arise later during implementation. At the designing stage, the teachers and the learners who come in contact directly with the curriculum need to be considered. This section will be discussed according to the various curriculum changes.

Curriculum 2005

The responses indicate that teachers' participation in the designing of C2005 was very minimal. They mainly attended workshops and training that would assist them handle the curriculum. This meant that the curriculum document had already been designed and was in place and the teachers were only brought in to be told how to use it.

Apart from the teachers, the researcher also wanted to know if the subject advisers had participated in the designing of C2005. One of the subject advisers explained that it was mainly the subject planners alongside those in the National office who were involved in the designing of the curriculum. There was only one, SA2, who was in the History team for designing the curriculum. The responses from the subject advisers suggest that some subject advisers were involved in the designing of C2005 but that their participation was based on their position and expertise.

Only one principal said he was involved, and at that time, he was a teacher. He was involved as a Physical Science teacher and participated at the Provincial level. He was a member of the committee that looked into the Physical Science curriculum, making sure that the content, resources, delivery method, practical aspects, and so on, were all in order.

Again the principal's response shows that he was invited to participate based on his expertise in his subject area.

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

The researcher sought to find out how teachers and subject advisers were involved in the RNCS during the designing stage. The responses of the participant teachers indicate they did not participate directly although there were representatives of the Teachers' Unions who participated.

One of the teacher's (T2) response suggested that the teachers felt their interests were not represented properly at the designing of the RNCS curriculum by the representatives from the Teachers' Union.

The researcher also elicited some information from the subject advisers regarding their participation during the designing stage of the RNCS. The response of one of the subject advisers indicated that they did not sit physically with the committee to participate in the designing of the RNCS, but they contributed by making inputs in different areas namely; content, method of delivery and resources. Again this indicates that the subject advisers participated as subject specialists.

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The response presented by (T1) which is similar to previous answers by the teachers interviewed earlier indicated that the teachers perceived they did not actively participate during the designing of the NCS. Although they were not physically present at the designing stage, they were however consulted to make an input. They made contributions through their schools via subject advisers to the provincial office when the authorities called for contributions and submissions to be made. This means there was a representation of teachers' views and voices.

Responses from the subject advisers' and principals' showed that they did not participate directly in the designing of the NCS curriculum, but they were a few of their colleagues who were curriculum planners who participated. As stated by one of the participants (SA6) the subject advisers only train teachers to be able to implement the policy documents and curriculum support materials. The principals were also not directly involved in curriculum development but

provide teachers with assistance with regards to assessment.

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS)

These comments reflected the concerns of the teachers, which prompted the formulation of CAPS, and they made inputs to the amendments of the NCS curriculum. Similarly, comments from the subject advisers' also suggested their concerns were incorporated in the designing of CAPS.

The statements from the subject advisers indicate that subject advisers' participated more actively in the designing of CAPS compared to other subjects. However, the participation of the principals were on how assessments were carried out. As noted by one of the principals, who participated by looking into the way the assessment was done in science.

The comments from the Focus Groups validate the submissions emanating from the interviews and reflect the overarching issues raised in the government document on the formulation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). Overall, the findings suggest that there were more participants in the formulation of the CAPS.

Participation of Teachers and Subject Advisers in the Implementation of the Curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is a major task for the teachers, principals and subject advisers. Teachers as implementers of the curriculum put the written document into practice; hence they are the closest to the problems and progress of the curriculum implementation and are in the best position to find remedies for perceived deficiencies. Teachers are the most important agents in determining the quality of the classroom curriculum, in that the teachers vary the methods of instruction used in teaching the content depending on the learners involved.

It was necessary to identify what the teachers and subject advisers contributed to the implementation of C2005. During the implementation, the teachers participated mainly at the school level, where they taught. They also at-

tended workshops in the District. However, they did not participate directly in evaluation.

Curriculum 2005

The responses from the teachers, clearly indicate that during the implementation of the curriculum, the teachers still used the OBE principles but, from time to time they reverted to the use of the old method of teaching which was teacher centred and where the teacher was no longer only a facilitator. Also, there was every indication that some teachers assisted their colleagues. This means that there were times when the teachers were challenged by the OBE principles, hence, they attended workshops at the District level where the subject advisers guided them on the method of delivery.

The subject advisers participated in different ways although at the time, some of them were not subject advisers, but were still teachers. They were used in different capacities. Based on what SA3 and SA6 said, there is clear evidence that the subject advisers helped the teachers to interpret, understand and deliver the curriculum in the classroom. This means that the teachers benefitted from the workshops organised by the subject advisers as they made the delivery of the curriculum easier.

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

When asked how they participated in the implementation of the RNCS curriculum, the teacher stated that they made sure that assessment was in line with content. This was one issue that was strongly emphasized in the teachers' responses. They were also very particular about the Assessment Standards and Learning Outcomes and this affected the contact hours they had with the learners. From the responses, it is evident that the teachers did not find the implementation of the RNCS curriculum easier either. They were faced with a lot of challenges namely: content/ assessment/ and learning outcomes, issues of the time frame, the lack of understanding of the curriculum document and the pass-one-pass-all system. Responses from subject advisers and principals also harped on assessment standards and learning outcomes. This

is an indication that assessment standards and learning outcomes were a serious problem, confirming what the teachers had said. According to one of the principals (P2). "The area of Assessment was a problem. The teachers could not handle this well in their teaching. It affected the quality of teaching the teachers gave to the learners. They did little teaching. "I assisted by inviting subject advisers to the school to help those teachers who were not coping." This response brought out the fact that the teachers could not handle the curriculum on their own" (P2).

This implies that the government has still not got it right. The curriculum is a good document but the problems lie with its implementation.

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The researcher was interested in finding out how teachers and subject advisers were involved in the implementation of the NCS curriculum. Teachers were really not sure of what to do because of the changes and the lack of in-depth training and the uncertainty displayed by the planners and trainers themselves (Burger 2010). Erden (2010) remarked that, if teachers do not understand what the curriculum theoretical framework is all about, they will not be able to implement it properly.

From the comments, the teachers concentrated more on getting the assessment right than doing the actual teaching as there was the possibility of this affecting their jobs. The implication is that government assessed them based on the learners' performance instead of their own. It emerged that the teachers did not know which textbooks to use and how to use them as there were no specific prescribed books, so different schools and teachers tried getting their own books. Hence, there was no uniformity in the schools. The implementation did not go smoothly with the teachers.

These responses from both the teachers and subject advisers indicated that the issue of assessment was crucial. The NCS had its own method of assessment and they needed to get it right. The teachers themselves had to be competent. They had to get the assessment standards correctly and they also needed to have the resources to use them. The principals interviewed said

they did not really know what they were concentrating on. They said the government did not carry them along in the developments that they instituted yet they were supposed to be overseers in their schools. This principal's comment again showed that a lot was expected from the teachers during the implementation stage. As stated by one of the participants. Focus Group (FG1) emphasis was placed on the method of delivery.

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS)

Teachers and subject advisers were asked to explain their involvement in the implementation of CAPS. Their responses show that teachers are becoming more innovative. The subject advisers also appeared actively engaged during the implementation of CAPS. The principals it will appear, are also less encumbered and able to monitor classroom activities. The implementation is still on and all the issues raised that prompted the review of NCS were considered. Data from the *National Curriculum Statements and CAPS document: Structured. Clear. Practical (Helping Teachers Unlock the Power of NCS)* document stipulated the areas that were to be considered during the implementation of CAPS and what the teachers and subject advisers were expected to do. This document covered all subjects.

Participation of Teachers and Curriculum Advisers in the Evaluation of the Curriculum

Curriculum evaluation is the stage in the curriculum development process when the curriculum is evaluated to ensure that the needs for which the curriculum was designed are met (Hussain et al. 2011). The purpose of evaluation is to check what happened or did not happen, to improve future curriculum development processes, communicate results from the evaluation to the current and future stakeholders and lastly, to act on the policy. The study sought to find areas of involvement of respondents in the evaluation of C2005. The teachers mentioned some areas that were considered during the evaluation of the curriculum. From the responses it emerged that teachers participated in the eval-

uation of C2005 using Continuous Assessment (CASS) moderation. They evaluated the content and methodology.

The subject advisers also participated in the evaluation of C2005 by monitoring what the teachers were teaching and how they assessed the learners. According to one of the subject advisers (SA1) the evaluation covered "*almost all areas; contents/concepts/arrangements of concepts/ assessment and implementation*". The findings indicated that the principals were also involved in the evaluation process of C2005. They were involved in *evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, making input in the content, method of delivery and assessment.*

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

The participants were also asked what they did during the evaluation of the RNCS curriculum. All the participants indicated that they made input in the evaluation of the RNCS curriculum. They noted that the content, method of delivery and assessment were evaluated. According to one of the respondents (T1) teachers were concerned about the language barrier and suggested the use of the mother tongue to enhance understanding. One of the subject advisers (SA1) stated that the issues highlighted during the implementation stage such as content, method of delivery, assessment and workload were considered during the evaluation.

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The researcher asked the participants which areas and issues were discussed during the evaluation of the NCS curriculum and their involvement. The teachers' responses are captured in what T4 said. The participant teacher said he was not directly involved, but teachers gave their input in workshops. At the end of workshops teachers were given evaluation forms to complete, which amounts to participation. This response indicated that, although teachers were not directly involved in the evaluation of the NCS curriculum, they gave their input through the evaluation forms they completed. The subject advisers were also asked to give an account of what they did during the NCS evaluation.

It is clear that the subject advisers guided the teachers during the evaluation. They had meetings with them where they collected data from them on the curriculum by giving them documents to complete. It was evident from the findings that participants were involved in all stages of curriculum development. However, the extent of their involvement varied, depending on the stage of curriculum development, areas of the curriculum, positions which stakeholders occupied at different levels etc. The findings revealed that participants were involved in different areas of curriculum design. These included content, the method of delivery, the scope to cover, the mode of assessment and the resources. From the findings these different areas were the real issues that were examined during the reviews and reforms of the curriculum and they required people who were hands-on teachers.

Participants acknowledged that there was more involvement in the design of RNCS and NCS curricula than in C2005. Although they were mostly involved in providing input in areas such as content, the method of delivery, the scope to cover, mode of assessment and resources, which are their areas of performance, some participants acknowledged that they had been given the curriculum policy drafts to review and provide feedback. However, they were not sure whether their comments were incorporated in the final curriculum documents. Although the process was still considered top-down, some participants felt that they had been given the opportunity to participate, to some extent.

Teachers are the curriculum deliverers in the classroom. From the findings, they delivered what they were not directly involved in designing, and that is why they were faced with a lot of challenges in their delivery. Some could not understand/interpret the curriculum hence they did their own thing and some reverted to using the old method of teaching. Many participants made it clear that they were never directly involved in curriculum evaluation. However, findings of this study show that participants contributed to the evaluation of the curriculum by completing evaluation forms in meetings.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that participant teachers, principals and subject advisers were involved mostly in the implementation at the school level. However, the findings of the study also show that with subsequent curricula, that is the RNCS, NCS and CAPS there was more involvement of participant teachers, principals and subject advisers unlike in Curriculum 2005.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study therefore recommends that the level of stakeholders' participation in curriculum development be investigated. Although all the stakeholders cannot be present, there should be representatives in the curriculum committees, representing different subjects, different grades, and different needs. These representatives should be useful and functional ones who after the meetings will take the information back to their members. Again, the principals should be more involved in curriculum development. This is very important, as the principals are the curriculum leaders/managers in their schools.

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