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Selection and Use of Textbooks in Lesson Planning of Mathematics for Grade 4 Learners in East London Education District

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ABSTRACT This paper examines the selection and the use of textbooks in lesson planning of mathematics for grade four learners. The study used a qualitative approach and adopted a phenomenological research design. Six educators and three heads of department were purposively selected and a thematic approach used to analyse the data gathered. The findings among others revealed that textbooks were selected from the prescribed textbooks by the department, which was written clearly according to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). For mathematics textbooks to be useful for lesson planning, such textbooks must be written in sequential order to align properly with the curriculum. The language used and the types of illustrations, diagrams, and activities written in the prescribed textbooks influence their final decision on the use of a textbook. However, teachers should plan far ahead and check errors in the textbook and workbook, rather than discovering the errors during the class activities.

INTRODUCTION

The technological and economic development of a nation is a result of mathematics. Mathematics is expected to help in accelerating the social, economic and technological progress of any society (Azuka 2014). The teaching of mathematics at the primary school level is of paramount importance in any educational system because a default at the foundation phase will infuse to other levels of the education system (Kolawole 2010). According to Michael (2013), mathematics can be broadly interpreted as something a person does in order to solve real-life situations. It can also be likened to a tool to solve problems, such as problems in science and geography. In the teaching and learning of mathematics at the primary school level, there is an array of materials that the teacher can choose from, which will be appropriate for the level of the students (learners) being taught. Of these various materials, textbooks are germane, as they facilitate the teaching and learning process at whatever level of instruction (Michael 2013).

The teaching and learning of mathematics vary from one continent to the other, hence, the practice of mathematics teaching and learning was examined in different contexts. The delivery of instruction in mathematics to grade 4 learners is based on the textbooks selected for this purpose and its use by the teacher and the learners.

Textbooks are among the most important artefacts in mathematics education. "The textbook should arouse students' interest in learning mathematics, help students to study mathematics actively, develop students' potential in creativity through the process of learning basic knowledge, improve students' mathematical thinking when trying to understand the essence of mathematics knowledge, and raise students' awareness to apply mathematics knowledge in everyday lives" (Lepik 2015: 6).

The Selection of Textbook for Teaching Mathematics at Primary School

The demands of educational institutions lead to the production of the textbook. Regardless of the institution level, the content of the textbook must meet the needs for its demand. The textbook must give clear instructions with a detail explanation of how to solve the activities written in them (Sapire 2012). According to this study, textbooks are manuals of instruction for mathematics, and an effective tool for lesson delivery (method of teaching).

In selecting primary school textbooks for teaching mathematics, fundamental questions

will arise and this serves as indicators for selecting which particular textbook meets the requirements of society. For example, a textbook must meet the needs of the students, and it must be comprehensive, flexible and detailed. A good textbook must satisfy the requirements stipulated in the curriculum. That, the explanation must be logical, not only the language used must be simple and the exercises in it must be motivating and diverse (Czeglédy and András 2008).

The simple, clear, concise and precise wording of definitions, theorems, proofs or other rules is significant in mathematics. Skills involve specific aims like the improvement of meaningful, analysing, reading, comprehension, counting skills, orientation in space, which is useful for proving, the pursuit of combining argumentation, etc. (Czeglédy and András 2008:17). Appearance is also important as a motivating factor. Adequate figures and illustrations, well-arranged paragraphs and readability all facilitate comprehension and thereby the acquisition of knowledge. Practical considerations include the overview of the supplementary materials (teacher's book, exercise book, test sheets, sample solutions, tools) that belong to the given textbook series. The durability of the book, its size or acceptable price, etc., are also factors to consider (Czeglédy and Kovács 2008:17).

Textbooks are effective tools in lesson planning and delivery of instruction by teachers, which parents equally fall in love with. As a result of this, the following question arises, that is, what is the real influence of textbooks in the teaching and learning of mathematics at grade 4 level? Describing the role of textbooks in teaching, scholars used terms like textbook control (Johnsen 2014), the impact of the textbook (Sikorová 2011), teachers should be conscious of the influence of the textbook and the textbook driven instruction.

According to Sikorová (2011), the reasons for using textbooks among others are, for effective teaching and learning, for proper lesson planning and delivery. This allows measuring textbook control teaching and classroom management. Research conducted by Johnsen (2014) seeks to find the relationship that exists between the content of a textbook and the methodology imposed in it. The strategies used by the teachers and the content should be integrated for better output. According to Sikorová (2011), there are many kinds of research on how to control the textbook through the interplay between the content of the lessons and the strategies employed by the teachers.

DeCesare (2007), in a study conducted in the USA on teaching mathematics, found out that, eighty-nine percent of high school teachers employed the use of mathematics textbooks frequently and substantially depend on standard introductory textbooks to structure their courses that led to the homogeneity of lesson content and teaching. However, teachers' approval of textbook does not justify the over-reliance and dependence. Many teachers disapproved of textbooks.

Sikorová (2011) in his Chicago Algebra Project reported that the high school mathematics teachers revealed that textbooks were influencing their teaching strategies. Sikorová's comparison of 'reform' textbooks and traditional widely recommended textbooks revealed a wide variation between the teaching strategies employed by teachers depending on the strategies of textbooks used. According to the findings of the study, for the use of the textbook to be effective the class size must be manageable. Differences in teaching were closely related to the different conceptions of both textbooks. Sikorová concluded that textbooks influenced not only the teaching strategies for mathematics, but also the content of teaching.

In a study carried out by Sigurgeirsson (2012), most teaching mottled along with the structure of the textbooks and to a great extent influence teaching, hence, it can safely concur that teaching is textbook-oriented. On the contrary, Adu et al. (2016) are of the opinion that the measure of teacher dependence on textbook does not necessarily show the quality of the textbook but rather indicates their conviction about the legitimate authority that prescribe the textbook. In tandem with the thinking of Freeman and Andrew (2008), was the conclusion of Stodolsky (2002) that the influence of textbooks does not show the irresistible and unmistakable use of a textbook by the teacher.

In selecting textbooks in the planning and teaching of mathematics for grade 4 learners, certain factors influence the choice of textbooks to be selected and such factors include the following among others.

Teaching Experience

The impact of teaching experience on textbook use and its nature cannot be underestimated especially in the selection of appropriate textbooks in planning and teaching, not only in mathematics but as well as other subjects. In a study carried out by Sikorová (2011), most experienced teachers used textbooks frequently because they see it as a source of information than the inexperienced teachers. The inexperienced teachers do not follow textbooks strictly like their experienced counterparts. The most interesting finding from the study was that the inexperienced teachers because of their experience observed simple activities. They are confronted with students of low levels of knowledge.

Qualifications

Another factor that influences textbook selection was the teacher's qualification for the school subject. The qualification of teachers will affect their cognitive experience and ability to articulate the contents of the textbook. To teach mathematics, the teacher needs to have direct qualification in the subject. Not everyone can teach mathematics, mathematics is applicable to the operation of daily life. The practical aspect of mathematics requires a teacher to be well qualified. Some school of thought believes that even when you have a qualification in physics, you can teach mathematics. This is not always so. The unqualified teacher might be deficient in pedagogical content knowledge. Different subjects come with different needs, and therefore, there is a need for a teacher to be qualified (Sikorová 2011).

The Use of Textbooks by Primary School Teachers in Lesson Planning

A lesson plan according to Khomani (2005) is the preparation of instructional materials like teacher guide, syllabuses and textbooks. Lesson planning is one of the basic duties of every teacher in the delivery of an instructional lesson in the classroom. According to Spratt et al. (2005), the lesson plan is a series of course plans which provide direction for a teacher on what kind of materials of study to be taught and how to teach them. The lesson plan is the main prerogative of the teacher depending on the class and learners' needs. In lesson planning, the teaching and the learning styles should be compatible (Naimie 2012).

Reed and Michaud (2010) averred that the lesson planning process allows teachers to evaluate their own knowledge concerning the content to be taught. The use of textbooks in lesson planning by teachers provides ideas and practices, which frame classroom activity and also help teachers to achieve goals that they presumably could not or would not accomplish on their own (Brown 2009). According to Nicol and Crespor (2006), teachers spend a chunk of their time preparing their lessons, interacting with textbooks and various teaching and learning materials to determine grade-specific texts and effective ways to present their lessons. Abadzi (2006) observed that good textbooks for lesson planning should have a serious focus on content, with rich and extensive explanation and elaboration of concepts. He further supports his arguments by stating that a good textbook should have extensive use of pictures, drawings, diagrams and figures that capture the essence of important concepts. A good textbook for lesson planning should provide ample space for practice and elaboration that enables graded upward progression. Abadzi (2006) also enumerates that, the textbook topics should be efficiently and clearly organised and that, they should be simple to read, with an uncluttered layout that foregrounds meaning.

Grossman and Thompson (2008) opined that the relevance of the textbook, the content and the degree to which it corresponds to students' competency levels help the teacher to be successful and effective during classroom activities. Textbooks that offer not merely information, but are also carefully designed, tested and professionally edited are very important. Such a textbook provides laudable interactive spaces for students and facilitates effective classroom activities. Fredricks (2005) and Fleisch et al. (2011) asserted that the interaction between teachers and learners in the lesson delivery in the classroom is better improved by the use of textbooks in lesson planning and delivery. Fredricks (2005) argues that textbooks stipulate in details, the materials to be covered and the de-

sign of each lesson. A good textbook provides the teacher with a balanced, chronological presentation of a lesson. According to Lee (2005), he concluded in his study that, teachers in most government schools in Hong Kong-based their lesson planning and student learning on commercial textbooks, which have been designed to prepare students for high stakes examination.

The use of textbooks by teachers in lesson planning has inherent advantages that make lesson delivery easy. Textbooks provide teachers with interesting and compelling platforms for conveying information since they motivate learners to better understand the concept (Phyllis 2011). Textbooks are integral aspects of teaching-learning situations, and they do not just supplement learning but complement their process. It is therefore imperative for primary school teachers to use textbooks in lesson planning to effectively enhance lesson delivery in the classroom (Kibe 2011). Harmer (2007) observed that both teachers and students benefit greatly when textbooks are used in the teaching and learning process. To facilitate teaching and learning effectively, teachers need a collection of resources to enhance curriculum delivery (Mohammed and Roshini 2007). Remillard (2005) argues that teachers frequently make changes in the curriculum intensions and modify them according to the structure and the purpose of the lesson, in doing so, the availability, quality, and flexibility of the textbooks play a critical role in teachers' decisions to select textbooks.

The mathematics textbook was used and is still very relevant as an important tool in teaching and learning, not only mathematics but also other subjects. Despite outstanding new technologies put in place, it is yet to displace the use of textbooks in the classrooms (Rezart 2009). This implies the continued relevance of textbooks as an aid to instruction. According to Rezart (2009), students incorporate their mathematics textbook as an instrument into four activities namely, solving tasks and problems, consolidation of class activities, acquiring mathematical knowledge, and activities associated with interest in mathematics. The content knowledge or the subject matter determines the type of textbooks to be used by the teachers. To deliver a lesson or to plan for a lesson, a teacher must align the content of his or her topics to various examples given in a textbook. Effective delivery of the lesson involves practical use of textbooks by the teacher. For example, in lesson planning, the teacher needs to pick some exercises from the textbook which will allow the students to gain deep knowledge of the concept being taught and to acquire skills of finding a solution to, not only mathematical problems in class but also with real-life problems.

In as much as the content of a textbook is arranged sequentially based on the school curriculum, the teacher needs to follow the sequence in his or her lesson plan and teach the students accordingly. Teachers use textbooks differently due to external and personal factors. External factors include pressure to prepare students for standardised tests, parent pressure, and pressure from colleagues. Personal factors, on the other hand, include a teacher's preparation, teaching experience, and understanding of the materials, as well as how the materials align with the teacher's philosophy of mathematics education (Edenfield 2010).

The roles of a good mathematics textbook include helping the learners to discover life-like tasks accompanied by problem-solving techniques, as well as promoting mathematics among the learners. In order to fulfil those tasks, the textbook writers should be well informed and have skills and knowledge of the subject matter. They must be aware of the requirements to be met before the delivery of the textbook (Adu et al. 2016). Lepik (2015) concluded that textbooks are one of the most powerful influences on school mathematics in a survey he carried out in Estonia with 164 teachers. The study further revealed that textbooks serve as a central instructional tool in Estonia during mathematics classes. Textbooks are equally important resources for both the teachers and the learners. Teachers use it to plan and teach mathematics lessons while learners use it as learning materials (Mullis et al. 2008). Textbooks are often perceived as reflecting the official and intended curriculum, and it involves control of the material selection and sequencing and the teacher becomes an implementer of the learning process, which is regulated by textbooks (Lepik 2015).

The textbook influences the teacher's decisions regarding the instructional approaches used in the classroom. Several empirical studies

have shown that "textbooks appear to play a role in teachers' pedagogy by conveying pedagogical messages and providing an encouraging or discouraging curricular environment for them to employ different teaching strategies" (Fan et al. 2013: 636). Textbooks are also connected intimately to the instruction and serve as an integral part of a teachers' daily work. Textbooks are very important during mathematics classroom activities (Fan et al. 2013; Pepin et al. 2013). Manolescu (2004) and Karlovitz (2005) succinctly describe the important functions of textbooks as motivation, knowledge transfer, classification, coordination, differentiation, learning coordination, teaching-learning strategies, triggering self-assessment, and values education.

Objectives

The objective of this paper is in congruence with the research questions. This study investigated how teachers selected textbooks for teaching mathematics and also established how teachers used textbooks in lesson planning.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this paper:

1. How do teachers select textbooks for teaching mathematics?
2. How do teachers use textbooks in lesson planning?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a phenomenological research design because it attempts to understand people's (learners' and teachers') perceptions, perspectives and understandings of the use of textbooks in teaching mathematics.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Participants for this study were purposively selected from three primary schools because of convenience and proximity to the school. The samples of six teachers and three heads of department were purposively selected. In each school, two teachers (educators) and one head of department respectively were selected.

Data Collection

Two instruments were used to collect data for this study, that is, observation, to enable the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the use, and selection of textbooks for lesson planning and delivery, and semi-structured interviews to obtain an in-depth information about participants' thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings about the topic.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

The instruments used in the study, which are observation and semi-structured interviews, were validated by experts in the field to ensure their trustworthiness and credibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following sub-research questions were raised and they constitute the themes of analysis from which sub-themes emerged for the purpose of data analysis.

Question 1: How do the teachers select textbooks for teaching mathematics?

Table 1 gives the theme and sub-themes from the first sub-research question.

Prescribed Textbook

In selected primary school textbooks for teaching mathematics, the respondents said that teachers were guided by the prescribed textbook by the department in the CAPS document. Whether the books were of good quality or not, they could not influence the changes. Obviously, this includes the examination of whether the textbook met the requirements of society, aligned with the education program of the institution, addressed the needs of the learners, was comprehensive, detailed and flexible. The following were teachers' responses:

TrA1: *On behalf of myself I use different textbooks from the prescribed ones by the curriculum and the department.*

Table 1: Themes and sub-themes concerning the selection of textbooks for teaching Mathematics

Theme	*Sub-theme*	*Issues raised*
The selection of textbooks for teaching mathematics	Prescribed textbook	The respondents indicated that they selected textbooks from the prescribed textbooks, and they did not have an influence on this. They followed the recommendation by the department.
	Easy language	The respondents said that they liked to use the textbooks that were not complicated, and textbooks with easy language that they would understand and be able to translate when code-switching in class since they are teaching grade 4.
	Clarity and comprehensiveness	The respondents indicated that the textbook must be very clear and avoid confusion and ambiguity. They liked detailed textbooks that meet the needs of the learners.

The other teacher (TRA2) corroborated this by saying that textbooks are prescribed only by the department.

TrB1: *We teachers come into an agreement since we have more than one teacher in grade four. We all used the prescribed textbook, which is Platinum*.

On the contrary to what the above teacher said, TrB2 has this to say,

TrB2: *We are not the ones who select textbooks, but the school tells us the textbook to use.*

The other teacher from school C had this to say,

TrC2: *We have so many mathematics textbooks. We have Oxford, Platinum, Day to Day, Harvest, and Spot on. But we do select the one that has detailed information that suits the learners. We select the one that suits the level of the learners. We based our selection on CAPS.*

Easy Language

Another teacher (TrA1) further said that he did not go beyond the prescribed textbook in his selection, but he based his selection on the language used to write the textbook. This was in line with what TrA2 said.

TrA2: *I only consider the language used in the textbook, whether it will be easy for me to translate into the mother tongue. If the English used in writing the book is not complicated, I make a decision based on it, and the clarity of the textbook.*

The opinion of other teachers in school B differed. She said,

TrB2: *I consider the contents, because some books have few questions, whereas we need to give learners more questions. The right book does affect my decision-making. I am comfortable with the textbook because everything that is in the policy documents is inside the book.*

TrC1 below supported what the teacher in school A said about the language used in the textbook.

TrC1: *It is obvious that the language used in writing the textbook is an essential factor to be considered since in grade four; there is a need for code switching.*

TrC2 alluded to what TrC1 said about the language used in writing textbooks as a factor she considered when selecting the textbooks.

Clarity and Comprehensiveness

On the aspect of clarity, one of the respondents alluded to the fact that what he is interested in is detailed textbooks. Those allowed her to make the right choice.

TrB1: *I select a very clear textbook that enhances my learners' success at all times. I also check if the textbook flows in thought and gives more than one example on each item of the lesson.*

TrB2: *The platinum textbooks we are using are very clear and detailed. This textbook works well because we consider the clarity before we use it.*

TrC2: *I use a textbook that has more diagrams and better illustrations that suit my learners' needs.*

Findings and Discussion on the Selection of Textbook for Teaching Mathematics

The respondents indicated that they selected textbooks from the prescribed textbooks by the department, which were written clearly according to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). They did not have any choice in selecting outside the prescribed textbooks, and they did not have an influence on this. They followed the recommendation by the department. However, they said that they liked to use the textbooks that were not complicated, textbooks with easy language that they will understand and be able to translate when code-switching in class since they are teaching grade four. They also indicated that the textbook must be very clear and avoid confusion and ambiguity. They like detailed textbooks that met the needs of the learners.

The above is in accordance with Czeglédy and Kovács's (2008) idea that, in selecting primary school textbooks for teaching mathematics, the following among others must be considered whether the textbook meets the requirements of society, the education program of the institution, the needs of the students, the need for being comprehensive, detailed and flexible.

Similarly, a textbook must be simple, clear, concise and precise wording of definitions, theorems, proofs or other rules are significant in mathematics. Likewise, a good textbook must allow the learners to acquire some skills with specific aims like the improvement of meaning, analysing reading comprehension, counting skills, orientation in space, wish for proving, the pursuit of combinatorial argumentation, etc. (Czeglédy and Kovács 2008:17). The appearance of the textbook is also essentially important as a motivating factor. The textbook can also have adequate figures and illustrations, well-arranged paragraphs, and readability that all facilitate comprehension and the acquisition of knowledge. Practical considerations include the overview of the supplementary materials (teacher's book, exercise book, test sheets, sample solutions, tools) that belong to the given series of the textbook, and overview of the textbook itself. The durability of the book, its size or acceptable price, etc. are also factors to consider (Czeglédy and Kovács 2008: 17).

Question 2: How do the teachers use a mathematics textbook for lesson planning?

Table 2 gives the theme and sub-themes from the above sub-research question.

The Contents of the Curriculum

Lesson planning is one of the basic duties of every teacher in the delivery of an instructional lesson in the classroom. Lesson planning is a series of course plans which provide direction for a teacher of what kind of materials of study to be taught and how to teach them. The teachers had this to say.

TrA1: *Each and every teacher should have a lesson plan. The content of the curriculum does affect how I use the textbook. For example, the content of CAPS is different from that of OBE; the textbook selected is useful for me in*

Table 2: Themes and sub-themes concerning the use of Mathematics textbooks for lesson planning

Theme	*Sub-theme*	*Issues raised*
The use of mathematics textbooks for lesson planning	The contents of the curriculum	The sequential order of the contents of the curriculum allows them to use it for lesson planning.
	Supplement with other resources	They do use other resources like computer-assisted programs, games, workbooks and other textbooks as a supplement to the mathematics textbook
	The link between the textbook and plan book	The contents of the textbook help them to plan for the lesson because there is a link between their plan books and the textbook. This linkage helps their focus.
	Wide range of activities covered	They used the exact activities in the textbook to plan for their learners. They also used it as classwork and assignment for them.

my lesson activities, because it aligns with the curriculum contents.

Even though the schools visited do not use the same textbooks, the textbooks are chosen from prescribed books. Notwithstanding, this teacher said that,

TrB1: *The contents of the Platinum textbook that we are using in our school are in line with the contents of the curriculum. This works well for my learners because it has got examples that are very clear.*

TrB2 was of the view that the content of the curriculum had different divisions that teachers must follow in terms of duration and exercises, with examples to cover at specific times. The teacher's view is captured below.

TrB2: *We start by checking CAPS, the amount of time/hours and how many topics to cover before we use that to plan, or else you will end up teaching more and more what you are not supposed to teach. I plan in advance before preparing my lesson. I plan weekly.*

Similarly, another teacher said:

TrC2: *I plan according to the topic that has been selected. I prepare the lesson according to CAPS instruction. The textbook helps me to plan very well.*

Supplement With Other Resources

Virtually, all the teachers have supplementary resources to support the mathematics textbook. Their views are stated below:

TrA1: *The best way to achieve the objective of each lesson is to add other resources with textbooks; the resources I do use are computer games, workbooks, other textbooks, etc. We hold a discussion group when necessary as well as visiting the library.*

TrB1: *I supplement the textbook with other related books, especially if I do not find all what I wanted in a particular textbook.*

TrB2: *I supplement the mathematics textbook when I am teaching; I will bring other materials and use them very well. Even with the Platinum textbook that is detailed, I still use posters and chats to make my teaching hitch-free and smooth.*

TrC2: *We have so many supplementary resources that have been prescribed by CAPS like workbooks. We also compare the resources so as to teach the learners from simple to complex, known to unknown.*

The Link Between Textbook and Plan Book

The participants also believed that there should be a link between the textbook and the plan book. The plan book must not be different from what is inside the textbook.

TrA1: *What comes from mathematics textbooks is linked to my preparation for the lesson and nothing more. The content of the textbook is what I use to write my plan book at all times. I don't organise my different activities. I use the activities that are specified by the department.*

TrB1: *The contents of the textbook help me to plan for my lesson. The link between my plan book and the textbook is according to the guidelines. It gives me what I must connect with and the area l must focus on.*

TrB2: *My plan book is linked because I am taking what I have in the plan book from the textbook. I always quote the exercise and page numbers that are written in the textbook in my plan book before using it in class. I always use the terms already mentioned in the textbook to start my lesson. I write the activities that are in the textbook on the board.*

TrC2: The lesson plan and the textbook go hand in hand. If I am absent from school, another teacher can use my lesson plan to teach by using the activities stated in the lesson plan. In a nutshell, textbooks assist in making a lesson plan easy and simple to prepare.

Wide Range of Activities

Most of the participants noted that the wide range of activities in the textbook assisted them to plan. Two of them have this to say:

TrA1*: I use the exact activities in the textbook to plan for my learners; I also use them as classwork and assignment for them***.**

TrB1: *The activities written in the textbook make my work simple and less cumbersome.*

Discussion of Findings

According to the participants, for mathematics textbook to be useful for lesson planning, such textbooks must be written in sequential

order of the contents, so as to align properly with the curriculum (CAPS), because the lesson plan is the main right of the teacher, depending on the class and learners' needs. In lesson planning, the teaching styles and the learning styles should be compatible (Naimie 2012). The participants also indicated that they used other resources like computer-assisted programs, games, workbooks and other textbooks as supplements to the mathematics textbook when they were planning for their lesson.

The above excerpt is consistent with Khomani's (2005) idea that lesson plan preparation includes instructional materials like teachers' guides, syllabuses, and textbooks. The teachers also said the contents of the textbook helped them to plan for the lesson because there was a link between their plan books and the textbook. This link assisted them to be more focused. In the same vein, Abadzi (2006) observes that good textbooks for lesson planning should have a serious focus on content, with rich and extensive explanation and elaboration of concepts. It also allows them to achieve a daily learning outcome. This is corroborated by Brown (2009) who says that the use of textbooks in lesson planning by teachers provides ideas and practices, which frame classroom activity and also help teachers in achieving goals that they presumably could not, or would not accomplish on their own. Reed and Michaud (2010) reiterated that they used the exact activities in the textbook, to plan for their learners from which they gave classwork and assignments**.**

CONCLUSION

The respondents said they considered the language used and the types of illustrations, diagrams and activities among the prescribed textbooks to influence their final decision on the textbook to use, they said textbooks were selected by the end of the section before they started another section in the following year. They believed that lesson plans are very important and needed to be very detailed and comprehensive, and well aligned to the CAPS document and the textbook. The teachers noted that they planned according to the topics that had been selected. The wide range of activities in the textbook helped them with their lesson plan. From these activities, they gave their learners classwork, homework and assignment. These enabled them to cover all the specific topics per term. They also prepared the lesson plan according to CAPS instruction using the aid of textbooks and some supplementary resources like a workbook, computer, games, library books, posters, among others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers should endeavour to be professional as noted by one of the heads of the department. Over-reliance on textbooks might be dangerous and make teachers lazy and not innovative. They should plan far ahead and check the exercises in the textbook and match them with their workbook to quickly discover if there are errors, rather than discovering the errors during the class activities. The head of the department should not be too loaded with classwork in order to perform their duties as expected. They should endeavour to do thorough monitoring regularly, as one of them said that she meets with her teachers occasionally. Their meeting should be done as being laid down by the policy with a specific agenda

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