


Research Article

Managing curriculum policy implementation at correctional centres in selected South African Regions

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><i>Received:</i> 3 November 2022 <i>Accepted:</i> 28 December 2022 <i>Available online:</i> 30 Dec 2022</p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Correctional Centres Curriculum policy Educationists Implementation Instructional leadership Management Offender Rehabilitation Rehabilitation Curriculum</p> <p>2149-360X/ © 2022 by JEGYS Published by Young Wise Pub. Ltd This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license</p> 	<p>In terms of section 29 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996, everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education. Notably, education is a basic human right even for those in conflict with the law (offenders). This study is geared towards investigating management of curriculum policy implementation at Correctional Centres in North West (NW) and Gauteng (GP) regions in South Africa as Department of Correctional Services (DCS) geographical demarcations. It is therefore imperative for education managers in Correctional Centres to manage education curriculum effectively and efficiently in order to avert criminal behaviour and relieve socio-economic hardships that citizens might experience. The theoretical framework of this study, instructional leadership model would be engaged in order to foster the change required. Schools are more effective and efficient teaching and learning environment through instructional leadership (IS) as a critical aspect of school leadership. Instructional leaders should ensure that every student receives the highest quality instruction in line with the managing of curriculum policy implementation. The study seeks to outline the challenges faced by research participants towards management of curriculum policy implementation in Correctional Centres schools (CCS) and to identify possible solutions to those challenges. The anticipated possible outcome would be a development of a model towards the proper management of curriculum policy implementation strategy in correctional centres. For the purpose of conducting empirical research, the qualitative methodology will be used. Both educators and SMT's should possess learning area matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. The DCS and DoE should train members of SMT's on how to monitor, evaluate and support educators in terms of new teaching methodologies. . DCS and DoE must have a common understanding of how they would enhance training to successfully manage curriculum policy implementation process.</p>

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Introduction

Educators in DCS are appointed in terms of Correctional Services Act, 111 of 1998 (CSA), Section 41 Regulations (2(c)) and Chapter 3: part 1.3 as qualified academic or technical and must offer educational services to offenders. Educational programmes offered to offenders, should be in line with South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as outlined in the CSA, 111 of 1998. It is therefore imperative for education managers in CCS to avert criminal behaviour by managing the curriculum effectively and efficiently in order to relieve socioeconomic hardships that offenders might have experienced.

According to White Paper on Corrections, 2005, Section (8)(2)(1) the right to education is not curtailed by

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incarceration as literacy, schooling and basic adult education are priorities in DCS and School Management Team (SMT), Head of Department (HOD), Deputy Principal (DP), and the Principal (P) guided and supported Department of Education (DoE). Additionally Department of Education 27, Section 4(c) – (d) (1996) stipulates the right to equitable education opportunities, redress of past inequality and that no person must be denied educational opportunity to the maximum of his/her ability.

The members of the SMTs are instructional leaders and they are responsible for taking the lead in putting their school curriculum into practice and improving it (SMT 2000:1). The White Paper on Corrections, Section (9)(9)(2) outlined that education in the correctional environment must be in line with the education system of the general society. Rehabilitation can be achieved through combating illiteracy in CCS by providing educational programmes to offenders and increase training facilities for developmental programs

Education is a basic human right even for the offenders. In terms of the Constitution of South Africa, Section 29 (1) (a), everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education. This is also recognised in Chapter 3: part (1) (2) (1) of the CSA, 111 of 1998 (CSA) which emphasises that offenders have the right to quality and effective education. There is need to promote a collective social responsibility for the rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders into the society, as productive and law abiding citizens. Therefore, the management and implementation of curriculum must be in accordance with the general policies of the Department of Education (DoE).

This study seek to explore the challenges management experiences of curriculum policy in Correctional Centres in two Regions (NW and GP. The primary responsibility of planning, managing and overseeing the curriculum policy implementation process is assigned to the SMT's. The responsibility of the SMT's is primarily that of overseeing the effective implementation of the curricula implementation process and must take into consideration the school human and physical resources, quality of teacher (ing) and learner (ing) (Madani, 2019 and Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

Moreover, DCS school managers must create and provide a conducive learning environment within the parameters of the available resources in which offender learners could grow individually and be equipped with requisite skills that could be used when reintegrated in the society. A distinction should be made between acquiring academic skills and further awarding of certificates, achieving qualifications and securing employment compared to soft skill that is change in emotions and attitudes and/or combination of the two (Bennett et al, 2008).

The school principal as an internal change agent is expected to initiate, facilitate and implement change by determining the procedures and methods for implementing change (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2005:44). The curriculum as a self-actualisation process should be removed from traditional curriculum practices hence students must be involved in studying how obstacles can be overcome so that a more safe, secure and moral orientated society can be developed.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the research is to investigate challenges management and educator's experiences in managing the implementation of the curriculum policies in correctional centres schools. The objectives for this study are to:

- Explore the status quo of education management of the curriculum policy implementation in selected correctional centres schools.
- Investigate instructional leadership roles that educational managers play in education curriculum implementation.
- Investigate the educationists' skills and knowledge of managing the curriculum implementation in selected correctional centres schools.
- Determine the perceptions of the educationists in managing the implementation of the curriculum.
- Suggest a training program that should be provided to the educationists.

Research Problem

The research problem addressed in this study is whether ineffective curriculum policy implementation reflects failure of leadership in school setting. Flowing from the above, the central and guiding question is:

- What are the management challenges experienced by the educationist in managing education curriculum policy implementation in the Correctional Centres?

The guiding research sub-questions are:

- What is the status quo of the management of education curriculum policy implementation in selected Correctional Centres schools?
- What instructional leadership roles do educational managers play in the curriculum implementation?
- Do educationists in Correctional Centres schools have sufficient skills and knowledge in managing education curriculum implementation?
- What are the perceptions of the educationists in managing the curriculum implementation?
- What training should be provided to the educationists in the management of education curriculum implementation?

Method

Research Model

A qualitative approach was employed since the main aim of this study is to describe the principal as an instructional leader and the management of the curriculum policy implementation in the improvement of quality education through desirable outcomes.

Qualitative research is a naturalistic inquiry involving the use of non-interfering data collection strategies to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:372). A naturalistic enquiry means that data is obtained from a natural setting as possible and also deductively where evidence is drawn and logical conclusions are made (Newby, 2010:117). The natural setting is Correctional Centres in this study, as the direct source of data whilst the researcher remained the key instrument. The researcher considered the setting and people holistically, viewed as a whole and were not reduced to variables.

According to Jian (2022) and Mamabolo (2002:236), qualitative research is rooted in a phenomenological paradigm which holds that reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions. The role of the researcher is to facilitate a shared understanding amongst participants regarding the research objectives and possible outcomes.

A purposeful (non-probability) sampling technique was used in this study because data elements were situated near to where research data was gathered. The study took place in selected Correctional centres in security restricted areas or setting, therefore purposive or theoretical sampling offered the researcher some degree of control. Non- probability sampling technique was used and decisions concerning the participants were included in the sample taken by the researcher. Based upon variety of which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue or the capacity and the willingness to participate in the research.

The logic of the sample size is related to the purpose, the research problem, the major data collection strategy and the availability of information-rich cases (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010:328). In Correctional Centres educators are of a limited number, therefore all educators in North West, Limpopo and Gauteng Regions were considered for purposeful sampling.

Data Collection Tool: Interviews

An interview is a purposeful way to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experience of those individuals whose lives constitute education. As a technique of inquiry, an interview is most consistent with people's ability to make meaning through language. The researcher considered a list of key themes, issues, and questions to be covered. In semi- structured interviews, the order of the questions

could be changed depending on the direction of the interview and interview guide was used (see Annexure A).

Qualitative data were processed and analysed according to different themes. The interview data presented in themes were identified through the interview transcripts. Respondents and schools were distinguished from each other by means of the following key:

Table 1. Keys used for respondents and selected schools

Respondents		Schools	
Word	Key used	Word	Key used
Principal	P	School 1	S1
Deputy Principal	DP	School 2	S2
Head of Department	HOD	School 3	S3
		School 4	S4
		School 5	S5

Data Analysis

The following are themes that emerged from the data obtained from the interviews.

Results and Discussion

Theme 1. Status Quo of Curriculum Policy

NCS and CAPS are mostly implemented in youth centres or centres of excellence where offenders are juveniles and they operate as full-time schools. P1 from S1 “... curriculum and all national protocols are policies governing the curriculum and are implemented and adhered to” thus P3 from S5 further confirmed that “we are offering CAPS curriculum”. HOD 1 from S2

“...as that says curriculum CAPS is implemented” and further said that

“...AET everything runs smooth as we are getting everything from the DoE, regularly invited to workshops”. DP1 S3 “is just needed more is training to be effective “In our school actually we are focusing on AET and FET” and P2 from S4 “we do offer AET and FET”. Interviews with different SMT members confirmed that different curriculum policies are implemented (NCS, CAPS, FET and AET) in selected correctional services schools. P3 from S5 further confirms that “...are attending classes, there are teachers allocated to teach different subjects”.

Educational managers further alluded to the fact that they experience challenges in the successful management of curriculum implementation process.

P1 from S1 “we are still having few or small challenges or redefining some parts of speciality of the Correctional centre or facility as it is rare occasion or unique situation as related to schools outside. There are few things to be attended particularly with assignments and case studies, they got restricted because of their social restrictions”.

HOD 1 from S2 “the status is not up to standard because we only attended only one session of CAPS... schools outside the CAPS training is done on regular basis... implementation of this curriculum is not up to standard... We are progressing very slowly hoping that the department will come and assist us in this implementation that it takes place correctly. We have so many challenges when it comes to SBA (school-based assessment). We don’t even know exactly what is supposed to be registered as progress or on how you monitor progress. So those are the things that we need the DOE to come and assist us with so that we can implement the curriculum correctly so”.

P2 from S4 “...there is a great shortage of human resource to manage the curriculum as per prescripts of the DoE” and to alleviate the challenge P3 from S5 resorted to “...help of fellow inmates who are assisting in teaching”. DP1 from S3 “FET we got a challenge because we don’t usually do what is expected from us especially time factor... “training schedule sometimes is not escalated to educators... usually make appointment with learning facilitators to catch-up of which is not always successful”.

Theme 2. Instructional Roles Of Education Managers

P1 from S1 “lead but not managing in ensuring the policies of different subjects or administrative policies and classroom

policies are being adhered to... as we are part of the classroom activities... to ensure that maximum output... will be the results... better performance of the learners and our marks/pass rate going to be improved”.

Zheng, (2019) and Blasé and Blase, (2000) expressed instructional leadership in specific behaviours such as making suggestions, giving feedback, modelling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and giving praise for effective teaching. It shows that the educational manager is taking a leading role and responsibility of the school activities in ensuring that school aims and objectives are met thus improved learner performance.

HOD 1 from S2 *“we monitor the standards they tally with what is expected... check whether they are up to record... classes if they have challenges that we can assist with and we also give support where necessary”.* P3 from S5

“...my responsibilities are to ensure that CAPS curriculum is implemented and successfully so... I do is to monitor the progress and organise training for the offenders... Offenders are a tutor... interviewed checking obviously their qualifications and that’s how I place them (offender tutors) and teachers that I am working with”.

There is management, monitoring and evaluation of curriculum implementation to further establish if the set school’s aims and objectives by educators are met and the necessary support where needed.

DP 1 from S3 *“...involves educators... meetings where we will discuss issues for implementation... Principal is playing the leading role... some of the new information is through educators... assigned to certain responsibilities”.* P2 from S4 is of a different view *“...programs are taking place as required by the department is that curriculum requirements are cascaded down to the relevant or individual educators”.*

S3 management towards curriculum implementation is a joint and concerted effort with educators as they are the main implementers and managers of curriculum at classroom level. There is interaction and improved communication within the school towards instructional activities. Whereas S4 communication and other school activities including management of curriculum implementation is from top to bottom thus not giving educators the feeling of being the role player at a particular level.

Theme 3. Skills and Knowledge of Educators

P1 from S1 *“...teachers/educators we are having are professionally qualified recruited”* The general feeling of SMT on knowledge and skills needed to implement curriculum was that, it is important that one is knowledgeable and has expertise in his/her job in order to perform the work efficiently and effectively. P1 from S1 and P2 from S4 agreed and had the same view respectively by saying *“... last year June 2013 not all attended but we were convinced that most of them have relevant information, knowledge and skills needed”* *“Yes educators are highly qualified and they all have the sufficient skills to implement the curriculum”* ... P3 of S5 is of the view that *“...does have skills but what I have noticed with this curriculum there are lot of challenges”.*

HOD 1 from S2 differed with the above school whereby *“[they] don’t have the necessary sufficient skills and knowledge in implementing the curriculum”* and further alluded to the aspect that educators *“regard the issue of training as critical as they do not have much training”.* DP 1 from S3 agreed with HOD 1 from S2 by saying that educators *“just needed more training to be effective”.* It emerged in the interview with SMT members that they use experience and expertise of some of their members including educators to implement some of the curriculum activities even if the experience some challenges.

Theme 4. Perceptions of Educators

P1 from S1 commended that:

“...we did have interaction with educators with outlined expectations... directed by policies but before the policy is implemented... we have a common understanding with them as our starting point... we are flowing to the same direction as we have agreed that we are going have one target”. Whereby P3 from S5 *“...do adapt positively to the changes and they are ready especially when it is in line with education because they do understand the changes in curriculum and curriculum changes. We do work as a team to ensure that we adhere to the expectations of GDE and comply with the requirements they set for us”.*

The environment and climate at S1 and S2 outline continuous improved communication amongst all staff

members thus improved perception and determination towards managing curriculum policy implementation. S5 strengthen their optimal management of curriculum policy implementation by involving the custodians of curriculum through their supportive provincial and regional structures.

Of which the school climate towards S2 and S3 is different whereby HOD 1 from S2 is of the view that “...very frustrated imagine if one does have to perform beyond expectation while is not fully equipped... they go all out to go and consult other schools to get information for themselves... a good perception as they want this happening but then we also need to assist”. P2 for S3 further remarked that educators “...need clear picture” to effectively and efficiently manage curriculum policy implementation. DP1 from S4 commented by saying that “...curriculum changes happen now and then” of which this might imply that educators are not sure on how to effectively manage curriculum policy implementation thus negatively affecting instructional program.

Theme 5. Training and Support

The form of training and support that is provided to educationists in the managing of education curriculum implementation is totally dependent of the Department of Education from all the provinces of which it poses a big question on Department of Correctional services on their contribution towards educator’s development and ultimate production.

P1 from S1 “...one on one training by introducing subject committees... DoE subject seminar is called to a workshop... communicated down and up from educators to SMT and vice versa to ensure common understanding of the implementation of the school curriculum implementation”.

HOD1 from S2 “...consulting other schools for assistance... consult the department to come and train...we can give them support and encourage them but they need to be trained”.

DP1 from S3 “...training schedule sometimes is not escalated to educators we usually make appointment with learning facilitators to catch-up”.

P2 from S4 “...usually get support from Gauteng Department of Education whereby we have a series of workshops and road shows whereby teachers are work shopped about curriculum implementation”. P3 from S5 “...every year we do meet (GDE subject specialists) and then they outline everything that is what is expected per subject... Subject advisors per subject then from there we comeback with the necessary documentation then we give training to our offenders to what is expected. There are some subject advisors who visit our school. I organise a meeting between educator and subject advisor on subject related to give that support and the things they have to follow”.

Conclusion

Status quo of the management of curriculum policy implementation; The interviews with different SMT members confirmed that the different curriculum policies are implemented NCS, CAPS, FET and AET in selected Correctional Services Schools. NCS and CAPS are mostly implemented in youth centres or centres of excellence where offenders other school activities including management of curriculum implementation is from top to bottom thus not giving educators the feeling of being the role player at a particular level.

Instructional leadership roles of education managers towards managing curriculum implementation; It shows that the Section Heads/Principals are tasked with a leading role and responsibility of school activities. Therefore, they should ensure that school aims and objectives are met for improved learner performance. Educational managers/principals further eluded the fact that they experience challenges in successfully managing the curriculum implementation process.

Interview data analysed show that the Section Head/Principal’s role is to drive the mission and vision of the school. The vision of the school is to inculcate the spirit and love of teaching and learning and this places the curriculum policy implementation at the core of everything the principal does.

Educationists have sufficient skills and knowledge of managing the curriculum implementation; Most of M+4 educators are encouraged by salary structure, promotion requirements, encouragement by DCS through bursaries and development of their teaching and management skills. Upward mobility through promotions is needed as most

educators are still at entry level (COII). Most of the educators are curriculum managers without positions. In spite of this issue, educators lead using the knowledge acquired through their service and interactions.

Most of the educators are in the AET stream and this is in line with DCS mandate to eradicate illiteracy. FET educators (39.1%) of which most of the learners after AET level 4 they opt for skills or vocational training in order to equip themselves for the outside world as sampled population to manage curriculum policy implementation of both NQF bands.

Perceptions of educationists on managing the curriculum implementation Educators believe that the Section Head/Principal's role is to continually strengthen the capacity of the SMT by being proactive and consultative in order to drive the vision of the school. Curriculum changes happen occasionally and this might impact negatively on educator's ability to effectively manage curriculum policy implementation. Instructional program could be negatively affected too.

Training and support provided to educationists in managing curriculum implementation; A higher number of educators had never attended workshops or training over three years and this is alarming. The DCS should make sure that more workshops are arranged to enhance proper management of curriculum policy implementation. These results also corroborate interviews findings where educators revealed that they depend entirely on the DoE for workshops and training on management of curriculum policy implementation.

The form of training and support that is provided to educationists in managing the curriculum implementation is totally dependent on the DoE in all provinces. It is therefore inevitable to wonder about what the DCS' contribution towards educator's development and ultimate production. Funding towards educator development must be sourced and increased to optimally and successfully manage curriculum policy implementation in schools as well as infrastructure.

Recommendations

Provision of quality education is thus a response to societal needs and expectation, advances in technology and globalisation. Teaching and learning should help learners develop their abilities, motivation and desire to play an active role in finding solutions to problems and issues in the society. Instructional leadership is a very important dimension because it targets the school's central activities, teaching and learning (Bush, 2007:401).

Educators must have all the necessary information required for the implementation process then they would take ownership of the changes that are implemented and be more positive about it.

Educator's ability to make sense of curriculum policy must be taken into account as sufficient time must be devoted to educator training which must be more informative and regular. DCS and DoE must have a common understanding of how they would enhance training to successfully manage curriculum policy implementation process.

It is therefore necessary to find appropriate professional development approaches to ensure that all the educators, even the most experienced and senior ones are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for improving learner and teacher performance. Furthermore instructional leadership involves developing a common vision of good instruction, building relationships, and empowering staff to innovate (Day et.al 2020 and Jones, 2010: 38).

Once the training from both DCS and DoE is concluded, it becomes the responsibility of the school managers to provide follow-up training through staff development workshops because these could be used as a platform to identify areas of concern and solutions. This is in line with the statement "People need to be given the opportunity to talk about their fears and concerns, both in groups and individually" by the Department of Education: (DOE, 2001: 27).

The Department of Correctional Services needs to increase funding for their formal education directorate. This would be dedicated to the improvement of infrastructure that will be customised in line with the expected school structures. Some of Correctional Centres were formally intended to house offenders and were not designed for schooling purpose.

Effective management of curriculum policy implementation will not work without adequate resources and necessary skills for the education managers and educators. The need for high quality professional development is imperative for improving quality education in DCS schools.

Curriculum policy management and its implementation is the responsibility of the Section Head/Principal and his management team. Their roles differ and complement each other. Gordon (2019) and Foran (1990:9) refers to instructional leadership as clinical supervision and the best way to improve instruction.

DCS schools must develop a common financed post establishment (SMT- Principal, Deputy Principal and Head of Department). This will allow the smooth running and shared responsibility towards managing curriculum policy implementation.

The DCS and DoE should train members of SMT's on how to monitor, evaluate and support educators in terms of new teaching methodologies.

Educators should possess learning area matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge.

Educators should count on their Section Heads/Principals as resources of information on current trends and effective instructional practices. Instructional leaders are tuned-in to issues relating to curriculum, effective pedagogical strategies and assessment.

It is imperative for all educators to know the learning outcomes of the learning areas they are teaching. The HODs for various learning areas should empower educators and ensure that they understand the learning outcomes of the learning areas they are responsible for, for improved learner achievement.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher identified the following as some of the possible limitations that are related to this study: The main limitation of this research was that a case study was informed by Correctional Centres schools in North West and Gauteng only. It was further influenced by the fact that research sites were in close proximity to the researcher, Time and financial constraints, and travelling distance had a bearing in the selection of research sites.

A further limitation was that the five (5) participants interviewed were too few because most of the Section Head/Principal's that had agreed to form part of this research did not honour the interview agreement schedule. The views of the SMT at those schools cannot be generalised to reflect views of SMT at other Correctional Services schools.

A larger number of participants from more schools might have contributed to a variety of responses thus enriching the findings. Follow-up interviews could have added to the richness of the conversations. A final limitation as with any qualitative research project is that this study is not intended to be generalised as a finding that could be applied elsewhere. Outcomes of similar studies at other Correctional Centres schools can, however, be compared for results and trends.

The researcher is an educator within Correctional services of which on its own can take a form of a limitation. The position of the researcher therefore can possibly have an influence on the views and perceptions of both fellow educators and managers in DCS. Furthermore, variation of power relation could be detected during data collection stage as with fellow educators' interviews were dominated by features of collegiality and some form of expectation for immediate change to the educational practices of DCS education system. As for managers, the interview questions were somehow viewed as a form of challenging their managerial skills and practices and furthermore as a fault-finding mission.

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Annexure A: Interview Schedule

Preamble

The following interview schedule is used to collect relevant data as well as guide the participant during the interview. Participants were allowed to openly discuss their experiences concerning the managing curriculum policy implementation at correctional centres in selected South African provinces.

OpeningRemarks

- The participants are welcomed.
- Anonymity and Confidentiality are confirmed, and it is indicated that the participant's name will not be revealed in any way.
- Permission is requested from participants to record the interview.
- Participants are informed that they can refuse to answer any question or discontinue at any time during the interview.
- The research objectives are briefly explained.

Interview Questions

- What is the status quo of the management of curriculum policy implementation in your school?
- What instructional leadership roles do education managers play in the management of the curriculum implementation?
- Do educationists have sufficient skills and knowledge of managing the curriculum implementation?
- What are the perceptions of educationists on managing the curriculum implementation?
- What form training and support should be provided to educationists in the managing of the curriculum implementation?