A Case study: **The Role of School Management Teams in curriculum management.**

By

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of the School Management Team in curriculum management. It was prompted by anecdotal evidence that curriculum managers, Heads of Department in particular, fail to guide teachers with planning and other problems that they encounter in teaching the curriculum. However, curriculum management responsibilities and roles do not rest with individuals in a school; it is a shared responsibility of the school leadership that is the School Management Team. Therefore, the focus of this study is on how the School Management Team understands and performs its curriculum management role.

The study was conducted in a public primary school in the rural area of Kwa-Santi ward at Pinetown District. The study employed a qualitative approach with an interpretive case study design. The design was deemed suitable for because the aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of how the School Management Team understands its curriculum roles, performs its leadership role in curriculum management, and the barriers that prevent it from managing the curriculum effectively.

This study adopted the Tyler rationale and the Walker's deliberation models which underline those curriculum leaders must know and understand their roles and responsibilities in curriculum management before they attempt curriculum management tasks. In addition, shared decision-making through collaboration is important, as is the conditions that School Management Team facilitates in order for teaching and learning to occur.

The findings of this study are that School Management Team members have a superficial knowledge of their curriculum management functions and curriculum leadership roles. While they may enumerate their functions but their performance of them is limited to supervisory tasks and monitoring teachers work. A traditional management approach predominates and appears to obstruct practices such as collaboration and teamwork. This restricts teachers and some School Management Team members from initiating programmes that aim to develop teachers and improve their teaching of the curriculum and in turn this impacts negatively on teachers'' attitudes towards their work. In addition, this study found that the barriers to curriculum management are as a result of inadequate initial and continuing training of teachers and School Management Teams in curriculum management; School Management Teams' superficial understanding of the curriculum management and support; as well as limited support from the Department of Education.

DECLARATION

I... *N AKHOSARAVA ERITH JHOBA* .... declare that

i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.

(ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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As the candidate's supervisor I have/have not approved this dissertation for submission.

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Date......7 April 2009

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29 AUGUST 2007

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Dear Ms. Shoba

ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0518/07M

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

"The role of school management teams in curriculum management"

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

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Ximba
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RESEARCH OFFICE

cc. Faculty Research Office (Derek Buchler)
cc. Supervisor (Dr. J Karlsson)

2007-09-0 5

(vi)

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I also wish to thank Mrs. Barbara Holloway for her patience and going an extra mile to assist me with registration and motivating me to finish my studies.

Dedication

I would like to thank God Almighty for giving me the strength to work this far.

I wish to dedicate this study to my family for the support and encouragement.

First, to my mother Ntombi Shoba for praying for me in trying times and most importantly for taking care of my children during long years and hours of work, and also my father Mdeleni Shoba for supporting me in everything that I do.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

1.1 Introduction

In recent years schools have witnessed major developments of educational policies aimed at improving the quality of education in South Africa. Amongst the new policies in education, the curriculum policy also emerged. It replaced the 'old' curriculum that promoted racism, sexism, bureaucracy and so on. This meant a change at all levels of education but mostly to implementers of the curriculum (schools). School managers, who are to manage the post 1994 curriculum, were accustomed to bureaucratic management approaches. Nevertheless, the new curriculum acknowledges leaders with knowledge and expertise to ensure effective learning and teaching for economic growth and innovation in the 21st century. Therefore, the management of the curriculum becomes one of the key managerial functions of the school management teams (SMT) and the focus of this study.

1.2 Background to the study

As a curriculum manager at a school, I have observed that the curriculum is not being managed effectively. Some teachers claim that they are still teaching in the 'old ways' that is, following textbooks rather than learning area policy documents for each phase as is expected and stipulated in overarching curriculum policy. In some phases curriculum planning is done by the Heads of Department without consulting the policy documents for the learning areas to ascertain assessment standards and learning outcomes to be achieved by each learner. In addition, as a senior phase Head of Department for grades 6 and 7, I have observed that gaps in learner knowledge and skills become evident when learners progress to these grades. Mdutshane (2007, p.39), in her investigation of the implementation of Curriculum 2005 is

also of the view that teachers plan their lessons without the policy documents that guide them about the outcomes that each learner should achieve. Teachers plan as individuals and not as a team, which is the approach to plan for the curriculum. Little is mentioned in Mdutshane (2007) about the attempts of the School Management Team as curriculum leaders to facilitate and lead for curriculum planning even though this was not the focus of the study. In addition, anecdotal claims among teachers are that the school management team provides little or no support on curriculum issues related to planning as this is the nature of the teacher's job. Over and above this, Taylor (2006, p.8), in his research on challenges across the education spectrum, asserts that some SMTs are still confused by the ideology that underpins the curriculum due to poor quality training provided by the Department of Education. Teachers fail to cover curriculum topics planned for the year because curriculum leaders lack curriculum knowledge. This could influence the ineffective curriculum management by the School Management Team and these failings are important to understand because of their potential effect on learners' achievement. Thus exploring the problem of the role of the SMT in curriculum management is the focus of this study.

SMTs, especially in disadvantaged rural and semi-rural schools, may be experiencing challenges in curriculum management. For instance, when the curriculum was introduced the SMT had to accept change that was introduced in a very swift way. This meant SMTs had to change mindsets, that is, change management approaches, from bureaucracy to collaborative and teamwork and plan a school curriculum such that it addresses the design features of the policy, that is, integration of knowledge, learner centred approach and outcomes-based (see for example Harley & Wedekind, 2004, p.196). All this had to be achieved in five days of

training provided by the Department of Education and on the job training and through promised 'support' from the Department of Education. Taylor (2006, p. 8) argues that schools still struggle to teach according to the policy specifications about outcomes-based teaching and integration of learning outcomes within and across learning areas because teacher's understanding of the curriculum is still vague.

Harley and Wedekind (2004) and Taylor (2006) point out that during training workshops, teachers including SMTs are not familiar with methods of teaching the curriculum nor are SMTs in possession of specific methods of effective curriculum management. Instead, teacher understanding is reduced to simple dichotomies (teacher-facilitator, old teacher-centred, new learner-centred). On the face of it, workshops only provide teachers with a shallow understanding of curriculum principles and false clarity between teacher knowledge and their practices. Consequently, teachers fail to plan for curriculum accordingly (Taylor 2006; Harley & Wedekind, 2004). Therefore, given the arguments discussed above, it becomes necessary to explore the role of the SMT in a school because schools exist for teaching and learning and the effective management of the curriculum becomes the most important function of any school.

While there may be confusion and misunderstanding about the curriculum and 'shallow' methodologies for teaching, as Harley and Wedekind (2004) and Taylor (2006) put it, the Department of Education (2000) outlines the roles that the SMT should perform in curriculum management are to:

- Oversee curriculum planning in the school

- Develop and manage assessment strategies

- Develop and use team planning

- Manage teaching and learning

- Plan and organise staff development programmes

- Discuss educational policy with educators

- Manage curriculum resources, for example, human, physical and financial resources.

However, as a curriculum manager (Head of department), I have observed that the management functions outlined above are not being fulfilled by SMTs. The SMT fail to undertake initiatives that set to neither engage and improve effective curriculum delivery, nor implement measures that try to address a myriad of curriculum problems that heads of department experience in schools. The SMT does not facilitate joint discussions among the teachers about the aims and objectives of the school guided by its vision and mission statement. In the light of these problems with the role of the SMT in curriculum management it is worthwhile to explore the topic further and I do this in this study.

1.3 Research questions

Based on the problem that I outlined above, this study is guided by the following questions:

1. How does the School Management Team understand its curriculum management functions?

2. How does the School Management Team perform its leadership role for curriculum management?

3. What barriers prevent the School Management Team from managing the curriculum effectively?

1.4 Significance of the study

When the Department of Education conducts a survey of school results, it attributes poor results to several factors including poor socio-economic conditions and contextual factors (Sayed & Jansen, 2001). It appears to ignore the responsibility of SMTs in managing the curriculum which can lead to acceptable teaching and learning standards and academic achievement. It is mostly the post level one educators who receive curriculum training and a few SMT members for example, Heads of Department. Moreover, the role of SMTs in curriculum management is a field that has not attracted much scholarly attention. Dludla (2002, p. 45) in his research on school management teams argues that "Curriculum management is a field that is dominated by state pronouncements on policy that seem far removed from the context of local schools and are free of the burden of being accountable for implementing the curriculum and related issues".

Research of South African schooling, (for example see Coleman, Graham-Jolly & Middlewood, 2003; Taylor 2006) finds that curriculum management is an area that is neglected in some schools because most principals and senior staff members have no specific preparations for their roles and therefore fail to execute them. SMTs carry a huge responsibility of managing the curriculum for quality teaching and learning yet these roles are not clear. Day, Hall and Whitaker (1998) concur that policy makers refer to curriculum management roles in broad general terms through job descriptions that define broad areas of

responsibility rather than the tasks to be managed. The capacity to execute these responsibilities given job descriptions does not appear to be a consideration of policy makers before the curriculum is implemented, nor does the DoE provide effective support structures for SMTs to effectively perform their roles. Consequently, SMTs may be confused about their roles relating to the curriculum. In the light of this, my aim is to explore how the SMT understands and performs its role in curriculum management and to identify barriers influencing some of the educator perceptions that I mentioned above.

1.5 Definitions of key concepts

In this study I use some concepts that guide the study. In this section, therefore, I provide my understanding of the concepts so as to clarify at the outset how I am using these terms in the study to explain the problem.

1.5.1 School Management Team

The transformation of the education system in South Africa led to many new terms. The school management team (SMT) was one of the new concepts. The DoE (2000a, p.13) defines the school management team (SMT) as the senior staff of the school, which comprises the principal, deputy principal/s and heads of department. Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003, p.101) define senior curriculum managers as principals, deputy principals and senior teachers who are members of any school senior management team (SMT). Elsewhere, the School Management Team is defined by Gunter (2002) as teachers who have posts that have a whole institutional focus, and are responsible for the oversight of the schools functioning including budgeting, professional development, assessment, resource

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management and curriculum management tasks. They are senior teachers who work in a senior management team and may include those in middle management. Wallace & Huckman (1999, p. 2) define the School Management Team as a subgroup of the staff that includes the head, deputies as well as teachers with promoted posts (Heads of Department). This subgroup makes policies and decisions on behalf of the staff.

In this study the term is used to mean the school leaders who lead the curriculum and ensure that the curriculum is planned accordingly. They plan for the curriculum using collaborative approaches and interpret the curriculum to meet the school's needs according to policy, assist educators with planning for classroom implementation in order to address the design features that underpin the curriculum policy. They address problems that teachers encounter in teaching certain topics, plan development programmes for teachers, guide, and influence and support teachers in teaching the curriculum according to policy requirements. Therefore, it is clear from the definitions, whether from local or international literature that a SMT while they are teachers with teaching loads they lead and have extra duties to perform, and curriculum management is one of them.

1.5.2 Curriculum

Curriculum can be a confusing concept because curriculum scholars define it in different ways. For instance, Ross (2000) defines the curriculum as all the features which produce the school's life, the values exemplified in the way the schools set about its tasks and the way in which teaching and learning is organised and managed.

By contrast, Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003) define the curriculum as comprising all the opportunities for learning provided by a school. It includes the formal programme of lessons in the time table and the climate of relationships, attitudes, styles of behaviour and the general quality of life established in the school community as a whole. In this study I use the term to mean the content of learning areas to be taught in each phase.

1.5.3 Curriculum management

There is no single encompassing definition of what curriculum management means. It is a term amongst several that are commonly used to describe the leadership of the core functions of teaching and learning. In this section therefore, I provide the meaning of the term by different writers and how the term is used in this study. The Department of Education (2000) defines curriculum management as instructional leadership. Curriculum scholars such as Cardno (2003) state that curriculum management is academic leadership, instructional leadership or management and unfailingly point to the task of leading the primary activity of a school, i.e. teaching and learning processes. Kydd, Anderson and Newton (2000) define curriculum management as the way in which schools receive, organise, support, understand, interpret and give meaning to the official curriculum within the context and constrain of the classroom in which it is implemented. In this study, curriculum management is taken to mean the interpretation of the curriculum policy in schools by the SMT and ensuring that the design features that underpin the curriculum are accepted and promoted in classroom settings (Harley &Wedekind, 2004, p. 196). This is done through teamwork, collaboration and consultation of learning area documents during planning by teachers at a school level as well as at phase and grade level. SMT members lead the process. In this study I use the term to

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mean functions and leadership roles that the School Management Team engages in when managing the curriculum.

1.6 Conclusion

In this section I provide the outline of each chapter in this study.

Chapter one gives the reader the background of the study, the significance and the questions that guide the study as well as explains key terms used in this study.

Chapter two discusses the relevant literature that was drawn from local and international arena. The chapter discusses documents that outline the functions of SMTs in curriculum management and barriers that they encounter when performing their roles. I this chapter I also discuss the theoretical framework that guides curriculum management. Chapter three discusses the methodology used in this study. This study adopted an interpretive case study approach given that I wanted an in depth understanding of the performance of function and leadership role by the SMT in curriculum management. Documents were the first step towards the collection of data. Then interviews were conducted in the field and these were tape recorded, transcribed and analysed.

Chapter four presents the data and discusses the findings.

Chapter five summarises the research questions and concludes the study.

In the next chapter I turn to discuss relevant literature on this topic of curriculum management.

Chapter 2: Review of literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses curriculum management and what scholars in the local and international arena say about it. Curriculum management approaches prior to and post 1994 provide the setting of this discussion. Curriculum change and its implications on teachers and SMT members are also considered. The chapter closes with a discussion of the barriers to curriculum management that emerged from the literature.

2.2 Background to curriculum management pre-1994

Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003, p. 100) are of the view that school management teams in most South African schools have little or no understanding of curriculum management. This is because of the apartheid legacies that underpin curriculum management practices especially in 'black schools'. Curriculum management in schools prior to 1994 was characterised by authoritarianism, bureaucracy and hierarchical practises and emphasised segregation according to race (Coleman, Graham-Jolly & Middlewood, 2003, p. 101). It followed a chain of command that ignored teacher participation both in curriculum development and within schools. They explain that at a school level, principals collected syllabuses from circuit offices. At the school the principal would check if all the subjects were catered for. Then the principal (where there were no HoDs) would distribute syllabuses to educators. The subject teacher would check if new topics had been added and then develop his/her scheme of work for implementation in class. This was done without consulting other teachers of the same subject. Decision-making in curriculum matters such as planning materials, resource

allocation etc., rested with principals even if there were deputy principals and heads of department. Bush and Middlewood (1997) contend that principals were seen as authoritarian and teachers as their subordinates. Hence, Van der Westhuizen (2004) contends that bureaucratic approaches assign the person's task and post in clearly defined lines and this may impede the management of the curriculum. This means that staff assisting and/or guiding each other in task performances may be regarded as interference in each others' task and post.

Consequently, in South Africa curriculum management activities by the school leaders for teaching and learning involved timetabling, allocation of teacher workloads, checking if the schemes of work (learning programmes/work schedules) had been planned, overseeing and ensuring that tests and exams were conducted and schedules compiled and submitted on time. Within the curriculum management activities planning for learner achievement and attainment of educational standards were not a consideration. The prescriptive nature of the curriculum provided no role and left little scope for curriculum decision-making for school leaders to become active curriculum managers and developers of aims and objectives for schools. These arrangements are regarded as traditional management practices.

Dalton (1988) argues that traditional management practices in the international arena positioned teachers as though they were skilled artisans to implement the directives of others, rather than intellectual professionals involved in designing, planning and evaluating the curriculum. This approach influenced school leaders to follow the

curriculum in a slavish manner and kept rigidly to subject boundaries and on the face of it encouraged individual practices by teachers (Preedy, 1989). It encouraged routine decision- making and solving problems in the school rather than dealing with curriculum issues such as resource allocation, developing the staff etc. It ignored the roles for effective execution of curriculum management tasks by school leaders (West-Burnham 1993, p.104-105). Supporting this is Early and Weindling (2004) who maintain that specifying roles provides frameworks for actions and assigns responsibilities to SMT members for effective curriculum management in a school. However, when the African National Congress (ANC) became the ruling party in 1994, their first priority was to introduce a curriculum policy that discouraged racism, sexism and redress of past inequalities (Harley & Wedekind 2004; Nsibande 2002).

2.3 Curriculum management Post-1994

Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003) state that the post-1994 curriculum management approach contrasts sharply with bureaucratic curriculum management approaches of the apartheid era as discussed above. Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003) assert that the post apartheid curriculum approach emphasises and promises that teachers will be key participants in curriculum decision-making. Teachers have autonomy and freedom to plan the curriculum in order to accommodate contextual factors such as learner experiences, and relevance of learning area content to suit the learners being taught. Such practices require teamwork, cooperation, power sharing and collaborative decision making so that there is joint decision-making in curriculum management and delivery in the classroom. The SMT members are leaders of this

practice. For them, it means becoming proactive leaders who must learn and gain a deeper understanding of curriculum management as encompassing a host of activities that need to be performed and not as tabulated tasks to be followed rigidly. Such activities include; understanding the meaning of curriculum management, curriculum leadership styles and being knowledgeable about roles in curriculum management and functions of SMTs as stipulated by the Department of Education. It is to these activities of curriculum management that I now turn in this discussion.

2.4 The Meaning of 'Curriculum Management'

SMT members during curriculum change will find their new roles as curriculum leaders challenging. This is because curriculum management is not understood by most SMT members due to past bureaucratic curriculum management practices in South African schools (Coleman, Graham-Jolly & Middlewood, 2003). It is only after the introduction of Curriculum 2005 that SMTs were informed about curriculum management as one of the core functions that SMTs should prioritise in their day-to-day running of schools. Nevertheless, scholars state that curriculum management means instructional leadership or management, academic leadership and/or curriculum leadership (Department of Education, 2000; Cardno, 2003). In this study I use the term 'curriculum management' and 'leadership' as Thurlow, Bush and Coleman (2003) state that it may be permissible to use management and leadership as one concept and therefore the terms are used interchangeably. This is because curriculum management is a process that does not only involve the execution of tasks that can be tabulated but it is complex and requires skills of leading, planning and designing. By and large, management is important for curriculum

leaders because it allows formative education to take place when SMTs execute their regulative tasks (Van der Westhuizen, 2004, p.55). On the face of it, facilitating curriculum management is leadership which plays an important role because it involves inspiring, motivating and supporting teachers to achieve desired curriculum vision (Early & Weindling, 2004). Therefore, for SMTs in curriculum management it is important that they 'manage' and 'lead' the curriculum and this leads me to discuss leadership approaches for curriculum management.

2.5 The Leadership approaches to curriculum management

The performance of the role rests on the potential of a SMT and its members being dynamic to perform their roles as curriculum leaders. This includes the adoption of leadership styles that impact positively on the teachers taking the lead in curriculum. For example, Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejord (2002) have emphasised the importance of leadership styles in curriculum management. They maintain that a SMT needs to adopt visionary leadership which guides curriculum management in schools. This mandates SMTs to develop and interpret the school's vision in line with curriculum needs. Cardno (2003) also concurs that the school's vision should guide and motivate teachers and learners in upholding high standards of achievement for their schools. Complementing this is the assertion by Thurlow (2000. p. 203) that strong leadership and the adoption of leadership approaches are essential for curriculum delivery and effective curriculum management. This view is also shared by West-Burnham (1992, p.101) who asserts that dynamic leadership creates the commitment to effective curriculum management. This

means, therefore, that appropriate curriculum approaches should be adopted to impact positively on teacher morale and teacher motivation in curriculum issues.

There are scholars such as Cardno (2003) and Evans (1998) who argue that leadership approaches could impact negatively on teacher quality of life in their work as curriculum implementers. This has been evident in the past where bureaucracies influenced school practices on curriculum management. Teachers were seen as implementers of centrally determined curriculum policies and their potentials as active participants to design and plan for curriculum were not acknowledged. As a result teachers in disadvantaged areas are not yet cooperating in curriculum issues of current times. Newlove (2000) maintains that the secret of successful curriculum management by a SMT depends on the expertise of staff and teacher potentials. This mandates a SMT to adopt leadership approaches that acknowledges teacher efforts. It is asserted that teachers participate actively in curriculum decision-making if they perceive their relationships with a SMT as collaborative, facilitative and supportive (Coleman, Graham-Jolly & Middlewood, 2003). Supporting this is Cardno (2003) who maintains that interpersonal relationships between SMT members and members of staff remain the key elements in enabling decision-making in areas of curriculum management.

It is suggested that participative leadership such as collegial models may ensure curriculum decision-making in schools. Collegial approaches improve relations with SMT members and encourage freedom for teachers to select curricular content that

ensures effective learning (Craig 1989, p.136). This is facilitated by debates and discussions which are followed by consensus on curriculum issues among teachers (Preedy 1989). Nevertheless, leadership approaches function within frameworks that enhance curriculum management in schools. Thurlow (2000) identifies three frameworks that may guide SMTs in curriculum management towards the motivation of staff for effective curriculum delivery. Firstly, Thurlow asserts that leaders need to adopt guidelines that guide the actions for all who are involved in curriculum management. These guidelines are guided by the aims policies and systems for decision-making in curriculum management within the school. The second framework is clarity of roles and responsibilities for all who are involved in curriculum management. Everyone needs to have a shared understanding of their respective role and should be supported in his/her role by members in a team. Without clarity of roles and clear frameworks for curriculum management, the school might lapse into confusion and conflict. Lastly, teamwork is important in curriculum management because each person in the team finds his/her roles enjoyable and rewarding towards the achievement of the school's curriculum aims (Thurlow, Bush & Coleman, 2003). Finally, it is important that curriculum leaders adopt approaches that promote curriculum management because these form the foundations for effective curriculum management and may either encourage or discourage teachers to be active participants in curriculum matters. However, the leadership approaches are accompanied by other support structures such as resources that promote effective curriculum management in schools which I now discuss.

2.6 Supports structures for curriculum management (resources)

Support structures include that which assist, promote and enhance the performance of curriculum tasks by school leaders and benefits teaching and learning (Department of Education 2000, p.90). Resources are regarded as the most important support structures because curriculum management depends largely on resources available in schools (Department of Education 2000, p. 94). These include knowledge of the curriculum, human, financial and physical resources.

2.6.1 Knowledge of the curriculum

The performance of curriculum management roles requires that each member in a team is well versed with skills, expertise, and knowledge of the curriculum. Taylor (2006, p. 8) contends that, SMT members in schools lack knowledge of the curriculum because teachers fail to plan certain aspects of the curriculum. Lack of curriculum knowledge and not being clear about terminology in the case of Curriculum 2005 by SMT members and teachers, lead to poor lesson planning and teachers lack confidence when they deliver their lessons because curriculum leaders lack knowledge to guide teachers (Nsibande 2002). Therefore, it becomes important that curriculum leaders are knowledgeable in the field of curriculum management so as to lead teachers and address problematic curriculum areas. The performance of the role by SMTs in South African schools depend on the stipulated functions from the Department of Education (2000, p. 10). The functions that SMT members should perform in schools are:

- Overseeing curriculum planning

- Developing and managing assessment strategies

- Developing and using team planning manage teaching and learning resources

- Planning and organising staff development programmes

- Discussing educational policy with educators

- Managing curriculum resources for example, human, physical and financial resources and manage time as a resource.

However, West-Burnham (1993) and Cardno (2003) argue that the role of SMTs as curriculum leaders is not limited to these functions but it is expected that they become coordinators who constantly update their knowledge in areas of curriculum, including appropriate teaching methodologies. SMT members should demonstrate a thorough understanding of contemporary approaches to effective teaching and learning by effectively conveying, providing and coordinating information about the latest ideas and approaches of subjects and assessment strategies to staff members. By and large the SMT should provide a supportive environment by giving professional direction to the work of teachers through developmental workshops, in-service training while at the same time encouraging innovation in classroom practice. In order to do this the SMT needs to understand and apply recognised leadership approaches for effective curriculum management mentioned earlier on in this discussion, reflect on their performance, appraisal and demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning in order to improve their performance and to motivate teachers to do likewise (Cardno 2003). However, this depends largely on how human resources (teachers and non-teaching staff) are managed and appreciated by the SMT.

2.6.2 Human resources

Human resources are the most important kind of resource that the schools have. Therefore, it is important that the SMT manage these resources in such a way that quality teaching and learning is guaranteed (Department of Education 2000, p. 95). In ensuring that the curriculum is uninterrupted, the SMT should engage itself in various human resource management activities, for example, mentoring, managing absent educators and relating to parents. Mentoring happens when an experienced educator in a learning area assist inexperienced teachers. The new teacher observes his/her mentor when he/she teaches so that teaching skills are transferred from the experienced to the less experienced teacher so that curriculum standards of a school are not compromised. Furthermore, the SMT should manage absent educators because learners ought not to be in a classroom without an educator to teach them. Therefore, the SMT has a serious responsibility to ensure that each class has an educator at all times (Department of Education 2000, p. 97). The SMT should establish a time table to identify 'free periods' for educators and SMT members so as to organise substitution for an absent educator/s and this should be made fairly to avoid conflict among teachers. In this way, the curriculum may not be disturbed and the SMT would be proud to be managing the curriculum effectively. Similarly, the SMT should try and meet the needs and concerns of the parents about the education of their children. Parents have the right to be informed about the conditions in the school and a positive relationship with them may benefit the schools. In this way, child related problems in learning matters could be addressed easily (Department of Education 2000, 98).

2.6.3 Financial resources

The School Governing Body is responsible for school finances and is supported by the principal and SMT. Educators in each department within the school will work on a budget for activities they are planning for the following year. The SGB will evaluate all requests and decide whether they are affordable and realistic. They will then allocate monies for all departments and finalise with parents who pay school fees and it is up to them to purchase resources that support the curriculum (Department of Education 2000, p.108-111).

2.6.4 Physical resources

Generally schools have basic physical resources that support curriculum management and these include; classrooms, exercise books, textbooks, pens and pencils, chalkboards, dusters and paper. The Department of Education supply some of these to schools but section 21 schools purchase their resources if monies are managed well by the School Governing Body (SGB). In addition, the SMT should encourage teachers to develop their own resources in order to develop collaborative working relations (Department of Education 2000, 103). However, curriculum management practices of SMTs in schools undermine the curriculum's vision because evidence suggests that schools respond to change in uneven ways and in some schools change is not introduced. Therefore, these point to barriers to curriculum management emerging from literature which I now discuss.

2.7 Barriers to curriculum management

This section discusses several barriers to curriculum management found in the reviewed literature. These are a lack of knowledge because of lack of continuous training of SMTs in curriculum management by the DoE, lack of resources and conflicting roles among SMT members and teacher attitudes towards curriculum change. I discuss these below.

2.7.1 Lack of knowledge due to poor training

Cardno (2003) states that research conducted in New Zealand indicates that the barriers that SMTs encounter in curriculum management are the rapid pace of change in the national system in the area of curriculum change and policy implementation. He maintains that SMTs carry enormously varied workloads and the nature of the job has become complex and constrained. This includes high administrative workloads such as financial and property management and accountability to education authorities often takes precedence over attention to curriculum management. Over and above that, paper work, interruptions, crises within schools and conflict management involving staff, learners and parents takes up most of middle managers' time. SMTs in these schools understand their curriculum management roles but the curriculum leadership from these leaders proves ineffective. They are in the least favourable position to provide proactive leadership required for curriculum management because they have insufficient knowledge to assist them to execute their roles effectively.

In contrast to New Zealand's curriculum change experiences, in South Africa, some SMT members have problems with the management of Curriculum 2005 linked with the

quality of training they received and thus lack knowledge which forms the foundations of becoming effective in role performance. SMT knowledge of the curriculum is important because it assists teachers and provides support in problematic curriculum areas (Sayed & Jansen, 2001). Similarly, SMTs play a major role in interpreting the educational policies in general as well as policy documents for the curriculum and therefore their knowledge is vital. Knowledge, skills and attitudes are essential for educational innovation and to enhance effective management of the change process, in particular, the curriculum (Nsibande 2002, p.30). However, researches have shown that some principals who should have knowledge and expertise of the curriculum 'know nothing' about the management of Outcomes Based Education. Supporting this is Taylor (2006), who maintains that SMTs in schools lack knowledge of the curriculum and therefore they fail to provide effective curriculum leadership to teachers because they do not understand Outcomes Based Education principles. This weakness still continues despite teacher workshops on Outcomes Based Education and shallow guidance of its management being given to SMT members, the terminology and language complexity used in the curriculum remains a problem for most teachers (Nsibande, 2002, p.19). However, planning for curriculum as a core function for curriculum management has occurred to varying degrees at schools while in some schools there has been no planning because of the complexity of the curriculum and failings among the SMT to give guidance to teachers due to SMT members' lack of knowledge.

SMTs' curriculum management effectiveness and efficiency depends on a five day training workshop that is organised by the provincial Department of Education. It is

within the five days that SMTs are expected to master skills and knowledge for curriculum management in schools. Researches indicate that teachers received more training opportunities than principals and as a result, principals are threatened by knowledge and expertise of teachers (Nsibande, 2002, p.20).Thus, the position of principals as knowledgeable leaders is further weakened by the fact that Nsibande sees them as ill informed about Outcomes Based Education because it is principals who are given support by teachers because they have been declared as 'knowing nothing' about the curriculum. Therefore, these different values and ideologies affect curriculum management issues and the way in which they could be addressed by the SMT.

Mabude (2002) finds that the training that was provided for SMT members does not enable them to sustain the transformation process in curriculum. The SMT members do not understand what needs to be done and changed in schools especially in areas of curriculum. Serious engagement with new policies requires that leaders are intellectually active, can raise awareness about policy among those they lead and can motivate and inspire their staff in the process of curriculum change (Mabude, 2002). The manner in which the training workshops are planned for school management teams is not always well received. Nsibande (2002) asserts that this is because workshops are conducted in an *ad hoc* way and fail to address the most important aspects of curriculum management. The quality of training workshops is poor, facilitators are not clear about the curriculum and there is inadequate follow-up support for SMT members after training. Chakane and Moyo (2004) describes Curriculum 2005 training as not up to standard, overcrowded, incoherent, and awkward and dominated by a shortage of personnel knowledgeable in

Outcomes Based Education. Consequently, this indicates that the management of the curriculum may have not filtered down to schools due to inadequate training received by SMT members and the model used for training (Mabude 2002). The cascade model is problematic because facilitators fail to replicate fully the training they receive at national level when they return to their districts and schools (Harley & Wedekind, 2004). The training ignores complex curriculum issues such as pedagogy and implications, professional identities that pronounce teacher practices. Understanding the complex curriculum issues only provides teachers with what Harley and Wedekind (2004, p. 195) call 'a simple hanger on which to peg their understanding'.

Mabude (2002) acknowledges that school managers play an important role in managing the curriculum. Therefore, he recommends that SMT members should receive training from experts and facilitators who are well versed with Curriculum 2005. Such training should be formal certificated courses for school management teams. Over and above that, Mabude proposes that there should be workshops before and after the innovation is implemented and there should be ongoing support available and resources to support the management of change. In the case of some schools, lack of recourses among many that exist have been identified as barriers to curriculum management.

2.7.2 Lack of resources

The lack of resources is a primary factor that impedes curriculum management, and is widely experienced in South African schools (Thurlow, Bush & Coleman, 2003; Sayed & Jansen, 2001). Yet, successful curriculum management requires resources such as physical, human and financial resources (Mabude, 2002). Historically disadvantaged schools have a shortage of almost every teaching and learning aid including human resources. Overcrowded classrooms make it difficult to teach and because of inadequate school finances a SMT cannot employ extra teachers in order to reduce the learner-teacher ratio in the classrooms. Historically disadvantaged schools also lack finances to purchase materials such as learning and teaching aids and other physical resources in the form of furniture that enhance teaching and learning. Some have buildings that are collapsing; they hardly have any libraries, laboratories and/or electricity and sanitation. In some schools there are no books or they receive books late from the Department and in some cases, schools receive books that they have not ordered. These books make it difficult for teachers to plan lessons because the level of complexity and content caters for first language learners and does not address the context of the learners in which they teach. It is these factors that SMT members struggle with in their endeavour to manage the curriculum. Consequently, effective curriculum management is compromised when there is a lack of resources since the performances of the curriculum management roles by SMT members depends on resources. Nevertheless, school management teams find their roles unclear and therefore a potential for role conflict which I now discuss.

2.7.3 Conflicting roles

Clarity of roles within SMT members are a precondition for effective curriculum management in schools (Newlove, 2004; Sayed & Jansen, 2001). SMT members often encounter problems in understanding what it means to be a curriculum manager and have expressed uncertainty about the specific nature of curriculum leadership.

Moreover, SMT members fail to strike a balance in their roles because the roles are packed with a variety of other related activities that cannot be separated from the whole school functioning. For instance, SMTs have key roles in the education system and in the wider community to perform what he refers to as roles full of confusion and ambiguity. SMTs are educational leaders, managers of people and resources and advocates of their schools and of education generally and to the community at large. They are negotiators and agents of government authorities and unions. SMTs act as experts and exemplars to members of the school community. They exercise authority to teachers and learners. Accountability to education authorities put enormous pressure on SMTs in schools thus impeding curriculum management (Marsh, 2003).

In South Africa most SMT members in schools are not aware of the clarity of roles in curriculum management; hence the performance of roles and responsibilities is ineffective. School leaders lack role models for the new paradigm because the department itself is still confused by these new management structures. Thurlow, Bush and Coleman (2003) are of the view that could be role conflict within the SMT members when performing their curriculum management roles. This is evident when members within a team hold different opinions or rather have competing expectations on curriculum issues,

for example, in phase planning and what teaching and learning topics to include in their teaching programmes. (see for example, Kitson & O'Neill, 1996) who state that some principals see the appointment of curriculum managers (i.e. Heads of Department) as indicating their failure to manage the curriculum). Heads of Department have the most curriculum responsibilities and may find their decisions at odds with that of the principals and deputies because s/he leads the curriculum and guides other SMT members. HoDs in their roles as curriculum managers are also team leaders, monitor of teachers' work, organisers of phase development workshops, while at the same time have substantial teaching loads. Consequently, some activities may be assumed as the responsibility of the principal or deputy principal because of the past management practices that may ignore shared decision-making as envisaged in the post apartheid curriculum policy. The school management team may struggle with these activities in understanding and deciding who is responsible for which area in curriculum management (Thurlow, Bush & Coleman 2003). Conflicting roles, if not properly managed, could have a potential to develop attitudes among the staff and SMT members. I address this in the next section.

2.7.4 Teacher attitudes towards change

Sayed and Jansen (2001) argue that during curriculum reform, teachers' existing beliefs, practices, interests were not explored sufficiently by policy developers to ensure successful implementation of the policy. Successful change depends on the capacities of teachers to understand curriculum changes they are confronted with (Nsibande, 2002). This is because, according to Glatthorn (2000), the translation of policy into practice depends crucially on the teachers who have the power to change meanings in different

ways. Nsibande (2002) also asserts that if teachers do not understand the foundations for change, chances are that change will not be implemented effectively. Concurring this is Van der Westhuizen (2004), who points out that people may have varying capacities to adapt and differing concerns when they are bombarded with change because it is difficult to amend personal values and beliefs that are entrenched in teachers' past experiences and practices. Consequently, bureaucratic attitudes may continue to exist among school leaders even when many social changes have taken place. Van der Westhuizen (2004) also identifies common yet diverse behaviours as a result of a change process. To cite a few examples, he asserts that some teachers participate enthusiastically in meaningful innovations. And there are teachers who are easily persuaded to accept change. These teachers would support change provided the design is well planned. However, Van der Westhuizen (2004) notes the negative presence of those who are pessimistic and rigid and they respond sceptically and resist change initiatives. Clearly, there are factors that influence these behaviours and Carl (1995) identifies factors that lead people to resist change. They are:

- Poor motivation.
- Uncertainty about what the curriculum changes imply.
- Ambiguity and lack of understanding of nature and extent of the envisaged change.
- Insufficient resources to administer support and specialised knowledge.
- Lack of clarity about development.
- Security of the existing practices.
- Insufficient support from education practices.

On the face of it, such factors may impact negatively on the change process and it depends on those in leadership positions to influence people to respond positively to change. In the case of curriculum change it is the SMT members who have that responsibility. I find this a compelling reason to investigate the radically changed curriculum management roles that SMTs face in their day to day activities in schools and their varying contexts and the extent to which they perform their roles under the changed curriculum settings, based on what the change process means to individuals.

This follows an assertion by Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003) that South African schools in rural, semi-rural and in urban settings appear to have responded positively to curriculum change. However, they find that change was imposed on schools with inadequate support for curriculum implementation. Anecdotal evidence from educators and SMT members is that the curriculum documents were overloaded with jargon and complex language that teachers have to master these in five days of training workshops organised by provincial Department of Education. Consequently, this results in frustration among teachers, gaps in their knowledge about the philosophy behind OBE, poor lesson planning and unclear strategies on assessment. Allegedly, these are still evident in teacher practices, including curriculum management for school leaders because this has not been an effective activity in some schools.

This could be attributed to the pace of change and the period within which schools have to implement change (Coutts, 1996). Schools have been bombarded with many polices including curriculum policy that SMTs should see to its management. While the curriculum policy is 'common' to all, its management takes place in varying contexts and

the management of the curriculum has been ineffective given the contextual factors in which teachers work. It should be acknowledged that schools' communities differ greatly in terms of their cultural traditions, material resources, social structures and aspirations. It is teachers who work in each community who are best able to interpret the needs of their school children. Most schools in rural areas are without the basic infrastructure and yet it is the 'common curriculum' with its emphasis on the achievement of specific skills, knowledge, attitudes and values by learners that SMTs should manage and teach at the same level with well resourced schools in the urban settings (Sayed & Jansen, 2001).

In addition, school leaders are accustomed to managing in a certain way and may tend to be comfortable with their familiar approach hence these traditions may prove difficult to change (Coutts, 1996). Supporting this is Wallace and Huckman (1999) who maintain that during curriculum change, some principals may vary markedly in the degree to which they accept losing control in curriculum decision-making, resulting from empowered colleagues. This is because curriculum change in South African schools does not change curriculum management practices only, but also the pattern of working relationships among staff and SMT members. The element of democracy in education is accompanied by a democratic structure in schools (School Management Team) that requires that principals understand and accept that they have to work collaboratively and co-operatively as a team with other people and relinquish some duties to each member in the team and this is a practice that principals are not accustomed to (Zakunzima, 2005). The reluctance by principals may be influenced by the powerful legacy of apartheid legacies and bureaucracies that may still continue to influence the ways in which

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principals perceive their roles as curriculum managers (Coleman, Graham-Jolly & Middlewood 2003). This means that elements of traditional hierarchy may continue to exist in schools and inhibit curriculum management of innovation even though management approaches have changed over time hence a need to investigate curriculum management practices. These practices may be further exacerbated by a lack of theory that should guide the practices of SMTs in schools. I examine these in the next section.

2.8 Theoretical framework

Several scholars note that the practices of SMT members reveal even more varied understandings of curriculum management practices to the extent that it raises the question of whether curriculum management theory is comprehended by the SMT members in schools. Theory is important because it influences the practices of curriculum leaders, in this case School Management Teams, and takes into consideration how learners learn and construct knowledge. Curriculum management theories assist SMTs in schools to determine how to help learners to learn the different aspects in the curriculum. Department of Education (2007, p.12) is of the view that theory assists curriculum leaders to think and acknowledge that not everyone learns the same way we do. The curriculum in South African schools has specific outcomes, skills, attitudes, values and knowledge that learners must achieve in each learning area. This is as a result of the current modes of curriculum designs that stipulate that learners should demonstrate certain skills, values attitudes and become critical thinkers. Smith (2008, p. 3) maintains that the curriculum should involve a detailed attention to what learners need to know, achieve and demonstrate at the end of schooling. It is the potential to manage and guide teachers for curriculum delivery that prepares the achievement of these activities. One

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way of doing this, is for me to draw on theories of curriculum management in order to understand how the SMT understands its functions and performs its leadership role in curriculum management.

In this study I selected two theories that will assist me to understand how the SMT understands its functions and performs their leadership roles in curriculum management because they address what curriculum leaders do in their roles. These are Tyler's model and the Decker Walker's naturalistic approach to curriculum management. These are not the only relevant theories but are some among many theories that guide practices of those managing teaching and learning. Ralph Tyler's model on curriculum management emphasises student behaviours and the learning experiences of learners as per curriculum stipulations (Marsh, 2003).

This model suggests four questions that should guide curriculum leaders in planning the curriculum. Firstly, what purposes the school seeks to attain? Secondly, which are the best learning experiences that can assist in the achievement of goals? Thirdly, how to ascertain the achievement of goals? Lastly, how to evaluate the success of their planning? It is the school's vision and mission statements that articulate these. In addition, it is through the vision and mission statement that aims and objectives that articulate curriculum delivery and the academic achievement of learners, are developed collaboratively. Ralph Tyler's theory encourages collaborative approaches and facilitation of debates and discussions with teachers by curriculum leaders, an understanding of roles and expectations of others within a team. It sets academic standards that lead to the success of learners. Those leading the curriculum decide on

learning experiences that articulate achievement and success of learners including assessment of the planned tasks. In supporting this, curriculum leaders develop policies that support teaching and learning, for example, homework policies, discipline among learners and an effective code of conduct for learners. Effective time management that ensures that teaching and learning commences immediately after assembly. Over and above that, curriculum leaders should encourage parents to support their children with homework and projects. Evaluation becomes an integral part of the learning programmes because it is a stage that assists curriculum leaders to identify their areas of strength and weaknesses in order to plan developmental programmes for teachers. Connected to this model is Decker Walker's naturalistic model on curriculum management which I know discuss.

Walker is of the view that better curriculum management involves understanding the complexity of tasks and roles. Marsh (2003, p. 130) states that this model articulates the actual tasks of curriculum leaders rather than giving advice of how they should go about the tasks. It portrays how curriculum management occurs in practice and acknowledges the beliefs, values, ideas and perceptions that curriculum leaders may have when they attempt curriculum tasks (Marsh 2003, p. 130).

The initial stage involves discussion and arguing about issues that may lead to agreed actions on curriculum management. He uses the term 'platform' because it is where the team undertakes the initial curriculum management activities. The platform stage specifies roles in curriculum management and identifies problematic attitudes. The second step to this model is 'deliberation' and entails solving problems through learning

and actions, discussions lead to gaining an in depth knowledge of tasks to be executed. SMT members recognise that curriculum activities and situations have different meanings for people in a team (Marsh, 2003, p. 129-132). Lastly, the deliberation stage leads to decisions for actions. This stage includes the selection of teaching materials, the complexity of learning activities, their control and evaluation of learners. The success of plans relies on whether learners will cope, achieve and demonstrate the expected academic standards.

Even though the Tyler's model is criticised for its rationality, however, it suggests questions that could be changed to suit the needs of a school. It is not a rigid model but it can guide curriculum leaders to facilitate discussion about curriculum issues. However, common to these theories is their emphasis on visionary leadership and being strategic in curriculum management. They further illustrate the importance of teamwork, collaboration and devolving curriculum decision making to teachers who are implementers of the curriculum. These are elements that underpin the post 1994 curriculum. In addition, the focus is on understanding functions and roles in curriculum management and in turn the performance of these roles and function.

2.9 Conclusion

It is evident from my review of literature that curriculum management is a role that school management teams must assume in schools in order to manage teaching and learning. A deeper understanding of curriculum management by SMT members is a pre-requisite for effective curriculum management taking into consideration what has been discussed in this section. With regards to Curriculum 2005 it requires that curriculum

leaders change their leadership styles and become proactive leaders in the process. This will be possible if the SMT members understand theory that guide the management of the curriculum as discussed above. Moreover, SMT members should receive ongoing training on curriculum management because they have to manage this curriculum such that it meets the global dimensions. It is an expectation from review documents written by policy developers and education authorities that SMT members must manage the curriculum in relation to the varying contextual factors in which schools operate. In the next chapter I discuss the methodology to be employed in this study.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter on scholarly and policy literature about curriculum management literature has revealed some information and insights about what SMT members do in curriculum management. In this chapter I discuss the research methodology I employ in this study. Firstly, the research design and setting are explained. Secondly, the research sample and methods of data collection are described. Thirdly, the data analysis procedures and ethical issues are discussed.

3.2 Research design and setting

The aim of this study is to have an in-depth understanding of the role of a SMT in curriculum management and how the team members understand and interpret their roles with regards to the new curriculum policy. This focus is because Radnor (2002, p. 115) argues that professionals in the education system construct different meanings when they grapple with interpreting the social world of educational policy and making meaningful the implementation of that policy at work. Therefore in light of this debate, I am employing a qualitative approach for this study and with an interpretive case study design. This design is deemed suitable for this study because the aim is to gain an in-depth understanding of how SMT members manage Curriculum 2005 through understanding their roles as curriculum managers. I am employing this design because

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004, p.21) assert that qualitative research attempts to uncover real life settings and to understand the infinite complexity of the school situation. Radnor (2002, p. 90) is also of the view that qualitative research is the essence of interpretive traditions because data is collected through talking to participants. This approach will help clarify how one SMT understands, interprets and gives meaning to curriculum management functions. In addition, Picciano (2004) concurs about this approach that it relies on meanings, context and settings that people assign to situations they work in. In pursuit of the understanding and interpretations of SMT members, I chose an interpretive case study design based on the assumptions pointed out by (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007, p. 51). They say that case studies reveal individuals' understandings of the real world and attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people make in performing their roles. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) assert that events cannot be understood unless one understands how they are interpreted by the people who participate in them. For example, if a deputy principal convenes a staff meeting to address curriculum issues, some people may see it as the responsibility of the principal to discuss curriculum related matters, yet it is a responsibility of a SMT to address curriculum matters. Nevertheless, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) warn that case studies can be dominated by the researcher's bias, selectivity and subjectivity and also that results may not be generalised to other situations.

For this study I selected a public school in Kwa-Santi ward at Pinetown District that forms part of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. The school is in a rural area

and has an enrolment of 920 learners, 1 non-teaching staff member and 33 educators. These 33 educators include the SMT members who are the Principal, two Deputy Principals and four Heads of Department. The school was chosen after considering distance from the school where I work for my easy access and also to determine the population of participants to participate in the study. I wanted all members of the SMT to participate. The SMT population at this school is seven members namely, the Principal, two Deputy Principals and four Heads of Department. In addition, three educators from the junior, intermediate and senior phases were selected in order to gain their perceptions of the SMT members' performance of their roles. The teachers were chosen purposely by the Heads of Department from each phase. Table1 presents demographic profile of the participants.

Table 1: Brief demographic profile of participants

Post Description	Gender	Age	Race
Principal	Male	50	Black
Deputy Principal	Female	40	Black
Deputy Principal	Male	44	Indian
Head of Department	Female	55	Black
Head of Department	Female	39	Black
Head of Department	Female	48	Black
Head of Department	Male	45	Black
Foundation Phase educator	Female	39	Black
Intermediate Phase educator	Female	38	Black
Senior Phase educator	Male	33	Black

This is a school in the rural area hence the demographic profile of the SMT members and the school community is predominantly black. The Deputy Principal who is Indian came to this school through redeployment from another school but he has been working in rural schools for most of his teaching career. The SMT in this school comprises four females and three males including the principal who is older than the rest of the SMT members. In addition, my population also comprised of three teachers who were selected for triangulation purposes.

3.3 Data collection methods

I used interviews and made reference to departmental documents as analysis of/ methods to collect data relevant to the questions about the study.

3.3.1 Document analysis

I selected government issued curriculum documents that school principals obtained from the workshops on Curriculum 2005. There are four modules on managing the curriculum. Among the four Modules, two modules stipulate functions and leadership roles of SMTs in curriculum management. They also give SMTs guidance on how to manage the curriculum. Document analysis as a research instrument means reading and analysing documents relevant to the research questions. This instrument was deemed necessary for this study because Merriam (1998, p.106) maintains that documents are sources of data in qualitative research that assist the researcher in developing an understanding of and to gain insight on the research problem as is the intention of the study. In addition, I used documents because I wanted to compare the SMT members' responses against what the

Department of Education curriculum documents stipulate as functions and leadership roles of SMTs in curriculum management. Obtaining these documents was difficult because this school does not have them. Nevertheless, I obtained these from a colleague who is the Principal in a primary school.

3.3.2 Interviews

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p.125) define the interview as an exchange of views and/or ideas between two or more people on a topic. I used interviews because they enable the researcher to probe perceptions and understandings. It is necessary to use a method that permits freedom in order to probe for details in the discussion. Interviews provide a face-to-face interaction which allows the interviewer to carefully prepare questions in advance and then to probe the participants about their responses so that further information is obtained (MacIntyre 2000, p. 105).

Semi-structured interviews were used as an instrument for data collection. By this I mean questions that can be reorganised or rephrased to allow for further probing about the topic in question (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Henning, van Rensburg & Smith (2004) recommend the use of semi-structured interviews in qualitative research because they provide the researcher with flexibility to probe for details during the interview. I chose this method because my purpose was to understand the participants' point of view rather than make generalisations about their behaviour, to gain insight on specific issues, and to probe the areas from the participants' responses that I had no prior knowledge of. The questions for interviews were constructed according to post levels. During the interviews

there was deep probing which resulted in additional questions being asked and these varied according to the participants' responses to each question (see appendices 1-4).

In order to set up the interviews I visited the school a week before the interviews were scheduled. This was to build rapport with the participants and explain the purpose of the study. I used an empty classroom in which to conduct the interviews. Lunch breaks were the most suitable time for the interviews. However, the noise levels proved distracting so instead some interviews were conducted during SMT members' free periods. The interviews needed to be recorded for transcripts and for data analysis purposes. Voice recording is considered convenient because it forces the researcher, during the interview, to listen more attentively. Smith (1999, p. 96) maintains that voice recording gives accurate recordings of the participants' exact words that can be replayed for accurate transcripts. Knowing that some respondents might be threatened by a voice recorder could withhold important information from me, I negotiated and explained the use of the voice recorder in advance.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 400) warn that researchers must be aware of the weaknesses of interviews. They assert that during the interview, eliciting data from the interviewee depends on the skill of the interviewer. A researcher needs to be attentive and at the same time think of follow-up questions. The interviewer may give out cues that guide the participants to give answers expected by the interviewer. The unique nature of the interview also makes it difficult to generalise because participants may be asked

different questions. The interviewer has limited ways of knowing if the participant is lying and this may jeopardise the trustworthiness of the study.

Conducting interviews did not prove problematic for me because similar projects have been conducted in the school before and the leadership of the school was open and welcoming to students from universities. Even though the case study school was welcoming, the issues of ethical clearance became necessary for this study, which I now discuss.

3.4 Ethical issues

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.51) assert that it is important to observe ethical principles in order to pre-empt problems that may arise during fieldwork and also to protect the rights of participants. I was granted permission by the provincial DoE to conduct research in the school. I negotiated access to conduct research in the school with the principal but I was referred to the Deputy Principal who finalised my appointments and explained to other SMT members the purpose of my visit to the school. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to participants through a letter of consent that declared that while participation in the research project would be appreciated, they could withdraw from participating if they wish to do so (see Appendix 3). However, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.225) warn that in a face-to-face interview, anonymity cannot always be fully guaranteed because the interviewer may identify and know the participant. These authors maintain that it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide credible confidentiality and convince participants to participate in the research.

To protect the participants I assured them that I would not divulge their names and that of the school, and that my findings and thesis would be made available to them on request.

It was necessary to discuss issues of confidentiality because I wanted them to understand that I am not an investigator but a researcher/student whose study and findings may assist future researchers to improve the management of curriculum in schools. Over and above that, my intention was to make the SMT of the case study school understand that the purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of the roles and their problems in curriculum management and not to evaluate them and their work. By doing, this I was avoiding tension during the interviews and encouraging openness to ensure trustworthiness of the data.

I now discuss my approach to analysis of the data.

3.5 Data analysis

Prior to analysis I transcribed the interview recordings. I developed themes and concepts to guide me to identify what the SMT members understood as their functions of curriculum management as well as barriers that prevent them from performing their curriculum management functions. For example, some themes that emerged are curriculum management approaches, understandings of leadership roles and functions and attitudes. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001, p.283) define coding as translating respondent information and categorising it by assigning category labels to segments of data such as phrases and themes. Discrete parts of key texts were closely examined and compared for similarities and differences (De Vos, 1998, p. 277). From that I was able to

conclude what each SMT member understood as his/her role in curriculum management, the leadership role and the challenges they encounter in performing their roles as curriculum leaders. Furthermore, the HoDs selected one teacher randomly from each Phase to verify my analysis of the SMT members' performance in curriculum management. This was important for my triangulation and final conclusions about the SMT and curriculum management at this school. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.443) define triangulation as a process of using multiple strategies to clarify meaning and to verify if there is any repeated interpretation. They assert that researchers should employ triangulation to minimise misinterpretations during the data analysis stage.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter I have described and explained the research setting and design, data collection instrument, ethical issues, and research methodology which is an interpretive case study. I have discussed my data collection instrument as document analysis of curriculum manuals, modules one and two as my initial step to generating data. This will assist me to compare the participant's responses against what the documents stipulate are functions. Secondly, I will conduct interviews and these will be tape recorded and transcribed. Finally, I will develop themes from the transcribed data and these will be coded and then analysed for my findings. In the next chapter I present and discuss findings of this study.

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

4.1 Introduction

It is important that leaders adopt curriculum management approaches that influence, motivate and inspire teachers given their demanding tasks in curriculum. This is because curriculum management styles, if not properly practiced, could have detrimental repercussions on the taught curriculum and the behaviour and attitudes of teachers in the classroom.

In this chapter I present my findings and discuss the data I gathered in the field. I present my findings thematically as they respond to the research questions that guide the study. The themes relate to the dominant practice, knowledge of roles, attitudes and support systems.

4.2 The dominant practice

The SMT of the case study school knows that they should coordinate curriculum issues and encourage collaborative approaches, teamwork and participation by teachers in curriculum matters. However, it appears that the SMT is a team only in name. It seems the curriculum management at the school reflects the personal style of the principal. There is a sense of authoritarianism and autocracy that exists in SMT practices under the transformed curriculum management practices in schools. This style contradicts recommended approaches that have moved away from individual characteristics to shared leadership. In the case study school, on the other hand there are those SMT members who understand that effective curriculum management is, through participation collaboration and teamwork. However, in this school, the Principal and some SMT members still

believe in autocracy and bureaucracy. This is evident when the deputy principal of the school says, "We have people who are sitting with traditional approaches to curriculum management and who believe that the management of the school rests solely in their hands". The perception is that the school principal believes in old ways of curriculum management and that the principal alone is knowledgeable about curriculum practices. For example, some SMT members indicated that initiating developmental programmes that aim to develop teachers towards effective teaching and learning in the classroom is regarded as interfering with the status quo in this school.

The notion of subordinates emerges in interviews with the principal and points to authoritarianism. The Oxford Dictionary (2006) defines a subordinate as someone who "holds a junior, lesser and inferior position or a supplementary accessory in a work place". Subordinates are commanded and/or instructed to perform tasks regardless of their will. To use this word in the context of curriculum management suggests there is superiority among the SMT and lack of communication between teachers and their leaders. Teachers are 'on the other side of the fence' from school leaders, in their isolated classrooms and teaching how they please. This is borne out of the interview with a teacher when she said:

> ...the SMT does not help us with problems that we encounter in the curriculum, instead, we get information from the workshops and we come back and workshop each other. There is a gap between us and the SMT, we do not communicate effectively. They do not listen to our suggestions and opinions. I do not know, may be they think that they are better than us. In the end we do what is best for the children.

It is evident that the SMT does not acknowledge the participation of teachers in curriculum decision- making nor does it appreciates their potential in the general functioning of the school. In turn, this encourages teacher practices that hamper the curriculum policy intentions.

My findings indicate that authoritarianism is the dominant practice in this school, cripples relations between SMT members and teachers and among the SMT members themselves. It alienates teachers and in the process stifles effective curriculum management in the school (Department of Education, 2007). This is noted in the case study school when one HoD said: "As the HoD you are not free to voice your opinion and therefore you do things your way." In addition, one deputy principal said: "If I have a suggestion in relation to curriculum, I have to make sure that I check with the principal first so that he does not feel that I am undermining him". This suggests that the SMT members perform their roles within clearly defined lines and guiding each other in role performance is regarded by other SMT members as interference in each other's task and post (Van der Westhuizen, 2004). One deputy principal said:

> ...I am not enjoying my role as a deputy in as far as curriculum management is concerned because there are border lines and restrictions. You do not work freely, sometimes you say things to the teachers and teachers do not see it your way. Sometimes teachers do not like to take your opinion, if it is not from the HoDs and they will say you are interfering; we have our HoD. The only people that they recognise are the HoDs. They are given more powers in curriculum than deputy principals.

There is a lack of power sharing and competition among SMT members and less recognition of other SMT members (the deputy principal) by the teachers. They function

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more as a group than a team. The role of the deputy principal in curriculum management is in conflict with the role of the HoDs because it is the HoDs who are responsible for the curriculum in schools. As a result the deputy principal is limited to certain roles in performing curriculum management roles in this school. If these attitudes are not discouraged the school may lose important information that the deputy principals may possess on curriculum management. This bureaucratic approach leads to division of phases because SMT members have a different understanding of their curriculum roles and functions.

I also found that the HoDs lead their departments in different approaches in their own spaces. One teacher said:

> It is different schools with their own cultures in one school. HoDs work in their own circles and groups and there is a feeling that one needs to be successful in his/her circle. These practices impact negatively on the learning children because there are gaps in learners' knowledge when they move to the next grades or phases.

Similarly, the deputy principal also indicated that "If HoDs from all phases work in consultation with each other, we will be hearing less accusations and fingers being pointed to lower grades because areas not covered in the previous grades will be known to the next teacher in order to minimise gaps".

Moreover, the traditional approach that emerged through the interviewees influences and encourages teachers to resist change and strains working relationships among teachers. In that atmosphere, the SMT may not facilitate curriculum meetings for teachers to discuss

their problems and frustrations in curriculum because the SMT excludes teachers in decision-making. As a result teachers will lack a sense of direction in curriculum matters and work in unclear directions and have a shallow understanding of the curriculum. Nevertheless, teachers in their endeavour to cope with many changes in areas of curriculum will appreciate participative leadership in curriculum matters.

My findings indicate that the case study school lacks the participative and collaborative curriculum management approaches that articulate effective curriculum management and which are recommended by (Coleman, Graham-Jolly & Middlewood, 2003). This kind of leadership is important for effective curriculum management. It can be a source of inspiration for teachers to perform their duties beyond measure. Participative leadership involves empowering teachers, involves staff members, support staff members with clear directions and focuses on processes of teaching and learning (Green, 2001). The leader inspires and influences followers to achieve high standards by setting clear directions in curriculum for teachers to follow and contribute in the process. In leading the school, the SMT demonstrates collaboration, participation and teamwork in order to influence teachers to achieve effective teaching and learning. However, my findings indicate that there was a failure to lead teachers through participative approaches at the selected school because the SMT members have a superficial knowledge of their functions and leadership roles in curriculum management. In the next section I discuss this superficial knowledge.

4.3 Superficial knowledge of curriculum management roles

It is important that one is knowledgeable and has expertise in his/her job in order to perform the work efficiently and effectively (Taylor, 2006). In a school the SMT as the leadership of the school must be knowledgeable in curriculum not only in learning area specialisations and phases but across the broad spectrum of the school curriculum. This is necessary so that the SMT is able to adopt strategic planning for curriculum management and planning and also to address curriculum problems in all phases and departments within the school (Sayed & Jansen, 2001). I found that some SMT members lack depth in understanding their curriculum management functions and leadership roles. Hence, there is only a resemblance of the curriculum management roles. According to one HoD, "My main role in curriculum is "I look after the orphans and I visit them in their homes". Another HoD said "I supervise cleaning and morning devotions". These are activities that are not part of curriculum management and suggest lack of understanding the role of curriculum management functions. Other SMT members were able to enumerate their functions and leadership roles but they seem to confuse these because each SMT member had a different understanding of his/her leadership roles and functions in curriculum management. For example, they mentioned supervision as both their curriculum function as well as a leadership role.

These examples show that the SMT has a shallow understanding of the post 1994 curriculum and their knowledge is influenced by the traditional approach that focuses on supervision and implementing pre-planned programmes rather than developing and planning learning programmes within the school, as mentioned in the new curriculum

policy. As a result they are not confident when they execute their functions in curriculum and therefore they hold on to their traditional approaches. One HoD said "The old curriculum was clear to us because topics were outlined in the syllabus and one had to implement that in the classroom. Now you have to look for many things in this new curriculum. Therefore, I use my old methods to manage the curriculum".

Another HoD said:

> I am not quite clear about the curriculum because it is new to us and we are used to the old curriculum and sometimes I am not sure what to do, therefore I combine different things from the workshops and use my own discretion and what suites me at that point in time. Another HoD from the Foundation Phase said, "It is difficult to lead people with an empty mind because you sometimes fail to guide teachers and to assist them with problems that we encounter in the curriculum.

This suggests that the HoD is unhappy and doubts her role in curriculum management and could be misleading her team. One of the SMT functions in curriculum is to develop the staff in areas of weakness. They do this by planning collaboratively developmental programmes or they invite people from outside who are knowledgeable in the area of development. If these programmes were in place in this school, the HoDs would be empowered in their curriculum roles. However, the school does not have developmental programmes because the school leadership has superficial knowledge of their curriculum management roles. Examples of similar sentiments are noted in previous research which was conducted in schools, found that schools fail to teach effectively when SMT members do not know certain aspects of the curriculum (Taylor, 2006, p. 8).

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Therefore I find that the extent to which the SMT members perform their roles is limited to checking the work of teachers in their departments. All SMT members understood their main function as 'checking' the work of the teachers. The word 'check'as used by members of the SMT means to establish whether something is correct or satisfactory and /or inspect if the work is as it should be (Word Power Dictionary, 1996). One HoD said: "If I see that there is little work in the books of the learners I enquire from the teacher why there is no work". This shows that HoDs focus on identifying mistakes or omissions in the work of the teacher rather than finding opportunities to praise the teachers. Supervision is part of making sure that things are done correctly however the practice is entrenched in the traditional management styles, and in this case it is negative supervision that celebrates mistakes rather than development of teachers. There is little emphasis upon the processes of teaching and learning. When this happens, teachers become poorly motivated because they are on the receiving end of being monitored negatively by the SMT members. For instance, one teacher said: "Our HoD takes our files only when he wants to evaluate our work, and if he calls a meeting, we know that there is something wrong". Teachers feel intimidated when their files are checked. The HoD checks the work of the teachers and this gives undue emphasis to single dimensions such as analysing lesson plans, without involving the staff in developing the criteria for monitoring. This is not a holistic approach for developing teachers which would lead to stronger professionalism, deepen and extend teachers' understandings of the nature of teaching and learning (Marsh, 2003, p.234). My findings are that the HoDs do not suggest programmes, actions, strategies or plans to address areas of weakness in teacher practices so that teachers are developed and guided in the right direction. In addition, the

data reveals that the SMT has not worked out curriculum goals, plans and expectations for teachers to follow yet they want teaching and learning programmes to be in place for teaching and learning to take place. Curriculum management should not be limited to checking the work of the teachers; it goes beyond that as I discussed in 2.5.1 above. Hence, I see the 'checking' strategy as indicative of limited and superficial knowledge of curriculum management roles.

A superficial knowledge of the curriculum led some SMT members to abdicate their duties and depend on others to perform their curriculum management duties. For instance, the principal who is the key figure for curriculum delivery in a school had shifted curriculum responsibilities to deputy principals and HoDs. According to one deputy principal, this is because the principal has a shallow understanding of the curriculum and therefore hides himself in his administrative duties. The deputy principal said "...the principal does involve himself with curriculum issues because he does not have a clear picture of the curriculum policy, instead, he 'ducks and dodges' curriculum responsibilities and consider these as HoDs and Deputy Principals' tasks". These are people who also have limited understanding of the curriculum. My interpretation of this comment is that the SMT is not clear about the curriculum and therefore their practices begin to impact negatively on the entire schooling of learners. The curriculum policy intentions and goals may be jeopardised when the policy is not understood by curriculum leaders within schools. In turn, the school may not produce learners who are critical thinkers and problem solvers as envisaged in the policy and this may be largely due to the SMT's superficial knowledge of curriculum management.

My findings indicate also that the SMT's superficial knowledge was crippling working relations in this school. For instance, the SMT members who were not clear about their tasks become defensive when those who knew more began to assist them. They resented other members in a team, hid new information from them, became aggressive and regarded assistance from other team members as interference and were critical of each other. For instance, a teacher from the intermediate phase alleged that their HoD hid information from them and felt threatened by younger teachers. Also, one Deputy Principal said: "If I was to call a meeting to address issues and problems in curriculum, some will say 'why he is interfering with the status quo when there are people who can do the job?" Support is necessary therefore, to assist SMTs to cope with understanding and implementing the technicalities of the curriculum and this according to SMT members, was lacking. This need is discussed as the next theme found in the analysis of the data.

4.4 Lack of support systems

It is expected that SMT members provide adequate support for teachers by empowering them with knowledge in curriculum matters, facilitate access to resources e.g. human and physical resources, and receive support from the community and parents of the learners. My findings reveal that the school is not receiving support from the Department of Education and the community and parents in a number of different ways. Firstly, the Department fails the case study school by supplying stationery late, at the beginning of the year instead of late in the previous year. The school also receives books that they had not ordered. These books are either not at the appropriate level for the grade or are titles

that the school did not request. According to one HoD "teachers do not use these books because their language is too complex for the learners of lower grades especially in the foundation phase". Secondly, Department of Education does not give the SMT members any on-going support in terms of getting to grips with the curriculum itself. In turn, the SMT members fail to give adequate support to teachers because they did not receive continuous support from the Department of Education in order to address confusing curriculum areas in the school. This cycle leads to a breakdown in a professional approach to the curriculum because teachers receive inadequate curriculum training workshops that were conducted in *ad hoc* ways by facilitators who were also not clear about the curriculum. Harley and Wedekind (2004) contend that this is a common phenomenon.

The lack of support is evident in data about SMT practices in this school because they struggle with certain aspects of the curriculum such as assessment. One HoD alleged that subject advisors do not respond to their invitations to the school. He said "we do not get the support from the Department of Education. For instance, I invited them telephonically so that they can assist us on assessment strategies. It was May and it is now October and they have not responded to our invitation yet we are expected to manage the curriculum". Another HoD said: "The Department does not give us support and teachers do not understand this new curriculum because training was not enough for teachers".

The deputy principal also that said:

> ... if the policy makers want the effective implementation of their policies
> e.g. curriculum policies, they should make sure that those leading the

implementation of the curriculum (school leaders) receive on-going support because I could not monitor something that I am not sure of hence my leadership role as curriculum leader is not fulfilled.

This suggests that the effective implementation of policies requires that schools receive on- going support from all stakeholders. I also found that the parents and the community lack interest in the work of their children and the school in general and this affects the day-to-day functioning of the school. According to one HoD "learners do not come to school if it is a cultivating season, if there is a community meeting or function, a church gathering or even if it is rainy day. When you get into class, you find half the number of learners and therefore you cannot teach in that situation". It appears that the community aspirations impact negatively on learning as well as managing for effective learning. However, it is not clear how the SMT aligns with the *South African Council of Educators Act 31 of 2000* which requires the teachers to interact and involve parents and the community in order to address these issues. Parental involvement is important because articulating and sharing the school's curriculum vision with the parents is necessary so that the school receives support from the parents aimed at effective teaching and learning.

I found that the SMT in this school does not have explicit initiatives that aim to develop and support teachers and themselves as leaders of curriculum. They appear to be waiting for the Department of Education and district offices to initiate support. Hence, they neglect their curriculum leadership role to initiate developmental programmes for teachers and give them support. They could do this by firstly using teachers who are informed about curriculum issues within the school. These are teachers who can assist the

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school if their potential is acknowledged and appreciated by the SMT. I found that in this school the SMT does not use their knowledge of the teachers for this purpose. Some teachers are well informed about educational policies and curriculum issues in general and some have a better understanding than others. For example, one teacher said:

> I understand the curriculum well because of my teaching experience in ex-model C schools and because of my education background. I feel that the SMT does not give us the platform to interact and discuss curriculum issues among each other as teachers. I have information that I would love to share with other educators but we are not given that chance as teachers.

This may indicate that adopting collaborative approaches and involving the staff in initiating support in curriculum matters could prove effective in developing teachers. In the case study school, the SMT believes it is only the Department of Education that can provide on-going support and skills development of curriculum managers. This shows the impact of the SMT's superficial knowledge of leadership roles and functions and the impact of a traditional approach in curriculum management in this school. Consequently, these impact negatively on teachers' behaviours and attitudes towards work in general. I examine this consequence in the next section.

4.5 Poor teacher attitudes

It is a truism to say that changing practices and procedures lead people to develop attitudes towards change because there is anxiety about the change process (Coutts, 1995). At the case study school, I found that the attitudes of teachers are poor and it seems teachers are resisting change in relation to teaching methods. One HoD said "we

have people who are not willing to change and who still believe that the old method of teaching is the only way to deliver the matter in the classroom". This unwillingness to change may be caused by ambiguity and lack of understanding about the new curriculum among teachers and because the SMT lacks the capacity to motivate teachers to respond positively to change. My finding in this regard indicates that teachers have become poorly motivated to fulfil their professional duties and resist the implementation of new methods for teaching and learning. This presents in educators who have chronic absenteeism, who do not submit their work on time, loiter on the verandas, chat during teaching hours and have negative attitudes towards HoD members of the SMT. These attitudes may be attributable to confusion about what to do in the classroom and inadequate planning, thus resulting to frustration of teachers (Yusuf and Jansen, 2001).

At the case study school, I found that teachers are frustrated by the management style of the SMT that undermines teacher potentials and obstructs teacher participation in curriculum decision making. Therefore, teachers undermine the SMT in subtle ways. For instance, the HoD from the Senior Phase said,

> Teachers absent themselves from school without reporting yet other teachers know that so and so is absent. It is like a game; today this person is absent and tomorrow he/she will come with a medical certificate and you cannot question the medical certificate, the next day he/she will be absent again.

In addition, according to another HoD, teachers submit their work late or they do not submit at all. Some teachers want HoDs to prepare teaching and learning programmes yet

teachers plan together and as individuals for each learning area. Other teachers do not attend curriculum workshops that the Department of Education rarely organises for teachers. These participant statements indicate that the negative attitudes of teachers, when not properly managed and handled, impact negatively on the curriculum delivery and its management.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented findings that were categorised into themes. The management style of a school influences the effective or ineffective management of the curriculum in a school. A Leadership approach that excludes teachers in curriculum decision-making ignores teacher potential. The focus on positions and the status quo of the SMT influences teachers to become poorly motivated thereby impacting negatively on the taught curriculum. This is because leadership is a source of inspiration for the performance of professional duties of teachers. Therefore, it is necessary that those leading the curriculum have an in depth understanding of curriculum policy so as to lead and guide teachers in the right direction. This depends on the SMT becoming proactive in leading the curriculum and having adequate support structures for the management of the curriculum. In the next chapter I draw some closing conclusions based on these findings.

Chapter 5: Summary and conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter revisits the findings discussed in chapter four in order to endeavour to answer the research questions in relation to conceptions of the curriculum management.

5.2 Research question 1: How the SMT understands its curriculum management functions

The members of the SMT appear to know their functions in curriculum management as stipulated in policy and could identify with them but their responses show that they had limited understanding of the functions. The majority of the SMT members confuse their functions with their leadership roles. They have a shallow and limited knowledge of curriculum management functions and this reveals a theoretical understanding of these functions. In addition, the SMT members do not have a common understanding hence their practices are vastly different. They base their understanding on information that they obtain from colleagues at other schools rather than what they know from reading and talking together about their functions. The school did not have copies of the government curriculum documents. These are the only tools for guidance in curriculum management and are essential for them to interpret and develop their own understanding. As a result of this, each member in the team had a different understanding of the functions and performed his/her roles differently. On the face of it, the SMT was grappling in an *ad hoc* way with whatever they come across and in trying to perform their curriculum management tasks. This led the SMT members to lack confidence and they were confused about their functions in curriculum. Cardno (2003) asserts that curriculum

leaders must be coordinators who update their knowledge in their subject specialisations including appropriate teaching and learning methodologies. This was not happening in the case study school. As a result this led to a reversion to a rigid traditional management style among the SMT members as a defence mechanism to questions and challenges from teachers about current curriculum management issues and practices. This traditional style is a top-down, autocratic approach that did not acknowledge teacher potential nor did it encourage participation in curriculum decision-making. Teachers were more passive and felt inferior in the process of curriculum decision-making and in how they performed their roles. This leads to the second question of the study.

5.3 Research question 2: How the SMT performs its leadership role in curriculum management

The second research question explores the SMT's performance of the leadership role in curriculum management. It concerns the management style and leadership roles because these are important in curriculum management as discussed extensively in chapter two above. My finding was that a few SMT members are aware that teamwork, collaboration and participative approaches are central to the management of the post 1994 curriculum. However, their leadership roles and practices contradict the elements of change and there is confusion around the actual leadership roles of curriculum managers. HoDs do not know what a curriculum manager does in performing his/her leadership role in curriculum management. This lack of knowledge is related to the existence of a traditional management approach among the principal and other SMT members that influences and hampers the effective management of the curriculum by obstructing

collaboration. Older members' entrenched ways of managing overshadowed the younger SMT members' 'new curriculum practices'. Underlying this influence was a leadership approach that was more bureaucratic rather than the participative curriculum leadership sought in the transformative educational policies. The bureaucratic approach emphasises line management, positions and the performance of curriculum tasks according to the post holder's job description. Thus the views and advice from the HoD and/or Deputy Principal take precedence over teacher's views and collegial advice. Assisting each other was regarded as interference in one's role and as a result of this, HoDs who led phases work in discrete compartments that obstruct teamwork and collaboration that the post 1994 curriculum policy encourages.

To continue, curriculum leadership often amounts to a mere execution of tasks rather than leading the curriculum by inspiring, being proactive and dynamic towards the achievement of curriculum goals as articulated in the curriculum policy. This occurs when an SMT lack a curriculum vision or aims and objectives that articulate broad curriculum aims. Tyler, Walker and Decker's theories on curriculum management emphasise the importance of curriculum management through goal setting and organising learning experiences of learners by curriculum leaders (Marsh, 2003, p. 129-132). These are important because they assist curriculum leaders to know their tasks in curriculum management. Moreover, these foundations guide teachers to consider the complexity of tasks, their level of achievement and how learners learn in the process (Department of Education, 2007, p. 12). However, the SMT in this school did not have an idea about the importance of these practices. In such a situation, although an SMT might try to lead the

curriculum, there will be a minimal effective curriculum leadership role. Moreover, the SMT of the case study school did not have curriculum initiatives that aim to improve curriculum standards within the school. They strongly believed that their leadership roles would be effective only if the Department of Education, through subject advisers, became active in their roles as subject specialists by visiting schools, monitoring and addressing curriculum problems that SMT members experienced in schools. This lack of knowledge of curriculum functions and ineffective curriculum leadership roles by the SMT members leads to barriers to curriculum management. I discuss these barriers briefly in the next section where I endeavour to answer my third question.

5.4 Research question 3: The barriers that the SMT encounters in curriculum management

My findings identified that a lack of curriculum knowledge, poor teacher attitudes and lack of support are barriers to curriculum management.

The lack of knowledge among SMT members in particular the principal, proved to be the foundation for other curriculum management barriers in the selected school. A Principal should have an overview of the curriculum for all phases within the school so as to be able to address problems, provide support and give guidance to the curriculum leaders and staff in curriculum matters (Nsibande 2002, p. 30). He/she ought to support curriculum leaders in their designated positions with relevant knowledge should they face challenges. In addition, school leaders should play a major role in interpreting policies in order to enhance the effective implementation of the curriculum (Sayed & Jansen, 2001;

Nsibande, 2002). However, if the principal lacks knowledge of the curriculum, it means the policies/policy will not be implemented effectively. Although a few SMT members in the selected school had 'knowledge' of the curriculum, it remained difficult for them to share this with those who did not have adequate knowledge. This appeared to be linked to the Principal's management style and resulted in a school culture that is fragmented and suspicious attitudes of SMT members towards one another as well as to the teachers. They failed to manage the curriculum and therefore they reverted to old management styles and practices. Thus a few knowledgeable SMT members carried the burden of all curriculum responsibilities in this school. When lines of demarcation and restriction around roles are tightly drawn it becomes difficult to share knowledge and assist SMT members who are unclear about their leadership roles and functions. This has a negative impact on the attitudes of teachers.

It emerged from the findings that poor teacher attitudes towards the post 1994 curriculum remains a major barrier. Some teachers use their 'old methods' of teaching in the classroom. This is because teachers often find themselves in compromising positions such as when they plan for curriculum implementation in the classroom and they pursue inappropriate strategies because they do not receive specific guidelines from their leaders. This dilemma leads teachers to use their old methods of teaching that contradict officially recommended practices in the classroom. Moreover, teachers then lose their sense of professional conduct and commitment to their professional duties. The effect of this was that I found teachers who loitered on the verandas during teaching hours, were often

absent. When this happens teachers neglect their duties and there is the possibility of insubordination to HoDs on the SMT.

The lack of support from the Department of Education is another barrier to curriculum management. This emerged from SMT members who asserted that subject advisers did not respond to their invitations to address their curriculum problems. This barrier plays out in inefficient and slow service delivery. As a result, learning and teaching does not commence timeously. This disrupts the school calendar, teaching and learning programmes because these do not start on time. A shift in curriculum change and classroom practices requires that the Department of Education provide continuous support and in-service training for SMT members so as to monitor whether change has been effected properly and schools are coping with change. Continuous support is necessary because during pre-1994, schools were accustomed to prescribed syllabuses or work programmes. Therefore, the barrier of a lack of support encourages teachers to revert to old practices because they are not coping and struggle with the new methodologies. Many of these barriers are linked to ineffective management of the curriculum.

5.5 Conclusion

However, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to other contexts like urban areas and in the cities because the research was conducted in one school. It remains clear from this case that the curriculum is not being managed effectively because the Heads of department fail to guide teachers in the right direction. The SMTs may be failing to

manage the curriculum according to functions stipulated by the Department of Education in policy documents. In contrast to what curriculum management should entail for curriculum leaders, this study shows that SMT members' knowledge of their management roles and functions needs to be deepened. Failure to do this could mean that the post 1994 curriculum policy will be ineffectively led and managed. Therefore, it is important that those who lead the curriculum in schools are well versed with knowledge and skills to effectively manage the curriculum. The success of the post 1994 curriculum relies on the potential of the SMT members to manage the curriculum and when necessary and appropriate, devolve leadership in teachers. This depends largely on the recruitment of SMT members who are qualified to manage the curriculum and on continuous support for both SMTs and teachers. It partly remains the responsibility of the Department of Education and SMT members through networking, to provide such support and identify areas of weakness in schools in relation to curriculum management. When these responsibilities and functions are performed effectively, it is less likely that teachers will be demotivated and undermine the policy intentions and good efforts of those who lead them.

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7: Appendices

7.1 Permission letter from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Eduction

7.2 Letter of request to the Principal

7.3 Letter of consent for participants

7.4 Interview schedules

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7.4.2 Interview schedule for Deputy Principals.

7.4.3 Interview for Heads of Department.

7.4.4 Interview schedule for teachers.

Appendix 7.1

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

No. 3627   P. 2/9
Tel: 033 341 8613
Fax:033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKOHHOVISI   PIETERMARITZBURG   HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries: Imibuzo: M Francis Navrae:	Reference: Inkomba: 0210/06 Verwysing:	Date: Usuku: Datum: 26/10/2006

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that Edith Makhosazana Shoba has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

➢   That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.

➢   Attached is the list of schools she/he has been granted permission to conduct research in. however, it must be noted that the schools are not obligated to participate in the research if it is not a KZNDoE project.

➢   EM Shoba has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.

➢   No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

NHLOKOHHOVISI **PIETERMARITZBURG** **HEAD OFFICE**

Enquiries:		Reference:	Date:
Imibuzo:	M Francis	Inkomba: 0210/06	Usuku: 26/10/2006
Navrae:		Verwysing:	Datum:

List of Schools where Research will be conducted:

1)

Bongumahule

for **SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL**
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Appendix: 7.2

L 118 Mpola
Ashwood
3605
12 Jul 07

Dear Principal

Letter of request to the Principal

I am currently doing a Masters Degree in Education with the University of KwaZulu-Natal [Edgewood Campus]. My student number is 991234404. The topic of my study is: The role of School Management Teams in curriculum management. This study aims to understand the role that the SMT faces in managing the curriculum. Your school has been chosen for this purpose. I therefore appeal to you to give me permission to conduct research in your school.

I promise that all the information gathered will be used only for this study and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. Your name will not be mentioned and you may withdraw from the study if you wish to do so. Information can also be made available to you on request.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours sincerely
M.E. Shoba (Miss)

For more information you may contact:
Dr Jenni Karlsson (Supervisor) at: (031) 2601398

Declaration

I...Principal/Deputy Principal

Understand that:

- The information will be made available on request

- The name of the school will not be mentioned.

- The names of SMT members will not be mentioned.

- The school may withdraw from the study if it wishes to do so at any time.

- I therefore give consent/do not give consent to Makhosazana Edith Shoba as a
  participant in her research.

Signature.............................   Date.............................

Appendix: 7.3

L 118 Mpola

Ashwood

3605

12 Jul 07

Dear Sir/Madam

Letter of consent for participant

I am currently doing a Masters Degree in Education with the University of KwaZulu-Natal [Edgewood Campus]. My student number is 991234404. The topic of my study is: The role of School Management Teams in curriculum management. As a member of a School Management Team or as an educator you have been chosen for the purpose of this study.

I promise that all the information gathered will be used only for this study and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. Your name will not be mentioned and you may withdraw from the study if you wish to do so. Information can also be made available to you on request.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours sincerely

M.E. Shoba (Miss)

For more information you may contact:

Dr Jenni Karlsson (Supervisor) at:

(031) 2601398

Declaration

I..understand that:

- My name will not be mentioned.

- I may withdraw from the study if I wish to do so.

- The information will be protected and can be available on request.

- I therefore give consent/do not give consent to Makhosazana Edith Shoba as a participant in her research.

Signature...............................   Date..............................

7.4 Interview schedules

Appendix: 7.4.1

Interview schedule for principal

Name of project: The role of School Management Teams in curriculum management

Researcher's name: M.E Shoba

Student No. : 991234404

Institution: University of KwaZulu -Natal (Edgewood Campus)

1. As the principal of the school what do you perceive as your role in managing the curriculum?

2. How do you plan for teaching and learning in this school?

3. Which functions/activities do you think a principal should embark on when managing the curriculum?

4. How would you rate your knowledge of the curriculum in general?

5. What measures do you undertake to address curriculum problems in your school?

6. What would you attribute as barriers to curriculum management as the principal?

7. What do you think could be done to assist principals to become more effective in their role in curriculum management?

Appendix: 7.4.2

Interview schedule for Deputy Principals

Name of project: The role of School Management Teams in curriculum management

Researchers name: M.E Shoba

Student No.:991234404

Institution: University of KwaZulu -Natal [Edgewood Campus]

1. As middle managers what do you perceive as your role in curriculum management?

2. Do you perceive curriculum management as your responsibility? Why?

3. What specific functions would you say deputy principals should perform when managing the curriculum?

4. What are some of the difficulties that you encounter in managing the curriculum?

5. Do you perceive a problem in your involvement in curriculum management? If yes/no, what kind of problems?

Appendix: 7.4.3

Interview schedule for Heads of Department

Name of project: The role of School Management Teams in curriculum management

Researcher's name: Makhosazana Edith Shoba

Student No.:991234404

Institution: University of KwaZulu-Natal

1. As an HOD (curriculum manager) what do you understand as your major role within the school?

2. Have you ever felt confused and having doubts about your role? What made you to feel confused?

3. Would you say you are knowledgeable and informed about the curriculum? If yes/no, why?

4. How do you plan for teaching and learning in your department?

5. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in the performance of your role as a curriculum manager?

6. How do you address or deal with curriculum related problems and issues that teachers encounter during teaching and learning?

7. Do you receive support from the principal in performing your role? What kind of support?

Appendix: 7.4.4

Interview schedule for teachers

Name of project: The role of school management teams in curriculum management

Researcher's name: Makhosazana Edith Shoba

Student No: 991234404

Institution: University of KwaZulu-Natal [Edgewood Campus]

1. How is the SMT involved in managing the curriculum?

2. How does the SMT assist and support you as a teacher with curriculum issues and problems?

3. Do you receive guidance in planning for different learning areas?

4. How do you plan for classroom teaching and learning?

5. Which problems do you encounter in planning your lessons?

6. How does the SMT deal with curriculum problems that affect teachers in teaching and learning?

7. How does the SMT involve teachers in curriculum decision making?

8. Are there programmes that the SMT plans to empower you as a teacher for effective curriculum delivery?

10. Would you say the SMT is effective in their role as curriculum leaders? If not, why?