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Curriculum reform in Zimbabwe: An analysis of early childhood development centers' state of readiness to embrace the new curriculum

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The study sought to investigate the readiness of mainstream early childhood development centres to actualize the updated preschool curriculum in Zimbabwe. The curriculum is one of the basic and central components of powerful educating and learning. Curriculum change assumes a significant role in rebranding instructive practices to make them receptive to contemporary national and individual needs. Keeping that in mind, a curriculum review process in Zimbabwe that was initiated in November 2014 culminated in another curriculum whose implementation started in January 2017. In this examination, a subjective structure was utilized. School heads and early childhood development (ECD) teachers who were interviewed were purposively sampled from four centres in mainstream primary schools. Discoveries from the study uncovered that school heads and teachers were putting forth deliberate attempts to concentrate on the new dispensation. Notwithstanding, discoveries additionally uncovered that the ECD teachers and school heads needed satisfactory conceptualisation of the updated curriculum, and resources like textbooks and other fundamental materials explicit to the new curriculum which were not yet set up. The investigation prescribed increasingly decentralized and comprehensive dissemination workshops to explain the origin, segments, and substance of the updated curriculum; as well as progressively vigorous resources activation procedures to address the content of the updated curriculum.

Key words: Updated curriculum, dissemination, implementation, early childhood development, centres, resources.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum change has become a global trend as a result of globalisation (Waks, 2003; Yin, 2013; Sparapani et al., 2014). A series of curriculum reforms have or are taking place worldwide, for example, in the United States of America, Europe, East Asia and in all sub-Saharan African countries, particularly in the development of new curricula due to social, political and technological progression (Yeung and Lam, 2007; Altinyelken, 2010;

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Kolmos et al., 2016). Ongoing renewals of the school curriculum in most countries normally centre on focusing, deepening and sustaining, in response to changing contexts (Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2015). In Israel, factors which influenced changes and developments in Chemistry curriculum included political, cultural socio-economic, and scientific, industrial and technological innovations. Similarly, Reis (2018) suggests that curriculum reform should follow a clear vision and mission, a selected educational paradigm, and pay attention to stakeholders, context, culture and politics.

Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 and like most countries, embarked on a number of curriculum reforms in an effort to redress the imbalances of the colonial era as well as to address the demands of the contemporary Zimbabwe. Earlier efforts were mostly channelled towards opening up access to education for a number of categories of learners that had been left out or had limited access to education (Zvobgo, 1986; Gatawa, 1998; Nziramasanga, 1999; Shumba and Chireshe, 2013; Mpofu et al., 2018). The report of the Nziramasanga Commission which was tasked to look into education found that education in Zimbabwe was too academic and recommended a comprehensive review of the school curriculum to make it responsive to the needs of learners and the nation (Nziramasanga, 1999). It is against this background that early childhood education in Zimbabwe was moved to the education ministry and became part of the primary school system through Secretary's Circular Number 14 of 2004. An early childhood development curriculum was also introduced in 2012. However, whilst schools were still trying to conceptualise the 2012 early childhood curriculum another review was instituted in 2014 that culminated in the updated curriculum which schools began to implement in January 2017. This study explored the extent to which schools were ready to implement the updated curriculum in terms of conceptualisation, availability of resources, curriculum dissemination, and implementation.

Statement of purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate mainstream preschool centres' readiness to implement the updated preschool curriculum introduced in Zimbabwe in January 2017. The study checked on teachers' conceptualisation of the new curriculum; the extent to which the curriculum was disseminated and resourced, and the teachers' experiences at the inception phase of the curriculum. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

(i) To what extent did the teachers understand the new curriculum?
(ii) How was the new curriculum disseminated to the implementers?
(iii) To what extent was the curriculum resourced?
(iv) What were the teachers' experiences in the initial implementation phase?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Education programmes are guided by policies. The degree to which policy expectations are clear will impact educators' translation of such arrangements (Raselimo and Wilmot, 2013). Spillane et al. (2002) contend that strategies that require central changes in executing specialists' information structures are bound to experience implementation issues than those which require gradual changes. In spite of the fact that they recognize that strategies are dependent upon various translations with regards to rehearse, Bowe et al. (1992) and Spillane et al. (2002) take a specialized perspective on arrangement investigation and propose that, since approach writings speak to thoughts regarding changing practice, there is need to assess whether a strategy was comprehended as expected. Subsequently, Obinna (2007) contends that no government policy on education can be acknowledged if it does not, as a matter of first importance, see the issues and openings before starting the decision-making process.

Smit (2001) is of the feeling that the truth of curriculum change and its impact is felt most at the essential levels, in the classroom. This infers educators at the school level are the most notable individuals in the change procedure. They should sufficiently conceptualize the new curriculum for them to have the option to viably actualize it. In this manner, teacher support, or purchase in, is vital to implementation (Bruns and Schneider, 2016). Prawat (1992) battles that while educators are from one perspective seen as significant change operators, then again, they can be snags to change in light of their adherence to antiquated types of instruction. This perception proposes that those presenting curriculum changes ought to permit educators sufficient opportunity to conceptualize change and consider its suggestions for their training and practice. Govender (2018) sees that in spite of their basic situation inside the instruction procedure, generally educators in South Africa and somewhere else have not had a voice in curriculum change, in this way their jobs, challenges; individual encounters and viewpoints are regularly overlooked. Correspondingly, examines by Avalos (2011), Carl (2002), and Park and Sung (2013) additionally uncovered that authorities will in general force change on educators as opposed to including them all the while.

Educators' earlier convictions and practices can present difficulties, not just in light of the fact that instructors are reluctant to alter in the direction of policy but in addition on the grounds that their present understandings may meddle with their capacity to

Table 1. Decision-making matrix for curriculum implementation.

Intended change	Implementation methods
Awareness and basic knowledge about curriculum	In-service training of teachers and new modules in teacher pre-service training programmes.
Knowledge and understanding of theories and practices required in new curriculum	In-service training of teachers, printed or audiovisual materials for teachers and new modules in teacher pre-service training programmes. Demonstrations of expected new classroom practices and behaviours in school.
Skills development for discrete behaviors, patterns and strategies	In-service training of teachers, printed or audiovisual materials for teachers and new modules in teacher pre-service training programmes. Demonstrations of expected new classroom practices and behaviours in school. Workshops where teachers can practice new skills.
Changing beliefs about learning, children and academic content	In-service training of teachers, printed or audiovisual materials for teachers and new modules in teacher pre-service training programmes. Demonstrations of expected new classroom practices and behaviors in school. Workshops where teachers can practice new skills. Extended school-based or locally managed teacher development programmes.
Consistent use of new practices	In-service training of teachers, printed or audiovisual materials for teachers and new modules in teacher pre-service training programmes. Demonstrations of expected new classroom practices and behaviors in school. Workshops where teachers can practice new skills. Extended school-based or locally managed teacher development programmes. Supporting professional learning communities in schools.

Adapted from Sahlberg (2009).

decipher and execute the change in manners consistent with the planners' expectation (Spillane et al., 2002; Prensky, 2014). The development of new information happens through existing structures, for example, educators' earlier information and convictions about educating and learning (Mohaeka and Wilmot, 2013). In the event that those structures are not strong, little might be accomplished regarding acknowledging change. The contention fortifies the one by Zimmerman (2006) that a few educators' change obstruction qualities may be a consequence of their past encounters. In this way, already ineffective endeavors at change can leave educators incredibly wary about tolerating further endeavors at change. Accordingly, it is not surprising that Mutch (2017) contends that instructors don't simply indiscriminately and adamantly oppose change.

As indicated by Noblit and Pink (2007), in Uruguay teachers were not ready to accept the new curriculum since they knew about the difficulties that they would confront; they were not given adequate help and data on the new curriculum. Adequate help is an issue that was likewise raised by Molapo and Pillay (2018) who reason that when educators are not bolstered by government and different offices or resources they build up a demeanor of reliable protection from change implementation. For implementation to happen or sanctioning to rise, authorities' need to address the practices of all players in the curriculum change (Magongoa, 2011; Pont, 2018). Curriculum makers, administrators, and educators must be clear about the reason or goal, the nature, the genuine and potential advantages of the advancement. As indicated by Mashele (2005) implementation requires some serious energy; it needs the consideration of the individuals to be won so as to impact their frames of mind

adequately with the goal that they modify their present ways. In the event that people feel included and their perspectives esteemed, they will contribute their best to the curriculum implementation. Magongoa (2011) contends that fitting implementation plans ought to be illuminated clearly. The implementation plans also need to describe the specific programmes, activities, tasks, resources, time schedules, responsible persons, inside collaborating structures, and outside collaborating structures. An example of an implementation plan adapted from Sahlberg (2009) is shown in Table 1.

The specific contexts in which teachers interpret and enact the new curriculum impact on how teachers conceptualise the new curriculum. Spillane et al. (2002) identify school contexts such as organisational structures, the social environment and the historical context as important factors in shaping teachers' sense-making of new curriculum policy. If curriculum reforms are not clear to teachers, they may not have enough faith and trust in the new curriculum (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008).

Teachers may feel they are not fully equipped to implement the curriculum (Knight, 2005; Prensky, 2014). Chatturgoon (2008) confirms that teachers may struggle to find their way with the curriculum changes and yet they are expected to change the manner by which they teach. Thus, acceptance of change could be affected by perceived threats to their expertise and proven abilities, and their belief that they lack the knowledge or skills to implement the change successfully (Fullan, 2001; Pont, 2018).

Educational change involves changing teachers' beliefs and understanding as prerequisite to improving teaching practices. Research indicates that teachers require a thorough understanding of the meaning of educational

change before there is an acceptance and adoption of new programmes (Cheung and Wong, 2012). Teachers who do not have sufficient information about the curriculum cannot implement it properly (Uiseb, 2007). For example, Molapo and Pillay (2018) found that teachers who did not have proper training seemed to be overwhelmed by the curriculum changes resulting in low teachers' confidence and commitment. It was reiterate that whoever is responsible for the curriculum change or innovation should consider teachers' attitudes and beliefs as major predictors of the success of a transformation. In other words, curriculum implementation must not be in haste. Vandeyar and Killen (2003) suggest that the implementation of a curriculum can be postponed until teachers have been taught to implement the curriculum correctly. Motseke (2005) and Naong (2008) concur that without proper training for teachers the new curriculum cannot be executed or implemented correctly because the teachers' knowledge base would be limited. Teachers require sufficient knowledge and skills for them to be able to expand on teaching and learning activities. Thus, training of teachers is a critical step for successful implementation, so that teachers understand what the changes are and how they can put them into practice (Rogan and Anderson, 2011). Dada et al. (2009) found that when there was inadequate information, teachers were expected to collate their own information for teaching in the classroom.

In South Africa, educators went to a short five-day workshop, where they were given information about the curriculum but were not taken through functional exercises, with regards to the way in which the activities could be actualized in the classroom circumstance (Harricharan, 2011). Not every one of the educators went to these workshops and the individuals who did were expected to transmit the data to their associates when they came back to their separate schools. This brought about the watering down of information since a portion of the information was not handed-off; teachers held their own conclusions and information on the curriculum and passed on their personal inclinations and translations (Harricharan, 2011). Namibia likewise experienced issues in regards to curriculum change whereby teachers were unfamiliar with the content and in a state of confusion (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008). So also, Singaram (2007) states that educators in New Zealand were besieged with the content that they were expected to instruct and thought of it as befuddling, hard to comprehend and decipher. The instructors were irate, baffled and they felt there was no requirement for a curriculum change. In Australia, teachers' constrained syllabus interpretation and content knowledge brought forth the fruitless implementation of their new curriculum (Bahr, 2016). A comparative situation was as of late observed by Govender (2018) in South Africa whereby foundation stage teachers whined about too many new curriculum workshops that were not applicable to classroom practice. Educators in the investigation conducted by Govender contended that they had not created adequate educational content for teaching some subjects (Govender, 2018).

Magongoa (2011) noted that most instructive changes fail on the grounds that those accountable for the endeavors might be having pretty much nothing or twisted comprehension of the way of life of schools. Most change projects are planned by specialists outside the school condition without adequately including school heads and educators, bringing about a hindered new curriculum implementation process (Magongoa, 2011). Mkpa (1987) views the teacher as the most notable individual in the program of curriculum implementation, and thusly underscored that the educator must be associated with all phases of the curriculum procedure. It is in this way imperative to incorporate staff development procedures, as teachers should be prepared to modify their training to the prerequisites of the new curriculum. This recommends the requirement for strong curriculum dissemination systems.

Curriculum dissemination comprises of the presentation of curriculum through the distribution of thoughts and concepts in order to make relevant people aware of the envisaged curriculum; ensuring that a curriculum reaches the target population, that is, the deliberate intention to inform clients of an innovation (McBeath, 1999; Carl, 2002). The process includes such aspects as training those who will present the material, sensitizing those who will monitor it, and other goal-oriented activities to facilitate the adoption of the innovation (Magongoa, 2011; Nasser, 2017). According to Mawila (2007) there are certain curriculum dissemination strategies and tactics that are critical and should be considered if dissemination is to bear the required fruits. Strategies include distribution of curriculum materials, meetings, newsletters, flyers, networking, questionnaires, material development and face-to-face contact. Cheung and Wong (2012) found out that teachers needed support in training courses, seminars or workshops for them to implement the curriculum reform effectively. Uiseb (2007) emphasises that teachers must be developed professionally, for them to take possession of the reform process. There is necessity to reinforce teacher training, to help and organise teachers to implement the changes to the curriculum effectively (Bantwini, 2010).

Some resources are fundamental for the implementation of another curriculum: human; infrastructure; hardware, material, and monetary resources. Instructional materials are a fundamental learning asset. For instance, if there is anything lacking in the common environment, the curriculum can't be appropriately executed (Erden, 2010; Lelliot et al., 2009). Ehiametalor (2001) sees school facilities as the operational inputs of each instructional program and viewed the school as a manufacturing organisation where all inputs must be in top operational shape to create results. Ivowi (2004) in Odey and Opoh

(2015) underlines that infrastructural facilities, equipment, and materials must be given in sufficient amounts to guarantee that the curriculum is viably executed.

Vandeyar and Killen (2003) propose that the implementation of a curriculum can be delayed until schools get the essential resources to guarantee achievement. It is extremely baffling for educators, just as students to proceed with teaching and learning when there is an absence of vital and proper resources (De Waal, 2004). In a similar vein, Naong (2008) repeats that if facilities are not redesigned at specific schools, students won't accomplish the necessary outcomes. Comparable perceptions were accounted for by Motseke (2005); and Molapo and Pillay (2018) who discovered that because of the absence of the necessary resources, instructors could not convey great quality lessons. The inaccessible resources included reading material; apparatus for experiments; computer lab; library; proper sports facilities; and educating media. The most significant asset for students is the educators and reading material, and for the teachers, the teacher's guide. The absence of fitting conditions and resources can bring about a building up of teachers negative demeanor towards students' learning. Alcardo et al. (2019) see that numerous organizations in Africa direct instructing and learning with constrained ICT facilities which incorporate not many or hardly any PCs and restricted power supply. Different resources, for example, physical facilities including classrooms and research centers intended to make an empowering domain in which implementation can happen must be given by the local government.

Odey and Opoh (2015) additionally take note of an issue related to over-burdening of the effectively far-reaching curriculum content in Nigeria, which was combined with packed classes, in spite of the prescribed and adjusted teacher-pupil proportion of 1:40. Govender (2018) additionally notes huge classes and congestion as a test which militates against curriculum change. In such conditions, educators will in general return to the customary technique for instructing in light of the fact that they come up short on the vital resources required for the implementation of a student-focused methodology. Therefore, educators utilize the inquiry and answer technique which is reading material based and "entire class-situated" (Mbeshu, 2010).

Educational reform requires financial support. Implementation of curriculum reforms often means increased costs of education in putting up classrooms, workshops, special rooms and laboratories (Syomwene, 2013). Various strategies can be used to generate financial resources to fund reforms in education. Most countries adopt the cost sharing strategy whereby the government pays teachers' salaries and the parents meet tuition fees and textbooks costs (Lungu, 2016; Ndulu and Moronge, 2015). World Bank Studies have shown countries like China, El Salvador, Malaysia and Indonesia as having communities that engaged in school financing as a result of demand for alternative forms of education that related to cultural and religious needs of the groups (Bray,1996; Zhu,2010). Similar systems exist in parts of Asia, for instance, in Laos People's Republic, Chairmen of village community associations usually oversaw construction of rural schools where levies were imposed with allowances for substitution with labour; recurrent needs of community schools in Singapore were raised through central provident deductions for racial based associations, while levies on purchases made at village shops were used to raise funds for local schools in parts of India (Bray, 1996). Cost-sharing is an international practice which has taken place in most countries, be it rich or poor (Lungu, 2016).

A study to assess the influence of hidden costs on students' academic performance in Kitui County secondary schools in Kenya by Ndulu and Moronge, found out that the Kenyan government had also introduced cost sharing at secondary school level to mitigate financial shortages, whereby the government, through free secondary education catered for the tuition fees while the parents and other stakeholders took care of the other costs including provision of infrastructure and other services for the boarding schools (Ndulu and Moronge, 2015).

A study on the effectiveness and sustainability of cost sharing in Kabwe District of Zambia, which was carried out by Lungu (2016) concluded that the perception of seeing government as the biggest sponsor of education had caused many not to be willing to respond positively as attitudes towards payment of school fees by parents were found to be negative. The study noted that cost sharing was sustainable through lobbing support from well-wishers, levying pupils, reintroduction of school boards, record keeping as well as income generating projects. The study recommended the following; government to ensure that funds were realized in good time; increase allocation of funds; put up strong and strict monitoring mechanism of funds (Lungu, 2016). Based on the findings from the above cited studies, it is apparent that the cost transfer concept may not work out well in a depressed economic environment where disposable income is generally low. The transfer of costs to parents may not be the best option since parents are usually overwhelmed by other financial responsibilities. In order for change and innovation to succeed, the strategies and models for implementing the curriculum must be considered carefully.

Strategies and models for curriculum change and innovation

Beckhard and Harris (1978), developed some strategies and models that are often applied. A strategy of innovation refers to the planned procedures and techniques to be employed. The strategies include: the participative problem-solving, planned linkage strategy, Coercive strategies and open input strategies.

The participative problem-solving procedure attracts its capacity from including the clients in recognizing their needs and how to fulfill these requirements, distinguishing and diagnosing their needs, discovering arrangements, giving it a shot and assessing the arrangement and executing the arrangement in the event that it is palatable. In the planned linkage technique, middle offices, for example, schools, unite the clients of the innovation. The coercive systems work based on force and pressure by those in power who utilize such instruments as laws, registries, and booklets to constrain and uphold consistency by those with less force (Obilo and Sangoleye, 2015). There is a detached dispersion of a centrally arranged development considered important to the beneficiaries. Open Input Strategies are open, adaptable, practical methodologies that utilize outside thoughts and resources.

Tanner and Tanner (1980), underscore three chief models that represent how change can happen. These are the Research, Development and Diffusion Model, the Problem-Solving Model and the Social Interaction Model. In The Research, Development and Diffusion Model, an advancement is imagined at the head or focus and afterward encouraged into the framework. Hence, the model perspectives the procedures of progress as a sane grouping of stages wherein an advancement is created or found, developed, delivered, and spread to the client, teacher inclusion is low. The Problem-Solving Model is worked around the client of the advancement, who decides the issue, looks for an innovation, assesses the preliminaries and actualizes the advancement. In Social Interaction Model, change continues or diffuses through formal or casual contacts between communicating social gatherings and depends on the attention to development, enthusiasm for the advancement, preliminary and appropriation for perpetual use. The social association model burdens the significance of relational systems of data, assessment, authority and individual contact.

With respect to both, models and systems, writing has uncovered that top-down structures do not function admirably in the scholarly world (Dalrymple et al., 2017). The fruitful implementation relies upon how the curriculum is presented and politically confined at the arrangement level (top-down) and how it is seen and energized at school level (base up) (Kuiper and Berkvens, 2013) in Molapo and Pillay (2018). Nonetheless, Molapo and Pillay discovered that when the curriculum is 'passed on from the top' it is not energetically executed by teachers. What seems to work are long haul procedures arranged inside and regarding the setting of the scholastic framework (Henderson et al., 2011).

METHODOLOGY

This study fell within the qualitative research approach in the form of a phenomenological study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Tubey et al., 2015). The phenomenological was chosen because it focuses on the lived experiences of the participants in terms of conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, relationships or trends, since it is devoted to gathering information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation (Salaria, 2012: 1; Chopra, 2016: 138; Korstjens and Moser, 2017: 277; Paley, 2017: 4; Mohajan, 2018: 8). The population of the study included early childhood development teachers and school heads/ administrators in mainstream primary school centres in Masvingo District. The sample included four school administrators and sixteen teachers purposively sampled from four centres. Purposive sampling enabled the researchers to 'handpick' participants on the basis of some defining characteristics which made them the holders of the data needed for the study. The teachers were trained to teach early childhood learners and were pursuing a bachelor's degree. The heads of schools from which the teachers were drawn from were then picked as participants as well. Participants were interviewed using an interview schedule which explored participants' understanding of the new curriculum, the extent to which the curriculum was resourced and participants' general experiences during the inception phase of the new curriculum. Data were analysed and presented in the form of narratives.

RESULTS

Conceptualisation of the new curriculum

Results indicate that administrators and teachers appreciated more those curriculum areas whose titles did not present a major departure from what was in the previous early childhood development syllabus which they were beginning to master, such as Mathematics and Science, English, and Physical Education. However, some did not quite appreciate some concepts falling under some curriculum areas and they thought there was unnecessary difference between Physical Education and Mass Displays. On the whole, indications were that some teachers felt that they had not yet grasped issues on subjects such as Mass Displays, Visual and Performing Arts, ICT, Physical Education, and Mathematics and Science. Overall, participants still required an in-depth understanding of all the ECD curriculum areas and skills in ICT. The following excerpts demonstrate the data:

I still don't have adequate knowledge to teach these subjects.
I attended a district workshop. I have failed to get how Mass Displays differ from P.E. and I have to be cautious not to confuse the two as I try to explain it to the other teachers.
I still need more guidance on curriculum areas such as mass displays, ICT, visual and performing arts, and heritage and social studies. More workshops still necessary.
Workshops we attended as teachers were done in a hurry because time was limited.

Dissemination of the new curriculum

Data from interviews with school heads showed that the

new curriculum was explained at national, district, and cluster training workshops. The national one was the most important because that is where cascading of the new curriculum to grassroots started. All the school heads and ECD teachers sampled did not attend the national workshop. Participants at national level then trained those at district and the same pattern was followed down to the school level. However, some of the school administrators and teachers complained that those who attended the national workshop seem not to have grasped key issues; as a result information that was reaching the schools had a lot of inconsistencies. Data revealed that at most instances the majority of teachers and school heads were left out and most of the workshops concentrated on out of school administrators who wanted an opportunity to claim travel and subsistence allowance. Data further revealed that only those teachers whose classes had been identified to participate in the initial run attended workshops, the other teachers were not even aware of what was happening. The initial ECD implementing classes were ECD A and Grade 1. Schools continued with workshops on syllabus interpretation, scheming and planning as clusters, as well as through school-based meetings. The data shows that teachers were not satisfied with the way the updated curriculum was disseminated. ECD specialist teachers did not participate at the national level training. As a result, those who cascaded the curriculum to the school teachers seemed not to be knowledgeable of ECD curriculum issues. The following data excerpts are an illustration of the teachers' sentiments:

The person who was training us seemed not to understand.
As ECD we were not represented well at national and district level. Those who later trained us were not familiar with ECD teaching and learning.
At times we fail to get assistance from colleagues because they are not yet part of the new curriculum group.

Availability of resources

Data from the interviews with school heads and ECD teachers revealed that all schools now had syllabuses for the updated curriculum areas but they were not enough, teachers were sharing. Schools were given soft copies and then printed hard copies for the school. The school heads indicated that at the moment they could not afford to print syllabus copies for individual teachers. Of the four schools, only one had bought one set of textbooks to be shared by all the ECD A class teachers. The other schools were still trying to harness funds and others were waiting to be guided by their respective school development committees. It was noted that textbooks and teachers resource books were still limited or unavailable in schools.

Data showed that ECD centres had some play materials relevant to the new curriculum like balls, ropes, and blocks. In addition to textbooks, the data also revealed that the schools still needed to procure age appropriate computers, PE equipment, musical instruments, cell phones, and calculators, as well as television sets and more syllabus copies for each teacher. The following quotes illustrate the participants' responses:

The materials are not age appropriate and are inadequate. We do not have adequate material resources to implement the new curriculum as this innovation was rushed and we do not have proper equipment and infrastructure for ICT, for example.

At the moment there are no swimming pools, libraries and computer rooms to implement the new curriculum.

Implementation of the new curriculum

Data from interviews with the school heads and teachers revealed that all schools had started implementing the updated curriculum. Data revealed that in addition to acquiring the relevant syllabuses as updated curriculum implementation strategies, schools had also lined up school-based workshops, and engaged parents and other stakeholders to sensitise them on resources required for the updated curriculum. This showed that the school administrators were making efforts to ensure that implementation of the updated curriculum would be successful.

However, the data also revealed that the administrators and teachers had experienced and perceived challenges and concerns which included lack of adequate preparation, inopportune resources mobilisation, and administrators' and teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and skills required in syllabus interpretation, scheming and teaching of some curriculum areas like Physical Education, Mass Display and ICT. Data also revealed that teachers complained about too much content and content that is beyond the ECD children's zones of proximal development.

Teachers are grappling with syllabus interpretation
We are struggling with scheming using the new curriculum syllabi.
There is too much content to be taught to young and some of the content is too difficult for them to understand. We are facing challenges in teaching subjects like, Physical Education, Mass Display and ICT.

DISCUSSION

One significant discovering was that administrators and

teachers immediately related to curriculum components whose portrayal had a ton like past subject portrayals demonstrating that change is progressively acceptable on the off chance that it is gradual in nature. Be that as it may, curriculum zones like 'Mass Displays' were too new and badly received. The underlying unnerving signs sent by the new subject portrayals came about because of various translations by teachers and administrators who had not had satisfactory data on the new curriculum and its core interest. The absence of sufficient information is a test liable to influence their implementation (Molapo and Pillay, 2018). This irregularity must be tended to as quickly as time permits, in case, numerous lucky minutes for learning would be missed. The educators who are generally significant in the entire procedure must not be given a fly-past assistance; they should be initiated enough with respect to curriculum understanding and conceptualisation or else the expected objectives will be missed (Mkpa, 1987; Prawat, 1992; Smit, 2001; Spillane et al., 2002; Magongoa, 2011; Govender, 2018). Absence of comprehension of curriculum changes noted in the present examination affirms what was seen by Bowe et al. (1992), Spillane et al. (2002), Bantwini (2010) and Bruns and Schneider (2016) that it was a block to positive change and implementation. Be that as it may, in accordance with the perceptions by Mohamed (2004), for a portion of the school directors and early childhood development instructors, the underlying period of tension and frenzy among educators had advanced to expanding certainty to execute the curriculum as they valued the requirement for subjects like ICT. Tolerating such advancements guarantees consistency with a contemporary social, political and mechanical movement (Yeung and Lam, 2007). However, when the instructors, in the end, started to value a portion of the advancements, some educating and learning time had just been lost. The discoveries agree with prior discoveries that instructor support or buy in is essential for smooth implementation of another curriculum (Bruns and Schneider, 2016).

Absence of clearness on certain parts of the updated curriculum was in accordance with Oztek's (2012) finding that the course or pyramid curriculum dissemination methodology gives preparing to more individuals inside a short space of time and is cost effective, however weakening happens as the preparation gets down to the grassroots but then the inverse ought to happen. This can prompt disabled implementation (Mawila, 2007; Chatturgoon, 2008). The teachers, as the most notable individuals in the curriculum development cycle, must be completely made mindful of the visualized curriculum and its objectives. Individuals who go to the key dissemination workshops or meetings additionally should have been educated on the substance and attributes of the learners. Forgetting about educators who were not yet actualizing the updated curriculum by restricting talk of the updated curriculum to a little inner circle in the school was a

financially savvy but then instructors could have shared thoughts if all were engaged with the preparation regardless of whether they were not yet teaching the new curriculum classes. Those actualizing the advancement ought not to be overpowered by the development (Molapo and Pillay, 2018). The preparation should incorporate all educators and it should have been allocated sufficient time. In this manner, there was a need to consider and utilize the best of every one of the curriculum change models or methodologies so as to think of the most reasonable.

The shortage of resources emerged as a major obstacle to the implementation of the updated curriculum. The observed shortages validated the argument that the required resources for a new curriculum must be availed in adequate quantities (Ivowi, 2004; Lelliot et al., 2009; Ehiametalor, 2001). Some of the equipment was not in a usable state to serve the purpose. Most of the computers in early childhood classrooms were old and dysfunctional. Having only dysfunctional computers for teaching ICT is not proper because it promotes traditional ways of teaching.

Legitimate arranging and timing are required to guarantee that enough resources are set up when another curriculum is propelled with the goal that learning openings are sufficiently used (Mbeshu, 2010). The government must be prepared to back development (Syomwene, 2013). The discoveries indicated that rushed curriculum choices were made without considering the monetary help expected to obtain resources. Obinna (2007) stressed that the administration must acknowledge difficulties and openings first. In any case, it might be uncalled for to put all the fault on government since educators could draw significant pieces of data from the books they were utilizing already, however, Cheung and Wong (2012) raise the issue of overwhelming outstanding burdens which may not give the instructors much time to do that. It was likewise noticed that rural schools were increasingly burdened as far as resources. Most didn't have the greatest budgetary help and furthermore a few schools didn't have power and PCs. The discoveries of the present study resounded Naidoo and Muthukrishna's (2014) and Govender's (2018) discoveries that because of the absence of assets, schools couldn't get a significant number of the stipulated resources. Guardians were required to meet the costs (Secretary's Circular 14 of 2004) yet cost-sharing techniques may not work with ruined networks.

The investigation set up that absence of clarification to guardians on expenses to be met by the legislature and that to be canvassed by guardians acquired a part of hesitance by guardians in paying concealed costs. These discoveries are like those by Njeru and Orodho (2003) who discovered that additional school imposes, for example, Parents Teachers Association finance, persuasive expenses, transportation charges, and development charges lead to troubles in financing

auxiliary instruction since the guardians need to bear the expanded costs which make a negative effect on the scholastic execution.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study explored the condition of preparation of ECD centres to implement the updated curriculum. Literature has it that presenting change in a curriculum ought to permit teachers sufficient opportunity to conceptualize and consider its suggestions for their practice. For the most part, writing uncovered that if changes in curriculum were forced on educators as opposed to including them and that if curriculum changes were not clear teachers lose certainty and trust in the curriculum bringing about them feeling that there is no requirement for change. The investigation indicated that absence of lucidity by certain educators regarding certain matters of the updated curriculum existed despite the fact that they gave a few indications of valuation for the subjects. Most teachers were not included in the arranging or planning phase of the updated curriculum. Dissemination of the updated curriculum was done through workshops beginning at the national level to singular schools at the grassroots level. Notwithstanding, the study indicated that educators could have been happy with the dissemination of the updated curriculum if less of the executives and a greater amount of ECD pros had gone to the national workshops. The individuals who fell the curriculum to the teachers appeared not proficient in ECD curriculum issues. As asserted by the early childhood instructors, the individuals who went to the key dissemination workshops or gatherings were not clearly clarifying the substance corresponding to the qualities of the early childhood learners since they were not early childhood educators. Difficulties were knowledgeable about endeavouring to execute the updated curriculum at the starting phases of implementation. These were fixated on the absence of satisfactory planning, resources, information and aptitudes required for schedule translation, conspiring and instructing of some curriculum territories like Physical Education, Mass Display, Visual and Performing Arts, and ICT. Teachers required a top to bottom comprehension of the ECD curriculum zones and abilities in ICT. It turned out that rustic schools were progressively impeded regarding resources as some didn't have textbooks, power and PCs. The curriculum content was additionally seen to be excessively and past the extent of ECD learners. The difficulties of course readings could have been eased if educators could have drawn some significant data from books that were being utilized already. The content could then be surveyed in an offer to choose that which is satisfactory and more age-proper. In-administration preparation should be possible to outfit teachers with the fundamental ICT skills.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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