



Factors influencing Curriculum Implementation in Commerce: A case of four selected Secondary Schools (Chasefu Day Secondary School, Emusa Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in Rural Chasefu District, Zambia.

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Abstract- This study focused on factors influencing curriculum implementation in Commerce in rural Chasefu District. The study was triggered by existing studies which only focussed broadly on curriculum delivery or concentrated on urban schools, leaving a critical gap in understanding rural-specific dynamics. However, the objectives of the study were to identify factors that influence the Curriculum Implementation in Commerce (i.e., Chasefu District in particular), analyse the views of various stakeholders regarding the challenges and establish effective strategies to ameliorate curriculum implementation in commerce. The implication of the study was to offer practical insights and experiences to the Head of Departments, Teachers and Learners in the curriculum implementation of Commerce pathway. The study employed descriptive case study design in order to understand practices and experiences factors influencing curriculum implementation, using qualitative research approach to collect data. The study population was represented by pupils pursuing the Business Studies Oriented Career Pathway, Business Studies Teachers and the Heads of Departments (HOD) for Business Studies Department. The study used purposive sampling to select four (4) Head of Departments, twelve (12) Subject Teachers and two hundred twenty-four (224) learners carefully selected from rural four (4) Secondary Schools having Business Studies Oriented Career Pathway. Research instruments chosen for the study were interviews and questionnaire guides. The study used qualitative data analysis to elucidate and analyse data. Findings of the study were tabulated according to study themes related to objectives. Findings revealed that factors that influence the effective implementation of the curriculum in commerce were training and expertise of teachers, resource, instructional leadership and Learner motivation. Further challenges for the study were lack of teaching and learning materials, poor teaching methods attributed by lack of teacher training and Continuous Profession Development. In reference to the challenges, strategies were identified to ameliorate curriculum implementation in Commerce. Based on the findings, the study recommends the Ministry of Education through Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) to provide ongoing training and support for teachers to develop their acumens and confidence in implementing new curricula. The government of Zambia to include budgetary allocation to ensure adequate allocation of resources, such as textbooks, technology, and infrastructure, to support effective curriculum implementation in Commerce. Nonetheless, further research suggests exploring factors inhibiting academic performance in commerce in rural selected secondary schools.



Keywords- Curriculum Implementation, Commerce Education, Rural Secondary Schools, Business Studies, Educational Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Teacher Training.

I. Introduction

Curriculum implementation is a very critical stage in the Curriculum Development Process in education; that is, translating a well-structured planned, and craftily designed curriculum documents into actual classroom practice and experiences. It involves however, interaction between teachers, learners, instructional materials, school leadership, community-based corroborations and the broader socio-economic spectrum. While Curriculum Development defines what should be taught in a class room set up, Curriculum Implementation determines how and whether educational objectives are fully achieved or not. Effective curriculum implementation is therefore intrinsic for ensuring quality education and meaningful learning outcomes.

It is against this background that this chapter provides general background information that sets the context of this study material on the factors that are influencing curriculum implementation in Commerce subject, a case of four selected secondary schools in a rural Chasefu District (Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School). The background was followed by the statement of the problem under investigation, specific objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the studies, formulations of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, theoretical frame work, operational definitions of terms of the study and finally, the summary of this first chapter.

Background of the study

Curriculum Implementation refers to the process of translating educational plans into classroom practice. In the Zambian educational system, commerce education aims to equip learners with business knowledge, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial acumens that are very critical for the economic participation of its citizens. However, in rural set ups like Chasefu District of Zambia, curriculum implementation faces numerous challenges that affect quality educational outcomes. These include limited resources, teacher preparedness, community attitudes, and infrastructural constraints.

Suffice to say, it is a well-known fact that globally, there has been a long-standing preference for Natural Sciences and Mathematics over commercial or business-related subjects in most Secondary school Education. In line with that assertion, Muleya and Mbewe (2013) revealed that there was a general belief among Zambian that Natural Sciences prepares learners for highly paying and prestigious jobs such as Engineering, electrical courses, etc., whereas Business-related courses does not (recent studies have shown that Commerce prepare learners for entrepreneurial jobs which has recently proved to be well rewarding in terms of profits and dividends). Therefore, Academic Natural Sciences and Mathematics were gaining predominance over commercial subjects since independence.

However, in the recent years, several Governments recognised the importance and relevance of these commercial subjects for equipping learners with entrepreneurial



acumens in order to enable them become self-reliant and contribute to the national economic development. In the Zambian context, the Ministry of Education undertook curriculum reforms to align educational outcomes with national development goals, yet challenges persevere in translating policy into effective classroom practice, particularly in rural areas (Ministry of General Education (MoGE, 2013). A thing that prompted the Government of Zambia to revise the curriculum to incorporate business related subjects such as Commerce at Secondary School Education.

It is high time that the governments realise the importance of Commerce, as a subject in equipping learners with knowledge and acumens related to business, entrepreneurship, and economic participation to align it with global trends. It is in this vein that the subject holds primacy in successful curriculum implementation in rural settings such as Chasefu District, where economic empowerment through education is a strategic priority.

However, there are still challenges in the curriculum implementation in Commerce, as a subject in Secondary Schools in Zambia. Several governments including Zambia, as earlier indicated that curriculum reforms, has its own challenges in the process of implementation especially in rural areas. These include limited teaching and learning resources, inadequately trained or unqualified teachers, large class sizes, and poor infrastructure (UNESCO, 2018; Mulenga and Kabombwe, 2019). Largely, studies have indicated that many teachers lack adequate training or up-to-date knowledge in specific areas such as financial literacy or entrepreneurship (Njiru, 2014). That hampers the delivery of content in a manner that resonates with real-world applications, thereby diminishing the value of the curriculum in itself.

In addition, rural schools often face contextual challenges such as poverty, poor access to technology, and weak parental support for education, all of which impact curriculum delivery (Nkonde, 2017). Teacher motivation and preparedness are also central to curriculum success, but many teachers in rural Zambia report feeling unsupported and under-resourced (Chishimba and Muwana, 2020). Moreover, localized adaptations of the curriculum, though necessary, often go undocumented and unmonitored, leading to inconsistencies in learning outcomes. To add on there is also learner-related factors, including interest, motivation, prior knowledge, and socio-economic background, also influence curriculum uptake. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds may struggle to access supplementary learning opportunities outside the classroom, thereby affecting their engagement and performance in commerce subjects (Oketch and Rolleston, 2007). Despite these known issues, there is a scarcity of research specifically examining how such factors affect the implementation of the Commerce curriculum in rural districts like Chasefu. Most existing studies focus broadly on curriculum delivery or concentrate on urban schools, leaving a critical gap in understanding rural-specific dynamics. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the factors influencing the implementation of the Commerce curriculum in selected rural secondary schools in Chasefu District. By investigating this case, the study aims to generate insights that can inform both policy and practice in enhancing Commerce education across similar rural settings.



Statement of the problem of the study

Despite efforts by the Ministry of Education to strengthen Commerce education in Zambia, many rural schools especially in Chasefu District, continue to reveal poor learner performance during their final examination, low participation, and weak application of the commerce curriculum pathway. Nonetheless, there is limited empirical evidence on what factors specifically influence this implementation in rural Zambian secondary schools, leading to policy and practice gap.

Even after the introduction of well-structured Commerce curricula in Zambian secondary schools, particularly under the 2023 Zambia education curriculum frameworks, *visa vis* Competence Based Curriculum, the actual implementation of curricula in rural areas remains uneven and often ineffective. In Chasefu District, a predominantly rural and under-resourced area in Eastern Province, there is a growing concern among educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders regarding the extent to which the Commerce Curriculum is being effectively implemented in rural secondary schools.

Evidence suggests that multiple factors may influence curriculum implementation, including teacher qualifications and preparedness, availability of teaching and learning resources, school infrastructure, administrative support, and socio-economic conditions of learners. Rural schools often face unique challenges such as chronic teacher shortages, lack of specialized Commerce educators, inadequate instructional materials, and limited access to Continuous Professional Development programs. These constraints can lead to inconsistent delivery of the curriculum, reduced learner engagement, and poor academic outcomes in Commerce subjects.

However, there is a scarcity of localized empirical studies that specifically examine how these factors interact to influence the implementation of the Commerce curriculum in rural Zambian schools. Without such data, it becomes difficult for education stakeholders to design targeted interventions that address the specific needs of rural schools.

This study, therefore, seeks to establish factors influencing the implementation of the Commerce Curriculum in selected rural secondary schools in Chasefu District. By identifying the challenges and opportunities within this context, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of curriculum delivery in rural settings and to offer practical recommendations for improving Commerce education in similar under-resourced environments.

Research objectives

General objectives of the study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate and establish factors influencing the curriculum implementation of commerce curriculum pathway in rural District of Chasefu, in eastern province of Zambia.

Specific Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:



- To examine the availability of teaching and learning resources in selected schools in Chasefu District.
- To assess the influence of teacher qualifications and continuous professional development on curriculum delivery.
- To explore the role of community and parental involvement in curriculum implementation in rural Chasefu District.
- To identify challenges affecting commerce curriculum implementation in rural District of Chasefu.
- Identify factors that influence the effective implementation of the curriculum in commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasefu district.
- Analyse the views of various stakeholders regarding the challenges associated with curriculum implementation in commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasefu District.
- Establish the effective strategies to ameliorate curriculum implementation in commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasefu District.
- To recommend strategies for improving curriculum execution in rural commerce classrooms of Chasefu District.

Research Questions of the study

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the status quo of the teaching and learning resources for commerce in selected rural schools in Chasefu District?
2. How do teacher qualifications affect commerce curriculum implementation?
3. How does community participation influence implementation in selected schools of Chasefu District?
4. What are the key challenges faced by commerce teachers in selected rural schools in Chasefu District?
5. What were the various factors that influence the effective implementation of the curriculum in commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasefu District?
6. What specific challenges did stakeholders identify in the implementation of the curriculum in commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasefu District?
7. What were the effective strategies to ameliorate curriculum implementation in commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasefu District?
8. What strategies can ameliorate curriculum implementation in selected schools in Chasefu District?

Significance of the study

This comprehensive study will definitely support policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in improving curriculum practices in rural areas. It will highlight key areas for investment and intervention to ensure effective commerce education delivery.

In addition, the findings of the study will provide evidence-based insights to the Ministry of Education and curriculum developers at the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) in Zambia. Understanding the specific factors affecting curriculum implementation in rural district of Chasefu can facilitate in tailoring policies that address contextual challenges and promote equitable delivery of the commerce curriculum across rural and semi-urban districts in Zambia. By identifying teacher-related and school-related factors that hinder or promote effective curriculum implementation, the study will facilitate school administrators and education officers



to design targeted interventions such as in-service training, mentorship, and provision of adequate teaching and learning materials. This can directly ameliorate the quality of commerce education and student outcomes in the rural district. The study highlights the challenges faced by commerce teachers, including lack of resources, inadequate training, or poor motivation.

Addressing these issues will facilitate ameliorate teacher satisfaction and performance, leading to more effective curriculum delivery in rural districts of Zambia. An effectively implemented commerce curriculum can facilitate students acquire intrinsic knowledge and entrepreneurial acumens. The study will provide guidance on how schools can better support learners, especially in rural settings, to achieve academic success and be prepared for future careers in business and trade. This research will add to the existing body of knowledge on curriculum implementation, especially in the Zambian context. It will provide a case study that future researchers, educators, and policymakers can reference when exploring curriculum issues in commerce or other subjects in rural education settings.

Formulation of the study

The formation of this study is grounded in observed challenges and concerns regarding the teaching and learning of Commerce in rural secondary schools. Over time, stakeholders such as teachers, learners, school administrators and education officers have raised concerns about poor learner performance, limited practical application of Commerce concepts, and difficulties in syllabus coverage in rural schools.

These challenges appear to stem from a combination of factors, including inadequate instructional resources, limited teacher preparedness, weak administrative support, and unfavourable learning environments. In addition, rural learners often have limited exposure to business activities, financial institutions, and commercial enterprises, which are intrinsic for contextualising Commerce concepts and making learning meaningful.

The implementation of the curriculum in Commercial subjects in secondary schools is crucial for equipping students with the necessary knowledge, acumens, and competencies required in the business world today. However, various factors can hinder effective curriculum implementation, affecting the quality of education. This study aims to investigate the factors influencing curriculum implementation in Commerce in selected secondary schools in Chasesfu District. The study was conducted in selected secondary schools (Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasesfu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in Chasesfu District, examining factors, challenges and interventions influencing curriculum implementation in Commerce.

Scope of the study

The study was conducted in selected rural secondary schools, that is Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasesfu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School (the research will focus on these selected schools which offers Commerce Curriculum pathway), within a specified rural region of Chasesfu District, ensuring a focus on schools that face similar experiences regarding



implementation of Commerce curriculum pathway. The focus is on Commerce discipline and subject teachers, including a sample of learners and Head of Departments. Independent and dependent variables were the factors and curriculum implementation in commerce respectively.

Theoretical framework of the study

The study was underpinned by the Lewin's Change Theory as expressed by Cummings and Worley (2014) identified by Sakala, (2025). In general, the Change Theory was also known as the Unfreezing-Change-Refreezing Theory. It was so because the theory was divided into three stages- Unfreezing, Change, and Refreezing.

According to this theory, the Unfreezing stage, whose main objective was to create awareness and readiness for change was the first stage in the process of Curriculum implementation in a learning institution. It involved a number of undertakings among which were identifying the need for change, building awareness, addressing Resistance and creating a Sense of Urgency.

In the Unfreezing stage, an assessment was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the current curriculum. Besides that, data was gathered from the concerned stakeholders (such as teachers, administrators, learners and parents) to highlight areas that need to be ameliorated. It was important to note at this stage that any change comes with some form of resistance. With this at hand, resistance is addressed, by having an open dialogue to address concerns and misconceptions regarding the curriculum to be embraced. Because of the need to have a new curriculum, a sense of urgency was then put forth to the stakeholders, by sharing among other issues some success stories from institutions (schools) that have successfully implemented the target curriculum.

Change was the second stage in curriculum implementation. Its main objective as held by Cummings and Worley (2014) was to implement the new curriculum and facilitate the transition. It involves development of a clear plan of action by outlining timeliness and responsibilities; providing training and resources necessary through professional development sessions to equip teachers with the necessary acumen to effectively deliver the new curriculum. The stage also ensures access to readily available resources in the form of teaching materials and various technologies that can support the implementation of the new curriculum; collaboration is also a stage under change in curriculum implementation. It involves teachers sharing among themselves some experiences, strategies and challenges after which they establish networks to facilitate each other deliver well in the process of the transition. Finally, the change stage is concluded by the progress of monitoring aspect which involves regular check-ins so as to measure the effectiveness of the new curriculum from the teachers and the learners.

Solidification of the changes with the aim of integrating them into the new curriculum is the main objective of refreezing stage. This involves among others recognition of the positives scored in the new curriculum so as to foster continued adherence. The new curriculum is then embedded into the school policies and practices so that it becomes permanently part of the school's educational framework.



In line with Lewin's Change Theory, one can say that, the three stages reflect the curriculum implementation process in an acceptable societal context. As indicated by Byon (2006), they reflect fundamental values and social norms of curriculum implementation. In this logic therefore, one can say that Lewin's Change theory reveals a lot of its importance to the study of factors influencing curriculum implementation in schools. It is so in that in its tenets, it portrays the information about the social interactions that various stakeholders have in the process of curriculum implementation in schools. In addition, the theoretical model not only facilitates the transition to a new curriculum but also fosters a supportive environment that encourages collaboration and continuous improvement eventually leading to enhanced educational outcomes for the learners. Since various stakeholder interact with each other at every stage of curriculum implementation, it is presumed that the same happens during curriculum implementation in various schools of rural Chusefu district. As such, this study will employ the Change Theory to reveal the factors influencing curriculum implementation in commerce in four selected schools of Chusefu district. This is so in that it will also facilitate in the analysis of qualitative data.

Definition of key terms

In any study, this section is very important as it makes the reader understand one's work better. Kasonde and Ng'andu (2014) called the section as operational definition of terms. She says these were the terms used in the study that are extraordinary or not widely understood by everybody. According to Blessings and Chakrabarti (2009), the definition of terms section provides a vivid meaning of synonymic terms used in a particular study. Marczyk et al (2005) comment that the definition of terms section makes the reader to use the words in a particular report the way they have been defined and used by the writer or author. The following key concepts in the study were used as defined below:

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Factors- Circumstances, facts or influences that contributes to a result.

Influence - To make it possible for something to happen.

Implementation- the process of putting something into effect.

Curriculum- expectations for what will be taught and what students will do in a course of study.

School- an institution for educating children.

Curriculum Education: Application of structured educational plans in teaching and learning.

Summary of the chapter

In summary, although several curriculum reforms have been introduced to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of Commerce, there is limited empirical evidence on how these reforms are implemented in rural secondary schools like Chusefu and what specific factors influence their success or failure. Without such evidence, interventions aimed at improving Commerce curriculum delivery may remain ineffective. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the factors affecting curriculum implementation in rural secondary schools.



This chapter has provided background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, specific research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, and limitations of the study and definition of terms. The next chapter will present literature review of the study.

II. Literature Review

Introduction

The chapter of literature review highlights the writing of the past studies identified with the researcher's range of study. Literature review, attempts to determine what other scholars have found out about the research problem in order to gather information relevant to the research at hand. The review examines existing literature on the factors influencing curriculum implementation in selected schools, highlighting challenges and strategies to overcome challenges for improvement in rural secondary schools. It also provides a conclusion of the literature and revealing the gaps identified during the review.

Factors influencing curriculum implementation

In line with factors influencing curriculum implementation, Guskey (2003) stresses teacher training and professional development as one of the factors. In Guskey's study it is explicitly stated that ongoing professional development is crucial for effective curriculum implementation. By this, what is meant is that teachers are supposed to undergo training not only in content but also pedagogical techniques in order to effectively deliver the curriculum. From a comprehensive look at Guskey (2003), one can say that the author took a narrow view which is just a part of the topic at hand (factors influencing curriculum implementation) and therefore the justification of the present study.

A study by Jantzi (2006) amplifies the role of the school leadership in driving curriculum changes. The study holds that effective leaders engender a supportive environment for teachers and facilitates togetherness in the form of collaborative practices. This is to mean that the administration is the intersection of all activities in line with curriculum implementation in school. In addition, the study also talks about the relevance of the curriculum design. It stipulates that curriculum that are relevant to students' lives and interests are more likely to be implemented successfully.

The present study also examines the role of school leadership in influencing curriculum implementation. However, it is important to mention that the examination of the factors is not general, it is narrowed down specifically to commerce in schools of rural Chasefu district in Zambia.

A study by Fullan (2007) discusses how availability of resources such as textbooks, favourable technology and materials positively affects the curriculum implementation process. The study argues that schools that have adequate and readily available resources tend to find it easy to implement the curriculum. On the other hand, research by Cohen and Hill (2001) highly supports policy frameworks as being a very important factor where curriculum implementation is concerned. The study exemplifies how state and district policies can either support or hinder curriculum implementation. According



to this study, policies that align with school goals and provide clear guidelines tend to facilitate better implementation.

Like Fullan (2007) and; Cohen and Hill (2001) the present study will endeavour to analyse how the factors resource availability and policy frameworks among others influence the curriculum implementation in commerce pathway in Chasefu district, Eastern province of Zambia.

Challenges associated with curriculum implementation

In line with challenges associated with curriculum implementation, a number of studies are cited below.

In a study on the role of teacher training in curriculum implementation, Smith et al (2020), highlights that inadequate teacher training leads to poor understanding and execution of the curriculum. According to this study, teachers often feel unprepared to implement the curriculum effectively. This leads to failure because teachers who are the main executors have failed to carry out their duties effectively. In addition, Lee and Kim (2021) argue by stressing the importance of stakeholder involvement in curriculum implementation. After carrying out a study, their finding was that successful and effective curriculum implementation requires input from various stakeholders including among others teachers, parents and the community. Lack of engagement of these among other important stake holders leads to resistance, misunderstanding and ultimately failure to effectively implement the curriculum.

It is argued by Partel (2022) that the absence of administrative support in the process of curriculum implementation is one of the factors that leads to failure in totality. This is so because the administration is charged with the responsibility of playing a pivotal role in the smooth running of institutional affairs, which include among others resources provision. Effective as stated by Partel (2022) is crucial for curriculum implementation as high levels of consistency and moral among teachers are sustained. In his study “culturally responsive curriculum: challenges and opportunities”, Torres (2023) clarifies that for the curriculum to be implemented, it must be very consistent with the cultural values of the community from which the learners come. This is so because it becomes very easy to embrace and implement such a curriculum as its contents are more like a daily practice in the learners’ home environment. The further says that curricula that fail to reflect the cultural background of the students, lead to disengagement and ineffective learning experiences on the part of the learners.

The literature highlights on the teaching and learning Materials in schools that affect the Implementation of curriculum of commerce. In a study conducted by Kombe and Mwanza (2019) on the 2014 Zambian Revised education Policy in secondary Schools, where school-based management revealed that materials which were sent were not enough against the learners. This according to the participants teaching with limited materials was a challenge as teachers were anticipated to teach and write everything on the board. The study was directly related to current study on the school-based management’s views on the inadequate teaching and learning materials that affect implementation of commerce curriculum.



Misalignment of educational policies and the curriculum is another factor as identified by Green (2021) that leads to failure of effective curriculum implementation. In a study of the impact of educational policy on curriculum implementation, Green (2021) espouses that misalignment between educational policies and curriculum goals engenders confusion and hinders effective curriculum implementation. This is to mean that there must be clear communication in terms of policy changes as the two are very much in tandem.

In line with challenges influencing curriculum implementation, Guskey (2003) stresses lack of teacher training and continuous professional development greatly hinder implementation of commerce curriculum. In Guskey's study it is explicitly stated that ongoing professional development is crucial for effective curriculum implementation. By this, what is meant is that teachers are supposed to undergo training not only in content but also pedagogical techniques in order to effectively deliver the curriculum. From a comprehensive look at Guskey (2003), one can say that the author took a narrow view which is just a part of the topic at hand (factors influencing curriculum implementation) and therefore the justification of the present study.

Just like the literature reviewed, the present study will also examine the challenges associated with curriculum implementation. However, the only difference is that the focus of the present study is not the general perspective. Rather, it is the context of challenges associated with the implementation of business curriculum in Chasefu District, Eastern Province of Zambia.

Teacher training is a critical component in the effective implementation of any curriculum. However, research has consistently revealed that inadequate teacher training can hinder the successful execution of educational programs, particularly in subjects like commerce (Darling-Hammond, 2000). A study conducted in South Africa by Chisholm and Mulkeen (2007) found that many teachers lacked the necessary acumens and knowledge to effectively teach commerce curriculum, resulting in poor student outcomes at final year examination.

Similarly, in the United States, research has revealed that teachers who receive inadequate training in subject-specific content and pedagogy struggle to implement curriculum reforms effectively (Garet et al., 2001). This is a particular concern in commerce education, where teachers need to stay up-to-date with constantly evolving business practices and technologies across the broad.

In Asia, a study in Malaysia by Wong and Wong (2011) found that teachers' lack of content knowledge and pedagogical acumens in Commerce Education led to a focus on rote memorization rather than critical thinking and problem-solving. This highlights the need for ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' capacity to deliver high-quality Commerce Education.

In Australia, research that was done by Goos and Bennison (2008) emphasized the importance of teacher professional learning communities in supporting the implementation of new curricula. However, they noted that these communities require adequate resourcing and support to be effective.



A global survey of teacher education programs by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (2019) highlighted the need for more emphasis on subject-specific pedagogical training, particularly in subjects like commerce. The report noted that teachers who receive this type of training are more likely to implement curriculum reforms effectively.

Solutions to the challenges in curriculum implementation

The effective implementation of commerce curricula in educational institutions is often hindered by challenges related to the allocation of resources. These challenges can include inadequate funding, insufficient infrastructure, lack of technological resources, and limited access to relevant materials. Addressing these issues is crucial for ensuring that students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for the demands of the business world. This literature review explores various solutions proposed by researchers to overcome these challenges.

A number of studies discuss solutions to the challenges in curriculum implementation. Among them are Fullan (2007), Darling-Hammond (2010), Elmore (2004), Tomlinson (2001), Wiggins and McTighe (2005), and Pushor (2015).

In his study *Leading in a culture of change*, Fullan (2007) stresses the importance of leadership in curriculum implementation. The study explicitly suggests that effective change in curriculum requires collaboration among the stakeholders. In line with this point, the study advocates for building a culture that supports continuous learning and adaptation. This is to mean that leadership in a learning institution must be at the helm of uniting the workforce so that oneness is enhanced for the ubiquitous goal. Additionally, Darling-Hammond's (2007) work discusses the need for comprehensive teacher training and professional development. As stated by this study teacher training is an intrinsic component of effective curriculum implementation. The study highlights the role of equity and equality in ensuring that all learners have access to quality education. As the study holds, it is deemed necessary that teachers treat all learners as being beneficiaries of the target curriculum. By so doing curriculum implementation challenges would be addressed.

Elmore's (2004) work discusses how schools can effectively implement curriculum reforms by focusing on the interactions between policy, practice and performance. The study advocates for developing professional communities among educators so that the best practices are shared. On the other hand, it is well understood from Tomlinson (2001) in whose work a differentiated classroom as suggested is a solution to challenges in curriculum implementation. As stated by this study, differentiation in the classroom environment is a key strategy in curriculum implementation. The study further provides practical solutions for adapting the curriculum to meet diverse learner needs, emphasizing the importance of understanding individual learners in terms of their profiles of learning.

Wiggins and McTighe (2005) did a study entitled *Understanding by Design*. In their study, they proposed a framework for curriculum design that emphasizes backward planning. Their study argues that starting with desired outcomes can facilitate educators engender more effective curricula that align with assessment and instruction. According



to this study, it is important to understand what the local population desires before designing the curriculum as that engenders hunger to learn from the learners who know that the curriculum favours them and that they learn what they want.

In an educational endeavour as Pushor (2015) puts it, parental engagement is said to be a factor that provides a pathway to learner success. The study emphasizes the role of parent and community engagement in the curriculum implementation process. The main argument is that involving families in education can enhance student learning and support curricula goals. It is so because parents are said to be teachers at home who should not be side-lined in the curriculum implementation process.

Adequate funding is intrinsic for the successful implementation of commerce curricula. According to a study by Odden (2009), strategic investment in educational resources can significantly enhance the quality of instruction and student outcomes. Institutions should prioritize budget allocations that support the development of commerce programs, including investments in technology, infrastructure, and professional development for teachers. In other words, the availability and equitable distribution of financial resources are critical. Rural schools selected often face budget constraints, limiting their ability to procure necessary textbooks, software and other instructional materials. Adequate infrastructure, including a well-equipped classroom, and reliable internet connectivity and learning in commerce.

Additionally, the integration of technology in commerce education can mitigate resource constraints by providing access to a wealth of digital content and tools. As noted by Kozma (2008), technology can enhance learning experiences and make education more accessible. Institutions can adopt e-learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital libraries to supplement traditional teaching methods and ensure that students have access to current and relevant materials. Additionally, access to technology, including computers, the internet, and relevant software, is increasingly important for commerce education. Efforts should be made to bridge the digital gap and provide rural schools with the adequate necessary technological resources. Both teachers and students need to be digitally literate to effectively use technology in the classroom. Training programs and resources should be provided to enhance digital literacy skills in line with commerce curriculum.

Investing in the professional development of teachers is crucial for effective curriculum implementation. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), ongoing professional development ensures that educators are equipped with the latest knowledge and teaching strategies, which can enhance the quality of commerce education. Institutions should allocate resources to support teachers in attending workshops, conferences, and further education opportunities.

Lastly though not the least, there is a need to leverage CDF for commerce infrastructure. Head Teachers must be trained to specifically lobby Constituency Development Funds for Commerce resource rooms and textbooks. In addition, there is a need to establish commerce industry advisory boards composed of local business leaders and entrepreneurs. These boards can provide guidance on curriculum development, internship opportunities and job placement for the aftermath.



The present study, like the above studies, analyses the process of curriculum implementation in order to establish the solutions to the challenges associated with curriculum implementation in schools of rural Chasefu district in Eastern province of Zambia.

Research Gap

Despite the growing body of research on factors influencing curriculum implementation, there remains a significant knowledge gap regarding the specific challenges and opportunities faced by schools in rural and resource-constrained districts like Chasefu in Zambia. While existing studies have identified general factors such as teacher training, resource availability, and institutional support, there was limited understanding of how these factors interact and influence curriculum implementation in commerce education within the unique socio-economic and cultural context of Chasefu District.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the lived experiences of teachers, students, and administrators in Chasefu District, with a focus on identifying context-specific factors that facilitate or hinder the effective implementation of the commerce curriculum. By shedding light on these dynamics, this research seeks to inform targeted interventions and support strategies that can enhance the quality of commerce education in similar rural and resource-constrained settings.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented a review of the relevant available literature related to factors, challenges and solution to challenges for managing curriculum change, the roles of school management team and the challenges they experience in the implementation of the curriculum. The next chapter elucidates the research approach, design and methodology used in this study.

III. Research Methodology

Introduction

The methodological elements to be used which were acute to the process to produce data, were research design, sample procedure, sample size, sampling area and sources of data method of data. In addition, collection tools of data, collection tools for data analysis, a report of data analysis including variables used in the study limitations of the study and difficulties faced by the researcher are of importance in the study.

Research design of the study

The research design describes the research study conducted in order to address the research problem. It provided a blue print or a plan of how the research was conducted by describing the research sites, how the subjects were to be selected, data collection procedures with the purpose of anticipating the decisions made to maximise reliability and credibility of the findings. However, descriptive case study design was selected in order to broadly explore and understand practices and experiences factors influencing, using more of qualitative research approach to collect data. Qualitative research approach allowed researchers to access the experiences and viewpoints of the research participants.



Sampling Area

The study was conducted in four selected secondary schools in Chasesfu District namely, Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasesfu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School. The locations of these schools were classified into two locations to avoid biasness. The researcher selected schools from the rural parts of Chasesfu district. The researcher undertook such a deliberation of sampling from rural settings in existence so that the findings were a representation of all schools in Chasesfu District that has the commerce pathway. However, the real names of the respondents were concealed in the study for confidentiality purposes.

Study Population

The study population was represented by pupils pursuing the Commerce Oriented Career Pathway, Commerce Teachers and the Heads of Departments (HOD) for Business Studies Departments from Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasesfu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School. It is important to note here that about (7) Secondary Schools out of the 9 established secondary schools in Chasesfu District are currently taking Commerce and Principles of Accounts pathway as the subjects are jointly taught concurrently as per curriculum demands. However, this Research Report focused on four selected schools as the findings would have proved the same if the research was done on all the 7 secondary schools taking Commerce and Principles of Accounts pathway since the schools exist within the same catchment area.

The study comprised of a population of 240 individuals (that is, 224 Grade 12 pupils taking Commerce, twelve (12) Business Studies Teachers and four (4) Heads of Departments) from the four (4) selected Secondary Schools in Chasesfu District. The Grade 12 pupils were the target population because they have a greater experience in the learning of Commerce Subject and they can easily identify the challenges encountered in the course of learning of Commerce subject than any other.

Sampling procedure

Sampling Procedure was a technique the researcher used to sample participants for the study. In qualitative research study, purposive sampling was much convenient as one of the non-probability sampling procedures. In purposive sampling the sample was 'hand-picked' for the study, because the researcher already knew something about the specific participants that are likely to produce the most valuable data (Chiyeka, 2019:14). In short, the researcher selected the sample with a specific purpose in mind. In addition, the researcher used a two-stage cluster sampling in which the entire schools in Chasesfu District were divided into zones as units. Later simple random sampling technique was used to select one unit out of seven zones. According to Kombo and Tromp, (2006:79) simple random sampling was a procedure in which all the individuals in the defined population had an equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample. This technique was found to be suitable because it gave a desired representation of 50% representation of participants in the study.



Sample size

According to Creswell, (2012:142), a sample size, was a subgroup of the population that the researcher planned to study for generalising about the target population. In an ideal situation, researcher selected a sample of individuals who were representative of the entire population. In that case, the sample size of study consisted of the four (4) Head of Departments coded 1-4 from selected schools. There were also twelve subject business studies teachers from four schools, which are coded 1-12, two hundred twenty-four (224) learners coded with numbers 1-224, bringing the total sample to two hundred forty (240) participants. For the purpose of this study, the researcher chose participants who were responsible for teaching commercial subjects.

Sources of Data

This study required primary data from the sample population after answering the interview and questionnaires guide.

Method of Data Collection

In order to gather as much information as possible on the factors influencing implementation of curriculum in commerce in selected secondary schools (Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School), two different data collection methods were used in the study. The study involved interviews and questionnaire guide. The use of more than one method of data collection was aimed at strengthening the validity of the data that will be collected, (Ndeleki, 2015).

Tools of Data Collection

Tools of data collection, which the researcher used to gather primary data and secondary data from the sources identified for the study were questionnaires and interview guide.

Questionnaire Guide

The questionnaire guide was preferred because as Creswell, (2012) puts it, it provided respondents freedom to express their views or opinions and to make suggestions. The questionnaires were permitted at greater depth of responses. According to Phiri (2019), questionnaires was used in the study to obtain important information about the target population as each item was to address a specific research objective, question or hypothesis of the study.

Interview Guide

The main purpose of an interview was to obtain information from the respondents and to understand phenomena within the social context. The social context was the school organization or a certain unit within an institution such as the school. In this study, the main purpose was to understand and get insight into the factors that are experienced by the school towards the factors influencing implementation of curriculum in commerce. The researcher used structured interviews using an interview guide. Each interviewee had the same set of questions.



Tools for Data Analysis

The study used qualitative data analysis to elucidate and analyse data. As regards qualitative data analysis Kombo and Tromp (2006) argue that, 'The responses were categorised into various classes which were called categorical themes,' and adds that, 'in qualitative research, data was thematically analysed. Braun and Clarke (2006) in dissertation conducted by Christine, (2017:33), define thematic analysis as a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data. Themes referred to topics or major subjects that come up in the discussions. This form of analysis categorises related topics.'

The qualitative data was analysed through the identification of ubiquitous themes and sub-themes from the respondents' description and presentation of their experiences. Later, conclusions will be reached, and analysed with reference to research questions and drastically reduce the researchers' bias due to the fact that phenomenon was interpreted from point of view of respondents.

Limitation of the Study

Limitations of the study were characteristics of qualitative design or methodology which impacted or influenced the normal flow of the study which restricted the conclusion of the study (Meredith et al 2003) in the study carried out by Christine, (2017:7). In that case, the potential limitations or weaknesses identified for the study included a small sample size, which reduced generalisation, and limited time spent in the field (Creswell, 2014). Since the research, confined to a case of four secondary schools in Chasefu, findings may not be generalised to all the management in secondary schools in Zambia. Within the study's data collection techniques, possible limitations included participants' potentially inaccurate responses to the questionnaire and interviews as well as potential reflexivity in seeking to provide responses that would be acceptable to the interviewer (Creswell, 2014).

Anticipated Difficulty

There were challenges when it comes to collection of data, as most of the subject teachers at the time, were committed with examination preparation, others with their studies. Study site was an animal infested area making it difficult to travel from one rural school to another. Furthermore, financial constraints, was another anticipated problem as that required finances to carry out the research exercise.

Ethical Consideration of the Study

According to Resnik (2012), ethic/morals were norms that distinguished between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. (Ibid) adds that, these were methods, procedures or perspectives for deciding how to act in a particular event. Before the commencement of the data collection processes, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the graduate school and the Head Teachers of schools from Chasefu District in Eastern Province to seek for a research permit. The researcher also arranged formal appointments with the respondents to establish rapport and to discuss the relevance of the study. However, only the willing respondents were involved. The researcher ensured that any personal details that reveal their identity and cultural values was observed with respect since the school had a variety of cultures from diverse ethnic groups.



Equally, religious values were utmost given respect because the school has a mixture of both Christians and Muslims. All the respondents were assured that the information gathered was used for academic purposes only, and nothing else. The respondents were fully cognizant of the study to enhance full cooperation and participation. Finally, participants were made to understand that they were extricate to answer the research instrument in their own language, which they understood better. They were not forced to answer using English or any other language that is foreign to them.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the research methodology used in the study. It included a brief description of the study area; it also covered the research design, target population, study sample, sampling procedures, research instruments, processes and analysis of both primary and secondary data. The next chapter is a presentation of the finding.

IV. Data Presentation

OVERVIEW

The preceding chapter discussed the Research Methodology. It looked at the possible approaches undertook to carry out the study. Therefore, the main purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the research and to interpret and analyse the data collected. It reports and discusses results from the questions contained in the questionnaire. The results were based on the 240 participants broken down into 224 Grade 12 Pupils taking Commerce, twelve (12) Business Studies Teachers and 4 Heads of Departments (HODs) in Chasesfu District.

Presentation of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The data collection tools were administered over a period of 1 week to 4 Secondary Schools in Chasesfu District. For the Grade 12 pupils it focused on variables such as gender. For the Teachers and Heads of Departments it focused on the variables such, gender, highest qualification and experience in service. The discussion therefore gives an overview of demographic characteristics of respondents as sought in the questionnaire.

Learners by Genders from the Four Selected Schools

The Research Population comprised of two hundred twenty-four (224) Grade 12 pupils taking Commerce, from 4 Secondary Schools (Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasesfu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in Chasesfu District. Emusa Day Secondary School had thirty-three (33) learners representing fifteen (15%) percent, Chasesfu Day Secondary School had eighty-two (82) representing thirty-seven (37%) percent, Lupamazi Day Secondary School had fifty-four learners representing twenty-four (24%) percent and Hoya Day Secondary School had fifty-five representing twenty-five (25%) percent.

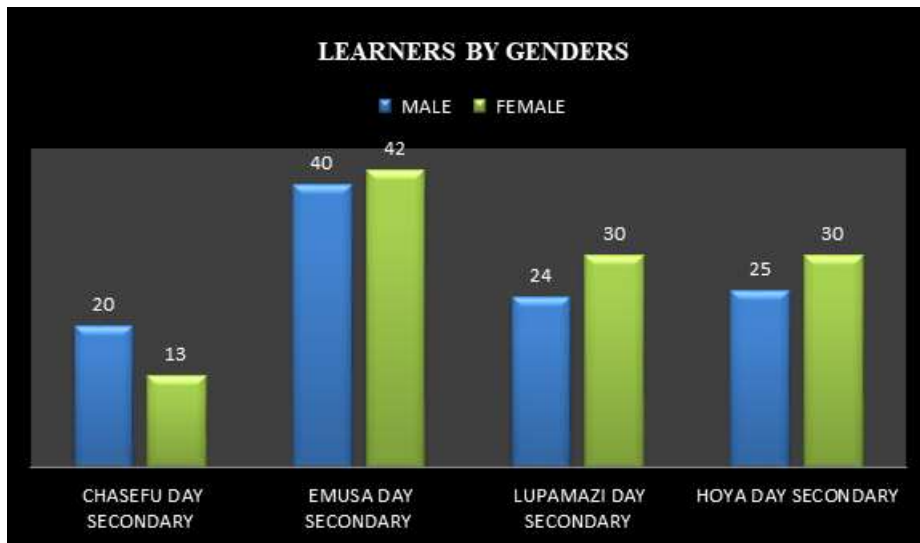


Figure 1: Learners by Gender
 Source: Field Data 2025

Heads of Department (HODs)

Working experience for the HODs was crucial because they understand the system and structures of the schools and they also supervise and monitor the teachers and pupils in the teaching and learning process. They have an understanding of the teachers and learner's experiences and challenges in the implementation of commerce. It is for this reason that the respondents were requested to indicate their period of service.

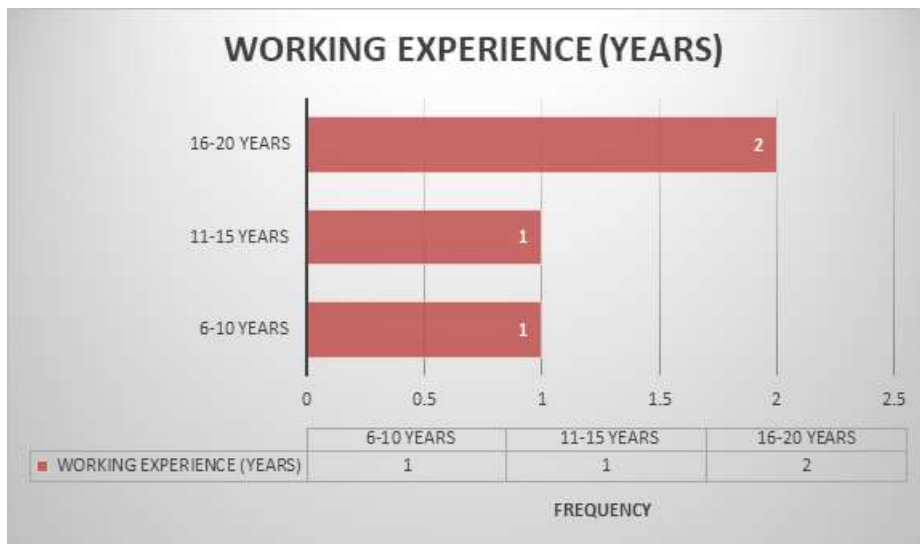


Figure 2: Working Experiences
 Source: Field Data (2025)



Working experiences of the Respondents – Business Studies Oriented HODs

Figure 12 above reveals the distribution of the working experience of HODs. The analysis indicates that 1 HOD had work experience between 6 – 10 years representing 25%. One (1) HOD had work experience of 11-15 years representing twenty five percent (25%) and two 2 HODs had work experience between 16 – 20 years representing (50%) fifty percent.

This revealed that high number of the respondents had spent more than 10 years in service an indication that majority of the questionnaires were completed by appropriate, experienced and knowledgeable respondents.

Highest qualification of Respondents - Business Studies Oriented Teachers

The study sought to understand the educational levels of the respondents in order to ascertain the reliability of the responses they give.

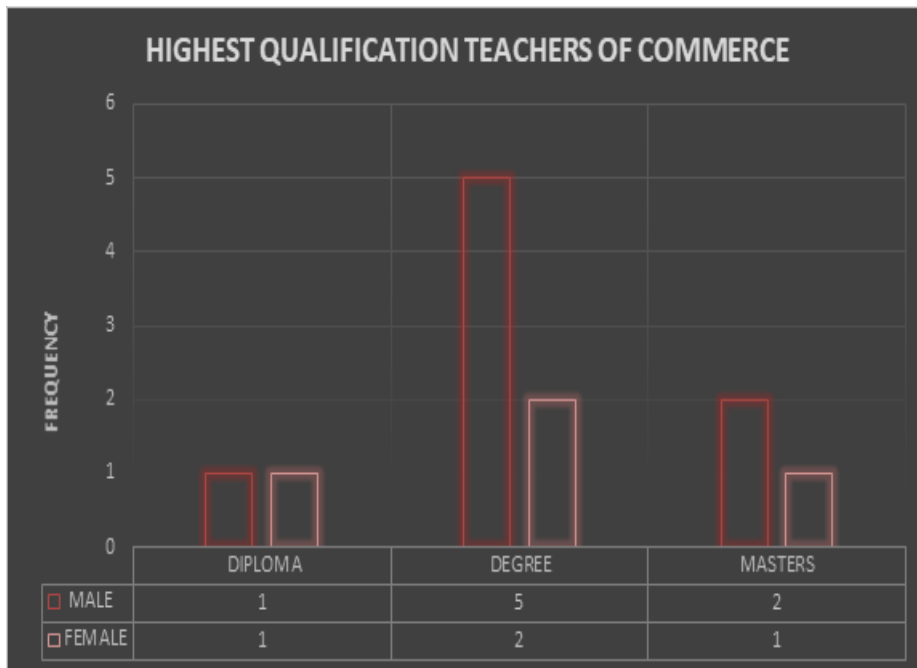


Figure 3: Highest Qualification

Source: field data 2025

Of the 12 Business Studies Teacher, two (2) have a Diploma as their highest qualification representing a 16% Seven (7) Business Studies Teachers at the 4 Secondary Schools have Bachelors’ Degree as their highest professional qualification representing fifty 58%) percent and three have master’s degree representing thirty (36%) percent.

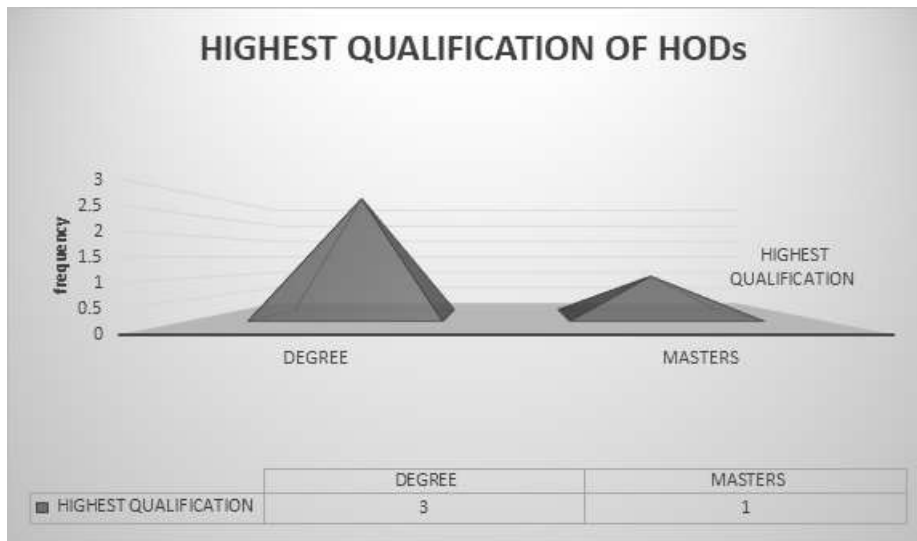


Figure 4: Qualifications of Head of Department (HODs)

Source: Field Data

One (1) HOD has a Masters' Degree whereas 3 HODs have Bachelors' Degree as their highest professional qualification representing twenty-five (25%) percent and seventy-five (75%) percent respectively.

In regards to educational qualifications, figures above indicated that the respondents possessed adequate qualifications critical for the provision of reliable information sought through questionnaires. The results implied that the majority of teachers who provided data for the study held First Degrees and 1 HOD held a Masters' Degree, thus according to the study, there was assurance that objective responses were given to the questions.

Narrative Presentation of the Research Findings

This section aims to present and discuss the findings of the research from the responses of the respondents. Following the gaps that were identified in the literature review, research objectives and questions were formulated to fill in the gaps of knowledge. From the gaps identified in the study, the research focused on the following gaps.

Studies on the factors that influence the effective implementation of the curriculum in commerce in selected secondary schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in Chasefu were conducted in rural settings. Therefore, this study aimed at investigating the experiences of the teachers and the learners in teaching and learning of Commerce. This was done by analysing the views of various stakeholders regarding the challenges associated with curriculum implementation in commerce in selected secondary schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in Chasefu District. The third gap was to establish the effective strategies to ameliorate curriculum implementation in commerce in selected secondary schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary



School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in Chasefu District.

Theme 1: Factors that influence the effective curriculum implementation in commerce

The raw data presentation for the study to explore the factors influencing the effective implementation of the Commerce curriculum in secondary schools. The findings were based on qualitative data collected through a questionnaire guide administered to 12 Commerce teachers in selected Secondary Schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) of Chasefu District.

Training and expertise of teachers

The participants were asked a question related Training and Expertise of teachers of commerce reflecting on the premised of teacher competence. Qualitative data was collected from twelve (12) respondents from varying selected secondary schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School).

Findings from teachers using questionnaire guide

Questionnaire responses were as follows from the participants coded as Teacher 9 on Training and expertise and explained that, the importance of regular training to stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies was evident factor for teaching and learning commerce. Further teachers from Emusa Day Secondary School highlighted the need for subject-specific training to enhance their expertise in Commerce. From the findings, it was clear that most teachers believe that regular training was intrinsic for effective teaching, and need for subject-specific training for effective implementation of commerce curriculum. It revealed that teacher training was a key factor influencing effective curriculum implementation in commerce in the selected secondary school offering Commerce oriented curriculum pathway.

Findings from Head of Department (HOD)

Further, Head of Departments from selected schools, were asked question related to need of training for implementing the Commerce curriculum. Almost all the Head of Departments raised concern over training to support and implement the commerce curriculum. Most of the participants elucidated that these teaching methodologies engage learners at every stage of the lesson and they encourage active participation. In light of that, of the HODs from selected secondary school had this to say,

‘The newly recruited teachers especially from private colleges/universities are half-baked teachers. They do not have enough subject content and methodology to effectively implement commerce curriculum. In view of that teacher training is truly a factor in the implementation of commerce curriculum.’

Findings revealed that teacher training was a factor to ensure use of appropriate and acceptable teaching methodologies in order to ameliorate learner performance. It was further, observed that some of the training colleges and universities provided ineffective



teaching methodologies to effectively implement curriculum in commerce, hence the need for teacher training.

Resource Factors

The study collected qualitative raw data using questionnaire guide on the availability of teaching and learning materials related to effective implementation of commerce. The use of questionnaire guide was to establish information on the resource factors contributing to smooth curriculum implementation in commerce.

Findings from teachers of commerce

In response teachers revealed that teaching and learning materials were a key factor in the curriculum implementation in commerce. The findings indicate that learners were sharing one book against all learners in class of 40 to up to 70/80. Teacher coded 10 reported that,

‘Textbooks and other teaching/learning resources are factors that can contribute highly to effective curriculum implantation in commerce. In addition, digital resources are factors to enhance effective implantation of commerce education.’

From the findings, it clearly indicated that teaching and learning materials were factors influencing in the effective curriculum implementation of commerce. The majority of teachers report resources as a major factor, with some suggesting digital resources to equip learners with information communication technology (ICT).

Instructional leadership factor

The qualitative data was collected using a questionnaire guide from respondents 9, 10 and 12 from Hoya Day Secondary School. The main aim of using the guide was to obtain in-depth information about the instructional leadership factor influencing management of curriculum implementation of commerce.

Findings from HODs

The question the HODs were asked was related to instructional leadership in the effective curriculum implementation in Commerce. Most of the HODs elucidated that instructional responsibilities and teaching duties was a factor to effective curriculum implementation in commerce. Teachers need to be guided in the implementation of curriculum in commerce.

Findings revealed that instructional leadership was a recipe influencing effective implementation of commerce curriculum in selected secondary schools. Instructional leadership were gatekeepers to guide teachers in the effective curriculum implementation in commerce.

Learner motivation factor

The objective for qualitative data collection of the study was to assess the level of motivation towards the effective learning of commerce in selected Secondary Schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) of Chasefu District. This was done in order to determine whether motivation was indeed a factor for the learners in the implementation of commerce curriculum.



Findings from HODs

Qualitative data was collected from HODs from selected secondary schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) in which many of them admitted that learners' motivation in the execution of a curriculum was without doubt very important factor influencing learning and teaching of commerce. Learners from selected secondary schools need to be motivated to have been given Commerce oriented curriculum pathway to adequately equip them with wholesome knowledge and acumens of business world.

Findings from the HODs indicated that learners' motivation was identified as a factor in the effective curriculum implementation in commerce. Results clearly revealed that learners' motivation affected the effective curriculum implementation in commerce. This implies that more needs to be done to ensure that the level of motivation in the learning and teaching of Commerce in the implementation of curriculum was well observed.

Theme 2: Challenges in Implementing Commerce Curriculum

The qualitative data applied used questionnaire guide. The main aim of using the questionnaire guide was to obtain in-depth information about the challenges in managing curriculum implementation in commerce in selected Secondary Schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) of Chasefu District.

Curriculum content/Load

This study explores questionnaire guide to collect qualitative data on the curriculum content/load challenges related to curriculum implementation in commerce subject in secondary schools. The findings were based on qualitative data collected through questionnaire guide administered to Commerce learners.

Findings from learners

There were a number of issues raised by learners pertaining to the curriculum implementation related challenges. From qualitative data collected, there was a mention of curriculum loads that commerce curriculum was too lengthy especially 2013 curriculum framework. This was evident in self-explanations by learners themselves. The learner coded as 1 had this to say;

'There was too much content to cover, making it hard to understand. We take too long to finish the syllabus. Some learners mentioned that the Commerce notes that are given to us are very bulk and they would like it if the teachers summarized the notes.'

Results revealed that outline of curriculum content for commerce study was a challenging factor influencing effective curriculum implementation. It was noted that bulk course outline and complexity of commerce was an obstacle to effective execution of commerce curriculum.



Resource-Related Challenges

The research carried out qualitative data collection using questionnaire guide on the availability of teaching and learning materials related to commerce subject. The purpose of using question was to obtain information in-depth the experiences of teachers and learners face in their execution of curriculum in commerce.

Findings from Head of Department

The question the HODs were asked was related to challenges faced by subject teachers in curriculum implementation of commerce. Head of Department coded 1 from Emusa Day Secondary School pointed out that, Teachers from Emusa Day Secondary School said that resources such as textbooks, technology infrastructure were inadequate for effective Commerce curriculum implementation especially for 2013 revised curriculum framework.

Findings from Head of Departments revealed that teaching and learning materials were not enough for 2013 revised curriculum framework in selected secondary schools. The findings indicate that teachers had only a copy for teaching which hindered effective implementation of curriculum in commerce.

Poor Teaching Methods

Learners from Chasefu Day Secondary School said that some teachers rarely use teaching aids when teaching. One learner coded as 40 made reference to a lesson on Commerce related to business documents that the teacher would be teaching on commerce related to business documents without revealing to the learners how the actual documents look like, e.g., Debit Note, Receipt, Invoice, without bringing the actual documents for physical check-up by the students.

Further learners from Hoya Day Secondary School, mentioned that teaching aids like real objects and the use of Charts arouses interest for them to learn and also for more understanding but teachers rarely use teaching aids when delivering lessons and had this to say; 'The teacher-centred approach does not encourage student participation. We need more interactive and engaging teaching methods such as the use of teaching aids.' Findings from learners revealed that there were poor teaching methods in the curriculum implementation in commerce because of failure to use teaching and learning materials to ensure that teachers were fully prepared to deliver a lesson and have all the necessary documents and teaching aids before they go to teach.

However, some learners coded 200, 201, 203 and 206 from Lupamazi Day Secondary School, complained of not having access to past examination papers as learning material. They said that this could affect the effective curriculum implementation in commerce because they did not know how questions were phrased or how they were expected to answer examination questions.

They further added that they were not exposed to field trips /Education Tours. They stressed that they mostly learn the theoretical part of the subjects and not the practical part. They gave examples of topics in Commerce like Banking, Insurance, Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade, Stock Exchange and Production where they may be required to go for field trips but they were denied that privilege.



Findings from learners clearly revealed that the most challenging factor was that teachers failed to effectively implement commerce curriculum because of lack of practical application. It revealed that there was lack of effective teacher training for curriculum implementation in commerce subject.

Lack of teacher training

The qualitative data applied used questionnaire guide. The main aim of using the questionnaire guide was to obtain in-depth information about the challenges related to teacher training in managing curriculum implementation in commerce in selected Secondary Schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School) of Chasefu District.

Findings from Head of Department

The question was asked using a questionnaire guide to establish challenges related to inadequate teacher training in the implementation of commerce curriculum in selected secondary schools (i.e., Emusa Day Secondary School, Chasefu Day Secondary School, Hoya Day Secondary School, and Lupamazi Day Secondary School). In responses HODs had these to say, 'we are faced with teachers using teaching methods because of the kind of staff which the department received are half-baked. Despite providing instructional leaders through monitoring, they fail to change their teaching methods.' From the findings results revealed that teachers lacked adequate teacher training which made them use poor teaching methods that affected effective implementation of commerce curriculum.

Support and Collaboration Challenges

This study explores the support and collaboration challenges faced by learners of Commerce in secondary schools. The findings were based on qualitative data collected through an interview guide administered to Commerce teachers.

Findings from teachers of commerce

There were a number of administrative support challenges raised by teachers pertaining to the implementation of commerce curriculum. The findings from the school-based administrators revealed that there were different interpretations of the kind of support received from school administrators. To this effect there were varying responses collected from research sites. Going by interview conducted at Emusa Day Secondary School, Teacher 1 had this to say, "I receive inadequate support from our Head of Department to ensure we have necessary teaching and learning resources. However, the school administration does not provide enough funds for field trips.' However, Teacher 2 from the same school revealed that, 'Our Head Teacher is very supportive. He attends our subject meetings and provides valuable feedback. But the clerical staff sometimes misplace important documents."

Conversely, in support of teacher 1 from Emusa Day Secondary School, said, "I do not get enough support from our department. We are expected to do everything on our own, including preparing teaching aids." In addition, Teacher coded 4, 'The administration provides us with relevant textbooks and materials. However, the class sizes are too big,



making it difficult to manage a single class with efficient as far as classroom control, lesson delivery and marking of the books is concerned.’

The findings suggest that while some teachers receive adequate administrative support, they face challenges due to inadequate teaching and learning resources. That revealed that teachers of commerce were faced with challenges with support from their instructional and administrators.

Solutions to Challenges in Curriculum Implementation in Commerce

The qualitative data was collected using the Questionnaire Guide for head of department. The main aim of using the Questionnaire guide was to obtain in-depth information about the views of Head of Department in managing challenges in the curriculum implementation of commerce pathway.

Teacher training

Qualitative raw data based on a questionnaire guide for the four Head of Departments on solutions related to lack of teacher training as one of the challenges in curriculum implementation in commerce.

Findings from the Head of Department

Based on the responses on the questionnaire, Head of Department coded 1 from Emusa Day Secondary School had this to say, ‘Teachers need training on new teaching methods and approaches, especially technology integration.’ In addition, ‘I suggest administrators to provide support by providing resources, reducing workload, and encouraging collaboration among teachers.’ However, Teacher training and development were noted as crucial in addressing challenges of effective implementation of commerce curriculum. Teachers need to stay updated on industry trends and best teaching practices. It was also, revealed that Teachers needed to be motivated through recognition, rewards, and opportunities for growth and development.

Further Head of Department coded 2 from Chusefu Day Secondary School had this to say, ‘Teachers need support in developing practical and commerce-focused lesson plans.’ In line to the previous respondent, administrators to provide support by providing opportunities for teacher professional development and business-oriented learner exposure. In support with earlier response teacher training and development was intrinsic in building confidence and competence in teaching the commerce curriculum. Teachers can be motivated through feedback, coaching, and mentoring. A resource centre with relevant materials and equipment would be beneficial for teachers. Whilst a Head of Department coded 3 from Hoya Day Secondary School did add his voice on the same who had this to say, ‘Teachers need training on assessment and evaluation methods. Teacher training and development are critical in ensuring teachers are equipped to teach the commerce curriculum effectively Teachers can be motivated through autonomy, flexibility, and opportunities for innovation.’

Findings from HODs from questionnaires suggested that teachers need support in teacher Training to equip them with new teaching methods and approaches that enhances developing practical and commerce-focused lesson plans. Findings implied



that teacher training was cardinal and a necessity in the implementation of commerce curriculum which could even be through a well-structured and monitored continuous professional development (CPDs) at school level organised by CPD Coordinators in schools.

Solution in Resource Allocation

The study aimed to explore the challenges related to resource allocation in curriculum implementation in Commerce and identify potential solutions. A questionnaire guide was used to gather qualitative data from Heads of Department to establish challenges faced in allocating resources for curriculum implementation in Commerce.

Findings from the head of department

The researcher sought to find out on challenges of teaching and learning resources to implement commerce curriculum pathway. This was from the background that teaching and learning materials were the corner stone for any curriculum implementation in the Ministry of Education. It was imperative to seek the views from the Head of Department's on the premise of curriculum implementation in their respective schools. The Head of Department suggested that, 'Lack of teaching materials due to Limited financial resources in schools could be solved by increasing budget allocation for Business Studies Department from the current allocation. The teaching materials supported by 2013 curriculum framework does not match with learners' enrolment.'

The books supplied by the government then, with the increased enrolment exacerbated by extricate education policy was a drop in an ocean. The Head of Department revealed that Head Teacher indicated that, 'My school cannot afford to buy the needed teaching and learning materials due to financial constraints as the grants from the government are just too little against the demands that the school has to meet'.

Findings from Heads of Department face on allocating resources could be solved by increasing budgetary allocation, so that the school administration can support adequate resources to the effective curriculum implementation in commerce.

Solutions to Curriculum Design and Content

Qualitative raw data based on a questionnaire guide for four Head of Departments on solutions related to Curriculum Design and Content in curriculum implementation in commerce was conducted. The essence was to establish solutions based on challenges of curriculum design and content in the curriculum implementation in commerce. The questionnaires were distributed to four Heads of Department from selected research site.

There were differing viewpoints on the premise of curriculum implementation in secondary schools in relation to 2013 curriculum framework. One of the Head of Department from Lupamazi Day Secondary School, elucidated the curriculum was too theoretical and does not prepare learners for the industry adequately. 'We need more practical acumens training as stipulated in the newly introduced 2023 Competency Based Curriculum framework. Industry experts should provide input on curriculum design and offer practical training opportunities. We need more funding for industry partnerships and resources for practical training.'



In addition, Head of Department coded 2 from Chusefu Day Secondary School added his voice that curriculum was too rigid and did not allow flexibility. We need to incorporate more technology and digital acumens other than paper and pencil-oriented curriculum. ‘However, the best solution was to develop a more flexible curriculum framework that allows for industry input and practical acumens development. Use technology and interactive activities to make the curriculum more engaging and relevant.’

However, Head of Department 4 from Hoya Day Secondary School had this to say, ‘The curriculum doesn’t prepare students for the changing job market. We need to incorporate more entrepreneurial acumens. I suggest that as a school we have to incorporate more entrepreneurship and innovation acumens training. Provide learners at school level with opportunities to develop business plans and pitch ideas. We need more funding for entrepreneurship programs and resources for students to develop business ideas.’

Findings from Chusefu Day Secondary School revealed that there was too much of theoretical approach curriculum contrary to practical acumens training as stipulated in the newly introduced 2023 Competency Based Curriculum framework. However, practical acumen-oriented curriculum could be enhanced through increased budgetary allocation for teaching and learning resources and infrastructure.

Summary

The study sought to obtain information on the factors, challenges and solution to challenges in the curriculum implementation in commerce. The study used interviews and questionnaire guides to collect data using qualitative data collection. There was little discrepancy in the findings amongst respondents in the curriculum implementation in commerce.

V. Discussion of the findings

Overview

This chapter presents discussion of findings based on the objectives as themes that emerged from the research. For easy discussion, sub-themes were incorporated in this chapter, just as viewed in chapter four.

Factors that influence the effective implementation of the curriculum in commerce

The study sought to analyse the factors that influenced the effective implementation of the curriculum in commerce in selected Secondary Schools of Chusefu District. It was aimed at investigating factors experienced in the implementation of commerce Subject. The findings were based on qualitative data collected through a questionnaire guide administered to 12 commerce teachers in selected Secondary Schools of Chusefu District. From the findings, it was clear that most teachers (75%) believe that regular training was intrinsic for effective teaching, and some (25%) highlight the need for subject-specific training for effective implementation of commerce curriculum. It revealed that teacher training was a key factor influencing effective curriculum implementation in commerce in the selected secondary school offering business-



oriented curriculum pathway. In line with factors influencing curriculum implementation, Guskey (2003) stresses teacher training and professional development as one of the factors. In Guskey's study it was explicitly stated that ongoing professional development is crucial for effective curriculum implementation. By this, what is meant is that teachers are supposed to undergo training not only in content but also pedagogical techniques in order to effectively deliver the curriculum. From a comprehensive look at Guskey (2003), one can say that the author took a narrow view which is just a part of the topic at hand (factors influencing curriculum implementation) and therefore the justification of the present study.

Further, the researcher collected data from respondents and findings, clearly indicated that teaching and learning materials were factors influencing in the effective curriculum implementation of commerce. The majority of teachers (83%) report resources as a major factor, with some suggesting digital resources as a potential solution. Similar study was conducted by Fullan (2007) discussed how availability of resources such as textbooks, favourable technology and materials positively affects the curriculum implementation process. The study argues that schools that have adequate and readily available resources tend to find it easy to implement the curriculum.

On the other hand, findings revealed that instructional leadership was a recipe influencing effective implementation of commerce curriculum in selected secondary schools. Riding on the foregone, a study by Jantzi (2006) amplifies the role of the school leadership in driving curriculum changes. The study holds that effective instructional leadership engender a supportive environment for teachers and facilitates togetherness in the form of collaborative practices.

Findings from the HODs indicated that learners' motivation was identified as a factor in the effective curriculum implementation in commerce. Results clearly revealed that learners' motivation had a role to play in the effective curriculum implementation in commerce. This implies that more needs to be done to ensure that the level of motivation in the learning and teaching of Commerce in the implementation of curriculum was well observed. The findings were matched with Mongezi (2017) quoted Atieh (2009) who noted that in Saudi Arabia, the learners' motivation, probably because of the poor teaching and learning to be some of the factors hindering the teaching and learning of commerce. From the results clearly revealed that teacher training was a major factor in the curriculum implementation.

On the other hand, from the findings, clearly indicated that teaching and learning materials were factors influencing in the effective curriculum implementation of commerce. The majority of teachers (83%) report resources as a major factor, with some suggesting digital resources as a potential solution. That echoed by a study conducted by Fullan (2007) discusses how availability of resources such as textbooks, favourable technology and materials positively affects the curriculum implementation process. The study argues that schools that have adequate and readily available resources tend to find it easy to implement the curriculum.



Challenges in Implementing Commerce Curriculum

In line with challenges associated with curriculum implementation, a qualitative data collection was done with reflection with a number of supportive studies. It was important to note that teaching and learning resources were regarded as the most important support structure by the school-based management because curriculum implementation depend largely on resources available in schools (Department of Education, 2000:94). From this, background that, the researcher sought to find out challenges of teaching and learning resources to effectively implement commerce curriculum. Findings from head of departments revealed that teaching and learning materials were not enough for 2013 revised curriculum framework in selected secondary schools. The findings indicate that teachers had only a copy for teaching which hindered effective implementation of curriculum in commerce. In study conducted by Kombe and Mwanza (2019) on the 2014 Zambian Revised Education Policy in secondary Schools, where school-based management revealed that materials which were sent were not enough against the learners. This according to the participants teaching with limited materials was a challenge as teachers were anticipated to teach and write everything on the board. The study was directly related to current study on the school-based management's views on the inadequate teaching and learning Materials that affect implementation of commerce curriculum.

On the other hand, results revealed that the outline of curriculum content for commerce especially for commerce curriculum was a factor influencing effective curriculum implementation. It was noted that the course outline of commerce was guiding factor influencing effective execution of commerce curriculum. Findings revealed that outline of curriculum content for commerce was a challenging factor influencing effective curriculum implementation. It was noted that the bulk course outline of commerce was an obstacle to effective execution of commerce curriculum. Indeed, misalignment of educational curriculum was another factor as identified by Green (2021) that led to failure of effective curriculum implementation. Similarly in a study of the impact of educational policy on curriculum implementation, Green (2021) espouses that misalignment between educational policies and curriculum goals engenders confusion and hinders effective curriculum implementation. This is to mean that there must be clear communication in terms of policy changes as the two are very much in tandem.

Findings revealed that there were poor teaching methods in the curriculum implementation in commerce because of failure to use teaching and learning materials. In Asia, a study in Malaysia by Wong and Wong (2011) found that teachers' lack of content knowledge and pedagogical acumens in commerce education led to a focus on rote memorization rather than critical thinking and problem-solving. This highlights the need for ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' capacity to deliver high-quality commerce education.

In addition, learners clearly revealed that the most challenging factor was that teachers failed to effectively implement commerce curriculum because of lack of practical application. It revealed that there was lack of effective teacher training for curriculum implementation in commerce subject.



From the findings results revealed that teachers lacked adequate teacher training which made them use poor teaching methods that affected effective implementation of commerce curriculum. In a study on the role of teacher training in curriculum implementation, Smith et al (2020), highlights that inadequate teacher training leads to poor understanding and execution of the curriculum. According to this study, teachers often feel unprepared to implement the curriculum effectively. This leads to failure because teachers who are the main executors have failed to carry out their duties effectively. Similarly, in the United States, research has revealed that teachers who receive inadequate training in subject-specific content and pedagogy struggle to implement curriculum reforms effectively (Garet et al., 2001). This is particularly concerning in commerce education, where teachers need to stay up-to-date with constantly evolving business practices and technologies.

The findings suggest that while some teachers receive adequate administrative support, they face challenges due to lack of resources, inadequate staffing, and poor communication. That revealed that teachers of commerce were faced with challenges with support from their instructional and administrators. It is argued by Partel (2022) that the absence of administrative support in the process of curriculum implementation is one of the factors that leads to failure in totality. This is so because the administration is charged with the responsibility of playing a pivotal role in the smooth running of institutional affairs, which include among others resources provision. Effective as stated by Partel (2022) is crucial for curriculum implementation as high levels of consistency and moral among teachers are sustained.

Solutions to Challenges in Curriculum Implementation in Commerce

The qualitative data collection was used to obtain in-depth information about the views of Head of department in managing challenges in curriculum implementation of commerce. Findings from HODs suggested that teachers need support in teacher Training on new teaching methods and approaches that enhances developing practical and commerce-focused lesson plans. Findings implied that teacher training was cardinal in the implementation of commerce curriculum. Additionally, Darling-Hammond's (2007) work discusses the need for comprehensive teacher training and professional development. As stated by this study teacher training is an intrinsic component of effective curriculum implementation.

The findings highlight the challenges Heads of Department face in allocating resources for Commerce curriculum implementation. Proposed solutions include increasing budget allocation, so that the school administration can support adequate resources to offering in effective resource provision. A reflective study done by Odden (2009), strategic investment in educational resources significantly enhances the quality of instruction and student outcomes. Secondary schools any other education institutions should prioritise budget allocations that support the development of commerce programs.

Findings from Emusa Day Secondary School revealed that there was too much of theoretical approach curriculum contrary to practical acumens training as stipulated in the newly introduced 2023 Competency Based Curriculum framework. However, practical acumen-oriented curriculum could be enhanced through increased budgetary



allocation for teaching and learning resources and infrastructure. On the other hand, it is well understood from Tomlinson (2001) in whose work a differentiated classroom as suggested was a solution to challenges in curriculum implementation. As stated by this study, differentiation in the classroom environment is a key strategy in curriculum implementation. The system emphasised on the use of enhanced teaching and learning materials. The study further provides practical solutions for adapting the curriculum to meet diverse learner needs, emphasizing the importance of understanding individual learners in terms of their profiles of learning.

Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, major findings of the study were analyzed and discussed using the theoretical framework and other related literature presented in Chapter Two. As the findings reveal, that school-based management challenges have diverse implications on the learners and teachers in implementation of commerce curriculum.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

Overview

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. The chapter shall also make appropriate recommendations arising from the study. The research sought to find out factors influencing in the effective curriculum implementation in commerce. The conclusion in the study was line with the findings and discussions. It was hoped that the recommendations given in this study will be of positive effect to the school administrators, teachers and beyond and indeed to all those who will take time to peruse the work.

Conclusion

This study explored the factors influencing effective curriculum implementation in commerce education through the lens of Lewis's curriculum change theory as expressed by Cummings and Worley (2014) identified by Sakala, (2025) known as the Unfreezing-Change-Refreezing Theory. The findings highlight the complex interplay between various factors, including teacher preparedness, resource availability, institutional support, and stakeholder engagement, in shaping the successful implementation of curriculum changes in commerce education.

Consistent with Lewis's theory, the study reveals that effective curriculum implementation requires a planned and systematic approach that takes into account the needs and concerns of all stakeholders. The findings also underscore the importance of providing teachers with ongoing support and training to develop their acumens and confidence in implementing new curricula.

The study's results have implications for policymakers, educators, and administrators seeking to implement curriculum reforms in commerce education. By understanding the factors that influence effective curriculum implementation, stakeholders can develop targeted strategies to support teachers, enhance resource allocation, and foster a collaborative environment that promotes successful curriculum change.



Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics involved in curriculum implementation and highlights the need for a nuanced and context-specific approach to supporting teachers and students in the implementation of curriculum reforms.

Lastly, curriculum implementation in commerce in selected rural schools in Chasefu District is significantly influenced by both internal (teacher capacity, resources, etc.) and external (community participation) factors. Addressing these issues can ameliorate learner outcomes.

Recommendations

This study has presented an insight into the phenomenon of challenges towards curriculum implementation. The findings have long-term implication on curriculum change, curriculum management and implementation, role of head teachers and teachers in managing the curriculum. The researcher based on the findings of the study came up with the following recommendations:

1. Continuous teacher professional development in commerce pedagogy.
2. The ministry of education through curriculum development centre (CDC) provides ongoing training and support for teachers to develop their acumens and confidence in implementing new curricula.
3. The government of Zambia to increase budgetary allocation to ensure adequate allocation of resources, including textbooks, technology, and infrastructure, to support effective curriculum implementation in commerce.
4. Strengthen community partnerships to enhance support and relevance.
5. Lastly, though not the least, Ministry of Education should conduct regular monitoring and evaluations of rural curriculum implementations.

Suggested further research

The following suggestion is proposed:

1. To explore factors inhibiting learners' performance in commerce in selected rural secondary schools.
2. Another study can focus on student perceptions on commerce curriculum relevance or compare rural versus urban implementation outcomes

Summary of the chapter

By implementing these recommendations lifted above, the educators and policymakers can work towards creating an environment that really supports effective commerce curriculum implementation and enhances the quality of commerce education in the rural districts of Zambia like Chasefu.

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