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IN COLLABORATION WITH

ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

**MANAGING THE CURRICULUM SHIFT IN RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF
NYIMBA DISTRICT IN EASTERN PROVINCE**

By

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**A Dissertation Submitted to The University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe
Open University in Partial Fulfilment for the Requirements for the Award of the
Degree of Master of Educational Management.**

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, **PHIRI WISDOM**, do declare that this dissertation represents my work and it has not in part or whole been presented as material for the award of any degree at this or any other University. Where other people's work has been used acknowledgement has been made.

Signature of Author.....

Date.....

DEDICATIONS

I wish to dedicate this piece of work to my wonderful wife, Annie Katongo Phiri, for her untiring encouragements and my children Mayeso, Mukata, Karen, Patience and Kondwani

APPROVAL

This Dissertation of Phiri wisdom is approved in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational management.

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ABSTRACT

The study attempted to establish how the curriculum shift was being managed in rural primary schools as well as find the challenges faced. It further, made suggestions for improvement to curriculum shift to enhance attainment of objectives of the curriculum. The study was conducted in Nyimba district of Eastern province at eight selected rural primary schools. The sample size consisted of eight school managers and 40 class teachers making a total of 48 participants. The study was descriptive qualitative in nature. The school managers were purposefully selected and responded to one-on-one semi-structured interviews while the class teachers were randomly selected and responded using focus group discussions.

The study showed that the management of the new curriculum in rural primary schools was poor due to a number of challenges which included inadequate teaching/learning materials, inadequate funding by government, inadequate capacity building towards the curriculum shift, inadequate teachers and classrooms. To address the challenges of the curriculum shift in rural primary schools, recommendations included that the government through the ministry of education supply relevant teaching/learning materials, increase funding to primary schools in the face of free primary education, increase capacity building for both school managers and class teachers. Other recommendations were increase recruitment of teachers and classrooms in rural primary schools

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LIST OF ABBRIVIATIONS

MoE- Ministry of Education

MOESVTEE- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education

ZECF- Zambia Education Curriculum Framework

PTA- Parents Teachers Association

FGDs- Focus Group Discussions

PF- Patriotic Front

CfE- Curriculum for Excellence

BBC- British Broadcasting Corporation

UK- United Kingdom

MP- Member of Parliament

BESSIP- Basic Education Sub Sector Investment Programme

T/L- Teaching and Learning Materials

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a background to the study. It gives an overview to the study from independence up to date in terms of curriculum shifts. Therefore the study presents the topic under investigation, the purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. The study also gives the significance of the study, delimitations and limitations, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Lastly, the chapter gives the definition of terms.

1.2 Background

The Zambian education sector has been subjected to a number of curriculum reviews and changes since independence. This has been necessitated by the dynamic nature of society and that education must move along side this dynamism if it is to serve its purpose. The curriculum of the education system determines the type and quality of citizens a nation intends to have to fulfil its aspirations. After independence in 1964, Zambia was coming from an education system that was dual in nature and this means that even the curriculum was dual in nature. Mwanakatwe (1974) indicates that one of the unmistakable features of the educational administration in the colonial era was the rigid separation of races enforced at all levels of the education system and all types of schools. By law and practice separate schools were provided for Africans and European children. The Zambian government had to change this scenario by doing away with this dual educational curriculum and adopting one curriculum that would make its aspirations realised after independence. This was achieved by the 1966 Education Act that led to the development of a curriculum that emphasized on the unification and solidarity of the newly independent state. Mwanakatwe (1974: 179) states “A milestone in the progress of education was reached in April 1966 when the education Bill was passed by Parliament. The Education Act of 1966 came into operation on 2 September of the same year and it marked an important step forward in the integration of the two separate systems of education...” This was crucial at that time because Zambia was still fragile in view of the many ethnic groups found in Zambia.

The other notable policy document that gave direction to the educational curriculum are the 1977 reforms that aimed at developing the whole human being and insisted on quality and relevancy. It emphasized on the need to involve learners in productive work as this was quite relevant in their lives. MOE (1977: 29) also indicates,

“Equally important is the need to include productive work in the curriculum. This must be seen not merely as a concern for development of certain skills for employment purpose: it has other important merits; it associates the student with vital activity of the community, and at the same time it abolishes the dividing line which artificially separates study from manual work. This could be a means of contributing towards the national development.”

This indicates that productive work was a very important component in the curriculum that was driven by the 1977 Education Reforms.

The other policy document is the 1992 Focus on learning which singled out primary education as a way of attaining mass literacy and proposed a type of education curriculum that suits the societal demands (Ministry of Education, 1992). This document necessitated change of the curriculum due to a number of weaknesses that were observed by educational specialists in the curriculum then. Ministry of Education (1992) indicated at that time that the curriculum for Zambia’s primary schools displayed a number of weaknesses. It was overly concerned with cognitive and factual knowledge. It was organised on the basis of fairly sharp distinction between subject areas. It is developed centrally without adequate input from teachers and communities. It lacked the flexibility that would enable it to respond to different local circumstances.

However, the most influential document that has brought the Zambian education curriculum to what it now is the 1996 policy document, Educating Our Future. This document is based on the principles of democratisation, decentralisation and productivity on one hand and curriculum relevance and diversification, efficient and cost effective and partnership on the other (Ministry of Education, 1996). This policy document indicates that the school curriculum consists in the content, structure and processes of teaching and learning which the school provides in accordance with its educational objectives and values. It includes concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which the learners incorporate through the process of schooling. MOESVTEE (2013) indicates that in 1996 the Ministry of Education developed the National Policy on Education in order to respond the development needs of the nation as well as those of the individual learners.

In line with the principles of the 1996 policy document is the current educational curriculum shift orchestrated by the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (ZECF) of 2013. This was formulated in accordance with the 2011 Education Act so as to provide curriculum guidelines as well as the structure at all educational levels. Times of Zambia (2014/01/19) indicates that

over 49 years of Zambia's independence, there have been dissatisfaction with the education offered to school going children and that the Patriotic Front (PF) Government and its partners is now seeking to re-orient the curriculum at all levels of the education to put emphasis on life skills through the launch of the new school curriculum dubbed 'Empowering Learners by Putting Theory into Practice.' The current curriculum framework has taken into consideration the technological and socio-economical changes in society and that graduates should be relevant to society. For any curriculum to translate into its intended aspirations there should be effective management at play. Curriculum management at school level is very crucial if any curriculum shift is to realise its purpose. It is against this background that this study will endeavour to establish the roles of school management in managing curriculum the current shifts in rural primary schools of Nyimba district of eastern province.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Zambia has undergone a number of curriculum shifts in the education sector since independence. This is so important because the knowledge and skills offered by the education curriculum should be compatible with the demands of the dynamic society the education serves. How well the curriculum serves the society depends on how well implementation and management of the curriculum is done at school level. Curriculum shift always comes with challenges. As Schaeffer (1990) rightly observed, "there is nothing easy about the process of change. Nowhere is this more the case than in education, yet in no other fields are innovations and reforms more needed. Effective management is a cornerstone to the successful implementation and institutionalization of curriculum change". The study, therefore, endeavoured to establish how the curriculum shift has been managed and the challenges faced in rural primary schools in the management of the curriculum shift orchestrated by the Zambia Curriculum Framework of 2013.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish how schools were managing the curriculum shift and challenges faced in rural primary schools of Nyimba district.

1.5 Significance of the Study

It is important to explain why the study is important. In the views of Kombo and Tromp (2006), significance refers to the importance of the study at hand. The significance of this study is that it would enable the education authorities in Nyimba district to be informed and

aware on how the curriculum shift is being managed in rural primary schools. The study would also help bring to light the challenges faced in managing the curriculum shift to education authorities for them to make appropriate interventions. The findings of this research would also add to the body of knowledge and create platform for further research.

1.6 Research Objectives

The above stated problem were to be addressed through objectives stated below

1. To establish how school managements are implementing and managing curriculum shifts in rural primary schools to enhance teaching and learning.
2. To explore challenges faced by school managements in managing curriculum the shifts in rural primary schools to enhance teaching and learning.
3. To suggest improvements to curriculum shift in order to make management in rural primary schools enhance teaching and learning.

1.7 Research Questions

The research questions for this study were as below

1. How are schools managing the curriculum shifts to enhance teaching and learning?
2. What are the challenges faced by schools in managing the curriculum shifts in rural primary schools to enhance teaching and learning?
3. What improvements can be made to the curriculum shift to make rural primary schools enhance teaching and learning?

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

Delimitation refers to the geographical area where the study will be undertaken (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Delimitation can also be said as a section study explicating the criteria of participants to enrol in the study, geographical area covered and the profession organisations involved, (Simon, 2011). Delimitations are used to address how the study would be narrowed in scope (Creswell, 1994). The study was conducted in selected rural primary schools of Nyimba district of eastern province. The study focussed on how school managements were managing the new curriculum shift in rural primary schools of Nyimba district.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

Chuma et al (2007:33) indicates that limitations are shortcomings faced by the researcher when conducting the study. Borg and Gall (1983) describe limitations to mean those conditions which are beyond the control of the researcher and may also place restrictions on the conclusions of the study. It can also be said that limitations are factors which the researcher foresees as restrictions, problems and such other elements which might affect the objectivity and validity of the research findings. Some of the foreseen limitations to the research included lack of adequate funds, lack of transport to visit the selected schools, limited time to do the research and insincerity of some respondents. Therefore, the research was limited to Nyimba district and the findings of this study may not be applicable to other areas. This is because Nyimba was where the researcher was based and access to Nyimba rural primary schools was easy and economical.

1.10 Operational Definitions

1. **Curriculum-** a prescribed programme of study for learners in an institution.
2. **School-** a formal learning institution following a prescribed curriculum for learners in a given area or nation.
3. **Curriculum shift-**changing of the curriculum being run by the schools to a more desirable one due to a number of factors.
4. **Primary school-** refers to a school offering education from grade one to grade seven.
5. **Rural primary school-** a primary school that is located in the remote area of a town.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews other studies that are related to the topic under investigation. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), literature review is a critical look at the existing research that is significant to the work that the researcher will be carrying out. The literature review of this study looks at a number of authorities who have written unrelated subject to the study. The literature will start with curriculum definition then factors that influence curriculum change and finally roles of school management in curriculum change.

2.1 Definition of Curriculum

According to the earliest work on curriculum by John Franklin Bobbit, curriculum originated from the chariot tracks of ancient Greece and later the Latin term *currere* (to run) adopted to represent it (Kelly 2009, Pinnar 1995). Curriculum theorists of the 20th Century went further to include the entire scope of formative deeds and experiences taking place within school and without, the planned and unplanned experiences as well as those that were intentioned done and carried out (Kelly 2009; Marsh 2004; Pinnar 1995).

The term curriculum is derived from a Latin word ‘*currere*’, which means to run or to run the course, (Print, 1994). Based on this background, some authorities have defined curriculum as a course of study subject matter. However, this definition has been modified by other authorities as it has been found limiting.

Fien et al. (1984) defines curriculum as all the experiences planned and otherwise that students have while in the care of a school. This entails a programme of studies organised for learners by the school. This kind of programme is one that need school management and teachers to think about how the teaching and learning take place and what is worthwhile and relevant to learners. Curriculum is also viewed to be purposely planned undertaking for teaching. This view for curriculum is in tandem with the view of Tyler (1949) who contends that curriculum refers to all the learning of students, which is planned and directed by the school to attain its educational goals.

Wynne (1964) views curriculum as planned experiences offered to the learners under the guidance of the school. A curriculum, therefore, is all that is taught at any given level of the

school in the school system. Harris (1991:70) defines curriculum as “the sum total of all learning experiences offered by the school.” This means that school curriculum includes the hidden curriculum which can be said to be the unofficial consequences of the school experiences. However, how the school is managed determines what the learner experiences in the school. Therefore, school management play a pivotal role in the management of curriculum shifts. Dekker and Lemmer (1993) sees curriculum as the planned and organised activities pupils undertake in the school which include the subject matter they are exposed to.

ZECF (1913: vi) defines curriculum as “a prescribed programme of study for learners in institutions of learning.” MoE (1996) indicates that the school curriculum consists of the content, structure and processes of teaching and learning which the school provides in accordance with its educational objectives and values. It includes the concepts, knowledge, attitudes and values which pupils incorporate through the process of schooling. Therefore, the curriculum is all activities that are done in a school in order to attain the intended aspirations and values. Further curriculum consists of intentionally undertaken activities that are planned so that certain objectives are reached, so that learners will come to know certain things and have habits and patterns of emotional response (Skillbeck, 1996). In other words curriculum is that which is taught at school. It is an approach which focuses and connects teaching in a school thereby giving meaning to what teachers do and making teaching predictable. In this case, the study will forecast on the roles of school management in managing primary education curriculum shifts in Nyimba district.

2.2 Curriculum Shifts (Change)

In his work (the Long Revolution), Williams (1966) points out that the content of a curriculum helps to guide the distribution of education in society as the cultural choices involved in selected in the existed in organic relationship with social choices. Greek and Latin philosophical thinking later greatly impacted on the western curricula systems. As noted by Jerkins (2004) and White (2005), curriculum is the foundation of any education system, and thus it often requires frequent revisiting for improvement of prescribed standards and to reduce inconsistencies. In many cases, such reviews are a requirement of policy makers and other educational leadership to improve curriculum and teaching quality. The following are scenarios that caused different countries to change and review their curricula.

In Scotland, the late 1990s saw the beginning of realisation that the education provided did not meet the needs of the young people for that time and for their future. This culminated in an ambitious reform being referred to as Curriculum for Excellence, (CfE). School leavers had less life skills needed for life and work (Britton, 2013). In a communique' on CfE 'What can learner expect?' the authorities (Scotland Education) describe CfE as one that has i on EfE included a range of features at different stages of learning to ensure that students are provided continuously opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Schools in partnership with stake holders were called upon to work together for a broader, well planned curriculum that would enable the children to understand the world and Scotland's place in the world. Basically, CfE was planned to be a curriculum that goes into the future with children's rights and qualifications taken care of.

In England, the major reason for reviewing the National Curriculum was described as to ensure the aspirations that were set for the children matched those in the highest performing education jurisdictions and giving teachers greater freedom to teach (Department of Education, England, 2013). In July 2013, Sean Coughlan, a BBC education correspondent reported that five year old children would start learning fractions and computer algorithms, as a more stretching national curriculum was announced for state schools in England. He appended his report with the photograph of the Prime Minister (David Cameron) flanked by two five year old youngsters and working on a laptop computer. The correspondent quoted a UK official stating that the curriculum changes were designed to catch up with world's best education systems. The Prime Minister called the change a 'revolution in education' that was vital for the country's economic prosperity.

2.3 Zambia's Drive towards the Current Curriculum Shift

There are a number of reasons as to why the Zambian education system opted for curriculum shift. These include the factors discussed above which are socio-economic factors, socio-political factors and technological change factors. To be more elaborate on factors that drove Zambia's curriculum shift, Honourable Dr J. Phiri (MP) (2014) then Minister of Education's ministerial statement to Parliament verbatim in part below would be helpful;

Mr. Speaker

The studies which the Ministry and other stakeholders conducted during the review of the school curriculum revealed many negative aspects about the curriculum some of which are well documented in the Education Policy (1996), predominant among them were:

- 1. A dominant examination curriculum that placed heavy emphasis on factual information that did not assess critical learning areas*
- 2. A curriculum that controlled much of the teaching and learning at the primary school level without consideration of the fact that the child's dominant way of learning is through exploration and experiencing.*
- 3. A language used as medium of instruction in the early Grades (Lower Primary) that is alien to the majority of learners and which was different from the language of the community and home*
- 4. An excessively overloaded and inflexible curriculum Had little consideration for emerging technological and social developments (i.e. Information and*

According to Kimbrough and Burkett (1990: 131) change is a deliberate effort to alter the status quo by influencing or modifying the functions, structure technology and purpose of an organisation. Change represents the struggle of what it is and what is desired. According to Hall (1988) change may be described as an adoption of an innovation where the ultimate goal is to improve outcomes through an alteration of practices. Educational change in Zambia is a fundamental process involving the entire education system, curricular, teaching and learning in the classroom. This is to ensure that the citizens acquire worthwhile education for the ever changing society.

According to Onstein and Hunkins (1993) the leaders of the institutions should be the ones to experience a mind shift as change is initiated in order to avoid resistance to change. The authors further indicate that sometimes people resist innovation and its implementation because they lack knowledge or understanding about the change being initiated.

2.4 Factors that Influence Curriculum Shifts

For any educational curriculum to be changed or shifted, there are factors that tend to be at play. Curriculum shift doesn't happen in a vacuum but there are issues that are raised against a

current curriculum to prompt the curriculum shift in an education system. This is because the society the education system serves is dynamic and societal needs shifts over time and therefore, the education curriculum should align itself to the needs of the society served if it is to be relevant.

According to Omar et al., (2011), the role of the teacher will continue to develop in tandem with the current developments in the world of education because education is a social phenomenon that is dynamic and often subjected to changes and innovations in the larger society. These changes and innovations are occurring in curriculum diversifications and pedagogical practices, and, for the educational system to survive and be equally current, it needs to keep in step with these. In this globalization era, marked by its borderless world through information and communication technology, this change becomes prominent. These changes have created new needs in knowledge, science and technology, changed the trend and profile of students, and modified the role and function of schools making them more challenging than before. Indeed, the globalisation era has changed the teaching profession landscape and this reality needs to be accepted not only by teachers and trainee teachers but also by all administrators. Indeed, the globalization era has changed the teaching profession landscape and this reality needs to be accepted not only by teachers and trainee teachers but also by all school administrators.

There are a number of factors that may prompt the shift of the educational curriculum so that it is compatible with the dynamism of society. These factors may include socio-economic, political, scientific and technological and changes. Peretomode and Ikoya (2010: 296) indicate,

“The world is in a state of flux occasioned by profound natural forces, social, political changes and rapid scientific and technological advancements. The nations of the world, of which Nigeria is a part, are also becoming more interconnected and interdependent. To avoid possible’ future shock ‘nations must respond quickly, preferably and proactively to these rapid changes. Regular curriculum renewal, which must consider new competencies, standards and trends, regional and international, is increasingly becoming a must in most educational systems of the world as a means of coping with these changes and challenges.”

2.4.1 Socio-economical Factor

Socio-economical factor is one of the factors that influences curriculum shifts world over. How the society in a given nation interacts and the economic demand of the nation may prompt for curriculum shift. The economic world of work today has its own desire of the type school graduates it wants to be churned and therefore, influences curriculum shift. Economic changes have an important influence on a country's education system (Shiundu and Omulando. 1992). For example, in South Africa, economic changes influenced the curriculum to change in order to provide sufficient skilled manpower to meet the demands of the local and the global society. In South Africa many changes in the curriculum have come about due to the politically inclined demand for equity linked to the economically inclined demand for competency at the world market. For instance, on a very broad scale one could consider how the school curriculum in South Africa has changed to reflect the general economic changes in society since 1994 (Marishane 2002:117). These changes have exerted greater demands for basic competencies and a greater vocational orientation. Hence the socio-economical factor plays a role on the curriculum shifts of any education system.

Zambia is undergoing rapid socio-economic development and the education sector is no exception. Education is an agent of change. While education has always been perceived as a social sector, it is also an economic tool for development in 1996, the Ministry of Education developed the National Policy on Education, 'Educating Our Future', in order to respond to the development needs of the nation and as well as those of individual learners (ZECF, 2013). This also indicates that the Zambian curriculum shift in some way has been influenced by the socio-economic factor.

2.4.2 Socio-Political Factors

Curriculum change in schools reflects changes in society at large (Print, 1993). In Turkey for example, it is indicated that one of the major factors that gave momentum to introduce bold and ambitious reforms in the field of education is the overall reformist tendency observed in the government policies to facilitate accession to the European Union. In early 2000s, the government introduced reforms to harmonize the national legislations with the EU body law. This has been the case with the field of education as well (Aksit, 2007). This is evident that politics plays a major role in influencing curriculum shifts in education for any country.

Political factors have played a very significant role in curriculum shifts also in many African countries. When the Africans became independent they aspired to get education and occupy key positions in government and other sectors. Zvobgo (1997) contends that to the Africans, education was the vehicles to political, economical and social power, hence, every African state developed a policy that was geared towards transforming colonial-educational policy in order to make education accessible to the majority of the indigenous blacks and education was a leading issue to the liberation struggle. MoE (1977) for some time now the party, government and the people of Zambia have repeatedly stressed the need to create a system of education which is properly attuned to, and more fully meets, the needs and aspirations of Zambians and which functions as a powerful instrument for our society's progress in the direction we have chosen as an independent nation. This was under the one party politics era in Zambia. The transformation of the education system is inevitable when nations undergo political changes (Gusky, 2002, Villegas Reimers (2003).

The shift from one party politics in Zambia necessitated the shift in the curriculum as indicated in the national education policy of 1996. MoE (1996: 1) "Zambia is a liberal democratic society. Hence, it is the values of liberal democracy that must guide the formulation of educational policies and their implementation."

2.4.3 Technological Factors

Technological advancements have also have also been a factor in initiating curriculum shifts in the recent years. The changes and innovations are occurring in curriculum diversifications and pedagogic practices, and, for the educational system to survive and be equally current, it needs to keep in line with these. In this globalization era, marked by its borderless world through information and communication technology, this change becomes more inevitable. These changes have created new needs in knowledge, science and technology, changed the trend and profile of students, and modified the role and function of schools making them more challenging than before. Indeed, the globalization era has changed the teaching profession arena and this reality needs to be accepted not only by teachers but also by all school administrators (Omar et al., 2011; Duze, 2009b).

2.5 Roles of School Management in Managing Curriculum Shifts

The changing roles of school leadership in today's global world and the challenging roles of the classroom teacher put a greater demand on teacher capacity building as the school's core business is teaching and learning. The accomplishment of educational goals and objectives depend highly on teachers who are prime mover in the implementation of the curriculum and teaching and learning. To ensure desired learning outcomes and teacher success, thus creating effective school, the school principle has an enormous responsibility as his/her role as organisation manager/administrator focussing largely on technical aspects is changing globally towards instructional leadership. The principle therefore, has a greater opportunity to develop teacher capacity to thrive in teaching and learning reformation and innovations to attain current educational demand (Chinelo, 2012).

It is common saying that the school principal wears many hats being manager, administrator, instructional leader and curriculum leader at different points in the day. His daily activity is a balancing act of having to juggle between these various roles. Often time observers say that more attention is accorded to managerial and administrative tasks at the expense of instructional supervision. Instructional leadership as alleged was usually relegated to other lower hierarchy even though the core business of the school is teaching and learning. Thus for decades, debates have been on-going regarding the curriculum and instructional leadership roles of the principal. Parkay et al. (2010) posit that principal is the individual best positioned within the school to evaluate the curriculum and evaluation process. School leadership should change from being too focussed on managerial duties to curriculum and instruction. Hellinger (2005) argues that the emphasis on technical aspect should be in balance with the instructional aspect and strictly requiring principals to be deeply engaged in the school instructional programmes to ensure that teachers implement effective teaching and learning. Jerkins (2009) warns that if principals are to take their role in instructional leadership seriously, they must free themselves from bureaucratic administrative tasks and direct their efforts more at improving teaching and learning through proactive instructional supervision.

With regard to change, much of the school activities revolve around the school management team. This determines to a greater extent, the success or failure when change is implemented (Hall, 1998). Therefore, the school management has the responsibility of the day to day running of the school with regards to policy interpretation and ensuring that the curriculum shift is

moving as planned. This also entails that failure to successfully implement and manage a curriculum shift is attributed to the school management. In order to effectively manage a curriculum change, the school management should take into account both the degree to which the total school community will be affected by the curriculum change and the degree to which the school community is aware of the curriculum changes. As such, the school management should play an active role in the curriculum change (Ndou, 2008).

Literature shows that since role is socially constructed, its holders more often than not, determine the way they behave based on the expectations of their role (Madden, 2013)

The pivotal role of principals in managing educational activities within schools is emphasised by several scholars (Briggs and Sommefeldt 2002; Botha 2004; Van Deventer and Kruger 2008). This includes facilitating curriculum implementation and associated reforms and instructional supervision which are considered their most important managerial function (Smit and Cronjé 1999; Van Deventer and Kruger 2008).

2.5.1 Creating a Conducive Environment

The successful implementation of a new curriculum depends on the school environment within which it is to be implemented. Ideally, such an environment should be characterised by goal focus, synergised communication, decentralised power, effective utilisation of resources, cohesiveness, adaptation, and sound morale (Kruger 2002). Modification of the school climate to reflect these attributes is the responsibility of the principal (Brigg sand Sommefeldt 2002; Van Deventer and Kruger 2008). To create such a climate, principals, should first embrace and show commitment to the curriculum change, and not perceive it as an imposition from above to which they merely comply. Principals should also involve teachers in decision- making processes and provide them with relevant and adequate resources. This can heighten and help sustain teacher morale and commitment to reforms (Mulkeen et al. 2005). This indicates that the school management needs to work hard in order to promote and sustain the morale of the teachers if a curriculum shift is to succeed. The head teacher/principal is the centre of this curriculum shift. Therefore should create an enabling environment to into which the curriculum shift should effectively be implemented to attain the desired objectives.

A key task for principals is to create a collective expectation among teachers concerning learner performance. This is to mean, a principal needs to raise the collective sense of teachers about

learner's learning (Dufour et al, 2010). Then principals must work to ensure that teacher expectations are aligned with the school's instructional goals. Further, principals need to eliminate teacher isolation so that discussions about student learning become a collective mission of the school (Elmore, 2005, Senge, 2006). The foregoing citations suggest that the school management should strive to create an environment that promotes oneness amongst teachers and also that inculcates same vision and same mission. This if well done can lead to effective and successful curriculum shifts in schools. School management must sustain school structures and cultures that foster individual and group learning. This means that school management must stimulate an environment in which information and practices are eagerly incorporated into the system. Teachers are more likely to pursue their individual and group learning when there are supportive conditions in the school, such as effective leadership (English, 2008; Northouse, 2010).

In the Zambian aspect, Ministry of Education (1996) indicates that educational provision does not always take sufficient account of the needs of the poor. The remotest areas, where poverty is most intense, are characterised by poorest schools that have poor buildings, inadequate materials, and few trained teachers. The Parents Teacher Associations (PTA) of these schools attended by children of the poor are seldom able to mobilize the resources needed for school furniture and learning/teaching materials that conduce to school effectiveness. Children of the poor need an enriched school environment to compensate for the deprivations experienced in their homes.

This entails that school management should strive to ensure that the school environment is made more facilitative and conducive for the rural children to appreciate school. This so in that most rural children lack a number of facilities in their home environments that can stimulate their school life. Therefore, school management should ensure a conducive environment is created to ensure success of a curriculum shift in their schools regardless of the socio-economical background of the child.

2.5.2 Capacity Building for Teachers

This is another very important role of school management in managing a curriculum shift in a school. Training and capacity building of teachers towards the curriculum shift should be taken

into consideration by school management. Ramproop (2004) in Mafora and Phorabatho (2013) contend that a system and its associated activities can only be implemented fruitfully by those with a working knowledge thereof. Teachers are therefore, expected to be up- to- date with curriculum related developments. They should also possess appropriate knowledge, skills and attitude to be positive forces of change or the envisaged is likely to fizzle out. The main drivers of successful teaching and learning are teachers.

Hence, quality teachers who can perform their responsibilities with great commitment are prerequisites for successful excellent education. Quality curriculum implemented through effective instruction should ensure successful teaching and learning in schools. This requires that all activities and resources in schools should be optimized to ensure that teaching and learning are implemented effectively (Omar et al., 2011; Grigsby et al., 2010; Duze, 2009a; Hill, 1990; Porter Therefore, school management should ensure that all the teachers in the school are kept abreast with all curriculum developments and changes for them to be effective and have a positive attitude. Training of the teachers in the curriculum shift is a very important management role so as to build capacity in the teachers in relation to the changes. This creates teacher leadership skills.

Danielson (2006) contend that the term leadership refers to the skills demonstrated by classroom teachers who not only teaches students but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classroom to others within their own school and elsewhere. Teacher leadership encourages other teachers to increase performance, especially in teaching and learning because teachers do not have expert reference power that can influence other teachers towards positive attitude towards work. This entails that school management should strive to build capacity of teacher leadership during the curriculum change process so that the teachers develop positive attitude towards the process. Therefore capacity building cannot be over emphasized during a curriculum shift.

Downey, Steffy, Poston and English (2009) further indicates, teachers need to be provided with the training, teaching tools, and the support they need to help all students reach high performance levels. Specifically, teachers need access to curriculum guides, textbooks, or specific training connected to the school curriculum. They need access to lessons or teaching units that match curriculum goals. They need training on using assessment results to diagnose

learning gaps. This can be achieved if the school management realise that capacity building for teachers towards the new curriculum shift is one of its roles.

Ministry of Education (1996) indicates that in order to improve the management capacity of managerial and supervisory personnel, the Ministry of Education will train or re-train educational managers to enable them to discharge their functions effectively. The ministry will develop a strategic framework for management training for the education sector to ensure efficiency. ZECF (2013) further indicates that teachers and teacher educators are key players in any education system and should regularly attend continuing professional development (CPD) programmes. This helps in updating pedagogical approaches, school organisation and management and relationship with parents/guardians and the community. Learning institutions should develop in teachers and teacher educators the spirit of continuing professional development in order for them to effectively implement the curriculum. Continuing professional development builds management and teacher capacity in the implementation of curriculum.

2.5.3 Planning and Leading the Curriculum shift

Planning and leading are management functions in any organisation. Mafora and Phorabatho (2013) contend that planning is a management task aimed to ensure that the organisation's purpose, mission, goals, and strategies are clearly understood by all the parties involved. When planning for the implementation of curriculum change, principals should establish and decide on the human, financial, and physical resources that are requisite for effectiveness (Ornstein and Hunkins 1998; Marsh and Willis 1995). This means that principals should contextualise the planning process and ensure that the anticipated activities help address the unique circumstances of their individual schools. If implementation plans do not match the specific context of schools, curricular reforms are most likely to fail. Jansen (1998) attributes the failure of C2005 to the absence of a detailed plan that addressed the unique context of under-resourced schools, among other factors in South Africa.

According to Ndou (2008), the introduction of a new school curriculum necessitates a fresh look at time management to improve the quality of curriculum change implementation. Schools are expected to finalise planning for each year during the third and fourth terms of the preceding year (Department of Education 2000b). Thus, learner admission, teachers' work allocation, and the procurement and allocation of learning-teaching resources must be completed before the

end of each year so that teaching and learning can start on the first day of schooling in the following year. The latter is, however, conditional upon finalisation of the school timetable which must be overseen by the principal or an assigned delegate.

The implementation of a new curriculum must be supervised (Ornstein and Hunkins 1998). Without supervision teachers are likely to emphasise what they know best, without being overly concerned about the new curriculum (Glatthorn 1997). This implies that school management must lead and guide teachers about the correct content and method of implementing the new curriculum in classrooms. Consistent monitoring is also necessary to help determine the extent to which the teaching methods and strategies are being applied. Monitoring can be done through classroom observations, moderating tests and examinations and looking at learners' work (Department of Education 2000a). Classroom observations in this instance are not done for teacher appraisal purposes, but to engage teachers in instructional dialogue about classroom practices (Glanz 2006). That school management has a role of monitoring how the changed curriculum is being implemented as well as the methodologies being used to meet the goals of a new curriculum. The school management should assume the leadership role in the curriculum shift. This is critical if a curriculum change is to yield the desired fruit.

Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (2013) asserts that planning is important in the work of a teacher and teacher educator. This works as a guide for the effective delivery of lessons and other activities in and outside the classroom. Therefore, school management should plan for the school and also ensure that teachers also plan for their lessons for the effective delivery of the curriculum. Further, effective resource management is important in the achievement of organisational goals and therefore, schools should use and manage teaching and learning resources prudently. School management should take a leading role in the effective management of resources such as human resources, time allocation and finance.

Further, ZECF (2013) indicate that monitoring and evaluation improve teaching practices. Therefore, learning institutions should monitor and evaluate and analyse the effectiveness of their programmes and the teaching and learning strategies. In undertaking monitoring and evaluation activities, the following should be paid attention to:

- Are the aims and objectives reasonable and appropriate?

-Are they being achieved?

-Are resources used to their optimum?

These should be done on a continuous basis for monitoring and evaluation to serve its purpose in the curriculum shift implementation by management at all levels in the education system.

School managements work in collaboration with the inspectorate in the ministry of education and as such inspectors play a key role in ensuring the curriculum shift is a success. Ministry of Education (1996) asserts that inspectors have an advisory and evaluation function in relation to educational provision. Their advisory function is performed through school inspections. On such visits, their principal concern is with improving teacher effectiveness and school organisation. As disseminators of good practice, they stimulate teachers to examine their lesson preparation and follow through; their teaching strategies, the way they are developing or using curriculum materials, how they evaluate pupils and how they organise the teaching session. The school inspectors in this way help the school managements to implement and lead the curriculum shift with fewer complications.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

According to Phakisi (2008), a theoretical framework is regarded as an important component of research because it drives the way for the researcher to conduct appropriate research as it provides the theoretical underpinnings. This study uses curriculum theory as a framework upon which it is constructed. The curriculum theory offers helpful propositions and explanations for understanding curriculum change in any given environment. According to Pinar (2004) curriculum theory is located within the broader field of curriculum studies. Fullan (1992) indicates that it is important to take into consideration factors that further facilitate effective curriculum change. These include materials, monitoring, feedback, assessment and improvements.

Curriculum implementation implantation is a very important stage for every education system to realise its goals. It is at this stage that a curriculum shift can be tested for its effectiveness. There are a number of factors that are at play in the process of curriculum shift in an education system. These are supply of teaching and learning materials, monitoring if the implementation, feedback and assessment. For curriculum implementation to be a success, provision of prescribed teaching and learning materials should be put in place. These will help the curriculum implementers to execute their duties with confidence. Teaching and learning materials are very important for curriculum change implementation because they are the tools

used. Curriculum shift implementation also demands that the teachers entrusted to implement the curriculum are seen to do the rightful things. This calls for the monitoring of the implementation process. This is a very important exercise as it gives direction into which the curriculum shift should go to produce the desired goals. The implementation of a new curriculum must be supervised (Ornstein and Hunkins 1998). Without supervision teachers are likely to emphasise what they know best, without being overly concerned about the new curriculum (Glatthorn 1997). Feedback is another very important element of a curriculum shift implementation and management. Without feedback the people implementing and managing the curriculum would not know they are doing the right thing. Feedback motivates the people entrusted to implement the curriculum change.

As the curriculum shift is in the process it is important that it is assessed to see if the objectives of the curriculum change are being realised or not. Assessment helps the curriculum shift to be judged if it is worth it or not. It is through assessment that the curriculum shift could be maintained if it is achieving or adjusted or improved if some challenges are being realised. This is illustrated in the figure below.

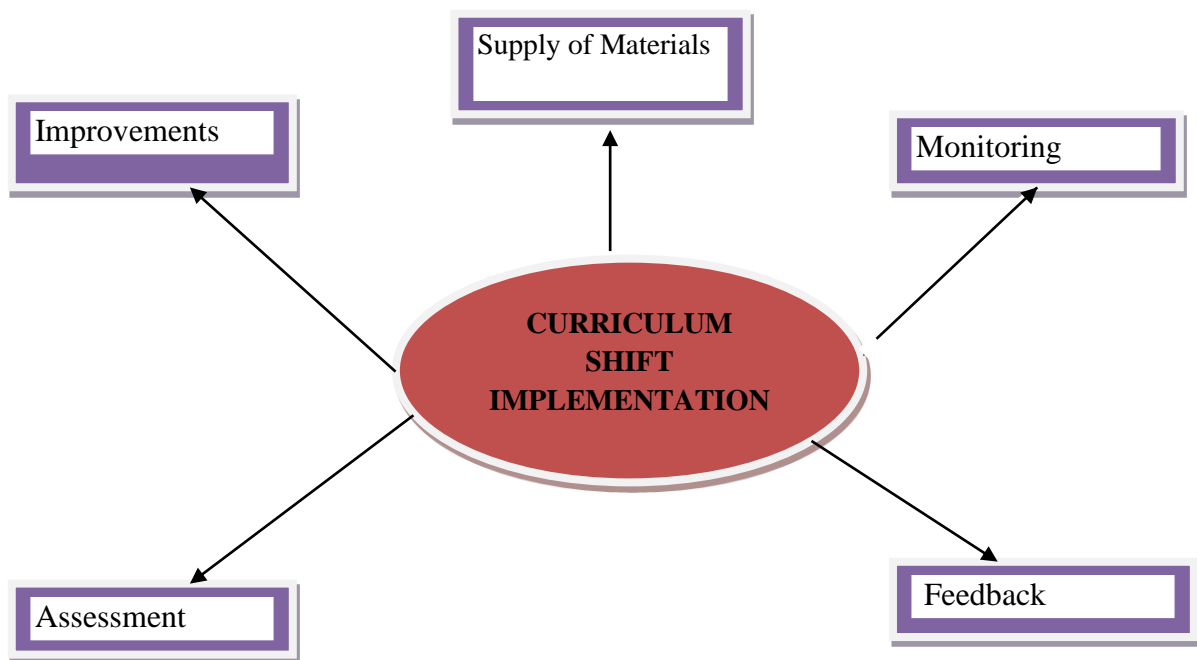


Fig 2.1: Curriculum shift implementation factors

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was followed in conducting the study. According to Wellington (2000: 22), a methodology is “the activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the approaches you use in data collection”. This chapter describes the methodology that was followed in conducting the study. Research methodology is essentially an outline of the procedures through which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomenon (Rajaseka, 2013). Consequently the chapter describes the research design, the target population of the study, sample size and the research instruments to be used, procedure for data collection and the process of data analysis in this methodology. The source of information of this study was mainly interview and focus group discussion. Secondary sources of information were journals, theses and books. Therefore, the research was qualitative in nature. The qualitative approach has been chosen due to its flexible nature and the fact that it allows systematic collection of data.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is often defined as the researcher’s overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions (Moyo et al. 2010). A research design according to Mouton (2008) is a plan or blue print of how you intend to conduct the research. It is also defined as the structure of research. It is the ‘glue’, that holds all of the elements in a research project together (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). A research design is a specification of the way in which data will be created, collected, constructed, coded, analysed and interpreted in order to enable the researcher to draw warranted description, explanatory or interpretive inferences (Bellany and Perri, 2012). The study took a qualitative approach. According to Chilisa and Preece (2005), qualitative design approach is an investigation that involves studying people’s experiences as they occur in their expected situations, the meaning that they attach to the experiences, and the multiple contexts within which these experiences occur.

This approach was descriptive in nature and allowed the researcher to have face to face encounter with the respondents. The reason for choosing descriptive qualitative design was to allow for a full description of the data collected from the study respondents. The description

was based on views obtained from the head teachers and teachers in the selected rural primary schools. In coming up with the respondents in this research, purposeful sampling and simple random sampling were used. The eight schools were purposely selected. The head teachers were also purposefully selected to represent school managements while teachers were randomly drawn using simple random procedure to represent the other members of the population under study.

3.2 Target Population

Tuckman (1991) defines population as all members of all well-defined class of people, events or objects. Borg and Gall (1983) state that a target population refers to all the members of a hypothetical people, events or objects to which I wish to generate the results of my research. In this research therefore, the target population comprised of all the head teachers and class teachers from rural primary schools in Nyimba district.

3.3 Sample Size

According to Ghosh (1992), a sample is a subset of the whole population which is actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalised to the entire population. Ryman (2004) explains that a sample is a segment of the population that is selected for investigation. A sample is a group of subjects or situations selected from a large population. According to Devos (1998) a sample comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. A sample is “a small proportion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis” (Best and Kahn, 2008:13). Cohen and Morrison (2007) explains that on the representativeness of the sample, there is need to consider the extent to which it is important that the sample represents the whole population under investigation, if it is to be a valid sample.

The sample size comprised of eight school managers (head teachers) and forty class teachers from the eight selected rural primary schools of Nyimba district. Each school contributed one eighth of the sample which translates into one (1) head teacher and five (5) class teachers amounting to a total of six (6) participants per school. Among the eight (8) respondents who were school managers five (5) were be male and three (3) were female and among the forty (40) class teachers, twenty five (25) were male and fifteen (15) were female.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

Peil (1995) defines sampling as the process of selecting a subset or sample from the entire population so that the generalisation of the results can be made to the population from which the elements were chosen. In the same vein, sampling is a “...*procedure which a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study*” (Orodho and Kombo, 2002).The sampling procedure for this study was both purposeful and simple random. This is to provide each population element an equal probability of being included in the sample, (White, 2005).Great care was be taken to ensure that equal opportunity were availed to all the members in the target population as much as possible.

The eight schools in the study were purposefully selected following the proximity of the researcher. The teachers were selected using simple random sampling procedure. Random sampling is a technique that gives every member of the population equal chance of being included in the study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). “Simple random sampling means that every member of the sample is selected from the total population in such a manner that all members of the population have essentially the same probability of being selected” (Kulbir, 2002:260).This method has no complexities involved (Kombo& Tromp, 2006).Based on this definition, the researcher chose a simple random technique as it allowed him to bring to the fore a relatively small, clearly defined population used in the study. The head teachers helped the researcher to select the teachers by availing the staff list from which the researcher picked respondents randomly. The head teachers from the eight rural primary schools were purposely selected by virtue of their positions in their respective schools.

3.5 Research Instruments

In collecting data for this research, the instruments that were used were semi-structured interview guides a focus group discussion.

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

Sidhu, (2006) indicates that semi-structured interviews are a good way of collecting information quicker and relatively cheaper. In this type of interview, the interviewer asks questions and makes leading comments towards the information needed for the research. The semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to interact one on one with the head teachers of the selected schools.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The FGD guide focuses a group of people at one time. It is useful especially in trying to get a general perception and feelings of people on an issue. This research instrument was appropriate to this study as teachers were put in groups to discuss their perceptions and feelings about the curriculum shift in rural primary schools. The interviewer asked both open and closed ended questions about the curriculum shift to the teacher groups.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is the process of finding information for the research problem. It may involve administering of a questionnaire conducting an interview or observing what is occurring among the subjects of the study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The collected primary and secondary data provide some facts pertaining to the problem under study. Patton (2002) defines data collection as the gathering of specific aimed at providing or refuting some facts.

The data was collected in the second school term of 2017. To conduct this research, authority had been sought from the University of Zambia. The District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) was approached to seek permission to interview the school managers and teachers in the schools. Appointments were made with the selected school head teachers to ensure availability of the respondents as the researcher went to the schools. Data was collected using semi-structured interview guides and use of focus group discussions in all the eight purposefully selected rural primary schools of Nyimba district. The semi structured interviews were conducted with 8 key informants who where the head teachers using one on one interview with open ended questions which were lasting for about between 30 to 40 minutes. This was to allow the respondents to discuss and raise issues of interest to the researcher.

Focus group discussion as the other primary source was conducted, of which one group constituted 5 teachers was drawn from each of the 8 schools using random sampling. Focus group interviewing represents an open purposive conversation where the researcher asks questions on a specific topic and then guides the discussion by means of questioning. Focus Group Discussions was used in this research to collect data which revealed the experiences, feelings, knowledge, perceptions and beliefs of the respondents on management of the curriculum shift. A voice recorder was used to capture the focus group discussions which helped the researcher process the data after the discussions.

3.7 Data Analysis

Merriam (1992) refers to data analysis as the process of making sense from data. In qualitative research, data generation and analysis constitutes a simultaneous and ongoing process. Bliss et al., (1983), contends that data analysis is the process of examining what has been collected in a survey or an experiment and making some deductions and inferences. It involves uncovering underlying structures, extracting important variables detecting any anomalies and testing any underlying assumptions. Data analysis is categorizing, summarizing and ordering the data and describing them in meaningful terms.

In this study, data was analysed largely qualitative. The data analysis was based on the emerging themes and theoretical framework. Data collected by semi structured interviews were analysed by categorisation of the emerging themes and content analysis. Equally, the data collected by FGDs was thematically categorized and analysed for use in data presentation. Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living or behaviours of respondents (Morton, 1975).Some of the data collected were converted manually and summarized in order to obtain concise measures of data by using descriptive statistics.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

The production of valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner is at the heart of all research. Multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings can be used (Merriam, 1992).

3.8.1 Methodological Triangulation

The methods that were used in collecting data to ensure validity and reliability were FGDs and semi structured interview.

3.8.2 Member Checks

Member checks ensured that important data was actually present and had not been missed out. For the study to accurately represent the findings to the study, the researcher took the findings back to the subjects being studied to verify. The members that were considered were the head teachers.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns in this study were taken into consideration. All data collected in this study was treated with the confidentiality it deserves and duly kept. The collected data was used for no other reason except for the intended purpose. The head teachers were assured that all the data that was generated in the research process was for no other reason except for academic purpose. This was equally mentioned to the teachers involved in the focus group discussions. Verbal consent was also sought from the respondents and ensured that respondents participated voluntarily. The researcher also applied open and honest approach and ensure that the names of schools and respondents involved were not reflected in the report.

3.10 Summary

The study on managing the curriculum shift in rural primary schools of Nyimba district used the descriptive qualitative design. The chapter described the target population and sample size of the research. The chapter has also described the sampling procedure and the research instruments used in the study. Also data collection procedures, data analysis, validity and reliability and ethical considerations were described this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

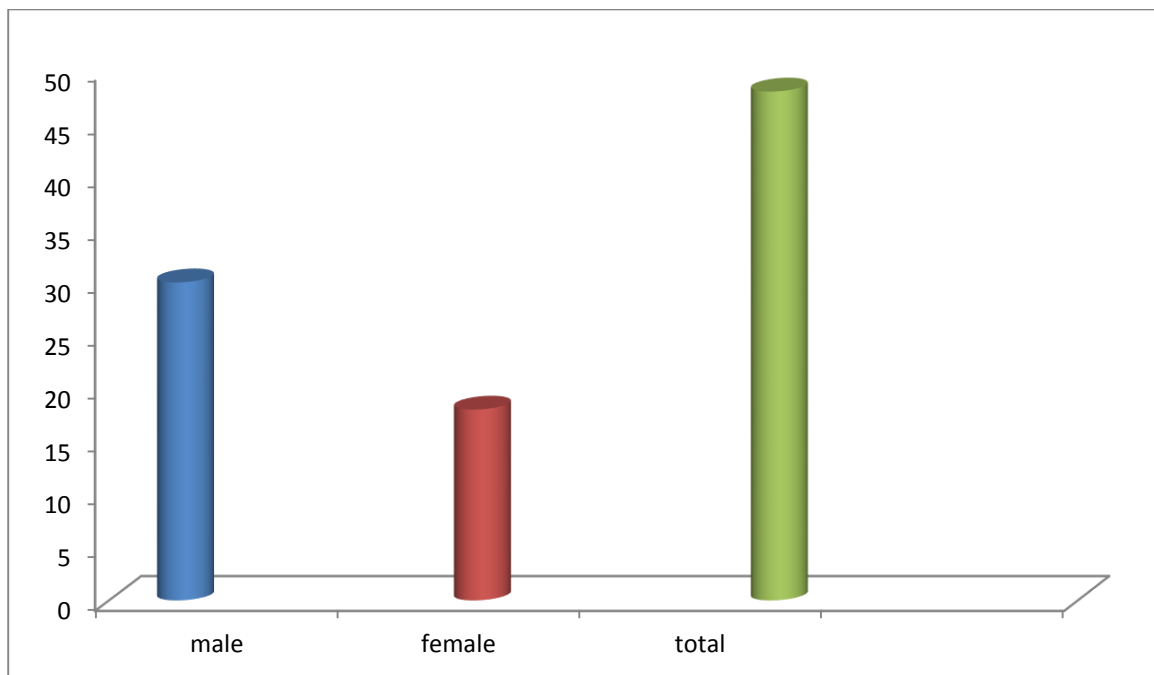
4.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the findings of the study ‘managing curriculum shift in rural primary schools of Nyimba district of Eastern province.’ For the findings to be followed easily, the findings will start by showing the demographic characteristics of the respondents and thereafter, show their responses under the headings determined by the research questions.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Forty teachers were involved to the in the focus group discussions and eight school managers were interviewed using semi interview guides. Of the forty teachers, 25 respondents were males while 15 were females. Of the 8 school managers, 5 were males while 3, were females as respondents. From these statistics it was observed that there were more male respondents than the female respondents in this study. The reason to this biased gender representation is that most rural primary schools are dominated by male teacher as the female teachers opt to teach in urban areas and move on transfers. The gender representation of the respondents table of the class teachers and school managers is shown below.

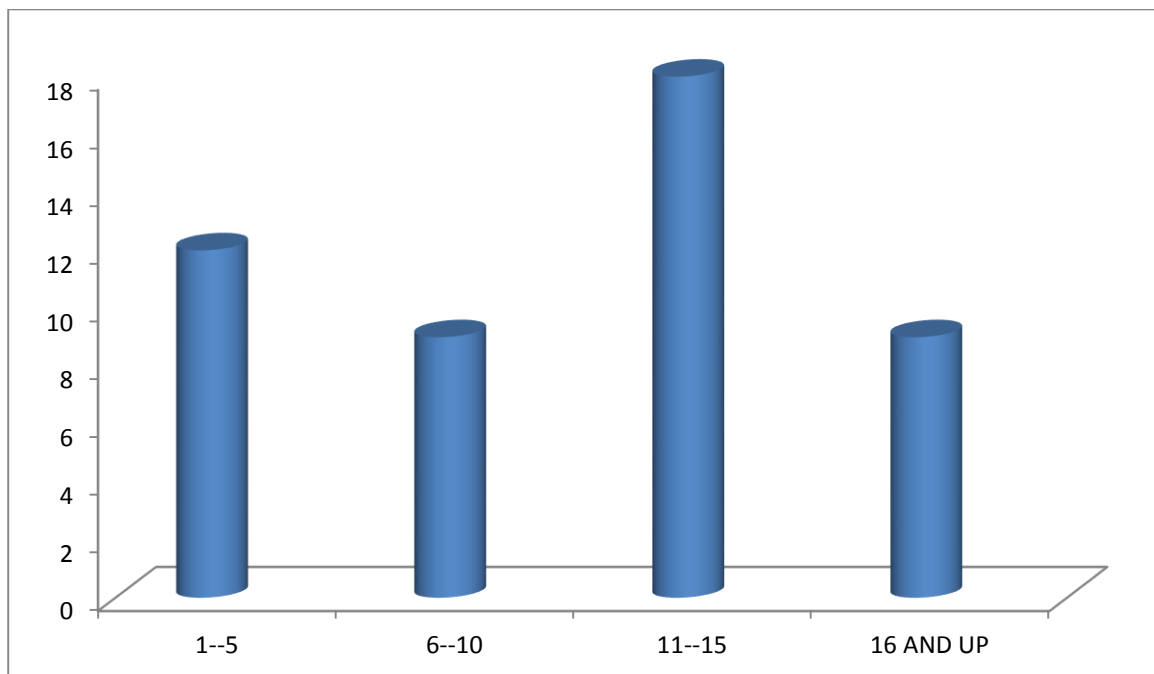
Fig 4.1.1: Gender representation graph of respondents in the study



4.2 Qualifications and Experience of the Respondents

The qualifications of the respondents were also analysed to add value to the findings. 32 out of 40 had primary teacher diplomas, 6 out of 40 had primary teacher certificates and 2 out of 40 had primary teacher degrees. Of the eight head teachers in the study, 7 out of 8 had diplomas and 1 out of 8 had a primary degree. In terms of teaching experience of the respondents, 12 out of 48 had experience between 1 and 5 years' experience, 9 out of 48 had experience between 6 and 10 years, 18 out of 48 had experience of between 11 and 15 years. The remaining 9 respondents had work experience of 16 years and above.

Fig 4.2.1: Teaching Experience of Respondents



From the graph above, it is noticed that only 12 of the respondents had a teaching experience of between 1 and 5 years while 9 had over 5 years teaching experience. This shows that most of the teachers involved in the curriculum implementation and management are well experienced for the curriculum shift.

The findings showed that all the school managers had over 15 years of teaching experience except for one who was a female. It could be also deduced that the school managers were well experienced in the teaching fraternity and capable of implementing and managing the curriculum shift.

4.3 Findings from Semi- Structured interviews with School Managers

4.3.1 Findings on how school managements are managing the curriculum shift to enhance teaching and learning.

Asked on how school managements are managing the curriculum shift, it was revealed that the head teachers were putting in place the guidelines that were enshrined in the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework. The study further showed that school managers indicated that they were finding a number of difficulties in the management of the curriculum shift. All the 8 head teachers indicated that they were facing challenges in managing the curriculum shift. One of the head teachers as key respondent when interviewed said, *“This curriculum change has many problems and is making our work difficult indeed.”*

4.3.2 Challenges faced to manage the curriculum Shift to enhance teaching and learning

The study revealed that there were a number of challenges with regards to the management of the curriculum shift. It was revealed that the curriculum came with inadequate and in some cases no materials. The study further revealed that materials such as pupil’s text books and teacher’s guides were not present in some grades. The respondents were asked on adequacy of human resource and it was revealed by 3 school managers that this was a challenge in the management of the curriculum shift in their schools.

Inquiring on funding from government in the face of free primary education, it was revealed that there was inadequate funding from government. One of the head teachers lamented that,

“The schools received as low as one thousand two hundred kwacha (K1200) as school grant per term and it comes late making it difficult for the schools plan well.”(source: interview with school head 1).

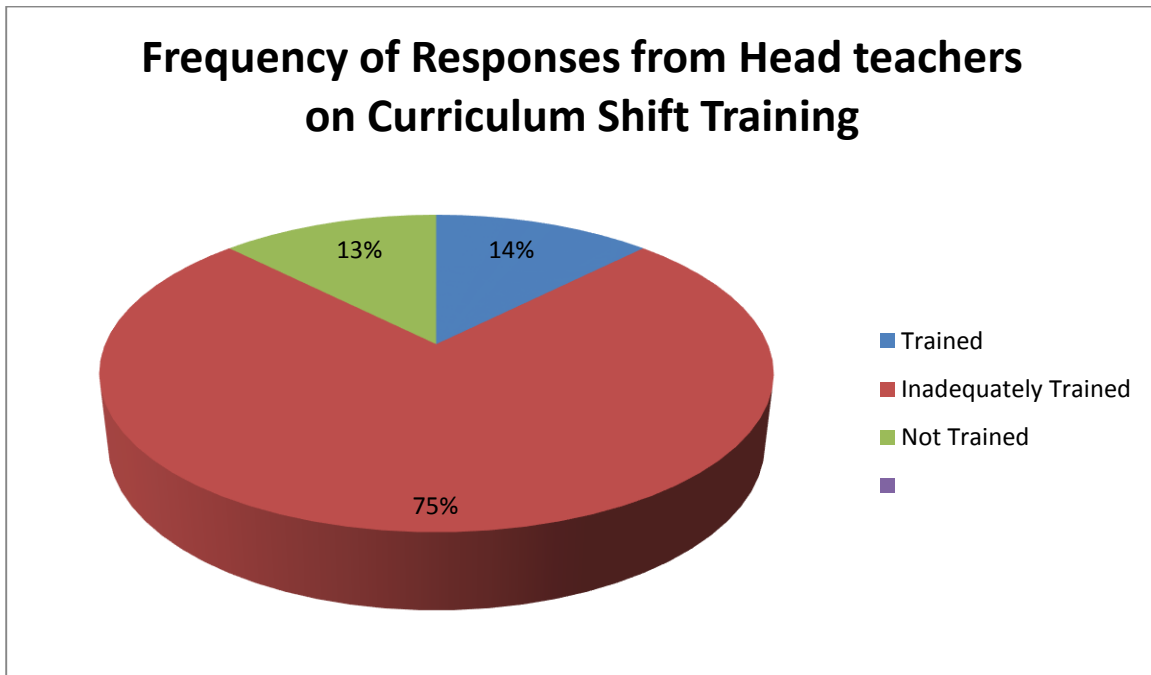
It was revealed that the grants were not adequate to effectively manage the curriculum citing the free education policy.

The study further revealed that school managers were not adequately capacitated enough to manage the curriculum adequately. Out of the 8 head teachers interviewed, 6 were of the view that the trainings for the curriculum shift were not adequate. To validate this one of the head teachers had the following to say,

“This curriculum did not prepare the school managers adequately in terms of trainings. That is why we are still facing problems with this curriculum change even after being introduced five years ago” (source: interview with school head 3)

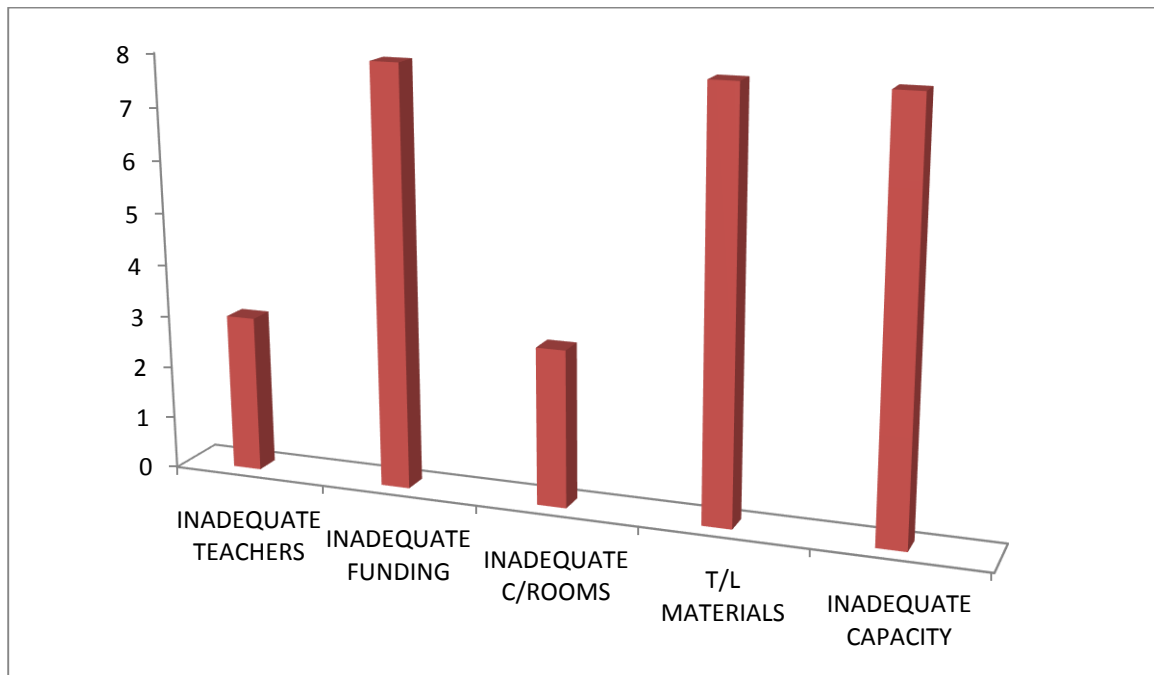
Below is the presentation of data collected on training of head teachers in the curriculum shift in the study.

Figure 4.3.2.1



The respondents were also asked on the adequacy of classrooms. 3 out of the 8 school Head teachers revealed that they had inadequate classroom space and this was a challenge to adequately manage the curriculum shift so as to enhance teaching and learning. Below is a graphical presentation of revealed challenges from school managers.

Fig 4.3.2.2: Challenges faced by school managements in managing the curriculum shift



4.3.3 Suggested improvements to the curriculum shift management

On suggestions to improve the curriculum shift management, all the 8 head teachers interviewed indicated that school head teachers and class teachers should be retrained. To cement on this, one of the head teachers had to say,

“The only way this curriculum can be improved to meet its goals is to retrain all the teachers involved in the implementation because the training was not adequately done.” (source: interview with school head 4).

Of the 8 head teachers interviewed, all further suggested that funding to the primary schools should be increased. To make this elaborate one of the head teachers lamented that,

“curriculum change should be accompanied with the necessary resources especially with free primary education. The grants that we are receiving are very little to buy the needed prerequisites.”(source: interview with school head 7)

The other head teacher indicated that the grants sometimes take long to be given to schools. The head teachers also suggested that the ministry should consider supplying teaching and learning materials to all the grades in schools. This was suggested by 6 of the 8 head teachers

interviewed. Out of the 8 head teachers interviewed, 4 suggested that government should consider sending enough teachers to rural primary schools. One school head teacher said in an interview that,

“The staffing level at my school is very low and we have resorted to double classes to ensure every grad is attended to.”(source: interview with school head 5)

Table 4.3.3.1: Suggested improvements Responses from Head teachers

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY
Retraining	8
Improving Funding	8
Increasing Staffing	4
Supply of Teaching/ Learning Materials	6
Increase Classrooms	3

4.4 Findings from Focus Group Discussions with teachers

4.4.1 Findings on how the curriculum shift is managed by school management

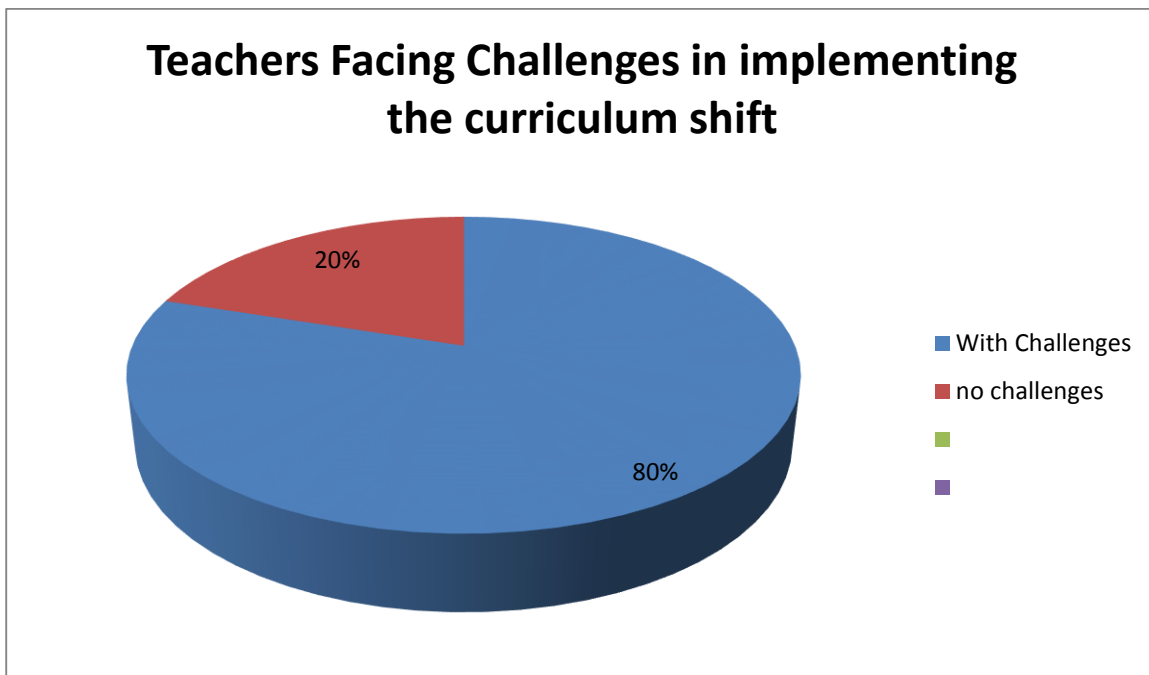
The teachers were asked how the school managers were managing the curriculum shift, 33 of the teachers in the discussions from the schools indicated that curriculum shift was not being managed very well. The teachers also revealed through the interview that their school managers were faced with a number of challenges. One of the teachers said,

“Our head teacher has tried to ensure the curriculum shift is well managed but the school lack adequate resources such as pupil’s text books and the grant that comes is very small to procure the needed materials...it is difficult to properly manage the curriculum shift without materials.”(Source: FGD 4).

4.4.2 Findings on challenges faced in managing the curriculum shift in rural primary schools

Asked on the challenges faced in managing the curriculum shift, 32 of the 40 teachers interviewed indicated that they were facing challenges in implementing and managing the curriculum shift while the teachers indicated that they were not facing any challenge. These findings are represented below.

Fig 4.4.2.1



As on the challenges faced one of the teachers revealed,

“the biggest challenge faced in the implementation and management of this curriculum shift is lack of adequate instructional materials such as teachers books and pupils books in some grades.”(source: teacher from FGD 2)

The findings also revealed that some of the books supplied had a lot of mistakes and misspellings which showed poor quality. A grade five teacher from one of the schools when interviewed evidenced this and she said,

“I teach grade 5 and I see a number of mistakes the pupil’s books. For example Cinyanja pupil’s book page 56 supplied by MK Publishers has problems of spellings.” (source: FGD 3).

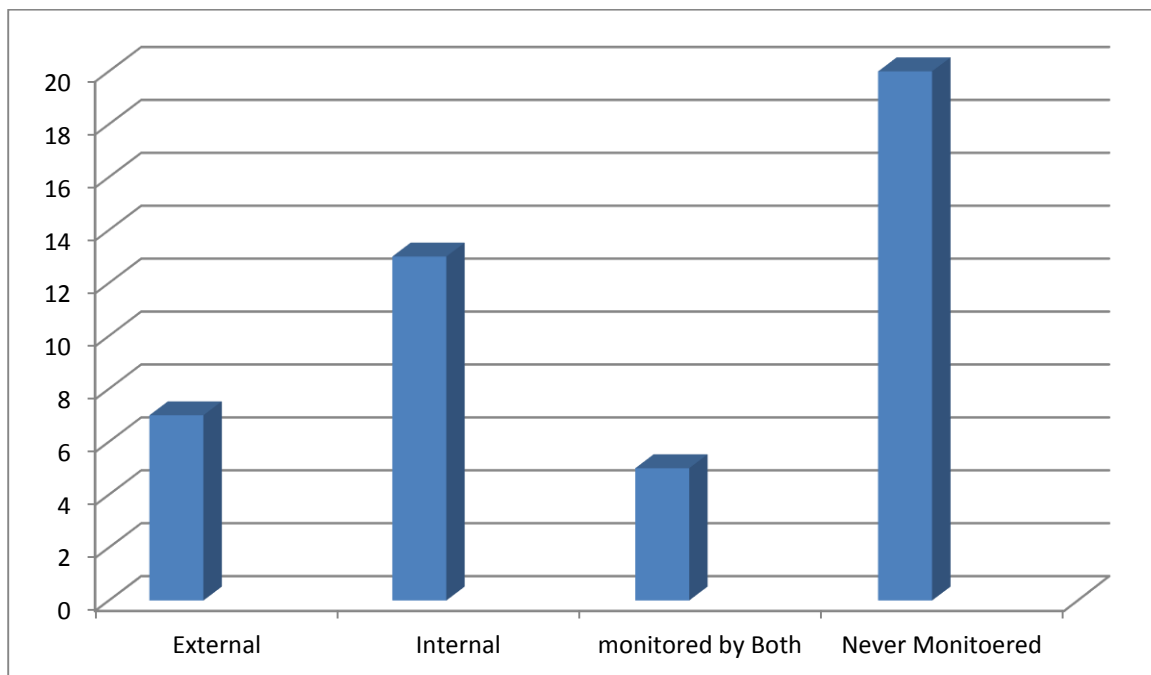
One of the teachers interviewed said,

“The socio- economic background of our learners is poor and mostly their parents fail to buy them books demanded by the curriculum in the book shops so as to supplement what the schools can provide.”(source: FGD 1).

Of the 40 teachers, 33 revealed that they had never been monitored by external monitors. One of the teachers revealed,

“Personally I have never been monitored by any external monitor from the time the curriculum was changed in 2013” (source: FGD 1).

Figure 4.4.2.2: Teacher Monitoring Responses from Respondents



4.4.3 Findings on suggested improvements to curriculum shift to enhance teaching and learning

The teachers were asked to make suggestions on how the curriculum shift could be improved. Out of the 40 teachers 36 suggested that the ministry should supply adequate teaching and learning materials for all the grades in schools. One of the teachers indicated,

“... the ministry of education should consider giving us teaching and learning materials for the curriculum change to run smoothly.” (source: FGD 5).

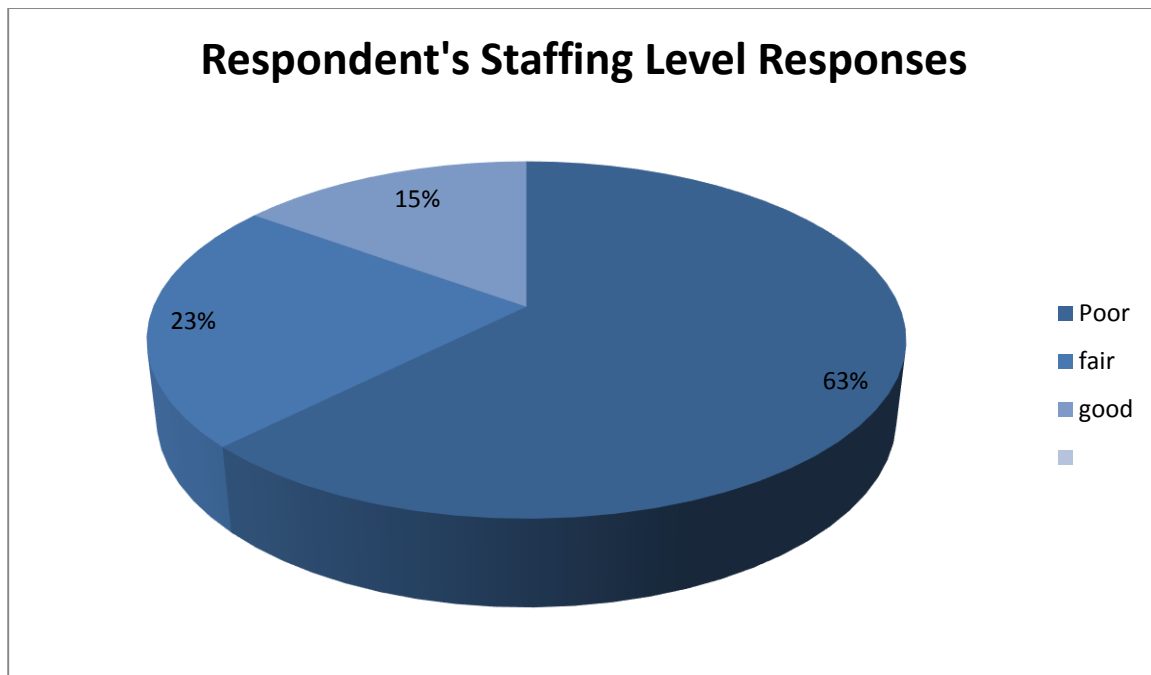
The teachers also suggested that monitoring of the curriculum shift should be scaled up. This was suggested by 30 out of 40 teachers in the study. This was cemented when one of the teachers said,

“I think for the new curriculum to perform better, the internal and external monitoring should be made serious.” (source: FGD 1).

25 out 40 teachers suggested that government should improve staffing in schools as they were very under staffed and 9 of the teachers felt they were well staffed to manage the curriculum. 6 of the 40 teachers indicated they were fairly staffed but needed more to adequately address the demands of the curriculum shift. One of the 9 teachers indicated that,

“At our school the staffing is just alright as everyone has a class to him or herself (source: FGD 1).

Figure 4.4.3.1 Respondent's Staffing Level Responses



Of the 40 teachers, all suggested that the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) should consider revising the text books supplied so far.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research findings based on the research findings. It showed the responses from the school managers and teacher focus group discussions in relation to the research questions on managing curriculum shift in rural primary schools of Nyimba district.

This chapter presents a discussion of the research findings in relation to the revealed literature and emerging themes. As stated by David & Sutton (2004:338), “the discussion section should bring together the main research findings and the key elements of the literature review...” The discussion has been divided into main emerging themes based on research findings. These themes include curriculum management, inadequate teachers, inadequate funding, inadequate classrooms, lack of teaching and learning materials and inadequate capacity building.

5.1 Management challenges of the curriculum shift in rural primary schools

The study established that that the management of the curriculum shift in rural primary schools was poor due to a number of challenges. Among the challenges established are inadequate capacity building/training, inadequate teaching and learning materials, inadequate funding to primary schools, low staffing levels and inadequate classrooms. These are addressed in the following sub themes 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4 and 5.1.5.

5.1.1 Inadequate capacity building/ training

This response was similar with all the key respondents indicating that there was inadequate capacity building before the curriculum shift was implemented. The capacity building trainings were done hurriedly such that they missed some of the important elements of the curriculum shift. This had made the school managements have challenges to effectively manage the curriculum shift. This is in tandem with Ramproop (2004) in Mafora and Phorabatho (2013) who contended that a system and its associated activities can only be implemented fruitfully by those with a working knowledge thereof. Therefore, if the school head teachers who man the schools in which the curriculum is actually being implemented are not abreast with the curriculum shift, problems are expected. The study also established that the majority of the teachers involved in the implementation of the curriculum face challenges in doing so (see figure 4.4.2.1)

From the study, it is observed that the curriculum shift needs to be revisited by all stakeholders by holding well managed re-orientation workshops for it to yield the desired objectives. This would help both the school managers and the class teachers to sharpen their teaching skills in the new curriculum demands. This discussion is supported by Hargreaves (1989), who indicated that poor teaching is the result of an absence of the necessary competences and qualities. The Education authorities need to provide teachers with extensive professional training in order for the teachers to be well equipped with relevant skills and sound knowledge of the subject. This is further supported by Mamosa (2010), who commented that clarity of implementation strategy at the time of preparation and during implementation is critical for the successful implementation of a curriculum to take place and Fullan (1992) who contended that it is a challenge in curriculum implementation if teachers do not understand what they are expected to do. It is for this reason that if the curriculum shift is to be a success, the school managers and the class teachers should be retrained to build capacity in order to make them implement and manage the curriculum with confidence.

5.1.2 Challenge of Inadequate Teachers

The study showed that inadequate teachers were another challenge in the management of the curriculum shift. The study showed that a number of schools in rural areas had inadequate staffing levels and that this was impacting negatively on the management of the curriculum shift. Teachers are the major implementers of a curriculum shift and should always be readily available in schools so as to drive it. This is in tandem with Chinelo, (2012) who asserted that the accomplishment of educational goals and objectives depend highly on teachers who are prime mover in the implementation of the curriculum and teaching and learning. It was established that some of the schools under study were very under staffed such that all the teachers at those schools were handling double classes. This is in line with the study findings shown in figure 4.4.3.1. This arrangement, in reality, disadvantaged one of the classes as the teachers also got tired and in the process made them ineffective. The curriculum shift prescribed eight learning periods per day on average and forty two periods per week. This meant that a teacher had to teach on average a minimum of 16 periods a day and 80 periods per week. This was supported by the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework of MOESVTEE (2013) in the table below that orchestrated the curriculum shift.

Table 5.2.1.1: Grades 1 to 4 time Allocation per Week

	Learning Area	Time	Periods
1	Literacy and language	6hrs 30min	13
2	Mathematics	5hrs	10
3	Social Studies	2hrs 30min	5
4	Integrated Science	2hrs 30min	5
5	Creative Technology studies	4hrs 30min	9
	Total	21 hrs	42

Grades 1 to 4 Time Allocation per week

Source: ZECF (2013: 32)

The table above entails that a lower class needs a minimum of eight periods a day. If a lower class teacher started at 07:00 hrs in the morning, he/ she was supposed to knock off at about 11:45 hrs and start at 13:00 hrs and end at about 17:45 hrs. This indeed compromised the preparation by the teacher as usually in a double class arrangement.

It was further established that due to the inadequacy of teachers, the school managements had made it in such a way that lower classes knocked off at 10: 00 hours while the upper classes knocked off at 12: 00 hours. This was robbing the learners of their precious learning time and could lead to not realising the desired goals and objectives of the curriculum shift. It was also confirmed that some rural primary schools were still making use of untrained teachers who were employed by the community. This also posed a challenge on the effective management of the curriculum shift. It was also revealed that the other contributing factor to inadequate teachers in rural primary schools was lack of teacher accommodation. The teachers refused to be in schools that had no accommodation citing hardships involved renting in villages.

According to curriculum theory, this kind of arrangement interfered with the interpretation and implementation aspect of the curriculum shift. This is so because effective implementation of a curriculum shift is the most important component of curriculum development or shift. The implementers of a curriculum shift are teachers and therefore, the Ministry of Education should ensure that adequate teachers are supplied to rural primary schools.

5.1.3 Challenge of Inadequate Funding

The study established that inadequate funding was another challenge that was being faced by the rural primary schools. The study found that some schools had since introduced PTA levies to ensure the schools procured some of the needed requisites. This was counterproductive to

the aims and objectives of the free primary education for the Zambian child especially citing the socio-economic background of children in rural primary schools. The was in conformity with Ministry of Education (1996) policy document which alluded that poverty was more intense among rural people, in the more remote provinces, in the more remote districts within any province, and among children and women. Further the document mentions. The ministry of Education affirms the need to ensure that the poor and vulnerable are enabled to draw maximum profit from the education system. Their participation must be assured by adequate provision. They must not be denied access through inability to meet school related expenses. It was further established that introduction of the PTA levies in rural primary schools prevented some of the learners in rural areas to access education due to inadequate government funding to the Ministry of Education and subsequently inadequate funding to schools. It was also indicated that the people who spoke and proposed levies during PTA meetings in these rural schools were those whose socio-economical standing was better. This left the disadvantaged with nothing to do but to adhere to the proposed levies. This challenge came out strongly in all the schools amidst the free education policy by government (see figure 4.3.2.2). The free education policy of primary education is in line with Ministry of Education, Circular No. 3 2002 which indicates, “As you are aware, The Republican President, His Excellency Mr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, SC, has announced the introduction of free education at grades 1-7 with effect from this year”. It was further established that funding was previously better under Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme funding (BESSIP) when free education was introduced but lately the funding had been so erratic and so inadequate to supplement the teaching and learning materials government was supplying. This trend is defeating the very cause for free primary education.

It study revealed that sometimes school managers failed to provide the necessary teaching materials because there were no funds in school due to inadequate or no grants from government. Therefore, this discouraged the teachers to put in their best efforts to facilitate the needs of the curriculum shift. This is in agreement with Fullan, (1992) who indicates that lack of teaching and learning materials may also affect the standard and quality of teaching.

5.1.4. Challenge of teaching and learning materials

The study revealed that among the most prominent challenges in the management of the curriculum shift was that of inadequate teaching and learning materials (see figure 4.3.2.2). The study showed that the supply of the teaching and learning materials by the Ministry of

Education was not satisfactory. The study further found that the curriculum shift came into swing unprepared in terms of the needed materials for its success. This made it difficult for teachers to implement the curriculum shift with inadequate or without teaching and learning materials in some instances. This was in agreement with Downey, Steffy, Poston and English (2009) who indicated that teachers need to be provided with the training, teaching tools, and the support they need to help all students reach high performance levels.

The study indeed, confirmed that the curriculum shift was prematurely implemented as evidenced by the quality of the supplied text books in schools which seemed had been hurriedly produced. This was evidenced by the misspellings of some parts of the content and the quality of binding of the few materials that were supplied to the schools. Use of materials that has wrongly done content could be disastrous to the primary school learners as they are beginners of the education system. The learners would learn wrong things altogether. Therefore, the curriculum development centre needed to counter check and validate the text books for unwarranted mistakes before they could supply them to schools for use.

It was also confirmed that grades 3, 4, 5 and 7 only had syllabuses supplied by the ministry of education making it difficult to teach the appropriate content to the learners. Most of the pupils in rural primary schools came from parents with poor or disadvantaged socio- economic background making it difficult to buy recommended text books from book shops to supplement their learning in grades not supplied with text books. This finding was in tandem with Ministry of Education (1996) which indicates that educational provision does not always take sufficient account of the needs of the poor. This means that mostly the schools in rural areas tend to have limited teaching materials making the management of the curriculum shift challenging. This is further in agreement with Hunkins (1998) who argues that the allocation of material resources is one of the aspects that affect curriculum change, as it will make a big difference for learners in highly resourced schools and learners in under resourced schools.

5.2.5 Challenge of inadequate classrooms for the curriculum shift

The study revealed that some rural schools had inadequate classrooms to effectively manage the curriculum shift. It was revealed that some of the schools had only three classrooms catering for grades 1-7 making it very difficult for school management to fully manage the curriculum shift as per expectation. The study therefore, confirmed that some schools in rural areas of

Nyimba were not adequately prepared for the curriculum shift in terms of classrooms. Classrooms are very important consideration for any educational reform if it is to meet its objectives. It was also revealed that some of the schools had only four classrooms to cater for grades 1-7 making it difficult for curriculum shift management and that has increased pupil/teacher contact time.

This confirmed that the environment for the curriculum shift was not conducive for effective management in some rural primary schools. A conducive environment for both learners and teachers in a curriculum shift is one of the prerequisites for successful implementation. Most of the rural primary schools had inadequate classrooms. This concurred with the Ministry of Education (1996) which indicated that educational provision does not always take sufficient account of the needs of the poor. The remotest areas, where poverty is most intense, are characterised by poorest schools that have poor buildings, inadequate materials, and few trained teachers. Kruger (2002) also asserted that the successful implementation of a new curriculum depends on the school environment within which it is to be implemented. This meant that the education authorities should have taken into consideration the plight of the rural primary schools in terms of increase of classrooms.

5.3 suggested improvements to the curriculum shift

Findings of the study had further suggested ways through which the management of the curriculum shift could be improved in rural primary schools in Nyimba district (see figure 4.3.3.1). One of the suggestions that were suggested was to initiate a district curriculum shift retraining workshop for all head teachers and class teachers. It was revealed that such a retraining would equip both the head teachers and class teachers with the necessary skills demanded by the new curriculum. This was in agreement with Ministry of Education (1996) that indicated that in order to improve the management capacity of managerial and supervisory personnel, the Ministry of Education will train or re-train educational managers to enable them to discharge their functions effectively. The ministry would develop a strategic framework for management training for the education sector to ensure efficiency. ZECF (2013) further indicated that teachers and teacher educators were key players in any education system and should regularly attend continuing professional development (CPD) programmes. The study revealed that this suggestion would make their work easier in the implementation of the curriculum.

The study also suggested that monitoring of the curriculum shift should be scaled up. This suggestion would help to improve the implementation and management of the curriculum shift in rural primary schools as both the head teachers and class teachers would be advised accordingly. This was in line with ZECF (2013) which indicated that monitoring and evaluation improve teaching practices. Therefore, learning institutions should monitor and evaluate and analyse the effectiveness of their programmes and the teaching and learning strategies. Monitoring is a very important aspect of curriculum shift if it were to be a success as it makes head teachers and class teachers engage in reflection on their performance. Monitoring is supposed to involve both internal and external to be effective.

The study findings further revealed that increase of teachers in rural primary schools was another suggestion to improve curriculum shift management. Some schools in rural primary schools were so under staffed to effectively manage the curriculum shift. Teachers are the implementers of any curriculum shift and should, therefore, be available in schools to perform this role. Without enough teachers in schools the quality of the education delivery is affected negatively as the teachers would be overloaded with work.

The study revealed a suggested that government should improve on consistency of remitting grants to primary schools and also increase it. The school need financial resources to run effectively especially in the face of free primary education. The study further indicated that it was proving difficult to effectively manage the curriculum shift with the meagre resources that were given by government to the primary schools. This was in tandem with Fullan (2007), who stated that no significant teaching and learning takes place without sufficient resource materials for the curriculum to be implemented effectively as per plan.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to establish how selected rural primary schools were managing the curriculum shift in Nyimba district of eastern province. The study, therefore, aimed at filling the gap by establishing the challenges faced by rural primary schools in managing the curriculum shift. It was from this background that this chapter made conclusions and recommendations of the study.

The conclusion and recommendations were based on the research findings from the respondents. The sample target of the respondents was 40 class teachers and 8 school managers. The school managers responded by face-to-face semi structured interview and the class teachers responded by focus group discussions. The presentations and analysis of the findings were organised in relation to the research questions and objectives that were formulated. Therefore, the research conclusions and recommendations are based on the findings drawn from the emerging themes.

6.1 Summary of findings

From the findings and discussions, the study showed that the curriculum shift management in rural primary schools was poorly managed as it had a number of challenges. The study found that the management of the curriculum shift had a number of challenges. Among these challenges, the most prominent ones were inadequate teaching/learning materials to support the curriculum shift, inadequate funding (grants) to primary schools and inadequate capacity building for both school managers and class teachers to manage and implement the curriculum shift. The other challenges that were revealed were inadequate teachers to implement the curriculum shift and inadequate classrooms. The later challenges led to reduction of learning time for the learners so that teachers were availed time to prepare and classroom sharing for different grades respectively. This reduction in teaching and learning time was detrimental to the curriculum shift attainment of the intended goals and objectives.

6.2 Conclusion

Curriculum shift, in any education system, can never be avoided in this dynamic society. Every system of education looks forward to churning out of graduates that would fit and beneficial to the society it serves. It is, therefore, necessary that an education system assesses the societal needs and ensure that it strives to address these needs by way of initiating curriculum shift that addresses these needs. This was what the curriculum shift in the Zambian education system had been striving to address. This was to ensure that the graduates from the education system at any level were as relevant as possible to the society.

The management of the curriculum shift was being managed fairly well but with a number of challenges that impeded the meeting the desired goals and objectives. Most prominent of these challenges revealed were inadequate teaching/learning materials, inadequate funding to the primary schools in the face of free primary education and inadequate capacity building for both the school managers and teachers to effectively manage and implement the curriculum shift. Other challenges revealed included inadequate teaching staff in some schools and inadequate classrooms.

To reduce some of these challenges, the school managements had to improvise the curriculum shift materials with old materials. In some cases some school managements had engaged untrained teachers to address the challenge of inadequate teachers. On addressing the challenge of inadequate classrooms some school managements had reduced learning time for the learners. These interventions of addressing the challenges were in some way viable but could impede the attainment of the goals and objectives of the curriculum shift.

6.3 Recommendations

In line with the significance of the study, it was important to realise that the results of this study, as useful as they might be, would make no difference to the education system if not accompanied by appropriate action by relevant stake holders. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

- Policy makers and Curriculum developers should consult widely on the feasibility of initiating a curriculum shift in both urban and rural primary schools to ensure uniform curriculum shift.

- Curriculum developers should consider coming up with a transparent and worthwhile tendering procedure for the supply of quality teaching and learning materials so that the schools receive quality teaching/learning materials in good time.
- The ministry of education through the curriculum development centre conduct adequate capacity building for both the school managers and teachers to ensure effective management and implementation of a curriculum shift.
- The ministry of education should put up adequate monitoring and evaluation procedures and guidelines to ensure the curriculum shift management and implementation in schools take the right path.
- The government through the ministry of education should increase funding to the primary schools to ensure free primary education is upheld and challenges to the management of the curriculum shift are reduced.
- The ministry of education should consider employing teachers who really are genuinely willing to serve in rural primary schools in order to address the challenge of inadequate teachers in rural primary schools.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Semi Structured Interview Guide for School Managers

Research Question: Managing curriculum shifts in rural primary schools of Nyimba district of eastern province.

1. In your view, what is the significance of the current curriculum shift in relation with the current socio-economical trends in society?
2. What roles do you play as school manager to ensure effective implementation and management of the new curriculum shift orchestrated by the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework?
3. What are some of the challenges that you are facing to effectively implement and manage the current curriculum shift in your school?
4. In your view, how best could the curriculum shift been done to address the challenges of management in schools?
5. What suggestions of improvements and adjustments can you make to ensure success of the current curriculum shift?

Appendix 2

Focus Group Discussion Guide for

Class Teachers

Research Topic: Managing curriculum shifts in rural primary schools in Nyimba district of eastern province.

1. In your view, what is the significance of the current curriculum shift in relation to current socio-economic trends in society?
2. How has the implementation of the current curriculum shift in your classes?
3. What challenges have you faced to effectively implement the current curriculum shift if any?
4. How supportive has school management been to ensure your effective implementation of the current curriculum shift?
5. In your view, how best could the curriculum been introduced to improve your implementation capacity as a teacher?