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ABSTRACT

The researcher investigated the management and implementation of the Common Tasks for Assessment Instrument as a tool for assessing Grade 9 learners in public schools. The objectives were to investigate:

- what the CTA Instrument entails for teaching and learning
- its positive and negative aspects
- training and development of the school management teams (SMTs) and Grade 9 educators in preparation for the implementation
- the management of its implementation
- learner performance

Four schools, comprising two urban and two township schools from the former Transvaal Education Department and the House of Delegates, respectively, were involved in this qualitative study. Grade 9 educators, SMT members and district officials were interviewed in this exploratory case study.

The study indicates that:

- The CTA Instrument entails a large amount of work for little marks.
- Educators identified a few positive and a large number of negative aspects of the Instrument.
- Training and development for SMTs and Grade 9 educators were inadequate.
- Management styles and models, and leadership styles and models varied. The quality of management practices differed from one school to another.
- On the whole, although implementation was satisfactory it was fraught with numerous problems largely relating to management's lack of effective support, their inadequate training and poor assessment competence, insufficient guidance for instruction, limited resources, learner apathy, staff instability, and absenteeism, amongst other problems.
- Although some of the learners performed very well, this should not distract attention from the majority who performed badly. Factors such as poor socio-economic backgrounds, learners' negative attitudes, their insufficient participation and poor commitment to their studies, amongst others, affected their involvement and the overall results.

Key words

management, leadership, implementation, Learning Programme: Language, Literacy and Communication: English Primary language, Grade 9, Common Tasks for Assessment, assessment, external examination, learner performance, training and development, Gauteng.