

**Teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy  
statement in the Nzhelele West Circuit**

by

NTHATHENI SIMON RAMABULANA

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SUPERVISOR: PROF. GEESJE VAN DEN BERG

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## DECLARATION

I declare that **TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT IN NZHELELE WEST CIRCUIT** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



16 November 2017

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NS Ramabulana

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my late and beloved elder brother, who always wished for and imagined his brother graduating with a master's degree one day. I also dedicate this work to my late and first supervisor, Dr. MM Rakoma, for her tireless efforts and educational inspiration to push me to the limit, even in her difficult times. Lastly, I dedicate this dissertation to my family, whose inestimable encouragement has assisted me to make this project a reality.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CER	Critical Emancipator Research
CTA	Curriculum Teaching Assessment
CER	Critical Emancipator Research
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CET	Critical Emancipatory Theory
DBE	Department of Basic Education
HOD	Head of Department
GET	General Education and Training
LTMS	Learning and Teaching Material Sources
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
MTT	Ministerial Task Team
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development unit
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PTD	Primary's Teacher Diploma
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
USA	United State of America

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research in this mini-dissertation was to explore the perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in one of the schools in Nzhelele West Circuit. The particular area was chosen because there are a number of rural, disadvantaged schools. The study further identified and clarified the possible obstacles to the implementation of CAPS. This study was exploratory and qualitative in nature, and adopted a case study research design to investigate teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CAPS in the chosen area.

The research was performed with a sample of purposively selected participants, namely the principal, one Head of Department, and four teachers. Semi-structured interviews, observation and document analyses were the methods of data collection. Document analysis was used to corroborate the data collected through observation and interviews.

The findings indicated that teachers were not ready to accept and implement the new curriculum. Although the findings highlighted the differences in their knowledge regarding the introduction of CAPS, they shared the same sentiments regarding the interpretation and understanding of CAPS content and components. Furthermore, this study revealed that some encounters impeded teachers from successfully implementing the CAPS. It was clear that teachers required comprehensive orientation and further training on the subject, as well as relevant teaching and learning support material, support and frequent monitoring, proper infrastructure, and a conducive teaching and learning environment. The findings highlighted that without the mentioned challenges, it was not possible to successfully implement CAPS.

Based on the findings from interviews, observations and document analysis, the study made the following recommendations: in order to ensure effective CAPS implementation, the Department of Education and curriculum designers have to consult widely and involve teachers and parents during the planning phase. In addition, teacher development has to be a priority in the process of introducing every new curriculum, and teachers need to be monitored and supported in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

**Keywords:**

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

Teachers' perceptions

Teacher knowledge

National Curriculum Statement

Curriculum implementation

Critical emancipatory research

Teacher development

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# CHAPTER 1

## OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1994, when the African National Congress came into power in South Africa, one of their key roles was to transform and unite a nation that had been torn apart by a system of racial inequality. In order to achieve this, many changes were planned, designed and implemented. One of the most critical and pervasive endeavours was to reconstruct the education system. The first democratic government of South Africa embarked on curriculum changes based on two main imperatives, namely to remove elements of discrimination within the national curriculum, and to create a curriculum that would be responsive to the ever-changing socio-economic environment, as well as to global competitiveness.

The introduction of Curriculum 2005 in 1998 was a positive step towards the realization of its goals. Curriculum 2005 was designed to improve the quality of education for all South African learners, but failed to do so because of certain applications that created challenges during and after implementation (Department of Basic Education, 2012: 2). One of the contributing factors was that teachers were not sufficiently equipped with the knowledge, skills, equipment and techniques to implement the new curriculum in their classrooms (Potterton, 2008: 15). In light of the problems experienced when trying to implement the changes in practice, Curriculum 2005 was revised twice, with the purpose of streamlining and strengthening the implementation process. Nevertheless, teachers in remote rural areas struggled to implement the curriculum effectively in their classrooms (Blease & Condy, 2014: 46).

Both the first revision, known as the National Curriculum Statement for Grades R-9, and the second revision, known as the Revised National Curriculum Statement for Grades R-9, addressed implementation problems caused by too many design features and complex language usage. This challenge particularly affected teachers' instructional method, which was beset with an overt misunderstanding of terminology (Hoadley & Jansen, 2009: 223). Furthermore, the three policy documents, namely the subject statements, learning program and subject assessment guidelines, were reduced into one policy document, namely the Curriculum and

Assessment Policy Statement (McMillan, 2012: 4). The aim of these changes was to streamline the curriculum with assessment and development outcomes.

In response to concerns expressed by teachers who faced various challenges in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement Grade R–12, the Minister of Education appointed a ministerial task team to investigate the challenges experienced in implementing the NCS Grades R–12. The team recommended that:

- teacher orientation and training should be improved to strengthen the implementation of curriculum changes;
- learning support materials should be made available;
- provinces should support the implementation of the curriculum; and
- time-frames for implementation should be relaxed (Department of Basic Education, 2010: 3).

In 2011, Angie Motshekga, the South African Minister of Basic Education, stated that the process of curriculum change had been extensive and widely consulted, yet its nature was very confusing (Department of Basic Education, 2011a: 4). Another task team was appointed to investigate the problems in this regard, so that the curriculum and quality of teaching and learning could be improved. Its main purpose was to provide guidelines on how best to improve curriculum implementation, and to assist in bridging the gap between the National Curriculum Statement and expectations from key players. The research conducted by the task team recommended that:

- learner portfolio files should be discontinued;
- teachers should have a single file for planning;
- the Common Tasks of Assessments (CTA's) should be discontinued; and
- paperwork needs to be reduced to allow more time for teacher/learner contact (Department of Basic Education, 2011: 4).

According to Gultig, Hoadley and Jansen (2008: 190), the new approach, namely the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), had fundamental flaws, despite its common sense and comparative appeal. Its successful implementation in classrooms requires innovative

classroom management and organization skills. One of the challenges that needs to be addressed is to motivate teachers to be innovative in their teaching. A major component of the challenges experienced during the implementation process has to do with inadequate adaptive implementation strategies. The RNCS did not live up to the expectations of the department and interested stakeholders, hence the task team made a further recommendation that the development of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) would have the potential to assist in the improvement of quality education. The Department provided its overview of the policy and national, collective decision-making process in the following recommendations (Department of Basic Education, 2011a: 4):

- removal of outcomes and assessment standards;
- reduction of the number of projects required by learners;
- reduction of the number of learning areas in the intermediate phase of the General Education and Training (GET) band;
- regular and systematic external assessment of mathematics, home language and English in grades 3, 6 and 9.

In January 2010, the CAPS documentation was finalized for implementation in 2011. After the process of involving teacher unions in the do-ability of the curriculum, the Minister approved it for implementation (Department of Basic Education, 2011a: 14). The CAPS was then implemented in phases, starting with grades R – 3 and grade 10 in 2012, grades 4 – 9 and grade 10 in 2013, and grade 12 in 2014 (Department of Basic Education, 2011a: 5). The first grade 12 CAPS examination was written in 2014. The rationale behind the introduction of CAPS and its features was communicated to both the School Management Team (SMT) and educators.

During the implementation of the CAPS, teachers were periodically reviewed to accommodate emerging trends and paradigm shifts around the development, as informed by emerging research and innovation of both the SMT and teachers as the key role players. Most of the challenges were those faced by educators in rural areas, because curriculum changes create new needs in society, which in turn need to be addressed by the kind of teaching taking place in a particular institution. Being isolated from their peers in other areas, the researcher wanted to find out if teachers at remote rural schools' experience unique, geographical

challenges not yet addressed during the recent implementation of curriculum changes in South Africa.

Based on the above discussion, the problem formulation for the study will be discussed in the next section.

## **1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Curriculum changes in South Africa have been an issue since the first democratic general elections held in 1994. The reasons for these changes, as explained in section 1.1, were to streamline the occurrence of trends that are not in line with new developments in the country and worldwide (Grobler, 2003: 34). Curriculum changes were also intended to establish a wide range of opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups. Teachers, however, experience challenges in the implementation of these changes. The introduction and implementation of CAPS was viewed as a solution to the above mentioned intention and challenges. The aim was to address the knowledge gap created by the regime government and the challenges of modern technology at a global level.

The CAPS for Grades R-9 was supposed to bring changes to the lives of the community, improve the quality of life, release the potential of each learner, lay a foundation for the development of learners who can become active and critical members of their communities, and to build a united and non-racial community (Hoadley & Jansen, 2009: 207). However, these changes were not realised in practice because educators were confused about the changes, were overloaded, received insufficient training, were underperforming and stressed, and even lost all motivation during the implementation process (McMillan, 2012: 1).

The Minister of Basic Education again appointed a panel of curriculum experts in 2012 to assess the implementation, in order to enhance the understanding of the curriculum to be implemented in classrooms. The aim was to make it user-friendly, but it did not realise its objectives as envisaged in areas such as the Nzhelele West circuit, which is one of the circuits located in the Vhembe district. Some of the schools in this circuit are situated in rural areas. As one of the teachers in this area, my observation was that teachers were struggling to adapt to the curriculum changes, which were viewed as an undesirable aberration, rather than an appropriate goal for practice and policy, due to contextual problems. One of the difficulties

teachers experience is that they are not always able to attend workshops and conduct contact sessions with learners as expected by the Department, due to the poor quality of the roads and mode of transport. They cannot use their cars, and therefore make use of available public transport. Only one bus is available, and this bus waits for them until everybody has finished their work. This logistical problem affects the provision of training opportunities, even if a workshop starts at twelve in the afternoon, as teachers will not be able to attend workshops at certain times because of not having the necessary transport. Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 331) believe that staff development and training activities are critical elements of successful implementation, in order to equip educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for the implementation process.

Another challenge is the lack of resources. The Department of Education requires learners to participate actively in their learning. Learners have to take the responsibility for their own learning, individually as well as cooperatively, while teachers serve as coaches (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, 2008: 2). Due to a lack of resources at some schools in the Nzhelele West Circuit, this type of learning and teaching, as required by the CAPS curriculum for Grades R-9, cannot take place. Furthermore, due to the scarcity of support materials and resources such as books and other learning material, learners are deprived of the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning

One of the motivations for undertaking this study is insufficient research on curriculum implementation in rural areas such as the Nzhelele West circuit. The review of literature relating to perceptions of teachers regarding CAPS implementation has identified a gap in existing research. The Department of Basic Education overlooked the context in which CAPS will be implemented in these areas. In addition, curriculum designers have not considered the context in which the curriculum will be delivered. This study aims to explore these neglected areas.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Against the background, as stated in the previous section, the main research question of the research in this mini-dissertation was the following:

## **What are the perceptions of teachers in the Nzhelele West circuit regarding the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement?**

Based on the main research question, as stated above, the following sub-questions were formulated:

- What are the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of CAPS?
- How do teachers perceive the curriculum changes during the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement?
- What factors are impacting the implementation of curriculum change?
- What strategies do teachers have for the effective implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement?

### **1.4 RESEARCH AIMS**

Based on the main research questions as stated above, the aim of this research was to determine the perceptions of teachers in the Nzhelele West circuit regarding the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement.

The study further sought to address the following objectives:

- To investigate the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of curriculum changes.
- To determine the perceptions of teachers regarding the curriculum changes while they were implementing the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement in the classroom.
- To investigate the possible factors influencing the implementation of curriculum changes at this remote rural school.
- To determine the strategies employed by teachers to ensure the effective implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement.

## **1.5 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

The school curriculum should play an important role in forging life-long learning competencies, social attitudes and skills, such as tolerance and respect, gender quality, and promotion of human rights (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, 2008: 35). This study seeks to understand how the implementation of curriculum changes can be improved in primary schools, particularly in the remote rural areas of the Limpopo province of South Africa. Through the researcher's involvement with the implementation of new curricula in schools, he has observed that curriculum implementation seems to be prone to failure in this area. The study therefore aims to identify the challenges that impede the implementation of new curricula, in order to support effective and efficient teaching and learning in these schools.

Some of the challenges are that curriculum changes become generic concepts that subsume a whole range of terminology development. It has allowed subjects or learning areas to automate many of the old terms used in the subject matter in the previous curriculum. There are many terminology changes - for example, subject to learning area and back to subject again, scheme of work to pace setter, retained to not achieved, and many more. These changes confuse both teachers and learners, in such a way that the whole process of implementation becomes immaterial.

This study also seeks to highlight the implementation problems experienced in rural areas, since these challenges may impact negatively on the implementation of curriculum changes. It is believed that if these problems are addressed, learning and teaching in remote rural schools can be improved.

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.6.1 Research approach**

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 87), it is extremely important to choose a viable method that will enable the kind of data collection and analysis that can respond to the research problem. Maree (2010: 34) believes that the research design should be clearly and succinctly delineated, and in such a way that the investigation will not lose its focus. This research, which focused on the implementation of the CAPS at a remote rural school in Limpopo province, was

conducted from a pragmatic perspective. The study used an overarching qualitative approach. A qualitative approach uses methods that explain phenomena in their complexity (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 133). It also focused on the wording, description and explanation of populations' perspectives within their real-life context. Using qualitative research will allow the researcher to better understand the perspectives of participants within their own environment. The researcher uses this approach to reflect on the feelings, beliefs, ideals, and thoughts of the participants in their natural settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 340). It suggested that the researcher focused on the participants' point of view.

Some of the elements that influence the choice of a qualitative approach are the following:

- It requires the use of various strategies to enhance validity
- It is inductive in nature
- It focuses on meanings and interpretations of reality by participants
- It gives the researcher an opportunity to use more than one method of data collection.

(McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 340)

Qualitative data collection involves the personal and in-depth responses of individuals (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 107; Maree, 2010: 38; Mouton & Marais, 1996: 204).

It is with the above understanding that the researcher opted to use the qualitative approach. This approach had assisted the researcher to examine the problems related to this research in detail.

### **1.6.2 Sampling**

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a portion from the entire population for investigation (Maree, 2010: 79). Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 144) hold the view that sampling in qualitative research is all about conducting content analysis research with a small part of the large population. The population under investigation comprised of primary school teachers working at remote rural schools, who had to implement the CAPS for Grades R-9 in their classrooms. For the purpose of this study, participants were purposively selected in order to

allow the researcher to draw rich information on the phenomenon under investigation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 202). Two categories of teachers were selected, the first being teachers who have been in the service of the Department of Basic Education for many years. These teachers were considered because they have a significant amount of experience in terms of different curricula. Their experience assisted the researcher because they were able to talk about the curriculum changes and their impact. Young teachers who are members of the School Management Team (SMT) were also considered in this study, since they are young and fresh from training institutions. They were therefore able to indicate the differences and similarities between the new curriculum and what they have been taught. It was also important for them to express how curriculum changes were affecting their teaching. In addition, they were faced with the task of planning supporting programmes for other teachers. The teachers were selected from a remote primary school, and more information about them will be provided in chapter 3 of this study.

### **1.6.3 Data Collection**

Both qualitative and quantitative researchers use a range of data collection methods. During this investigation, the following data collection methods were used:

- Individual, face-to-face interviews, where teachers and members of the SMT were interviewed.
- Non-participant observation, whereby the researcher took time to observe activities in and around the school.
- Document analysis was carried out and certain documents were requested, both from teachers and learners.

These methods were discussed in detail in chapter 3.

Qualitative data were collected by means of a case study, which was discussed in detail in chapter 3.

#### **1.6.4 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the process of making sense out of the large amount of collected information and, in the context of this study, relates the research activities and perspectives of individuals on how curriculum changes can be understood (Merriam, 2009: 178). This is where the researcher summarised what has been heard and seen in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that assisted in interpreting and understanding the phenomenon under investigation, and in drawing conclusions (Maree, 2010: 100). The collected data was organised into small, intensive, examined data sets that will keep track of text. The researcher ensured that the reduced and organised sets of data respond to the research question. This involved reducing the volume of raw information into identified significant patterns to construct a meaningful framework. The researcher endeavoured to present different perspectives of individuals in a logical manner, in order to integrate loose information from the transcripts with the observations and document analysis. The researcher used content analysis to collate information from different perspectives, with the aim of identifying patterns in the raw data (Leedy & Ormord, 2005: 142). Maree (2010: 101) believes that it is helpful because it assists the investigation to identify similarities and differences from the emerging themes.

#### **1.6.5 Ethical considerations**

Leedy and Ormord (2005: 101) maintain that ethical issues are principles that the researcher, as the principal of the project, should observe whenever human beings or animals are the focus of the investigation. Ethics are measures that the researcher should bind himself to in conducting his research. The Helsinki Declaration of 1972 emphasises that “it is imperative to obtain clearance from an ethical committee when human (or animals) subjects are involved in any kind of research of an empirical nature” (Maree, 2010: 300). Strydom (2002: 63) adds that “anyone involved in the research needs to be aware of the general agreements about what is proper and improper in the scientific research”. In addition to this statement, McMillan and Schumacher (1993: 195) highlight the fact that for any research conducted within an institution, be it a school, college, university or other institution, approval to conduct the research should be obtained before any data is collected. For the purpose of this study, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the College of Education at Unisa (see Annexure J).

Furthermore, he received permission from the circuit manager in Nzhelele West, as well as the school principal (see Annexure D and E), to conduct the research.

This research is also underpinned by other ethical considerations. Participation will be voluntary and the participants can withdraw at any stage from the research (Leedy & Ormod, 2005: 101). They will be protected from harm, and their consent will be obtained before any data is collected. The privacy of the participants will be respected and all information will be handled confidentially. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure the anonymity of the participants. The ethical considerations will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 of this study.

## **1.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS (reliability and validity)**

According to Phelan and Wren (2005: 6), reliability refers to the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Shuttleworth (2008: 8) concurs that the idea behind reliability is that any significant result must be more than a once-off finding, and must be inherently repeatable. Other researchers must be able to conduct the same research, under the similar conditions, and generate similar results. Winter (2000: 7) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study. He further indicates that if the same results can be reproduced under similar conditions using the same methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable.

On the other hand, validity in research is concerned with the accuracy and truthfulness of the investigation. A valid instrument must actually measure what it is supposed to measure. Joppe (2000) indicates that validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure, or how truthful the research results are. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 104) define validity as “the degree to which scientific explanation of phenomenon matches reality”. According to them, validity refers to the truthfulness of the findings and conclusions. The following aspects will be taken into consideration to ensure trustworthiness: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. This will be discussed in detail in chapter 3 (section 3.4).

This study has to consider all of the above factors and be able to construct findings that are free of bias. In this regard, the selection of the setting, participants, data collection tools and data analysis procedure was done with caution.

## **1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

The following concepts are explained within the topics of this study.

### **Curriculum**

According to Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 10), the word “curriculum” is derived from the Latin word “currere” which means “to run a course”. In accordance with this definition, the concept curriculum in this study refers, in the South African context, to everything that the Department of Basic Education requires to be taught to Grades R to 12 learners. Recently, a simpler definition came to be used worldwide: “it is about what the school advances in planning teaching” (Gultig & Jonathan, 2008: x).

Van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 200) reached a common understanding that “curriculum is regarded as the text that guides teaching and learning in the education setting. Unfortunately, this guide is not always constructive or positive”. In South Africa, there is a great diversity of approaches to education. The various historical and cultural roots from which these approaches grew should assist in developing a framework to inform the contemporary type of education. This will avoid alienating learners from their community

Curriculum, in the context of this study, will therefore mean a planned generic policy document that contains the content knowledge for an institution to use in building a better future for the citizens of a particular country or community. It includes aspects such as subjects, assessment, extra-mural activities and a diversified plan.

### **Curriculum change**

Curriculum change implies the implementation of a new way of doing things in education. It also impacts on existing teaching and learning practices. It involves adapting to the new way and adjusting the involvement of all participants. The ultimate goal is to improve outcomes

through an alteration of practice (Carlopio, 1998: 2). In this study, curriculum change refers to the introduction of a new program of study within the Department of Education, and the experiences of teachers when implementing new syllabi.

Curriculum change can be described as a dynamic process that involves many people, often with different priorities, vested interests and needs. It focuses almost exclusively on curriculum documentation, without much movement of users and learners. It is also aimed at improving learning and teaching, increasing access to education, and improving the quality of education. Influenced by a number of societal and cultural factors, Gultig, Hoadley and Jansen (2008: 62). believe that “a curriculum changes focus on developing citizens to be multi-skilled, knowledgeable, sensitive to environment and able to respond to the many challenges that affect the entire society”.

For the purpose of this study, curriculum change refers to how social conditions and events outside the school environment influence classroom practice, such that it alters the methodology and aims of education. It further explores the question as to who benefits from the process, both collectively and individually, as well as politically and socially, including the learners. It is therefore the subset of education changes that ensures maximum efficiency of the education process. Curriculum change should be relevant and appropriate to the current changes and anticipated future needs of the society.

### **Curriculum development**

The development of a curriculum refers to the process whereby a curriculum of a certain institution is integrated and infused to accommodate higher level competencies, such as critical thinking, clear discipline and responding to the needs of society (Carl, 2002: 39). Curriculum development is the result of the interaction of objectively developed plans in the system, involving educators for the benefit of learners, as well as for the better implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (Longstreet & Shane, 1993: 51). The roles of different stakeholders in the process of curriculum development should be clear.

## **Transformation**

Transformation refers to an effective and sustainable process that is persuaded in solidarity with those engaged in the same kind of struggle (Nissinen, 2006: 34). It is a formal way of encouraging people-centered education. Strategies in transformational education bring about changes in the way people cooperate in the production of alternative methods. Teachers and parents are concerned with the kind of content that learners should receive. They are also concerned with how education can contribute to the popular struggle for democracy, social justice and equality (Badat, 2008: 10). Teachers and parents view education as progressive social and political change that can unite society. For this reason, parents and teachers “fight back” against conditions and ideas that exploit democracy and justice in education (Fullan, 2007: 34).

Transformation is associated with bottom-up and people-centered educational change (Thompson, 2000: 3). The development strategies in educational transformation are aimed at making changes to the kinds of social, political, personal and cultural relations in society which are currently based on inequality, exploitation and oppression (Gill, 2013: 13). It includes groups that are sufficiently aware, well informed and actively involved in defending themselves and others who are in their care against the circumstances, conditions and power differences that act as barriers to equality and social justice (Thompson; 2000: 3).

## **Evaluation**

For the purpose of this study, evaluation refers to the information obtained during and after the lesson, in order to make a judgment about the learner’s level of competence. According to the Department of Basic Education Policy Bill (2010: 41), evaluation refers to culmination consideration of a learner’s attitudes, values and norms, while assessment is a continuous process for a certain period, aimed at determining whether the objectives have been attained. However, both evaluation and assessment involve ascertaining the worthiness of achievement.

## **Assessment**

Assessment can be described as a process that involves generating and collecting evidence, evaluating the evidence against outcomes, and recording the findings, in order to use the information at a later stage in assisting the learner (Department of Basic Education, 2010a: 40). Assessment is a continuous process that is classified as either formal or informal, and also caters for a range of cognitive levels and abilities among learners. Levels and corresponding activities are specified in such a way that learners of all grades or levels are able to respond appropriately (McMillan, 2012: 32).

## **Perception**

Perception refers to ways of regarding, understanding or interpreting information on an individual or group basis (Soanes & Stevenson, 2004: 46). According to McMillan (2012: 23), teachers' perceptions refer to teachers' needs, attitudes, tensions and anxieties in relation to objects or events. It reflects the imagination of what they observe, be it out of fear or great love of something. Teachers will always have an experience in their minds of what is observed and known, which can be explained and presented through discussions with other people (Boote, 2006: 462).

## **Critical thinking**

In this study, critical thinking means the ability to apply logical reasoning to new, unfamiliar ideas, opinions and situations (Ruenzel, 2014: 2). Critical thinking involves seeing things in an open-minded way, in order to be able to examine an idea or concept from as many angles as possible. This ability allows people to approach problems or situations rationally. Critical thinking enables learners to examine their own experiences, as well as those of others, so as to acquire the knowledge to form one's own concepts (Thompson, 2000: 4).

## **Teacher**

Teacher refers to any person who teaches, educates, or trains other persons, or who provides professional educational services (Brunton & Association, 2003: A-3). He or she helps others to acquire knowledge, competences and/or values.

## **Learner**

A learner is any person who receives education or who is obliged to receive education in terms of the law of the country (Brunton & Association, 2003: B-4). In this empirical study, learners refer to primary school children in grade R – 7. This definition is only applicable to this empirical study.

## **1.9 CHAPTER DIVISION**

The study is divided into five (5) chapters, each with a specific focus.

In **Chapter 1**, a general overview of the research is provided. It includes the introduction and background, which briefly outlines the main arguments of the investigation, research problem, and aims and objectives. The research design and methodology is also discussed, which includes the selection of research methods, place of investigation, participants, and data collection and analysis. The systems put in place to improve the credibility and trustworthiness of the research are discussed, and the ethical considerations are described.

In **Chapter 2**, the conceptual-theoretical framework is discussed. In this regard, the choice of a critical emancipatory theoretical framework is defended, and the elements of critical emancipatory theory, role of the researcher, nature of knowledge, and the nature of reality are discussed. It further elaborates on the use of language, the relationship between the researcher and the participants, and the operational objectives. The operational concepts are delineated with regard to the manner in which they can assist in operationalising the research objectives. An overview of the current interpretation and implementation of the CAPS Grade R-9 is provided in relation to the research topic. The literature review includes an overview of the effect of the recommendations of the task team, effect of terminological changes, and the transition from many outcomes to a few learning outcomes and assessment standards. The

literature review highlights the confusion created since the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement and the Revised National Curriculum Statement to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, and the manner in which teachers were trained to implement these changes in their classrooms.

**Chapter 3** deals with the research methodology. The research design and methods used to collect the data are clearly delineated and described. The qualitative approach was identified as the best method to collect rich data, in order to answer the research questions effectively. The methods for collecting the data, namely documentation, observation and interviews, are discussed. The sampling process is also discussed, since selecting participants who can provide information needed to understand the phenomenon is vital to the success of the research. Factors such as age, gender, class, professional and socio-economic status, and demographic factors will be kept in mind, since these factors can influence the results. The methods used for analysing the data are also discussed.

In **Chapter 4**, the data is analysed and interpreted in such a way that it can be sorted according to themes or conceivable phenomena. The information is contextualised within the body of existing knowledge. This chapter corroborates the known as well as the new insights gained, in order to enhance the understanding of the topic under investigation. The issues of work overload and confusion with regard to terminological changes have been there since the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement, and might still be a key factor influencing the work of the teachers at this primary school. The findings might overlap with problems experienced in the past to become an emerging reality.

In **Chapter 5**, the conclusions of the study are discussed and recommendations are made. The focus will be on evidence of a shared understanding regarding an emerging reality. New themes that emerged during the study form an important part of answering the research question. The chapter will indicate how the developed themes assist in reaching the final conclusion and recommendations.

## **1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The delimitation of a study refers to those characteristics that can limit the scope of the inquiry. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 55), readers need to know precisely what the

researcher intends to do, and what he or she does not intend to do. Only the researcher who knows and thinks carefully about the challenges and their focal areas can distinguish between what is relevant and what is not, what is missing and what is not missing. Delimitation defines the boundaries of the study, as determined by the consciousness of the research problem.

This study was conducted in one of the remote schools in the Nzhelele West circuit. The school faces a number of challenges, such as the fact that there are only a few teachers, but many subjects, a limited infrastructure, limited resources in the class, and its location is so remote that there is no completeness with regard to the findings. This will limit the scope of the research in the sense that a wide range of detrimental factors will disadvantage the data collection. These are factors that conform to an institution becoming a normal school. The researcher can easily be beguiled by discovering interesting factors during the investigation, which can sometimes delimit the researcher's scope of inquiry, if not treated with caution. They may make the study more undesirable or less understandable. In this study, the researcher will consider only those desirable and relevant challenges that assist in answering the research questions.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter started with a brief historical background to the research topic. This was followed by a description of the problem formulation, research questions and aims. The importance of the study was also outlined in brief, as well as the significance of the choice of the study. The chapter further discussed the methodology to be used, and how the collection and analysis of data would be conducted. It ended by clarifying the main concepts used in the study, as well as the chapter division.

The next chapter will deal with the literature in a more detailed manner, in order to determine the perceptions of teachers regarding the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement. It begins by presenting a detailed discussion on curriculum changes in South Africa, as viewed by other scholars, followed by identifying various aspects such as the theoretical framework.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter presented the background to the study, problem formulation, research questions, aims, research design, methods, clarification of concepts and delimitations of the study. The purpose of the literature review is to give the researcher an opportunity to find out what other scholars have found in relation to the problem in which the researcher is interested and what body of knowledge is available on it (Leedy & Ormord, 2005: 66). Johnson and Christensen (2004: 61) concur that the purpose of the literature review is to provide an understanding of the past and current state of knowledge on the research topic.

The aim of this chapter is also to identify and discuss various aspects of the theoretical framework, as synthesised, analysed and evaluated by other researchers. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the history of curriculum change in South Africa from the perspective of other scholars, particularly in relation to rural areas. The clarification of ideas based on others' understanding is used as a foundation to enhance the validity and accuracy of the study. The researcher considered relevant and important policies in the implementation of CAPS. Policies and related authoritative documents such as the Education Labour Relation Council, Collective Agreement no. 2 of 2011, the "no fee school" policy, and the promotion and progression policy, will be addressed (Department of Basic Education, 2011b). The study will then develop a deliberate construction to provide an equivocal presentation on challenges experienced by educators in relation to the implementation of a new curriculum.

#### **2.2 CURRICULUM CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Curriculum change in South Africa was precipitated by certain imperatives that impinge on the lives of communities. South Africa with its 11 official languages, tried to bring together diverse cultures. Letsoko (2008: 5) posits that a curriculum change should focus on challenges that society faces, and should provide possible solution to those challenges. Since 1994, there have been many changes to the design, method and organisation of education in the country. Some of these changes have had a serious negative impact on teaching due to implementation problems. According to Lombard, Meyer, Warnich and Wolhuter (2010: 74),

one of the challenges was that teachers were not competent to teach the new curriculum, as they were not adequately trained. They expressed their dissatisfaction with the manner in which workshops were organised. These workshops were inadequate and never prepared them for effective implementation (Maphalala, 2006: 67; Matshidiso, 2007: 109). Therefore, a need exists to understand how the implementation of change can be improved. One of the factors that impacts on the efficiency of change is the way in which teachers embrace changes, since they are the key agents of implementation.

In 1998, the Department of Education adopted a policy which aimed to change the curriculum in schools. A programme called “Curriculum 2005” was initiated by the government. According to Gultig, Hoadley and Jansen (2008: 171), the aims of Curriculum 2005 were to focus on the flexible specialisations and skills needs of an internationally competitive market, and to achieve the goal of equity, along with social and economic development. It was named Curriculum 2005 because it was supposed to be fully implemented in the year 2005 (Department of Education 2000: ii). The proposed introduction was as follows:

- 2004 – Foundation phase
- 2005 – Intermediate phase
- 2006 – Grade 7
- 2007 – Grade 8
- 2008 – Grade 9

This outcome-based education approach was discovered to be posing unhealthy challenges to the promotion of effective teaching and learning (Department of Basic Education, 2010a: 4). It was destined to fail in the South African education system because it was based on a flawed assumption about the role of an educator and what happens inside a school, how classrooms are arranged, and what kind of activities need to be planned. There was therefore a need to streamline and strengthen Curriculum 2005 through the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). The NCS was not a new curriculum. It kept intact the principles, purpose and thrust of the curriculum 2005 (Department of Education, 2002a: 6). According to Hofmeyr (2010: 3), the problem with NCS and RNCS were, amongst other things, the following;

- Over-emphasis on assessment and associated administration, which resulted in an overload on teachers.
- Mismatch between the demands of NCS/RNCS and the capacity of teachers.
- Terminology was found to be difficult with too many new concepts.
- They were implemented without prior planning of teacher training in new subjects.

In 2009, the Minister of Basic Education appointed a Ministerial Task Team (MTT) to review the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement for Grades R – 12. The team issued a report emphasising recommendations to improve the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 4). The following points summarise the recommendations of the Ministerial Task Team (MTT):

- The reduction of the number of learning areas in the foundation and intermediate phases.
- English as first additional language to be given priority, alongside mother tongue, and should be taught from grade 1.
- Discontinuation of learner portfolio files.
- Requirements for a single teacher file for planning.
- Reduction of the number of projects required per learner.
- Discontinuation of common task assessment (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 5).

There were persistent disparities in the NCS implementation. Educators across all grades found it difficult to integrate teaching, learning and assessment, manage diversity in classrooms, prioritise skills and assess values and attitudes. They also expressed a need for thorough training on anti-bias issues (Gultig, Hoadley & Jansen, 2008: 187). The greatest challenge, as captured by the task team, has been to address poor performance in literacy and numeracy across all grades (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 12). It was frustration and lack of confidence in the curriculum implementation by educators, the question of streamlining the curriculum framework and addressing flexible skill development which led to the introduction of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (Moodley, 2013: 35). The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement was viewed as a solution to learner performance across the grades. A National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) was established

shortly after the recommendation of the Ministerial Task Team. The purpose of NEEDU was to identify the critical factors that inhibit school development, and to ensure the correct interpretation and smooth implementation of the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2013: 3).

The implementation of CAPS was planned as follows:

- 2012: Grade R – 3 and Grade 10
- 2013: Grade 4 – 9 and Grade 11
- 2014: Grade 12

Key and formidable implications were experienced during implementation. There were resource constraints such as facilities, books and other learning materials, number of classes, lack of training, level of knowledge in the new subjects, curriculum management and support from the department and the parents (Moodley, 2013: 36). Fleisch (2008: 122), as quoted by Makeleni (2013: 4), asserts that teachers in rural primary schools tend to have less expectations of what learners can achieve in the new curriculum. The perception was that teachers believe that infrastructure, quality and qualified teachers, training programmes and assistance from both the department and parents are the reasons for curriculum success (Makeleni, 2013: 78-81).

One big challenge for the department was the introduction and implementation of the new curriculum for visible improvement in schools, without developing clear dissemination, training and support guidelines (Marais, 2015: 1). This on its own was the biggest challenge, which could have resulted in low morale and motivation among the educators. Problems with curriculum interpretation and implementation can hinder the efficiency of curriculum changes. According to Lovat and Smith (2003: 195), change means moving from old to new. Those who benefit from changes will do anything to maintain them, but those who feel threatened and discontented will implement changes with less enthusiasm. Therefore, changes can fail to address the needs of the targeted group or community.

The theoretical framework underpinning this study will be discussed next.

## **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study aims to enhance the understanding of curriculum change and development, in order to assist in the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement. This section discusses the principles underlining the change of innovative curricula, in order to shed light on progressive classroom practices. It also examines critical emancipatory research, which was deemed the most appropriate theoretical framework for this study. In this section, elements of critical emancipatory theory and its contribution to the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement will be outlined, in the belief that a critical theoretical stance provides an appropriate framework for investigating curriculum change in South Africa.

Scholars maintain that theoretical paradigms about knowledge, learning and understanding of phenomena influence the system of the country (Swantz, 2008: 38). The political shift in South Africa has unduly influenced the system of education. Furthermore, political history influences the theories of those in power when they make decisions about new learning and teaching policies. This is the reason why, when democratic political perceptions emerge; they immediately transform the system of education.

This perspective regarding curriculum changes is guided by educational theories and a legitimate framework, which influences curriculum change. Critical emancipatory theory is viewed as an appropriate framework for this study. Critical emancipatory theory (CET) is the product of critical theory and emancipatory theory, both of which focus on the acquisition of knowledge, but with different origins and history (Donovan & Branford, 2005: 407).

CET is defined as any effort to achieve political equality. The emancipatory view emanated from the Institution of Social Research in Frankfurt, but has been specifically linked to the work of Jurgen Habermas. Habermas, as one of the famous critical theorists, argued that the emancipatory domain identifies self-reflection and self-esteem as the principles of human liberation (Van Loon, 2001: 18). One must become conscious of how an ideology reflects and distorts reality, and what influences and sustains the false consciousness that it presents. It becomes evident that knowledge is gained by self-emancipatory through reflection, leading to a transformed consciousness (Van Loon, 2001: 18).

CET originally harboured thoughts of knowledge and human interest. Habermas presented his theory on the subject, and originally found some common ground with the Frankfurt school, believing “that man produces and reproduces his existence organized around guiding interest, which are produced from nature object worth for material existence” (Habermas, 1968: 27). It opposes the positivist theory, which claims that there is only valid knowledge in scientific knowledge, and that society operates according to certain laws (Maree, 2010: 2). Emancipatory liberates humankind from such dominations. It emphasises that human knowledge and interest are not subject to one form of perspective. Instead, it combines three kinds of sciences, namely: empirical analytic, historical hermeneutic and critical thinking, which encompass the critical emancipatory theory (Habermas, 1968: 30).

### **2.3.1 Principles of critical emancipatory theory**

This section seeks to outline the principles of critical emancipatory theory and its contribution to the study of CAPS implementation, in the belief that this theory offers a framework to examine curriculum changes in the South African context. Habermas (2009: 99) explained the notion of critical emancipatory theory as follows:

- **A form of self-reflective knowledge**, both an understanding and theoretical explanation to reduce entrapment in a system of dominance (Habermas, 1968: 31). His theory entails expanding the scope of domination. This study aims at promoting human knowledge and interest in order to develop a large scope of independent thinking. Donovan and Branford (2005: 2) concur with this, and state that the idea of how a person learns new concepts is based on their preconceived ideas and prior knowledge.
- **The critical emancipatory theory seeks to free human subjects** from oppressive regimes within societies and the institutions that constitute them (McGrath, 2005: 88). It also liberates humankind from domination and alienation in society. The idea of liberation helps the researcher to conduct research with an open mind. The researcher will be able to accept any comments before making a judgment on the merits of its existence.
- **Critical emancipatory theory emphasises the use of a range of ideas** to understand research subjects. Habermas’ strong assertion, in his methods used to

interpret subjects, is that a range of ideas provides equity status of individual citizens in relation to the state, property and law. The approach includes all kinds of information gathered by individuals. It is through a wide range of negotiations, interviews, observation and reading that research is understood. In this regard, CAPS can be defined as a tool to change education in the country in totality, if the implementation is carried out in a critical manner.

In the next section, the study will elaborate on the role of the researcher in this research.

### **2.3.2 The role of the researcher**

The researcher has to enter into a collaborative partnership with the participants, in order to collect and analyse data, and ultimately to enhance understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, the information must be organised in such a way that it makes sense (Maree, 2010: 41). Collaborative partnerships help the least powerful people to gain more autonomy and independence, as well as more control over their own lives. It also brings about change in the interests of greater equality and social justice (Thompson, 2000: 4).

The main task of critical research is social critique, in order to highlight restrictive and alienating conditions associated with the status quo. The researcher should therefore help to eliminate the cause of alienation and domination (Maree, 2010: 62). It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that, within this approach, curriculum change is not viewed as the social reproduction of traditional power relations, which are maintained and nourished. The researcher has to critically and consciously identify characteristics of dealing with transformation within and among the subsystems. Therefore, as a researcher, one has to bear in mind that one is the eye through which people see curriculum change for the better.

### **2.3.3 The relationship between the researcher and participants**

Critical emancipatory theory emphasises that the relationship between the researcher and participants should be characterised by love, trust, mutual respect and elements of equality. It requires openness and open-mindedness during all engagements (Mitchell, 2010: 35). The researcher should always keep in mind that the world consists of people with their own

assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values. Therefore, he or she should understand that reality is known through an exploration of the experiences of others, regardless of their specific problems (Maree, 2010: 54). When the relationship is built on trust and mutual respect, the researcher can retrieve information from the participants.

The role of the researcher is to guide participants so that they stay within the parameters of the topic under investigation. It is also necessary to ensure that each participant is provided with an equal and fair opportunity to voice his or her concerns.

The relationship between the participants and the researcher in this study is also informed by a common vision, purpose and actions. Participants must be able to explore their reality holistically. On the other hand, the researcher should acknowledge the fact that participants' power of knowledge is not the same. However, their collective strength complements each individual's weaknesses. They interact as a team to produce purposeful results. This relationship and all activities involved are emancipatory in nature, as they progressively change individuals' attitudes (Biesta, 2010: 43). This study provides content that seeks to transform the implementation of a new curriculum.

The role of the researcher, as discussed in this section, is influenced by the nature of reality, which is discussed in the next section.

#### **2.3.4 The nature of reality**

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006: 70) regard the nature of the reality that is to be studied as "ontology". The term "ontology", which is depicted as a branch of empirical research dealing with reality, is normally used by a researcher as a tool to analyse the essential nature of the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher should elucidate the nature of reality, because the essence of the phenomenon is embedded in the reflection of reality depicted during the investigation.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000: 5) state that social reality can be comprehended from an empirical point of view through words and names created by the human mind, and within levels of individual consciousness. The nature of reality gives rise to an emancipatory from the domination of stereotypical thinking. The researcher as a human being should have an inherent

openness to reality, which is regarded as fundamental for a study. The willingness to explore and openness to reality leads to the emancipatory from imposed human beliefs.

Critical emancipatory research is relevant to this study because it endeavours to develop an understanding and knowledge about the nature and root causes of unsatisfactory circumstances, in order to develop real strategies to change them (Thompson, 2000: 1).

### **2.3.5 Relevance of the critical emancipatory theory to this study**

This section seeks to outline how CET assists the study by offering a theory that can examine curriculum changes in the South African community. CET has the capacity to direct the investigation towards greater use of transformation, as discussed in section 1.8, in learning to change curriculum interpretation and implementation in primary schools.

Critical emancipatory research advocates transformation and emphasises collaborative teaching and learning in meaningful contexts. The use of emancipatory learning tends to empower both educators and learners to acquire knowledge that is functional and can change their attitude. Learners learn more effectively in a situation where they are free to exercise their critical analytical skill to solve the problem. It allows them to explore and accept different approaches pertinent to the situation at hand.

## **2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This chapter aimed to provide an overview of curriculum change history in South Africa. The chapter further dealt with the shortcomings of curriculum interpretation, as identified by the research committee, and how these challenges affect the implementation of CAPS in rural areas, with reference to studies conducted by other researchers. The literature further revealed that teachers were reluctant to accept changes; especially if they were not informed in advance. In addition, proper and adequate training was never provided to build their capacity.

The chapter further highlighted the understanding of existing research regarding the content and analysis of the theories related to curriculum change. The literature review examined the theoretical framework of the investigation by explaining concepts such as critical

emancipatory theory and research, the nature of reality and critical thinking. It further discussed the role of the researcher, the relationship between researcher and participants, and how the critical emancipatory theory is applied to the study. In the next chapter the research methodology used in this study is discussed.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The literature review in the preceding chapter provided a historical background to curriculum changes in South Africa. It highlighted the perceptions of teachers regarding curriculum changes, and reflected on how the changes affected the implementation of the new curriculum in classrooms. The previously mentioned effect of curriculum changes motivated the researcher to investigate the perceptions of teachers in certain areas of South Africa regarding the implementation of CAPS. The literature review concluded with a detailed description of the theoretical framework, where the critical emancipatory theory was deemed most appropriate for this study.

This chapter discusses the research methodology of the study, which includes the research design and approach, as well as ethical considerations. Research methodology is regarded as the mode of inquiry, as discussed in this chapter. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 30) describe a mode of inquiry as “a collection of research practices”. The research design describes the researcher’s plan and the approach used to enable him or her to answer the research questions that guide the study. The research design, setting, population and sample will be discussed in detail in this chapter. It also describes the instruments used to collect the data, and how the data is analysed. The chapter concludes with a detailed explanation of ethical issues and a summary.

The purpose of the empirical research is to assist the researcher to find appropriate answers to the research questions. The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

- What are the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement?
- How do teachers perceive curriculum changes during the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement in the classroom?
- What factors have an impact on the implementation of curriculum change?

- What strategies do teachers use for the effective implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement?

In order to find appropriate answers to these questions, interview questions were designed to explore the challenges faced by teachers at a remote rural primary school. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 93), data and methodology are inextricably linked, hence the methodology must always take into account the nature of the data that will be collected in the course of the study. A detailed description of the research methodology will be provided in the ensuing sections of this chapter.

### **3.2 RATIONALE FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

The effectiveness of the implementation of both outcomes-based education and the Revised National Curriculum Statement was hindered by the significant contextual challenges experienced at the remote rural school where the research was conducted. These challenges had a negative impact on the quality of education, and as a result, this study was undertaken to identify the challenges that impeded the implementation of CAPS at Nzhelele West circuit primary schools. The goal was to make suggestions regarding the implementation of future educational reform initiatives at this small school in a remote rural area, and at other remote rural schools in similar contexts, which are experiencing similar challenges.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Polit and Hungler (1999: 155) believe that the research design can be regarded as a blueprint or outline for conducting the study, in such a way that maximum control will be exercised over factors that could interfere with the validity of the research results. According to Mouton (2002: 55), a research design provides a detailed plan of how a researcher aims to conduct the research. It directs and guides the researcher when conducting a study. Maree (2010: 70) conceptualises a research design as a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specify the selection of the participants, the data gathering technique/s to be used, and the analysis of the data. Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 85) state that a research design provides the overall guidelines for the procedure to be followed by the researcher in responding

to the research problem. This involves identifying a set of ideas and procedures, as well as resources and data, in a more effective and efficient way.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 117) concur that a research design can be seen as a plan for selecting participants, geographical location, data collection instruments and data analysis procedures to answer the research questions. Based on the above description, a research design can be seen as a plan to conduct research. Research designs represent broad categories of compartments that need to be refined into an appropriate design, in order to answer the research question in the most logical manner. This enables the researcher to expand the investigation into new and unfamiliar territories that are associated with content areas.

The choice of research design depends on the nature of the problem to be investigated, the researcher's assumptions, and the data collection methods. It must provide findings that are judged to be accurate, credible, trustworthy, valid and reasonable, in order to respond to the research question. In addition, it must be a suitable design that can assist the researcher in avoiding a situation of unwanted evidence.

It is against this background that the qualitative research approach was used in the study. This approach was preferred because it enables the researcher to collect rich and in-depth information. Maree (2010: 51) explains that qualitative perspectives are concerned with understanding the process and the social and cultural context, by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 340) concur that the researcher will use this approach to reflect on the feelings, beliefs, ideals and actions of the participants in their natural setting.

For the purpose of this study, qualitative data will be collected by means of a case study. Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 135) describe a case study as a way in which a researcher collects extensive data on the individuals, programmes or events that the investigation is focusing on for a specific period. Creswell (2003: 25) indicates that a case study is an exploration of an event, programme, activity, or individual. In a case study, the researcher is able to use multiple resources and techniques in the data collection process. In this way, the researcher will be able to gain greater insight into and understanding of teachers' perceptions of the implementation

of CAPS in a specific, poorly understood situation (Maree, 2010: 76). The case in this study therefore is a specific rural primary school in the Vhembe District in South Africa.

This study focuses on the experience of teachers in the interpretation and implementation of CAPS. It also investigates the experiences of teachers in implementing CAPS in their natural environment. The qualitative research design, and in particular the case study, enables the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of educators regarding the phenomenon under investigation. It also gives the researcher an opportunity to engage individuals at primary schools with regard to their experience of implementing the CAPS.

### **3.4 RESEARCH METHODS**

This section focuses on the area or environment where the investigation was conducted, the selection of participants, data collection methods and the data analysis process.

#### **3.4.1 Selection of site**

The research project was conducted at a primary school in the Vhembe District in Limpopo, South Africa. This specific primary school was selected as a suitable and convenient site for this study for the following reasons:

- The area is accessible and convenient to the researcher, which will help to minimise expenditure in terms of travelling.
- The institution is located in one of the villages in a rural area, where learning and teaching are subject to a lack of resources, including infrastructure and learning and teaching support materials.
- Although the majority of schools in the district perform poorly, the performance of learners in the Annual National Assessment is significantly lower in this institution.
- The principal and teachers were willing to participate in the research project.

### **3.4.2 Selection of participants**

Leedy and Ormod (2005: 144) hold the view that sampling in a qualitative design is all about conducting content analysis of a small group representing the entire population, as well as selecting specific participants from the population that will be informative to the research. The particular entities selected will assist the researcher to obtain relevant information. The participants and their school were drawn from this remote rural area, and their names were kept anonymous in accordance with ethical considerations. Therefore, six educators, including the principal, were selected for the purpose of the study.

The selected participants who were involved in this study were the following: The principal, one subject Head of Department (HOD) and four teachers. These teachers belong to the civil service level one (CS1) in the Department of Education rankings. They are not in any promotional position. The principal and Head of Department are involved in managing and implementing the curriculum. The four CS1 teachers attended training sessions and were regarded as the key agents of implementing the new curriculum in the school. However, the principal, HOD and one CS1 teacher are members of the School Management Team (SMT). These participants were actively involved during the implementation and management of CAPS at this school. It was assumed that they would yield the information needed to understand the topic under investigation. Even though the participants remained anonymous for ethical reasons, their profiles are as follows:

The principal, who has 21 years of uninterrupted service in teaching, is a manager who is responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is correctly implemented in the school. One of the principal's core duties is to be responsible for the school curriculum and teacher development, including the choice of correct and relevant textbooks, and for coordinating subject committee activities (Brunton and Association, 2003: c-65). He is therefore an active member in the process. Furthermore, he is one of the SMT members who regularly attend management workshops and provide guidance to teachers with regard to the implementation of the CAPS. He has completed his B.Ed. Honours Degree in curriculum studies, and plays an important role as a union member.

The HOD is part of the SMT and her role is to manage the implementation of the curriculum, together with the principal. Her involvement is more direct than the principal, because she

works with teachers on a daily basis. Teachers report directly to her and she is also involved in daily class activities. The HOD is studying curriculum management. She is responsible for the foundation phase, while the principal is looking after the intermediate phase, which includes grades 4 - 6.

With regard to the four remaining participants, two of them have been in the teaching fraternity for 18 years, while the other two were employed in 2009 and have seven years of experience. Four of them are females, while the remaining two are males. The participants were selected on the basis of the role they are playing in the school and community. Teachers are active in the teaching practice and are regarded as key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa (Brunton and Association, 2003: h-45). Their core duties and responsibilities are to engage in class teaching, which will foster purposeful progress towards implementing the new curriculum and selecting the best approaches to be followed (Brunton and Association, 2003: c-67).

The selected group of teachers was viewed as being able to assist in creating a new understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. They teach learners not only to pass, but also to understand the world around them and to see how changes can affect their daily lives. This group of educators is able to review and reflect on their learning and teaching process, as well as to identify strategies and respond accordingly. They are teachers who believe that their implementation moves constantly between the new requirements of policy and the established practice of teaching in their classrooms.

### **3.4.3 Data collection**

Interviews, document analysis and observation were employed to collect relevant data for this study. This approach is known as data triangulation, which is the cross-validation among data sources and data collection strategies (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 379). The purpose of data triangulation is to capture different dimensions of the same phenomenon and increase confidence in research data. In the interest of the crystallisation of data, the main method of collecting empirical data was interviews. In order to achieve maximum participation, the researcher will divide participants into two groups, namely the management and the teachers, especially during the interviews. Management will have their own set of questions (Annexure

A), and teachers will have a separate set of constructed questions (Annexure B). Although participants are divided into two groups for the sake of interview questions, all the interviews will be individual, face-to-face interviews. This is done in order to obtain the maximum response from participants, because it is assumed that they will feel more comfortable to talk as individuals, rather than in a group.

**Semi-structured interviews:** Interviews in qualitative research refer to a way of asking questions related to the research problem. Maree (2010: 87) defines an interview as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions in order to collect data, and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. A semi-structured interview refers to an interview technique in which all participants are required to answer a set of predetermined questions, but are given an opportunity to define their lines of individual responses.

According to Maree (2010: 87), semi-structured interviews are commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources. They basically delineate the line of inquiry. They give the researcher an opportunity to explore different emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the research questions. The researcher must pay attention to the participants' reactions, so that it is easy to identify the new lines of inquiry. The interviews were held after school on the school premises, and were scheduled for 30 minutes per interview. It took the researcher three weeks to complete the interview process for both management and teachers.

**Non-participant observation:** Maree (2010: 85) indicates that with non-participant observation, the researcher gets into the situation, but focuses on his role as an observer. The researcher remains uninvolved and does not influence the dynamics of the setting. The aim is to look for patterns of behavior and resources in a particular situation. This gives the researcher two advantages: an opportunity to conduct physical verification in order to confirm the claims of the educators, and an ability to capture unforeseen data sources as they surface. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007: 398) attest that this observation includes, amongst other things, enrolment in the class, activities before and immediately after school, whether they arrive in or on time, and their transport system, as well as how it influences their teaching and learning. Observation was conducted in two phases. The first phase took place every day before the

interview process, and lasted for a week. Another observation was conducted after two months, and was done before the collection of documents. It also lasted for a week. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 350) agree that observations focus on patterns of behaviours, resources, and learning and teaching in the institution. A checklist was developed to assist with the process (See ANNEXURE C).

**Document analysis:** This is a data gathering technique that focuses on all types of written communication that may be relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. This includes the availability of CAPS documents for continuous relevant implementation, lesson plans as an assurance of understanding or failing to adjust to the changes, learners' portfolios, learning and teaching materials, and written activities. The availability or non-availability of the mentioned documents will assist in answering the research question (See ANNEXURE D).

#### **3.4.4 Data analysis**

Data analysis is a process of making sense out of the large volume of collected data, and in the context of this study, it aims to relate the research activities and perspectives of individuals on how curriculum changes can be understood (Merriam, 1998: 178). This is where the researcher summarised what has been heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that will assist in the interpretation and understanding of the collected data, and enable the researcher to draw conclusions (Maree, 2010: 100). The collected data is organised into small, intensive, examined data. This involves reducing the volume of raw information to significant patterns, in order to construct a meaningful framework. The researcher endeavoured to present different perspectives of individuals in a logical manner that integrates loose information, patterns, differences and similarities, and comments from interview transcripts.

For the purpose of this case study, content analysis was considered to be a suitable method for analysing the collected data. It was a way of gathering information from different perspectives, with the aim of identifying patterns in the raw data. McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 477) believe that it is helpful because it assists the researcher to identify similarities and differences from the emerging themes. The researcher chose content analysis because it is an inductive process that corroborates themes. It is also a helpful method for identifying meaningful

patterns. The researcher was able to synthesise the information from tape recordings and transcripts into developed themes. In this study, the following procedures were followed during the data analysis phase (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 136):

**Coding:** The collected information was coded into meaningful segments of text in the transcripts. This assisted the researcher to identify emerging themes and sort them according to defined segments. Names of participants were given codes, in order to avoid possible embarrassment and character defamation.

**Organisation of details:** The gathered information about the case was arranged in a logical manner to allow the researcher to identify differences and similarities in the responses.

**Categorisation of data:** The researcher identified categories that helped to sort the collected data into meaningful groups. This enabled the researcher to easily determine connections from the participants' responses.

**Identification of patterns:** After creating a list of categories, the researcher embarked on the identification of data that is relevant to the topic. In this study, this data included those perceptions that are reflected in the literature review, as expressed by other theorists, and the new themes that emerged during the data collection process. This is where categories were compared to develop central themes that assisted in answering the research question.

**Synthesis and generalisation:** This is where the researcher constructed the overall picture of the data analysis, and presented conclusions and recommendations.

### **3.4.5 Validity and reliability**

The principle of validity and reliability or trustworthiness is the cornerstone of any research. By following basic principles, this study will stand up to rigorous questioning and skepticism. Reliability (consistency) and validity (accuracy) are the key aspects in defining and measuring bias and distortion, and determine the trustworthiness of the research (Ali & Yusof, 2011: 30). The researcher should be attuned to the multiple factors that may pose risks to the trustworthiness of the findings (Carmines & Zeller, 1991: 13). To avoid these threatening

factors, the research was assessed, in order to ensure that it is free of bias and distortion. The reliability and validity of the research instrument will be discussed below.

**Reliability of the research instrument:** According to Phelan and Wren (2005: 6), reliability refers to the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Shuttleworth (2008: 8) concurs that the idea behind reliability is that any significant result must be more than a once-off finding, and should be inherently repeatable. Other researchers must be able to conduct research under the same conditions and generate the same quality of results. Winter (2000: 7) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study. The definition implies that if the same tool is used under different circumstances, or administered to different participants from the same group, the results should be the same. If such instrument yields the same score when used at any given time, it becomes reliable.

In order for this study to fulfill the prerequisite of testability, observation and interviews were conducted within the real-life environment with the affected participants. Six participants were required to answer the same questions in two categories. The observation and interviews were administered on different days. This was done to capture attitudes and moods of participants on different days. In order to increase the reliability of responses in such an environment, the researcher will ensure that participants are aware of the nature of the research and what it entails.

**Validity of the research instrument:** Validity in research is concerned with the accuracy and truthfulness of the investigation. A valid instrument must actually measure what it is supposed to measure. Joppe (2000: 221) indicates that validity determines whether the research truly measures what it was intended to measure, or how truthful the research results are. Phelan and Wren (2005: 7) further refer to validity as how well a test measures what it is supposed to measure. They both agree that while reliability is necessary, it is insufficient on its own, because for a study or test to be reliable, it also needs to be valid. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 104) define validity as “the degree to which scientific explanation of the phenomenon matches reality”. According to them, it refers to the truthfulness of the findings and conclusions. Researchers construct their explanation based on the observed phenomenon and the ability to

approximate the observation with reality. The degree to which the explanations are accurate or match reality comprises the validity instrument.

In this study, the following strategies for ensuring trustworthiness were considered:

- **Credibility:** McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 03) define credibility as the extent to which the results approximate reality and are judged to be accurate, trustworthy and reasonable. It is a criterion for evaluating the truthfulness of results. The researcher used this technique in the interviews, which were supplemented by observation.
- **Dependability:** Polit and Hungler (1997: 306) define dependability as the consistency of the inquiry processes used over time. The more consistent the researcher has been, the more dependable the results will be. The researcher maintains stability in the logic used to select participants and settings for interviews and observation. The researcher ensures that the collected data are kept in the form of audited files for a maximum of five years.
- **Confirmability:** Trochim (2006: 32) describes confirmability as the degree to which the results can be corroborated by others. The researcher ensures that the method used to collect and analyse data is objective and neutral. Critical to this process is the audit trail, which allows any observer to trace the course of the research, step-by-step, via the procedure described. The researcher has to bear in mind that any interested person can access the information upon request.
- **Transferability:** Shenton (2004: 7) indicates that transferability is a technique which demonstrates that findings in a qualitative project can be applicable to other situations and populations. In the context of this study, data collection involved a small group of participants. Therefore, the researcher has to understand that findings can not necessarily be applied to a wider population. In this regard, this study applies to similar contexts in South Africa.

This study is able to contextualise collected data and findings within the body of existing knowledge on the topic, and to show how it corroborates what is known, as well as how emerging themes can enhance the neutrality and understanding of the phenomenon. To achieve this, data were read and re-read, in order to enhance the understanding and interpretation of this data.

### 3.4.6 Ethical considerations

The ethical principles that underpinned this research were adhered to throughout the study. In this regard, the following ethical criteria are applicable:

**Permission to conduct research:** McMillan and Schumacher (1993: 195) articulated that within any institution, be it a school, college, university or any other institution, approval needs to be obtained before any data can be collected. Therefore, permission was requested from the circuit manager (see Annexure D) and the principal of the rural primary school (see Annexure E). In order to comply with the university's ethical requirements, the researcher applied for ethical clearance for the research, which was granted by the College of Education at UNISA (see Annexure J).

**Protection from harm:** It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the participants are not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm (Leedy & Ormord, 2005: 101). In this study, the participants will not be exposed to any danger, embarrassment, unusual stress or defamation of character. However, a small amount of psychological discomfort is anticipated. The researcher will strive to be honest, respectful and sympathetic towards all participants, and will ensure that debriefing or counseling is provided during and after an interview.

**Equitable selection:** The researcher will not allow discrimination against any individual in the population to take place, and no preference will be given to gender or age. The subjects will be selected from the entire population, according to the agreed criteria for selection.

**Informed consent:** Leedy and Ormord (2005: 101) emphasise that research participants should be aware of the nature of the intended research, in order to allow them to make an informed choice, and participation should be voluntarily. The researcher should ascertain that participants are available and willing to take part in all phases, but the participants also need to be informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. For the purpose of this study, the participants will be presented with a consent form that describes the nature of the research project, and they will be requested to sign this form (See Annexures F and G).

**Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity:** According to Leedy and Ormord (2005: 102), participants' right to privacy will be respected. McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 195) agree that the information from and about participants should remain confidential at all times. Maree (2010: 301) attests that both researcher and subject have to elucidate their understanding regarding the confidentiality of the findings. In this study, pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of participants, and the documents were coded or numbered.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

The aim of this chapter was to present a rationale for the conceptual underpinning of this qualitative research. The research image was constructed by focusing on the research methodology, including the research design and methods. The chapter further discussed the research paradigm and the motivation for selecting the research methodology. The population and sampling criteria were then discussed, as well as the motivation for using interviews, observation and document analysis as data collection instruments, and each instrument's advantages and disadvantages. The methods for analysing and interpreting the data were also described. Furthermore, the chapter concluded with a discussion of ethical issues and the reliability and validity of the study. The results and interpretation of the empirical research will be discussed in Chapter 4. The chapter will present an analyses of the data based on the information gathered from participants. The generated data will be analysed according to identified broad themes.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter focused on the research design and data collection techniques available to qualitative research. It reflected on why the study chose to utilise the particular methodology, why specific participants were considered, and how they were purposefully selected. It also endeavoured to distinguish between the different types of data collection used in the study.

The focus of this chapter is on qualitative data analysis. More specifically, this chapter aims to provide a report on the empirical enquiry that attempted to answer the main research question, namely “*What are the perceptions of teachers in the Nzhelele West circuit regarding the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy statement?*” It also presents the findings of interviews with six participants, as well as observations and documentary analysis, from the selected primary school. The profiles of the participants were captured as follows:

**Table 1: Profile of teachers**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Educational Qualification</b>		<b>Experience in teaching and subjects</b>
Principal <i>Participant 1</i>		X	Primary Teacher’s Diploma	BEd Honours	21 Years (SMT) Grade 4-7 Home Language Social Sciences and Creative Arts
HOD <i>Participant 2</i>	X		PTD	Degree	19 years (SMT) Grades R & 1 Home language English First Additional language, Maths and Life Skills.
Teacher 1 <i>Participant 3</i>	X		PTD		18 years Grades 4 – 7 Maths, Natural Sciences and English First Additional Language

Teacher 2 <b>Participant 4</b>	X			Degree	07 years Grades 4 – 7 Life Orientation Technology and Economic Management Sciences
Teacher 3 <b>Participant 5</b>	X		PTD	Degree	18 years ( <b>SMT</b> ) Grades 2 & 3 Home language English First Additional language, Maths and Life Skills.
Teacher 4 <b>Participant 6</b>		X		Degree	07 years Grades 4 –7 Home language, Technology and Maths.

The above information indicates that participants are all teachers, including the members of the SMT. It was not possible to balance gender, since the majority of teachers are females at primary school level. However, the gender issue did not significantly limit the findings of the study. Participants are all employed in the same public school. For the purpose of this study, and considering the research ethics, each teacher was given a pseudonym. The letter ‘M’ refers to a male participant and the letter ‘F’ refers to a female participant. In other words, P1M means “Participant Number 1 who is a male teacher”, while P2F means “Participant Number 2 who is a female teacher”.

Three data collection methods were employed, namely semi-structured interviews, participant observation and documentary information. Maree (2010: 99) argues that because different approaches, leading to a particular type of research design, and various data collection methods were employed, there can also be different approaches to data analysis. This assumption creates a terrain wherein data analysis cannot be viewed simply as a matter of generating facts about what happened during the data collection phase. Instead, the researcher should be engaged in an active process of interpretation. It therefore implies that the researcher has the task of “noting some things as significant, but ignoring others as not significant, and missing other potential significant things altogether that can be useful to the investigation” (Leedy & Ormord, 2005: 150).

## 4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

Data interpretation and analysis is a process of making sense out of the large amount of collected data (see section 3.7). It involves reducing the volume of raw information to significant patterns that construct a meaningful framework. Leedy and Ormord (2005: 150) indicate that there is no single correct way to analyse qualitative data. Although the assumptions and procedures of the approach differ, it is believed that most qualitative data analysis procedures have much in common. It is for this reason that the researcher chose to employ content analysis.

The researcher began with a large body of information that was collected through semi-structured interviews, document analysis and non-participant observation. Interviews present a sheer amount of data that serves as a guide during the data analysis process, and this data needs to be reduced to useful information that can address the main research question. Leedy and Ormord (2005: 151) concur that the researcher will find that collected data is multifaceted and reflects several meanings simultaneously. The researcher has to employ content analysis, since the collected data is captured within the scope of the research questions.

After carefully examining the transcribed data and using the observation and document information, data were coded into identifiable segments and sorted with related ideas, so that it could be examined together as retrieved and emerging themes. Guided by the research questions, the following themes and subthemes were identified:

**Table 2: Themes and subthemes**

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>SUBTHEMES</b>
4.2.1 Curriculum implementation	a. Planning
	b. Policy
	c. Training
	d. Selection of LTMS
4.2.2 Perception of curriculum Changes in the classroom	a. Content
	b. Class size

	c. Assessment and monitoring
4.2.3 Curriculum challenges	a. Dissemination of curriculum information
	b. Lesson planning
	c. Content
	d. Infrastructure
4.2.4 Curriculum improvement strategies	a. Support
	b. Training
	c. Policy
	d. Curriculum design
	e. Funding

The themes and sub-themes will be discussed next.

#### **4.2.1 Curriculum implementation**

The following subthemes were identified from the first research question, which focuses on the perceptions of teachers regarding curriculum implementation, namely *planning, policy, training and selection of LTSM*. These subthemes are discussed below.

##### **a. Planning**

Planning for the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy statement becomes a questionable process. During the empirical investigation, the majority of participants expressed the view that the introduction of Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement marked one of the most significant changes in education introduced by the government after South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. They concurred that the ideology behind the changes was perfect, namely to address the imbalances created by the regime government through the apartheid system of education. By ensuring that all children of South Africa have equal opportunities to acquire essential knowledge, this will allow them

to compete globally and promote a sense of national identity (Jansen, 2007: 207). The major challenges were experienced during the interpretation and implementation phase. Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 34) believe that curriculum planning involves a number of frameworks. Some of these frameworks are the following: creation of relevant policy, lists of contents to be learned, organising and sequencing the contents, suggestions regarding how learners should learn and educators should teach, the involvement of educators during the initial stage, and how the information will reach the schools. During the interviews, it became clear that the CAPS implementation ignored all of the abovementioned expectations. P2F responded that,

*“It is very important to include educators in the planning phase so that the department knows exactly what the schools are encountering. We can be involved through our unions or established task teams. We are the key role players in the implementation of every new curriculum”.*

The findings regarding the rationale for curriculum planning endorse the view of the MTT in section 2.2 of this study. The planning should reflect on how the interpretation of reality is channeled. The planning process should be drafted and studied by all affected stakeholders or interested parties. It must be a coherent, clear and simple curriculum to improve teaching and learning across all institutions, and be open to criticism and ratification by the relevant bodies (Department of Basic Education, 2010b: V).

P3F shared her view, stating the following:

*“CAPS was introduced in an incoherent manner. It was very clear that the department also acknowledged the impasse challenges as indicated by the Minister of Basic Education. That is why the school management team is failing to plan successfully for further assistance in as far as implementation is concerned”.*

Furthermore, P1M, who was very optimistic about the need for curriculum change and how planning should be done, indicated that; *“The interventions of unions in the planning stage can assist a lot. It is significant that they are brought aboard in the beginning of the process,*

*because they understand our challenges in the working environment*". When referring to the role of unions in curriculum review, Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 314) indicate that all three unions played a role in the interpretation and formulation of Curriculum 2005. Their inclusion marked a shift from the visible stakeholder-driven approach to a true democratic education plan. The six participants who were interviewed tended to agree on almost all points raised concerning planning, emphasising that the department did not do enough in terms of planning the implementation of the new curriculum, hence the failure of the school to implement a successful developmental plan. The documents supplement the interview findings, in that they show the lack of resources on how to prepare for teaching in the classroom. Teachers still resort to the same way of preparation as in the past.

**b. Policy**

The policy documents emerged as a subtheme from the first research question of the study, which highlights the fact that perception is another focal point of curriculum implementation. The interview data illustrated that an overwhelming majority of participants were complaining about the policy documents, which were supposed to assist in managing the successful implementation of the CAPS, especially with regard to assessment and progression. These policy documents include subject statements, overview documents, assessment guidelines and the national protocol on assessment and progression. Participants agreed that they were not planned in such a way as to assist the implementation. School management could not utilise these documents in the administration, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process. In his response, P1M indicated that,

*"The policy documents are vitally significant in every curriculum implementation. They give guidelines as to what needs to be done at school level. Every school component must be aware of its task as per prescription from the policy documents or assessments plan. For instance, the policy is not clear as to how learners are progressing. We do understand the promotion of learners, but progression is causing a lot of confusion"*.

The Department of Basic Education (2000: 19) concurs that it is important that people, including teachers, parents and learners, feel that they are part of curriculum implementation, and are regarded as important role players. They are likely to support the process if they understand it and experience a sense of ownership of it. The contents of the policy documents represented ideas and methods that are not regarded as a user-friendly model of implementation. The policy representations contained little information on the interests or involvement of stakeholders. This is an indication that no consultations took place during the formulation of policy. P2M mentioned that

*“The policy documents become our bible in the school. Success of curriculum implementation depends on the collaborative nature of the policy. The progression process is resulting in a fight between teachers and parents. We are distressed about the whole implementation. It renders ineffective teaching and learning in our school and compromises our standard of performance”.*

It is evident that the assessment part of the policy document is causing uneasiness among teachers. The majority of participants seem to believe that the fact that the department made suggestions in the form of a circular for ways to deal with progression proved that there was something that was not clear in the policy. The circular stated that

*“a learner who obtains more than 20% in mathematics can be progressed provided that he or she is retained because of failing mathematics only”.*

The circular added value to the understanding of teachers, as it indicated how teachers must deal with learners who are not promoted, information which was not included in the policy.

### **c. Training**

One of the subthemes that emerged from the first question referred to the quality of the training that teachers received. The researcher believes that inadequate training of educators and the SMT poses a challenge to the implementation of CAPS. Teachers' training is the key element of every curriculum implementation. Therefore, CAPS informs a process that requires bringing forward eligible teachers who are knowledgeable. The curriculum seeks to elevate the standard

of education through a shift from a teacher- and content-based approach to one of learner-centeredness. In this regard, Van Deventer & Kruger (2010: 219) believes that for a school to be successful in the implementation of any new curriculum, it requires a comprehensive and well organised development programme for teacher training. Teachers generally feel professionally obliged to improve their skills, and understand and accept that there is a need to undergo change, and that renewal happens slowly and with some difficulty in their professional careers. Constant support, guidance and follow-ups are essential in the current teaching practice.

The interviewed participants unanimously agreed that they only received emergency training that introduced them to certain key concepts regarding curriculum implementation, which is not related to classroom practice. P4F expressed the following view:

*“The introduction of CAPS which was guided by principles of strengthening the curriculum to improve the quality of teaching and learning at schools was a wise decision. I have only attended its advocacy campaign at the centre in 2007. We also went for continuous assessment moderation training. It was a one-day training that exposed us to a lot of complicated new structures, methods, planning and assessment. We were expected to go and introduce new subject matter to the learners without actually being given the necessary assistance”.*

Another teacher, P3F, agreed with the notion that the department does not give them enough training:

*“All processes of curriculum review are iterative. There has been no considerable advance made around the training of the new curriculum. Hindrances to achieving satisfactory implementation are not found in the curriculum documents alone. Impediments to curriculum implementation arise also from the kind of training we are receiving. As people who manage curriculum at school level, one of our duties is to support each other where we are failing to understand. Our duties become very difficult*

*because we do not have knowledge and skills to assist. We cannot make sense of curriculum dynamics”.*

Lack of training can pose serious challenges to the implementation of a curriculum. The experience of curriculum change revealed that one of the greatest challenges was to implement the previous curriculum, as there was inadequate advocacy, orientation, training and development of teachers before they implemented the new curriculum (Makeleni 2013: 63).

Participants’ responses highlighted that the current skills development policies to support the implementation of the new curriculum were often too generic and superficial, and did not provide teachers with the necessary skills. The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa was introduced to address, amongst other things, the improvement of the quality of teacher education and development over time (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 1). The plan was initiated after the department had realised its inability to provide adequate training to teachers through in-service training. From the document analysis, it appeared that no curriculum documents providing guidance after training could be found. This means that teachers have to rely on their own understanding. It is important that once teachers have attended training, they should have been provided with some material that will further assist them at school. Participant P4F also expressed the view that,

*“A one-size-fits-all approach kind of program will never be appropriate to address the need to upgrade teachers’ skills. We cannot be put into one microwave and hope all is well. In addition, no documents were provided during training”.*

There were also complaints that tertiary institution training did not cover the implementation of new CAPS documents. New teachers, from whom they expected new skills from the training institution, were found to be incompetent and frustrated with regard to teaching the new curriculum. The researcher’s observation confirms participants’ frustration. Letters of invitation to the workshop confirmed that the workshop was to be conducted for 2 days only. The participants unanimously agreed that teachers’ training for the new curriculum, namely CAPS, was inadequate.

**d. Selection of learning and teaching support material**

Learning and teaching support material can be regarded as the primary source of knowledge. The textbook is one of the most effective tools through which learners acquire useful knowledge that can emancipate them from the doom of insecurity and inferiority. It is within this context that teachers feel that the selection of content should be based on material which delivers diversified core knowledge. Teachers were not happy about the quantity and quality of textbooks supplied.

Procurement of adequate textbooks was a serious challenge. During the interview process, one of the participants, P3F, expressed her view that,

*“We are requested to fill in the requisition form every year. We are requested to select certain textbooks we want to use a year before. It happened for every curriculum change, CAPS included. The department took it upon its shoulders to make a final decision, which differs dismally from what we have chosen. We are compelled to use material that we do not feel comfortable with to use in class. We understand that relative importance of activity and skill is the basis for knowing and knowledge. When we feel that the type of textbooks provided do not fulfill the goals of the new curriculum, it becomes a challenge to both teachers and learners”.*

From these remarks, it is clear that there is a challenge in selecting the most useful and appropriate textbooks. During every curriculum change, it is necessary to ensure that the selected textbooks embody the rigor standard and are coherent, as well as providing adequate challenges, interest, skills and motivation to learn. All participants shared the sentiment that procurement was done without consultation or consideration of affected stakeholders. Participants acknowledged the perception that educators, as learning mediators, facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom, and should play a major role in the selection of adequate material that will promote the kind of learner envisaged in the new curriculum (National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 (2)). Participant P1M shared his view by saying the following:

*“Knowledge is gained through emancipation that leads to transformed consciousness. One must become conscious of what and how reality and its factors are sustained for correct representation. This can only happen when relevant and sufficient LTSM are used for a specific grade. The people who are qualified to do this are teachers. However, they are not given that opportunity, their participation in the procurement process was a rubber stamp”.*

The observation data confirmed that teachers in some subjects used a single textbook in the classroom while learners were listening. Teachers sometimes gave learners notes as either handouts or by writing on the chalkboard. In other cases, the researcher observed a group of 8 learners sharing one textbook. Teachers remarked that it was emphasised in the training that each learner must have his or her own textbook and workbook, in order to achieve good results. It was also pointed out that good textbooks were usually written in a way that gave teachers a chance to adapt the content for learners who experience learning difficulties. The chosen textbooks must accommodate learner diversity and be made available in an accessible format. Learners and educators must be able to use it with ease. Concepts and content should be presented in an organised and systematic manner (Department of Basic Education, 2010: 6).

The review committee, appointed by the current Minister of Education, Angie Motshekga, highlighted the decisive role played by learning and teaching support material in supporting and strengthening the implementation of CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2010: 7). For successful implementation, adequate funds and a legitimate team to control delivery of books must be made available. It is relatively difficult to implement changes without sufficient and relevant material. The interview discussion revealed that the delivery of textbooks is still a challenge in the province, particularly in the area where this research was conducted. Teachers are unable to play an effective role in enhancing the idea of curriculum changes, because of the unavailability of the textbooks. P2F concurred with the view that late supply disturbs the progress of curriculum implementation:

*“We are used to begin a year without textbooks for learners. Every new curriculum imposes a challenge of shortage. The way the department manages the delivery of textbooks is questionable. They repeat the same mistakes more than once and that is unacceptable. We are tired of their*

*excuses that bear no progress. We are not surprised to learn that in our province, there were numerous confiscations of dumped textbooks. Some were found dumped in the river; others were discovered scattered in the shelter while learners are struggling to cope with the new curriculum content in the class. These are textbooks that were supposed to be used by learners in the class. It is obvious that there will be no effective and efficient curriculum implementation”.*

The above participant’s response to this particular issue indicates that the school was expecting more from the department than it is currently receiving. In fact, the department is not closing the gap between its role, the expectations of the school, and the actual performance demonstrated by the supplier. It was apparent that there were signs of failure in the system. From the observation, the researcher noted that, at the time of investigation, this specific rural area was severely affected by this shortage and scarcity. This was evident from statements made by teachers. In this regard, P1F asserted the following:

*“For no apparent reason we are the worst affected area. If there are learners who run short of any book, it is usually those in the rural areas. How can the department expect maximum implementation and satisfactory performance, when the supply of textbooks is so poor like we are experiencing? We do not expect miracles to happen. All we need is fair distribution of textbooks like in other provinces where this is not happening. We are compelled to use the old NSC textbooks for the sake of learning and teaching to continue in the school”.*

According to the perception of the participants, distribution of LTSM to this area was very poor. In response to the interview question,

*“Did you receive relevant and sufficient LTSM for CAPS?”*,

the feeling was that this shortage limits the implementation of the CAPS. The researcher’s observation also confirms their assertion. Learners were seen using books from the old curriculum in some subjects, such as Natural Sciences, English and Life Orientation.

Participants agreed that this would inevitably have an impact on the approach towards and efficiency of CAPS implementation.

The next section focuses on the analysis of the data that emerged from the second research question, namely:

*“How did teachers perceive the curriculum change while implementing it in the classroom?”*

This leads to the second theme, which will be discussed below.

#### **4.2.2 Perception of curriculum change in the classroom**

Teachers who are the agents of implementing changes, are experiencing continuous challenges in administering the core of curriculum change, especially in the classroom. The following subthemes emerged under the theme of curriculum change in the classroom, namely *content, class size, assessment and monitoring*, which will be discussed next.

##### **a. Content**

This subtheme relates to the drawing of the pacesetter that is used in each subject. It reflects the number of topics to be covered within a prescribed period. The findings indicate that there is a need for content alignment. The research results show that there is a knowledge gap created by the prescribed content, between Grades 3 and 4, and between Grades 9 and 10. In this regard, P3F remarked that,

*“South African learners have fared comparatively poorly and are continuing to do so in local and international testing in Grades 3 and 6. Annual National Assessment results are a disaster in our province, particularly in our rural schools. The reason is none other than a challenge caused by the transition process”.*

Teachers feel that transition from Grade 3 to 4 needs alignment. According to the participants, there is a big knowledge gap between Grades 3 and 4, that is to say, between the foundation

phase and the intermediate phase. Learners in the foundation phase do four subjects with only one teacher, and need to pass only three subjects to move to the next grade. They also concentrate more on developing mechanical skills than developing a fundamental form of human understanding (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 6). Learners in the intermediate phase do six subjects with different teachers. It is clear that a learner needs serious adjustment when he or she enters the intermediate phase. Learners experience double challenges, because they have to master the content of six subjects, as well as getting used to different teachers. P2F indicated that,

*“The content from Grades R to 6 has no single comprehensive, concise and coherent content coverage that provides details on how a teacher can link subject matter from the foundation phase to the senior phase”.*

Gultig et al (2008: 114) believe that subject content should assist learners to acquire the techniques and skills necessary for developing critical intellect. The school should assist in developing certain abilities of the learner, starting at an early stage. Learners should not be burdened with unnecessary loads. In this regard, P4F said the following:

*“Learners are expected to shift from 3 subjects to 6 subjects. Do we expect miracles from the learners? The CAPS designers should consider the knowledge gap between the different phases. This contributes towards a transition challenge for both learners and educators, and affects the performance in higher grades”.*

Teachers agreed that learners should be introduced to basic fields of study, so that they can have a basic understanding, as well as discover their interests in a certain area at an early stage. The feeling of teachers in general was that there should be a link between what is done in the foundation phase, intermediate phase and the senior phase.

**b.        *Size of the class***

The premise that small numbers of learners in the class increase learners’ achievement seems logical. This relates to the understanding that class size is an important factor with respect to

academic performance of learners. If the number of learners in the class is far above the norm of 40 per class in primary school (Department of Basic Education, 2010b), the likelihood is that interaction could be negatively affected. The overall finding on the size of the class indicates that the number of learners in all classes was relatively high. This was evident from both the observation and interviews. Teachers indicated that big classes restrain the effectiveness of CAPS implementation. P1M, who is teaching a class of 62 learners, had the following to say:

*“It is very difficult to give learners individual attention as prescribed by CAPS. The kind of situation we are experiencing reduces the teacher–learner interaction. This is the reason why the implementation of CAPS is rather ineffective”.*

The class size in this school was found to be exceptionally high, in such a way that teaching and discussion become fragmented and disturbed. Based on the observation of the researcher, teachers were compelled to rely on passive teaching and assign less written class work and homework, or fewer sets of problems, in order to fulfill the requirements of CAPS. In some cases teachers even found it difficult to know each learner personally and were sometimes only able to identify those who experience challenges. P2F indicated that

*“It is difficult to adjust my teaching method to such a large size. I am forced to apply one or two methods suitable for the large class, namely the instructional and question and answer methods. This deprives learners of discussions. They will never have a chance to demonstrate their abilities with regard to learner-centered approaches, because of the method I am compelled to use”.*

The impact of large classes seems to have an impact on the issue of considering cultural diversity as one of the significant prerequisites of CAPS. The “one size fits all” approach may not be the most effective method to assist learners. This study also took into consideration that on primary school level, infrastructure was a challenge. For instance, there were not enough classrooms and desks for learners. From the observation, it appeared that in grades 3, 4 and 5, 4 learners were sharing a desk meant for 2 learners. It became obvious that the seating

arrangement restricted effective teaching and learning. All the participants were disgruntled by their big class sizes.

**c. Assessment and monitoring**

As assessment is such an important aspect of teaching and learning, it was important to understand and know how teachers conduct assessment and monitoring, as stipulated in the CAPS documents. It was also important to find out if teachers were able to follow the modus operandi and the type of assessments predetermined in CAPS. CAPS regards assessment as a continuous process until the end of the academic year (McMillan, 2012: 27). With regard to the particular subtheme, teachers appeared to focus more on the acquisition of knowledge than on assisting learners to develop skills. P4F remarked as follows:

*“We do not have sufficient material with which we can assess these learners effectively. Teachers end up applying the old method of assessment, a teacher-centered method, because learners cannot take responsibility for their own learning. At the training and workshop on CAPS they emphasized the learner-centered method of teaching and assessment, which is difficult to use”.*

Similarly, P2M concurred by saying,

*“There is very little that we can do to assist learners in order to attain good results. The number of learners in the class impedes quality assessment as per CAPS documents. When we assess grade R – 3 learners, we have to attend to them on an individual basis and make sure that they understand the content and develop the correct skills. The kind of environment in the class and shortage of relevant books negatively impact on assessment”.*

The way in which the teachers assess and monitor the progress of learners became evident in their exercise books in which learners seem to be completing assignments in Grades 6 and 7, as well as projects and investigation, class work and homework. The requirements for assessment in CAPS are not being adhered to at all. The findings suggest that teachers do not

understand the basics of assessment. Teachers concentrate on examinations or tests, which are only done at the end of each term. This might be a sign that teachers are not well trained and are avoiding the continuous assessment process. P4F agreed that they are not always able to assess learners effectively, saying that,

*“Application of assessment in the class of 65 learners in grade 3 who do not have enough workbooks is a serious challenge. I think the department must come up with a different strategy in order to assist us, especially in the environment where there are no classes, teachers and textbooks. I cannot perform miracles to assist these learners to pass. The kind of assessment as stipulated in the CAPS documents requires textbooks, and if there are not sufficient textbooks, learners will not be able to learn”.*

Participants’ experience in assessment and monitoring of the work of learners was very appalling. They all agreed that they are not living up to the expectations of CAPS. They clearly indicated that more should be done to address their situation, because the curriculum prescribed learner-centered principles.

#### **4.2.3 Curriculum challenges**

As indicated earlier in section 4.2, within the scope of one of the four sub-research questions, namely the factors that were influencing teachers’ implementation of CAPS in this remote rural school, the following sub-themes were generated:

*dissemination of curriculum information, lesson planning, content and infrastructure.*

These sub-themes will be discussed next.

##### **a. Dissemination of curriculum information**

It was necessary to determine the views of teachers regarding the advocacy of the new curriculum. Teachers were requested to give further details about the challenges faced in this area. This was one of the areas where participants were very vocal about the model for

curriculum dissemination. The majority of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with regard to the way in which curriculum planning and implementation was communicated using a top-down approach. P3F expressed the following view:

*“For effective teaching and learning to happen at school, a plan to implement a new curriculum should be communicated well in advance. We are the key agents of change. We need to be informed about changes so that we can be flexible in the roles we play and able to prepare to internalise and contextualise relevant content in the correct way. It discourages us when we are not taken seriously. It must be noted that greater involvement of educators at the initial stage of planning through dissemination of curriculum change contributes to satisfactory performance. The department is using us as tools that have no minds of their own. As a teacher I want to see and prepare myself well beforehand”.*

It was clear from the onset that effective ways of disseminating a curriculum plan were not evident. In her turnaround strategy, the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, made a clear statement to acknowledge the challenges. She also established a task team to assist in research, in order to improve the quality of basic education (Department of Basic Education, 2010a: 2). P1M commented on the establishment of this task team by saying that

*“We never heard of the task team before it started working. The matter was not communicated to interested stakeholders by our union. We only heard of the team’s report. Whether the investigation was conducted in South Africa or abroad we do not know. We are expected to believe whatever we are told. There is a great lack of disseminating information to us, especially in the rural areas. We are always taken by surprise in most of the curriculum activities.*

P2F had the following to say:

*“The new curriculum was never properly tested or researched and there was inadequate preparation and consideration of whether educators,*

*learners and the system in general were ready for more fundamental changes. While we were still struggling to adjust ourselves to the Revised National Curriculum Statement, a new curriculum (or amended curriculum) has already been introduced”.*

The marketing of CAPS, its timing, and the compelling stories told, ensures its acceptance in the school, especially in rural primary schools. It is important to communicate a clear message to the relevant structures on time. Some of the teachers believed that advocacy can create a positive new beginning and a new emphasis on implementation.

The overall finding was that all teachers, regardless of union affiliation, demonstrated dissatisfaction regarding the manner in which the new curriculum was advocated. While they agreed with the introduction of the new curriculum, the model for introducing it took them by surprise. The fact that the department failed to inform teachers on time about curriculum changes caused resistance and uneasiness with regard to the interpretation and implementation of CAPS.

***b. Lesson planning***

It was important to determine what the experience of teachers was with regard to lesson planning, as presented by CAPS. The overall finding was that teachers were happy about the provided lesson plans. They all appreciated the fact that the department reduced some of their paper work. P4F said the following:

*“At least there is a difference between NCS and CAPS. We have to plan at one level, namely application in the classroom. The phase overview and teaching plan are provided in the CAPS document. We only have to plan the lesson presentation”.*

The document analysis conducted in the study confirmed that CAPS documents consist of the following sections: generic policy, overview of phase content methodology, assessment resources, curriculum content per grade, and the National Protocol for Assessment Grades R – 12 (Du Plessis, 2013: 8). The overview of phase content methodology resources includes the

teaching plan, which makes it easy to extract a lesson plan. From the observation, it became clear that the documents contain main and supporting ideas of lesson plans.

The problem that teachers experienced started when they were using textbooks (content materials), since the whole textbook is designed in the form of lessons in many subjects. This means that the textbooks contain little information to assist learners. Learners find it difficult to follow the content because the information provided is shallow. It focuses more on how to acquire information than on knowing the content for assessment. It requires learners to work in groups, in order to break up the information together as one group. This kind of teaching plan does not work well in an overcrowded class, even though teachers at some stage try to use group work. P2M experienced such a challenge and commented that

*“While we are happy that the CAPS documents provide teaching plans for teachers, we sometimes find it difficult to break up the information in the textbooks into lessons and do not know how to change activities to cater for all learners in large classes. The workshops never assisted us enough on how to use teachers’ guides and learners’ books. They never released us from the constraint of irrational, unproductive, unjust and unsatisfactory interaction in the real class contact situation. They also did very little to assist us to change to more learner-centered approaches.*

P1M concurred:

*“The in-service training we attended was just training aimed at providing a workshop as per the facilitators’ job description. The worst part was when the facilitators did not understand what they were doing. We expect facilitators to unfold the constraints embedded in the teaching of subjects in the classroom situation. They never explored the interaction expected between learners and educators, as prescribed in the new curriculum. There was no deliberate process through which teachers are directed to transform their practices”.*

The lesson planning sub-theme focused on how teachers perceive the lesson plans, as prescribed in the textbook. The findings showed that teachers were happy to be provided with

lesson plans, but were worried about the information provided in textbooks in relation to the CAPS document. They expressed the concern that those who prescribed the content to teach should have considered the requirements of the CAPS documents, and the time allocated to topics. There is room for improvement if the department manages to deal with the incongruence between the textbooks and the CAPS documents. This shows that not all is well in the operation of the curriculum.

**c. Content**

As noted in Section 4.2.2, content is the core of knowledge acquisition. Learners are able to progress and develop because of the content they master. The challenge in this context is in relation to the number of topics to be covered within a given period. The findings show that there is too much to be covered within a short term of study.

*“There is too much content to be covered within a short period of time. I am teaching mathematics in grade 7 and for the past two years, I found it difficult to cover all the required topics within a quarter. Learners are failing because we were not able to cover the prescribed work”*

(P3F). In resonance with the feelings of the mathematics teacher, P1M had this to say:

*“The curriculum designers should be teachers who stay with learners in class. Teachers understand what learners need and can make them progress or grow. The curriculum is packed with a lot of content that does not tally with the designated time. I am a Social Science teacher; I have to cover both the history and geography parts within three hours a week. That is too much for the learner in a rural area, a learner who does not have a textbook, a learner who relies on the teacher’s notes because there are no textbooks. This makes CAPS practically impossible to implement in our situation”.*

According to the understanding of teachers, there is a reciprocal relation between the content and the designated time. From the research, it became clear that instructional time per week in

some subjects is inadequate. Based on the CAPS documents, the prescribed time for subjects is as follows:

- Home Language: 6 hours
- English First Additional Language: 5 hours
- Mathematics: 6 hours
- Life Skills: 4 hours
- Natural Science and Technology: 3.5 hours
- Social Sciences: 3 hours

The above times are allocated for each subject in Grades 4-6 per week. This scenario emphasises the frustration of teachers in this area, because they are working without sufficient resources. There is too much content to teach within a short period. From the document analysis, the topics in the content of each subject are not allocated a specific time, but the pace setter drawn by the departmental official determines the period in which a specific topic must be finished. It leaves teachers with much to be covered in a short periods of time in some subjects, such as Social Sciences and Mathematics as indicated by the participants.

Another challenge is the content quality, as indicated in Section 4.2.2. The successful implementation of CAPS depends on the quality of the content, including the content in textbooks. It was important to find out from the teachers if the textbooks used were regarded as a good source to improve the quality of education. It was also important to understand their perceptions regarding the content in relation to the performance of learners, and whether the implementation of CAPS is improving performance in the school. All participants unanimously agreed that the quality of content, especially in the new textbooks, does not necessarily assist in the implementation of CAPS or better performance of learners. P3F had this to say:

*“The content that appears in the textbooks seems to be more than the allocated time. The textbooks we are using are full of activities that learners sometimes cannot understand because there is inadequate explanation of the topic. While the activities assume that learners will know the scenario because they are experiencing it on a daily basis, the*

*opposite is the case for learners in this area, because they are subjected to a remote kind of life experience and they cannot relate to some contexts. When textbooks refer to a train or high buildings, it never makes sense to them”.*

Other teachers shared similar frustrations. For instance, P4F concurred with the above statement and added that

*“We are not able to teach and effectively assess some subjects, such as Natural Science and Life Orientation, as they contain a lot of new terminology. The least that the Department of Education could have done was to find a way of thoroughly explaining topics and the content. The fact that authors are not doing enough to unpack the content results in poor implementation”.*

The interview data revealed that participants acknowledged the challenge about the quality of the content with regard to the successful implementation of CAPS. The participants indicated that teachers are experiencing difficulty in using some of the CAPS textbooks due to the nature of topics and content. Teachers’ responses showed that they were worried about their learners’ performance. They indicated that textbooks should produce quality and relevant content, in order to speak to the ideals of CAPS. They should focus on subject-specific knowledge and be able to inspire teachers and learners to get the most out of every lesson.

The next sub-theme refers to the infrastructure of the school.

#### ***d. Infrastructure***

This sub-theme refers to the findings that emerged from participants’ responses in relation to the status of the classroom, which forms part of the challenge in the implementation of CAPS. Makeleni (2013: 73) indicates that learners should be taught in a safe and secure environment. An environment that is not safe and secure hinders effective teaching and learning. It was essential to obtain the experiences of teachers in this regard. In response to the question about infrastructure, P1M reported that:

*“Classrooms are too small, are not well ventilated and have old furniture and dilapidated walls on which one cannot paste charts, as one of the CAPS requirements. The classroom is full of potholes, leaking roofs and a falling chalkboard”.*

Similarly, P3F said that

*“We are the worst school in the area, as there are insufficient classrooms. I wonder whether there is, in South Africa, still a class that is conducted under a tree. We will be forced to do so for the safety of teachers and learners. During the rainy season, one would not like to come to school. This has a negative effect on teaching and learning, and by implication on the implementation of CAPS”.*

From the observation, it was found that the classes were dilapidated and needed serious renovation. The observation was consistent with the participants’ perceptions that no effective teaching could take place. The above comments acknowledged the fact that the standard of the classrooms in this school contradicted the principle of good education for all learners, as per the education policy documents, the South African School Act 84 of 1996, and School Education Act 6 of 1995 (Brunton & Association, 2003: B-65). However, participants agreed unanimously that this situation hindered the successful implementation of CAPS.

#### **4.2.4 Curriculum improvement strategies**

The aim of this theme was to determine the perceptions of participants in order to address the challenges of CAPS implementation. The theme was embedded in the scope of the last sub-question, namely to determine participants’ strategies for the effective implementation of CAPS. The following sub-themes were identified from the responses of the participants: support, training, policy, curriculum design and funding. These sub-themes will be discussed next.

**a. Support**

The overall findings suggested that the new curriculum needed the support of stakeholders in the community. P2F indicated that,

*“We need the support of parents. Parents in this area do not attend to the challenges of their learners at school. They neither attend SGB meetings, nor respond to the invitation by the school principal when needed to resolve certain challenges of individual learners. We are frustrated and it really renders unproductive teaching in the institution”.*

The purpose of CAPS was to deal with certain constraints experienced in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. One of the critical areas needing special attention was inadequate support from parents, as prescribed in the policy. In his statement on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, the President of the country, Mr. Jacob Zuma, indicated that education must be elevated from being a departmental issue to a social issue, one that occupies the attention and energy of all our people: parents, interested stakeholders and other organizations. Parents, in particular, must show commitment to the “code of quality education” in non-negotiable terms (ANC documents, 2008: 10). This is in contradiction with the real practice in this school.

*“The majority of learners’ parents regard their job as more important than the education of their learners, especially farm workers. They do not want to miss even a single hour of their day” (P1F).*

Van Deventer and Kruger (2010: 9) argue that learners’ education can be fully realised in tripartite co-operation, which consists of learners, educators and parents. The policy did not articulate the position and responsibility of parents. The report by Cheairs (2015: 24) indicate that in rural areas, the majority of learners’ parents regard their job as more important than the education of their children. Research further shows that they did not attend to the problems of their children, as requested by their educators (Cheairs, 2015: 26). Even parents who are illiterate can assist their learner in many ways, as required by the new curriculum.

Participants in this study revealed that teachers are not receiving support from parents. All of the participants acknowledged the absence of this one element in this tripartite co-operation. Participants were positive that the presence of parents could minimise the challenges they were experiencing with learners.

**b. Training of teachers**

As noted in Section 4.2.1 on curriculum implementation, participants' perceptions regarding training were clear. They suggested that adequate training could assist in the implementation of CAPS. This is confirmed by Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 331), who believe that staff development and training activities are critical elements of successful implementation. It is meant to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required in the implementation process. It is also intended to introduce a new curriculum. The success of a new curriculum depends on the way in which it is introduced to the participants. In this regard, P1M had the following to say:

*“It must be borne in mind that teaching in this current orientation requires not only the ability to generate problematic situations for learners, but also the ability to create that kind of learner who will be able to critically analyse a situation without the aid of teachers. The teacher has the positive role of cultivating ‘the higher mental abilities’. This is possible to attain with a full house and well planned training”.*

P2F added that

*“The department should develop a programme of action, which ensures that all educators are re-trained for the effective implementation of the changes, not a microwave kind of training”.*

According to the Education Labour Relation Council, the department has an obligation to train all educators for 60 hours a year and remunerate them accordingly, without any contrition (Brunton, 2003: c-86).

Participants believed that all training must be planned, in order to allow everybody to come on board. It is through this training that a new curriculum can be introduced. Training has to remain a process and not an event. Training heavily concentrated at the beginning of the year cannot be effective. The rationale for this relates to the fact that because of insufficient training, teachers will implement a curriculum and policy that they might not clearly be able to interpret and understand. Participants unanimously agreed that well-planned training can assist teachers to implement CAPS efficiently and effectively.

**c. Policy**

The policy issue, as discussed in Section 4.2.1, is one critical area that frustrated the participants. According to them, the CAPS document does not portray a consistent framework, especially in terms of progression and promotion requirements, as well as the textbook policy. P4F remarked that,

*“The CAPS document should be consistent throughout the entire process. Changes effected through the circulars are causing more confusion than before. The department should stick to the original document”.*

P6M added that

*“The textbook policy, progression and promotion policy should stay the same for all learners every year”.*

There was a great concern about the policy document. Participants believed that the CAPS document needed revision. The department should produce another revised document and not send addendums every year. Participants agreed on the fact that dealing with a new invention every year distracts them from believing in what they have acquired. For instance, with regard to the progression and promotion policy, the CAPS document never mentioned the requirements to qualify for progression. P3F remarked that

*“We are so confused about the progression and promotion requirements that come as amendments to the policy at the end of each year. There is no steady framework explaining the parameters of the policy. One year*

*you deal with a condoned pass; the next year the conditions have changed for progression”.*

The policy provides guidelines regarding assessment, progression and promotion requirements, without stating the prerequisites for progression based on recorded evidence in formal assessment tasks (Department of Basic Education, 2013: 16). Participants agreed that qualifying for progression is frustrating to teachers and confuses the teaching and learning system.

**d. Curriculum design**

Curriculum design is informed by certain principles, some of which are human resource development, learner-centeredness, relevance, integration, credibility, nation building and flexibility (Gultig et al, 2008: 4). This also means that a good deal of attention must be given to the choice of an appropriate notional model for curriculum design. Curriculum design should follow a society-centered approach, in particular involving parents and teachers. Therefore, the success of curriculum design depends on the involvement of the personnel. In this study, it was important to find out from teachers about the nature and scope of the curriculum they were implementing. Their experiences with regard to curriculum design will assist in curriculum development. P4F said the following in this regard:

*“We have learnt from our union that involvement of teachers in the design and dissemination phases is not emphasised. We are not surprised to note that the entire curriculum programme is inadequately designed around the interests of the child. Children’s interests may not be an adequate index to measure the level of curriculum design, but there should be a relationship between learning stages, cognitive growth and grade progression, which this curriculum has not adequately addressed”. “The report we got from our union is that a review committee was appointed by the Minister of Education.*

Participants argued that if teachers were involved, they would be able to identify the relevant aims and objectives of the curriculum, select appropriate topics to be cumulatively learned,

structure a sequence in learning, and select correct assessment strategies. In this way, learners will become internationally competitive.

*e. Funding*

Training, policy documents and design are part of government expenditure. The previous sections looked at how the department can promote quality education through the implementation of CAPS. In this view, the major functions of the department include providing funding, as well as identifying and selecting relevant programmes. The department has the responsibility of educators' cognitive development (Department of Education, 2008: e8). Of the three functions, funding remains the most significant responsibility, because without sufficient funds, no programme can be successfully implemented. Recapitalisations of existing infrastructures and resources and funding models have long been the subject of debate across provinces. This led to the establishment of resourced Provincial Teacher Development Institutions in all provinces (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 21). It is this institution that has to come up with a roll-out programme that must be funded. From the responses of the participants, the interviews revealed that there was no strict policy that deals with the funding of new curriculum programmes, hence these one-day or week-long training programmes. P1M remarked that,

*“Teacher unions are potentially powerful actors in shaping the curriculum. Although their focus and attention are on political issues, salary and working conditions, they are also concerned about substantive issues of knowledge and teaching practice. They are in constant loggerheads with the department on sensitive matters of curriculum funding. They always report to us as members that the Department of Education is not willing to provide enough funding to increase the rate of teacher development with regard to the new curriculum”.*

P3F added that:

*“The Department of Education is allocating limited funds that allow a few educators to attend certain programmes. The department is not ready to*

*strengthen the national and provincial bursary scheme to ensure that adequate numbers of educators are assisted to meet the demands for the new curriculum and get adequate training. We only know of the Funza Lushaka bursary, which is provided for the students taking Mathematics and Science as their teaching subjects. It never addresses the need of a new curriculum”.*

The responses from participants during the interviews also revealed some factors that contribute to unproductive workshops. Participants highlighted the following factors that came to light during the attendance of training, which contributed to the inadequate implementation of the CAPS:

- *Poor facilities:* educators indicated that about 300 of them were bundled into a small hall which could not accommodate more than 100 people. A week’s induction was conducted and they were expected to sit comfortably and participate in the discussions, which was impossible. Impediments to good facilitation arise from a conducive atmosphere for learning. No productive training could take place under those circumstances.
- *Unhygienic food:* educators were supplied with paltry food, which was sometimes not palatable. They indicated that the department does not seem to care. Those entrusted with the responsibility of organising the food during the workshop, seemed to have been given insufficient funds.
- *Insufficient materials:* inadequate and below acceptable standard materials were supplied to the attendants of the workshop. For instance, a circuit was given one workshop guideline, which had to be photocopied for more than 300 educators. The content also did not assist with the implementation of CAPS.
- *Training during school hours:* the department opted to utilise school hours, so that trainees could not claim for extra hours. This was one challenge that frustrates teachers because they have to leave classes several times to attend CAPS training. This negatively affected teaching and learning,

The above factors were unanimously regarded as a failure to provide sufficient training. In this regard, Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 229) believe that change in curriculum is uneven, generally

takes a long time, and requires adequate training and entails much more than a new policy. For curriculum change to succeed, policy must include, as its central focus, a sound implementation strategy and an attainable model of funding.

### **4.3 CONCLUSION**

The chapter presented a detailed account of the findings that emerged from the interviews, document analysis and observations. Ultimately, as stated in the beginning of the chapter, the objectives were to present the empirical findings and attempt to synthesise the collected data into formidable themes that would help to answer the research question. The themes emerged from the four research questions. The first theme was curriculum implementation, and the general finding was that teachers had a limited interpretation of CAPS. The investigation suggested that this has a negative impact on the implementation process. The second theme was the perception of curriculum change in classrooms, which had the overall finding that teachers are struggling to cope in class due to overcrowding and lack of resources. This was supported by the researcher's observation. The third theme was curriculum challenges, and the findings showed that there are many challenges. They ranged from the dissemination of information and lesson preparation to availability of infrastructure. Document analysis and observation supplemented the interview findings on this theme. The last theme concerned curriculum improvement strategies, and the overall findings suggested that support from stakeholders is significant, and that the training of teachers needs to be adequately planned and implemented. The last theme further highlighted policy formulation, curriculum design and funding as important issues to consider. The chapter also verified the views of participants with reference to the perceptions of other writers, as captured in the literature review.

The summary of the findings was presented in the form of themes. This is evident in the systematic approach used to analyse qualitative data. The content analysis approach was utilised to inductively and objectively integrate loose information from transcripts. The presentation and analysis of data in this chapter informs the last chapter, which focuses on the summary, recommendation and conclusion of the research.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, an analysis and interpretation of gathered data during interviews, observation and document analysis were presented. The analysis was based on the conceptual underpinning of qualitative research method needed to respond to the research problem. The chapter discussed generated themes and subthemes that emerged from the data analysis.

This chapter, as being the final chapter, will provide the holistic view of the entire study. It will recapitulate on the most significant aspects of the study and present its logical closure. It will highlight the similarities and contradiction between literature review and empirical study. The chapter will revisit the research question in order to draw the conclusion based on the findings. The chapter will further reflect on the limitations of study and concludes with recommendations and suggestions for further research.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review focused on curriculum change, interpretation and implementation in South Africa. The findings drawn from the review of related literature are that curriculum change in the country was precipitated by certain imperatives that impinge the lives of the communities (see section 2.2). The introduction of curriculum 2005 in 1998 was viewed by other theorists, like Chisholm (2000: 45), Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2008: 59) and others, as a step towards the transformation of the education system. The review progressed to discuss how Curriculum 2005 was aimed at improving quality of education for all South African learners (see section 2.2). The existence of constraints such as the policy-practice gap, too many outcomes, the administrative burden, workload for both teachers and learners and inadequate training of teachers created an impediment with the Curriculum 2005 implementation.

There was therefore a need to streamline and strengthen Curriculum 2005 through the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (see section 2.2). The review revealed that the NCS also imposed an unhealthy threat to the promotion of effective teaching

and learning and it ultimately gave way to RNCS. The literature pointed out certain changes that were effected in the revised curriculum, namely the discontinuation of the learner portfolio, reduction in the number of projects, and the discontinuation of the common task assessment (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 5).

The last and major curriculum change took place in 2012. The introduction of CAPS brought hope and great expectations of the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in South Africa (section 2.2). The literature review analysed empirical studies on CAPS and the role of teachers in this change, especially teachers in rural schools (Makeleni, 2013: 4). It emerged that curriculum implementation challenges affected teachers in the process. Formidable implications, such as the lack of training, shortage of learning and teaching support materials, lack of infrastructure, level of knowledge in new subjects, and support from the department and parents, were experienced during the implementation process. From this review, it was clear that these constraints created a barrier to the implementation of the CAPS.

The last section in the literature review referred to the curriculum theoretical framework, where influential theories of the past were discussed. Section 2.3 posited that critical emancipatory theory was found to be most suitable as a framework for this study, since this study is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge from different origins (Donovan & Branford, 2005: 407). The use of CET formed the theoretical basis of self-reflective knowledge and a knowledge – based curriculum. It was observed that all these principle considerations are found in South African curriculum changes. It further reflected on the objectives of CET, role of the researcher, relationship between researcher and participants, and the nature of reality as the most important elements of CET to be applied in this study (see section 2.3).

Having highlighted the main outcomes of the literature review, the next section summarises the empirical study.

### **5.3 SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL STUDY**

Chapter 3 dealt with the rationale for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. The discussion on the selection of the empirical research approach, setting, participants and analysis of data were presented in this chapter (see sections 3.3 and 3.4). The empirical research design

chosen to answer the research questions, was a case study. Qualitative data were therefore collected by means of a case study (see section 3.3). A description of the population was also provided, which indicated that the study sampled six teachers from the same setting (see section 3.4).

Data triangulation strategy was used as the means to collect information (see section 3.4). The interviews were intended to be the main data collection instrument while observation and document analysis will assist to confirm and validate the responses from participants. The data analysis was presented, wherein the researcher indicated how data were coded, organised, categorized and themes identified (see section 3.4). This section also revealed how the researcher intended to synthesise and generalize the coded data.

Validity and reliability as tools of trustworthiness were presented in section 3.4.5. The principle of trustworthiness sought to test the applicability of this study by other researchers in some years to come. Therefore, strategies such credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability were presented and discussed in brief (see section 3.4.5). The ethical considerations were presented with a view of complying with the principles of the empirical research and gaining ethical clearance from the institution.

The research findings were discussed and interpreted under each theme and presented in categorized sub-themes that correspond with the relevant theme (see section 4.2). The first theme focused on the curriculum implementation (see section 4.2.1). This theme was presented under the following sub-themes that appeared as major challenges: planning, policy, training and selection of LTSM. The research confirmed that participants unanimously agreed that there were shortfalls in the curriculum implementation process. The second theme addressed the perception of curriculum change in the classroom (see section 4.2.2). The following sub-themes were discussed: content, class size, assessment and monitoring. Both management and teachers believed that content and class size created impediments in the learning and teaching.

The third theme concentrated on curriculum change challenges (see section 4.2.3). The following sub-themes were generated: dissemination of curriculum information, lesson planning, content and infrastructure. The responses of participants revealed that there were

some challenges caused by insufficient advocacy, content and the type of infrastructure. The last theme focused on issues related to curriculum improvement strategies (see section 4.2.4). The following sub-themes emanated from this theme for discussion: support, training, policy, curriculum design and funding. The findings highlighted the views of participants with regard to how the implementation can be improved.

The next section will discuss the synthesis of research findings.

#### **5.4 SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The previous section focused on the research design, methods, analysis and interpretation. This section discusses the similarities and contradictions between the literature review and the empirical study. This section commences with the three similarities between the literature review and the empirical findings. The following similarities were found in chapters one, two and four: availability of learning materials, lack of teachers' training or induction workshops, and poor numeracy performance.

The first similarity appears in section 1.1, namely the availability of learning material, where the department also acknowledges the shortage and delayed supply of LTSM (Department of Basic Education, 2010a: 3). Since the introduction of the new curriculum, the availability of teaching and learning material has been a constraint towards the implementation of the curriculum. This similarity was apparent in the empirical research in chapter four (section 4.2.1D), where participants expressed their concerns about textbook distribution. From the participant interviews and document analysis, it appears that textbook supply is still a challenge. Although this was a comment and commitment made in 2009 by the DBE, it is disappointing to note that the same situation still exists in 2016.

The second similarity is captured in chapter two (section 2.2), where Fleisch (2008: 122), as quoted by Makeleni (2013: 4), asserted that the lack of teacher training tends to hinder the process of implementing a new curriculum, because teachers have insufficient knowledge and skills to teach and assist learners. Gultig, Hoadley and Jansen (2008: 187) mention that teachers were not thoroughly trained to implement the new curriculum, hence its failure to produce the expected results. Although they were referring to the implementation of NCS, the challenge

seems to be repeating itself in CAPS. This similarity is again found in chapter four, section 4.2.1C on training, where participants agreed that teacher training was inadequate.

The third similarity was raised in chapter two (section 2.2), namely poor performance in numeracy. The findings by the Department of Education's Ministerial Task Team reported poor performance in literacy and numeracy (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 12). Numeracy in particular was the greatest challenge to learners. This similarity is also captured in chapter four (section 4.2.3) under the sub-theme of content. According to the perceptions of the teachers, learners are continuing to attain low performance in numeracy or mathematics, due to the incongruence between content and allocated time.

The last aspect presented in this section is the only contradiction found in this study between the literature review and the empirical study, namely support from parents. This contradiction is discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.2). Parents' support of Curriculum 2005 was evident in this section, especially in this rural area, whereas participants in chapter 4 (section 4.2.4A), under the support sub-theme, argued that parents showed no commitment in terms of supporting them in the implementation of CAPS. The empirical findings attest to the fact that parents do not properly attend to the problems of their children.

The following section presents the research conclusions.

## **5.5 CONCLUSIONS**

This study sought to determine teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy statement in the Nzhelele West circuit. The investigation of teachers' perceptions was guided by four research questions, namely:

- What are the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement?
- How do teachers perceive curriculum changes during the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement in the classroom?
- What factors are impacting on the implementation of curriculum change?

- What strategies do teachers use for the effective implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement?

The following subsections discuss the research questions separately with reference to the themes and sub-themes emanating from the responses of the participants.

### **5.5.1 What are the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement?**

The empirical study confirms that participants experienced challenges related to the established theme: *curriculum implementation*. Four sub-themes related to the main theme emerged, namely *planning; policy; training and selection of LTSM* (see section 4.2.1). The study argues that there is not enough evidence that the department considered all aspects and stakeholders during the planning and formulation of the policy phase. The findings further indicate that teachers reported that the CAPS training they received was inadequate. There was a unanimous assertion that teachers do not have the capacity to integrate teaching, learning and assessment due to a lack of training. The empirical study further established that teachers received emergency training that introduced them to certain key concepts regarding curriculum implementation.

Teachers also asserted that the selection of learning and teaching support materials was inappropriate. According to their perceptions, it limits their skills to implement the new curriculum. The department is not taking sufficient initiative to fulfill its responsibility in providing relevant and selected material. The overwhelming understanding was that planning, policy formulation, training of teachers and selection of LTSM created impediments to the implementation of CAPS.

### **5.5.2 How do teachers perceive curriculum changes during the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement in the classroom?**

The second research question presented the theme of the perceptions of curriculum change in the classroom (see section 4.2.2). For a thorough analysis of this theme, it was important to discuss it under the following four sub-themes: *content, class size, assessment and monitoring*.

The empirical study confirmed that participants were not happy about the content of some subjects, such as mathematics and natural sciences. Teachers further indicated that the content created a serious knowledge gap between the grades. They felt that there should be a single comprehensive, concise and coherent document that provides details on how to link grades and phases. Teachers also specified that enrolment is an important factor with respect to the implementation of a new curriculum, as well as the academic performance of learners. The findings on the size of classes indicated that the number of learners in all classes was relatively high, which prevented effective implementation of CAPS.

Other related sub-themes were assessment and monitoring. It was important to understand that the lack of training, shortage of LTSM and the size of the class affected the assessment and monitoring of learners. Teachers pointed out that their experience in assessing and monitoring the work of their learners was appalling. Teachers were honest in reporting that they were not able to live up to the expectations of CAPS.

### **5.5.3 What factors are impacting on the implementation of curriculum change?**

The third research question gave rise to the curriculum challenges theme. It was necessary to examine this theme because it provides a specific demarcation in terms of the scope of the study, namely a remote rural school. This theme was discussed under the following four sub-themes: *dissemination of curriculum information, lesson planning, content and infrastructure* (see section 4.2.3).

The empirical study confirmed that participants expressed dissatisfaction with regard to the way in which curriculum planning and information were communicated, and that a top-down approach was used. It was clear that effective communication was not evident. Another finding relating to instructional planning was that teachers were both happy and worried. They appreciated the fact that textbooks were designed with lesson plans and that their only responsibility was to create the instructional lesson. However, they were displeased by the information provided by the textbooks, including the time designated for each topic. The overall findings confirmed that there was a reciprocal relationship between the content and designated time for each instructional lesson. The document analysis confirmed that the pace setter drawn by the curriculum advisors was inversely proportional to the time allocated, and that there were more topics than the designated time allowed to teach them.

Another finding that was crucial to effective teaching and the implementation of CAPS was the state of the infrastructure. In all the interviews it was apparent that the state of the classrooms did not satisfy the required standard supporting the CAPS implementation. The observation confirmed that the infrastructure was poor and was not safe for effective teaching and learning.

#### **5.5.4 What strategies do teachers have for effective implementation of CAPS?**

This last research question endeavored to detect the discernment of teachers in an attempt to address the challenges of the CAPS implementation. The research question gave rise to the theme called *curriculum improvement strategies* (see section 4.2.4). This theme is embedded within the scope of the following sub-themes: *support, training, policy, curriculum design and textbooks*. The teachers suggested that support from parents can assist in the effective implementation of CAPS. Furthermore, crucial to effective implementation was teachers' adequate training. The findings asserted that training of teachers is of paramount importance.

The empirical study also confirmed that the CAPS document needs to be revised to include changes the department has made since the first policy documents have been released. They further indicated that a participatory approach in curriculum design where teachers through unions or task teams are involved, can assist the process. The rationale for this relates to the fact that teachers will be able to implement a curriculum and policy that they are involved in and can therefore interpret and understand. Finally, teachers expressed the need for funding and planning. Teachers expressed their belief that for curriculum change to succeed, policy must include a sound implementation strategy and attainable model of funding. Funding must include amongst other things; training programs for both short and long periods, transportation, study guides and catering.

The interview data indicated that the perceptions of teachers about the implementation of CAPS in their area were revealed in their responses. The study presented their understanding of curriculum changes and implementation of CAPS in their natural environment. It becomes clear that teachers are not pleased with many aspects of the curriculum. They still believe a lot needs to be done for effective implementation.

## **5.6 LIMITATIONS**

Studies of this nature cannot address everything related to teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CAPS in the Nzhelele West circuit, and therefore have their limitations, which will be briefly discussed. One of the main limitations of this study was that the case study was based on one primary school in a remote rural area. The primary school was chosen because it is close to the researcher and challenges such as time constraints, fiscal constraints and travelling distance were minimised. The scope is geographically relatively small. The researcher felt that since this is a dissertation of limited scope, the selection of one primary school would be sufficient. The circuit has 36 primary schools, which means that the present study serves as an introductory study on teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CAPS in this area. This limitation has not affected the significance of the study, however, because the approach used in this qualitative research contains several aspects that enable the researcher to access rich and in-depth information. It also focused on the meanings and interpretations of reality by participants.

A further limitation was the relatively small sample of six {6} participants who were interviewed. A larger number of participants might have contributed to more variety in the responses, in order to enrich the findings. However, this particular school has only six teachers, including the principal. The views of these teachers cannot be generalised to reflect the views of teachers at other primary schools. Further research involving more schools and participants from different areas is therefore suggested.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations in this study are based wholly on the identified themes in section 4.2. It was previously mentioned that South Africa has undergone several curriculum changes since the dawn of democracy (see section 2.2). Most of them had serious challenges, including CAPS. The research findings confirmed that teachers are still disgruntled with CAPS implementation. Based on the findings from interviews, observation and document analysis, the following recommendations are suggested. These recommendations relate to different levels of stakeholders in the education system, namely teachers, SMT, parents and management in the Department of Education.

### **5.7.1 Teachers**

Training of teachers for any newly introduced curriculum and their involvement in the designing stage should be viewed as a priority. Their ability to make sense of curriculum policy must be taken into consideration. It is recommended that teachers need to be given a wide range of opportunities for training and initial stages of planning, in order to acquire sufficient and relevant knowledge and skills for curriculum implementation. This could be achieved through:

- Intensive, well-planned training that lasts for a month or two. Teachers must be trained to use multiple sources during implementation, in order to be able to improve and demonstrate the impact of the implementation of the new curriculum.
- Enrolling teachers in short courses or offering them bursaries to train them for the relevant curriculum.
- Encouraging them through incentives after attending training, so that they can be courageous and become proactive in the process. This will encourage them to take initiatives, advocate changes to parents, and make necessary preparations for learners. One of the incentives is to get points through training and South Africa council of education is the administrator.
- Teachers should be consulted, through unions or task teams, regarding what works for them in the classroom with their learners. They need to know about curriculum change before it is implemented. They must be the ones to conduct research on curriculum improvement and submit a report to the relevant stakeholders responsible for design and implementation.

### **5.7.2 School Management Team**

The empirical findings suggested that the SMT as a change agent should monitor the implementation of CAPS at school level. They need to be equipped with the necessary skills of control. They must be able to offer assistance to their sub-ordinates, and should draw up an internal schedule for supplementary training of teachers at school level.

### **5.7.3 Parents**

The study highlighted the importance of support from parents. Parents should know and understand their role in learning and teaching, especially in terms of the implementation of the new curriculum. They can only do this if the department, through teachers, educates them about the importance of their involvement in education. This will improve the dysfunctional dynamic between teachers and parents, which is sometimes found. The study showed that once parents become familiar with the curriculum, they are able to support its implementation.

### **5.7.4 Department of Basic Education**

It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education, as the main role player, should consider the following before and during implementation of a new curriculum:

- Seek sufficient funds to plan and implement the new curriculum.
- Continuous teacher training for a newly introduced CAPS curriculum should be a priority. Effective implementation depends on the quality of training. Frequent training exposes teachers to various dynamics of curriculum changes, such that they finally adjust to changes.
- The department must ensure that relevant and sufficient learning and teaching support materials are delivered on time.
- It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that learning and teaching takes place in a safe and secure environment. Therefore, infrastructure in this area needs to be urgently renovated, or new classrooms and administration blocks need to be built.
- The department should consider teacher incentives in rural areas, as working conditions in remote environments can be very demoralising.
- The department should develop a programme to disseminate new curriculum information before it is implemented.
- They need to revisit the subject policy, especially with regard to mathematics and science teaching, and review the programme. They also need to adjust topics and time allocations. Furthermore, transitions between phases needs to be improved.

## **5.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study, which is a dissertation of limited scope, was conducted at one primary school with six teachers. It is recommended that further research on CAPS and the implementation of the curriculum should be done at different schools, in different areas of South Africa, including secondary schools. The challenges of CAPS are found throughout the country. This will strengthen the current empirical findings and further assist in the practical implementation of curriculum changes.

Further research could also include views of learners, parents and curriculum advisors. This will provide the perspectives of different stakeholders.

## **5.9 CONCLUSION**

Curriculum transformation in South Africa has become the topic of much debate in the past 20 years. There were a series of curriculum changes aimed at contributing to the deconstruction of the apartheid education system. However, the roll-out of these changes created a number of impediments to the implementation process. The key current debates on the process of curriculum change are related to the implementation of CAPS. South Africa instituted educational reforms in a bid to improve education. Despite the effort to reform teaching and learning in the country, teachers encountered a series of challenges during the implementation process.

This empirical study was aimed at establishing teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy statement in a rural area. The research focused on six teachers at a remote rural school. The research further employed a case study design, wherein data were collected through face-to-face interviews, non-participant observation and document analysis. Data were gathered in the participants' natural setting, in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the research.

The researcher summarised what had been heard and observed in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns, and emerged sub-themes, which assisted in the interpretation, understanding and ability to draw conclusions. The findings confirmed that teachers were not

adequately trained, and as a result, they could not fully understand and interpret the implementation of the CAPS. There were ongoing concerns about the supply and quality of teaching and learning support materials. The findings further indicated that the large number of learners in the class, the status of the infrastructure, and the design process created barriers during the implementation process.

The study confirmed that the inevitable changes of curriculum in South Africa are beset with a number of challenges. The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, as one of the changes, is overwhelmed by challenges, mostly emanating from training, inadequate resources and lack of support structures. The study noted that the success of CAPS depends on sound design, interpretation and implementation processes. The aim of CAPS to improve the quality of learning and teaching and education in general, is achievable if challenges are taken seriously and if they are addressed.

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## **ANNEXURE A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

1. In your opinion what is the essence of CAPS?
2. How often does the department plan and conduct in-service trainings or workshops to equip educators for the implementation of CAPS?
3. Does the school receive sufficient CAPS resources for both educators and learners?
4. How were you informed about CAPS before real implementation takes place?
5. What do you think can be done to improve the implementation of CAPS?

## **ANNEXURE B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS**

1. Does the school management team plan and conduct staff development and training for CAPS?
2. Did you receive relevant LTSM for CAPS?
3. In your opinion, do the textbooks reflect contents that are different from the previous curriculum (NCS)?
4. How does the class enrolment affect the implementation of the new curriculum?
5. Did you find the assessment strategies useful in the classroom?
6. How does the infrastructure affect the implementation of CAPS?

### ANNEXURE C: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

OBSERVATION	COMMENT
<b>1. TIME</b>	
1.1. Do learners arrive at school on time?	Not all of them. Some come from far and there is no public transport.
1.2. Do educators arrive at school on time?	Sometimes, especially when the bus picks them up on time.
1.3. Do educators arrive for classes on time?	Yes, they are trying their best.
1.4. What time do both educators and learners leave the school premises?	At 14h00. The bus will be waiting for them at the gate.
1.5. What time does public transport pick them (educators) up?	At 14h00.
<b>2. RESOURCES</b>	
2.1. LTSM	Inadequate
2.2. Library	None
2.3. Educator's CAPS textbooks	Very few
2.4. Learners' exercise books	Available
2.5. Computers	One for administration
<b>3. TEACHING</b>	
3.1. Number of learners in the class	50 – 75 learners
3.2. Availability of desks	Very few
3.3. Educator's lesson plan	Available from CAPS document.
3.4. Number of periods	11 per day in higher grades and 4 – 8 in lower grades
3.5. Use of LTSM in the classroom	Inadequate
3.6. Assessment	Still a challenge

### ANNEXURE D: DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

<b>DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>AVAILABILITY/ NON- AVAILABILITY</b>
1. Curriculum manuscripts	Not available
2. Curriculum policy	Available
3. Appropriate LTSM	Not available in all classes
4. Lesson plan	Available
5. Portfolio for Educators	Available
6. Portfolio for Educators	Available in some classes
7. Class workbooks	Available
8. Textbooks	Some textbooks are available
9. Researcher' s note book	Available
10. Researcher' s computer	Available
11. Researcher' s manuscripts	Available

**ANNEXURE E: LETTER TO THE  
CIRCUIT**

**2065 Mountain View  
DZANANI  
0955  
25 JANUARY 2016**

**THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR NZHELELE WEST CIRCUIT P.O.BOX  
DZANANI  
0955**

Dear Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I, Ramabulana Nthatheni Simon, student no: 6331548, hereby submit my request to conduct research. I am a student at the University of South Africa and am presently enrolled for a MEd degree in Education (specialising in Curriculum Studies) under the supervision of Prof. Geesje van den Berg. My topic is **TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT IN THE NZHELELE WEST CIRCUIT.**

I am kindly requesting permission to conduct interviews with chosen members of the school management team and educators. I will maintain the strict confidentiality and anonymity of all participants in this research project. I will also ensure that my investigation does not interrupt the smooth running of the school.

The purpose of the study is to determine how teachers feel about implementing the curriculum assessment policy statement in their classes.

For more information regarding the study, kindly contact my supervisor, whose details are listed below:

Prof. Geesje van den Berg  
Chairperson of Department: Curriculum and Instructional Studies

College of Education

AJH van der Walt Building 6 – 72

University of South Africa

Tel: +2712 429 4895

E-mail: [vdberg@unisa.ac.za](mailto:vdberg@unisa.ac.za)

Ramabulana NS

Student No: 6331458

## **ANNEXURE F: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL**

**2065 Mountain View  
DZANANI  
0955  
25 JANUARY 2016**

### **THE PRINCIPAL**

**Dear Madam**

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I, Ramabulana Nthatheni Simon, student no: 6331548, hereby submit my request to conduct research. I am a student at the University of South Africa and am presently enrolled for a MEd degree in Education (specialising in Curriculum Studies) under the supervision of Prof. Geesje van den Berg. My topic is **TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT IN THE NZHELELE WEST CIRCUIT.**

I am kindly requesting permission to conduct interviews with chosen members of the school management team and educators at your school. I will maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants in this research project. I will also ensure that my investigation does not interrupt the smooth running of the school.

The purpose of the study is to determine how teachers feel about implementing the curriculum assessment policy statement in their classes.

For more information regarding the study, kindly contact my supervisor, whose details are listed below:

Prof. Geesje van den Berg  
Chairperson of Department: Curriculum and Instructional Studies

College of Education

AJH van der Walt Building 6 – 72

University of South Africa

Tel: +2712 429 4895

E-mail: [vdberg@unisa.ac.za](mailto:vdberg@unisa.ac.za)

From: Ramabulana NS

Student NO: 6331458 (0713841286) or (0721435130)

## **ANNEXURE G: LETTER OF CONSENT**

25 APRIL 2016

**TITLE OF RESEARCH:** TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT IN NZHELELE WEST CIRCUIT.

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is RAMABULANA NTHATHENI SIMON and I am doing research under the supervision of Prof. Geesje van der Berg, the chairperson of the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies at the University of South Africa, towards a M. Ed degree. You are hereby invited to participate in a study on teachers' perceptions regarding the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy statement. The purpose of this research is to determine how teachers experience the implementation of the curriculum assessment policy statement in the Nzhelele West circuit, and the outcome will be used to make recommendations to different stakeholders within and outside the education fraternity, such as teachers, MTT, SMT, NEEDU, unions and the Department of Basic Education.

I have obtained details from the circuit and chose to include your school in this research. Since you work in this rural school, which is faced with the lack of facilities and resources, you have been chosen to be part of the research. Six participants, including yourself, are invited to participate in this study.

All participants will be interviewed by the researcher for a maximum of forty minutes on the topic under investigation. The researcher will also conduct an observation, whereby you will not be asked anything, but notes will be taken on site regarding your daily activities, including documents used in class. You will be allowed to ask questions about the research and be given an opportunity to view the notes of the researcher, in order to confirm the findings.

A follow-up interview will be conducted and may also take a maximum of forty minutes. Please be informed that all responses may be recorded using a voice recorder.

There are no payments as a form of incentive for participating in this research. However, participants will be compensated for transport and food, as this research will be conducted after school. The findings of the study will be beneficial to the Department and other interested stakeholders, and will therefore benefit teachers indirectly.

There are no foreseeable risks or inconveniences if you decide to be part of this research. The researcher does not expect anything from you, except your input during the interview. Your participation is free and voluntary. You are under no obligation to consent to participate. If you agree to take part, you will be requested to sign a written consent form and be given a copy to keep for yourself. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time and without giving reasons.

The names of all participants will remain anonymous. The findings of this research will not reveal your names, and no one will ever know or be able to identify the source of the answers. The researcher guarantees your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses.

You will be debriefed regarding the findings at the end of the study, and a possible follow-up interview will be conducted before the final findings of this dissertation of limited scope are concluded.

By signing this consent form, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in the research. For any enquiries about the study, please contact:

**Mr. Ramabulana Nthatheni Simon**

**Cell No: 071 3841 286**

E-mail: rnthatheni@yahoo.com

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this research.

**ANNEXURE H: STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

I..... understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the research study at any time without any penalty or prejudice.

I also understand that by signing below, I agree that this research study has been explained to me in full, and will take full responsibility to answer any questions in the research project. I also accept that the findings of the research study may be used to enhance the quality of the project and my privacy will be protected. By signing this form, I am agreeing to participate in the research study until the end.

.....  
**PARTICIPANTS FULL NAMES**

.....  
**DATE**

.....  
**SIGNATURE**

.....  
**RESEARCHER**

.....  
**DATE**

## ANNEXURE I: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

1. Research question one: what are the overall perceptions of teachers on implementing CAPS?

This question was referred to the three members of the SMT (P1M, P1F & P3F).

Response of P1M:

- 1.1 Planning for the curriculum implementation

- Were teachers involved in the initial stages of planning?  
*Teachers were not considered in the planning of the new curriculum. The least that they could have done is to call on board the teachers 'unions.*
- Does the school management plan supplementary assistance in the school?  
*CAPS was introduced in an incoherence manner. That is why the school management team is failing to plan successful further assistance in as far as implementation is concerned at school level.*

- 1.2 Principle of policy design

- What are the essentials of a new curriculum?  
*Policy documents are vitally significant in every new curriculum implementation.*
- How does the policy document influence assessment of learners?  
*We are so confused at certain times. The policy document is not clear on the assessment plan. Promotion and progression of learners is causing a lot of challenges, hence these amendments through circulars.*

- 1.3 Training programs of teachers

- How often does the department plan the in – service trainings or workshops to equip teachers for the implementation of CAPS?

*A two or three days training is what the department can do best. It exposes us to a whole range of sophisticated new structure, methods, planning and assessment.*

- To what extent has the workshop equipped you to implement CAPS?  
*It never empowered us enough to implement the new curriculum. It actually throws us to the deep end of confusion. We were expected to go and introduce something we do not understand. It was a difficult task.*
- Have you ever thought of planning the supplementary training at school?  
*No, how can we plan on something we do not understand.*

#### **1.4 Selection of learning and teaching support material.**

- How was procurement of textbooks done?  
*We are requested to fill the forms at the end of the year, but the department decide to supply us with the material that we never ordered. It was a challenge that we are sitting with and it hampered the implementation.*
- Did you receive enough and relevant resources/ LTSM on time?  
*We are used to begin a year without textbooks for learners. A shortage challenge is always there in every curriculum; CAPS is no different. We are not surprise to start a year without sufficient materials.*

#### **Responses of P1F:**

##### **1.1 Planning for the curriculum implementation**

- Were teachers involved in the initial stages of planning?  
*It was obvious that teachers were not included in the planning stage of the new curriculum. Our unions confirmed that.*
- Does the school management plan supplementary assistance in the school?  
*No, it is a difficult responsibility especially when you are not part of the plan.*

## 1.2 Principle of policy design

- What are the essentials of a new curriculum?  
*As a teacher, I think Policy documents, resources and training are vitally substantial in every new curriculum implementation.*
- How does the policy document influence assessment of learners?  
*The document is not assisting us, especially the assessment and progression section, is causing a lot of confusion.*

## 1.3 Training programs of teachers

- How often does the department plan the in – service trainings or workshops to equip teachers for the implementation of CAPS?  
*One or two days at the beginning or the middle of the year and it becomes a once off training.it is a training or workshop that is meant to introduce us to a lot of concepts but not to equip us to teach.*
- To what extend has the workshop equipped you to implement CAPS?  
*It never endowed us enough to implement the new curriculum.*
- Have you ever thought of planning the supplementary training at school?  
*No, it is practically impossible.*

## 1.4 Selection of learning and teaching support material.

- How was procurement of textbooks done?  
*We just fill the forms and the department supply us with LTSM that we have ordered. It is a challenge we are experiencing with the implementation of CAPS.*
- Did you receive enough and relevant resources/ LTSM on time?  
*We have never received material on time or sufficient resources that can assist us in the process. We are used of starting academic year without enough textbooks, sometimes nothing at all. The same goes with CAPS material, we are not surprise.*

## Responses of P3F:

### 1.1 Planning for the curriculum implementation

- Were teachers involved in the initial stages of planning?  
*We have a reason to believe that teachers were not included in the design stage. Intervention of teachers 'unions could have assisted a lot, because unions are teachers who understand our challenges in the working place*
- Does the school management plan supplementary assistance in the school?  
*It is very difficult to plan on something you are not certain of. We are not able to plan because we should we are not sure of what we know about CAPS.*

### 1.2 Principle of policy design

- What are the essentials of a new curriculum?  
*Workshops, documents and support from different stakeholders, including department of education.*
- How does the policy document influence assessment of learners?  
*The policy document is the guide towards achieving the intended outcomes. The CAPS documents are so confusing; there are no clear guidelines as to how to deal with the assessment, in particular progression of learners. The department sends circulars to minimise confusion.*

### 1.3 Training programs of teachers

- How often does the department plan the in – service trainings or workshops to equip teachers for the implementation of CAPS?  
*Two or three days training is the best can do. It impedes the interpretation and implementation of the curriculum.*
- To what extend has the workshop equipped you to implement CAPS?

*There were no advances made around the training of new curriculum. Our responsibility as player maker in the class becomes relatively difficult because we did not receive substantial knowledge and skill to assist learners.*

- Have you ever thought of planning the supplementary training at school?  
*No, it is not possible.*

#### **1.4 Selection of learning and teaching support material.**

- How was procurement of textbooks done?  
*Procurement of textbooks is done every time throughout the year, but the department does not deliver the requested material. I do not understand what happen when they deliver materials that we never requested.*
- Did you receive enough and relevant resources/ LTSM on time?  
*For no apparent reason we are the worst affected area when it comes to supply of textbooks and other supporting materials*

#### **2. Research Question two: how do teachers perceive the curriculum changes during the implementation of CAPS in the class?**

**This question is referred to the three teachers (P2F, P2M and P4F) Responses from P2F:**

##### **2.1 Challenges around the content**

- Does the content, as presented through pace setter, create a link between phases, in particular the foundation phase and intermediate phase?  
*The transition process, from foundation to intermediate and to senior phase is comparatively disjointed.*
- How does it influence the performance of learners?  
*Learners are destitute of all forms of normal skill acquisition when they get to higher grade. It affects their performance badly. The reason that learners performed poorly in ANA, is one example of knowledge gap.*

## 2.2 The effect of class enrolment

- Is the class size ideal for the efficient and effective implementation of CAPS?

*Our school has no enough classes. There could be 60 to 80 learners in one class. The crowded class decreases the opportunity of teacher – learner interaction as it one of the CAPS prerequisite for better learning. I think this poses a challenge in fulfilling the ideology of introducing CAPS.*

- How does the class enrolment affect the performance of learners?

*It is very difficult to adjust my teaching method to a large size. I am forced to apply one or two method of teaching which at the end denies other learners opportunity to learn effectively. It will obviously affect their performance. It is not easy to identify learners who are not serious as they will be hiding behind other learners. Sometimes you end up not assisting them, hence their performance become poor.*

## 2.3 Quality of assessment and monitoring

- Did you find the assessment strategies helpful in the class as prescribed by CAPS document?

*Apart from large size of numbers in the class, the administration of class activities and monitoring is relatively comprehensive. It is only a problem at the end of year when we have to promote and progress learners. The document is supplemented by a number of circulars that always bring new implementation every year.*

### Responses from P2M:

## 2.1 Challenges around the content

- Does the content, as presented through pace setter, create a link between phases, in particular the foundation phase and intermediate phase?

- *We always experience challenges from foundation learners when they are promoted to intermediate phase. The increase numbers of learning area that are taught in English as medium of instruction frustrate learners for the first three months. The changing of content in some subjects, from tangible to theoretical learning and the exchange of periods and faces of teachers are also challenges to majority of learners.*
- **How does it influence the performance of learners?**  
*Learners are somehow deprived of all forms of normal skill acquisition. Majority of learners turn to perform poorly in the first semester.*

## **2.2 The effect of class enrolment**

- **Is the class size ideal for the efficient and effective implementation of CAPS?**  
*No, we are faced with a situation where 60 learners are bundled in class and a teacher is expected to perform all normal activities as per prescription in the document. CAPS emphasise individual contact during the lesson and that is practically possible. There is no effective learning and teaching.*
- **How does the class enrolment affect the performance of learners?**  
*During the learning and teaching, learners who are good become good, whereas those who perform poorly remain poor because there is very little that one can do with such a large number of learners in one class. CAPS document requires that learners whose performance are poor need individual attention for them to improve their performance, which we are not doing. It is therefore, difficult for them to improve their performance.*

## **2.3 Quality of assessment and monitoring**

- **Did you find the assessment strategies helpful in the class as prescribed by CAPS document?**

*CAPS prescribed a certain percentage of class activities to be written within a week. As teachers we always at loggerheads with management during monitoring process, because we are unable to comply with the quarter principle. Too much is expected within a short period. The worst is experienced during progression and promotion of learners. The strategies are not assisting us at all.*

## **Responses from P4F:**

### **2.1 Challenges around the content**

- Does the content, as presented through pace setter, create a link between phases, in particular the foundation phase and intermediate phase?  
*There is a knowledge gap created by the transition from phase to phase, especially from grade 3 to grade 4. Learners are always faced with a number of challenges in the content changes.*
- How does it influence the performance of learners?  
*Learners performed poorly in the first three months. Very few learners will start to show sign of improvement towards the end of June. The rest may remain average and poor until the end of academic year. This is because the knowledge gap created between grades 3 and 4.*

### **2.2 The effect of class enrolment**

- Is the class size ideal for the efficient and effective implementation of CAPS?  
*There are so many learners in one class. One class can have up to 70 learners. There is substantial increment in enrollment, but the department is doing nothing about it in our area. Many learners in class reduce the individual interaction, that is to say teacher – learner interaction can be sometimes not possible.*
- How does the class enrolment affect the performance of learners?

*CAPS document necessitates those learners who performance low in class need individual helpfulness for them to improve their performance, which we cannot do. It ultimately affects them badly.*

### **2.3 Quality of assessment and monitoring**

- Did you find the assessment strategies helpful in the class as prescribed by CAPS document?

*I am not happy about the assessment and monitoring management as prescribed by the document. In some subjects, for instant Maths, it first prescribes that a learner can be promoted or progressed if he or she get 40%. At the same intensity, circulars amend the document, to say a learner need to get more that 20% if maths is the only subject that makes a learner fail. There is no consistency in the assessment of learners.*

### **3 Research question four: what strategies do teachers have for effective implementation of CAPS?**

**This question is referred to some members of management and teachers (P1M, P2M, P1F and P3F).**

**Responses from P1M:**

#### **3.1 The principle of support and training.**

- What is your view on support and training of teachers for successful implementation of CAPS?

*I think the department needs to be serious about supporting teachers through thorough, funded and well planned training. It must also consider inviting and find a way to involve stakeholders in the process.*

### **3.2 Norm of curriculum design and policy.**

- How can the curriculum design and policy development be improved in a way that it advances the implementation of new curriculum, CAPS in particular?

*The department of education must invite teachers through their Unions parents through SGBs to be part of curriculum design because those are the people who are close to where implementation takes place. They know and understand the plight of the community.*

#### **Responses from P2M:**

### **3.1 The principle of support and training.**

- What is your view on support and training of teachers for successful implementation of CAPS?

*A well planned training, four times a year can assist us to do better than before. The quality of training reflects a good understanding and relevant implementation. It needs to raise funds and stage seminars for stakeholders' advocacy twice a year.*

### **3.2 Norm of curriculum design and policy.**

- How can the curriculum design and policy development be improved in such a way that it advances the implementation of new curriculum, CAPS in particular?

*The department of education must consider the fact that South Africa is a democratic republic; therefore, it should consult widely when a new curriculum is to be planned. It must invite teachers through their Unions parents through SGBs to be part of curriculum design process. Those are the people who understand the communities and their desire. They can advise the department in a positive way.*

## **Responses from P1F:**

### **3.1 The principle of support and training.**

- What is your view on support and training of teachers for successful implementation of CAPS?

*A training of more than two weeks twice a year can resolve this challenge.*

*Parents and other stakeholders must be encouraged to be part of learning and teaching.*

### **3.2 Norm of curriculum design and policy.**

- How can the curriculum design and policy development be improved in a way that it advances the implementation of new curriculum, CAPS in particular?

*I think it should involve teachers and parents in the design and planning stages.*

## **Responses from P3F:**

### **3.1 The principle of support and training.**

- What is your view on support and training of teachers for successful implementation of CAPS?

*Nothing is better than a well-funded and planned workshop or training.*

*Teachers must be thoroughly equipped so that they must know their subject matter.*

### **3.2 Norm of curriculum design and policy.**

- How can the curriculum design and policy development be improved in such a way that it advances the implementation of new curriculum, CAPS in particular?

*I believe it is important to involve other stakeholders in the planning stage, like teachers and parents. It will also be significant to consider the business owner in the process.*

## ANNEXURE J: PROOF OF APPROVED RESEARCH ETHICS



### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

14 September 2016

Ref : 2016/09/14/06331548/16/MC

Student : Mr NS Ramabulana

Student Number : 06331548

Dear Mr Ramabulana

**Decision: Approved**

**Researcher:** Mr NS Ramabulana  
Tel: +2771 384 1286  
Email: [mthatheni@yahoo.com](mailto:mthatheni@yahoo.com)

**Supervisor:** Prof. G van den Berg  
College of Education  
Departments of Curriculum and Instructional Studies  
Tel: +2712 429 4895  
Email: [Vdberg@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Vdberg@unisa.ac.za)

**Proposal:** Teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the curriculum and assessment policy statements in the Nzhelele West Circuit

**Qualification:** M Ed in Curriculum Studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for the duration of the research.

*The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee on 14 September 2016.*

*The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:*

- 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.*
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the College of Education Ethics Review Committee. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for*



University of South Africa  
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane  
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150

the research participants.

- 3) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

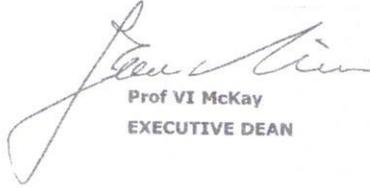
**Note:**

The reference number **2016/09/14/06331548/16/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants, as well as with the College of Education RERC.

Kind regards,



**Dr M Claassens**  
**CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC**  
[mcdtc@netactive.co.za](mailto:mcdtc@netactive.co.za)



**Prof VI McKay**  
**EXECUTIVE DEAN**

Approval template 2014

University of South Africa  
Preter Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane  
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)