Who is disengaging the gear? Is school leadership the impediment in the implementation of the new curriculum in Zimbabwe?

Paul Mupa

Zimbabwe Open University

E-mail of the author**:** **mupapaul@gmail.com**

ABSTRACT

School leadership is there to build 'learning bridges' between learners and the curriculum content (Everand, Morris & Wilson, 2004, p. x). This study seeks to investigate challenges that school leadership face in the implementation of the new curriculum in Zimbabwean primary schools. It particularly examines the dissonance between the current implementation level and the expected standard of implementation. The implementation of a new curriculum requires effective school leadership (Bennett, Crawford & Cartwright, 2003). The key stakeholder in the process of curriculum implementation in any education system is school leadership. This article argues that school leadership should have a clear picture of what to do and how for effective implementation of any new curriculum. The curriculum introduced in Zimbabwe is not spared. The study was located within the qualitative paradigm using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to generate. Purposive sampling was done to select information rich cases from among school leaders in Masvingo Province. The study highlighted a number of complex challenges linked to school leadership which include the problem of suffering from multiple meanings and conceptual complexity of the new curriculum and lack of orientation on the new curriculum. The study also revealed that school leadership has not been sufficiently retrained for fitness of purpose. The study thus recommends retooling of school leadership so that they develop the craft competency needed in the implementation of the new curriculum.

Key words

school leadership, curriculum, curriculum implementation, leadership, perspectives, implementation, craft literacy, craft competency