

PERCEPTIONS OF THE NEW GRADE 10 – 11 COMMERCE CURRICULUM: A NARRATIVE
CASE STUDY OF TEACHERS IN THE OMPUNDJA CIRCUIT, OSHANA REGION OF
NAMIBIA

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ABSTRACT

Commerce education is vital for a nation's economic growth, but adapting to changing global, technological, and economic trends requires continuous curriculum innovation. In Namibia, efforts to develop new commerce curricula have faced challenges in implementation, leading to resource and time wastage. Consequently, this study aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce curriculum in the Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. Adopting a qualitative research approach, the study applied a narrative case study design. A sample of six teachers and two HoDs from a population of 27 teachers and 4 HoDs teaching Commerce subjects were selected by Convenience and Purposeful sampling respectively. The study deployed a semi-structured interview on a face-to-face basis, with a duration between 20 to 30 minutes, and complemented by document reviews comparing the old and new curricula. The collected data were analyzed using inductive content analysis and the following three themes emerged: a) teachers' perceptions of the new commerce curriculum; b) the fundamental difference between the new and old curriculum; c) the strategies for the implementation of the new curriculum. The findings of the study reveal both positive and negative teacher perceptions of the new curriculum. Some appreciate its practical focus and adaptability, while others criticize the lack of teacher involvement, inadequate training, and resource limitations. It underscores the importance of teacher engagement in curriculum development, comprehensive training, ongoing professional development, onsite support, and access to teaching materials for successful implementation. The study highlights teachers' pivotal role in curriculum changes and emphasizes the need for collaboration among curriculum planners, teachers, and school management. Recommendations aim to assist teachers, school administrators, and curriculum planners in addressing curriculum change challenges to enhance commerce education quality in Namibia's Grade 10-11 classrooms.

Keywords: Commerce curriculum, Teachers' perceptions, Qualitative research, Implementation.

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DEDICATION

*My hope is built on nothing less;
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.*

I will bless the name of the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth; I sought the Lord; He heard me and delivered me from all my fears. For thou has been strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge and a shadow from the heat.

This work is dedicated to the my Lord, Jesus Christ.

DECLARATIONS

I, Titilayo Patience JOHNSON, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The business environment is changing both domestically in Namibia and globally. This generated the need to introduce the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum in Namibia. This curriculum aims to equip students with the skills necessary to navigate the modern job market, foster financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and problem-solving abilities. This chapter provides an overview of the study, comprising of the study's orientation, problem statement, research questions, significance, limitations, and delimitations. It also offers definitions of vital terms and concepts.

1.2 Orientation of the Study

The need for curriculum reform is paramount in today's rapidly changing world, as countries that fail to adapt risk leaving their future generations ill-prepared for the challenges they will face (Skidmore & Carmichael, 2013). However, the success of such reforms heavily depends on the involvement of teachers (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). Teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions are critical factors in understanding how these curriculum reforms are received and implemented (Blignaut, 2007; Haney et al., 2002). Thus, it is unsurprising that teachers often raise questions or concerns when they are not included in the curriculum reform process.

Recognizing the pivotal role that teachers play in curriculum reform is important, given their expertise, experience, and daily teaching responsibilities (Alsubie, 2016). They are the ones responsible for delivering the curriculum content in the classroom, making their active participation in reform processes

crucial (Nnabuike et al., 2016). Tomáš and Pešková (2017) emphasize that teachers' perceptions and attitudes significantly affect the successful implementation of new curriculum reforms. To ensure the effectiveness of such changes, providing teachers with comprehensive educational and professional training is viewed as essential (Boudersa, 2016).

In the African context, curriculum reforms have been ongoing across various countries to better prepare students for modern challenges. The involvement of teachers in these reforms has proven essential for their success. In Nigeria, for instance, the introduction of a new curriculum for secondary education emphasized the need for teachers to be adequately trained and involved in the planning stages to ensure smooth implementation and acceptance (Nnabuike et al., 2016). Similarly, in South Africa, teacher engagement was crucial in the adoption of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), which aimed to improve the quality of education and student outcomes (Blignaut, 2007).

Focusing on Namibia, understanding teachers' perceptions of the new Commerce Curriculum is vital for identifying potential challenges and facilitating effective change. The Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture in Namibia continues to reform the curriculum for basic education with the aim of moving “Namibia from a literate society to a knowledge-based society where knowledge is constantly being acquired, renewed, and used for innovation to improve quality of life” (Ministry of Education Arts and Culture [MOEAC], 2016, p.2). The current reform is such that “basic education is subdivided into four phases: Junior Primary (Pre- Primary and Grades 1-3), Senior Primary (Grades 4-7), Junior Secondary (Grades 8-9), and Senior Secondary (Grades 10-12). After completing the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary (NSSCO) level at the end of Grade 11, learners have various options: they may choose to continue with either vocational education and training or with distance learning, or seek

employment. Learners who meet the prescribed requirements may proceed to Grade 12. In Grade 12, learners take subjects on Advanced Subsidiary Level, which is an admission requirement for enrolment at a tertiary institution” (Ministry of Education Arts and Culture [MOEAC], 2016, p.3).

As a Commerce teacher with several years of experience, the researcher has become increasingly concerned about the lack of teaching resources, particularly in remote areas, and how this scarcity negatively affects the provision of quality education for learners. Through my own teaching of Commerce and active participation in curriculum development initiatives at the regional level, I have not only encountered these resource shortages firsthand but also witnessed the frustration this causes for both teachers and students. This has deepened my interest in understanding how teachers can adapt their instructional strategies, particularly in the context of implementing the new Commerce curriculum. My personal experience in the classroom and involvement in curriculum development have motivated me to explore how these resource challenges, as well as teachers’ perceptions of curriculum changes, can shape educational outcomes. This study holds particular significance for me as a Commerce teacher in Namibia, as it directly relates to the challenges and opportunities I face in my professional practice.

Hence, understanding teachers' perceptions of the new Commerce Curriculum in Namibia, which is made of Economics, Business Studies, Accounting and Entrepreneurship is crucial for identifying potential challenges and ensuring effective implementation. By involving teachers in the reform process and providing them with necessary training, the success of curriculum reforms can be significantly enhanced, leading to better educational outcomes and a more knowledgeable society.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Commerce education plays an essential role and serves as a catalyst for the socio-economic development of any country (Bamba et. al, 2013). However, the rapid trend of globalization, liberalization, privatization, and technological changes have put additional pressure on commerce education curriculum to be innovated and changed to impart relevant, current, and cutting-edge knowledge to the learners as per changing dynamics of the business environment (Bamba et. al, 2013).

In South Africa, curriculum changes in commerce subjects such as Accounting were essential to equip learners with skills needed for a democratic society and a globalized world (Ngwenya, Sithole, & Okoli 2020). These changes aimed to better align the curriculum with international accounting standards, shifting the perception of Accounting from a routine, bookkeeping-focused subject to one that requires a deep understanding of complex relationships and cognitive reasoning (Myers, 2016). This involved the introduction of new topics which gave rise to a shift in the prescribed subject content and the movement of topics within the grade and across the grades, resulting in a broader and deeper curriculum that demands higher-order thinking skills (Ngwenya, Sithole, & Okoli 2020; Letshwene, 2014). However, the success of these reforms heavily relies on teachers' ability to adapt their teaching and assessment methods to meet new curriculum demands. Research indicates that while diverse teaching approaches can enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills, teachers often struggle with the implementation due to inadequate training and resource constraints (Ngwenya, & Maistry, 2017; Ngwenya, Sithole, & Okoli 2020). This challenge is compounded by misunderstandings around assessment practices, which are critical in a subject like Accounting that requires extensive practice (Erasmus & Fourie, 2018). Therefore, understanding teachers'

perceptions is crucial for the successful implementation of curriculum reforms in commerce education.

Over the past few decades, the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture in Namibia has been involved in the development of a new commerce curriculum to prepare learners for the changing business environment in the country. Although these curricula are well-designed and have laudable aims to achieve in many cases, their implementation has resulted in less-than-desirable outcomes and led to a waste of considerable resources, time, and effort (Namolo, 2021). This is because well-intentioned policies were never translated into classroom reality (Fullan, 2015). One of the reasons for such an unwanted reality is teachers' resistance to any curriculum reforms. Within the context of literature on curriculum reforms, the perceptions of commerce teachers to the latest curriculum change in Namibia has not been given significant attention. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by investigating the teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Namibia.

1.4 Research questions for the study

The main research question in this study was: How do Commerce teachers in the Ompundja Circuit perceive the new Grade 10–11 Commerce curriculum, and what factors influence its effective implementation?

The sub-questions were:

- a) What are the perceptions of Commerce teachers on the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum?
- b) What are the fundamental differences between the old and new Commerce curriculum

in terms of the content, learning objectives, and assessment criteria?

- c) What strategies can be employed to enable effective implementation of the new Commerce curriculum?

1.5 Significance of the study

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture of Namibia is committed to contributing to the national Vision 2030 by fostering a "knowledge-based society" (MoEAC, 2016, p.8). Achieving this goal hinges on a well-designed curriculum, which is thoroughly understood and effectively implemented by teachers. In essence, the curriculum serves as the conduit through which this objective can be realized. As such, this study aims to present teachers' perceptions and provide suggestions for mitigating potential impediments that could deter the realization of this vision from the educational perspective.

This study might provide a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of teachers on the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum. The research findings of this study might be supportive to curriculum developers and the Ministry of Education in recognizing the important roles and responsibilities of senior secondary school teachers in curriculum design, as well as considering the need to involve more of them. Furthermore, the study might help the educational stakeholders to familiarize themselves with the challenges faced by school teachers during curriculum reforms and consider the type of support that they can provide. The research is also important in filling a knowledge gap by investigating specifically the perceptions of Namibian teachers on the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum. Moreover, it can encourage future researchers to investigate areas that

have emerged from this research.

1.6 Limitations of the study

This study, being a case study, does not portray a comprehensive regional or national picture of the perceptions of all Namibian teachers on the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum. The research was primarily limited to public secondary schools within the Ompundja Circuit in the Oshana Region. Consequently, the findings may not fully reflect the perspectives or perceptions of teachers in private secondary schools or other regions of the country. Furthermore, the sample size of six teachers and two Heads of Departments (HoDs), while providing in-depth insights, is too small to be representative of all Commerce teachers in Namibia. The findings of the current study, therefore, should not be generalized to other regions or the entire country.

Another anticipated challenge was the participant dropouts during interview sessions due to interruptions caused by their teaching activities. However, the researcher addressed this issue by explaining the importance of the study and making necessary arrangements to accommodate their schedules.

Finally, the quality of data obtained depends greatly on the participant's ability to express themselves. Some participants might not be comfortable sharing personal experiences or may not articulate their thoughts clearly. To overcome this limitation, the researcher spent time building rapport with the participants, explaining the purpose of the study, and reassuring them about confidentiality in order to create a comfortable environment.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018) explained that delimitations refer to the limitations intentionally established by the authors themselves. These limitations pertain to the definitions and boundaries set by researchers to ensure that the aims and objectives of the study remain achievable and realistic, rather than becoming unattainable. The scope was bounded by the number of Grade 10 – 11 teachers in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana region, who taught the new curriculum in the Commerce subjects (Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics) at the time of this study. It follows a qualitative narrative case study that focuses on the data from these samples and does not include other subject teachers and principals.

1.8 Definition of significant terms and concepts

Best and Kahn (2016) emphasize the necessity of defining potentially ambiguous terms. This process helps establish a context, providing a lens through which the researcher approaches and understands the problem at hand. In this study, the following terms and concepts are defined in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Definition of critical terms

Term	Definition	Context in This Study
Curriculum	According to Hoadley and Jansen (2009, p. 10), the word “curriculum” is derived from the Latin word “currere” which means “to run a course”. Van Niekerk and Killen (2000, p. 200) reached a common understanding that “curriculum is regarded	In this study, the curriculum refers to the structured content, teaching methodologies, and assessment procedures outlined for Grade 10-11 Commerce subjects in the Ompundja Circuit, Oshana

	as the text that guides teaching and learning in the education setting.	Region, Namibia.
Curriculum change	Curriculum change is defined by Banning (1954) as a type of social change and involves discovering and applying better procedures to improve learning experiences for students. Curriculum change is needed when the present curriculum fails to meet the needs and current demands of the culture, the society, and the expectations of the population being served (Johnson, 2001).	This study examines the shift from the old to the new Grade 10-11 Commerce curriculum, focusing on how these changes aim to address contemporary educational needs and better prepare students for the modern economy.
Curriculum implementation	Curriculum implementation refers to the act of working out the plans and suggestions that have been made by curriculum specialists and subject experts in a classroom or school setting, (Makewa & Nguusa, 2015).	In this context, curriculum implementation involves how teachers in the Ompundja Circuit apply the new Grade 10-11 Commerce curriculum in their classrooms, including the challenges they face and the strategies they use to achieve the intended educational outcomes.
Perception	According to Robbins and Judge (2013), perception is a process by which individuals	The study investigates the perceptions of teachers and Heads

	<p>organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment.</p>	<p>of Departments (HoDs) regarding the effectiveness, challenges, and benefits of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce curriculum, aiming to understand their viewpoints and experiences in the educational setting.</p>
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1.9 Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1: This chapter provides the study's background, statement of the problem, research questions, significance, limitations, delimitations, chapter divisions, and conclusion.

Chapter 2: This chapter reviews relevant literature and the conceptual framework, focusing on curriculum planning, development, implementation, evaluation, and teachers' involvement. It also examines curriculum changes in Namibia, commerce curriculum reforms, and strategies for implementing new curricula.

Chapter 3: This chapter details the methodological approach, including the research paradigm, design, population, sample, sampling techniques, data collection methods, instruments, procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents, interprets, and analyzes data on teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, including a demographic overview and emerging themes based on the research questions.

Chapter 5: This chapter discusses the findings, focusing on teachers' perceptions of the new curriculum, differences between the old and new curricula, and strategies for effective implementation. It also links the findings to Taba's model.

Chapter 6: This chapter summarizes the study's findings, provides conclusions, and offers recommendations based on the research findings.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the significance of the study, limitations, and delimitations of the study and defined key terms pertinent to the study. The next chapter presents a review of related literature and the conceptual framework that guided the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a conceptual framework which forms the basis for the study. The literature review focuses on curriculum planning development, implementation, and evaluation as well as teachers' involvement. In addition, the chapter provides a review of literature on curriculum changes in Namibia since independence, commerce curriculum and its reforms, and general strategies for implementing new curricula. This chapter concludes by summarizing the key findings extracted from literature and suggesting areas for further investigation.

2.2 Conceptual framework

Hilda Taba's Model of Curriculum Development and Implementation serves as a valuable conceptual framework for investigating teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. By emphasizing the central role of teachers in the curriculum development process and recognizing their expertise and insight, Taba's model can provide valuable insights into the factors that influence teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the new curriculum (Taba, 1962).

Taba's model is often referred to as the "grassroots" or "bottom-up" approach, as it emphasizes the active involvement of teachers in the curriculum development process, contrary to the more traditional "top-down" models (Oliva, 2018). This model is characterized by its inductive reasoning, where teachers derive general principles from specific examples and experiences. It ensures that

curricula are more responsive to students' needs, relevant to local contexts, and conducive to meaningful learning experiences (Alsubie, 2016).

Taba's model consists of seven interrelated steps, which are illustrated in Figure 1 and described as follows:

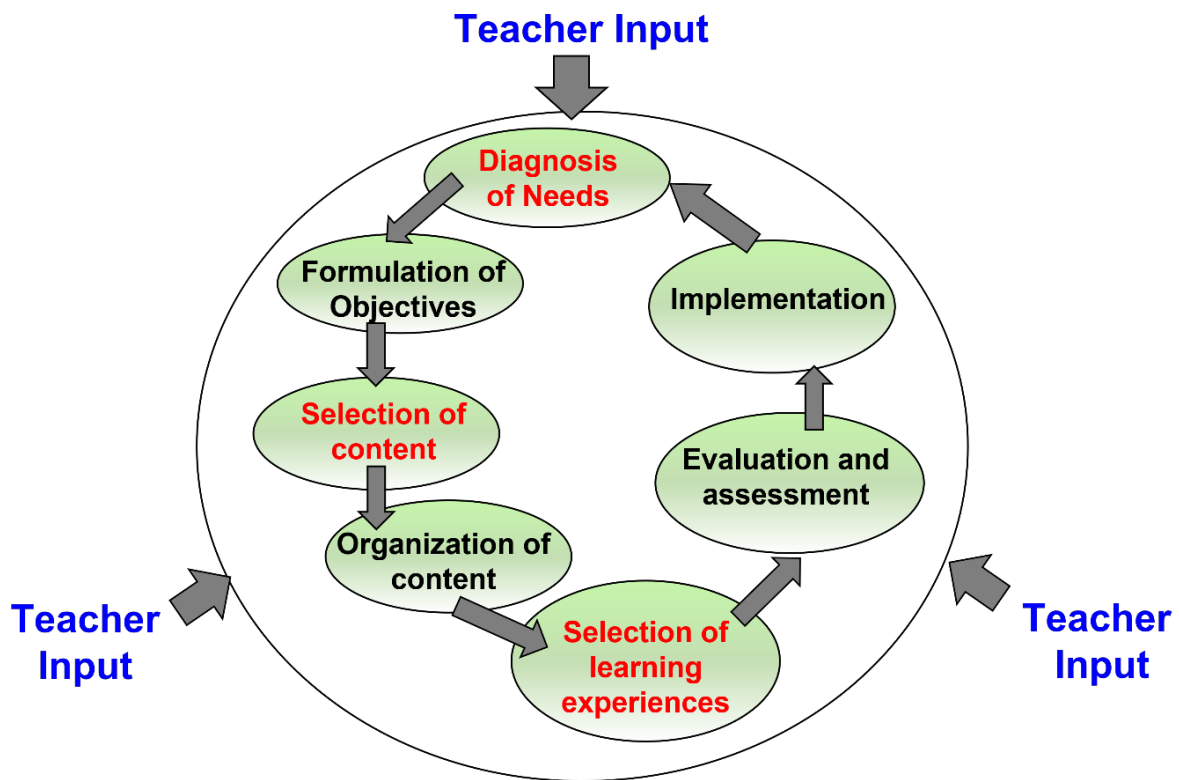


Figure 2-1: Taba's Curriculum Development Model, (Bhuttah et. Al, 2018)

1. Diagnosis of needs: The first step in Taba's model involves identifying and diagnosing the educational needs of students, the community, and society at large. This requires a comprehensive analysis of various factors, such as learners' characteristics, social and economic contexts, and educational goals and objectives.

- 2. Formulation of learning objectives:** Based on the identified needs, teachers collaboratively formulate clear and specific learning objectives. These objectives should reflect the desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes students are expected to acquire upon completing the course or program.
- 3. Selection of content:** In this step, teachers select relevant subject matter and content that aligns with the established learning objectives. Taba emphasized the importance of selecting content that is meaningful, relevant, and engaging for students.
- 4. Organization of content:** In this step, teachers organize relevant subject matter and content that aligns with the established learning objectives. The content should be organized logically and systematically to facilitate a coherent and progressive learning experience.
- 5. Selection of learning experiences:** Teachers are responsible for selecting appropriate learning experiences and instructional strategies that align with the learning objectives and content. These experiences should be designed to actively engage students in the learning process, promote critical thinking, and foster the development of the targeted knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- 6. Evaluation and assessment:** Taba's model requires ongoing evaluation and assessment of both student learning and the curriculum itself. Teachers must develop appropriate assessment tools and methods to measure student progress toward the learning objectives. Moreover, they should continuously evaluate and revise the curriculum based on feedback, student performance, and evolving educational needs and contexts.
- 7. Implementation:** The final step in Taba's model is the actual implementation of the curriculum in the classroom. Teachers are responsible for delivering the curriculum, facilitating learning experiences, and assessing student progress. Effective implementation requires flexibility

and adaptability, as teachers may need to adjust the curriculum in response to students' needs, interests, and abilities.

Research has shown that involving teachers in the development process can lead to higher levels of curriculum implementation fidelity and greater teacher commitment to the curriculum (Pandey, 2018). Several studies have examined the application of Taba's model in various educational contexts, demonstrating its adaptability and relevance across different subjects and geographical locations. For example, Çakmak (2012) explored the application of Taba's model in the development of a social studies curriculum in Turkey, finding that the model facilitated a more comprehensive and locally relevant curriculum. Similarly, Makhwathana (2016) investigated the use of Taba's model in developing a life orientation curriculum in South Africa, revealing that the model's focus on teacher involvement led to a greater sense of ownership and investment in the curriculum.

Research has also shown that teachers' perceptions and attitudes play a crucial role in the successful implementation of curriculum reforms (Tomáš & Pešková, 2017). By utilizing Taba's model as a conceptual framework, researchers can explore the factors that shape teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. For instance, Nnabuike et al. (2016) found that teachers who were involved in the curriculum development process had more positive perceptions of the curriculum and were more likely to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

Taba's model emphasizes the importance of providing teachers with adequate training and professional development to support the effective implementation of the curriculum (Boudersa,

2016). Studies have shown that well-prepared and supported teachers are more likely to have positive perceptions of the curriculum and be successful in its implementation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Although Taba's model has been successfully applied in various educational contexts, it is not without its challenges and limitations. One potential challenge lies in the time-consuming nature of the grassroots approach, which requires significant teacher involvement and collaboration (Dewey, 2018). This may create logistical and practical challenges for teachers who already face heavy workloads and limited resources. However, research has shown that the benefits of involving teachers in the curriculum development process can outweigh the challenges, leading to a more relevant and effective curriculum (Makhwathana, 2016).

Resistance to change among teachers, especially when the new curriculum significantly diverges from traditional practices or demands new skills, presents another challenge (Mupa & Chinooneka 2015). This highlights the importance of providing ongoing professional development and support for teachers, as well as fostering a culture of collaboration and open communication during the curriculum development process (Boudersa, 2016).

By emphasizing the importance of teacher involvement, adaptability to local contexts, and the provision of adequate support and training, Taba's model can provide crucial insights into the factors that shape teachers' perceptions and the success of curriculum implementation in the region.

2.3 Literature review

(a) Curriculum Planning and development

Curriculum planning is a vital aspect of the educational process that involves systematic design, organization, and evaluation of learning experiences to achieve desired educational outcomes (Button, 2021). It is known as the process involved in the establishment of objectives, organization of content, and analysis of context (Offorma, 2016). Effective curriculum planning ensures that the content, instructional strategies, and assessments used in the educational process are coherent, relevant, and aligned with the goals and needs of students, teachers, and the broader community. Teachers, as trained professionals with expertise in their field, should not have their knowledge undervalued. Although regional government offices determine the skills encompassed by the curriculum, teachers can offer valuable input on the necessary materials, activities, and specific abilities to incorporate (Alsubaie, 2016).

Researchers like Alsubaie (2016), Albilehi et. al, (2013) argue for the inclusion of teachers in curriculum development, while Khorasgani, and Baratali (2019) emphasized that they should participate in all phases of the process. However, questions may arise as to whether teachers possess the necessary capabilities and knowledge, even within the Namibian context. Gerrard and Farrell (2014) reported that Australian policymakers excluded teachers from curriculum planning due to their belief that teachers lacked the training for such tasks. Nevertheless, there are instances where teachers have been involved in curriculum planning. For example, Porter et. al., (2015) found that while teachers participated in curriculum planning aligned with the Common Core, they struggled to develop materials and felt that the process was time-consuming and draining. Pandey, (2018) suggested empowering teachers in curriculum planning to ensure effective implementation.

Even if teachers may not have extensive knowledge of curriculum planning, their participation is crucial. Thus, if they lack the expertise to develop a curriculum, they should receive training and guidance to independently create a high-quality curriculum. Over the years, several scholars (Ke, et al., 2023; Pieters, 2019; Albilehi et al., 2013) have called for curriculum design projects to be incorporated into teacher training. The need to enhance teachers' knowledge and experience with the curriculum continues to be emphasized in recent years. For example, Alsubaie (2016) argued that, given their experience and responsibility for implementing the curriculum in the classroom, teachers should receive training and workshops to improve their professional development and contribute effectively to the curriculum. Even in cases where teachers have completed training, additional support may still be necessary during times of curriculum renovation.

Since teachers are responsible for implementing the curriculum, they should be involved in its development (Alsubaie, 2016). Curriculum development is a stage in which learning content and course objectives are determined, as well as the creation of teaching and learning materials (Carl, 2009).

Often, teachers feel excluded from the curriculum development process. For instance, teachers in Turkey reported that their input was not sought before implementing the curriculum (ÖZÜDOĞRU, F. (2021). Similarly, a study on basic school teachers' perceptions of curriculum design in Ghana found that teachers were not consulted during the design process (Abudu & Mensah, 2016). The same authors also noted that teachers felt policymakers did not consider their opinions because there were too many teachers and not all views could be accommodated. Moreover, there was no curriculum

representative at schools to collect teachers' input. Nghihalwa, (2018) argued that curriculum implementation could only be successful if teachers and communities participated in the development and implementation of the curriculum and related structural changes. When teachers are part of the development process, minimal in-service training is needed since they are already familiar with the curriculum's content. However, when teachers are not involved, extensive in-service training is necessary to familiarize them with the new curriculum. Nevertheless, studies revealing teachers' exclusion from curriculum development also indicate that they receive insufficient orientation (Mokaleng, & Möwes, 2020).

(b) Curriculum Implementation

Carl (2009) states that implementation involves putting a new curriculum into practice. Teachers, as the primary implementers of the curriculum, believe it is crucial for them to participate in curriculum planning to ensure a smooth and efficient implementation process (Abudu & Mensah, 2016). According to Porter et al. (2015), effective implementation encompasses initiating, interpreting, integrating, and assimilating change at the individual, team, and organizational levels. Recently graduated teachers may have updated knowledge about curriculum-related topics, while some might lack a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum due to insufficient induction training or differing areas of interest. Similarly, teachers who graduated years ago may possess outdated information on curriculum development. Consequently, ongoing in-service training is necessary for both experienced teachers and recent graduates who have not specialized in curriculum studies, ensuring effective curriculum implementation. Despite their role as curriculum implementers, teachers often experience a lack of orientation on innovations (Mokaleng, & Möwes, 2020, Nghihalwa, 2018).

A study examining teachers' experiences in implementing core curriculum standards found that many teachers faced challenges during implementation (Porter et al., 2015). Additionally, they felt pressured to cover a large amount of work in a short period. Similarly, some teachers in Estonia, Finland, and Germany felt the curriculum content was excessive (Erss et al., 2016). Porter et al. (2015) noted that ineffective communication and continual reinterpretation of instructions from top officials might jeopardize effective implementation, as expressed by the teachers. Once the curriculum is implemented, it needs to be evaluated to determine if it achieves its intended objectives.

(c) Curriculum Evaluation

During the curriculum evaluation process, data on strengths, weaknesses, and preferences are collected. This stage includes evaluating teachers, students, materials, assessments, and methods (Jadhav & Patankar, 2013). Teachers are seen not only as active curriculum implementers but also as essential contributors providing feedback to improve the existing curriculum (Konokman et al., 2017). If the curriculum is deemed unsuitable after evaluation, it can be reformed. However, even though teachers evaluate the curriculum, their suggestions for improvement are often disregarded. ÖZÜDOĞRU (2021) revealed that in Turkey, teachers were aware that their opinions were not considered, nor did they receive feedback on the previously evaluated curriculum. Additionally, the same author reported teachers' dissatisfaction with textbooks, which were not revised based on their input, causing them to view curriculum evaluation as a mere routine and perceive themselves solely as implementers. A similar situation occurred in Jordan in 2007, with the slight difference that

Jordanian teachers received feedback on the evaluation, but only the page order of teaching and learning books was altered while the content remained the same (Al-Daami & Wallace, 2007).

Ignoring teachers' input may discourage them from critically reflecting on their work, which is essential for excellent performance. Bilgin et al. (2011) conducted a survey study in Turkey to determine teachers' opinions on planning, applying, and evaluating the Primary Curriculum (PC) and any differences between those who attended in-service training and those who did not. The findings revealed that teachers held negative views regarding the evaluation of the Primary Curriculum, possibly due to their evaluations being overlooked, as mentioned in earlier research. Furthermore, the results showed that teachers who attended in-service training and those who did not attend held differing opinions on curriculum development. Lastly, Al-Daami and Wallace (2007) found that in-service training was insufficient. In summary, although teachers were involved in this phase of curriculum development and given the opportunity to provide evaluations, their ideas were not considered, making the evaluation process seem like a mere formality.

2.4 Curriculum development and Teachers' involvement

Curriculum development is a crucial aspect of the educational process, and the involvement of teachers can significantly impact the effectiveness of the curriculum. A centralized curriculum involves a top-down approach where the government initiates the implementation process, followed by schools (Eunitah et al., 2013). On the other hand, a decentralized curriculum starts at the grassroots level, with schools, and moves upward. The mixed approach combines both top-down and bottom-up approaches, granting power to central and subordinate stakeholders. As the curriculum moves towards a broader level, teachers' involvement in its development decreases. However, Carl (2009)

emphasizes that teachers' involvement in curriculum development is essential for successful outcomes.

2.4.1 Top-Down (Centralized model)

The top-down centralized model of curriculum development is characterized by the centralization of decision-making processes, with the government or a central authority taking the lead in determining the content and objectives of the curriculum (Kusumaningrum, & Triwiyanto 2015). This approach can lead to uniformity in educational standards across schools and regions, ensuring that all students receive a consistent quality of education (Apple, 2013). However, critics argue that this model can limit the flexibility and adaptability of the curriculum to local contexts and individual student needs (Biesta, et al., 2015).

The top-down model, commonly used in Arab countries, limits teachers' involvement in curriculum development to the implementation stage (Nghihalwa, 2018). This model contributed to the failure of China's College English Department's Rolling Project, which aimed to improve cooperation between teachers and students (Liu, & Xiu (2019). Despite enhancing the learning experience, teachers struggled to implement the new curriculum because they were not involved in the innovation process and did not receive in-service training. This led to reduced proficiency and chaos, ultimately causing the discontinuation of the model.

In many developing countries like Ghana, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Kenya, the curriculum is centralized and teachers are expected to implement it without input (Abudu & Mensah, 2016; Nghihalwa, 2018). In Ghana, 90% of teachers reported not being involved in curriculum design, with some unaware of when it even occurs (Abudu & Mensah, 2016). Despite this, teachers recognize their

importance in the development process due to their practical knowledge and understanding of learners' interests (Radloff et al., 2019).

In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Education allows schools to choose practical and optional subjects, but a study by Nghihalwa (2018) found that in four of five schools, teachers were not involved in the decision-making process. Instead, decisions were made by school heads and their deputies. Teachers who were excluded from this process felt undervalued, even though many specialized in curriculum and considered themselves best qualified to make such decisions. The study recommended empowering teachers in decision-making to avoid resistance to change and potential negative outcomes for learners.

In Kenya and Nigeria, the curriculum is centralized using a top-down model, designed by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD, 2014; Kobiah 2016) and Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) (Oloruntegbe, 2011), respectively. Studies in Kenya have found a significant relationship between teachers' participation in curriculum conceptualization and effective implementation (Kobiah et. al, 2015), but also show a limited extent of teacher participation (Kobiah, 2016). The top-down model restricts teacher involvement, undermining their knowledge and experience, which can lead to pedagogical dogmatism (Nghihalwa, 2018) and deviation from the intended curriculum (Wang & Cheng, 2005; Kobiah, 2016), ultimately impacting educational goals. Researchers (Abudu & Mensah, 2016; Kobiah 2016) suggest that decentralizing the curriculum is the appropriate model to increase teachers' participation in curriculum development.

2.4.2 Bottom-up (Decentralized model)

In the realm of curriculum development, the bottom-up (decentralized) model has increasingly gained attention as a more participatory approach that actively involves teachers in the process (Nghihalwa, 2018). The bottom-up (decentralized) model emphasizes the importance of teacher involvement in the curriculum development process, starting at the grassroots level and working its way up to higher levels of decision-making (Eunitah et al., 2013).

Various countries, including Finland, Australia, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Sweden, employ a decentralized curriculum approach (Mølstad, 2015; Nghihalwa, 2018). Decentralized curricula offer benefits such as fostering teacher autonomy and enhancing the teaching profession (Molstad, 2015). Teacher autonomy is crucial, as it leads to better curriculum implementation. In Finland, the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, implemented from 2006, serves as a foundation for designing local curricula (Niemi et al, 2016). This system of localizing curriculum provides ample opportunities for teacher participation and boosts their sense of efficacy. Finnish teachers feel they have a strong influence on content, especially in foreign languages where greater interpretation is allowed (Erss et al., 2016). Teachers can decide on the curriculum content, guided by the National Core Curriculum.

Every curriculum model has its strengths and weaknesses. Eunitah et al. (2013) argue that decentralized curricula can be expensive since schools must cover all costs. Although this model works well in some countries, it failed in Hong Kong and China. Niu (2023) reports that attempts to implement a decentralized School-Based Curriculum Development (SBCD) model in these countries failed due to a lack of qualified teachers capable of designing effective curricula. To address this issue, Hong Kong and China transitioned to a quasi-SBCD model.

A similar situation occurred in England decades ago, when the education system was primarily influenced by schools between the 1960s-1970s (Kelly, 2009). This approach led to low education standards, prompting the state to intervene and develop a national statutory curriculum in 1989. In some cases, entrusting schools and teachers with curriculum development can lead to a sense of ownership and improved results (Nieveen & Kuiper, 2021). However, this model can also produce inconsistencies and differences in education policy, as the quality of curricula may vary depending on the schools or teachers involved (Gerrard & Farrell, 2014).

2.4.3 Mixed (Top down-bottom up) approach

The mixed approach to curriculum development, which incorporates both top-down and bottom-up approaches, has been explored as an alternative to solely centralized or decentralized models. This hybrid model aims to strike a balance between national standardization and localized autonomy, allowing for increased teacher participation while maintaining a unified educational framework (Gouédard et al., 2020). Gouédard et al., (2020) argued that a mixed approach can better address the diverse needs of students by allowing teachers to adapt the curriculum to their specific contexts. This flexibility ensures that teachers have a say in the development process, enhancing their commitment to the curriculum's successful implementation.

The mixed approach to curriculum development, which combines top-down and bottom-up approaches, emerged after the failure of external attempts at disseminating innovation (Kelly, 2009). This approach emphasizes school-based curriculum development and the appointment of teachers as curriculum coordinators to address individual schools' problems. An example of this model is Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) (Priestley, 2011).

In the Netherlands, the shift from a solely input/output model to a mixed approach was influenced by political changes and international academic competitions like TIMSS and PISA (Nieveen & Kuiper, 2012). This mixed approach maintains trust in teachers and schools but adds regulations and standards.

Scotland, unlike other parts of the UK, does not have a centralized national curriculum, instead opting for a school-based one (Kelly, 2009). The Scottish CfE, implemented in 2010-2011, highlights the importance of teachers as agents of change and professional developers of the curriculum (Priestley et al., 2014). However, despite the incorporation of teacher input, the implementation of CfE faced challenges, with teachers feeling anxious and finding the guiding document unclear and inconsistent (Priestley & Minty, 2012).

While involving teachers in curriculum development is important for motivation and maintaining professional standards, it does not guarantee smooth implementation. School-Based Curriculum Development supports teacher autonomy and recognizes the interdependence between curriculum development and teacher professional development (Nghihalwa, 2018).

Teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding curriculum involvement vary. Some teachers are eager to be involved (Nghihalwa, 2018), while others are reluctant, as seen in Eastern European countries like Estonia (Erss et al., 2016), top-down curricula countries like China and Hong Kong (Nghihalwa, 2018), and countries with a history of decentralized curricula like the Netherlands (Nieveen & Kuiper, 2012) and Zimbabwe (Chinyani, 2013). Reasons for this reluctance include

feeling overwhelmed by the workload (Erss et al., 2016; Chinyani, 2013). In summary, while most teachers desire to be involved in curriculum development, a minority do not.

2.5 Curriculum changes in Namibia since independence

Since gaining independence in 1990, Namibia has undergone significant educational reforms to address the legacies of apartheid and colonialism, as well as to adapt to the changing needs of a globalized society (Josua et al., (2022). Following independence, Namibia embarked on a series of educational reforms aimed at creating a more equitable and relevant education system. Key curriculum changes during this period included:

- a) **The Basic Education Reform:** Implemented in 1996, this reform aimed to provide access to quality basic education for all Namibian children by restructuring the curriculum to emphasize learner-centered teaching methods and a more inclusive approach to education (Melber, 2014).
- b) **The National Curriculum for Basic Education (NCBE):** Introduced in 2010, the NCBE sought to further enhance the relevance and quality of education by integrating cross-curricular themes, such as life skills, environmental education, and entrepreneurship, into the curriculum (NIED, 2010).
- c) **The Senior Secondary Curriculum Reform:** Launched in 2014, this reform aimed to better prepare students for higher education and the labour market by introducing new subjects, such as entrepreneurship and business studies, and updating the assessment system to focus on critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Shifidi, 2015).

Iiping and Hako (2017) identify three major stages of curriculum reform in Namibia:

- a) total transformation from 1990 to 1996,
- b) curriculum improvement and localization from 1997 to 2010, and
- c) building curriculum and providing alternative curriculum from 2010 to 2016.

During the total transformation, the government unified the various colonial education administrations and replaced the South African segregationist curricula with a new Namibian Secondary Education curriculum. Language policy, ICT policy, and learner-centered policies were introduced, along with the four major goals of education: access, equity, quality, and democracy (MoE, 1993). Namibia localized its curriculum with the implementation of NSSCO and NSSCH in 2007, introducing entrepreneurship into the curriculum. During this period, the Presidential Commission on Education was established, and several education policies, including the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), were developed (Iiping & Hako, 2017).

During the phase of building curriculum consensus and providing alternative curricula, significant reforms were implemented to align with Vision 2030. The structure of basic education changed, moving the Junior Secondary Certificate (JSC) from Grade 10 to Grade 11. Well-performing learners in NSSCO could take higher-level subjects in Grade 12, qualifying them for local universities, vocational training centers, or employment. Reforms included making education free at government primary and secondary schools in Namibia in 2013 and 2016, respectively. A national conference on education was held in 2011 to identify educational challenges and document actions for improvement (Iiping & Hako, 2017). Figure 2-1 indicates the transformations in the structure of basic education. Previously, the basic education is sub-divided into **five** phases: *Pre-Primary*, *Lower Primary Grades*

1-4, Upper Primary Grades 5-7, Junior Secondary Grades 8-10, and Senior Secondary Grades 11-12. Formal Basic Education is for all from Pre-Primary to Grade 10, after which there are various opportunities: entry into formal Senior Secondary education, vocational education and training, direct entry to employment, or distance learning. Currently, basic education is subdivided into **four** phases: *Junior Primary (Pre-Primary and Grades 1-3)*, *Senior Primary (Grades 4-7)*, *Junior Secondary (Grades 8-9)*, and *Senior Secondary (Grades 10-12)*. After completing the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary (NSSCO) level at the end of Grade 11, learners have various options: they may choose to continue with either vocational education and training or with distance learning or seek employment. Learners who meet the prescribed requirements may proceed to Grade 12. In Grade 12, learners will take their subjects on Advanced Subsidiary Level, which is an admission requirement for enrolment at many universities in Southern Africa and abroad.

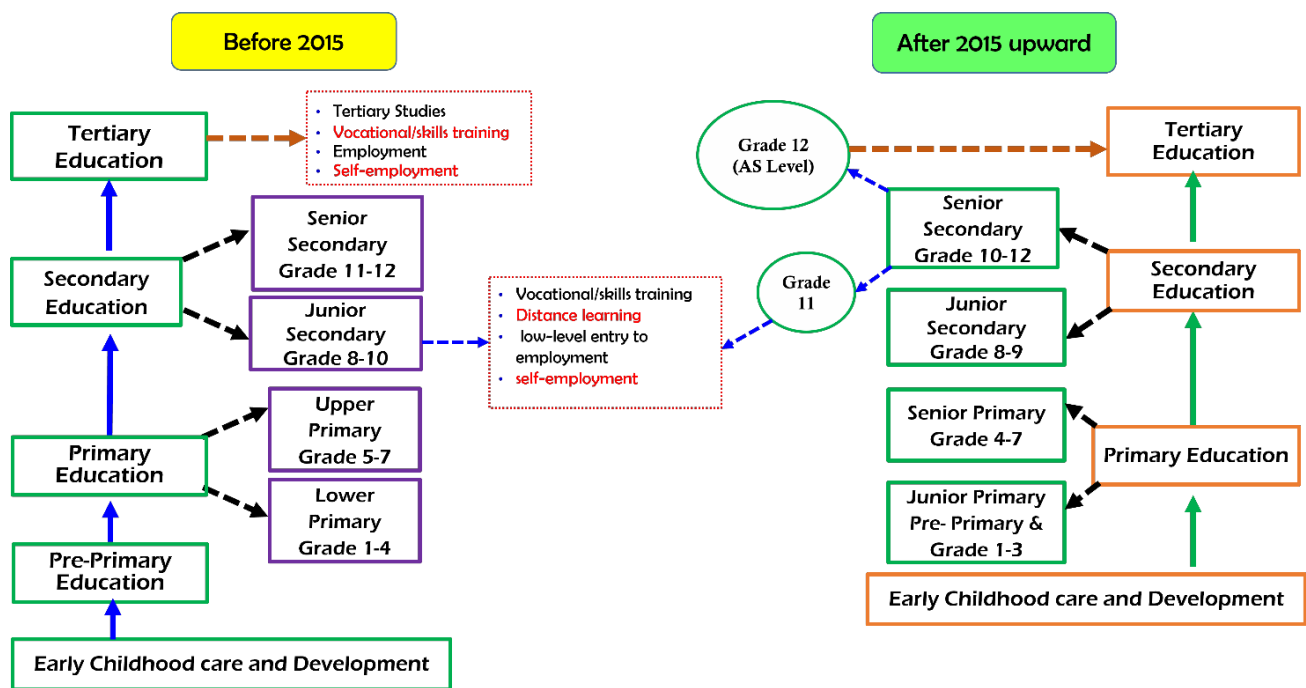


Figure 2-1: The Structure of Basic Education (MoE, 2010 & MoEAC, 2016)

Several factors have driven the curriculum changes in Namibia since independence, including:

- a) **Addressing historical inequalities:** Curriculum reforms have sought to redress the educational disparities inherited from the colonial and apartheid eras by promoting greater access to quality education for all Namibian children, regardless of their socioeconomic background (Josua et al., (2022)).
- b) **Responding to global trends:** As the world has become increasingly interconnected, Namibia's education system has had to adapt to the changing needs of a globalized society, including the development of new skills and competencies required for success in the 21st-century labour market (Melber, 2014).
- c) **Aligning with national development goals:** Curriculum changes have also been driven by the need to align education with Namibia's broader development goals, as outlined in national policy documents such as Vision 2030 and the National Development Plans (NDPs) (NIED, 2018).

Josua et al., (2022), explored the reasons for the curricular responsiveness and transformation in Namibia's basic education before and after independence and established that curriculum changes have been driven by socio-economic, cultural as well as political reasons. The summary of their findings for the post-independence curriculum transformations (1990 – till now) is captured in Table 2-1 below:

Table 2-1: Curricular responsiveness for the post-colonial era (Josua et al., 2022)

	Different Curriculum Period	Focus of Curriculum	Highlights of Curriculum responsiveness
1.	Unification of segregated education systems (1990-)	After decades of socio-economic as well as cultural exclusion of indigenous people and injustice which resulted from apartheid policy, unification of education systems was introduced.	Curriculum responded to prolonged cultural injustice as well as the policy of divide and rule. The curriculum responded to culture, social practices and economic activities were indigenous people have been structurally and systematical excluded. Responsiveness to socio-cultural and well as economic activities.
2.	Towards education for all in Namibia (1990-)	Goals of access, equity, equality and democracy were introduced to promote towards education for all.	
3.	Junior Secondary Certificate (1991-1993) and Higher/International General Certificate of Secondary Education (1994-1995)	The two exit examination systems were introduced to improve the outcomes at the junior as well as senior secondary level. Despite the changes in the draconial language previously used in the assessment there seems to have been not much change.	
4.	Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate (2009-2020)	This change was motivated by the move towards indigenization of assessment.	
5.	The Revised Curriculum for Basic Education (2015-2022)	The curriculum seeks to fast track realization of Vision 2030, which seeks to have Namibia industrialized in the knowledge-based economy era.	

While the impact of curriculum reforms in Namibia has been varied, some notable achievements include:

- a) **Increased access to education:** Reforms have contributed to a significant expansion in access to basic education, with primary school enrolment rates reaching over 95% by 2016 (UNICEF, 2016).
- b) **Improved quality of education:** The introduction of learner-centered teaching methods and updated curricula have led to improvements in the quality of education, as evidenced by improved performance on national and international assessments (Shifidi, 2015)

Despite these achievements, Namibia's curriculum reform process has faced several challenges, such as:

- a) **Resistance to change:** Some teachers and administrators have resisted the adoption of new teaching methods and curricula, citing concerns about their relevance, feasibility, and appropriateness (Shifidi, 2015).
- b) **Limited resources:** The successful implementation of curriculum reforms has been hampered by limited financial and human resources, as well as inadequate infrastructure and support services.
- c) **Inadequate teacher training and support:** The lack of adequate professional development opportunities and support for teachers has hindered the effective implementation of new curricula and teaching methods (Melber, 2014).

In summary, since independence, Namibia has made significant strides in reforming its education system through various curriculum changes aimed at addressing historical inequalities, adapting to

global trends, and aligning with national development goals. While these reforms have led to increased access to education and improvements in educational quality, challenges such as resistance to change, limited resources, and inadequate teacher training and support have hindered their full implementation and impact. Moving forward, it is crucial for Namibia to address these challenges in order to further advance its education system and provide all students with the skills and knowledge needed for success in the 21st century.

2.6 Commerce curriculum and its reforms in Namibia and beyond

Commerce education plays a crucial role in preparing students for the world of work, entrepreneurship, and participation in the global economy. As a developing country striving for economic growth and diversification, Namibia has recognized the importance of commerce education and has implemented several reforms in this area since gaining independence in 1990 (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC, 2016).

In Namibia, commerce education has been designed to cater for the increasing personnel requirements of various business entities. The purpose of providing students with commerce education is to furnish them with specialized skills applicable to a range of functional areas in trade, commerce, and industry. The constant provision of well-trained manpower is crucial for the expansion of the industrial sector. This makes it imperative to have skilled personnel to oversee the process of industrial reconstruction and the swiftly developing trade and commerce. Commerce education is vital in today's fast-paced business environment, as globalization and technological advancements make it challenging for organizations to remain competitive. The growing importance of commerce education necessitates that business executives update their skills to adapt to the ever-changing external landscape. As the

complexity of organizations and businesses increases, it is essential for business schools to provide students with relevant, up-to-date, and cutting-edge knowledge. The School of Commerce should play a central role in preparing future dynamic managers with emerging commerce skills to tackle the challenges of the evolving business world (Bamba, et al, 2013).

Generally, commerce is an area of study that directs industry and retail activities, such as the trade of commodities and the management of finance from the producer to the end-user. Several subjects such as Economics, Accountancy, and Business Studies are fractions of the Commerce stream in Classes 10 - 12. In Namibia, it is believed that the commerce learning area is a skills-focussed area that is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society. Learners “acquire and apply commercial knowledge in practical situations and develop the particular communication skills and work attitudes and practices which are essential in effective business life” (MoEAC, 2016, p. 13). The revised commerce learning area comprises entrepreneurial skills integrated in the subjects Home Ecology, Elementary Agriculture and Design and Technology in Grades 4-7, and the subjects Entrepreneurship (Grades 8-12), Accounting (Grades 8-12), Business Studies (Grades 10-12), Economics (Grades 10- 12), and Office Practice (Grades 8-11) (MoEAC, 2016). By comparison with the old commerce learning areas, where entrepreneurial training ends in Grade 10, Business Studies and Economics only begins at Grade 11 respectively (see Table 2-2). This indicates that the curriculum developers were interested in deepening both the knowledge and skills of learners in this field.

Table 2-2: The Commerce learning areas (MoE, 2010 & MoEAC, 2016)

Before 2015	2015 onwards
Grade 5-7: Entrepreneurial Skills (integrated in Home Ecology, Elementary Agriculture and Design & Technology.	Grade 4-7: Entrepreneurial Skills (integrated in Home Ecology, Elementary Agriculture and Design & Technology.
Grade 8-10: Entrepreneurship	Grade 8-12: Entrepreneurship
Grade 8-10: Keyboard and Word Processing	-
Grade 8-10: Typing	-
Grade 8-12: Accounting	Grade 8-12: Accounting
Grade 11-12: Office Administration and Keyboarding Applications.	Grade 8-11: Office Practices
Grade 11-12: Business Studies	Grade 10-12: Business Studies
Grade 11-12: Economics	Grade 10-12: Economics

Studies in Nigeria, such as those by Edokpolor (2018) and Adeoye & Igbinedion (2018), have found that the under-utilization of field trips and computer-driven simulations hinder the instruction of Business Studies in junior secondary school education. Additionally, Christy & Okolocha (2018) and Briggs (2019) reported that Business Studies teachers under-utilize concept mapping in planning instruction, which negatively impacts the teaching process. Oyenekan (2016) opined that a commerce curriculum should be functional, dynamic, and responsive to the changing needs, interests, problems, and visions of individuals and their developing society. In Nigeria, the success of The New Secondary School Curriculum (NSSC) as a curriculum reform for commerce education has been hindered by the limited infrastructural provision, teacher challenges, poverty due to a volatile national economy, and corruption within the education system (Oyenekan, 2016). The failure of curriculum reforms for

entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has led to many Nigerian youths not possessing skills required by employers, and being incapable of self-employment via entrepreneurship (Ogwu et al., 2014). It is, therefore, imperative to engage in a study that focuses on the strategies that can be employed to effectively implement the new commerce curriculum in Namibia.

In Southern Africa, challenges in curriculum reforms have been addressed by various scholars. Sithole (2010) notes that teachers' rigidity in shifting from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered pedagogy is a significant challenge in achieving curriculum goals for Business Studies in Botswana junior secondary schools. In South Africa, however, the drama pedagogical approach is preferred over other instruction modes, limiting comprehensive skill acquisition for students, and stimulating their engagement in Business Studies classes (Bayat 2019). This again points to the need to determine teachers' perceptions in the process of commerce curriculum reform particularly in Namibia.

2.7 Teachers' perceptions towards general curriculum reforms in Namibia and beyond

Curriculum reform is an essential aspect of the educational process, as it aims to ensure that educational programs remain relevant, engaging, and effective for learners (Gouëdard et al, 2020). It brings high expectations due to their innovative approaches to education, but implementing these changes may not immediately result in noticeable improvements in school instruction or student learning (Nevenglosky, 2018). It is a subjective process, as it relies on individual interpretations and experiences (Fullan, 2007).

Teachers, as the primary implementers of curricula, play a crucial role in the success of curriculum reforms, and their perceptions of these changes can significantly influence their implementation (Alsubie, 2016). Teachers' perceptions of curriculum change are influenced by their personal identity and interpretative framework, leading to reasons for or against the change (Aytaç, 2023). It can also be influenced by external factors, such as political pressures and international academic competition (Nieveen & Kuiper, 2012). These factors may create a sense of urgency or anxiety among teachers, affecting their attitudes toward the changes. Teachers' engagement with curriculum change can range from acceptance to resistance. Acceptance involves positive support for the changes, influenced by various factors such as the curriculum change's aims, school management, and the perceived level of support. Resistance, on the other hand, is a negative stance toward change but can sometimes serve a constructive purpose (Jenkins, 2020).

In many cases, teachers are open to curriculum changes if they feel prepared and supported throughout the transition (Jones & Dexter, 2014). Adequate training and professional development opportunities are essential for teachers to feel confident in their abilities to adapt to new curricula (Aytaç, 2023). When teachers feel well-equipped to tackle new methods and content, they are more likely to view the reforms positively. However, teachers' perceptions can vary depending on the nature and scope of the reforms. In some instances, teachers may feel overwhelmed by the changes, especially if they perceive the reforms as too complex or if they feel unprepared to implement them (Erss et al., 2016). For example, Chinyani (2013) found that some teachers in Zimbabwe were reluctant to participate in curriculum development due to increased workload and perceived complexity.

Curriculum reforms that emphasize student-centered learning and teacher autonomy have been

generally well-received by teachers (Nghihalwa, 2018). However, the implementation of these reforms can be challenging, as some teachers may struggle to adapt to new pedagogical approaches (Sithole, 2010). Additionally, the availability of resources and support can greatly influence teachers' perceptions of curriculum reforms (Nel, et al., 2016). When resources and support are scarce, teachers may feel frustrated and unsupported, negatively impacting their view of the reforms.

Several studies show that teachers' beliefs and perceptions are very important because they shape and strengthen the curriculum development of a country (Namolo, 2021). Aytaç (2023) also argued that the meaning that a teacher attaches to curriculum reforms acts as his or her map on the curriculum implementation journey. This determines the success of educational reforms. Teachers' perceptions and beliefs play a pivotal role in the implementation of curriculum reforms.

Gu (2015) concurs with others that teachers' perceptions are very important because they mediate and shape their attitudes and emotions toward the curriculum reform of the country. Terhart (2013, p.1). further states that: "you cannot accomplish school reform against the will of the teachers, but only with the teachers". Teachers only partake in changes that they support. Alsubaie (2016) adds that curriculum reform can only be successful if teachers feel that their knowledge and experiences are included in the development of the new curriculum. It was viewed that "the way teachers perceive curriculum change may be the reason curriculum change impacts negatively or positively on the teaching and learning of the new curriculum.

In Samoa, Leituaso-Mafoa (2012) in the study titled "Teachers' Perceptions on the Implementation of the New (2000) Business Studies Curriculum" confirmed that most commerce teachers expressed

their views that they need training on the curriculum materials in relation to content, pedagogies and teaching activities. Given that no such study has been done in Namibia, there is a need to investigate the teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia.

In conclusion, teachers' perceptions towards general curriculum reforms are influenced by various factors, including the nature and scope of the reforms, availability of resources and support, and external pressures. Ensuring that teachers feel well-prepared, supported, and equipped to handle the changes is essential for the successful implementation of curriculum reforms. More research is needed to further explore the nuances of teachers' perceptions and experiences, with a focus on understanding how these factors can be addressed to facilitate smoother transitions and more effective implementation of curriculum changes.

2.8 General strategies for implementing new curriculum.

Curriculum implementation can be understood in different ways by various authors. Fullan (2001) defines it as the process of putting into practice new ideas, programs, or activities and structures for those attempting or expecting to change. Sabola (2017) defines it based on the curriculum development model used. In Centre-Periphery Models, where the curriculum is developed elsewhere and handed to teachers, implementation is seen as transforming the developers' aspirations into a form that can be understood by pupils.

In the Collaborative Model of curriculum development, teachers are actively involved in the process, making curriculum implementation the act of using the curriculum they helped develop in the classroom. This model values teachers' views and recognizes their vital role in the education system

(Alsubaie, 2016). Thorn, and Brasche (2015) emphasizes that a curriculum's effectiveness relies on teachers' willingness to use it. Nevenglosky (2018) adds that implementation includes providing support to teachers to ensure effective delivery of the new curriculum and instructional strategies at the classroom level. Despite different perspectives, all authors agree that curriculum implementation occurs at the classroom level.

Rogan and Aldous (2005) put forward a theory of curriculum implementation consisting of profile of implementation, capacity to support innovation and support from outside agencies as its three major constructs as shown in Figure 3. The construct of curriculum implementation helps to understand, analyze, and express the extent to which a curriculum's proposals are put into practice. It acknowledges that each teacher may implement the curriculum differently. In Figure 2-2, the **profile of implementation** offers a map of the learning area and various ways for implementation, as well as helping to conceptualize levels of implementation for a new curriculum.

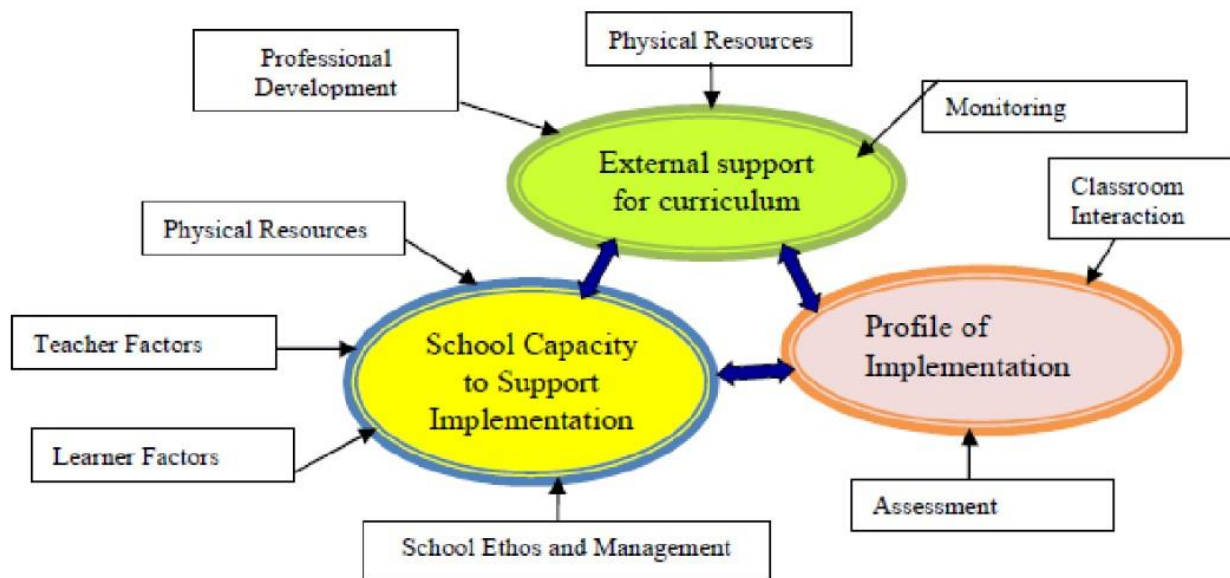


Figure 2-2: Theoretical framework for curriculum implementation (Rogan & Aldous, 2005)

The construct of **capacity to support curriculum implementation** aims to understand school-based factors that affect the implementation of new curriculum ideas and practices. Schools differ in their capacity to implement curriculum innovations. Indicators of this capacity fall into four categories: physical resources, teacher factors, learner factors, and school ethos and management. *Physical resources* can influence implementation, with inadequate resources limiting even the best teachers. Teacher factors include background, training, confidence, and commitment. *Teachers* play a crucial role in effective implementation, and insufficient subject knowledge or training can hinder this process. *Learner factors* relate to students' backgrounds and the strengths and constraints they bring to the learning environment, such as unsupportive home environments or language proficiency issues. **External agencies or organizations**, such as government departments, donors, NGOs, and unions, interact with schools to facilitate curriculum implementation. In this study, external support focused on providing professional development and monitoring curriculum implementation.

Implementing a new curriculum is a complex and multi-faceted process that requires careful planning and execution. Various strategies have been proposed to facilitate the effective implementation of new curricula, with researchers emphasizing the importance of several key factors.

One crucial factor in implementing a new curriculum is teacher involvement and professional development (Fullan, 2007; Alsubaie, 2016). Providing teachers with adequate training and resources is essential for ensuring they feel confident and prepared to deliver the new curriculum effectively (Mandukwini, 2016). In addition, teachers should be included in the development and decision-making processes to promote a sense of ownership and motivation (Griffith & Lacina, 2018).

Support from school leadership and administration is also critical for successful curriculum implementation (Bahtilla, & Hui, 2020). Strong leadership can facilitate the necessary organizational changes, provide resources and support, and establish a clear vision for the new curriculum (Griffith & Lacina, 2018). Collaboration among teachers and other stakeholders is another important strategy for successful curriculum implementation (Samson, 2019). By working together, teachers can share ideas, experiences, and best practices, which can lead to more effective teaching and learning (Samson, 2019). By continually assessing the impact of the new curriculum on student learning, educators can identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments (Alsubaie, 2016).

Finally, clear communication and transparency throughout the implementation process are critical to fostering buy-in and support from teachers, students, and the broader community (Samson, 2019). By clearly articulating the goals, rationale, and expectations associated with the new curriculum, stakeholders can better understand and support the changes taking place (Nevenglosky, 2018).

In summary, successful implementation of a new curriculum involves multiple strategies that emphasize the importance of teacher involvement, professional development, strong leadership, collaboration, evidence-based practices, ongoing evaluation, and clear communication. By incorporating these factors into the implementation process, schools can better ensure that the new curriculum is effectively introduced and has a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

2.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the conceptual framework was presented followed by a review of literature focusing mainly on: significant curriculum reforms in Namibia post-independence, teachers' attitudes toward curriculum reforms, optimal strategies for implementing curricula, and the updated Commerce curriculum were examined. The literature review is pertinent to the current research as it informs the study's objectives and guides the development of data collection tools tailored to address the research questions. Additionally, it highlights some of the key research works related to the study. The following chapter discusses the research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the literature review and conceptual framework forming the foundation of the study were presented. In this chapter, the detailed methodological approach employed to gather data concerning teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in the Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia was presented. The chapter encompasses aspects such as research paradigm, design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, and instruments. Furthermore, the chapter presents data collection procedures, data analysis, and the ethical considerations which were considered during the research process.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The significance of selecting a paradigm for a research project lies in its role as the foundation for the study's research and methodologies. It defines how knowledge is understood and explored, explicitly stating the objectives, motivations, and expected outcomes of the research (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). A research paradigm provides researchers with a clear path to investigate their topic of interest effectively.

Creswell and Creswell (2017, p.12) define a paradigm as “a general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher holds”. It represents a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions guiding a chosen field of study, influencing the research approach, data collection instruments, data analysis, and the interpretation of findings. Different research paradigms, such as positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, and postmodernism, are characterized by varying

assumptions about reality, the role of the researcher, and the nature of knowledge (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

In this study, an interpretivist research paradigm was adopted. Interpretivism emphasizes gaining a deeper understanding of a phenomenon within its unique context, rather than generalizing findings to the entire population. It focuses on studying individual perspectives and subjective interpretations, appreciating the complexity and richness of human experiences (Pham, 2018). This approach allows for in-depth exploration and a comprehensive understanding of the specific context under investigation. According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), the interpretivist paradigm aims to comprehend and interpret the thoughts and meanings attributed by the subjects to their context. It involves delving into the perspectives of the subjects being studied and understanding their views and perceptions (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The present study utilized this interpretivist approach to gain insight into the views and perceptions of Namibian teachers of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum.

3.3 Research Design

Inaam (2016) suggest that a research design acts as a blueprint or outline for conducting a study, ensuring maximum control over factors that could affect the validity of research results. He emphasizes that a research design offers a detailed plan guiding the researcher's approach throughout the study. Sileyew (2019) views a research design as a strategic plan that encompasses philosophical assumptions, participant selection, data gathering techniques, and data analysis. It was further stated that a research design provides overall guidelines for the researcher to address

the research problem effectively and efficiently, involving a systematic approach that incorporates ideas, procedures, resources, and data (Sileyew, 2019).

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. (Sileyew, 2019)

Given this context, the study employed a qualitative research approach, and then employed a narrative case study design. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to gather rich and in-depth information. Narrative case study design seeks to understand the phenomenon in their natural setting. It was appropriate because it allows for a "richer and more in-depth understanding of a process or phenomena" (Lingard, 2016, p.1). Therefore, it made the researcher to listen and understand how participants narrated the stories about the teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. Therefore, the study used a qualitative narrative case study with the purpose that the researcher will have a face-to-face conversation with the participants in their natural settings which is their schools.

34 Population and Sampling procedures

3.4.1 Population of the study

Casteel and Bridier (2021) indicated that the population of interest in a study includes individuals, groups, organizations, or other entities one seeks to understand and to whom or to which the study results may be generalized or transferred and is the principal group about which the research is concerned. This population sets the scope of the study and provides context for the reader. Defining these boundaries helps the researcher maintain focus and avoid presenting generalized or a one-size-fits-all set of results. This also aids in identifying specific subpopulations, like the target group and sample, ensuring alignment among these components within the research.

The population of the study included all 27 teachers and 4 Heads of Department (HoDs) implementing the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in the four public Senior Secondary Schools in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia.

3.4.2 Sample and sampling strategies

As illustrated in Figure 3-1, a sample is a small group of participants that are intended for the study from a larger population. According to Shaheen and Pradhan (2019), when faced with limited resources and time constraints, researchers are often compelled to carefully assess samples and events. They may even explore extreme cases to gain deeper insights. The emphasis here is on understanding which events hold significance.

The sample of this study consisted of a total of 6 teachers from 2 selected schools, who have been teaching the following Commerce subjects (Accounting; Business Studies, Economics,

Entrepreneurship, and Computer studies) of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum.

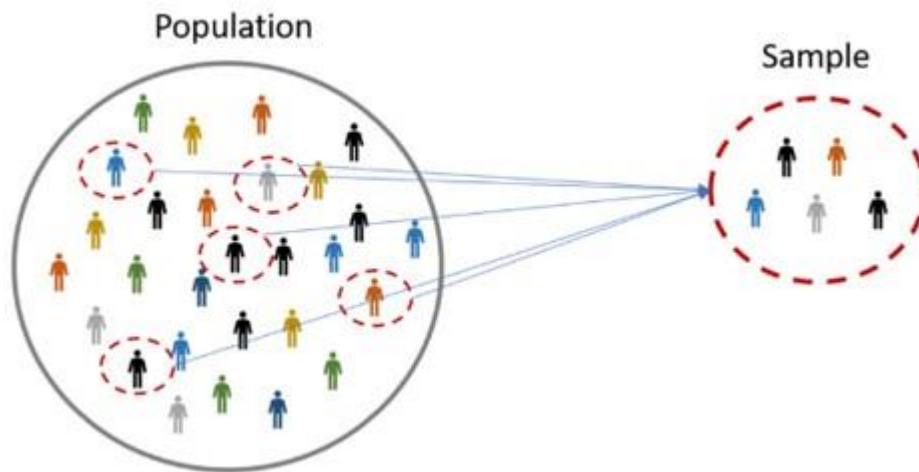


Figure 3-1: A Sample derived from Population

Convenience sampling was used for the selection of the schools in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana region. Convenience sampling involves selecting participants based on their accessibility to the researcher, often from a readily available sampling pool. These samples are typically from the same geographic area, share similar socioeconomic traits, and often have similar racial or ethnic backgrounds (Emerson, 2015).

A Purposeful sampling technique was used to select the teachers that constituted part of the sample of the study. One HOD from each of the selected schools also formed part of the study. Purposive sampling is the deliberate selection of a participant based on specific characteristics or qualities they possess (Etikan et al., 2016). The criteria for choosing participants can vary, such as targeting specific narratives, shared experiences with a phenomenon, cultural membership, or contribution to theory development (Creswell, 2013). The key factor is that each participant is chosen for possessing a particular quality relevant to the research. The teachers were sampled based on the

following criteria: a) be qualified teachers for commerce subjects Grade 10 – 11, b) be teaching commerce subjects for three years, and c) currently teaching commerce subjects Grade 10 – 11.

3.5 Research Instruments

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are one of the methods for collecting primary data in qualitative research designs. Despite its complexity, the interview can be simplified as a form of consultation where the researcher gathers opinions about a subject from an individual. Essentially, an interview is an interactive process where questions are posed to gather specific information. Scholarly perspective, like Adhabi and Anozie (2017), defines qualitative research interviews as an attempt to comprehend the world from the participant's viewpoint, revealing the significance of their experiences before scientific explanations. Recognized by scholars, interviews are pivotal for qualitative data collection.

Interviews were chosen as a primary data collection method for this study to deeply explore teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum. Semi-structured interviews are particularly effective in qualitative research as they allow for flexibility in responses, enabling the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences and insights (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). In the context of this study, face-to-face interviews facilitated a rich, detailed exploration of individual teachers' views and attitudes towards the curriculum changes, offering an interactive platform for participants to express their thoughts and concerns freely. This method also allowed for follow-up questions, providing clarity and depth to the responses, which is crucial for understanding the nuanced perspectives of teachers in the Ompundja Circuit, Oshana

Region, Namibia.

The study deployed a semi-structured interview with a set of questions in a pre-determined order and presented to each interviewee in an identical way so that the researcher can learn more about how teachers perceive commerce curriculum reforms. Magaldi and Berler (2020) characterize the semi-structured interview as an exploratory method. They elaborate that it usually follows a guide, concentrating on a central subject that offers a general framework. Moreover, Magaldi and Berler (2020) contend that despite its predefined topic directions, the semi-structured interview allows researchers to delve deeply into the exploration process. The face-to-face interview permitted the researcher to obtain in-depth data from the interviewee about teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia.

3.5.2 Document analysis

Document analysis, involves the examination of diverse documents like books, newspaper articles, academic journals, and institutional reports. Any text-containing document can serve as a qualitative analysis source (Morgan, 2022). The term "document" encompasses a wide range of materials, including visual sources such as photographs, videos, and films (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Just as textual documents, those comprising visual content also provide potential sources for qualitative analysis (Flick, 2022).

Document analysis was selected as a complementary data collection method to provide a robust framework for understanding the changes in the Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum. By examining diverse documents such as the old and new curriculum guides, and policy documents, the study aimed to identify the fundamental differences and intended objectives of the curriculum reforms. This method is essential in triangulating the data collected from interviews, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the curriculum changes from multiple perspectives. Document analysis offers a historical and contextual backdrop that enriches the qualitative data, allowing the researcher to corroborate and contrast the findings from the interviews with documented evidence. This approach not only enhances the validity of the study but also provides a detailed narrative of the curriculum evolution and its intended impact on commerce education in Namibia.

Documents review for this study included the old and new curriculum for Grade 10 – 11 Commerce subjects to identify the fundamental differences between the old and new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The complete data collection procedure is presented in Figure 3-2. The research instruments (guides) were created and refined in collaboration with supervisors to ensure the quality of the research questions aligns effectively with addressing the study's objectives. The researcher designed two different semi-structured interview schedules targeted at commerce teachers and Head of departments (HoDs) of commerce sections. The interview schedule included open-ended questions that encouraged respondents to express themselves freely about their perceptions of the implementation of the new Grade 10 – 11 curricula. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Namibia Ethics Committee, and permission was granted by the Education Ministry's Permanent Secretary to conduct research in government schools.

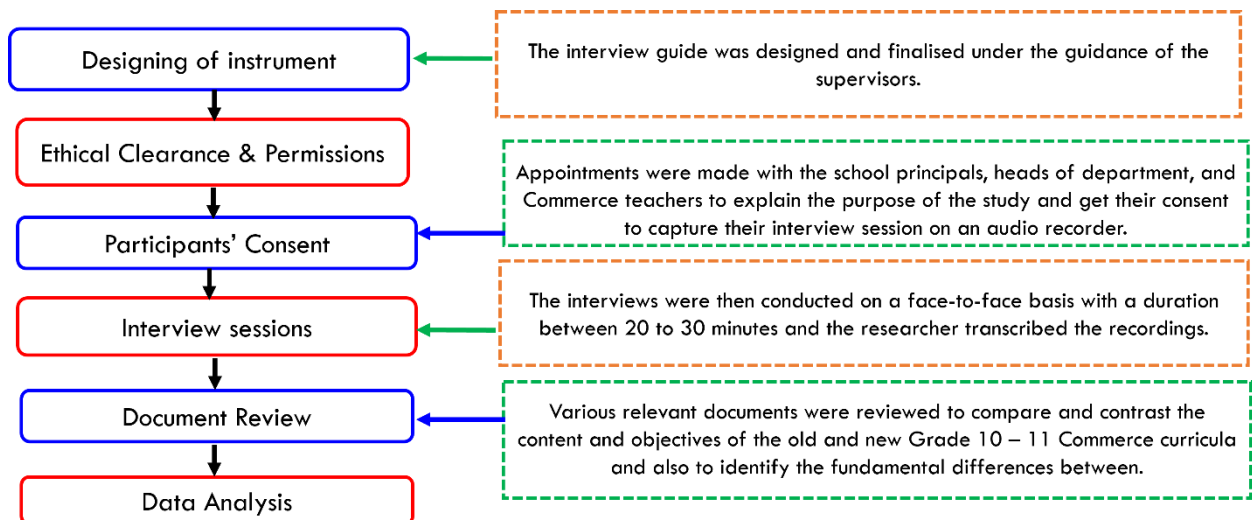


Figure 3-2: Data collection processes

Appointments were arranged with school principals, Commerce department heads, and teachers. The study's purpose and methods were explained, including the use of an audio recorder for interviews. All data collection procedures were clarified with participants and their consent to capture their interview session on an audio recorder was sought.

The interviews were conducted in person at the participants' school premises, scheduled at their convenience, with each session lasting between 20 to 30 minutes. The researcher transcribed the recordings afterward. The data collection spanned 4 weeks to accommodate participants' flexibility. Voluntary participation was emphasized, with participants having the choice to decline involvement without any impact on their job or job-related evaluations. The interviews facilitated detailed exploration through follow-up questions, aiming for a comprehensive understanding of perceptions. Importantly, participants had the autonomy to discontinue the interview at any point without repercussions. At the end of the interview sessions, participants were given the opportunity to review their comments and suggest modifications.

Finally, the old and new curriculum for Grade 10 – 11 Commerce subjects were analyzed to compare the content and objectives, while also identifying the fundamental similarities and differences

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of deriving meaning from the extensive volume of data gathered. In the context of this study, it seeks to establish the perceptions of teachers to the new Grade 10 – 11 commerce curricula in Ompundja circuit, Oshana region, Namibia. Here, the researcher condenses the collective input by identifying shared words, phrases, themes, or patterns, aiding in interpreting, and comprehending the data, and facilitating drawing conclusions (Mihas, 2019).

For the purpose of this study, thematic analysis was considered to be a suitable method for analyzing the collected data. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves reading through a data set (such as transcripts from in depth interviews or focus groups), and identifying patterns in meaning across the data to derive themes (Mihas, 2019). Thematic analysis can be conducted using either a deductive (top-down) or an inductive (bottom-up) approach (Dawadi, 2021). Inductive analysis involves coding the data without forcing themes into an

existing framework or the researcher's preconceptions (Dawadi, 2021). Themes emerge naturally from the data itself, without being influenced by themes from other studies. These themes are closely tied to the data, not the researcher's theoretical inclinations. Conversely, the deductive approach is researcher-led, allowing analysts to examine data within the context of their theoretical interest in the subject being studied (Dawadi, 2021).

The researcher initiated the analysis process by transcribing recorded audio data into written text. This was followed by thorough reading of the text, which was then interpreted by categorizing research questions into distinct groups using various highlighters. To protect participants' identities, code names were assigned, such as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, HoD 1, HoD 2, and so on. The researcher examined participants' responses, delving into the data to identify emerging patterns or concepts. This process involved generating theories and explanations from these patterns. A comparison was drawn between these identified themes and existing literature findings to ascertain potential connections or links, as well as to pinpoint any disparities. This comparison aimed to establish a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of teachers to the new Grade 10 – 11 commerce curricula.

38 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: In order to comply with the university's ethical requirements, the researcher applied for ethical clearance for the research, which was granted by University of Namibia's ethics committee to carry out this study. Official permission was obtained from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture to conduct research in the selected schools within the Ompundja circuit, Oshana Region. Subsequently, the school principals were contacted for their consent to conduct research on their premises. In addition, the teachers and heads of departments taking part in the study received comprehensive information about the study's purpose and significance.

Informed consent: Participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any negative consequences. In alignment with this study's requirements, participants received a consent form outlining the nature of the research, and they were asked to provide their signature.

Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity: While the intention was to audio record the interview sessions, if a participant declines permission for recording, the researcher opted for note-taking instead. All participants received an assurance of the strict confidentiality of the information they provided, guaranteeing that it will remain confidential and not be disclosed to anyone. Additionally, coding such as Teacher 1, Teacher 2, etc. were employed instead of real names to safeguard their identities.

Intellectual property rights: To ensure compliance with copyright principles and intellectual property rights, works of other authors, whether used in full or part, will be appropriately

acknowledged. Collected data from this study are to be retained for a period of three years, after which it would be securely discarded.

Trustworthiness and Validity: Ensuring trustworthiness and validity was a crucial ethical consideration. To enhance credibility, the researcher employed triangulation by using multiple data collection methods, such as interviews and document analysis. Member checking was also conducted, allowing participants to review and verify the accuracy of the data and interpretations. This process helped ensure that the findings accurately reflected the participants' views and experiences, thus enhancing the overall validity of the study.

39 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology utilized in this study. It also addressed the research paradigm, approach, design, sample, population, and sampling techniques applied in the study. The discussion also covered the research tools used to address the research questions, which included one-on-one interview guides and document analysis guides. Additionally, data collection procedures and ethical considerations are discussed. The subsequent chapter will present the study's findings.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter detailed the methodology used for data collection, analysis, and presentation. This chapter presents the findings from the study which delved into the teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. In addition, it offers a demographic overview of the participants. Emerging themes from the study will also be explored in this chapter, structured around the three research questions previously outlined in Chapter 1 as follows:

- a) What are the perceptions of Commerce teachers on the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum?
- b) What are the fundamental differences between the old and new Commerce curriculum in terms of the content, learning objectives, and assessment criteria?
- c) What strategies can be employed to enable effective implementation of the new Commerce curriculum?

4.2 Biographical information of the participants

This section provides an overview of the participants, who comprised teachers and heads of departments (HoDs) from selected schools in the Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia, specializing in commerce. Background details considered for these participants include gender, age, qualifications, subjects taught, and the duration of their experience teaching commerce in Senior Secondary School.

The study involved five teachers and two HoDs. The participants in this study were anonymized for confidentiality reasons. The teachers were coded as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, and Teacher E, while the heads of departments were referred to as HoD A and HoD B. This coding system

ensured that the participants' identities remained protected while facilitating the organization and presentation of data. The gender distribution included three males and four females. These educators taught commerce subjects such as accounting, business studies, economics, and entrepreneurship. Every teacher in the study held professional qualifications, either in the form of a degree or a postgraduate diploma in education. Their teaching experience varied widely, spanning from 7 to 28 years. This extensive range of experience ensures that all participants possess the requisite knowledge and skills, equipping them to offer insightful responses to the questions in the research instrument.

4.3 Findings

Following the analysis of the data, three distinct themes emerged from the study: Firstly, *the Teachers' Perceptions on the New Commerce Curriculum*, where participants shed light on the varied perspectives and opinions that teachers hold regarding the newly introduced commerce curriculum. Secondly, *the Significant Differences Between the Old and the New Curriculum*, where the focus is on describing the distinctions between the prior curriculum and its successor. The participants weighed in on the added components, removed elements, and the overall changes in the educational approach of the new curriculum. Lastly, *the Effective Strategies for Implementing the New Curriculum*, which revolve around the best practices and methods that can be employed to seamlessly integrate the new curriculum into the teaching process. Participants shared their recommendations, strategies they found fruitful, and areas where additional support might be needed. The detailed views and insights of the participants on these themes are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.4 Teachers' perceptions on the new commerce curriculum

The data analysis revealed diverse opinions among teachers regarding the new commerce curriculum. While some teachers expressed positive views and optimistic about the potential benefits and impacts of the new curriculum, others voiced concerns and held negative perceptions towards it. This range of views underscores the varied experiences and expectations teachers have in relation to curriculum changes.

4.4.1 Positive views on the curriculum

Some teachers have expressed a positive view regarding the realignment of content in the new curriculum, particularly the movement of certain content to the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level. This realignment has led to a more focused curriculum that addresses the specific needs and abilities of students at each level. For example, Teacher B and the HoD A mentioned that:

"... the teachers that were consulted, I feel like they did a great job. Since the content, it's fair that it can be covered in two years as per the syllabus as well as the syllabus content, I feel like it matched the level of the learners." – (Teacher B)

"This new curriculum, I hope it's a very good curriculum... If I compare it with the old one, you find out that there are some topics that were removed and some were added so that it fit well, the curriculum of the level, the grades." – (HoD A)

These educators appreciate how the realignment allows for a more concentrated exploration of subjects and better aligns content with the cognitive readiness of students at different stages. HoD B shared that:

"The old curriculum, it was narrowed... But on the new curriculum they have a lot to

learn. Especially I figure out the grade ten with five tasks that contribute to their final examination. So, they are learning a lot..."

Secondly, some participants held a positive view of the new curriculum by emphasizing its effectiveness in preparing students for their academic journey and future endeavours. They perceive the curriculum as providing students with a strong foundation of knowledge and skills that will serve them well beyond their current studies. These teachers appreciate the focus on practical skills and real-world application, allowing students to be better equipped for higher education and life after school. This optimistic perspective is reflected in the following statements from one of the participants:

"And then when the new curriculum started, because I majored in Economics and Geography, I took over Economics when it was first introduced in this school in 2000... it's helping the learners when they are leaving the school for tertiary institution because the objectives that they are learning now in the new curriculum is also a great help when they go to the university." - (Teacher E)

Additionally, some teachers highlighted the role of this new curriculum in fostering entrepreneurship skills among students. They perceive the curriculum as a catalyst for nurturing students' ability to think innovatively, take calculated risks, and develop practical business acumen. For example, Teacher A and HoD B made this clear in their submissions:

"The curriculum focuses more on the practical side of the content. The learners are exposed to a lot of practical business activities and tasks that allow them to apply what they learn in real-world scenarios... It encourages them to think critically, solve

problems, and develop their entrepreneurship skills." - (Teacher A)

"We are only having entrepreneurship. So, for Entrepreneurship, for me, the curriculum, the new curriculum is good because it exposed the learners on how to start their own business... It gives them the room on how to create or how to come up with their own business." - (HOD B)

Figure 4-1 presents an overview of the sub-themes on the positive views shared by the participants on the new commerce curriculum for Grade 10 – 11 in Namibia. Their observations underscored that the new curriculum has the potential to equip students for the future, impart valuable entrepreneurial skills, revamp content to remain relevant, and adapt to the evolving times.

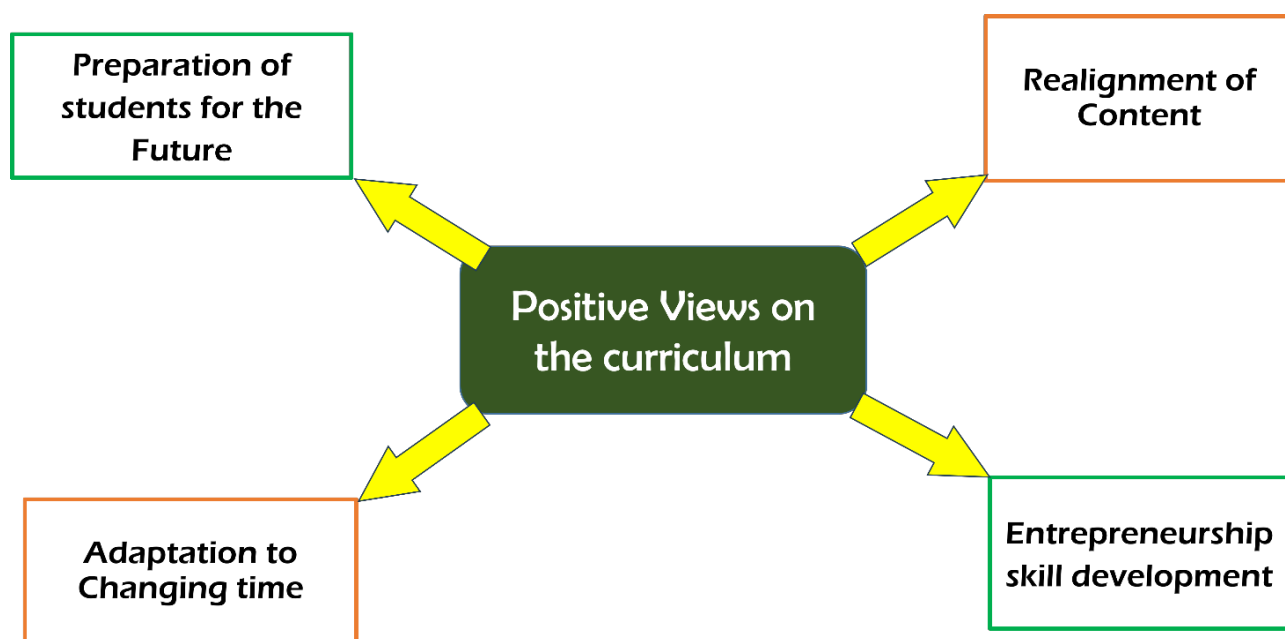


Figure 4-1: Positive views shared by the participants on the new commerce curriculum.

4.4.2 Negative views on the curriculum

Some teachers express a negative view about the implementation of the new curriculum, particularly highlighting the lack of proper training provided to teachers. These teachers feel that they were not adequately prepared to effectively deliver the new curriculum, leading to challenges in lesson planning, content delivery, and meeting the demands of the curriculum. For example, Teacher C, a qualified commerce teacher, conveyed a concern with a candid statement,

"I don't think teachers were ready for that because there was not enough training which was given to the teachers."

Teacher C stressed the inadequacy of the one-week training session and its impact on teachers' readiness. His words reflected the broader sentiment among educators who believed that a mere one-week workshop fell short in preparing them to effectively teach and guide students through the intricacies of the new curriculum.

Also, there was clear frustration on the part of the educators for not receiving adequate teaching resources in terms of textbook during and after the workshop, which would have been a systematic material to follow, rather they received handouts, snippets, and fragments from various sources. Teacher C, painted a vivid picture of the challenges they faced that:

"We were given handouts which were collected from different business studies books. And some of the information which were on the handout were not relevant, but some are relevant."

The HoD A further described the challenge of the availability of textbooks in this quote that:

"The challenges we have is just about the textbooks. Textbooks have a lot of errors

and also, we have a shortage of textbooks in different subjects. Ah, as we are speaking right now, economics and business studies we have textbooks even though not enough but in accounting we don't have in the school, but the textbook is there only that the school did not acquire because they are very expensive and they region did not give the school. So now the problem we are facing just about the textbook those are challenges we have and we are trying to overcome them”.

Teacher D stated that the resources they were provided contained typographical errors that disrupted the flow of learning. The textbooks, intended to be a beacon of guidance, had become a source of confusion and uncertainty:

“We just found out that the books were not really up to date. Additional to the fact that they were not really addressing the syllabus as it is. We also found that there were a lot of typing errors in the textbook”.

Some of the teachers had reservations about the curriculum change process and its implications.

Teacher C shared concerns about the timing and preparation for the new curriculum, stating that:

"The new curriculum, I think it came at the time when we did not have books, the curriculum was introduced but planners did not think about the resources to be used by both teachers and learners at the same time."

Teacher E highlighted the challenges that arise with curriculum changes, especially in terms of content breadth, noting that,

"The content, like I said earlier, the old curriculum content is too short and narrow,

the new curriculum is too broad and some added topics also that require you to tackle them with time and time is limited."

This perspective sheds light on the struggle teachers face when trying to cover extensive content within a limited timeframe.

Several teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of teacher involvement in the development of the new curriculum. Teacher C lamented the absence of teacher input in the curriculum development process, stating that,

"The curriculum was introduced but planners did not think about the resources to be used by both teachers and learners at the same time."

This lack of consideration for teachers' input was evident in the challenges they faced when the new curriculum was implemented.

Teacher D echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of teacher consultation in curriculum development. They stated that,

"Teachers need to be consulted to be part of curriculum changes because they are the ones at the forefront. They are the ones that are in the classrooms that are teaching."

This educator emphasized that teachers' insights are essential for shaping a curriculum that effectively meets learners' needs and aligns with teaching realities.

Figure 4-2 presents a summary of the sub-themes on the negative views shared by the participants on the new commerce curriculum for Grade 10 – 11 in Namibia. Their remarks emphasized that upon

the introduction of the new curriculum, there was a lack of proper teacher training, insufficient teaching resources, exclusion of teachers from the curriculum development process, and inadequacies in the curriculum change process.

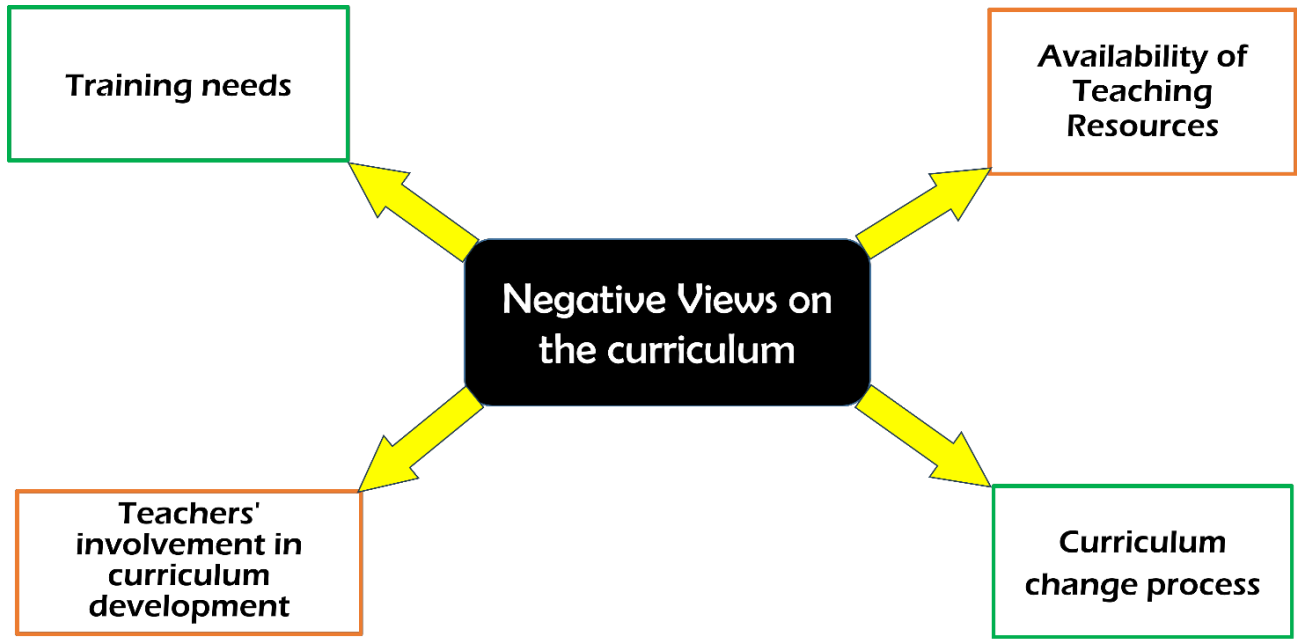


Figure 4-2: Negative views shared by the participants on the new commerce curriculum.

4.5 Significant differences between the old and the new commerce curriculum

The old commerce learning areas were such that entrepreneurial training ends in Grade 10, Business Studies and Economics only began in Grade 11 respectively (MoEAC, 2010). The revised commerce learning area comprises entrepreneurial skills integrated in the subjects Home Ecology, Elementary Agriculture and Design and Technology in Grades 4-7, and the subjects Entrepreneurship (Grades 8-12), Accounting (Grades 8-12), Business Studies (Grades 10-12), Economics (Grades 10-12), and Office Practice (Grades 8-11) (MoEAC, 2016). In this study, the following four subjects within the commerce learning areas were analyzed: Accounting, Business studies, Economics and Entrepreneurship.

An examination of both the old and new commerce curricula was conducted to pinpoint their key distinctions. These differences have been categorized and elaborated upon under the following sub-themes: a) Policy Goals and Objectives; b) Curriculum Content; c) Expected learning outcomes; and d) Assessment criteria. The details for each are presented as follows:

4.5.1 Policy Goals and Objectives

Both the old and new accounting curricula in Namibia share explicit objectives such as understanding accounting principles, using accounting for decision-making, and recognizing the impact of computers on accounting. The new curriculum adds details on guided learning hours, prior learning, progression opportunities, and support materials, providing a more structured framework. Implicitly, both curricula emphasize essential skills like communication, numeracy, problem-solving, and critical thinking, and address global issues like AIDS, global warming, and technological changes. The new curriculum enhances these by promoting learner-centered education, lifelong learning, and respect for human rights within a multicultural context, aligning more closely with national educational priorities and better preparing learners for further education and employment.

The old and new Business Studies curricula share several similarities in their policy goals and objectives, such as developing learners' understanding of the business environment, critical thinking, communication, numeracy, problem-solving, and self-management skills. Both curricula aim to foster entrepreneurial skills, promote respect for human rights, and raise awareness of global issues like the AIDS pandemic and environmental degradation. They align with Namibia's broader educational priorities, emphasizing learner-centered education and preparing learners for employment or further education. However, the new curriculum provides more explicit guidance on prior learning and

progression pathways, reflecting a structured approach to educational advancement. It also places a greater emphasis on innovation and societal participation, aligning more closely with the National Curriculum for Basic Education (NCBE) and incorporating lifelong learning and non-formal education stages, highlighting a holistic approach to business education.

The old and new Namibian Economics curricula share explicit objectives such as developing understanding of economic principles, numeracy, data handling, and the application of economic analysis, while fostering decision-making skills and awareness of global issues like HIV/AIDS and environmental impact. Both emphasize essential skills like communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking within a multilingual, multicultural context. The new curriculum enhances this framework by detailing guided learning hours, prior learning expectations, progression opportunities, and support materials, aligning more closely with learner-centered education and lifelong learning principles, and better preparing students for further education and employment.

Both the old and new Namibian Entrepreneurship curricula aim to develop entrepreneurial skills, positive work attitudes, and self-employment capabilities among learners, addressing the national needs and fostering economic contribution. They share objectives like promoting awareness of global issues, human rights, and environmental sustainability, while emphasizing essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, and self-management. The new curriculum adds a focus on creative thinking, effective links with the business community, and confidence in idea generation. Additionally, it specifies guided learning hours, prior learning expectations, progression opportunities, and support materials, enhancing the structured approach to entrepreneurship education.

4.5.2 Curriculum content

Table 4-1 provides an in-depth comparison of the content within the Accounting subject as it appears in both the old and new commerce curricula. These contents have been organized into four overarching themes: *Basic accounting systems, Preparation and principles of financial statements, Preparation of other categories of accounting statements, and Interpretation of accounting statements*. However, it is crucial to note a significant alteration in the new curriculum, where certain units, such as the *Introduction to close corporations* and *Non-profit making organizations*, have been intentionally excluded and instead placed at the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level. This shift reflects a structural change in the curriculum's organization and focus.

Table 4-1: Accounting learning content for the old and new curricula (MoE,2010 and MoEAC, 2016)

Commerce Subjects	Old Curriculum	New Curriculum
Accounting	<p style="text-align: center;">THEME 1: BASIC ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS</p> <p>Unit 1: Basic principles of accounting</p> <p>Unit 2: Subsidiary books</p> <p>Unit 3: Verification of accounting records</p> <p>Unit 4: Accounting principles</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 2: PREPARATION AND PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</p> <p>Unit 1: Accounts of the sole trader Unit 2: Adjustments in the accounts Unit 3: Partnership</p> <p><i>Unit 4: Introduction to close corporations</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 3:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THEME 1: BASIC ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS</p> <p>Unit 1: Basic principles of accounting</p> <p>Unit 2: Books of first entry/Subsidiary books</p> <p>Unit 3: Verification of Accounting records</p> <p>Unit 4: Accounting principles</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 2: PREPARATION AND PRINCIPLES OF FINAL ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</p> <p>Unit 1: Adjustments in the accounts</p> <p>Unit 2: Final accounts and financial statements of sole traders</p> <p>Unit 3: Partnerships</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 3: PREPARATION</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">PREPARATION OF OTHER FORMS OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS</p> <p>Unit 1: Manufacturing accounts Unit 2: Single entry and incomplete records <i>Unit 3: Non-profit making organisations</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 4: INTERPRETATION OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS</p> <p>Unit 1: Ratios and interpretation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">OF OTHER FORMS OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS</p> <p>Unit 1: Manufacturing businesses Unit 2: Single entry and incomplete records</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 4: INTERPRETATION OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS</p> <p>Unit 1: Ratios and interpretation</p>
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Also, in Table 4-2, illustrates a comprehensive comparison of the content found in the Business Studies

subject within the commerce curriculum, highlighting the differences between the old and new versions. In the previous curriculum, the content was structured around six distinct themes, namely:

Why is business activity needed? How is business activity organised and financed? What is work like? What is produced and why? Why and how do the government and the community influence business activity? and Entrepreneurship? Notably, the unit on Entrepreneurship has been omitted from the new curriculum. This decision stems from the introduction of a dedicated subject that comprehensively covers entrepreneurial principles.

Table 4-2: Business studies learning content for the old and new curricula (MoE, 2010 and MoEAC, 2016)

Commerce Subjects	Old Curriculum	New Curriculum
Business Studies	<p style="text-align: center;">THEME 1: WHY IS BUSINESS ACTIVITY NEEDED?</p> <p>Unit 1: The nature and purpose of economic activity <i>Unit 2: Economic systems</i> Unit 3: Types of business activity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 2: HOW IS BUSINESS ACTIVITY ORGANISED AND FINANCED?</p> <p><i>Unit 1: Ways of organizing business activity: the public and private sectors</i> Unit 2: Forms of business organizations Unit 3: Organizational structures, by level and function Unit 4: Finance in the private/public sector, meeting targets, raising finance. Unit 5: The accounting function, planning and controlling business activity. Unit 6: Management of business. Unit 7: Communications.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THEME 1: WHY IS BUSINESS ACTIVITY NEEDED?</p> <p>Unit 1: The nature and purpose of economic activity Unit 2: Types of business activity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 2: HOW IS BUSINESS ACTIVITY ORGANISED AND FINANCED?</p> <p>Unit 1: Forms of business organizations Unit 2: Organizational structures, by level and function. Unit 3: Finance in the private/public sector, meeting targets, raising finance. Unit 4: The accounting function, planning and controlling business activity. Unit 5: Management of business. Unit 6: Communications.</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">THEME 3: WHAT IS WORK LIKE?</p> <p>Unit 1: Why work? Needs of the Individual</p> <p>Unit 2: Rewards for work</p> <p>Unit 3: Groups and relationships</p> <p>Unit 4: Formal representation and participation.</p> <p>Unit 5: Recruitment, training and human resources.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 4: WHAT IS PRODUCED AND WHY?</p> <p>Unit 1: The market and marketing.</p> <p>Unit 2: Market research.</p> <p>Unit 3: The marketing mix: product and packaging, price, promotion, distribution.</p> <p>Unit 4: Deciding on the scale of operations, and location.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 5: WHY AND HOW DO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY INFLUENCE BUSINESS ACTIVITY?</p> <p>Unit 1: The reasons for regulation of business activity.</p> <p>Unit 2: Aiding and influencing the producer.</p> <p>Unit 3: Aiding and protecting the employee.</p> <p>Unit 4: Persuading and protecting the consumers and providers of capital.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THEME 3: WHAT IS WORK LIKE?</p> <p>Unit 1: Why work? Needs of the Individual</p> <p>Unit 2: Rewards for work</p> <p>Unit 3: Groups and relationships</p> <p>Unit 4: Formal representation and participation.</p> <p>Unit 5: Recruitment, training and human resources.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 4: WHAT IS PRODUCED AND WHY?</p> <p>Unit 1: The market and marketing.</p> <p>Unit 2: Market research.</p> <p><i>Unit 3: Business plan.</i></p> <p>Unit 4: The marketing mix: product and packaging, price, promotion, distribution.</p> <p>Unit 5: Deciding on the scale of operations, and location.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEME 5: WHY AND HOW DO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY INFLUENCE BUSINESS ACTIVITY?</p> <p>Unit 1: The reasons for regulation of business activity.</p> <p>Unit 2: Aiding and influencing the producer.</p> <p>Unit 3: Aiding and protecting the employee.</p> <p>Unit 4: Persuading and protecting the consumers and providers of capital.</p>
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	<p><i>THEME 6: ENTREPRENEURSHIP?</i> <i>Unit 1: What is an entrepreneur?</i> <i>Unit 2: Types of enterprises.</i> <i>Unit 3: A business plan.</i></p>	
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Teacher B remarked that:

“The content, like I said earlier. There was some new content in the grade 10 -11 syllabus that was moved from the Junior Secondary. Also, some contents were moved from the Senior Secondary grade ten to eleven to AS level. So those were the changes when it comes to content and the learning objectives”.

Teacher D, who teaches Accounting in one of the schools, elaborated on the content differences, explaining that,

"With the content, I would say, it's more or less compacted now because what we used to teach over three years, we are expected more or less to cover it in two years such that some of the subject contents that used to be required for the next level are even removed just of the reduction of the number of years at senior secondary phase. Remember in the past we used to have grades 10, 11 and 12 senior secondary phase. Now the senior secondary phase, we only have grade ten and eleven such that one year is down and of course it's making it difficult for one to master everything."

This highlighted the teachers' understanding of the need to condense and reorganize the learning content to fit within the constraints of the new curriculum's timeline.

Tables 4-3 and 4-4 illustrate the old and new curricula for the Economics and Entrepreneurship

subjects. The learning contents have remained relatively unchanged during the transition from the old to the new curriculum. It continues to encompass nine core themes that provide students with a deep understanding of economic principles, ranging from microeconomics to macroeconomics, while, the Entrepreneurship structured around two fundamental themes that equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to explore the world of entrepreneurship. However, it is crucial to note that the old curriculum primarily targeted Grade 11–12 students. In contrast, the new curriculum has been realigned for Grade 10–11 students.

Table 4-3: Economics learning content for the old and new curricula (MoE, 2010 and MoEAC, 2016)

Commerce Subjects	Old Curriculum	New Curriculum
Economics	<p>The content is divided into nine themes and different units and these are:</p> <p>THEME 1: What is Economics? Unit 1: Basic economic problem: scarcity and exercise of choice Unit 2: Types of economic systems and economic resources. Unit 3: Specialisation and division of labour.</p> <p>THEME 2: Nature and functions of organisations and financial institutions Unit 1: Business organisations Unit 2: Trade unions and employer association Unit 3: Financial institutions</p> <p>THEME 3: The market Unit 1: What is a</p>	<p>The content is divided into nine themes and different units and these are:</p> <p>THEME 1: What is Economics? Unit 1: Basic economic problem: scarcity and exercise of choice Unit 2: Types of economic systems and economic resources. Unit 3: Specialisation and division of labour.</p> <p>THEME 2: Nature and functions of organisations and financial institutions Unit 1: Business organisations Unit 2: Trade unions and employer association Unit 3: Financial institutions</p> <p>THEME 3: The market Unit 1: What is a</p>

	<p>market? Unit 2: Market forces. Unit 3: Price elasticity Unit 4: Advertising Unit 5: Policies</p> <p>THEME 4: Occupation, income and expenditure of individuals</p> <p>Unit 1: Occupational choices Unit 2: Earnings. Unit 3: Expenditure</p>	<p>market? Unit 2: Market forces. Unit 3: Price elasticity Unit 4: Advertising Unit 5: Policies</p> <p>THEME 4: Occupation, income and expenditure of individuals</p> <p>Unit 1: Occupational choices Unit 2: Earnings. Unit 3: Expenditure</p>
	<p>THEME 5: Production Unit 1: The private firm as producer and employer. Unit 2: Productivity. Unit 3: Production costs and revenues Unit 4: Economies and diseconomies of scale.</p> <p>THEME 6: Role of Government in an economy Unit 1: Government as producer and employer. Unit 2: Government economic policies. Unit 3: Government control.</p> <p>THEME 7: Main economic indicators Unit 1: Prices. Unit 2: Employment. Unit 3: Output Unit 4: International trade</p> <p>THEME 8: Developed and</p>	<p>THEME 5: Production Unit 1: The private firm as producer and employer. Unit 2: Productivity. Unit 3: Production costs and revenues Unit 4: Economies and diseconomies of scale.</p> <p>THEME 6: Role of Government in an economy Unit 1: Government as producer and employer. Unit 2: Government economic policies. Unit 3: Government control.</p> <p>THEME 7: Main economic indicators Unit 1: Prices. Unit 2: Employment. Unit 3: Output Unit 4: International trade</p> <p>THEME 8: Developed and developing economies.</p>

	<p>developing economies.</p> <p>Unit 1: Population. Unit 2: Living standards.</p> <p>THEME 9: Conflicts of interest Unit 1: Conflicts</p>	<p>Unit 1: Population. Unit 2: Living standards.</p> <p>THEME 9: Conflicts of interest Unit 1: Conflicts</p>
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Teacher A, when discussing the new curriculum, remarked that,

“For content, mostly the content is not too much difference. It's almost the same. Just little things were added here and there for the assessment”.

Table 4-4: Entrepreneurship learning content for the old and new curricula (MoE, 2010 and MoEAC, 2016)

Commerce Subjects	Old Curriculum	New Curriculum
Entrepreneurship	<p>The content is divided into two broad themes:</p> <p>THEME 1: Introduction to Entrepreneurship Unit 1: The concept of Entrepreneurship Unit 2: The Model of Entrepreneurship</p> <p>THEME 2: Application of this Model of Entrepreneurship Unit 1: Idea generation - recognition of opportunities and generation of enterprise ideas Unit 2: Research and market research – conducting research. Unit 3: Finance – obtaining capital. Unit 4: Legal requirements - complying with legal requirements. Unit 5: Running the enterprise.</p>	<p>The content is divided into two broad themes:</p> <p>THEME 1: Introduction to Entrepreneurship Unit 1: The concept of Entrepreneurship Unit 2: The Model of Entrepreneurship</p> <p>THEME 2: Application of this Model of Entrepreneurship Unit 1: Idea generation - recognition of opportunities and generation of enterprise ideas Unit 2: Research and market research – conducting research. Unit 3: Finance – obtaining capital. Unit 4: Legal requirements - complying with legal requirements. Unit 5: Running the enterprise.</p>

Teacher C discussed how the new curriculum has affected the content of the subjects, stating,

"Grade 10 - 11 the content is almost the same as the old curriculum. However, when it comes to lesson presentation, there are slight differences and when it comes the learning objectives, they are almost the same as the old curriculum ones."

This suggested that while some core content remained similar, there were changes in the approach to presenting the material.

In other view, the HoDs also shared their insights into the content differences. HoD A mentioned, *"The new curriculum is broad compared to the old curriculum. Even the assessment objectives and the assessment criteria are different."*

HoD B echoed this sentiment, noting that,

"The new curriculum is broad, and the assessment has also changed."

Teacher E added to the conversation by noting that,

"The new curriculum is too broad and has added topics that require learners to research and use different learning materials."

This observation pointed to the introduction of new topics that demand a broader understanding of concepts and skills.

Collectively, these teachers and HoDs conveyed their recognition of the significant differences in learning content between the old and new commerce curriculum. The teachers identified a broader scope, additional topics, and a need for learners to engage with research and a wider variety of

learning materials. The HoDs concurred, emphasizing the broadened curriculum and its implications for both learners and teachers.

4.5.3 Expected learning outcomes

The new commerce curriculum brings substantial changes in learning content compared to the old curriculum. It is notably broader and covers more topics, demanding increased depth of understanding from learners. This shift has led to adjustments in lesson presentation while maintaining some similarity in core content. In addition, the assessment objectives and criteria have evolved in tandem with the curriculum changes. Teachers and HoDs alike recognize the need to condense content due to the reduced timeframe, emphasizing the curriculum's comprehensive nature. Moreover, the new curriculum introduces additional topics that necessitate research and the use of diverse learning materials, enhancing the learning experience for students.

Teacher A, when discussing the new curriculum, remarked that, *"The new curriculum is broad. They are expecting more from the learners."* This sentiment was echoed by Teacher B, who added that, *"The new curriculum is broad compared to the old curriculum. There are more topics now."*

Teacher C discussed how the new curriculum has affected the content of the subjects, stating that, *"Grade 10 - 11 the content is almost the same as the old curriculum. However, when it comes to lesson presentation, there are slight differences."* This suggested that while some core content remained similar, there were changes in the approach to presenting the material.

The HoDs also shared their insights into the content differences. HoD A mentioned that, *"The new*

curriculum is broad compared to the old curriculum. Even the assessment objectives and the assessment criteria are different." HoD B echoed this sentiment, noting that, *"The new curriculum is broad, and the assessment has also changed."*

Teacher D elaborated on the content differences, explaining that, *"With the content, I would say, it's more or less compacted now because what we used to teach over three years, we are expected more or less to cover it in two years."* This highlighted the educators' understanding of the need to condense and reorganize the learning content to fit within the constraints of the new curriculum's timeline.

Teacher E added to the conversation by noting that, *"The new curriculum is too broad and has added topics that require learners to research and use different learning materials."* This observation pointed to the introduction of new topics that demand a broader understanding of concepts and skills.

Teachers and HoDs collectively acknowledged the substantial disparities in learning content between the old and new commerce curriculum. Their insights converged on the curriculum's expanded scope, the introduction of supplementary topics, and the requirement for learners to delve into research and utilize a more extensive array of learning resources. The HoDs' concurrence underscored the breadth of the new curriculum and the resulting implications for both students and teachers alike.

4.5.4 The assessment criteria

A detailed examination of the old and new commerce curricula reveals a shared set of assessment objectives. These encompass, *Knowledge with understanding, Application, Analysis and evaluation*, as well as *Judgement and decision making*. Teachers are entrusted with the responsibility of evaluating

learners' proficiency across these four fundamental assessment objectives. Nevertheless, a critical distinction emerges in terms of assessment focus between the old and new curricula.

In the old curriculum, the predominant emphasis on Knowledge with understanding reflected the educational priorities of that era (see Table 4-5). Students were expected to acquire a solid foundation of factual knowledge and conceptual understanding. Consequently, assessments predominantly revolved around testing students' ability to recall and comprehend information.

Table 4-5: Accounting assessment objectives and components of the scheme of assessment for the old curriculum (MoE, 2010)

Assessment Objectives	Paper 1 - Marks	Paper 2 - Marks	Weighting of Assessment objectives
A) Knowledge with Understanding	60	20	40 %
B) Application	20	50	35 %
C) Analysis and Evaluation	20	20	20 %
D) Judgement and Decision Making		10	5 %
Total	100	100	100 %
Weighting	50 %	50 %	

However, the emergence of the new commerce curriculum marked a shift in pedagogical paradigms. While knowledge with understanding remains a crucial component, the curriculum now places a more significant emphasis on Application (see Table 4-6). This implies that students are not merely expected to amass knowledge, but to actively employ it in practical scenarios. This shift aligns with modern educational philosophies that emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving, and the real-world application of knowledge.

In the old accounting assessment practice, student learning is assessed across four distinct objectives: Knowledge with Understanding, Application, Analysis and Evaluation, and Judgement and Decision Making. Each objective is weighted differently across Paper 1 and Paper 2, reflecting a balanced approach to testing foundational knowledge and higher-order skills like analysis and decision-making. The assessment is structured to include both basic principles and advanced financial and management accounting practices, aiming to ensure comprehensive skill development and understanding. In contrast, the new assessment practice maintains similar objectives but adjusts the weighting and distribution of marks between Paper 1 and Paper 2. It places greater emphasis on application skills in Paper 2, reflecting a shift towards practical accounting scenarios and a deeper integration of real-world business needs. Both frameworks aim to evaluate learners' abilities in applying accounting principles, interpreting financial data, and making informed judgments, albeit with nuanced differences in emphasis and approach to reflecting contemporary accounting practices and educational standards.

Table 4-6: Accounting assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment for the old curriculum (MoE, 2016)

Assessment objectives	Paper 1 - marks	Paper 2 - marks	Weighting of assessment objectives
A) Knowledge with understanding	60	20	40 %
B) Application	20	65	42,5 %
C) Analysis and evaluation	20	10	15 %
D) Judgement and decision making		5	2,5 %
Total	100	100	100 %
Weighting	50 %	50 %	

The teachers and HoDs emphasized the notable differences in assessment between the old and new commerce curriculum, highlighting changes in assessment objectives and strategies.

Teacher A expressed that, *"In terms of assessment, there have been changes. The assessment objectives have changed. Now we are using different criteria like knowledge, analysis, application, and evaluation."*

This pointed to the shift from traditional assessment objectives to a more comprehensive set of criteria that required learners to demonstrate a broader range of skills.

Teacher B echoed this sentiment, stating that, *"Assessment has changed greatly. We are more onto analysis, unlike in the past where we used to have also a lot about recording and subject knowledge."* The educator recognized that the assessment focus had shifted towards analysis, reflecting the higher- order thinking skills required by the new curriculum.

HoD A provided insight into the assessment changes, noting that, *"The assessment objectives and the assessment criteria are different now in the new curriculum. There's a greater emphasis on analysis and application."* This emphasized the educators' awareness of the increased emphasis on critical thinking and application skills in the new assessment approach.

Teacher D offered further perspective, saying that , *"With grade 10 we have four assessment objectives. With grade eleven, we still have four assessment objectives. But the way that the learners need to respond to these learning objectives is different, especially with AS. If assessment objectives ask learners to evaluate, then the learners are supposed to write almost like in long answers, defending their answers, analyzing, applying all those things."* This quote underscored the educators' understanding of the nuanced differences in assessment expectations across different grades and objectives.

In the old business studies assessment framework, student learning is evaluated through four primary objectives: Knowledge with Understanding, Application, Analysis, and Judgement and Decision Making. Each objective is distinct in its focus, with assessments structured across two papers to balance knowledge recall (Paper 1) and application of concepts to business scenarios (Paper 2). Weighting is evenly distributed between the papers, emphasizing a comprehensive understanding of business theories and practical skills in analysis and decision-making. In contrast, the new assessment framework maintains similar objectives but adjusts the distribution of marks between papers to reflect a greater emphasis on applied learning and evaluation of business theories in real-world contexts. This shift is evident in Paper 2's focus on case studies and the inclusion of an Evaluation objective, highlighting a contemporary approach to assessing students' ability to critically assess business situations and communicate reasoned judgments effectively. Both frameworks aim to ensure a well-rounded evaluation of students' knowledge, skills, and application abilities in business studies, albeit with nuanced differences in emphasis and assessment structure to align with evolving educational standards and industry relevance.

In the old Economics assessment framework, student learning is assessed through a comprehensive approach that spans four distinct objectives: Knowledge with Understanding, Application and Analysis, Evaluation and Decision Making, and Investigation. Assessment tasks include a mix of short-answer questions and structured scenarios aimed at testing knowledge recall, analytical skills in interpreting economic data, and the ability to make informed judgments and recommendations. This framework places a balanced emphasis on theoretical understanding and practical application, ensuring students demonstrate proficiency across various dimensions of economic study. In contrast, the new Economics assessment framework maintains these core objectives but refines the assessment structure to emphasize deeper analysis and critical evaluation. It incorporates more nuanced evaluation tasks in both papers,

encouraging students to not only apply economic theories but also to critically assess their implications and propose solutions based on complex economic scenarios. This shift reflects a heightened focus on higher-order thinking skills and practical decision-making abilities, aiming to better prepare students for real-world economic challenges and decision contexts.

In the old Entrepreneurship assessment framework, student learning is assessed through a structured approach focusing on four distinct objectives: Knowledge with Understanding, Application, Investigation, Analysis and Evaluation, and Judgement and Decision Making. Assessment tasks include a combination of written papers and coursework, which require students to demonstrate knowledge recall, apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios, conduct detailed analyses, and make informed judgments with recommendations. This framework emphasizes a holistic evaluation of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge across various dimensions, encouraging practical application and critical thinking.

In contrast, the new Entrepreneurship assessment framework maintains similar objectives but places a stronger emphasis on deeper analysis, evaluation, and decision-making skills. It integrates updated assessment techniques, including case studies and a portfolio of evidence-based coursework, designed to assess students' ability to apply entrepreneurial knowledge effectively and evaluate the broader implications of business decisions. This shift reflects a modernized approach that aligns closely with real-world entrepreneurial challenges, aiming to develop students' readiness for practical business environments and innovative thinking.

4.6 Effective strategies for implementation of the new curriculum

In addition to sharing their perspectives on the new commerce curriculum, teachers and HoDs also put forward valuable strategies aimed at ensuring the successful implementation of the curriculum changes, aligning it with its intended objectives. These strategies are organized and explained within the following subcategories: *a) Teachers' involvement in curriculum development; b) Training of*

Teachers; c) Provision of teaching and learning materials; d) Provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs; and e) Provision on Onsite support. The specifics for each of these strategies are presented below:

4.6.1 Teachers' involvement in curriculum development

Teachers who participated in this study shared that they were not involved in the curriculum development process. This lack of consultation posed a significant challenge for them when it came to implementing a change, they had no role in shaping. For example, Teacher A stated that,

“ I think this is a very important thing since teachers are the implementers of the curriculum. So, I really feel that they should also be part of the planning or whatever change in the curriculum that should be done. Teachers should form part of it because they are the ones who want to implement it. So, if they're not part of the planning or the curriculum changes, it's not fair since they are the one who's going to implement. So, they should be part of it and they should give their views. They should be trained. So I feel they should form really part of the curriculum change”.

In addition, Teacher B stated that,

“ The teachers being consulted on the curriculum development, it will be best because the teachers are the people at ground. They are the one implementing the syllabus, so they really need to give their views”.

Teacher C also alluded that,

“ I think consulting teachers would be a blessing to the new curriculum. Teachers are drivers when it comes to curriculum implementation. So that's why I feel if teachers have to be consulted to be included or consulted, then everything will be easier”.

HoD B, in agreement stated that,

“That teachers should be part of those that create new yes, teacher should be part of the curriculum development in order to give their views. So for them to put what is necessary, needed because they are the one at the ground”

4.6.2 Training of Teachers

Another effective strategy shared by the participants is the need for training teachers, who are the implementers of curriculum changes. Both teachers and HoDs emphasized the critical importance of teacher training as an effective strategy for successfully implementing the new curriculum. They expressed concerns about the adequacy and duration of training, highlighting the need for comprehensive and ongoing professional development for teachers.

Teacher A remarked on this point that;

“Maybe by training teachers more so that teachers, especially the new ones that are coming in, at least they have understanding, especially when it comes to assessment criteria. As I said, the assessment criteria have changed much. So I think teachers need to be really trained on how to assess learners, also how to teach learners the assessment criteria, because you find that they are losing marks at the National Marking because of that, because of the lack of knowledge on how they will be assessed or the assessment criteria. I think teachers should be trained more so that they help their learners.”

Teacher B in support of the need for training stated that;

“So they should do more of the trainings for those teachers and also the universities, I feel like they should also revise their curriculum to consider the new curriculum at school level because those teachers, they were only taught the old

curriculum, so they might think it's still the same thing”.

Teacher C also emphasized the importance of teachers’ training by saying that,

“ I think the first improvement will come when they involve all the stakeholders and the second one, it will be improved if they get training, if teachers get training, enough training which will help them to present their content”.

4.6.3 Provision of teaching and learning materials

Teachers and HoDs expressed the critical importance of providing adequate teaching and learning materials for the successful implementation of the new curriculum. They highlighted the challenges they faced when lacking essential resources like textbooks and supplementary materials. For example, Teacher B emphasized the need for adequate teaching materials, stating that,

“ Yeah, number one was the lack of textbooks since when we order the textbooks they don't come on time they are never enough so we do not have enough textbooks for every learner”.

Teacher E echoed this concern, saying that,

“Another challenge is also lack of learning materials like textbooks where you see textbooks but hence the textbooks are not enough or not sufficient for all the learners, for Learners need to share and all that. They need to supply enough or adequate materials to schools so that learners can use during their spare time and during lesson presentation. Like enough textbooks learners need to have so that they can study on time. They need to bring other teaching AIDS for the learners to be exposed to different learning material. Like I said, TV and computers. I think too much because then the learners will hear from the teacher in class and then they will hear from somebody else”.

HoD A also stressed the significance of teaching materials stating, *“Yeah, the support that we need so far just to get enough textbooks”*.

While, HoD B supported this view, saying,

“Okay, the challenges that we are having is textbook we don't have enough textbook especially for grade ten to eleven the learners are sharing. You might find that the learners are sharing three textbooks or sometimes two. But they are just not enough. They are not enough because there are some grades without textbook. They are just writing summaries. That is the big challenge we are having because during the introduction we only received few or few textbook”.

4.6.4 Provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs

The teachers and HoDs emphasized the need for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs for teachers to effectively implement the new curriculum. They highlighted challenges related to the lack of training and resources and stressed the importance of regular workshops and training opportunities to support teachers in delivering the new curriculum effectively.

Teacher B encourages the government to pay more attention to CPD programs, aimed at training teachers on how to adapt to changing times and new teaching styles, by stating that,

“Yeah, I believe the ministry of education should do more of the CPDs, such as the training and workshops also, especially for the first time teachers, teachers that were only teaching the junior secondary since those schools were are given also grade ten to eleven....And also maybe training on how we can do this online

teaching just for future purposes in case we have COVID-19 again or problems such as that. It was a challenge, really, to implement the online teaching and all those”.

Teacher E emphasized the importance of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs for teachers in implementing the new curriculum. She highlighted the need for teachers to be regularly trained and updated on the new curriculum's requirements. She stated that,

“It can be improved if teachers who are at the ground of teaching disciplines go for regular workshops. They need to make workshop for teachers to train them. They should bring in the experts to train them...”

4.6.5 Provision of Onsite CPD support

In addition to the government's contributions, including teacher training, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs, learning materials, and teacher consultations, another critical strategy for the effective implementation of the new curriculum is the provision of onsite support in the schools. On-site support involves educational experts or supervisors physically present in schools to assist teachers in the practical application of the new curriculum. It provides practical, real-time assistance and guidance, making the transition to a new curriculum smoother and more effective.

HoD A stated that,

“but the support that we could give to teachers, just the workshop and maybe this thing of to say, when you teach a new curriculum, you have to consult some different resources. We have been checking some additional materials, the school had been buying books so that the teachers can use them as additional materials and guidance and I hope it was well and

went well”.

HoD B supported the assertion on the on-site support by saying that,

“We usually sit and then look at the task together and help each other where we can.. So sometimes he come to me asking for some material to be used for example to order textbook like teachers manual. I do help or I can order without him asking, but I can include him also. So we are helping each other.”

Figure 4-3 presents a concise overview of strategies for successful new curriculum implementation, as suggested by the participants in this study. Their insights highlighted that involving teachers in curriculum development, training them, supplying teaching resources, offering CPD opportunities, and ensuring on-site support collectively facilitate a smoother adoption of the new curriculum, aligning it with the intended objectives set by curriculum developers.

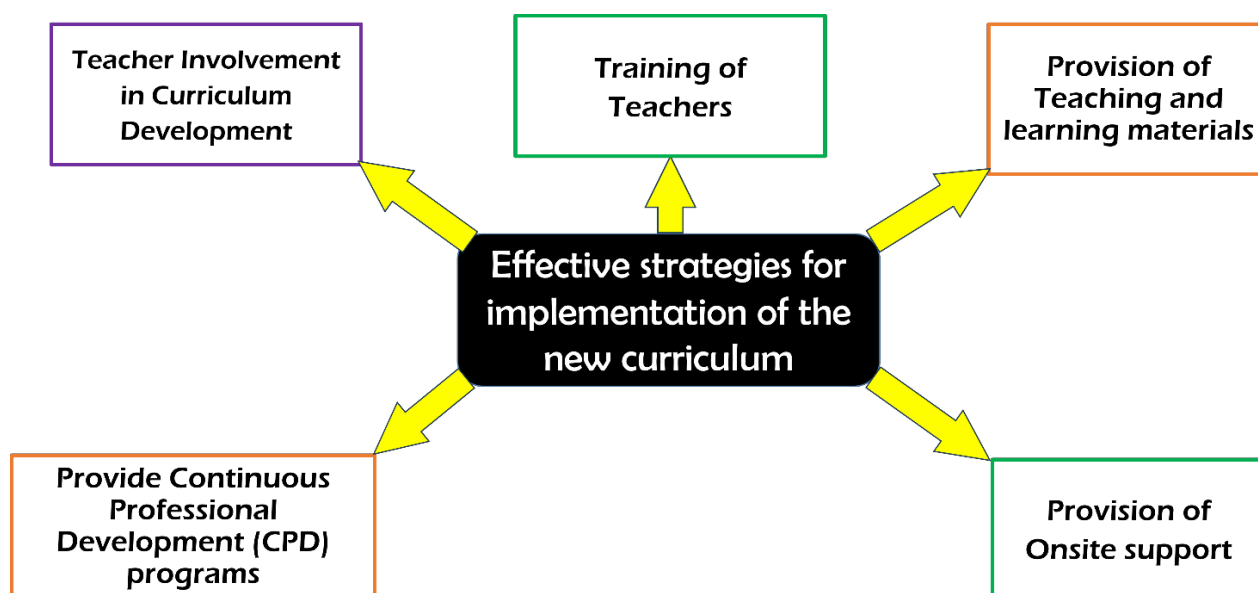


Figure 4-3: Summary of the effective strategies for the implementation of the new curriculum.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings of this study which investigated teachers' perceptions on the new Grade 10 – 11 commerce curricula. There were three themes that emerged from the data collected: *the Teachers' Perceptions on the New Commerce Curriculum, the Significant Differences Between the Old and the New Curriculum and the Effective Strategies for Implementing the New Curriculum*. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the findings of the study that investigated the teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. The discussion focuses mainly on the perceptions of teachers on the new commerce curriculum, the fundamental differences between the old and new commerce curriculum, and the effective strategies for implementation of the new curriculum. Additionally, the research would further link the findings to Taba's model that guided the study.

5.2 Discussion on teachers' perceptions of the new commerce curriculum

The findings of this study highlight that a significant portion of teachers held negative perceptions of the new commerce curriculum. These negative perceptions stem from various factors, including dissatisfaction with the lack of teacher involvement in the curriculum development process, inadequate training provided to teachers, a shortage of essential teaching resources, and the perception that the curriculum change process was overly complex.

These findings are in line with the research conducted by Erss et al. (2016), which also identified that teachers could become overwhelmed by curriculum changes, particularly if they perceive the reforms as intricate or if they feel ill-prepared to implement them. Similarly, Nel et al. (2016) observed that the availability of resources and support plays a pivotal role in shaping teachers' perceptions of curriculum reforms. When resources and support are lacking, teachers may experience frustration and a sense of being unsupported, ultimately leading to a negative outlook on the reforms.

However, it is worth noting that not all researchers share the same perspective. Authors like Khorasgani and Baratali (2019) and Gerrard and Farrell (2014) hold contrary views to the teachers' desire for greater involvement in curriculum development, as expressed in this study. They argue that teachers may lack the necessary expertise, knowledge, and specific training required for effective curriculum development. Consequently, these authors contend that involving teachers in this process could potentially lead to challenges and lengthen the duration of curriculum development efforts.

In addition to the prevailing negative views, some teachers in the study expressed positive perceptions of the new commerce curriculum. They highlighted several beneficial aspects, such as the realignment of content, better preparation of students for their academic journey, the promotion of entrepreneurship skills among students, and the curriculum's adaptability to changing times. These teachers appreciated the inclusion of practical skills with real-world applications within the new curriculum.

These positive sentiments align with the perspective put forth by Oyenekan (2016), who emphasized that a commerce curriculum should be functional, dynamic, and responsive to the evolving needs, interests, challenges, and aspirations of individuals and their society. This perspective underscores the importance of a curriculum that stays relevant and addresses the practical needs of students.

Similarly, Ogwu et al. (2014) stressed the significance of fostering entrepreneurship skills in the curriculum. They pointed out that the failure of curriculum reforms for entrepreneurship education

in Nigeria has resulted in many Nigerian youth lacking the skills required by employers and being ill-equipped for self-employment through entrepreneurship. This underscores the importance of integrating entrepreneurship education into curricula to better prepare students for the challenges of the modern workforce and encourage self-employment opportunities.

In summary, while this study reveals that teachers in Ompundja Circuit, Namibia, have negative perceptions of the new commerce curriculum due to various challenges, the debate over teacher involvement in curriculum development remains multifaceted, with differing viewpoints among teachers and scholars. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that some teachers recognized the positive aspects of the new commerce curriculum, particularly its real-world relevance, better preparation of students, and the promotion of entrepreneurship skills, aligning with the evolving needs of society.

5.3 Discussion on the fundamental difference between the old and new curriculum

The researcher found that there were significant differences between the old and new curricula in terms of content, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria, while analyzing four commerce curricula (Accounting, Business studies, Economics and Entrepreneurship) in this study.

The old curriculum was simpler, emphasizing knowledge acquisition, and had a traditional approach with a narrow focus. In contrast, the new curriculum is more demanding, focusing on practical application, analysis, and evaluation. It covers fewer content themes but has a broader scope to provide a deeper understanding of commerce.

In accounting, a significant alteration in the new curriculum is the intentional exclusion of certain

units, such as the Introduction to Close Corporations and Non-profit making organizations. These units have been placed at the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level, reflecting a structural change in the curriculum's organization and focus.

For the Business Studies subject, the unit on Entrepreneurship has been omitted from the new curriculum. This decision was made due to the introduction of a dedicated subject that comprehensively covers entrepreneurial principles. However, the content for Economics and Entrepreneurship subjects remains relatively unchanged. Economics comprises nine core themes, while Entrepreneurship focuses on two fundamental themes. It is important to note that while the old curriculum primarily targeted Grade 11–12 students, the new curriculum has been realigned for Grade 10–11 students.

The new commerce curriculum brings substantial changes, covering more topics, demanding greater depth of understanding, and requiring research and diverse learning materials. Teachers and HoDs recognize the need to condense content due to the reduced timeframe, emphasizing the curriculum's comprehensiveness. These changes have significant implications for both students and teachers.

The old curriculum primarily focused on imparting knowledge and assessed students' ability to recall facts and concepts. It had a more traditional approach, where students were expected to memorize information and reproduce it in exams. The learning outcomes were centered on knowledge acquisition and understanding of basic principles. In contrast, the new curriculum places a strong emphasis on practical application, analysis, and evaluation of concepts. It goes beyond mere knowledge retention and challenges students to apply their understanding to real-world

scenarios. The learning outcomes are designed to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students.

Under the old curriculum, students were assessed based on their ability to provide correct answers to predefined questions. The assessments primarily measured their knowledge of commerce-related topics. The focus was on right or wrong answers, and there was limited room for creativity or independent thinking. The new curriculum introduces a more diverse set of assessment objectives. It requires students to analyze complex problems, evaluate different solutions, and apply their knowledge to novel situations. The assessments are designed to assess higher-order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Furthermore, the new curriculum encourages students to engage in research, project work, and practical exercises. This approach enables them to explore commerce concepts in-depth and gain practical experience. The learning outcomes aim to produce students who are not only well-informed but also capable of applying their knowledge effectively in various business and economic contexts. Overall, the shift from the old to the new curriculum represents a transition from rote learning to a more holistic and practical approach. It aligns with the goal of preparing students for the demands of the modern economy by equipping them with the skills and competencies needed for success in commerce-related fields.

Table 5-1 provides a summary of the significant differences between the old and new commerce curriculum, combined with the insights from the teachers and HoDs. It reflects their perspectives on the shift in grade levels, changes in content themes, and the altered emphasis in learning outcomes and assessment objectives in the new curriculum.

Table 5-1: The differences between the old and new curriculum

Aspect	Old Curriculum	New Curriculum	Educators' Insights
Grade Levels	Grade 11 - 12	Grade 10 - 11	Educators emphasized the shift to a lower grade level in the new curriculum.
Content Themes	Simplified, emphasizing Knowledge, less practical, more specific and focused	More demanding, more practical, requiring Application, Analysis, and Evaluation, Fewer content themes but broader in scope.	Teachers pointed out that the new curriculum condenses content into fewer, broader themes.
Learning Outcome	Emphasis on foundational knowledge and understanding.	Broadened scope, requiring learners to research and use varied learning materials	Educators stressed that the new curriculum expects more from learners. They mentioned a broader understanding and research needs in the new curriculum.
Assessment Objectives	Predominantly focused on Knowledge with understanding.	Balanced emphasis on Assessment Objectives including Application, Analysis, and Evaluation.	Teachers emphasized the shift towards a balanced approach, including application, analysis, and evaluation in assessments in the new curriculum.

5.3 Discussion on the effective strategies for implementation of the new curriculum

The findings of this study are closely aligned with the perspectives of other authors in the field of curriculum development and educational reform. Participants in this study proposed valuable strategies for the effective implementation of a new curriculum in Namibia's educational system.

One prominent strategy that emerged from the participants' insights was the active involvement of teachers in the curriculum development process. This recommendation resonates with the collaborative model of curriculum development advocated by Alsubaie (2016), which emphasizes the pivotal role of teachers in shaping the curriculum they will subsequently implement in their classrooms. This model not only values teachers' input but also recognizes their significance within the education system. Thorn and Brasche (2015) underscore that the effectiveness of a curriculum depends on teachers' willingness to adopt and utilize it. As Terhart (2013, p.1) aptly states, "You cannot accomplish school reform against the will of the teachers, but only with the teachers." Teachers are more likely to support and engage with changes that they have actively contributed to crafting. Aytaç (2023) further argues that a teacher's interpretation of curriculum reforms acts as a guiding map during the curriculum implementation journey, greatly influencing the success of educational reforms. In essence, teachers' perceptions and beliefs play a central role in the successful implementation of curriculum reforms.

Furthermore, the findings underscored the paramount significance of providing ongoing and comprehensive training for teachers, who play a pivotal role in implementing curriculum changes. The participants emphasized that a one-time or sporadic training approach would be insufficient in building the necessary confidence and competence among teachers to effectively deliver the new curriculum and fulfill the broader objectives of the reform. This perspective aligns closely with Aytaç's viewpoint (2023), which emphasizes that ensuring teachers receive adequate training and ongoing professional development opportunities is crucial for instilling confidence in their ability to adapt to new curricular paradigms. When teachers are well-prepared and equipped to navigate new

instructional methods and content, they are more likely to embrace and view curriculum reforms positively. Nghihalwa (2018) also highlighted the challenges associated with implementing educational reforms, particularly in cases where teachers struggle to adapt to novel pedagogical approaches. Similarly, Leituaso-Mafoa's study in Samoa (2012) revealed that many commerce teachers expressed the need for training specifically related to curriculum materials, encompassing content, pedagogical strategies, and teaching activities. These findings collectively emphasize that providing teachers with ongoing training and access to essential resources is essential for ensuring they feel confident, prepared, and capable of effectively delivering the new curriculum.

Finally, the study's findings underscored the crucial role of providing sufficient teaching and learning materials and resources. As Nel et al. (2016) have previously highlighted, the availability of resources and support can significantly influence teachers' perceptions of curriculum reforms. When these essential components are lacking, teachers may experience frustration and a sense of being unsupported, which can have a detrimental impact on their overall perspective of the reforms. This observation resonates with research conducted in Nigeria, as demonstrated by studies conducted by Edokpolor (2018) and Adeoye & Igbinedion (2018). These studies found that the under-utilization of resources such as field trips and computer-driven simulations hindered the effective instruction of Business Studies in junior secondary school education. Such findings underscore the critical need for educational authorities to ensure the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, as these resources are indispensable for enhancing the teaching and learning experience, particularly within the context of curriculum reforms.

5.4 Linkage between research findings and conceptual framework

The research findings regarding teachers' perceptions of the new commerce curriculum in Namibia align closely with Taba's conceptual model of curriculum development. Taba's model consists of several stages, including diagnosis of needs, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organization of content, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning experiences, determination of what to evaluate, and evaluation. Throughout the study, teachers consistently emphasized the need for their active involvement in the curriculum development process. This aligns with the initial stage of Taba's model, the "Diagnosis of Needs," where educators' perspectives and needs are essential in shaping the curriculum. Dissatisfaction with the lack of participation and training revealed a significant gap in the "Diagnosis of Needs" phase, highlighting the importance of understanding teachers' requirements and concerns.

Furthermore, the research findings shed light on the fundamental differences between the old and new commerce curricula, particularly in terms of content and learning outcomes. The new curriculum's broader scope and emphasis on practical application, analysis, and evaluation mirror the "Selection of Content" and "Organization of Content" stages in Taba's model. This suggests that curriculum developers should carefully select and organize content to meet the evolving needs of both teachers and students, as indicated by the research participants.

Lastly, the study highlighted reported views from participants on strategies they perceived as effective for implementing the new curriculum. These included ongoing teacher training and the provision of onsite support. These perceived strategies align with the later stages in Taba's model, particularly the "Selection of Learning Experiences" and "Evaluation" phases.

Teachers' calls for continuous professional development and onsite support highlight the need for ongoing assessment and adaptation of the curriculum to ensure its successful implementation. In summary, the research findings illustrate the importance of considering Taba's model at various stages of curriculum development, emphasizing the critical role of teachers' perceptions, content differentiation, and effective implementation strategies.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the main findings of this study on teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 commerce curricula. The findings reveal the significance of involving teachers right from the initial stages of curriculum planning, aligning with the principles advocated by Taba's model, which served as the conceptual framework for this investigation. To ensure effective teaching and learning outcomes, comprehensive teacher training across all aspects that are included in the implementation of the new curriculum. Adequate facilities and resources must be readily available prior to curriculum implementation. The next chapter will provide a summary and conclusion of the study, culminating in recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher provides the summary of the findings of the study and conclusion as well as the recommendations based on the findings of the study.

6.2 Summary of the findings of the study

This study investigated the perceptions of teachers on the new Grade 10-11 Commerce Curriculum. It was carried out at selected schools in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. It adopted a qualitative research approach; the study applied a narrative case study design. A sample of six teachers and two HoDs from a population of twenty-seven teachers and four HoDs teaching Commerce subjects were selected by Convenience and Purposeful sampling respectively. The study deployed a semi-structured interview on a face-to-face basis, with a duration between 20 to 30 minutes, and complemented by document reviews comparing the old and new curricula. The collected data were collected through interviews and document analysis.

The main findings of the study were that teachers perceived the new curriculum as having the potential to equip students for the future, adapt them to changing times, and impart valuable entrepreneurial skills. They also noted significant differences between the old and new commerce curricula. When it comes to the strategies for implementing the new curriculum, the findings reveal the need for adequate training of teachers, provision of teaching and learning resources, provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs, and adequate onsite support.

The study recommends that teachers need to be trained, that provision of materials needs to be available, and for teachers to have positive attitude to new curriculum they must be involved in the curriculum

development, meet the need for collaboration, continuous professional development, empowerment, and open communication to ensure that teachers are well-prepared and confident in delivering the curriculum to their students.

6.3 Conclusion

Generally, the introduction of something new, such as a new curriculum, often generates tension and anxiety among those involved, particularly teachers who are at the forefront of its implementation. Change, especially in the educational realm, can be met with resistance and fear for several reasons. First, teachers may feel uncertain about their ability to adapt to the new curriculum, especially if they have been accustomed to the old one for an extended period. The fear of the unknown and concerns about their proficiency in delivering the new content can be daunting. Teachers may be concerned about the adequacy of training and support provided by educational authorities. If they perceive a lack of sufficient preparation or resources, their anxiety can intensify. Furthermore, the pressure to meet the expectations of curriculum reforms can contribute to teachers' stress and fear of change.

Both decision-makers and teachers should recognize that curriculum changes are not isolated events but ongoing processes that demand collaborative efforts. Decision-makers must prioritize teacher involvement, providing the necessary training and resources for effective implementation. Furthermore, they should consider the broader societal context and anticipate the skills and knowledge students will require in the future. Teachers, on the other hand, should embrace professional development opportunities, stay adaptable, and actively participate in the curriculum development process. They play a pivotal role in shaping the educational landscape and should be open to changes that align with the evolving needs of students and society. By fostering collaboration and communication between decision-makers and

teachers, educational systems can navigate curriculum changes more effectively, ultimately benefiting the students they serve.

6.4 Recommendations

The recommendations stemming from this study can be organized into three distinct categories, which are tailored for (a) teachers, (b) school management, (c) curriculum planners, and (d) further research.

6.4.1 Recommendations for Teachers

- a) Teachers should take advantage of available professional development opportunities to enhance their understanding and implementation of the new curriculum, with a focus on both content and teaching methods.
- b) Teachers are encouraged to use existing teaching and learning materials creatively, even if resources are limited, and to explore ways to develop supplementary materials that align with the curriculum.
- c) Teachers should take time to familiarize themselves with the new curriculum, particularly its key differences from the old curriculum, to effectively teach the updated content.
- d) Teachers should seek opportunities to collaborate with colleagues to share ideas, experiences, and strategies related to the new curriculum. This peer support can help in overcoming common challenges.

6.4.2 Recommendations for School Management

- a) School management should do their best to allocate available resources, including teaching materials and facilities, to support the new curriculum's implementation, even within existing constraints.
- b) School management should offer consistent support to teachers through mentorship and regular

professional development opportunities, creating an environment where teachers feel supported and encouraged to seek help when needed.

6.4.3 Recommendations for Curriculum Developers

- a) Curriculum developers should consider seeking input from teachers during the curriculum development process to ensure that the curriculum is practical and suited to classroom needs.
- b) It is important to provide basic training programs that introduce teachers to the new curriculum and equip them with the essential skills and strategies required for effective teaching.
- c) Efforts should be made to make essential teaching and learning materials accessible to schools, including textbooks and supplementary resources, within the available means.

6.4.4 Recommendations for Further Research

The study investigated subjects which made up Commerce field in Namibia namely, Accounting, Economics, Business Studies and Entrepreneurship. In order to increase the depth of the study and findings, further research can be done in one subject only.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance Certificate



ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: DEC: HPC00014 Date: 14 March 2023

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Ethics Committee (REC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the ethics committee.

Title of Project: Teachers' Perceptions of The New Grade 10 – 11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia

Investigators: Titilayo Patience Johnson

Supervisor: Prof. Sakaria Ipinge

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Lukas Matati Josua

Student Number: 201412179

Centre for Research Services

Take note of the following:

1. Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the ethics committee. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
2. Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the ethics committee.
3. The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the ethics committee (through the Chairperson) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by the ethics committee.
4. The ethics committee retains the right to:
 - i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

The ethics committee wishes you the best in your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angelina Popyeni Amushigamo'.

Dr Angelina Popyeni Amushigamo (Chairperson DEC HPC)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Davis Mumbengegwi'.

Prof. Davis Mumbengegwi (Head, Multidisciplinary Research)

APPENDIX B: Permission Letter to conduct research.



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
ASPIRING TO EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION FOR ALL**

Tel: 065 - 229800/25
Fax: 065 - 229834
Enquiries: Hileni M Amukana
Ref. 13/2/9/1

Private Bag 5518
Oshakati

Ms. Titilayo Patience Johnson
P.O. Box 3624
Ongwediva

Cell: 0813686167

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN OSHANA REGION

Your letter dated 03 February 2023 on the above caption bears reference.

Kindly be informed that permission is hereby granted to conduct research study at Gabriel Taapopi Secondary School, Mweshipandeka Secondary School in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region.

Research topic: Teachers' perceptions of the new grade 10- 11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia

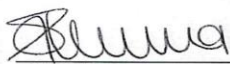
This permission is subject to the following strict conditions; (i) There should be minimal or no interruption on normal working schedule (ii) Ethical issues of confidentiality and anonymity should be respected and retained throughout this activity i.e. Voluntary participation, and consent from participants

Both Parties should understand that this permission could be revoked without explanation at any time.

Furthermore, we humbly request you to share your research findings with the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture, Oshana Region. You may contact Ms. Hilma Nuunyango-George, the Deputy Director; Programs and Quality Assurance (PQA) for the provision of summary of your research findings.

We wish you the best in conducting your study.

Yours sincerely,


HILENI M. AMUKANA
REGIONAL DIRECTOR



Cc: Inspector of Education: Ompundja Circuit

All Official Correspondence must be addressed to the Regional Director

APPENDIX C: Interview Guide

**Interview Guide on the
Teachers' Perception of the New Grade 10 –
11 Commerce Curricula in Ompundja Circuit,
Oshana Region, Namibia.**

PREPARED BY

TITILAYO PATIENCE JOHNSON

February 2023

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION & HUMAN
SCIENCES

TEACHERS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

My name is Titilayo Patience Johnson, student number 201412179 and a Master's student at the University of Namibia. I am conducting research on the teachers' perception of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. I am going to collect data through the interview as well as document analysis. Therefore, I am requesting you to feel free when answering the interview questions. This research is for academic purpose and all the information that will be revealed here will be treated confidential.

Thank you for your participation.

Interview questions for teachers

Biographical questions to start with:

- (i) What grade are you teaching?
- (ii) How long have you worked as a teacher?
- (iii) Have you worked in the same region? School?
- (iv) What is your highest qualification in teaching?
- (v) Have you ever participated in curriculum development?

Detailed questions:

1.
 - (i) What are your perception on the introduction of the new Commerce Curriculum for Grade 10 - 11?
 - (ii) As a commerce teacher were you prepared for the introduction of the new curriculum?
 - (iii) If yes, where was the training held and for how long?
 - (iv) What kind of teaching materials were given for the introduction and implementation of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum?
 - (v) Please share your experience when you first implemented the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum? How did you go about it?
 - (vi) What challenges have you experienced in implementing the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum?

2.
 - (i) What are the fundamental differences you have noticed between the old and new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum with regard to:
 - a) Content
 - b) Learning objectives
 - c) Assessment criteria/strategies

3.
 - (i) How can the implementation of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum be improved?

 - (ii) What is your view on teachers being consulted on curriculum changes and or development?



UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION & HUMAN
SCIENCES

Heads of Department (HoD)'s INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

My name is Titilayo Patience Johnson, student number 201412179 and a Master's student at the University of Namibia. I am conducting research on the teachers' perception of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. I am going to collect data through the interview as well as document analysis. Therefore, I am requesting you to feel free when answering the interview questions. This research is for academic purpose and all the information that will be revealed here will be treated confidential.

Thank you for your participation.

Interview questions for HoD

Biographical questions to start with:

- (i) What grade are you teaching?
- (ii) How long have you worked as HoD?
- (iii) Have you worked in the same region? School?
- (iv) What is your highest qualification in teaching?
- (v) Have you ever participated in curriculum development?

1.
 - (i) What are your perception on the introduction of the new Curriculum for Commerce Grade 10 - 11?
 - (ii) Can you please give a brief explanation on how Commerce teachers for Grade 10- 11 were prepared for the new curriculum?
 - (iii) Can you remember the length of the workshop given to the Commerce teachers for Grade 10-11?

2.
 - (i) What are the differences you noticed between the old and new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum?
 - (ii) Please share your experiences on the introduction of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum? How did teachers in your department handled and supported it?

3.
 - (i) What challenges have the Commerce teachers for Grade 10 – 11 experienced in the implementation of the new Commerce curriculum, that were reported to your office?
 - (ii) What type of support did your office provided to resolve the challenges?

4.
 - (i) How can the implementation of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum be improved?
 - (ii) What is your view on teachers being consulted on curriculum changes and or development?

APPENDIX D: Letter of Consent for Teachers

Ms. Titilayo Patience,
JOHNSON

*Postal Address: Department of Applied Educational Sciences,
University of Namibia, P.O. Box 3624, Ongwediva, Namibia,
Phone: +264 65 232 4118 (Office)
Cell: +264 81 368 6167 Email: adebere.titilayo@gmail.com*

LETTER OF CONSENT: FOR PARTICIPANT

03 February 2023

TITLE OF RESEARCH: *Teachers' Perceptions of the New Grade 10 – 11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia.*

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is TITILAYO PATIENCE JOHNSON and I am conducting a research under the supervision of Prof. S.M. Iiping and Dr. L. M. Josua, towards a Master's degree in Curriculum studies. You are hereby invited to participate in a study on teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. The purpose of this research is to address the gap in the body of knowledge about the perception of commerce teachers to the latest curriculum change in Namibia. The outcome of the research will be used to make recommendations to curriculum developers and the Ministry of Education in recognizing the important roles and responsibilities of senior secondary school teachers in curriculum design, as well as considering the need to involve more of them.

I have obtained details from the circuit and chose to include your school in this research. I would like you to participate in this study, because you are a senior teacher for Commerce subjects in Grade 10 -11, and you are currently implementing the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum. Six participants, including yourself, are invited to participate in this study.

All participants will be interviewed by the researcher for a maximum of thirty minutes on the topic under investigation. 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. Please be informed that all responses will be recorded using a voice recorder.

There are no payments as a form of incentive for participating in this research. However, you will benefit from this study, because the study will expose your view, regarding whether you were prepared or not prepared to implement the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum, moreover your suggestion will help in better implementations on the new

curriculum. The findings of the study will be beneficial to the Ministry of Education 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. If you have experienced any problems or issues or are not happy with the way the study is conducted, you are free to contact me:

Ms. T. P. Johnson
University of Namibia
Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus
Private Bag 5507
Ongwediva
Namibia
+264 81 368 6167

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

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.

.....
PARTICIPANT'S FULL NAME

.....
DATE

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
RESEARCHER

.....
DATE

APPENDIX E: Letter of Consent for Head of Department

Ms. Titilayo Patience,
JOHNSON

*Postal Address: Department of Applied Educational Sciences,
University of Namibia, P.O. Box 3624, Ongwediva, Namibia,
Phone: +264 65 232 4118 (Office)
Cell: +264 81 368 6167 Email: adebere.titilayo@gmail.com*

LETTER OF CONSENT: FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

03 February 2023

TITLE OF RESEARCH: *Teachers' Perceptions of the New Grade 10 – 11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia.*

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is TITILAYO PATIENCE JOHNSON and I am conducting a research under the supervision of Prof. S.M. Iiping and Dr. L. M. Josua, towards a Master's degree in Curriculum studies. You are hereby invited to participate in a study on teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. The purpose of this research is to address the gap in the body of knowledge about the perception of commerce teachers to the latest curriculum change in Namibia. The outcome of the research will be used to make recommendations to curriculum developers and the Ministry of Education in recognizing the important roles and responsibilities of senior secondary school teachers in curriculum design, as well as considering the need to involve more of them.

I have obtained details from the circuit and chose to include your school in this research. I would like you to participate in this study, because you are a HEAD OF DEPARTMENT for Commerce subjects in Grade 10 -11, and you have been heading the commerce department and the teachers are under your department.

You will be interviewed by the researcher for a maximum of thirty minutes on the topic under investigation. 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. Please be informed that all responses will be recorded using a voice recorder.

There are no payments as a form of incentive for participating in this research. However, you will benefit from this study, because the study will expose your view, regarding whether you were prepared or not prepared to implement the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum, moreover your suggestion will help in better implementations on the new

curriculum. The findings of the study will be beneficial to the Ministry of Education 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. If you have experienced any problem or issues or not happy with the way the study is conducted, you are free to contact me:

Ms. T. P. Johnson
University of Namibia
Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus
Private Bag 5507
Ongwediva
Namibia
+264 81 368 6167

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

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.

.....
HOD'S FULL NAME

.....
DATE

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
RESEARCHER

.....
DATE

APPENDIX F: Letter of Permission to the Schools

Ms. Titilayo Patience,
JOHNSON

*Postal Address: Department of Applied Educational Sciences,
University of Namibia, P.O. Box 3624, Ongwediva, Namibia,
Phone: +264 65 232 4118 (Office)
Cell: +264 81 368 6167 Email: adebere.titilayo@gmail.com*

LETTER TO THE SCHOOL

03 February 2023

The Principal,

Dear Sir /

Madam,

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

I, TITILAYO PATIENCE JOHNSON, student no: 201412179, hereby submit my request to conduct research at your school. I am a student at the University of Namibia and am presently enrolled for a MEd degree in Education (specializing in Curriculum Studies) under the supervision of Prof. S.M. Iipinge and Dr. L. M. Josua. My topic is *Teachers' Perceptions of the New Grade 10 – 11 Commerce Curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia*.

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 this research is to address the gap in the body of knowledge about the perception of commerce teachers to the latest curriculum change in Namibia.

For more information regarding the study, kindly contact me:

Ms. T. P. Johnson
University of Namibia
Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus
Private Bag 5507
Ongwediva
Namibia
+264 81 368 6167

APPENDIX G: Letter to the Permanent Secretary of Education

Ms. Titilayo Patience,
JOHNSON

*Postal Address: Department of Applied Educational Sciences,
University of Namibia, P.O. Box 3624, Ongwediva, Namibia,
Phone: +264 65 232 4118 (Office)
Cell: +264 81 368 6167 Email: adebere.titilayo@gmail.com*

LETTER TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

03 February 2023

The Permanent
Secretary Ministry of
Education Private Bag
43186 Windhoek

Dear Madam,

Re: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

I, TITILAYO PATIENCE JOHNSON, a final year Master's degree student at the University of Namibia, specializing in Curriculum Instruction and Assessment studies, hereby seeks permission to conduct educational research at high schools in Ompundja circuit in Oshana region under the supervision of Prof. S.M. Iipinga and Dr. L. M. Josua. My topic is *TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE NEW GRADE 10 - 11 COMMERCE CURRICULUM IN OMPUNDJA CIRCUIT, OSHANA REGION, NAMIBIA*. This research is required for the fulfilment of the Master's degree program.

Over the past few decades, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia have been involved in the development of new commerce curriculum to prepare learners for the changing business environment in the country. Although, these curricula are well-designed and have laudable aims to achieve (Namolo 2021). Nevertheless, in many cases their implementation has resulted in less-than desirable outcomes and led to waste of considerable resources, time, and effort, this is because well-intentioned policies were never translated into classroom reality (Fullan, 2015). One of the reasons for such unwanted reality is teachers' resistance to any curriculum reforms. Within the context of open literatures, the perception of commerce teachers to the latest curriculum change in Namibia has not been given significant attention. Therefore, this study intends to address this gap by contributing to the body of knowledge on teachers'

Perceptions of the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia.

I am kindly requesting your good office to grant me permission to conduct research in the two secondary schools (Gabriel Taapopi SSS and Mweshipandeka SSS) in Ompundja circuit, in Oshana region. The study will have a sample of 6 teachers and 1 HoD from the circuit, selected by Convenience and Purposeful sampling respectively. It will deploy a semi-structured interview on a face-to-face basis, with a duration between 20 to 30 minutes. Finally, relevant documents would be reviewed to compare the old and new curriculum.

The participants will be informed about the purpose and objectives of the study and how will they benefit from it. They will also be informed about their right to participate and that they have right to withdraw from the study should they feel so.

The study will inform the Ministry of Education and Curriculum Developers about the struggles that the Grade 10 – 11 Commerce subjects teachers are facing during the implementation of the new Commerce curriculum for Grade 10 – 11. Their recommendation and suggestion could also lead to the effective implementation of, not only the new Grade 10 – 11 Commerce curriculum, but for other subjects as well.

Looking forward for your good response.

Yours sincerely



Titilayo P. JOHNSON

Master's student

University of Namibia.

APPENDIX H: Letter to the Director of Education

Ms. Titilayo Patience,
JOHNSON

*Postal Address: Department of Applied Educational Sciences,
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LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

03 February 2023

The Director
Ministry of Education
Private Bag 5518
Oshakati

Dear Madam,

Re: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

I, TITILAYO PATIENCE JOHNSON, a final year Master's degree student at the University of Namibia, specializing in Curriculum Instruction and Assessment studies, hereby seeks permission to conduct educational research at high schools in Ompundja circuit in Oshana region under the supervision of Prof. S.M. Iipinge and Dr. L. M. Josua. My topic is *TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE NEW GRADE 10 - 11 COMMERCE CURRICULUM IN OMPUNDJA CIRCUIT, OSHANA REGION, NAMIBIA*. This research is required for the fulfilment of the Master's degree program.

Over the past few decades, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia have been involved in the development of new commerce curriculum to prepare learners for the changing business environment in the country. Although, these curricula are well-designed and have laudable aims to achieve (Namolo 2021). Nevertheless, in many cases their implementation has resulted in less-than desirable outcomes and led to waste of considerable resources, time, and effort, this is because well-intentioned policies were never translated into classroom reality (Fullan, 2015). One of the reasons for such unwanted reality is teachers' resistance to any curriculum reforms. Within the context of open literatures, the perception of commerce teachers to the latest curriculum change in Namibia has not been given significant attention. Therefore, this study intends to address this gap by contributing to the body of knowledge on teachers' perceptions of the new Grade 10 - 11 Commerce curriculum in Ompundja Circuit, Oshana

Region, Namibia.

I am kindly requesting your good office to grant me permission to conduct research in the two secondary schools (Gabriel Taapopi SSS and Mweshipandeka SSS) in Ompundja circuit, in Oshana region. The study will have a sample of 6 teachers and 1 HoD from the circuit, selected by Convenience and Purposeful sampling respectively. It will deploy a semi-structured interview on a face-to-face basis, with a duration between 20 to 30 minutes. Finally, relevant documents would be reviewed to compare the old and new curriculum.

The participants will be informed about the purpose and objectives of the study and how will they benefit from it. They will also be informed about their right to participate and that they have right to withdraw from the study should they feel so.

The study will inform the Ministry of Education and Curriculum Developers about the struggles that the Grade 10 - 11 Commerce subjects teachers are facing during the implementation of the new Commerce curriculum for Grade 10 - 11. Their recommendation and suggestion could also lead to the effective implementation of, not only the new Grade 10 - 11 Commerce curriculum, but for other subjects as well.

Looking forward for your good response.

Yours sincerely



Titilayo P. JOHNSON

Master's student

University of Namibia.

