

## From an Instructionist to a Constructivist Classroom Management: A Dialogue

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**ABSTRACT** Since the democratic era, South Africa's the Department of Basic Education implemented *Curriculum 2005* and *National Curriculum Statement* policies in the public schools. However, during the training of teachers on these flawed *Curriculum 2005* and *National Curriculum Statement* policies, much time was devoted to teaching them about the principles of learner-centred teaching approach and the outcomes to be achieved. Very little attention, if any, was given to training them on changing their approach to classroom management. Drawing from Paulo Freire's work, Nieuwenhuis' Matrix of Paradigmatic Value Systems and social constructivism, this paper argues that classroom management in a learner-centred setting should be approached from a situational perspective.

### INTRODUCTION

A movement from instructionist (objectivist and behaviourist) to constructivist approach reflects a paradigm shift in perspectives of learning, instruction and classroom management that emphasises the social and contextual nature of learning. However, in the case South African Education System, there seems to be a policy divide – emphasis is clearly on educational policy production and to a lesser extent on the implementation of the policy, which are mainly seen as two separate processes. Notwithstanding the extensive legislative developments and other policy initiatives aimed at transforming basic education, the practice of classroom management in the public schools continues in large measure to reflect a “factory” or “Fordism” model of education and instructionist classroom management. During the training of teachers on the flawed *Curriculum 2005* and *National Curriculum Statement* policies, much time was devoted on teaching them about the principles of learner-centred teaching and the outcomes to be achieved, yet very little attention, if any, was given to training them on changing their approach to classroom management. This omission may imply that the policy developers of the new approach either assumed that the paradigm shift does not require a shift in classroom management practices, or that such a change would naturally follow from the implementation of *Curriculum 2005* and *National Curriculum Statement* policies. Learner-centered teaching (at least

at a conceptual level) is moving from an instructionist (teacher as transmitter of knowledge) to a constructivist approach (teacher as mediator and facilitator in the construction of meaning).

With few exceptions this paradigm shift, among others, has a significant number of implications for classroom management practice. As a result, there is a need to rethink the classroom management in learner-centered settings within the constructivist framework. This paper holds that the effective and efficient implementation of the newly 2012 launched *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* hinges on the approaches guided by constructivist paradigm. Hence, classroom management practice in the South African schools will only be “transformed” if its intellectual discourse is fundamentally shaped by constructivist framework. A discourse is never an end in itself but a means to develop a better comprehension about the object of knowledge. Transformation of basic education is not simply a matter of structural and governance reform, but also ensuring that classroom management reflects practices that are compatible with constructivist thinking.

In this paper, the researcher attempts to deconstruct the instructionist classroom management hegemony arguing that classroom management in learner-centered setting should move towards constructivist guidelines. Perhaps, it is noteworthy to mention that a deeper understanding of the origins and characteristic features of instructionist classroom management and the attributes of constructivist classroom manage-

ment are critical in rethinking classroom management principles in the context of the emergent paradigm. Drawing from Johnson and Brooks' (1979) work, Paulo Freire's work, Nieuwenhuis' Matrix of Paradigmatic Value Systems and social constructivism, this desktop review: (1) explores origins and characteristic features of instructionist classroom management; (2) investigates the characteristic features of constructivist classroom management; (3) reflects on the emerging trends and challenges on constructivist classroom management; (4) critically analyses the instructionist classroom management and constructivist classroom management; and (5) focuses on rethinking classroom management in the context of the emergent paradigm.

#### **Origins and Characteristic Features of Instructionist Classroom Management**

The history of classroom management has a very rich background. Yet, this dialogue will largely draw from Johnson and Brooks' (1979) work. Brophy and Putman (1979: 214) are emphatically of the opinion that the trends in classroom management ideology have followed earlier trends in thinking about children and child rearing. In addition, early approaches featuring authoritarian regimentation and punitiveness reflected Victorian notions about children, who were seen as idle and undisciplined creatures, needing mental and physical training. Socialization was construed mostly as the curbing of unacceptable impulses through discipline and punishment (Brophy and Putman 1979: 214).

As Johnson and Brooks (1979: 5) eloquently articulated that "until the 1840s, when normal schools began to be established, teachers had no training in management of a classroom, and their procedures primarily reflected their personalities and commonsense. They argue that one of the first books for prospective teachers appeared in 1847, three years after the founding of the State Normal School at Albany, New York, from the pen of its first principal, David Page (Johnson and Brooks 1979: 5). For Page, "order" was the first essential for the happiness and success of the school and that, whether or not it was secured and maintained, depended primarily on the teacher's possessing certain requisite personal characteristics like: (1) being in self-command and confident of his ability to govern;

(2) having deep moral principle; and (3) holding just views of both government and the governed (Johnson and Brooks 1979: 5).

Page held that the teacher's authority to inflict punishment was necessary to "order" was grounded in the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, and corporal punishment was to be a last, not a first resort, neither to be repeatedly threatened nor irrevocably renounced nor never to be abused if used (Johnson and Brooks 1979: 6). In addition, he emphasised meticulous planning as the basis for good classroom management, for when the teacher is uncertain and the pupils idle, "all is confusion". In his works, Page advocated the three principles of: (1) "management by motto" – for interruptions, the Lancasterian maxim, "A Time for Every Thing, and Every Thing for Its Time"; (2) for assignments, "Not How Much, But How Well"; and (3) for public examinations, "Let the Teacher Be Honest". Johnson and Brooks (1979: 6) note that as urban centers grew, the concentration of population offered the alternatives of constructing more and more separate unguarded one-room schools or collecting a number of them together in a single larger building. In addition, by the time of the Civil War, state systems of common schools had succeeded in organising uniform courses of the study, usually divided into eight grade levels, and graded readers and textbooks had appeared.

This historical background provided the framework within which human activities are directed and coordinated within the instructionist paradigm. Instructionism is deeply rooted in what Freire (1990) termed "banking concept" of education. Implicit in the banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between human beings and the world: a person is merely *in* the world, not *with* the world or with others; the individual is spectator, not re-creator. In this view, the person is not a conscious being (*corpo consciente*); he or she is rather the possessor of a consciousness: an empty "mind" passively opens to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside. Freire (1990) depicts what actually goes on in the world of banking education succinctly. He attests that the relationship (teacher-student) involves a narrating subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students). In contemporary educational contexts, instructionism is the term used to describe teacher-centered, teacher-controlled, outcome-driven, highly structured, and non-interactive

instructional practices (Rowe 2006: 5; Johnson 2009: 90; Stanley 2009: 5). In addition, instructionism has been referred to as systematic teaching, explicit teaching, direct teaching, and active teaching, terms that emphasize teacher, as opposed to student, behavior. The content of instruction and the content of knowledge are assumed to be isomorphic, teachers are conceptualized as transmitters of objective reality; students are viewed as passive receptors of knowledge (Johnson 2009: 90).

Flowing from this scientific paradigm educational management, among others, which informs and guides instructionist classroom management draws heavily from “factory” or “Fordism” model of education, and is rooted in positivist, objectivistic and/or behaviourist and Christian-orientated philosophy (Pitsoe and Letseka 2013: 26; Yasar 2008: 2; Van der Westhuizen and Mentz 1996: 27; Van der Westhuizen 1995: 12). In essence, the nature and the structure of being of instructionist classroom management seem to be rooted in the mechanistic/scientific worldview. For example, most of the research on which classroom management principles are based, has taken place in instructionist classrooms characterised by narrative approaches to teaching, that is, where the teacher acts as the transmitter of knowledge (Brophy and Alleman 1998: 56). Dooyeweerd (as quoted in Van der Westhuizen 1995: 28) asserts that all scientific practice is based on transcendental foundation or on presuppositions. It is further held that by means of transcendental-critical method, a person investigates the structure of scientific thought and indicates that his/her presuppositions underlie this scientific thought.

Mechanistic worldview recognises the possibility of human control over nature (Black 1999: 28). In ontological and epistemological dimensions, instructionist classroom management theory and practice is scriptural – it has a Christian-orientated or religious characteristic. It sees *managing* and *regulating* human activity as a scriptural mandate. Van der Westhuizen (1995: 28) notes that “God has equipped man with abilities, gifts and talent for his mission on earth – mission of reigning over and controlling the creation”. In a similar view, Engelbrecht et al. (1989: 189) see man as “a crowning glory of creation, the prince who has been elected to reign over the entire creation of God.” Another example of examining the origins and characteristic features

of instructionist classroom management theoretical constructs from a scriptural perspective follows. Central to this paradigm is the belief that God’s sovereignty is based on the fact that He embodies or concretises His everlasting power in laws which apply to creatures, while He Him is not subject to any of these laws (Van der Westhuizen 1995: 27). The onticity (reality and ontology) of instructionist classroom management emerges from the teacher’s position of authority and from his/her creational mandate. Thus, instructionist classroom management as a practice and theory of knowledge can be typified as rooted in objective reality and truth, and as positivistic. It has an absoluteness and dogmatic characteristic view knowledge, which underpins the scientific worldview.

With reference to the relationships between entities, scientific paradigm is underpinned by discrete units’ hierarchical orders. The mechanistic worldview is characterised by patriarchal and hierarchical social pattern which is maintained by systems of command and control at all levels of the hierarchy (Nieuwenhuis 2007; Black 1999). Another outstanding feature is that authority is transmitted hierarchically (Dollard and Christensen 1996). In Theron’s (1996: 38) opinion, within structural authority, a certain hierarchical order exists, where at every level of the hierarchy; a person is given authority from above. The person in authority has the right to give instructions and to expect obedience from those below (Van der Westhuizen 1995: 12). In the case of instructionist classroom practice, the teacher gives the instructions and learners are expected to obey them. The teacher’s authority is limited because he/she is also subject to the authority of those above him (that is, the HOD or the principal). Thus, the teacher’s level hierarchy gives him/her freedom to act within the limits of the authority.

Metaphorically, instructionist classroom management takes a description of the Newtonian clock or the machine. Black (1999: 29) notes two key images of the mechanistic worldview that dominate bureaucratic-managerial model – machine and pyramid. In addition, the organisational model of the mechanistic worldview can be typified as the machine bureaucracy. The organisation is envisaged as a machine and the leader as the “servo-mechanism” that drives it. The management or leadership style in the machine bureaucracy is characterised by command

and control exercise by those at the top of the bureaucratic hierarchy who are charged with the responsibility of articulation and promoting the vision of strategic planning for the future and of maximising the resources. Thus, the values of bureaucratic-managerial model dominate educational management, more specifically in classroom management.

The last point the researcher wants to bring out is that at epistemological level, the management style dominating and compatible to instructionist classroom management seems to be influenced by scriptural authority – it flows from the teacher's convictions and his/her philosophy of life. As Kruger (1995: 44) has pointed out, a teacher's approach to his/her teaching and management task is largely linked to his view of how much personal emphasis should be placed on the task aspects and the human aspects respectively. In this tradition, classroom management is teacher-centered – it takes an autocratic pattern. Autocratic management style forms the basis in doing teaching and management tasks. It is task-oriented, overemphasising the dimension of the classroom (Kruger 1995: 44). Hence, Van der Westhuizen (1995: 190) posits that the autocratic leadership will never disappear completely because situations arise in school, for instance in the classroom, where any other style of leadership would be impossible for maintaining discipline.

### **Characteristic Features of Constructivist Classroom Management**

Constructivism has enjoyed an element of educational popularity in recent years. In contemporary educational contexts, constructivism is the term used to describe student-centered, student-controlled, process-driven, loosely structured, and highly interactive instructional practices (Rowe 2006: 1; Johnson 2009: 92; Almutka 2009: 5). Constructivism defines learning as a process of active knowledge construction and not as passive knowledge absorption (Stanley 2009: 100). In line with this, the goal-oriented rational model of management and organisation and the cause and effect understanding of management which is imbued with the values of the mechanistic worldview, have been questioned over time (Black 1999: 37). For example, patriarchal institutions such as political empires, the institutional church, the nation state and the

modern corporation appear to be profoundly affected by what has happened in the development of human process. In the instructionist school of thought, knowledge can achieve absolute and final certainty; the world is a dualistic world in which the mind is superior to the body; human beings are superior to nature; rational is superior to the irrational; male is superior to the female; and objectivity is superior to subjectivity (Black 1999: 38). In a mechanistic worldview, leadership is equated with management and represents a symbol of authority, order and control, the powerful means of improving the performance of anything that the energetic manager touches (Rees as cited by Black 1999: 29).

The holistic worldview, in contrast, operates in a reverse direction. Leadership and management are situational variables. With reference to its characteristic features, and the view of knowledge, constructivist classroom management appears to be compatible with the beliefs and assumptions of the holistic worldview. Accordingly, constructivist classroom management can be typified as fitting through the lens of emergent paradigm. Both concepts of leadership and management are guided and informed by contingency viewpoint – it rejects a notion that a particular viewpoint, (for example, traditional or behavioural or systems), is a one size fits all management approach.

Given that reality is seen to be created through processes of social exchange, historically situated, social constructivists are interested in the collective generation of meaning among people (Au 1998: 299). Thus, the characteristic feature with a view of knowledge is relational, tentative and largely perceptual. On the other hand, constructivist classroom management has holistic and artistic features. According Black (1999: 33), the holistic worldview takes its distinctive features from the dimensions of any artistic event. Central to the emergent paradigm is the distinctive feature of contextuality. Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 13) stress that qualitative research values context sensitivity that understands a phenomenon in all its complexity and within a particular situation and environment. Thus the view of phenomena is complex, holistic, ideational (a notional response to the question) and is a product of empirical process.

Constructivist classroom management has metaphorical descriptive features of a holon

(something that is simultaneously a whole and a part). The holon provides the basis for a new principle in the holistic worldview, namely, the whole is always greater than the sum of the parts and paradoxically, the whole is contained in each part while no whole is complete in itself (Nieuwenhuis 2007; Black 1999: 33). Wholeness is the primary reality in the holistic worldview. Within the holistic metaphor, the leader is not simply the manager who is responsible for increased efficiency, productivity and profit, but rather an artist (Black 1999: 33). The leader as an artist is more concerned with insight, symbolism, intuition and stories than with economic performance. For Bremmer (as cited by Black 1999: 33), the leader is not simply a manager who is responsible for increased efficiency, product and profit, but rather a key artist. The role of the leader as an artist, according to Bremmer (as cited by Black 1999: 33), is equivalent to that of the conceptual artist who utilises extensive communication systems in the creation of the work so that extremely complex signs, symbols, images, text and various form of media are designed to include the viewer-consumer in sharing or completing, or consuming complex codes of meaning or services.

Consistent with the emerging paradigm, Starat (as quoted by Black 1999: 40) asserts in a holistic worldview, the leader recognises the limitations of rationality which can solve some problems but cannot ground reasons why one solution is preferable to another in a creative and multi-dimensional view of organisational and social life. In Hermes's (as cited by Black 1999: 40) view, holistic leadership cannot limit creativity by a narrowly rational approach and is obliged to facilitate the organisation's "capacity for learning for predictable change and variety of possible alternative future".

Lastly, the researcher considers achievement of organisational goals. In scientific paradigm, leadership has its focus in the achievement of organisational goals; and insists on the orientation towards transformation of consciousness and social change. In contrast, leadership in emergent paradigm focuses on both social and global transformation (Black 1999: 41). The emergent paradigm sees leadership's ultimate aim/goal as the refinement and the achievement of human community. Thus, the view of change/orientations to - the future is indeterminate, unpredictable and morphogenetic.

### **Emerging Trends and Challenges on Constructivist Classroom Management**

Brophy and Alleman (1998) discuss classroom management and social constructivism in a social studies classroom. They tackle the issue, not in the instructionist classroom characterized by the teacher acting as the transmitter of knowledge, but in classrooms based on social constructivism. In such classrooms, the teacher acts as a collaborator in the production of knowledge within the classroom. The premise is that when teachers help learners construct knowledge through social interaction, classroom discourse will deepen through more reflective discussion (Brophy and Alleman 1998: 56; Rowe 2006: 2; Martin 2009: 29). Especially in a social studies classroom, teachers and learners collaborate to develop rules, often formalizing them into a classroom constitution.

According to Brophy and Alleman's (1998: 56) research, discipline emanates mostly from the individual as teachers and learners share leadership roles. In raising the question of whether teachers can use established principles of classroom management, their answer is a qualified yes, if implemented appropriately. Brophy and Alleman (1998: 56) emphasize that teachers must focus on instructional goals rather than functioning primarily as disciplinarians (interesting to note is that most authors that deal with classroom management link it to *discipline and control* issues and do not see it in a broader perspective). In a constructivist classroom, discipline is especially linked to moral and intellectual goals (DeVries 2002: 5). In order to promote autonomy and prevent an overbalance of heteronomy, constructivist teachers consciously monitor their interactions with children (DeVries 2002: 5).

Brophy and Alleman (1998: 57) point out that the teachers need to engage in thoughtful analysis, to determine how to apply basic principles of good classroom management to engaging instructional innovations. Their research makes clear that to ensure that the principles support the goals of constructivist or other non-instructionist approaches to teaching, teacher can (1) begin by identifying what learners are expected to do in order to engage optimally in learning activities, and (2) work backward from this description of desirable learner roles to determine what forms of managerial instruction or assistance are needed (Brophy and Alleman 1998: 57).

Dede (1996) argues that educational technologists have often stated that an effective way to integrate technology into the teaching and learning process is to follow a constructivist model. Although teachers may have technical skills, they may not understand how constructivism translates into meaningful classroom practice (Dede 1996). When one integrates learner experiences with technology into the curriculum, the role of the teacher changes. The teacher no longer has to be in charge every minute, but can give some of the control over to the learners and the technology. If approached in a constructivist manner, the teacher's job becomes one of a facilitator or architect. Instead of telling learners the answer, the teacher asks questions to help them discover the answer themselves. For this type of teaching to be successful, teachers need to give learners time to explore the material and construct meaning from the experience. Also, teachers sometimes, are concerned about such a shift; they worry about losing control, not fulfilling their role or being seen as less effective by parents, principals or supervisors.

In a constructivist classroom, learners are more actively involved than in an instructionist classroom. They share ideas, ask questions, discuss concepts, and revise their ideas and misconceptions (Jonassen et al. 1996). Such activity involves collaboration, with occasional competition, among learners. Collaborative environments can encourage the knowledge construction needed for more lasting learning (Jonassen et al. 1996). For Wyssusek et al. (2000: 3), constructivist classroom management differs radically from instructional classroom management. They assert that many of the modernist assumptions on which instructionist classroom management is based, do no longer hold in our world today and this led philosophers to questioning modern issues using a different paradigm. In addition, classic (that is, modern) conceptions of knowledge, regarding it as an objective entity, are superseded by conceptions which view knowledge as culturally determined, subjective or social (Wyssusek et al. 2003: 3).

### **Critical Analysis of Instructionist Classroom Management and Constructivist Classroom Management**

In this paper some of the empirical research undertaken into classroom management prac-

tices was reviewed. Sixty research studies conducted on classroom management, in both developed and developing countries, ranging from 1980 to 2011 into instructionist and constructivist classroom management practices, were analysed. In the analysis of the empirical studies, the focus in each case was on the: (1) context within which the study was undertaken; (2) purpose of the study; (3) situation investigated (including the type of classroom management practices used); and (4) alternative approach to classroom management; does it offered a critique of the practices in used. This analysis was largely hinged on Nieuwenhuis' (2007) Matrix of Paradigmatic Value Systems. Also, hermeneutic principles were adopted in the analysis of the presuppositions and the dogma underpinning the instructionist and constructivist classroom management.

On the one hand, according to Nieuwenhuis (2007), the Matrix of Paradigmatic Value Systems, scientific paradigm views: (1) *knowledge* as rational perceptual absolute (fairly dogmatic), (2) *phenomena* as simple, reductionist and empirical, (3) relationships between entities as discrete units hierarchical orders, (4) causation as linear cause-effect and unidirectional interaction, explained by deductive reasoning, (5) change/ orientations to the future as determinate predictable and controllable by humans, and (6) takes descriptive metaphor of the Newtonian clock. On the other hand, the emergent paradigm sees (1) knowledge as relational, tentative (largely perceptual), (2) phenomena as complex, holistic, ideational and empirical process, (3) relationships between entities as fluid, systemic, integrative orders, largely and hierarchical, (4) causation as Mutual causation, - with multi causal factors, explained by deductive, inductive and integrative reasoning, (5) change/ orientations to the future as indeterminate, unpredictable and morphogenetic, and (6) takes descriptive metaphor of the hologram.

At a general level, the characteristic features of instructionist classroom management are compatible to the scientific paradigm. Emerging from the analysis, most of the studies conducted in the instructionist classroom management has a number characteristic features. Among others, these studies largely depart on a *quantitative* and *positivist* framework. A significant number of studies adopted research methods such as: survey, questionnaires and field and/or laboratory experiments where samples were used. In

contrast, at philosophical level, constructivist classroom management fits through the lens of the emergent paradigm – it is informed and guided by contingency theories. Situational variables determine management approach, leadership style, and more specifically leadership roles of the teacher in constructivist classroom management practice. A significant of studies done in constructivist classroom management is largely qualitative in nature and adopted dialogical research methods.

The discourse which follows focuses on the key aspects identified in constructivist classroom management that differ from the instructionist planning, organising, control and evaluation concept (Yasar 2008: 3). Also, this discourse is intended to explain how classroom management should be applied in learner-centered context against some of the empirical data gathered within the theoretical framework in the literature. The South Africa's *Curriculum 2005, National Curriculum Statement* and *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* policies are a hybrid from various philosophical groundings; and that classroom management can be seen as belonging to two conflicting paradigms, namely, scientific and emergent worldviews. On the surface basic management principles such as, planning, organising, leading and control, appears to be similar, but this is a myth.

Planning, seen from its instructionist defining terms, approach classroom management as a step-by-step process under control and directed by the teacher. Such an approach is too limited and may restrict the degree to which learners become collaborators in the teaching and learning situation. Planning should thus be substituted by strategising in which the teacher allows flexibility and fluidity that opens opportunities for collaboration without relinquishing to a situation where an “everything goes” approach could override quality lessons. Strategising focuses on developing a range of strategies that could be utilised in the classroom to support and enhance effective teaching and learning. It is responsive to the emergent needs of learners in the classroom, but remains strongly focused on the outcomes to be achieved. In this sense it calls on the teacher to use his/her knowledge and skills to assess the situation and facilitate the teaching and learning in a responsive manner.

In constructivist classroom management, organising as a management function, focuses

on issues of group work and collaborate learning. In Van der Horst and McDonald's (1997: 86) view, the new methods for organising must not only focus on the learner outcomes, but should also accommodate the diversity of learners and settings. Given that managerial and instructional functions are the sides of the same coin, instructional task associated with cooperative group calls for behaviour on the part of the learners that are different from the behaviour required for working alone to learn a new skill.

Control moves to accountability (where learners become part of the development of class rules and partners in ensuring order and discipline). Successful classrooms, as Van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 86) observe, generally have an organisation and management plan, developed ahead of time by the teacher, communicated to the learners at the start of the school year, and maintained consistently throughout the year. In these classrooms, efficient routines and procedures are clearly and consistently followed, the teacher and the learners clearly understand expectations about the learner behaviour, and rules and procedures are enforced and reinforced. In accomplishing this, the teachers must know what their management plan will be, teach it to the learner, and watch over them until they have learnt and accepted the system (Horst and McDonald 1997: 97; Yasar 2008: 17).

Evaluation moves to ongoing assessment and feedback as a strategy to ensure continuous improvement and the facilitation of the construction of new knowledge. The approach to continuous assessment, in Nakabugo and Siebörger's (2005: 288) view, requires that decisions on a learner's progress be based on an ongoing formative assessment, associated with the helpful feedback on how a learner tackles various learning tasks rather than on results of a single end-of-session test or examination. In addition, it should not focus on what the learners have achieved, but should also be used to support and increase learners' learning.

### **Rethinking Classroom Management in the Context of the Emergent Paradigm**

Perhaps, it is pertinent to start this section with a claim that instructionist classroom management is not applicable to the implementation of *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements*. Flowing from the previous section, at

philosophical perspective, *Curriculum 2005* and *National Curriculum Statement* policies, *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* fit through the lens of the emergent paradigm (Pitsoe and Letseka 2013). In recent years the subject of “emergent paradigm” has sparked numerous debates in social sciences. Part of the reason for these debates is that an emergent paradigm epistemology requires a paradigm shift, and in the field of classroom management this shift is a radical one. Most classroom management approaches remain entrenched in a scientific paradigm, factory model of education and/or Fordism. A scientific paradigm is characterized by the belief that truths about human behavior can be found and adherence to the methods of the natural sciences is the best path by which to discover them (Freire 1990). On the other hand, teacher-student relationship at any level inside or outside the school reveals its fundamentally *narrative* character. This relationship involves a narrating Subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students). This relationship involves a narrating Subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students). The contents, whether values or empirical dimensions of reality, tend in the process of being narrated to become lifeless and petrified. Education is suffering from narration sickness. Hence, instructionist classroom management is deeply grounded on the scientific paradigm – it is regulatory and objectivist.

Given that modernist assumptions on which instructionist classroom management is based do no longer hold in constructivist classroom management, this paper proposes rethinking a set of principles compatible with the emergent paradigm for the successful implementation of the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements*. The *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* has far reaching implications for classroom management practice. Against the contingency theory background, this paper sees classroom management as a fluid and malleable construct – it should be flexible to fit the context. It holds that classroom management, specifically in learner-centred setting, should be underpinned by theories supporting the constructivist philosophy. The move from instructionist to constructivist classroom management, with reference to planning organising, control and evaluation, calls for the new set of principles. This new set of principles should be informed and

guided by the contingency theory; be situational (contextual) in order to accommodate a diversity of learners from different cultural backgrounds, and be subjective and holistic in nature. These principles should not only support the construction of knowledge in the constructivist setting, but should also promote a feeling of individual accountability, face-to-face interaction and a feeling of positive interdependence in cooperative groups. On the basis that classroom management belongs to two conflicting world views, namely scientific and the emerging, my philosophical account is that classroom management in learner-centered environment should move towards constructivist guidelines

Against this backdrop, there seems to be a policy and practice divide. The differences in paradigm assumptions cannot be dismissed as mere philosophical differences, inherently or overtly, these positions have important consequences for the teacher and learner roles. Based on the critical analysis done on the flawed *Curriculum 2005* and *National Curriculum Statement* policies, even though their originators label this shift as a “paradigm shift”, it appears that they assumed that scientific management is applicable or compatible to the constructivist setting. Hence, for the successful implementation of *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* in the South African schools, new management principles, with conceptually key features to the emerging paradigm, should be developed.

## CONCLUSION

Constructivism has enjoyed an element of educational popularity in recent years and has a significant number of implications for classroom management, more specifically to the roles of the teacher in learner-centered classroom. Among others, it calls for a dramatic shift in classroom focus, away from the narrative model of teaching toward one that is much more complex and interactive. Also, the implementation process demands the management function of the teachers, principals, district officials and policy formulators coupled with their leadership style, consistent with the emergent paradigm. On the basis that many of the modernist assumptions on which instructionist classroom management is based, no longer hold in our world today (there is paradigmatic divide), this requires

that classroom management in a learner-centred setting, be approached from a situational approach perspective. Thus, a new set of principles is apposite for the successful implementation of the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements*.

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