

Teachers' Awareness of Their Role in Planning and Implementing School-based Curriculum Innovation

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ABSTRACT Centrally planned curriculum in most developing countries follows a centre–periphery approach in which curriculum planned by a central authority is simply handed down to teachers for implementation. However, teachers as curriculum implementers still have the room to adapt and adopt curriculum to suit the conditions they face in schools. We sought to ascertain teachers' awareness of their role in planning and implementing school-based curriculum innovation. A quantitative-cum-qualitative descriptive survey design was used. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from a convenient sample of 242 teachers drawn from schools in one educational district in Zimbabwe. Interviews were also held with a purposeful sample of teachers who had responded to the questionnaire. The SPSS statistical package version 17 was used to analyze quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed through content analysis as emerging key issues led to themes that guided analysis. It emerged from the study that teachers were generally aware of their role in the planning and implementation of school-based curriculum innovation but their understanding of their role was as limited as their understanding of the concept curriculum. The study recommends emphasis on curriculum theory as a key component of teacher training and the implementation of short in-service courses to enhance teachers' knowledge of curriculum and their role in planning and implementing school-based curriculum innovation.