

The Principal as a Curriculum-instructional Leader: A Strategy for Curriculum Implementation in Cameroon Secondary Schools

First author (corresponding author) Marinette Bahtilla

Affiliation: Southwest University, China)

Email: barinette@yahoo.com

Phone number: +8615923224758

Second author: Xu Hui

Affiliation: Southwest University, China

Email: skcxh@swu.edu.cn

Abstract

The role of principals as curriculum-instructional leaders has remained unclear in most Cameroon secondary schools. Thus, this study aimed at reviewing the literature on the role of principals as curriculum-instructional leaders to gain insight on strategies that are suitable for Cameroon schools because the role principals are expected to play as curriculum-instructional leaders vary from context to context. The successful implementation of the curriculum depends among other factors on the effectiveness of the school principal. The leadership of an institution is crucial to its success. The principal needs to have full knowledge of what the curriculum entails to effectively coordinate curriculum activities. The researcher synthesizes 75 studies from 2000 to 2020, examining studies associated with the principal as a curriculum-instructional leader. The majority of researchers used qualitative research methods. This paper reviews the literature on principals as curriculum-instructional leaders and proposes recommendations for improvement.

Keywords: Principals, Curriculum-instructional Leadership, Curriculum Implementation, Cameroon

Introduction

Curriculum implementation is an important part as far as the curriculum process is concerned because no matter how well developed a curriculum is, if it is not well implemented, the objectives for which it was set to achieve may never be attained. If the curriculum is not well implemented it means the development stage has been a waste of time. However, despite the critical nature of curriculum implementation, most literature on curriculum focuses on curriculum development. Cameroon is striving to be an emergent nation by 2035 and the educational sector is expected to play a part by improving the quality of education. As a result of this, there have been some modifications in the curriculum; however, these modifications cannot be effectively implemented without principals carrying out their curriculum instructional roles effectively. Leadership is the most important school-level factor as far as in student's learning outcomes are concerned (Hallinger, 2011; Ainley & Carstens, 2018). Teachers cannot be allowed to go through the process of implementation alone. Effective school leadership is pertinent to educational reform and in improving educational outcomes (Ainley & Carstens, 2018). Principals need to be motivated to effectively carry out curriculum-instructional activities (Hallinger & Lee, 2013). This is because principals need to take necessary actions to promote growth in student learning. An effective leader is one who can think beyond what currently exists. Only a principal who can think beyond current educational practices can make any reasonable improvement or change.

In most African countries low-quality education results from failure to effectively implement the curriculum which leads to wastage of time, money, efforts and resources (Rogan & Grayson 2003; Goddard, Goddard, Kim, & Miller, 2015) According to Ruebling, Stow, Kayona, and Clarke (2004), the poor implementation of the curriculum and low student achievement in most schools is due to ineffective leadership. Schools with effective leadership provide a conducive and favorable environment that enables teachers to optimize their effectiveness. Teachers have a greater part to play as far as curriculum implementation is concerned but the principals' role in curriculum implementation should not be neglected. It cannot be refuted that teachers

sometimes go through stress to implement lessons. Principals must assist teachers to ensure effective implementation of the curriculum. Principals and teachers should be concerned with the planning of the curriculum at the school level in terms of breaking the curriculum into the scheme of work, what is to be learned, how it is to be learned and when it is to be learned. The principal role is very vital in schools because he or she coordinates activities that support students' learning (Quinn, 2002). The effective implementation of the curriculum requires principals to be a curriculum-instructional leader. To ensure curriculum implementation, there is a need for principals to allocate adequate resources in curriculum implementation (Ruebling, Stow, Kayona & Clarke, 2004). Principals need to pay attention to the taught curriculum to improve students learning. It is good to note that teachers, principals, parents as well as students have an important part to play in curriculum implementation but this study aims at exploring the role of principals in curriculum implementation.

Cameroon's educational system has traditionally emphasized the administrative and managerial role of the principal. Cameroon principals function as administrators in a highly centralized system of education where bureaucracy is the role of the day. Principals are viewed as general managers of government policies rather than curriculum-instructional leaders. Principals in developing countries with hierarchical cultures tend to spend more time on organization management than on instructional leadership (Hallinger & Lee, 2013). If principals see themselves more as organizational managers how will they effectively play curriculum-instructional roles to ensure effective teaching and learning? The government of Cameroon expects more from the education sector as it is striving to attain emergence by 2035, it is thus necessary, for principals to actively lead teaching and learning.

Statement of the Problem

The curriculum implementation process remains one of the major concerns in the education of many countries. Curriculum implementation is a pertinent issue in the educational sector because what students learn in school today determined the type of society they will eventually create. This shows that the way and the nature that the curriculum is implemented will determine the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and Cameroon's development by 2035. The type of knowledge we impart on students determines the rate of societal development. What students are taught in school determines what is happening in society as far as economic, political, and technology development is concerned. In designing the curriculum of any country, there is a need to take into consideration the changing needs of the society, which means that if students are not productive as they ought to have been, then something is surely wrong somewhere. Effective curriculum implementation is vital for every nation. The role principals are expected to play to ensure effective curriculum implementation should not be neglected. Education has an important part to play in the overall development of a nation, it is thus necessary, to ensure effective implementation of the curriculum.

Sustainable development goal number four states that, by 2030 schools should ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all students. Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education would require modifications in teaching practices and this will require principals to effectively carry out curriculum-instructional roles. At the school level principals are expected to be curriculum leaders. However; principals most often concentrate on administrative duties leaving teachers and heads of departments to ponder about curriculum issues. The success of any secondary schools among other factors is determined by the effectiveness of the principal, hence, the need to find out strategies principals can employ to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum.

Justification of the Study

This study is not to refute the fact that teachers are at the center of curriculum implementation but it is aimed at revealing that principals also have an important part to play as far as effective curriculum implementation is concerned. Literature shows that there is a general agreement that besides administrative duties, the principal is also a curriculum-instructional leader, but in Cameroon schools, principals tend to focus more on

administrative duties. The curriculum instructional leadership role of the principal has been neglected. This study is aimed at filling that gap. There is a need to continually inform principals that they have a pertinent part to play as far as curriculum implementation and students' achievement is concerned. More importantly, the review seeks to contribute to the small number of studies on instructional leadership in Cameroon, that is, the study aimed at exploring an overview of curriculum-instructional leadership, which would help to inform future research on leadership in Cameroon.

The objective of the Study

To find out what curriculum-instructional strategies principals in Cameroon secondary schools can adopt to enhance curriculum implementation

Research Questions

1. What is principals' curriculum-instructional leadership?
2. What curriculum-instructional strategies can principals in Cameroon secondary schools adopt to ensure effective curriculum implementation?

Method

The researcher conducted a systematic search of the following databases in November 2019: Academic Search Complete, Education Full Text, ERIC, JSTOR, Wilson Select Plus, Wiley and Academic Search Premier, for material on the principal as a curriculum-instructional leader: a strategy for curriculum implementation. Parameters such as principal leadership, instructional leadership, school leadership, curriculum leaders, the role of principals, curriculum implementation, the role of curriculum workers and curriculum implementation were used to source for articles. Firstly, all abstracts of all papers identified from the search process were scanned; the papers, which addressed issues that are related and relevant to curriculum-instructional leadership, were stored in a file. Secondly, after going through the abstract the researcher read through all the papers. Research papers whose main focus were not on curriculum-instructional leadership but addressed certain aspects of instructional leadership were included.

It is good to note that the researcher included studies on instructional leadership carried out in other countries because only a few empirical research papers that are directly related to instructional leadership in Cameroon were found. The researcher reviewed both qualitative and quantitative studies. The researcher focused on peer-reviewed studies. The search yielded 150 articles, after removing the exact duplicate only 120 articles were left, the researcher further securitized the articles to make sure that they were related to the study, this yielded 75 articles that met the criteria. The researcher limited the search to studies published in English and did not include any foreign papers which were not in English.

Findings

The Principal should be a Curriculum-instructional leader

It is good to point out that the term curriculum-instructional leadership and instructional leadership are used interchangeably. Literature indicates varied definitions of curriculum-instructional leadership; these different definitions may affect how principals perceive curriculum-instructional leadership. Some of these definitions are broad as such confusing principals on what is expected from them as curriculum-instructional leaders (Dematthews, 2014). Curriculum-instructional leadership can be defined as the process where principals provide a conducive environment for teachers, students and the curriculum to interact directly to improve teaching and learning (Bendikson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012; Neumerski, 2013). Similarly, It can also be defined as the process by which principals provide direction, resources, and support for the improvement of teaching and learning schools (Blase & Blase, 2000; Gaziel, 2007). Curriculum- instructional leadership can also be referred to as activities undertaken by the principal to develop a productive and satisfying working environment for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for students' (Dufour, 2002; Gronn,

2000; Rigby, 2014). Moreover, Curriculum-instructional leadership can also be defined as learning-centered leadership (Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliott, & Cravens, 2009).

Furthermore, Wanzare and Dacosta (2001) define curriculum-instructional leadership as the process by which the principal tries to improve school programs, teaching, learning, and students' achievement by providing adequate resources, involving teachers in decision making and providing support. Instructional leadership refers to the process of planning, evaluating, coordinating and improving teaching and learning (Robinson, 2010). Curriculum-instructional leadership refers to the leadership functions of the principal which are associated with teaching and learning that is, the various ways in which principals coordinate teaching and learning activities (Dematthews, 2014). Similar to Dematthews' definition, in this paper, curriculum-instructional leadership refers to activities and strategies principals employ to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum to enhance students' learning. This reveals that instructional leadership focuses on activities and strategies aimed at improving teaching and learning for the benefit of students.

Principals can improve school success by influencing educational structures, processes, and teachers. With the right training and experience, the principal is in the best position to ensure school improvement (Lunenberg & Orstein, 2012). The leadership practices of a principal determine the teachers' job satisfaction and the overall success of the school. This is because when teachers are satisfied with their job they will likely implement the curriculum effectively, hence high students' achievement (Kars & Inandi, 2018; Mehdihezad & Mansouri, 2016; Baptiste, 2019). As curriculum-instructional leaders, the principal needs to be familiar with the context in which the school operates. This is because the context determines what instructional practices will be appropriate for a particular school. This reveals that instructional strategies suitable for one school may not be suitable for another school (Hallinger 2011; Clarke & O'Donoghue 2017). In schools, the principal is in charge with the responsibility of coordinating programs and events. The principal is expected to help the school achieved its objectives through effective coordination of the school activities. He or she is also expected to manage the school and ensure that everything is done properly and on time (Quinn, 2002; Bendikson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012). This shows that principals have a pertinent part to play as far as school improvement is concerned. This paper argues that the principal's instructional leadership roles are essential in curriculum implementation

Principal leadership practices are a key factor in school reforms (Reynolds, Hopkins, Potter & Chapman, 2002; Supovitz, Sirinides & May, 2010). Failure to effectively implement curriculum reforms can be attributed to the inability of principals to play the role of curriculum-instructional leaders (Walker, Haiyan & Shuang, 2011). Some principals do not fully know what they are supposed to do as instructional leaders (Mitchell & Castle, 2005). A school principal who performs only managerial functions is not different from managers in any other organization. Most often, Secondary school principals complain they have little time to ensure effective implementation of the curriculum and see themselves more often as general managers. Principals are often engaged with a continual stream of problems that make it difficult for them to leave the office, and they are more concerned about administrative duties than with people (Walker & Qian, 2006; Walker & Hallinger, 2015). Sometimes teachers teach what they want or what they can teach without taking into consideration the need of the students. It is the role of the principal to ensure that teachers teach what is found in the curriculum. Schools in which principals see themselves as instructional leaders perform better than schools in which principals see themselves as managers (Reynolds, Hopkins, Potter & Chapman, 2002; Lunenberg & Orstein, 2012). This is because principals who see themselves as curriculum- instructional leaders devote their time, resources and efforts to ensure effective implementation of the curriculum.

In large schools principals sometimes leave activities related to curriculum activities to head of departments. Some authors support this, saying that a community of teacher leaders could serve as an effective alternative to a school principal (Gronn, 2000; Campbell, 2018). However, literature shows that effective schools are characterized by principals, who see themselves as curriculum-instructional leaders (Knight, 2004; Hallinger, 2005). This shows that it is indeed necessary for principals to be curriculum-instructional leaders. Curriculum leadership is a key aspect of the school principals' role (Mitchell & Castle, 2005; Sun, &

Leithwood, 2015). Effective principals need to be concerned about teaching and learning activities. Principals who have abandoned teaching for a long period see themselves as incapable of being curriculum-instructional leaders (Hallinger, 2005). Mitchell and Castle (2005) found out that some principals believe that they are not effective instructional leaders. Principals who are knowledgeable in classroom practices motivate teachers to engage in collaborative activities that facilitate teaching and learning (Goddard, Goddard, Kim, & Miller, 2015). Schools in which principals frequently monitor teaching and learning and provide instructional support and work together with teachers as a team are effective. When principals provide instructional support to teachers will likely improve curriculum implementation, hence students' achievement (Hallinger 2005; Young, Anderson & Nash, 2017).

Principals have an Important Role to Play in Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation refers to the actual teaching stage. It is largely the classroom efforts of the staff and students of a school in putting into operation the curriculum document. It is the task of translating the curriculum document into the operating curriculum by the combined efforts of the students, teachers, principals and others concerned. Ruebling, Stow, Kayona & Clarke, (2004) stated that the poor performance of students is as a result of ineffective leadership behavior related specifically to developing and monitoring the implementation of curriculum. There is a need for principals to focus on curriculum implementation to improve students' achievement. In this contemporary and changing world, the question of what is worth teaching has become so complex (Eacott, 2010). To ensure the effective understanding of the curriculum implementation process teachers must be well versed with the curriculum design procedures which refers to the way the various parts of the curriculum are arranged to form a whole. Teachers need some basic skills such as communication skills, questioning techniques, classroom management skills, effective use of reinforcement to effectively implement the curriculum. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that teachers are well equipped with those skills. Ruebling et.al (2004) found out that principals are not effective when it comes to evaluating curriculum implementation.

The guidance and support of principals are necessary to ensure effective curriculum implementation. Without the principal's guidance and efforts, teachers may not be able to effectively implement modifications or change as far as curriculum implementation is concerned (Fullan, 2001). Only principals with curriculum-instructional leadership skills can effectively implement curriculum reforms that can lead to the sustained improvement of student's achievement (Hallinger, 2011; Dematthews, 2014). The effective curriculum implementation greatly depends upon the nature of leadership within the school. An instructional leader is one who supports and develops high-quality instructional practices, learning communities, develop and implement policies that support student achievement, provide feedback on instruction, model effective instruction, and support the use of assessment data (Ainley & Carstens, 2018)

There is often a gap between the written curriculum and the taught curriculum. It is the responsibility of the principal to minimize the gap. For this to be done teachers need to be allowed to share the challenges they faced as curriculum implementers. There is a need for principals to be directly involved in the curriculum of schools (Dematthews, 2014; Gawlik, 2018). Principals need to balance administrative roles with the curriculum-instructional role to facilitate school improvement. Failure to effectively implement the curriculum can be attributed to the principal lack of skills in curriculum leadership (Walker, Haiyan, Shuang, 2011).

For curriculum implementation to be successful, there is a need to plan the scheme of work from the syllabus, the teaching units from the scheme of work and the lessons from the teaching unit. The curriculum requires a lot of effort and time to break it down into teaching units. It is the responsibility of the principal to assist teachers. The leadership style of principals influences the school environment and classroom teaching practices (Hallinger, 2011; Gawlik, 2018). A principal who practice instructional leadership and coordinate core functions of schools has been found to have a great impact on student learning outcomes (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe 2008; Sun & Leithwood, 2015). For meaningful planning to occur the teacher must be aware of the desired outcomes. The instructional objective must be stated clearly. A good instructional objective

(behavioral objective) must consist of components such as the condition, performance, product, and criterion. As curriculum-instructional leaders, principals need to assist teachers in translating concepts and topics into activities that are meaningful to the learners. Effective schools have principals who exhibit strong curriculum-instructional leadership as well as essential management skills (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2013). Low student achievement can be attributed to failure to effectively monitor curriculum implementation (Ruebling, Stow, Kayona & Clarke, 2004; Walker, Haiyan, Shuang, 2011)

The Curriculum-instructional Leadership Roles Principals are expected to perform.

Firstly, the principal as a curriculum-instructional leader needs to make the vision of the school clear and communicate the goals and objectives of the school with everyone involved in curriculum implementation (Hallinger, 2017; Campbell, 2018; Baptiste, (2019). He or she is also expected to provide a strategic plan showing clearly the activities and resources needed to attain the objectives. Principals are also expected to define and communicate the mission of the school to teachers, students, and other educational stakeholders. By communicating the mission of the school with other stakeholders it can lead to some modifications which are essential for students' learning (Printy & Marks, 2006; Spiro, 2013; Timar & Chyu, 2010). When all the stakeholders are involved in formulating the school objectives it can increase their level of commitment towards the achievement of those objectives (Silins & Mulford, 2004; Young, Anderson & Nash, 2017). Principals who can create a good working relationship with all the stakeholders involved in the implementation process can effectively motivate them hence, increasing students' achievement (Berson & Oreg, 2016; Sebastian, Allensworth, & Huang, 2016; Baptiste, 2019).

Secondly, principals as curriculum-instructional leaders are expected to involve community members in school reforms. Listen to the needs of the community and invite parents and members of the community to attain and make suggestions on school improvement and also to showcase the achievement of the school (King, 2000; Marks & Printy, 2003; Silins & Mulford, 2004). He or she is also expected to be informed about societal needs in order to direct teaching and learning to meet the needs of society. Principals are expected to ensure that the curriculum of schools meets the expectations of the community (Hansen, 2018; Beam, Russell, Claxton, & Smith, 2016). The principal is also expected to make connections with the business world to know what knowledge and skills students need to acquire to meet up with the job market (Whale, 2000; Knight, 2004).

Thirdly, principals need to take into consideration relevant data sources to develop realistic goals and objectives (Bowers, 2009; Copland, & Swinnerton, 2007; Luo, 2008; Kurland, Peretz, & HertzLazarowitz, 2010; Schlidkamp, Ehren, & Lai, 2012). One of the roles of a principal as an instructional leader is to effectively use assessment data to improve students' achievement. The principal needs to ensure that teachers draw lesson plans before going to class and that the lesson suits the learners' developmental stages. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that lessons address inclusion because in classrooms there are usually students with different learning styles. Some learn best by listening (auditory learners), others by seeing (visual learners) and others by doing (kinesthetic learners). It is the responsibility of the principal to make sure that the needs of all the students are made. Principals need to ensure that instructional materials are adequate and readily available to teachers. In most developing countries, teachers go to classrooms without instructional materials. This type of situation shows that principals in such schools are not effectively performing their curriculum-instructional role ((Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Walker, & Hallinger, 2015; Baptiste, 2019). Lack of instructional materials may not only affect the implementation of the curriculum but it might also cause teachers to leave the teaching profession to other professions (Bahtilla, 2017)

Likewise, the principal is expected to facilitate teachers' growth, this can be done by observing teachers presenting lessons in class once in a while to evaluate how instruction is carried out and give feedback to the teachers. The feedback given by principals will help teachers improve their classroom interactions with students. Principals as curriculum-instructional leaders need to devote time in supervising and monitoring the teaching and learning process and for this to be effectively carried out; principals need to be knowledgeable about teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2017; Gawlik 2018). The principal needs to ensure

that teachers present lessons systematically, using instructional materials and strategies appropriately. They are expected to support and encourage teachers to effectively implement the curriculum and to promote discussions on instructional issues they have observed among teachers that need to be improved and encourage them to be creative (Farnham, 2000; Young, Anderson & Nash, 2017). Through direct supervision of instruction, principals can enhance teachers' self-efficacy which can improve teaching practices (Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Lui, 2017). Principals with instructional leadership skills can influence teachers' commitment and performance (Batool, 2017; Kars & Inandi, 2018; Rana, Malik, & Hussain, 2016).

Similarly, principals as curriculum-instructional leaders are responsible for stimulating growth in teachers by providing in-service training and organizing professional development programs to enable teachers to improve their teaching skills. Principals need to develop professional learning communities for teachers to discuss and share ideas (Marks & Printy, 2003). Principals can use faculty meetings to stimulate discussions about specific curriculum elements that are not being implemented as expected and create opportunities for staff development programs to address critical issues. Today the whole is going digital; it is the responsibility of the principal to provide technological training in the form of professional development programs to teachers to enhance curriculum implementation (Anderson & Dexter, 2005).

Furthermore, a principal as a curriculum-instructional leader is expected to Plan, monitor and evaluate school programs to identify problem areas and find immediate solutions to them. This can help to improve teaching and learning, hence facilitating the achievement of school goals and objectives. The principal as an instructional leader is also expected to evaluate and monitor student progress through test scores (Walker, & Hallinger, 2015). The principal is also expected to be aware of students' motivations and interests (Wanzare & Dacosta, 2001; Rigby, 2014). He or she is expected to supervise and evaluate instruction. As a curriculum-instructional leader, the principal is expected to ensure that the objectives of schools are translated into practice at the classroom level. The principal is expected to coordinate the curriculum activities, for example translating the scheme of work together with the teachers into meaningful teaching units. Research reveals the principal as a curriculum-instructional leader needs to collaborate with other faculty members to plan, implement and evaluate the curriculum (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Fuller, Young, & Baker, 2011; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). Matching instructional objectives with instructional materials and ensuring a balance between vertical and horizontal consideration of the curriculum. Ineffective schools, principals devote time to instructional activities more than managerial activities (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Neumerski, 2013; Liu, 2017).

Besides, the principal is expected to create and enforce policies that prioritized teaching and learning. That is, teaching and learning should be the main objective of the school. He or she is expected to promote quality instruction by coordinating teaching and learning. The principal is expected to promote content coverage and protect instructional time by not involving teachers and students on activities that can disrupt effective teaching and learning. Extra-curricular activities are important because they enable students to develop self-esteem and acquire social skills but they should not occupy teaching time. Extra-curriculum activities enhance students' social development (Holloway, 2002; Findlay, 2015; Fredericks & Simpkins, 2011). It is good for school principals to ensure the holistic development of students (Goldring, Huff, May & Camburn, 2008; Walker, Haiyan & Shuang, 2011). Principals as curriculum-instructional leaders can shape teaching practices and classroom interactions to improve teaching and learning (Ross & Gray, 2006; Liu, 2017). Principals who see themselves as Curriculum-instructional leaders work closely with teachers to ensure effective teaching and learning. They spent time devising strategies to facilitate the achievement of school goals and objectives. As a curriculum-instructional leader, the principal is expected to monitor student's progress using criterion and standardized-reference tests to identify students' problems and evaluate their progress. The principal is also expected to use test scores to modify school objectives. The principal as a curriculum-instructional leader must also set up inclusive school structures to help students with special needs (Cooner, Tochtermann, & Garrison-Wade, 2005; Cruzeiro & Morgan, 2006; Hoy, 2012; Pazey & Cole, 2016). The principal is also expected to plan, develop, coordinate, and promote the school-based curriculum.

As curriculum-instructional leaders, principals are expected to develop and enforcing homework policies to promote independent studies.

Moreover, principals are expected to create an environment that can stimulate teaching and learning. They are expected to know the need levels of all the teachers and motivate them to effectively implement the curriculum. The principal as a Curriculum leader needs to ensure that the school environment is conducive for both teaching and learning. Principals who create a friendly and supportive school culture suppress fear in both students and teachers which fosters teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2003; Baptiste, 2019). May and Supovitz, (2011) found out that, principals' influence on instructional improvement is significantly related to their interactions with individual teachers. As a curriculum-instructional leader, he or she needs to enhance teachers' self-esteem and motivation. This makes it easier for them to direct and coordinate teachers' instructional practices (May & Supovitz, 2011; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Liu, 2017). There is a need for an environment that allows freedom of expression so that teachers can feel free to share their problems with the school principal or with other teachers (Sweetland & Hoy, 2000; Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Principals need to know the needs level of each teacher because once a need is satisfied it's no longer serving as a motivator. The principal can know the need level of individual teachers through effective communication. Through effective communication, the principal can find out the motivational need of each teacher. The principal is also expected to create incentives and reward systems that stimulate academic success.

Lastly, a curriculum-instructional leader ensures that teachers have adequate tools, and resources required for effective curriculum implementation (Fullan, 2001; Ruebling, Stow, Kayona & Clarke, 2004). In case there is an innovation in the written curriculum, a curriculum-instructional leader makes sure that all teachers understand and use the new curriculum documents effectively and efficiently. It is the responsibility of the principal to provide the necessary instructional materials to ensure that teachers and students acquire appropriate computer skills that can facilitate teaching and learning (Farnham, 2000; Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008). The principal themselves are also expected as curriculum-instructional leaders to have the necessary computer skills require to energize and improve instruction.

Empirical Review

Firstly, Goddard et.al (2015) carried out a study titled: A theoretical and empirical analysis of the roles of instructional leadership, teacher collaboration, and collective efficacy beliefs in support of student learning. The survey research design was used. The population of the study was made up of 1,606 teachers. The study found out that Principals' instructional leadership may enhance teachers' collaboration to improve instruction, and when teachers work as a team it can lead to the effective implementation of the curriculum. The study reveals that principal instructional leadership has a direct effect on teachers' collaboration. The study concluded that a principal with strong instructional leadership can create an enabling environment to facilitate teaching and foster students' learning. This study shows that to improve curriculum implementation, there is a need for principals to ensure collaboration between teachers because, through collaboration, teachers can share ideas and help one another in solving instructional issues. The principal is responsible for developing a school-based curriculum together with the teachers.

Secondly, Gawlik (2018) carried out a study titled; Instructional leadership and the charter school principal in the United State of America. A case study research design was used. The objective of the study was to examine how principals at four charter schools enact instructional leadership in their respective schools and to find out what barriers the principals encounter when enacting instructional leadership at their school sites. The population of the study was made up of charter school principals. Purposive and convenience sampling was used to select the sample population. An interview guide was used as an instrument for data collection. Data was also collected through observation. The study found three main categories of instructional leadership practices which include; developing a school mission, managing curriculum, and instruction, and promoting school climate and culture. Similarly, Allensworth, (2012) found out that principals need to establish a positive school climate to enhance teaching and learning as well as students' achievement.

Principals' encountered problems related to budgeting and staffing while attempting to engage in instructional leadership. This indicates that principals need financial assistance to effectively carry out curriculum- instructional leadership.

Thirdly, Hallinger, Walker, Nguyen, Truong, and Nguyen (2017) carried out a study title: Perspectives on principal instructional leadership in Vietnam. The objective of the study was to describe the perspectives of Vietnamese school principals toward their role as instructional leaders, describe instructional leadership practices perceived as important by the principals, and develop a preliminary instructional leadership model. The qualitative research approach was used. The researchers employed a semi-structured interview with 27 school principals. The grounded theory approach was used to analyze data to propose a preliminary conceptual model. The study supports the fact that the instructional leadership role of a principal depends on a particular context because school leadership is determined by features in a particular society.

Furthermore, Alsaleh (2018) carried out a study title; investigating instructional leadership in Kuwait's educational reform context: school leaders' perspectives. The objective of the study was to explore the practices of Kuwait school principals as instructional leaders during education reforms. The qualitative research approach was used. Open-ended interviews were used for data collection. The population of the study was made up of 28 principals who were randomly selected. The study found out that, due to the centralized nature of the educational sector, principals faced difficulties in performing their functions as school leaders. This finding shows that the bureaucratic nature of the educational sector can inhibit principals from performing their curriculum-instructional role effectively. This means that for principals to practice curriculum-instructional leadership effectively there is a need for decentralization.

In addition, Gaziel (2007) carried out a study title; re-examining the relationship between principal's instructional/educational leadership and student achievement. The sample population was made up of 256 teachers from 32 secondary schools in Israel. The study found out that, the time principals invest in instructional leadership activities is inadequate. They neglected activities such as supervising and evaluating instruction, providing incentives to teachers, motivating students, and promoting teachers' professional development.

Similarly, Blase and Blase (2002) carried out a study title; effective instructional leadership teachers' perspectives on how principals promote teaching and learning in schools. The objective of the study was for teachers to identify and describe characteristics of principals that enhanced their classroom instruction and what impacts those characteristics had on them. The population of the study was made up of 800 teachers, 251 males, and 558 females. An open-ended questionnaire was used for data collection. The study found out that principals who communicate effectively encouraged teachers to critically reflect on their learning and professional practice. Through communication, principals give teachers suggestions and feedback that help to promote growth.

Moreover, Hallinger and Lee (2013) carried out a study title; mapping instructional leadership in Thailand: Has education reform impacted principal practice? The objective of the study was to explore the principal's changing role as an instructional leader in Thailand, where education reforms adopted in 1999 sought to change modal approaches to teaching and learning as well as the school management. The survey research design was used. The study found out that despite new system expectations for a principal to act as instructional leaders, the predominant orientation of Thai principals remains largely unchanged. This reveals that since the curriculum- instructional leadership role of the principal seems to be new in many developing countries there is a need to train and motivate principals to effectively carry out this role.

May and Supovitz (2011) carried out a study titled; the scope of principal efforts to improve instruction. The objective of the study was to examine the scope of principal efforts to improve instruction. The survey research design was used in addition to data from principal web log the population of the study was made up of 51 schools in an urban southeastern district in the United States. The authors develop models to examine differences in average instructional change at the school level and variability in instructional change across

teachers within schools. The study found out that the scope of principals' instructional leadership activities varies from one school to another and that principals used different strategies to handle instructional issues. They used broad approaches to handle issues that affect the entire school or department and specific strategies to handle individual issues. The study also found out that, the frequency at which the principal handle individual teacher instructional problems depends on the number of times the individual teacher discuss instructional issues with him or her. To an extent, this approach can help to improve teaching and learning but the fact that the principal only attends to individual teachers' instructional needs when they report a problem is not appropriate, what if the teacher does not report? This indicates that there is a need for principals to observe teachers in class occasionally or create an environment in which every teacher will feel free to discuss his or her challenges.

Conclusion

From the findings, it shows that for principals to perform the curriculum-instructional role effectively there is a need for principals to have substantial knowledge on curriculum planning, curriculum implementation, and evaluation. This indicates that in appointing principals there is a need to take into consideration their knowledge in teaching and learning. Besides, the principal needs effective communication skills and the ability to work with other people to be able to discuss curriculum issues with teachers, parents and other stakeholders in education. The principal also needs to be enthusiastic and confident to effectively perform this important role. There is a need to include instructional leadership as a course in educational leadership programs to build the capacity of future educational leaders especially in countries like Cameroon where instructional leadership seems to be a new area. It is also important that newly appointed principals should receive professional guidance and training from experienced school leaders.

Summarily, the vital roles of principals as curriculum-instructional leaders include; communicating the vision and mission of the school, using assessment data to improve teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, providing professional development programs for teachers, creating and enforcing policies that prioritized teaching and learning. Creating a stimulating environment that can enhance teaching and learning, making sure that teachers have adequate tools, and resources required for effective curriculum implementation, ensuring effective communication between principals, teachers and other stakeholders involved in curriculum implementation to ensure that the curriculum is effectively implemented; motivating and encourage teachers to effectively implement the curriculum; setting realistic rules and regulations to ensure the success of the implementation process.

It is important to point out that, most studies on principal leadership or school leadership in Cameroon focus on democratic, authoritative, laissez-faire and transformational leadership styles. This study recommends that more empirical studies should be carried out on principal curriculum-instructional leadership in Cameroon schools. Research on principal curriculum-instructional leadership is necessary for school improvement. There is a need for more empirical and review studies on Cameroon educational leadership that would serve as the basis of comparative studies with other countries.

References

- Ainley, J., & Carstens, R. (2018). Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS): Conceptual Framework, OECD Education Working Papers, No. 187, OECD Publishing, Paris
- Anderson, R. E., & Dexter, S. (2005). School technology leadership: An empirical investigation of prevalence and effect. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 41(1), 49-82.
- Bahtilla, M. (2017). The impact of working conditions on teachers' attrition: *International Journal of Education and Research*, 5(6), 59-78.
- Baptiste, M. (2019). No teacher left behind: the impact of principal leadership styles on teacher job satisfaction and student success: *Journal of International Education and Leadership*, 9(1), 1-10
- Bendikson, L. Robinson, V., & Hattie, J. (2012). Principal instructional leadership and secondary school performance. *Research Information for Teachers*, 12(1), 2-8
- Berson, Y., & Oreg, S. (2016). The role of school principals in shaping children's values. *Psychological science: Research, theory, & application in psychology and related sciences*, 27(12), 1539-1549.
- Beam, A. P. Claxton, R. L., & Smith, S. J. (2016). Challenges for novice school leaders: facing today's issues in school administration. *Faculty Publications and Presentations*, 23(13), 145-162.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2000). Effective instructional leadership: *Journal of Educational Administration*, 38, (2), 130 - 141
- Brown, K. M. (2004). Leadership for social justice and equity: Weaving a transformative framework and pedagogy. *Educational Administrative Quarterly*, 40(1), 79-110.
- Campbell, J. W. (2018). Efficiency, incentives, and transformational leadership: Understanding collaboration preferences in the public sector: *Public Performance & Management Review*, 41(2), 277-299.
- Clarke, S., and T. O'Donoghue. (2017). Educational leadership and context: a rendering of an inseparable relationship." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 65, (2), 167-182.
- Cooner, D., Tochtermann, S., & Garrison-Wade, D. (2005). Preparing principals for leadership in special education: *Journal of Principal Preparation and Development*, 6(9), 19-24

- Copland, M. A. (2003). The leadership of inquiry: Building and sustaining capacity for school improvement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(4), 375-395.
- Cruzeiro, P. A., & Morgan, R. L. (2006). The rural principal's role with consideration for special education. *Education*, 126(3), 569-584
- Dematthews, D, E. (2014). How to improve curriculum leadership: integrating leadership theory and management strategies, the clearinghouse: *Journal of educational strategies, issues, and ideas*, 87(12), 192-196
- Dufour, R. (2002). The learning-centered principal: *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 12-15
- Eacott, S. (2010). Studying school leadership practice: A methodological discussion. *Issues In Educational Research*, 20(9), 220-233.
- Farnham, A. (2000). Buying new technology? Don't forget the music teacher! *Principal*, 79(3), 42-44.
- Findlay, N. M. (2015). Discretion in student discipline: Insight into elementary principals' decision making. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 51(3), 472-507
- Fredricks, J., & Simpkins, S. (2011). Promoting positive youth development through organized after-school activities: Taking a closer look at the participation of ethnic minority youth. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6(7), 280-287.
- Fuller, E., Young, M., & Baker, B. D. (2011). Do principal preparation programs influence student achievement through the building of teacher-team qualifications by the principal? An exploratory analysis: *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(1), 173-216.
- Fullan, M. G. (2002). The change leader: *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 16-20
- Gawlik, M. (2018). Instructional leadership and the charter school principal, *School Leadership & Management*, 6 (4), 234-245
- .Gaziel, H, H. (2007). Re-Examining the relationship between principal's instructional/educational leadership and student achievement: *Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(1), 17-24.
- Goddard, R. Goddard, Y, Kim, S., & Miller, R. (2015). A theoretical and empirical analysis of the roles of instructional leadership, teacher collaboration, and collective efficacy beliefs in support of student learning. *American Journal of Education*, 121(4), 501-530
- Goldring, E., Porter, A., Murphy, J., Elliott, S. N., & Cravens, X. (2009). Assessing learning-centered leadership: Connections to research, professional standards, and current practices. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 8(1), 1-36.

- Goldring, E., Huff, J., May, H., & Camburn, E. (2008). School context and individual characteristics: What influences principal practice? *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(3), 332-352.
- Gronn, P. (2000). Distributed properties: A new architecture for leadership: *Educational Management and Administration*, 28(3), 317-338.
- Hallinger, P. Walker, A. Nguyen, D, T. Truong, T., & Nguyen, T, T. (2017). Perspectives on principal instructional leadership in Vietnam: a preliminary model. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 55(2), 222-239
- Hallinger, P. (2005). Instructional leadership and the school principal: a passing fancy that refuses to fade away. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 4(3), 221-239.
- Hallinger, P., & Lee, M. (2013). Mapping instructional leadership in Thailand: Has Education reform impacted principal practice? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 42(6), 6-28
- Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for learning: lessons from 40 years of empirical research.” *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49 (2), 125-142.
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge: Journal of Education*, 33(3), 329-352.
- Hansen, C. (2018). Why rural principals leave. *Rural Educator*, 39(1), 41-53.
- Holloway, J. H. (2002). Extracurricular activities and student motivation: *Educational Leadership*, 60(1), 80-81
- Hoy, W. (2012). School characteristics that make a difference for the achievement of all students: A 40-year odyssey. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 50(1), 76-97
- Kars, M., & Inandi, Y. (2018). Relationship between school principals' leadership behaviors and teachers' organizational trust. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 74(8) 145-164.
- Knight, J. (2004). Instructional coaches make progress through partnership. *Journal of Staff Development*, 25(2), 32-37.
- Kurland, H., Peretz, H., & Hertz-Lazarowitz, R. (2010). Leadership style and organizational learning: The mediate effect of the school vision. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 48(1), 7-30.
- Liu, M, S (2017). A multilevel analysis of the relationship between principals' perceived practices of instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy perceptions. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 55(1), 49 - 69
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2005). A review of transformational school leadership research, 1996-2005. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 4(3), 177-199.

- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. P. (2012). The nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(3), 387-423.
- Leithwood, K. Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership & Management*, 28(1), 27-42.
- Lunenburg, F. C., & Lunenburg, M. R. (2013). Convergent Roles of the School Principal: Leadership, Managerial, and Curriculum-Instructional. *International Journal of Education*, 1(1), 1-9
- Luo, M. (2008). Structural equation modeling for high school principals' data-driven decision making: An analysis of information use environments. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 603-634
- May, H & Supovitz, J.A. (2011). The scope of principal efforts to improve instruction: *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(2), 332-352.
- Marks, H., & Printy, S. (2003). Principal leadership and school performance: An integration of transformational and instructional leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 34 (3), 370-397.
- Mehdinezhad, V., & Mansouri, M. (2016). School principals' leadership behaviors and their relationship with the teachers' sense of self-efficacy. *International Journal of Instruction*, 9(2), 51-60.
- Mitchell, C & Castle, J. B. (2005). The instructional role of elementary school Principals: *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28(3), 409-433
- Neumerski, C. M. (2013). Rethinking instructional leadership, a review: what do we know about principal, teacher, and coach instructional leadership, and where should we go from here? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 49 (2), 310-347
- Pazey, B. L., & Cole, H. (2016). Tensions and transformations: Using an ethical framework to teach a course on disability law to future educational leaders. *Journal of School Leadership*, 25(6), 234-241.
- Printy, S. M. (2008). Leadership for teacher learning: A community of practice perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(2), 187-226
- Printy, S. M., & Marks, H. M. (2006). Shared leadership for teacher and student learning. *Theory into Practice*, 45(2), 125-132
- Quinn, D. M. (2002). The impact of principal leadership behaviors on instructional practice and student engagement. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 40(5), 447-468
- Reynolds, D. Hopkins, D. Potter, D., & Chapman, C. (2002). School improvement for schools facing challenging circumstances: a review of research and practice. *School Leadership and Management*, 22 (3), 243-256.

- Rigby, J. G. (2014). Three logics of instructional leadership: *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 50 (4), 610-644
- Robinson, V. M. (2010). From instructional leadership to leadership capabilities: Empirical findings and methodological challenges, *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 9(1), 1-26,
- Robinson, V. M., Lloyd, C. A., & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: an analysis of the differential effects of leadership types. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44 (5), 635- 674
- Rogan, J. M., & Grayson, D. J. (2003). Towards a theory of curriculum implementation with particular reference to science education in developing countries, *International Journal of Science Education*, 25(10) 1171-1204,
- Ross, J.A., & Gray, P. (2006). School leadership and student achievement: the mediating effects of teacher beliefs. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29(3), 798-822.
- Ruebling, C. E., Stow, S. B., Kayona, F. A., & Clark, A. N. (2004). Instructional leadership: An essential ingredient for improving student learning. *The Educational Forum*, 68(3), 243-253,
- Sebastian, J., & Allensworth, E. (2012). The influence of principal leadership on classroom instruction and student learning: a study of mediated pathways to learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(4), 626-663
- Sebastian, J., Allensworth, E., & Huang, H. (2016). The role of teacher leadership in how principals influence classroom instruction and student learning. *American Journal of Education*, 123(1), 69-108.
- Schildkamp, K., Ehren, M., & Lai, M. K. (2012). Editorial article for the special issue on data-based decision making around the world: From policy to practice to results. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 23(2), 123-131.
- Silins, H., & Mulford, B. (2004). Schools as learning organizations: Effects on teacher leadership and student outcomes. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 15(3-4), 443-466
- Spiro, J. D. (2013). Effective principals in action: *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94(8), 27-31.
- Supovitz, J., Sirinides, P & MaY, H. (2010). How principals and peers influence teaching and learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46 (1) 31-56
- Sun, J. P., & Leithwood, K. (2015). Direction-setting school leadership practices: a meta-analytical review of evidence about their influence. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 26(4), 499-523.
- Sweetland, S., & Hoy, W. K. (2000). School characteristics and educational outcomes: Toward an organizational model of student achievement in middle schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 36(5), 703-729.

- Timar, T. B., & Chyu, K. K. (2010). State strategies to improve low-performing schools: California's high-priority schools grant program. *Teachers College Record, 112*(7), 1897-1936.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2009). Fostering teacher professionalism in schools: The role of leadership orientation and trust. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 45*(2), 217-247.
- Whale, D.E. (2000). The principal and the business manager: *Principal, 79*(3), 36-38.
- Walker, A, Haiyan, Q, Shuang, Z. (2011). Secondary school principals in curriculum reform: victims or accomplices? *Frontiers of Education in China, 6*(3), 388-403
- Walker, A., & Qian, H. Y. (2006). Beginning principals: Balancing at the top of the greasy pole. *Journal of Educational Administration, 44*(4), 297-309
- Walker, A., & Hallinger, P. (2015). A synthesis of reviews of research on principal leadership in East Asia. *Journal of Educational Administration, 53*(4), 554-570
- Wanzare, Z., & Dacosta, J, L. (2001). Rethinking instructional leadership roles of the school principal: challenges and prospects: *Journal of Educational Thought, 35*(3), 269-295
- Young, M, D. Anderson, E., & Nash, A, N. (2017). Preparing School Leaders: *Standards-Based Curriculum in the United States: Leadership and Policy in Schools, 16*(2) 228-271