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Constituency Building and Resource Provision in Curriculum Change in Post-Independence Zimbabwe

Manasa Munashe Madondo[1], Hedwick Chigwida[2], Wilson Banda[3]

[1,2,3] Department of Educational Foundations, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe.

ABSTRACT: This article examines the role of constituency building and resource provision in the process of curriculum change in post-1980 Zimbabwe. It mainly utilises data from existent literature and documents to explore the role of these factors in curriculum change in the 1980 to 2014 and the 2015-2022 Zimbabwe Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (ZCF 2015-2022). Based on an understanding that the curriculum change process encompasses phases of; initiation and conceptualisation, design, and implementation, the study examines how constituency building and resource provision impacted and can impact on these processes. The focus on constituency building and resource provision is on the realization that of the many variables that determine the nature and fate of curriculum change most are closely linked to these two factors. The study shows that in the period prior to 2015, curriculum change was spearheaded by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) Subject Panels (SP). In contrast, the ZCF (2015-2022) process was preceded by a new practice in constituency building in the form of a nationwide consultation exercise. With regards to resource provision, similar challenges were experienced in both the pre- and post-2015 periods. Overall, the level of constituency building, and resource provision efforts were far from being ideal. Main recommendation of the study is that attention to constituency building and resource provision in the various phases of the curriculum process would go a long way to ensure successful curriculation.

Corresponding Author:

Wilson Banda

KEYWORDS:

curriculation, curriculum change, constituency building, design, implementation, initiation and conceptualisation, resource provision

INTRODUCTION

While curriculum change can occur spontaneously as unplanned change, more often it takes the form of planned change. In the context of this article, a long-standing rendering of planned curriculum change by Bennis (1966) still applies. This sees curriculum change as a deliberate and collaborative process which brings together a change agent and the client system to solve a problem, to plan, to attain a higher level of functioning and to supply valid knowledge (Bennis, 1966, in Harris 1975:296). The process of curriculum change encompasses curriculum development work or curriculation, encompassing the main phases of; i) needs assessment, ii) the planning phase, iii) content development, iv) pilot testing and revision, and v) the completed curriculum package (Ramadhani, 2017). In this discourse we take on board Adams and Cohen's (in Bishop; 1986:10) eleven elements which they propose should be considered in the five phases of planned curriculum change stretching from the conceptualisation to institutionalization. The eleven elements are: i) the personnel, ii) the task, iii) the method, iv) equipment, v) plant, vi) the cost, vii) social contexts, viii) time, ix) scheduling, x) the rationale, and xi) the effects of the innovation. These elements are intertwined in operation. Thus, the operation of a single element may impact on the operation of other elements.

Conceptual framework on curriculum change variables

Here we propose a conceptual framework where these 11 variables feed into two factors identified by Sarason (1982) namely, *constituency building* and *provision of resources* as also important in the quest for a successful curriculum change process. This framework, as shown in Figure 1, represents a conceptual handle enabling us to recast the combined curriculum change variables proposed by Adams and Cohen (1986) and Sarason (1982).

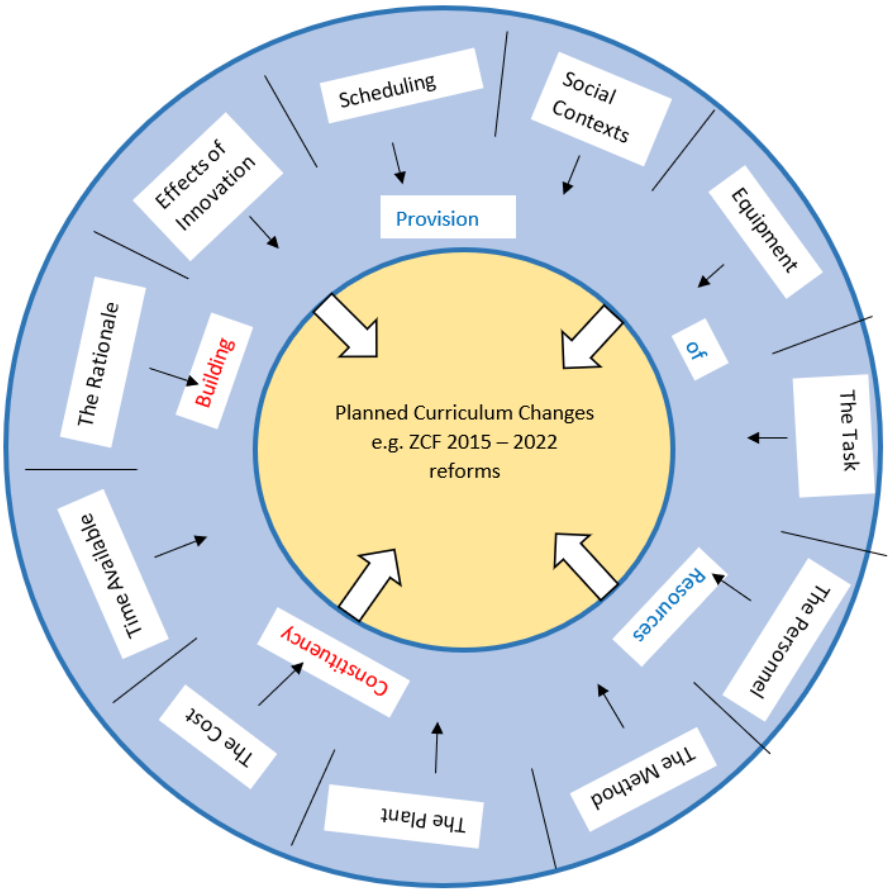

Figure 1: Elements of planned curriculum change

The framework portrays two elements of constituency building and the provision of resources as subsuming most other elements which in this article indirectly become part of the role of constituency building and resource provision in the process of curriculum change in post-1980 Zimbabwe. It is argued that in most Global South countries, where centralized curriculum planning is the norm, though the operation of these two elements is far from ideal, building stakeholder advocacy coupled with the efficient and effective use of scarce resources work to the best advantage of curriculum practice in such countries.

Process, rationale, and players in constituency building

This continuing reference to constituency building begs a nuanced examination of what it is all about. Planned curriculum change should always be viewed in relation to the values, goals, and expectations of the various people it serves who are the stakeholders in the curriculum and education system. Literature is replete with the invocation that teachers and local policy custodians, among other interest groups, need to share the same assumptions and meaning of the curriculum as those encased by a new curriculum (Tabulawa, 1998). Such shared understanding may ensure less troubled implementation. Proponents of change, be it school-based teachers or outside agents, should seek the support of '… the individual groups without whom the proposed change will not occur', (Sarason 1993:293). Hudson, et al., (2019) stress that such support must be 'active stakeholder engagement' which must be nurtured. This process of developing client support and advocacy for change can be likened to building a constituency. Constituency building as an element in planned change consists of cultivating a shared vision that results from dynamic interaction among participants, stakeholders, and the proponents of change (Fullan 1993).

One way to look at constituency building is to view it as a collaborative policy making strategy where the outcome of curriculum development is a curriculum policy document to be enacted just as other policies in society (Moodley, 2013). As with other processes of planned social change and policy design, the design of curriculum change requires continual collaboration amongst many stakeholders at various levels including with "downstream" actors, end users, frontline staff, and other local service providers. Specifically, curriculum stakeholders include clients of the curriculum change such as parents, learners, teachers, school heads, workers' unions and associations, employers, politicians, religious groups, and the community. Ansell, et al.'s (2017) invocation on policy formulation generally, also applies to the design of curriculum change. This is implying that the process must connect all actors horizontally and vertically in a process of collaboration and joint deliberation.

A question which must be addressed in this coverage of curriculum change constituency building is *why it is needed at all?* Conversely put, *what are the consequences of a lack of stakeholder involvement?* Literature is awash with justifications on why we

must be preoccupied with constituency building in curriculum change and other policy reforms generally (Pratt, 1980; Sarason, 1982; Bishop, 1986; Hudson et al., 2019). Failure of curriculum changes to take effect often reflects a failure to take on board the views of parents, teachers, and other interest groups as constituencies who must be involved in all stages of the curriculum change process. However, often and for plausible reasons at that, the central authorities are won't to steer curriculum change with limited involvement of these other players. However, it is also worth remembering that no one person or entity can possibly understand the complexities of change. Going it alone implies that whenever conditions in schools become a matter of public debate and outcry, criticism is directed at change agents and those controlling education. The involvement of stakeholders in the whole process of planned change goes a long way in anticipating and partially responding to the polemic issues like *who controls schools* and *what are schools for?* As Fullan (1993: 29) opines, "ownership comes through learning that arises from full engagement (of participants, stakeholders and proponents of change) in solving problems". For global south states where stakeholder advocacy is weak, part of the duty of the change agent is to cultivate participation. Stakeholders should regard their participation in educational matters as a duty and not courtesy. Such stakeholder advocacy works best when there is a predisposing macro socio-cultural milieu.

One way to understand the rationale for a *change constituency* is through a review of the part played by some of the curriculum stakeholders. In this work the focus is on the role of the change agent in general, the school head and the classroom teacher or facilitator.

The change agent in general

Change agents or change proponents refer to individuals or institutions that transform aspects of the school curriculum. In education such agents can be external or internal to the school. External change agents are common in systems with a centralised curriculum development approach. Examples include ministries of education and curriculum development centres like the CDU in Zimbabwe. In a centralised system major decision that frame the intended change in learning and instruction are controlled by the Ministry at national level. Important decisions on policy objectives, curriculum development, selection of textbooks, and allocation of personnel for public schools is the mandate of the education ministry. Ministerial decisions and mandates are passed down as memoranda, guidelines, and circulars for implementation by schools, teachers, and other local actors. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) as a centralised system utilises CDU subject panels to bring on board inputs from players like, schools, colleges, universities, and others from the private sector. It can be said that in such centralised settings, school level personnel and boards such as school heads, teachers, communities, school districts and school development associations and boards are more of clients or implementers of externally designed curricula. However, these personnel, institutions or organisations can operate as change agents when there is a school-based curriculum development (SBCD) approach to curriculum development. The Zimbabwean system is, as pointed out earlier, essentially a centralised system. However, the increasing involvement of teachers in curriculum work, such as reviews points to a trend that 'empowers' the teachers' curriculum constituency as change agents in curriculum change and the self-improvement of schools.

The change agent, although important in initiating the change process, should involve other players for several reasons. As Sarason (1982:293) has argued, "…the power to propose or legislate change does not obviate the need to develop constituencies". Involving various interest groups in the change process reflects a willingness to redefine power relations. To the change agent, involvement of other players represents a redefinition which serves his or her self-interests in the change process. In harnessing the support and contribution of stakeholders, the change agent insures the innovation against the risk of superficial implementation or outright rejection. Stakeholder involvement redefines the role of clients since the change agent would be forced to abandon typical parochial conceptions of stakeholder or client participation. The participation of parents, teachers, school heads and other community groups underscores that these groups possess the power and knowledge essential to the change process. The stakeholders should be seen as capable of "…understanding and contributing to the substance and the process of change", (Sarason 1982:294). With such involvement, stakeholders build a sense of ownership of the change. That said, however, stakeholder involvement must occur within given parameters. Here the advice by Shaeffer (1994) is that *'the centre is neither omnipotent nor impotent'* is worth remembering. Stakeholder involvement does not have to build unanimous consent; rather it is a search for sufficient common ground to proceed, so as forestall possible conflicts over policy legitimacy and other aspects of the curriculum. It is not a free for all process, rather the centre must continue in the driving seat. It on the basis on this caveat that constituency building with regards to the role of school heads and teachers in curriculation can examined.

The school head

The cause of stakeholder advocacy has an important player in the person of the school head. Irrespective of the source of innovation, the school head has been aptly described as a 'gate keeper' of change (Sarason 1982). He or she has a say on what gets into the school. That is the head must give his/her blessing to an innovation, though admittedly, in centralised systems they may not have much of a choice. The school head defines the roles of the teachers in planning and implementing change. The school climate which can be for, or anti-change closely reflects the head's attitude to the change. Most successful change is rooted on the unwavering support of school heads. However, obstacles such as lack of time, lack of initial training as a curriculum leader and pre-occupation with surviving day to day management challenges, hinder the effectiveness of the school head as a proponent for change (Sarason,

1982). For Zimbabwe in-service training, reduction of workload through delegation, set-ups like the Better Schools Program and decentralization are some of the ways to empower the head to play an active and meaningful role in the curriculum change process.

Teachers: a needful constituency in curriculation

A reading of literature on the need to involve teachers in planned change from conceptualization to institutionalisation, is compelling. Fullan (1993) views teacher involvement as *sine qua non* to successful planned curriculum change. In his view "educational change depends on what teachers do and think (...) it is as simple and as complex as that." (Fullan; 1991:117). In the same vein, Trump, and Miller (1973:35) argue that in final analysis "... the teacher is the new curriculum". Indeed, these superlative depictions of the central role of teacher participation in worthwhile curriculum change underscore the fact that, for the most part, change will flounder or flourish in the hands of the teacher. Teachers are arguably the most important determinant of successful change. In articulating the reasons to build a constituency for change, those which justify teacher involvement can be said to broadly represent those for other stakeholders. The reasons may differ in degree from stakeholder to stakeholder, but in kind, they are the same. The ensuing paragraphs highlight several reasons, which are by no means exhaustive, as to why there is need for meaningful teacher involvement in change processes.

Many writers link teacher involvement to the whole question of teaching as a profession. For example, Tanner and Tanner (1975: 614), quoted in Carl (2009:246), argue that: "(i)f teaching is to be a profession, the teachers must participate in curriculum development at the classroom, school, and school system levels. Professionalism is inextricably intertwined with curriculum development and change." To buttress this argument, is the fact that teaching is an intellectual engagement which gives form to content in shaping the learner's cognitive and emotional development (Pratt, 1980; Alsubaie, 2016). Teachers will shape pupils' development, whether they follow the curriculum or not. So, it may be better to have teachers shape such learner development based on broadly agreed curriculum to which they are part.

Teachers must be involved since they know best what classrooms are like. Oft-times the classroom together with interactions within it are likened to an aeroplane's black box which records its flight history (Cuban, 2013). In a way analogous to aeroplane black boxes, within classrooms is embedded contextual data of the intricate goings-on of this particular social setting to which only teachers and learners are privy. The teacher superintends, for good or for worse, the events of the classroom black box. Thus, in this context, it is when individual teachers alter their own classroom environment that deep rooted change occurs. Hence involving teachers in curriculum change processes is a means to the required deep-rooted change.

Getting teachers to be meaningfully involved is easier said than done. As Pratt (1980) aptly observes, it is fallacious to think that mere teacher participation is the recipe for successful innovation. It is not possible to involve all teachers. This is true given that there will always be laggards and antagonists in any system of change. Thus, it may be prudent to focus on a core group of frontline innovators. However, as Sarason (1982) contends, no one model of teacher involvement can be described as the "how to do it" way. The current Zimbabwean practice of initial nation-wide consultation and subsequent use of subject or learning area panels, in which teachers are participants, is one way of harnessing teacher input into curriculum change and innovation.

Contemporary best-practices recommend teacher involvement in curriculum planning. The traditional top-down approach, which by-passes local actors like teachers in curriculum development work, has long drawn the discontent of curricularists. In Stenhouse's (1975) view to bypass teachers' involvement means bypassing their rationality and their inventiveness. Teachers are not robots who are expected to blindly implement any given change or innovation. Teachers are the implementers who bring a curriculum idea alive in the concrete interaction with learners in the classroom. To leave out teachers and other local level players in the initiation and design of educational change vitiates the realisation of such intended change. Ideally, curriculum change processes and discourses must be made transparent, mostly through teacher participation in curriculation. This creates a framework from which teacher 'dereification' of curriculum documents in their classrooms is possible (Fernandez, Ritchie & Barker, 2008).

The centralised and SBCD approaches can be considered to occupy the opposite ends on a continuum of possible curriculum development approaches and teacher involvement in curriculation. In Zimbabwe, while the centralised approach has dominated curriculum development, some strategies requiring greater school and teacher involvement have been tried. Vandenberghe (2002), cited in Maphosa et al., (2013), contends that enhanced teacher professional collaboration is key to the teacher's full participation in spearheading curriculum innovation at school level. One possible and promising way of enhancing teacher involvement is the use of decentralised teacher cluster resource centres or just clusters. Cluster resource centres are learning and information exchange units.

In Zimbabwe, the resource cluster model was introduced at the turn of the century through the Better Schools Programme (Zimbabwe) [BSPZ]. Ideally teachers and change agents are meant to use resource centres to discuss, learn and research on the actual or potential change on a collegial basis. The philosophy of clusters is also predicated on the need for teacher-to-teacher interaction in the change process. "The more the teachers can interact concerning their own practices, the more they bring about improvements that they themselves identify with", (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1993:132). The school clusters model is based on a decentralisation paradigm. A question of interest is how well decentralisation of curriculum development has also gone by in various contexts.

Fullan (1993) writing mostly for global north contexts argues that neither centralization nor decentralization works. For him, concentration or centralization errs on the side of over control while decentralization errs towards chaos (Fullan, 1993). In a related Zimbabwean context, Maphosa et al., (2013) did a study on whether local school clusters enhanced needed teacher professional collaboration for curriculum change. The study found out that school clusters mostly dealt with general administrative and few teaching and learning issues both of which had little impact on major curriculum improvements in schools. Maphosa et al., (2013) recommended that school clusters be supported financially and resource-wise for them to be significant agents of curriculum innovations. Thus, even within a centralized system of curriculum change, meaningful inputs need to be mobilized for an effective cluster system.

An important requirement to successful constituency building is the need for clear communication through personal contact between participants, stakeholders and change agents. Such contact enables a process of negotiation, reconciliation of self-interest and agreement/disagreement on the structure, content, and form of the curriculum. The implementation of educational policy has often been resisted for three reasons. This happens when change recipients: (i) do not understand the implications of a policy, (ii) have not received sufficient information on its purpose, and (iii) do not know how it is to be implemented (Bishop, 1986; Zindi, 2018). These reasons for resistance share a common thread of non-effective communication as a cause to resistance. To obviate such resistance the information on the proposed change must be available and detailed. At school level the school head has a major responsibility for collecting, organising, and sending sufficient information about a policy, particularly its origin and the problem(s) it is intended to alleviate. This is an element of what an effective education system should be. Education is all about a knowledge system and hence it must be a system that supports dialogue and organisational learning among multiple stakeholders at various levels.

Reference to communication in the curriculation process invites comments on a common means of communication in Zimbabwe between the centre and schools, which is through circulars. The use of impersonal directives in the form memoranda or circulars may negate the process of building a constituency among the teachers and other stakeholders. Circulars can easily lead to innovation failure through the three reasons listed earlier. For one thing, the language of circulars may alienate teachers, and for another, it also smacks of a top-down approach that can result in 'façade' or superficial implementation of the change.

In ways like façade implementation of change, teachers often show infidelity to new curricular initiatives by either continuing with hitherto existent practices or subverting the reforms to enact them in ways contrary to original intentions. Sometimes the implemented reforms are tangential to intended reform, a challenge which Maravanyika (2018) calls the 'dissonance in curriculum as plans and as transacted outcomes. Such dissonance may be reduced by constituency building, as noted earlier, through an incorporation of the assumptions and meanings which teachers hold vis-à-vis the demands of externally initiated curriculum reform (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002). Such an approach is based on the realisation that the teachers' practices are a translation into classroom pedagogy of their deeply held views on teaching and learning (Tabulawa, 1998). Successful implementation would be enhanced when teachers share the same assumptions and meaning about teaching and learning as those encased by a new curricular and instructional policy. The converse is true.

All stakeholders: a synopsis

An underlining emphasis of this article has been that building a curriculum change constituency has to target all education stakeholders. In our context, constituency building is taken to be "… the network of individuals (and institutions) whose actions are required to actually effect a change (and who) must buy into and commit to that change." (Chapman, Mahlck and Smulders 1997:294). Thus, all stakeholders can effectively contribute to change if they are part of a planned change constituency. In this respect Sarason observes that " … the more committed more groups are to planned change the more likely the goals of change will be approximated"(1982:285). An examination of why constituency building in planned curriculum change is necessary has been given with respect to the roles of change agents generally, school heads and teachers specifically. In sum, the rationale that justifies involvement of all interest groups in the whole change process, is essentially the same. A long-standing principle explaining constituency building is one which Dewey, as early 1896, understood very well (Sarason 1982). This is the principle that those who are or may be affected by the curriculum change process and by education for that matter, should rightfully be involved in these issues. In contemporary times the principle enunciates that curriculum development should include those people who are nearest to and are involved in its implementation in classrooms (Chapman, Mahlck and Smulders, 1997). These contemporary trends towards local participation, governance and decentralization in education may be the Trojan horse in whose belly stakeholder advocacy and involvement can become permanent features of the process of planned curriculum change in many global south curriculum settings.

Zimbabwe experiences, challenges, and prospects in constituency building

Historically, curriculum change in the Zimbabwean school system has been carried out by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU). The CDU is the officially mandated body to develop, implement, monitor, evaluate, review, and revise the school syllabuses in Zimbabwe (CDU, 1990). The CDU thus performs other sub-tasks like curricular materials material writing, pilot testing, dissemination and distribution which go with the main tasks. In its work the CDU uses learning areas or subject panels composed of subject experts and representatives from interest groups. The subject panels are meant to be participatory platforms for

developing, revising, and implementing relevant and appropriate school level curricula (CDU, 1990; Mtembo, 2009). The expectation to have CDU adopt a participatory approach is meant to generate curriculum ideas from a broad spectrum of society and to achieve national consensus on curriculum goals (Mtembo, 2009). The levels for which syllabuses are developed range from Early Childhood Development (ECD), through primary to secondary school.

Subject panels, for each learning area, operate at district, provincial and national levels. Ideally, the lowest level taps grass-roots stakeholder inputs and passes these up to the next level until the apex which is the national subject panel. The panel membership varies from level to level. However, the general membership of subject panels has to have representatives from; teachers, education officers, resource centre teachers, school heads, relevant ministries and institutions, the National Association of School Heads (NASH), University subject specialists, church organisations, teachers' colleges, Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) and commerce and industry (Mtembo, 2009; CDU, 1990).

The educational changes in the 1980s mostly aimed at providing education to the once deprived black majority. With regards to stakeholder support there was consensus on the need for such quantitative changes. This society-wide support ensured a measure of success for placed changes. In the 1980s curriculum change was dominated by government and donors who jointly funded massive production and/or provision of instructional materials. Such materials included CDU developed modules, science kits under the Zimbabwe Science (ZIMSCI) Project and the distribution of technical subjects' kits meant to support the teaching and learning of vocational and technical subjects (Chivore, 1992). In geography education, as in other learning areas, study booklets or modules, specialist texts and materials like weather station kits, wall maps and atlases, among many other curriculum artefacts, were supplied to schools (Munowenyu, 1997). This approach to material production and distribution derives from a technicist and empiricist Research, Development and Diffusion (RD&D) model by Havelock (1973). In this model, the reform formulated, and materials developed by the centre are assumed to suit all situations in the country. In this context, educational research has a *legitimating by expertise* function as it confers "… the dignity and prestige of scientific enterprise on a given innovation or reform." (London, 1997:134). This model, however, has an underlying assumption that the 'expert' developed curriculum materials or products are 'user/teacher proof' and guaranteed to work in the hands of most feeble teacher. Thus, it was believed that if accompanied by wide dissemination, the innovations would naturally be adopted by any 'rational' practitioner given that their design and production was by 'experts'. This did not turn out to be so especially for the ZIMSCI kits.

The operations of the CDU in the production and distribution of curricular materials experienced a nosedive from the 1990s and early 2000s as general funding including donor support dried up for several reasons. The 2014-2015 curriculum review Narrative Report (MoPSE 2015: vii) captures some the reasons thus.

> (a) constrained fiscal space characterised, in part, by a downturn in the global economy and the imposition of economic sanctions, vitiated any fundamental curriculum renewal fifteen years after the government endorsed the CIET (Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training) recommendations in 2000.

The 2014-2015 and 2023 curriculum review undertakings have introduced a practice of nation-wide stakeholder consultation as a necessary first step to the reviews. Such stakeholder consultations meant to solicit stakeholder views of the type of education they want for their children have become a common feature at the start of each seven-year curriculum review cycle. Several data generating tools such as questionnaires, interviews, discussion meetings and documentary analyses serve to solicit the views and inputs of key stakeholders. In this regard, the 2014-2015 review consultation process in Zimbabwe reportedly involved over a million participants such as learners, teachers, village heads, councillors, parents, representatives of business organisations, civil society, government ministers and members of parliament (MoPSE, 2015). These nation-wide consultations were held at each of the over 8000 schools and community centres. Similarly, for the 2023 review process each school was a consultation centre. The consultation process is a form of needs analysis or front-end evaluation whose findings can shape the form, content, and scope of the subsequent school curriculum. MoPSE has also adopted a best-practices consultation process of availing initial findings back to stakeholders for validation. This is meant to check, in a manner analogous to member-checking in research, the accuracy of the captured stakeholder inputs before finalization through compilation of findings as a Narrative Report. The 2014-2015 and the 2023 curriculum review consultations have, to all intents and purposes, entrenched regular and timely 7-year cycle curriculum reviews as part of curriculum practice in Zimbabwe. This is a belated adoption of an espoused but not in-use practice by the CDU since the early 1980s. It is also a conventional practice in most curricular systems around the world (MoPSE, 2016).

A related departure from pre-2014 curriculum development practices are that the 2014 -15 and 2023 curriculum reviews provide national CDU subject panels with inputs from a greater stakeholder base for designing syllabuses. These inputs are encased in the *Narrative Report* of the consultative process and its synthesis through a developed *National Curriculum Framework.* Furthermore, in these two documents classroom teachers have helpful reference and guiding sources on broad curriculum issues like the rationale and guiding philosophy, the learning areas, and pedagogical approaches.

Challenges to constituency building

Existent literature highlights myriad challenges to constituency building for curriculum change. These encompass but are not limited to; poor quality of the teaching force (Riley, 2005), weak community-school relationships (Mufanechiya, 2015), defective process

of data generation during consultation (MoPSE, 2015) and non-sustained teacher involvement (Learning.com). There is need to examine how each of these pose a challenge to curriculum change constituency building in the Zimbabwean context.

A challenge to teacher involvement in curriculum work are the highly prescriptive and centrally designed school syllabi. These syllabi usually require full coverage as a prerequisite to gainfully sit for summative examinations at grade 7, forms 4 and 6. Despite the introduction of a continuous assessment component in 2022 as part of the ZCF (2015-2022) reforms, summative examinations still hold sway in Zimbabwe. As a result, teachers' participation is still constrained by their pre-occupation with both continuous assessment and summative examinations. For one thing, continuous assessment projects and ignorance on how to effect continuous assessment tend to reduce the time teachers may spare for curriculum change linked activities (Makamure & Jojo, 2022). For another, summative tests still demand a teacher's full attention since learner performance in them is taken as an indicator of a teacher's effectiveness. This situation suggests a need to reduce over-reliance of prescriptive syllabi and exams. This would allow time and room for teacher reflexive practice and hopefully participation in curriculum change activities.

One challenge to establishing constituencies for curriculum change is borne out from a scrutiny of centralized curriculum planning common in global south contexts including in Zimbabwe. In most countries of the global south the curriculum developers or change agents are subject or learning area experts. They often must design syllabuses and develop curricular materials for relatively inexperienced, if not untrained teachers. In addition, most practising teachers have no sound grounding in curriculum issues including the area of complex curriculum change. Under such circumstances, as Riley (2005) observes, teachers cannot operate effectively in spearheading curriculum changes as they lack a sound understanding of the curriculum. Consequently, some researchers have suggested that initial teacher training may need to include, in their training curricula, aspects on the role of teachers in curriculum development and related change processes (Mufanechiya, 2015; Trinter & Hughes, 2021). Considering the foregoing, there is a sense in which a constituency is only effective if it is competently equipped to play that role.

In a manner like that of the poorly trained teachers depicted above, other interest groups like parents and communities also tend to be compliant with change-agent ideas in the belief that experts know best. In a study on community-school relationships in implementing curriculum change in Zimbabwean primary schools, Mufanechiya (2015) found out that weak school-community relationships vitiated meaningful and effective curriculum implementation. Communities were found to be marginally involved in 'their' school's affairs. Such a situation is an obvious limitation on effective stakeholder involvement in curriculum change. The schools as 'custodians' of the change process would 'walk' the innovation path alone to the exclusion of community participation. When schools steer such a solitary implementation path this has attendant challenges of innovation failure as its destination.

An observed limitation to constituency building through stakeholder consultation lies with the data generation tools used to solicit stakeholder views. In the Zimbabwean situation, a major data generating tool during 2014/15 and 2023 consultation meetings was the use of a questionnaire-based interview. While the questionnaire has the advantage of soliciting definitive data, it is also beset with limitations. Pre-determined categories create a straitjacket with regards to the responses chosen. For the most part, the responding stakeholder must choose from the provided or 'prompted' options. This, in a way, amounts to channelling or predetermining the responses. That said however it must be acknowledged that Zimbabwean stakeholder consultation practices also use other data generating tools like recorded stakeholder meetings, written contributions, and analysis of documents, all of which produce self-triangulating data to questionnaire-based interview data.

One other challenge noticeable in the post-2015 period is that although teachers are very much involved in the initial consultation and validation stages, such involvement weakens with subsequent activities like syllabus design and development, pilot testing and post-implementation monitoring and evaluation. These activities tend to involve a limited number of teachers since they utilise established structures like CDU officers and subject panels (MoPSE, 2015). It may not be feasible to continue involving many teachers after the induction stage as the curriculum innovation is being placed in schools. The need for continued teacher involvement in processes after induction such as monitoring and evaluation and post-implementation review is, however, highlighted in literature (Hudson et al. 2019; Learning.com). These innovative institutionalisation activities provide opportunities to assess the extent to which curriculum goals and objectives are being met. Curriculum-related literature and other literature on policy review and evaluation highlight the primacy for authentic data from policy implementers or practitioners like teachers which helps "… to modify implementation trajectories and support decisions on whether or not to renew, expand or terminate an initiative "(Hudson et al., 2019:6).

In global south contexts the urgency for change and the lack of widespread stakeholder advocacy may militate against constituency building. Constituency building is a process that takes time and needs to be put in motion. In Zimbabwe in the 1980s immediately after the attainment of independence the urgent need for change was such that change had to be implemented quickly without recourse to stakeholder consultation. It is normally expected that change agents in curriculum centres and government should engage stakeholders in curriculum change to prevent many good curricula from sinking "… without trace on the shoals of implementations"(Pratt, 1980:). When and where change is urgently wanted there may be need to dispense with constituency building and let the change agent bring about change.

Provision of resources and fate of curriculum change

The provision of resources, working together with the other variables identified in Figure 1, is an important consideration in all stages of planned curriculum change. The usual resources and services needed for successful curriculum change involve funding, learning support materials (LSMs), human resources, induction training and infrastructure. There is need to examine the resource provision processes in the post-1980 Zimbabwean context. With the massive expansion of education in the post-1980 period the provision of resources was a nightmarish challenge in Zimbabwe. In the 1980s the government involved local communities to support schools through provision of labour and other resources. In rural areas most local communities provided labour to build school buildings. As Kanyongo (2005) rightly observes, during this time the emphasis was increasing access to education. Thus, the provision of resources was far from ideal and many examples of shortages in teaching staff, in learning management systems (LMS), school infrastructure, finance and necessities for teaching and learning can be cited. In this context, a few examples of resource provision can illustrate the conundrum which this aspect of Zimbabwean education has been and continues to be.

The realization of the goals of any curriculum innovation is predicated upon the quantity and quality of the material and human resources available. When formulating the goals of an innovation, consideration should be made of the types and number of resources. A contingency analysis at this stage ensures that the formulated goals are in line with available resources. A mismatch between the two courts caused eventual failure for the innovation. In Sarason's (1982:285) view "many of the efforts to change and improve schools have been based on well-intentioned goals for which available resources are simply inadequate". A case in point for Zimbabwe was the requirement, in the late 1980s, for all secondary schools to offer at least two practical subjects at Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC), that is about the 9th year of schooling then. This was in pursuance of the vocationalisation drive. This policy was unachievable given that many secondary schools had neither the teachers nor the resources to implement this requirement. This challenge still hounds many secondary schools today thereby vitiating the vocationalisation of the curriculum.

At independence many African governments pursued programmes of Universal Education (UE) or Education for All (EFA). However, this was largely unattainable in the face of rapidly increasing populations, diminishing donor funding and the burden of debt-servicing (Ndawi, 1996). The shortage of materials such as textbooks, equipment and adequately trained teachers restricted the successful implementation of the UE and EFA.

Resources are always in short supply such that there is a need to use them efficiently and effectively. This is not always the case. In Zimbabwe, for example a 1989 report of the distribution of educational materials which included practical subject kits, found out that most of the kits were lying idle in rented storerooms in Harare, or in Regional, District and school storerooms and corridors. The cost of storage eventually far exceeded the cost of distribution to schools. Coordination, efficient distribution, and reduced profligacy could easily have ensured that these materials reached classrooms where they were needed. For materials already in schools, in-service courses on the use of materials accompanying new curriculum packages are a must. In-service training of teachers on new curricula and curricular materials ensures that teachers adopt new changes. In this context this partly explains the failure of untrained science teachers to use "hands on" approaches in the use of ZIMSCI kits, an issue which we return to in some detail below. In the 1980s most materials in the form of modules, practical kits, equipment, and consumables were distributed to schools at no cost. While this was commendable given that most schools were poor, these handouts could have been accompanied by training in the use and handling of these materials. In addition, the rate of wear and tear was high apparently due to the mistaken view that resources were limitless. To inculcate a more caring attitude, cost recovery measures were later introduced (Chivore, 1992).

As schools were now contributing towards the cost of distribution and buying replacements, a more caring attitude towards the use of materials was inculcated. Such an attitude could easily have been considered originally at initiation and implementation stages. All in all, it can be argued that a coordinated deployment of materials and available trained/untrained manpower accompanied by in-service training goes a long way in solving some of the resource shortages which hinder the successful institutionalisation of planned change. In the words of Pratt (1980: 429) there is need for the designer to:

> … make a thorough inventory of what is required and budget accordingly. Wholeheartedness will be shown by the provision for resources, moral support and rewards and clear evidence of intention to access the degree and effects of desired curriculum change.

A recurrent challenge to resource availability is scarcity and shortage of expected resources. In Zimbabwe, some instances in which the required LMS were unavailable for programmes that were being implemented can be cited. An example in the early 1980s, is the Zimbabwe Science (ZIMSCI) kits which were supposed to facilitate 'hands on' science learning mostly among pairs of rural based-learners in newly established 'upper-top' day secondary schools. These schools did not have conventional laboratories. Due, in part, to production and distribution constraints, there were shortages of the ZIMSCI related-kits equipment in many 'upper-top' schools. Resultantly, science learning hardly approximated the envisaged 'hands on' experience since over 10 learners shared a kit (ZIMSCI Evaluation Report 1984, in Chivore, 1992).

A similar challenge involving the non-availability of envisaged curriculum materials was witnessed in the ZCF 2015-2022 reform process. An entry in an *Aide Memoir* to the 2017 Education Strategic Sector Review Report aptly captures the need for adequate resource provision thus, "[t]he curriculum implementation process should be backed by adequate teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, teachers' guides, computers and other equipment and teachers qualified to teach the new learning areas" (*Aide*

Memoir 2017 Notes, in Education Strategic Sector Review Report, 2018:1). Curricular materials like supplementary materials had been expected to "… begin to reach schools before the end of the first term of 2017" (Ground Zero, 2017: Slide 16), that is, some three months after the launch of the competency-based curriculum in January 2017. However, it took a year for the promised *Geography Teachers' Guides* to be readily available in schools in electronic format or as e-documents (Madondo, 2020). The Ministry was unable to provide *Teachers' Guides* and *Supplementary Materials* timeously as had been promised at the time of launch of the competence-based curriculum in early 2017. By mid-2017, MoPSE, on its part, acknowledged logistical problems relating to the implementation of the new curriculum including the supply of teachers' guides and supplementary curricular materials (Dokora, 2017). Indeed, examples of the mismatch between resource provision and the expected processes of newly placed curricula are many. A perception on the kinds of challenges, including problematic resource provision, associated with the ZCF 2015-2022 curriculum reforms is one proffered by the Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ). According to PTUZ, the launch of the competence-based curriculum and the associated first distribution of curriculum materials and policy documents was, "… hurried, chaotic, shambolic and lacking in the provision of syllabi, resources, focus, direction and national consensus on content." (PTUZ *Petition to the Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2017:2).* Although there is need to allow for an element of hyperbole in the PTUZ statement given its natural antagonism to the employer MoPSE's actions, there is little doubt that challenges of material availability indeed bedevilled the ZCF (2015-2022) processes.

Time as a resource in curriculation

In addition to material resource provision, this study scrutinizes the factor of time as an element which must be provided for, just like other resources, to achieve successful curriculum change. In this article we highlight the importance of allowing time in activities of curriculum change and innovation. The various resources need time to be factored in into all phases of curriculum construction from conceptualisation, through design and development, and more importantly during implementation. A central question that guides our examination on the role of time is *why there is always an apparent mismatch between time and the delivery of expected curriculum components?* Put differently; *why is it that delivery of needed curricular resources or inputs seems to always lag?*

It is pertinent to examine the need for time in various phases of curriculum development. Sarason (1982) advises that at the conceptualisation stage the pertinent question to ask with respect to time is, *whether time is available to develop and locate the resources consistent with the desired change?* This means that time should be allowed for a coordinated start when developing the curriculum change and innovation and for the deployment of required resources and infrastructure in subsequent stages.

The timeous delivery of curricular resources implies a need to make a time allowance for unforeseen developments in planned change. The process of planned change is characterized by uncertainty contrary to the predictability implied in the term 'planned change'. Literature on curriculum change is awash with the metaphor of uncertainty. For example, Pratt (1980:425) refers to the change process as "... the stormy voyage", while Fullan (1993: 24) likens it to "... a planned journey into uncharted waters in a leaky boat with a mutinous crew". In this regards Bishop (1986:3) advocates for more time since "... innovation is essentially a social process and so takes place over a period of time." Part of the reason for this is the unpredictability and complexity of curriculum change. Like other social changes, curriculum changes are processes that occur in complicated social-institutional settings which cannot be entirely controlled. Many innovations, especially in the global south contexts, have tended to always lag their tight time schedules. This is especially so where the projects depend on donor funding that may require stringent conditions to be met for the disbursement of funds. If no time is allowed at the start for unforeseen eventualities, there is a sense in which any subsequent failure is self-inflicted. In this context the insistence by donor agents on tight schedules may at times lead to premature withdrawal of funding if such schedules are not met.

An area where time must be provided for is the aspect of a lead-in time prior to commencement and enactment of activities embedded in the change. A lead-in time or lead-time gives adequate time for school personnel such as teachers to familiarize themselves with the innovation before implementing it (Pratt 1980). The lead-time provides an occasion for formal and informal personal exchange on the planned change. It can also be the occasion for feedback on the original plan and any subsequent adjustment. The lead-time is also essential for a gradual soft-belly landing or change-over from the old curriculum to the new curriculum. Gradual adoption makes for a smooth transition without inducing any 'shocks' which may be inimical to successful adoption. A new curriculum which changes classroom practices places the teacher in "....an unlearning and learning process", (Sarason 1982: 86). Thus, time is of essence for the proper "learning" and even for in servicing the teachers. In global south states where centralised curriculum development predominates, allowing for some lead-in time may help create a sense of ownership of, and identity with, the new change on the part of teachers. Admittedly this may tend to be superficial, but it can be an occasion in which curriculum developers sell the innovation to schools.

In developing countries, which may lack developed infrastructures, the need for a time allowance for unforeseen eventualities becomes a condition for possible success. These countries, some of which have recently become self-governing, are usually in some kind of hurry to change the curriculum while expecting immediate results. Many countries have learnt bitterly the truth of old adages such as that *in haste there lies no plenty.* In this context comments by Chivore (1992:76/7) on the apparent non-performance of the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP) pilot programme in the 1980s are instructive in that:

> ...as everyone knows, traditions take time to die and sometimes they refuse to die. It may be that we expect positive results too soon from a programme that requires time, patience and dedication before any meaningful results are realised.

While it is sensible to argue for more time to have innovations take root, other contending views need also to be considered. There may be instances when change is urgently needed, and no time can be allowed for a measured pace for change. Under stable conditions Harrah's flippant law of " (n)no matter how long you think it will take, it will take twice as long," cited in Bishop (1986:11) is good advice for planned change. This serves to emphasis that, all things being equal, curriculum planning benefits from adequate time. However, the need for time in planned change is situational. In the context of Zimbabwe there is a sense in which early post-1980 curriculum innovations such as the Education with Production (EWP) Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP) – linked programme and ZIMSCI were not, in *senso stricto*, planned changes. There was inbuilt hurriedness in these innovations given that the new majority government had to be seen to deliver on issues like mass education. There was little time for planned curriculum change.

A time-related aspect to be considered in planned curriculum change is the heavy demands that change makes on teachers' time. Change agents are usually under the mistaken belief that since they themselves are convinced about the value of and necessity for the change, teachers would naturally be enthusiastic to accept increased change-linked demands on their time (Bishop, 1986). This is far from the truth. A new curriculum makes some of the following demands on the teacher's time namely: preparation, acquisition of new concepts and skills, marking and participation in in-servicing training (Sarason, 1983). The school head must create time for; 'selling' the innovation to teachers and parents, staff development and in trouble-shooting problems of implementation. If no time has been allowed for the new tasks which an innovation brings the result maybe a superficial or "facade" adoption at best or non-adoption at worst. In Zimbabwe, in the 1980s and 1990s, the introduction of two, arguably worthwhile subjects, namely Education for Living (EFL) and Aids Education (AEd) resulted in their partial adoption. The two subjects were superimposed on an already overloaded curriculum. The little attention given to EFL and AEd was exacerbated by the fact that they were non-examination subjects, whereas other subjects were. For AEd, an additional reason was a lack of trained staff to teach the subject. The other reason why the two subject struggled take root in the curriculum is that they were non-examinable at the time. Teachers and schools devoted more time to examinable subjects. When planning for change, the total time required by all parties such as the school head and the classroom teacher, must be provided for. For the teacher, who in most cases is barely able to survive on a day-to-day basis, an innovation which demands more of his/her time is in danger of rejection or superficial implementation.

New projects should be implemented in such a way that they come with their new teachers or the teacher taking them has his/her load reduced (Aide Memoir report, 2017). Another possibility is to provide monetary or other rewards for extra time committed to some new thing. For the school head, there may be a need to delegate other managerial and public relations duties to take up the task of curriculum leader more fully. Other intrinsic forms of motivation such as recognition, promotion and personal satisfaction may help in making the innovation a success. However, the bottom line for success is that, if a change makes demands on the teacher's and the school head's time, then the proponents and planners must provide the requisite incentives.

Although time provision is an essential resource, in and of itself, it does not amount to much. The importance of time in successful development and implementation of planned curriculum change assumes that many requirements are in place. One main assumption is that material resources, funds and human resources are available to maximize the time provided. Time is basically a passive factor whose significance should be taken together with that of other resources.

The foregoing exposition on the need for time in curriculum planning suggests an inbuilt proclivity by curriculum planners to underestimate the time it takes to have new and sufficient curriculum materials and resources in schools for use by teachers and learners. There is usually a disjuncture between the envisaged time for materials availability in schools and the actual time for such materials to be produced and distributed in the required quantities. Such disjointed instances of curriculum development and implementation processes can be reduced, as earlier suggested, by an initial contingency analysis to establish a harmonious link between existing productive and distributive capacity and the enactment of a proposed curriculum innovation. In emphasizing the need to factor in enough time for various curriculum activities, the advice by Bishop (1985: 11) comes handy. This is that "… time spent in planning the sequencing and coordinating of events is time well spent."

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A twofold line of argument pervades this article. First, that a change constituency made up of educational stakeholders especially school heads and classroom teachers help make curriculum change successful. Second, the fortunes of such a change in constituency depends on efficient and effective use of time which in turn impacts on the provision of material, financial and human resources. These two factors of change constituency and resource/time provision must be part of the curriculation process from start to finish. Other variables like personnel, the task and equipment, feed into these processes, a relationship depicted in the conceptual framework in Figure 1.

The study shows that the two factors of a change constituency and provision of resources, time included, have a checkered history in the Zimbabwean context. In the period prior to 2014/15 there was no nationwide stakeholder consultation accompanying any curriculum change process. In the post-2015 period constituency building in the form of pre-curriculum review nationwide

consultation has become part of curriculum practice. Though the process is far from perfect it is a promising development. Resource provision, especially allowing adequate time for requisite processes, is still challenging. Overall, the level of constituency building, and resource provision efforts are far from being ideal.

Main recommendation for the study is that adequate attention to constituency building and resource provision in the various phases of the curriculum process would go a long way to ensure successful curriculation. Constituency building and resource/time provision should be viewed as contributing to a social process – namely change whose enduring characteristic is complexity. From both a Zimbabwean and a wide perspective, it may be suggested that with adequate constituency building and effective and efficient use of resources, global south states may manage to have meaningful curriculum change to overshadow a history of many failed attempts.

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