



**Challenges in Effective Curriculum Implementation:
A Study of Leaders and Teachers in a Private School in
Dubai**

تحديات التنفيذ الفعال للمناهج الدراسية
دراسة حالة للقادة والمعلمين في مدرسة خاصة في دبي

by
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of the requirements for the degree of
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Declaration

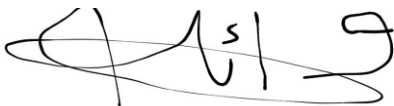
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Abstract

The process of putting an educational curriculum into practice, which includes delivering the planned instructional content, methodologies, and assessment strategies in a classroom or other educational setting, is referred to as curriculum implementation. It includes converting the aims and objectives of the curriculum into practical learning opportunities, making sure that it is in line with academic standards, and making adjustments for the wide range of needs of the students. In order to implement the curriculum effectively, teachers must work together, assess continuously, and be adaptable to meet changing student requirements. The study was conducted in one of the private schools in Dubai. The aim of the study was to identify the challenges faced by school stakeholders (teachers, MLL, and the SLT) regarding effective curriculum implementation and discussed several approaches that facilitate curriculum reform. The researcher included the findings of some studies that have been done related to the topic. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the qualitative method was used. The study included 17 participants. A questionnaire was sent to 8 teachers and 4 department heads. In addition, 5 members of the senior leadership team were interviewed to compare and contrast the views of the teachers. The replies from the interviews and open-ended questionnaires were interpreted using thematic analysis. It was shown by the study that the department heads and teachers have an excessive amount of work related to curriculum implementation. They face unique difficulties in doing their duties. On the other hand, the senior leadership team is in charge of observing and assessing the curriculum in order to ensure that the teachers are implementing it effectively. The study suggests that educational leaders should be responsible for offering direction, encouragement, and a clear vision for the implementation of the curriculum. In addition, policymakers ought to pass policies that promote effective curriculum implementation and deal with underlying issues.

Keywords: curriculum, senior leadership team, middle level leaders, heads of departments

خلاصة

يشار إلى عملية وضع المنهج التعليمي موضع التنفيذ بإسم تنفيذ المنهج، وهي تتضمن تقديم المحتوى التعليمي المخطط له والمنهجيات واستراتيجيات التقييم في الفصل الدراسي أو أي بيئة تعليمية أخرى. ويتم من خلالها تحويل أهداف وغايات المنهج إلى فرص تعليمية عملية، والتأكد من أن المنهج يتماشى مع المعايير الأكاديمية، مع الحرص أيضا على إجراء التعديلات لتناسب مجموعة واسعة من احتياجات الطلاب. و من أجل تنفيذ المنهج بفعالية، يجب على المعلمين العمل معًا، وإجراء التقييم المستمر لهذا المنهج، والتكيف لتلبية متطلبات الطلاب المتغيرة. لقد أجريت الدراسة الحالية في إحدى المدارس الخاصة في دبي، حيث تهدف إلى التعرف على التحديات التي يواجهها أصحاب المصلحة في المدرسة مثل المعلمين ورؤساء الأقسام وفريق القيادة العليا فيما يتعلق بالتنفيذ الفعال للمناهج الدراسية، كما ناقشت الدراسة العديد من الأساليب التي تسهل إصلاح المناهج الدراسية. وقد أدرج الباحث نتائج بعض الدراسات المشابهة التي أجريت حول نفس الموضوع. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة تم استخدام المنهج النوعي. وشملت الدراسة سبعة عشر مشاركًا. تم إرسال استبيان إلى ثمانية مدرسين و أربعة رؤساء أقسام. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تمت مقابلة خمسة أعضاء من فريق القيادة العليا لمقارنة وجهات نظر القيادة العليا بوجه نظر المعلمين. تم تفسير الردود من المقابلات والاستطلاعات المفتوحة باستخدام التحليل الموضوعي. وقد أظهرت الدراسة أن رؤساء الأقسام والمعلمين لديهم أعمال فائضة عن الاستطاعة من العمل المتعلق بتنفيذ المناهج الدراسية. كما إنهم يواجهون صعوبات غير مسبوقة في أداء واجباتهم. ومن ناحية أخرى، يتولى فريق القيادة العليا مسؤولية مراقبة وتقييم المنهج للتأكد من أن المعلمين يطبقونه بفعالية. وتقترح الدراسة أن القادة التربويين يجب أن يكونوا مسؤولين عن تقديم التوجيه والتشجيع ووضع رؤية واضحة لتنفيذ المنهج. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يجب على صناع السياسات تمرير السياسات التي تعزز التنفيذ الفعال للمناهج الدراسية والتعامل مع القضايا الأساسية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المنهاج - القيادة العليا - القيادة الوسطى - رؤساء الأقسام الأكاديميين

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List of Abbreviations

MLL	Middle Level Leaders
MOE	Ministry of Education
SLT	Senior Leadership Team

Chapter 1: Introduction

Education in the Emirates has its roots in earlier civilisations, whose influence may still be observed today in a number of places. Afterwards, teachers who were experts in a specific branch of science taught students. Because of this, education in the United Arab Emirates has developed from a basic traditional model to one that is supported by lessons, courses, and regulations. As a consequence of the examination of the historical development of education, the UAE's Ministry of Education shows that we are able to identify four phases of educational systems that have evolved in the Emirates over time. According to Alnabah (1996), these phases include the semi-organised education system, educational circles, the Mutawaa and Katateeb education system, and the modern education system.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has a wide variety of educational systems, which reflects the country's dedication to offering high-quality education to its people. Religious and cultural information was traditionally transmitted through the Mutawaa and Katateeb educational system. The Katateeb concentrated on teaching reading, writing, and fundamental math skills, while the Mutawaa were religious instructors who taught Islamic values. These Islamic-based systems served as the cornerstone of UAE education (Alnabah, 1996, p. 35).

With the advent of educational circles that combine old and modern methods, the landscape of education has changed over time. Initiatives for semi-organised education have been important as well, offering chances for unstructured learning. Though with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) topics, the UAE has progressively adopted a complete and modern educational system. For the purpose of equipping its people for the challenges of the 21st century, the nation has made significant investments in the construction of top-notch educational facilities and innovation-friendly

environments. In order to offer students the knowledge and abilities necessary to prosper in a globalised and fast-changing world, the UAE's current educational system strives to give them a well-rounded education (Alrawi, 1996). Standardised curricula, infrastructure development, and the establishment of formal educational institutions are all addressed by policy (UNESCO, 2015). The UAE's current educational system is distinguished by its dedication to offering high-quality instruction at all educational levels as asserted by Natasha Ridge and Aaron S. William (2018) "*Education in the Gulf states*".

1.1 History of Curriculum Development in the UAE

When the first Kuwaiti educational mission established a school in the emirate of Sharjah in 1953, formal education was first implemented in the United Arab Emirates. With support from Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and other nations, schools were subsequently established all around the United Arab Emirates (Suliman, 2000). The nations that provided the funding for the schools typically employed the teachers and utilised textbooks and curricula from their own countries. The MOE was established in 1972, not long after the United Arab Emirates was founded, with the purpose of serving as the country's central education body and supervising the growth and delivery of education. However, schools in the UAE continued to use a wide range of diverse curricula with variable standards even after the MOE was established; these curricula were primarily taken from nearby nations (Suliman, 2000). The MOE did not begin working on a single Emirati curriculum until 1979 with the National Curriculum Project, and it wasn't until 1985 that the curriculum was implemented nationally (Ridge, 2009).

Since 1985, official textbooks or intended curricula have been referred to as "curriculum" in the UAE, rather than any written materials specifying the knowledge or

abilities a student should gain in a given grade or subject. This has resulted in a great deal of restriction on what teachers can teach, as they are required to follow the exact curriculum and exercises outlined in the textbooks to make sure that what they teach aligns with what they will be assessed in (Ridge, 2009).

Two of the six national priorities of the United Arab Emirates' 2010 introduction of UAE Vision 2021 were a competitive knowledge economy and a first-rate education system. Initiatives to enhance the curriculum and infrastructure to raise educational standards have been announced by Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 and Dubai Plan 2021 (GFH, 2020). The National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 was also introduced by the Ministry of Education in September 2017 with the goal of raising the bar for professional and scientific education in the nation for the benefit of coming generations. The plans comprise two initiatives, namely, Competitive Research Funding and Investment in Knowledge.

Future educational trends assist stakeholders in envisioning how these will affect curriculum creation and delivery in 2030 in order to better prepare students for their future employment and lives. For example:

Future curricula will place a strong emphasis on giving students a voice and options in their education (Darling-Hammond & Flook, 2018), which will support individualised instruction. In addition, personalised learning promotes lifelong learning abilities, which will aid future workers in changing careers and adjusting to environmental, technological, and other changes (Hattie & Yates, 2014).

Learning is made more accessible and equitable through digital distribution methods including open educational resources, which also make teaching and learning experiences more accessible (Colvard, Watson, & Park, 2018). According to the World Economic Forum

(2020), curriculum in the future must support student-centred learning experiences and creative pedagogies, such as experiential learning and computational thinking (National Research Council, 2010). Future curricula must relate academic courses to skill development in order to prepare students for the changing needs of the workforce and industry (Chase, 2020).

The United Arab Emirates has made significant efforts to rethink and restructure its education system in response to the growing Middle Eastern focus on youth development and employability. Several reforms have been put in place by local education authorities in an effort to move away from rote memorisation and towards a skills-based curriculum that will enable pupils to succeed in the twenty-first century. For example:

Integration of technology: The UAE is aware of how crucial technology is to education. There have been campaigns to provide schools with the required infrastructure and resources, as well as efforts to integrate technology into the curriculum.

Incorporating 21st-century skills: Critical thinking, creativity, communication, and teamwork are among the 21st-century abilities that are being included into all curricula. More emphasis is being placed on educating students for a connected and fast-changing world.

Inclusive education: In an attempt to provide high-quality education to students with a range of needs and skills, efforts have been made to make education more inclusive. Support programmes for students with special education needs are included in this.

International benchmarking: International standards have frequently been used as a benchmark by the UAE for its educational system. The curriculum is always reviewed and adjusted to ensure that it meets or exceeds international benchmarks.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

Compared to other educational topics, the study of obstacles to the implementation of an effective curriculum is of great significance since it has a widespread effect on the learning outcomes of students and the efficacy of educational systems as a whole. Studies reveal that curriculum implementation success is critical to meeting learning goals and raising student performance (Fullan, 2007; Guskey, 2002). The curriculum of the UAE's education system is undergoing a significant and ongoing change. Curriculum implementation, which bridges the gap between curriculum development and classroom instruction, is an essential part of the educational system (Wiles & Bondi, 2015). The curriculum acts as a roadmap for the learning objectives that students should acquire, and its effective implementation ensures that this objective is met. However, curriculum implementation often faces challenges, which have a significant effect on the quality of education (Wiles & Bondi, 2014). The successful implementation of the curriculum has a direct impact on the quality of education that students get (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017). When the curriculum is not delivered as planned, students might not gain essential skills and knowledge, which will affect their entire educational experience.

Teachers are also very important in the process of implementing the curriculum (Fullan, 2007). Building teacher training programmes and professional development initiatives might benefit from understanding the problems they face in order to enhance their ability to successfully deliver the curriculum. Sufficient resources are required for curriculum implementation, encompassing materials, instruments, and assistance networks. Understanding the problems can help with resource allocation, ensuring that schools have what they need to teach the curriculum effectively. The evaluation of curriculum

implementation is necessary to determine problems and effective practices. This can be accomplished by finding out what issues MLL and teachers confront so that the SLT can assist them in getting better results

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Curriculum implementation has proven problematic to the teaching and learning culture in schools due to the issues faced by educators, including insufficient resources, financial issues, and a lack of training (Guskey, 2002; Lochner et al., 2015). These issues will have far-reaching effects on the educational system and the kind of talented students we generate if they are not resolved. The implementation of curriculum modifications over time has had a negative impact on instructors. Some teachers make a strong case, according to Maodzwa-Tarwinga and Cross (2009, p. 136), that it is easier to stick to some teaching methods and strategies rather than following new methods or policies. This implies that increasing teachers' capacity is necessary for any curriculum to be implemented successfully. Teachers are the main contributors to raising educational standards. The study's objectives are outlined below in accordance with this context.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to identify the challenges faced by school stakeholders (teachers, MLL, and the SLT) regarding effective curriculum implementation. In order to achieve that, the following objectives are pursued:

To identify the difficulties department heads face in curriculum implementation.

To identify the difficulties that teachers face in curriculum implementation.

To investigate the support that the senior leadership team provides in effective curriculum implementation.

1.5 Research Questions

The main research question is what are the main challenges in effective curriculum implementation? The following sub-questions provide expression for this main research question:

- RQ1: What are the difficulties that teachers and department heads face in curriculum implementation?
- RQ2: What strategies could be used in order to overcome the challenges?
- RQ3: How does the senior leadership team support effective curriculum implementation?

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

The study will be conducted in one of the private schools in Dubai. Due to the nature of the research questions and the data required to answer them, the researcher will use two qualitative data-gathering instruments: a questionnaire with open-ended-questions and face-to-face interviews.

1. Questionnaire: The researcher will use an online questionnaire created on Google Forms with open-ended questions in this study to collect qualitative data.
2. Interviews: Physical face-to-face interviews will be conducted with 5 of the senior leadership team. Each senior leader will participate in a 15–20 minutes interview.

One of the benefits of conducting interviews is their flexibility; both the interviewer and the interviewee can change, remove, or even reword questions if they feel they are unsuitable (Creswell, 2012). The study participants will find it simpler to express their opinions openly as a result. Open-ended questions allow you to completely investigate the issue without running the danger of potential bias that could result from providing responses,

which is often linked with closed-ended questions. This is why the questionnaire includes open-ended questions instead of predetermined answers (Reja et al., 2003). This study's open-ended questions allow the researcher to extract more information on certain facts.

1.7 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter begins by providing background information on the UAE's education history. It describes how self-centred traditional practices underwent four distinct stages of educational development before becoming formal education. It provides information about curriculum development in the United Arab Emirates as well. The researcher then emphasises how the UAE government is determined to advance the curriculum in UAE schools and how crucial it is to align the new curriculum with the most recent developments in 21st-century capabilities.

The chapter concludes with the problem statement of the study, research questions, the dissertation format, and a summary of the chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview of this Chapter

The foundation of the investigation is provided by the literature review in this chapter. The section presents several scholars' and educators' points of view regarding the complex nature of curriculum implementation. The chapter also discuss several elements such as the definition and importance of the curriculum; curriculum implementation; the role of students, teachers, department heads, and the senior leadership team; and curriculum approaches.

2.2 Definition and Importance of the Curriculum

2.2.1 *Defining the Concept of the Curriculum*

A curriculum is a plan or collection of planned learning objectives that represents the subject matter to be learned, the intended delivery methods, and the order of teaching for a group of students (Wiles & Bondi, 2007). In addition, the term "curriculum" describes the range of classes, subjects, and educational opportunities offered by a school or programme. It includes all of the scheduled and coordinated activities created to support kids' growth and learning. A curriculum usually consists of a range of topics, teaching strategies, evaluation techniques, and learning materials designed to help students meet predetermined learning goals and objectives (Ornstein, Hunkins, & Pajak, 2013). The researcher will use the definition of Tyler (1949) in this research, who defined curriculum as all organised and supervised learning that takes place in classrooms, labs, libraries, and extracurricular activities inside the school setting. There are multiple reasons why his definition is regarded as the finest. First of all, it is extraordinarily thorough, acknowledging that education encompasses a range of experiences and activities, in addition to traditional academic disciplines. Second, it recognises that learning can take place in a variety of contexts and with a range of approaches,

which promotes flexibility. Third, Tyler's concept takes a comprehensive approach, stressing social interactions and extracurricular activities, as well as the entirety of the learning environment.

2.2.2 *Importance of the Curriculum*

The curriculum plays an important role in education because it provides a structured framework that directs educational experiences and serves as a blueprint for good teaching and learning. It is well said by Hutchins (1950) that "The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives". A well-crafted curriculum guarantees a methodical and cohesive delivery of knowledge, in addition to outlining precise learning objectives. Educators can use the curriculum as a tool to arrange and organise lesson materials in a way that best suits the requirements, needs, and styles of different students. Furthermore, a curriculum that is in line with educational standards – like the ones highlighted by Wiggins and McTighe (2005) – helps ensure that education is equitable and consistent in a variety of contexts. Curricula need to stay dynamic and relevant, equipping students for the challenges of the future by integrating technology, incorporating feedback, and adjusting to social changes (Eisner, 2002). Fundamentally, the curriculum matters because it shapes the educational environment and encourages lifelong learning, even outside of the classroom.

The curriculum is extremely important in the United Arab Emirates since it acts as a guide for structuring the educational system to fit the nation's strategic objectives. The UAE Vision 2021 and UAE Centennial 2071 programmes set the vision, and the curriculum is essential in ensuring that students are prepared to make significant contributions to the country. In addition to being intellectually demanding, a well-designed curriculum guarantees that education is appropriate to the needs of a world that is changing quickly. It promotes the

growth of competencies essential for the labour market in the United Arab Emirates by stressing STEM subjects, creativity, and global viewpoints. The curriculum also takes into account the UAE's rich cultural diversity, which promotes an inclusive learning environment that honours and cherishes diversity (ADEC, 2023). In the end, the UAE curriculum is a dynamic instrument that is vital to raising a generation of people capable of leading and succeeding in the global environment.

2.3 Curriculum Approaches

Approaches to curriculum implementation include the different tactics and techniques teachers use to convert curriculum designs into real teaching practices in the classroom. These methods direct the implementation of lesson plans, guaranteeing that students are adequately informed about the aims and objectives of the curriculum. The various implementation tactics are a reflection of the various pedagogical approaches, theories, and philosophies.

2.3.1 Top-Down Approach

The top-down approach to curriculum design is distinguished by a methodical and all-encompassing framework that starts with the general goals and objectives of education, and directs the subsequent creation of particular subject matter, teaching strategies, and evaluation techniques. This approach guarantees adherence to academic standards and integrates feedback from stakeholders to mould the curriculum's overarching goals. The underlying insights into the ideas of top-down curriculum design can be found in classic books like Elliot W. Eisner's (1979) "*The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs*" and Ralph W. Tyler's (1949) "*Basic principles of curriculum and instruction*". To achieve predetermined results, learning objectives, scheduled activities, evaluation based on

those objectives, and standards-based education should all be included in the curriculum, according to Porter (2018).

2.3.2 Bottom-Up Approach

The focus placed on grassroots participation and a decentralised decision-making process that begins in the classroom or with a single teacher are the defining characteristics of the bottom-up approach to curriculum creation. In order to provide students with a more contextually relevant and responsive learning environment, this approach encourages educators to customise the curriculum content and instructional strategies to the unique needs and interests of their students. With the bottom-up method, educators take the lead in developing curricula by utilising their direct understanding of the student characteristics and classroom dynamics. The 1995 book "*Understanding and assessing the impact of bottom-up education reform*" by Joseph Murphy offers valuable perspectives on the workings of bottom-up educational initiatives. Furthermore, as stated by Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart (2005) in "*The action research planner: Doing critical participatory action research*", the concept is consistent with the participatory action research and teacher empowerment ideas. This method acknowledges the value of educators' knowledge and their capacity to modify course material to meet the particular requirements of their students and local communities.

2.3.3 Interactive Approach

An active and collaborative process including educators, students, and other stakeholders is what defines the interactive approach to curriculum design. This concept promotes a student-centred approach by encouraging active engagement and interaction within the learning environment. Teachers that use this method place a strong emphasis on how important it is for students to be involved in creating the curriculum to suit their unique

interests and requirements. Books like "*Outcome-based education: Critical issues and answers*" by William Spady (1994) offer insights into interactive learning strategies that put an emphasis on well-defined outcomes and include students in the process of learning.

Furthermore, the interactive approach's tenets are consistent with experiential learning theories, as outlined by David Kolb (1984) in "*Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*", which highlight the importance of active involvement and reflection. A school is regarded as a social community where administrators, instructors, and students collaborate to achieve a common goal (Bilbao, Corpuz, & Dayagbil, 2015).

2.3.4 Integrated Approach

By seamlessly integrating different subjects and disciplines, the integrated approach to curriculum design dismantles old academic silos and creates a more comprehensive and interconnected learning environment. With an emphasis on knowledge interconnectedness, this model aims to provide students with a more thorough grasp of real-world problems. An integrated curriculum frequently encourages students to draw connections between several topic areas and supports the development of skills in addition to material knowledge. The concepts and techniques of integrated curriculum design are examined in the work of Heidi Hayes Jacobs, especially in her 1989 book "*Interdisciplinary curriculum: Design and implementation*". The 1997 book "*Curriculum integration: Designing the core of democratic education*" by James A. Beane also sheds light on the democratic principles that underpin an integrated curriculum. The integrated method is in line with modern educational theories that place an emphasis on 21st-century abilities including cooperation, critical thinking, and problem-solving. By promoting a greater grasp of the intricacies of the real world and bridging the gap between academic fields, it provides students with an educational experience that is

more relevant and linked. The integrated approach to the curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing critical thinking abilities, deepening comprehension, and structuring the curriculum around enduring principles (Erickson, 2007).

2.3.5 *Spiral Approach*

The spiral method to curriculum design allows students to review and build upon concepts in a cyclical way by means of a recurrent and progressively deeper investigation of themes over time. This paradigm acknowledges the value of reinforcement and repetition in learning, with the goal of improving mastery and deepening comprehension with each revisit. Jerome Bruner's (1960) groundbreaking book "*The process of education*" in particular set the foundation for the spiral curriculum idea. Bruner promoted a curriculum framework that introduces important concepts in a spiral manner, guaranteeing that students come across these ideas at different points in their study, each time going deeper into the subject. The theory also fits with curriculum theorist Ralph W. Tyler's (1949) views, which are covered in "*Basic principles of curriculum and instruction*", where he emphasises the need for reviewing and reinforcing prior learning experiences. The spiral method seeks to promote a more durable comprehension of the subject matter, bolstering the notion that education is a continuous, dynamic process as opposed to a straight line. Giving learners the chance to practise and reinforce newly learned material and abilities is crucial. This is consistent with the spiral method since it guarantees that ideas and abilities are practised and reinforced over time when they are reviewed (Maodzwa & Cross, 2009).

2.3.6 *Experiential Learning Approach*

The experiential learning approach to curriculum design places a strong emphasis on the value of practical application, reflection, and hands-on experiences as crucial elements of

the learning process. As stated in "*Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*" (1984), this model – which was developed by David Kolb and his colleagues – postulates that learning is most successful when it involves an ongoing cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. Students can apply knowledge in real-world circumstances, connect theory to practice, and build critical thinking abilities through experiential learning, which creates a dynamic and engaging learning environment. As covered in "*Experience and education*", John Dewey's (1938) progressive educational theory established the groundwork for experiential learning by highlighting the value of learning via firsthand experience. It is commonly acknowledged that the experiential learning approach can improve student motivation, engagement, and the transferability of information and skills outside of the classroom.

2.4 Curriculum Implementation

Implementing a curriculum is the process by which educators employ the designated resources included in a curriculum to carry out instruction and evaluation (Mabale, 2013). On the basis of a set of objectives, curriculum designs typically offer teaching recommendations, scripts, lesson plans, and assessment choices. Wiles and Bondi (2014) stated that these designs prioritise consistency in order to support instructors in effectively implementing and upholding the curriculum structure to achieve a variety of goals and learning outcomes. The literature also states that curriculum implementation's primary goals are to give students knowledge and skills (Chaudhary, 2015); guarantee that students take full advantage of opportunities that are already available to them (Mkandawire, 2010); initiate change before advancing education (Cobbold, 1999); guarantee that students gain knowledge and experience, and that they utilise all of them efficiently (Badugela, 2012); and reorganise students'

knowledge by incorporating new information into previously held beliefs (Muskin, 2015). Thus, when students acquire the necessary knowledge, abilities, experience, and attitude, the curriculum's requirements can be met (Chaudhary, 2015). Curriculum implementation also seeks to use the same curriculum at the same grade levels across all educational institutions and anticipates behavioural changes in students under the implementer's control (Muskin, 2015). Curriculum implementation at the same grade levels guarantees consistency in learning objectives and facilitates the achievement of a common level in students' development and readiness levels (Tweedie & Kim, 2015). The curriculum implementation phase is a crucial, challenging, and necessary stage of the curriculum. This is because, in the absence of curriculum implementation, it is impossible to identify the curriculum's strengths and weaknesses, successes, flaws, and inadequate sections (Dzimiri & Marino, 2015). A curriculum's shortcomings and inadequacies might be identified to give educators ideas for revision and reorganisation (Ekawati, 2017). Typically, a curriculum includes texts, lesson plans, teaching-related suggestions, and assessment alternatives.

Instructional techniques should be in line with the particular learning objectives specified in the curriculum in order to guarantee that curricular improvements are applied faithfully (Vold, 2017). Implementing a curriculum involves a number of steps, one of which is delivering the material using teaching methods and tools. Instructional strategies must complement the curriculum and meet each student's unique and individual requirements in order to implement curricula (Causarano, 2015). Specifically, Battey et al. (2016) discovered that instructors' readiness for implementing the curriculum is crucial. The study's conclusions confirmed that in order to improve teaching strategies, teachers must have a thorough understanding of the curriculum. Battey et al. (2016) suggested that professional development

should assist instructors in implementing the curriculum, which emphasises the importance of dedication and high-quality education.

A relationship between the teachers' subject knowledge and student performance was discovered by Mohyuddin and Khalil (2016); this conclusion is consistent with teachers having good content knowledge and the self-assurance to teach the required curriculum. Mohyuddin and Khalil discovered that teachers' lack of curricular knowledge limited student achievement, progress, and curriculum implementation, although Vold (2017) noted that in order to best prepare teachers and support the qualities required for successful implementation, care must be taken to make sure that the gaps between teacher training and curriculum expectations are bridged. Phillips et al. (2017) concurred that teacher beliefs, receptivity, and consistency directly affect implementation.

Bell (2015) examined the benefits and drawbacks of an English grammar programme, paying particular attention to the guidelines and instructions meant to assist teachers. Bell discovered that while the curriculum was generally reliable, there was insufficient pedagogical assistance in the materials to assist teachers in comprehending the lessons sufficiently to be able to teach them. Bell discovered that accurate content delivery to students was hampered by a lack of training, professional development, or direction. As stated by Baumi (2015), students benefit when curriculum is implemented confidently, yet many new curricula come with strict pace expectations, according to studies. Baumi (2015) reported that inexperienced teachers have trouble using new curriculum materials, especially the pacing aids for achieving goals. This theory is further supported by Robertson and Pfeiffer (2016), who discovered that some student pacing strategies proved unsuitable for meeting their learning demands outside of the stated objectives. This indicates that the pace of the selected curriculum is out of step with

teacher preparation and student demands. This gives one example of the reasons why teachers frequently decide not to follow a curriculum exactly; they usually claim this as their main justification, which is that supporting students' learning ends up being more important than teaching the material. Because the teachers' decision to defy the pace instructions stems from their desire to act in their students' best interests, Baumi (2015) called this situation "principled resistance". Similar to Bell (2015), Baumi (2015) noted that resistance to new curricula can be a hindrance to teachers' experiences. Teachers who are expected to follow tight pace rules in order to meet curriculum objectives frequently find it difficult to adapt their instruction to the needs of their students or to follow district policies out of concern for facing disciplinary action (Baumi, 2015).

2.5 Role of Students in Curriculum Implementation

The process of implementing a curriculum entails converting instructional strategies, student learning experiences, and assessments into goals and objectives for education. It is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Fullan (2007) asserted that cooperation amongst a range of stakeholders – including teachers, administrators, and students – is necessary for an efficient implementation. Students play a crucial role in the learning process and have a big say in whether implementation efforts succeed or fail, even though teachers are in charge of providing the content.

The shift to student-centred learning strategies emphasises how crucial it is to view students as active contributors to the curriculum's implementation. In accordance with Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory, children build knowledge through interactions with teachers, peers, and the learning environment. Learning is a social process. Through student participation in decision-making processes, teachers can adapt the curriculum to each student's

unique needs and interests, resulting in a more effective and interesting learning environment. Students who actively engage in the learning process are more likely to succeed academically and gain better knowledge of the material (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). This emphasises how crucial it is to treat students as collaborators while implementing the curriculum in order to foster an inclusive and cooperative learning environment.

By actively seeking feedback from students, teachers may pinpoint the curriculum's strong and weak points, and make appropriate changes to improve the learning process. This is in line with the formative assessment concepts, which state that continuous feedback influences instructional choices (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Involving students in the evaluation process also fosters a sense of accountability and ownership for their own education.

The significance of a planned curriculum created by people with vast knowledge and experience has been underlined by philosophers like John Dewey and Plato. The assumption that teachers have a better understanding of what is crucial for students' intellectual development is reinforced by Plato's allegory of the cave. This viewpoint holds that due to their restricted abilities, students might not be able to make wise choices regarding the subject matter and organisation of their education. The emphasis on a set curriculum and the expectation that students will listen to teachers and absorb their information passively are two areas where Plato's impact can be observed in educational systems. Critics counter that this method can hinder pupils' unique inventiveness and neglects to take into account their varied demands and interests. Progressive philosophers like John Dewey, in contrast to the traditional view, support students' active participation in directing their own education. According to Dewey, curriculum development should be a collaborative and interactive process in which students contribute their interests, experiences, and changing needs. Dewey contends in

"*Democracy and education*" that a student-centred approach develops responsibility, critical thinking, and creativity.

Understanding the structure and procedure helps students connect with the goals and become more motivated to achieve them rather than acting as a roadblock to their education (Rudduck & Flutter, 2000). It is often challenging for teachers to ascertain whether students are having difficulty with the instructional tactics used. If students are not given the authority to express their opinions and support instructional modifications, their growth will suffer (Konings, 2010). According to Thompson (2009), students create a deep bond with teachers when they feel that they are respected for their opinions.

2.6 Role of Teachers in Curriculum Implementation

Teachers are essential in helping students understand the content (Lochner et al., 2015). It is imperative that educators adhere to the curriculum. The degree of adherence to guidelines by educators, the soundness of curriculum principles, and the provision of suitable opportunities guarantee the correlation between the curriculum and implementation (Penuel et al., 2014). Teachers' roles in the curriculum implementation process have evolved recently; they are now expected to provide activity-based instruction where students focus on cause and effect, collaborate, communicate, and share. To ensure all of these, teachers may occasionally make modifications to the curriculum (Penuel et al., 2014). During implementation, teachers look for potential issues, assess the curriculum's applicability and sufficiency, assess the political and social climate of the school, use their creativity and pedagogical knowledge to further their professional development (Vasconcelos et al., 2015), and decide how best to support students' learning and development (McLachlan et al., 2018). Thus, according to Hickey (2005), a teacher's duties include putting the curriculum into practice, assisting

students in developing to the appropriate degree, and resolving any issues that arise. If left by themselves, they will struggle. Due to all of these obligations, instructors must step outside of their comfort zone and engage in a balanced process; nonetheless, based on their workload, they might not be able to resolve issues (Chapman, 2019).

The important stage of curriculum implementation is when the theoretical underpinnings of a curriculum are converted into actual classroom experiences. Throughout history, educators and philosophers have vigorously debated the role that teachers play in this process. Some argue for a more student-centred, facilitative approach, while others support a stricter, directive role for teachers. In his groundbreaking book "*Cultural literacy: What every American needs to know*," E. D. Hirsch (1987) made the case that a cohesive society and efficient communication depend on a common body of knowledge. He stressed the significance of a teacher-centred approach and argued that instructors are essential in passing on this cultural knowledge to students. Hirsch's idea emphasised the need for a consistent curriculum led by educators, who act as authorities. In his opinion, educators guarantee that every student has access to the cultural capital needed for meaningful engagement in society by teaching a common body of knowledge. By creating a foundation of common knowledge, Hirsch's teacher-centred approach seeks to close the achievement gap. Hirsch's dedication to a teacher-centred approach was also shared by William Bagley, a well-known educational theorist of the early 20th century. In order to preserve regularity and consistency in education, Bagley thought that a standardised curriculum was essential. "*Education, an introductory survey*", written by Bagley in 1934, made the case for a preset curriculum that directs instructors in the methodical delivery of material. This method guarantees that every student has the same educational experience, he claims. Bagley's viewpoint is consistent with the idea

that instructors ought to follow a set plan of action because they are the main facilitators of curriculum implementation. Teachers are able to lead pupils through a planned educational journey and promote coherence and continuity in learning by adhering to a predetermined curriculum.

On the other hand, progressive theorists and educators like Paulo Freire and John Dewey support a curriculum that is more experiential and student-centred. Dewey (1938) believed that inquiry-based learning and critical thinking should be the cornerstones of education, with a strong foundation in students' experiences and interests. In his work on critical pedagogy, Freire (1970) challenged the traditional hierarchical teacher–student relationship by emphasising the value of conversation and collaboration in the teaching–learning process. Curriculum planning is a limited function for teachers, according to James (1986). The main accountability rests with administrators and supervisors, even though many academics have regarded them as curricular leaders. Supervisors and administrators have responsibilities that support curriculum planning, including budget planning, stakeholder contact and approval, and school board involvement. However, the planning might also involve qualified educators.

2.7 Role of Department Heads and the Senior Leadership Team in Curriculum Implementation

In order to modify the curriculum for himself, the teacher, and the school, the role of the school leader is essential (Dery, 2021; Lukman et al., 2020). The achievement of the exceptional level of instruction in his school is largely dependent on the school leaders. Thus, in order to raise the standard of instruction in their schools, school leaders must make every effort to establish a curriculum that meets the needs of their students (Badriyati & Usman,

2020). According to Arokiasamy et al. (2015) and Evy Ramadina (2021), the department heads and SLT serve as transformative leaders and supervisors inside their educational institution. As a result, they are in charge of helping teachers and other education personnel raise the standard of instruction in schools. Leaders play a pivotal role in fostering a student-centred learning environment and granting teaching autonomy to educators and their support staff while executing the curriculum for independent learning. Within the confines of the school, they are also one of the forces behind the human resources.

As curriculum implementers, leaders assume the responsibility of overseeing their teachers through direct observation, the collaborative monitoring of student achievement, the provision of resources for teachers to locate supplementary materials, staff development and support for interdisciplinary units, professional development for teachers, the observation of effective practices, the evaluation of teachers' performance, and keeping teachers informed about alternative learning strategies to meet the needs of students (Chan et al., 2022; Semin, 2019).

Department heads play a vital role in the implementation of the curriculum, as they are accountable for converting broad educational objectives into department-specific goals. In order to execute curricula effectively, Fullan (2007) states that instructional practices must be in line with the learning objectives. Department heads are in a good position to make sure that the curriculum complies with the institution's educational philosophy and external standards because they are subject matter experts. On the other hand, the senior leadership team have a crucial role in resource allocation and strategy planning, both of which are necessary for the effective implementation of curricula (Leithwood, 2006). Carefully allocating resources guarantees that teachers have access to the resources and assistance required for delivering the

curriculum in an efficient manner. Senior leaders' strategic planning also aids in defining achievable deadlines, spotting possible problems, and coming up with ways to get over roadblocks during the implementation phase. Senior leaders and department heads are essential in creating an environment where teachers value ongoing professional development. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) stress the value of continuous professional development for teachers implementing curricula. Department heads can plan workshops, seminars, and mentorship programmes to improve teachers' abilities and knowledge so they are prepared to carry out the curriculum in an efficient manner. They can also do this with the help of senior leadership. Implementing a curriculum requires regular monitoring and assessment (Stufflebeam, 2003). Department heads are essential in developing tools for assessment to determine how effective the curriculum is, while working with senior leaders. This entails gathering and evaluating information on instructor curriculum adherence, student performance, and the overall effect on the learning environment. For curriculum implementation to be successful, stakeholders must collaborate and communicate effectively (Senge, 1990). Department heads facilitate information flow between instructors and the senior leadership by serving as a middleman. Collaboration creates a sense of shared accountability for the curriculum's successful implementation, while open lines of communication guarantee that instructors are aware of its objectives and expectations.

In addition, the management's job is to create an atmosphere that supports an open-door policy and direct communication between the administration and teachers in order to resolve issues with the curriculum. Through this approach, instructors and students will have more opportunities to voice concerns and find constructive solutions. Additionally, in order to create a paradigm that will support school achievement, department heads or the senior

leadership team must have discussions with implementors. These discussions can then be utilised as a benchmark for positive implementation.

2.8 Summary

The literature review on curriculum implementation indicates a complex environment with a wide range of variables affecting its success or failure. The integration of much of the research highlights the importance of comprehending the complex interactions among different elements, including stakeholder participation, contextual factors, and teacher preparedness. According to the examined literature, implementing curricula effectively necessitates a comprehensive strategy that takes into account not just the curriculum's design and content, but also the dynamic interactions within the educational ecosystem. The literature also highlights how teachers are important as major players in the implementation process. For curriculum implementation to be successful, teacher professional development, continuous support, and a positive outlook on change are identified as essential components. The review also emphasises how crucial it is to match the curriculum objectives with more general educational goals and to modify teaching methods to meet the requirements of a wide range of students.

Finally, the literature study emphasises how difficult it is to adopt curricula and the importance of taking a thorough, team-based, flexible approach. Future studies ought to concentrate on investigating novel approaches, tackling particular difficulties, and assessing the long-term effects of effective implementation on academic results for students. Therefore, this study will explore the concept and use the results to get beyond the obstacles to school implementation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter is essential since it provides the methodological framework for the entire investigation. The researcher outlines in this chapter the framework that was used to look into the study questions and objectives. Since these are the main tools for gathering data, open-ended questionnaires and interviews received priority. The study's ethical considerations as well as the methods used for data analysis and interpretation are examined. Alignment with the topic, purpose, research questions, and methodology of the proposed study is necessary when selecting a research methodology (Creswell, 2014; Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010). When considering these elements, it is necessary to analyse several approaches in order to potentially answer the research questions and address the problem.

3.2 Research Design

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), the research design outlines how the study was carried out to meet the research objectives. This research focuses on the experiences and difficulties that the SLT, teachers, and department heads had when implementing curriculum changes. To gather data, the researcher opted for a qualitative study methodology. The researcher can access the research participants' experiences and points of view by using a qualitative research approach (Creswell, 2014). The following section goes into further details regarding this strategy.

3.3 Research Approach

3.3.1 Qualitative Research Method

According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research entails investigating a central significant concept related to a certain issue. Gaining a deeper understanding of this

fundamental phenomenon implies the use of particular approaches to accomplish an objective. A main characteristic is examining the problem and providing an explanation based on studies from the literature. This is followed by a goal statement that is not too specific, and general research questions that are intended to extract the participants' own experiences (Creswell, 2014). As Creswell pointed out, data analysis involves employing text analysis to describe patterns and themes, as well as interpreting the findings in light of a larger context. One last feature is a written report that summarises the results, key topics, and suggestions. The qualitative research method entails gathering non-numerical data using methods including in-depth interviews, observations, and document or artefact analysis (Cresswell, 2017).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research facilitates an in-depth investigation of intricate phenomena, offering a more profound comprehension of the background and viewpoints of the participants. Furthermore, its flexibility and adaptability enable researchers to adjust their strategy in response to new information and pursue unanticipated research directions (Creswell, 2017). Additionally, it highlights how crucial rigour is to the study design and data analysis in order to improve the validity and reliability of the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Essentially, the qualitative technique deepens the investigation by providing an insightful lens through which to understand the complexity present in social phenomena and human behaviour. It provides more details regarding personal viewpoints (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2010). Exploring, comprehending, and interpreting the meaning of events and phenomena, and how they relate to regular people in particular contexts is the main goal of phenomenological research (Yusuf, 2014). In addition to the leadership role in terms of the stages of curriculum implementation, this study will investigate the obstacles faced by department heads and teachers. The outcomes of an open-ended

questionnaires and interviews were employed as data sources. This method encourages the development of themes and patterns, offering a comprehensive perspective on the difficulties encountered in implementing curricula. Furthermore, I was able to record new ideas that might not have come through in quantitative surveys. I was able to gain a thorough understanding of the complex issues surrounding curriculum implementation through the use of a qualitative approach,

3.3.2 *Triangulation*

Triangulation is a methodological tool used in qualitative research that integrates several data sources, approaches, and perspectives in order to increase the validity and reliability of the study findings. Triangulation lowers the possibility of bias and boosts the study's overall dependability by enabling researchers to cross-validate their findings. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) support triangulation as a means of strengthening the credibility of findings in qualitative research by obtaining corroboration from many sources. This may entail using a variety of data collection methods, including open-ended questionnaires and interviews in order to obtain a more thorough and detailed comprehension of the studied phenomena. Furthermore, Patton (2002) emphasises how crucial triangulation is to maintaining the validity of qualitative investigations since it reduces the impact of individual researcher biases and strengthens the research design. Through the use of triangulation, qualitative researchers enhance the methodological richness of their work and, in the end, offer a more complete and trustworthy explanation of the phenomena they study. Denzin (1970) distinguished between four categories of triangulation in qualitative research: investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, and data triangulation. Data triangulation is the process of investigating a given event using a variety of

sources or data kinds. For example, to investigate a specific social topic, the researcher employed an open-ended questionnaire and interviews. An open-ended questionnaire and interviews will provide the database used in this research.

3.4 Data Collection Plan

3.4.1 *Description of the Study Area*

The study was conducted in one of the private schools in Dubai. The school was established 28 years ago. It houses two schools, a US School and MOE School, which offer a US California State Curriculum (Kindergarten to Grade 12) and a UAE Ministry of Education Curriculum (Grades 1 to 12), respectively. The curriculum in both schools, which places a strong emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving skills, is continually evaluated to make sure it still meets the needs of our students. The school is aware of the ways in which technology is transforming the world and our way of life. The school is eager to keep up with the latest advancements and aims to engage learners to the fullest extent possible in response to the new trends.

3.4.2 *Participants*

The study's specified problem directly affects the teachers, department heads, and senior leadership team members, who were chosen as participants. The sample size for this study is 17 ($n=17$), including 8 teachers, 4 head of departments, and 5 of the senior leadership team. The goal to preserve the participant identification and privacy led to the selection of the sample size (Creswell, 2014). This sample consists of five members of the senior leadership team who work directly with the curriculum on a daily basis, two teachers from each cycle, and the heads of the departments of the main subjects (English, Maths, Science, and Arabic). This sample size, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2016) and Creswell (2014), permits more

detailed data without having an enormous sample that would reduce the honesty of the responses. Creswell (2014) and Yin (2014) support the following qualities as necessary for study participation, which are included in the inclusion criteria for the participants and timeframes. The participants must meet three requirements: (a) be at least 21 years old, (b) have direct interaction with the study region, and (c) be available for one 25–30-minute interview. In order to highlight and find similar themes within the participant data for reported concerns and observed instructional practices linked to the curriculum implementation, data from the open-ended questionnaires and interviews were analysed using a coding system. Purposive sampling was utilised by the researcher. According to Patton (2002), purposive sampling is especially helpful in qualitative research when the objective is to include individuals who possess particular traits or features in order to capture the complexity and subtleties of a phenomenon. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), the deliberate selection of participants based on relevance to the research focus improves the study's validity and advances a more thorough comprehension of the research topic.

3.5 Research Instrument

The research adopted a qualitative approach, as was previously noted. In order to answer the study questions and gain a thorough knowledge, both the open-ended questionnaires and interviews were used.

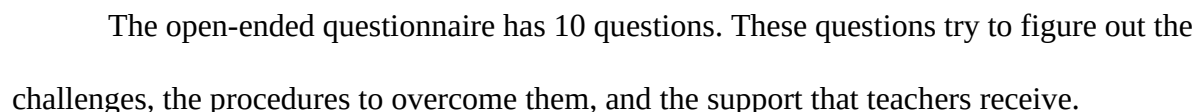
3.5.1 *Open-Ended Questionnaire*

In qualitative research, open-ended questionnaires are an essential tool for gathering detailed and comprehensive data. Open-ended questionnaires allow the participants to express themselves freely and provide extensive narratives and insights into their experiences, beliefs, and attitudes, in contrast to closed-ended surveys that restrict the respondents to predefined

answer choices (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The capacity of the open-ended questionnaire to convey the complexity of the respondents' viewpoints is one of its main benefits. Granting respondents the freedom to express their ideas in their own words provides researchers with an abundance of qualitative data that can reveal hidden meanings and unexpected patterns in a study (Patton, 2002). Open-ended questionnaires are consistent with grounded theory, narrative inquiry, and phenomenology in qualitative research methods. According to Husserl (1936), phenomenology aims to discover the core of human experiences. Participants can provide a detailed description of these experiences by answering open-ended questionnaire questions. Open-ended questionnaires help themes and patterns without predefined categories to emerge. Grounded theory emphasises the discovery of hypotheses from data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). According to Patton (2002), open-ended questions allow the respondents to share personal stories, provide context, and go into further detail about their experiences, making them especially helpful when examining complicated social phenomena.

The importance of question quality was emphasised by Flower (1995). A well-crafted inquiry produces meaningful and trustworthy measures of the phenomena the researcher is trying to identify. For this reason, there are no confusing ideas, incomplete sentences, or other interpretations in the study's questionnaire. The study's sample size is limited to approximately 17 participants. Therefore, it made sense to use open-ended questions (Cohen et al., 2004). Less structured and more open-ended questionnaires that rely on words are effective for small sample sizes (Patton, 2015). Figure 3.1 presents the content areas of the open-ended questionnaire.

Open-Ended Questionnaire Areas



The senior leadership team was interviewed semi-structurally in order to gather information. The goal of the interviews was to complement the questionnaires replies with relevant details that could not be found in the questionnaire. Researchers can explore various aspects of people's thoughts, feelings, and experiences by using probing inquiries and open-ended questions (Patton, 2002). Researchers can record the depth and variety of human experiences through interviews, which give participants a forum to voice their opinions in their own words (Cohen, 2011). Researchers can build a relationship of confidence with participants during interviews, which is a useful opportunity. Building a relationship is essential to getting real and honest answers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Furthermore,

interviews offer the research process flexibility and adaptation. In contrast to conventional questionnaires, interviews enable researchers to modify questions in response to the participant responses, resulting in a dialogue that is both dynamic and responsive (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Since the researcher has been working with the participants for a considerable amount of time and is aware of their background, he chose a semi-structured interview technique, which allows him to craft questions that would elicit the necessary information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The investigator employed semi-structured interviews to get information from a chosen group of subjects. Semi-structured interviews provided a focused means of communication between participants, with the particular goal of implementing the curriculum about a predetermined subject (Anderson & Arsenault, 2000). Interviews are especially useful for revealing hidden or unconscious knowledge that the participants might not be aware of with their conscious minds. Researchers can access tacit knowledge by asking follow-up and probing questions, which may provide insights that are difficult to obtain using other research techniques (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

To minimise the possibility of biased responses, the participants were told by the researcher about the goal of the interview (Tuckman 1972). The senior leadership team was interviewed one-to-one. In building a trustworthy relationship with the researcher, one-to-one settings enable participants to feel more at ease and eager to provide private and sensitive information (Fontana & Frey, 2005). In order to ensure that the participants felt at ease and could communicate freely, the researcher made an effort to provide a safe and supportive setting. During the interview, the researcher made sure that the participants understand the questions by using simple, unambiguous language (Patton, 1980). Moreover, additional inquiries were used to probe further into specific parts of the participants' experiences. This

makes it possible to comprehend the subject matter more fully (Patton, 1980). Table 3.1 presents the content areas of the one-to-one interviews.

Table 3.1

One-to-One Interviews Content Areas

Interview Study Area	Question Number
Teacher preparedness & Professional Development	1 & 2
Resource Allocation & Accessibility	3 & 4
Assessment & Feedback Processes	5 & 6
Communication & Stakeholder Engagement	7 & 8

Six questions make up the senior leadership team interview, followed by the follow-up questions. The figure illustrates how the questions are divided into six categories: flexibility and personalisation, preparedness and professional development, resource allocation, teachers' turnover, technological advancements, and stakeholder engagement.

3.6 Data Analysis

The study has demonstrated how the participants interpret obstacles to curriculum implementation and has uncovered their perspectives, understandings, and experiences with curriculum implementation. The data were presented in a qualitative manner as verbal narratives centred on themes that arose from the information gathered using a variety of techniques. Six steps are provided by Creswell (2014) for the analysis and interpretation of qualitative data: (a) data collection, (b) data preparation for analysis, (c) data proofreading to gain an overall understanding, (d) the segmentation and coding of data, (e) coding text for research report descriptions, and (f) coding text for themes to be used in research reports. The

data collected from the open-ended questionnaires and interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. It is a popular qualitative research technique used to find and analyse patterns in textual or visual data. The method, which was first presented by Braun and Clarke (2006), provides a flexible and simple way to find patterns, themes, and meaning within a dataset. Braun and Clarke (2006) proposed a six-phase process to do thematic analysis including familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. The participants' responses were converted into codes, which were then further simplified into themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe coding as the process of labelling and indexing data to identify meaningful patterns or themes. The goal of coding, according to Creswell (2014), is to interpret the data by applying a variety of techniques intended to extract significance from the participant responses. After the three weeks that the data collection process took to complete, the data analysis took place.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Data

To increase trust and triangulate the data, two forms of data were gathered, as suggested by Creswell (2014). The reliability and correctness of the data collection and analysis are referred to as credibility. Based on the techniques employed to promote credibility, trustworthiness determines whether or not a study's findings are credible. The study employed two measures, such as conducting member checks and using multiple tools for triangulation. In general, member checks can be particularly significant since the respondents validate and reinforce their answers, which adds to the trustworthiness of the information. As stated by Creswell (2014), a thorough explanation of the issue under study was delivered to the participants via the questionnaire and was reviewed with the senior leadership team before

the interview in order to evaluate the reliability of the research. Furthermore, the questionnaire includes the identity of the researcher, the purpose of the study, and the policy regarding the anonymity of participants and the response confidentiality (Fogleman, 2002). The researcher employed a methodical approach to evaluate the reliability of the study's data, which involved cross-checking the results, comparing the audio recordings of the interviews with the transcribed responses, and conducting informal discussion interviews with the study participants. The incorrect data were further verified by the researcher. This was accomplished by providing the transcripts to the study participants, enabling them to correct any answers that were not accurately recorded. This made it easier for the researcher to determine whether the respondents' responses were understood in the same way. Additionally, the researcher confirmed if the information obtained from the interview and questionnaire led to the same conclusion. The researcher gave copies of the draft report to each participant, giving them another chance to offer written or spoken feedback on the entire study in order to confirm and validate the findings. Moreover, to avoid influencing the study's conclusion and findings, the researcher put aside his prior assumptions and views about the research issue when undertaking the interviews.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The process for acquiring the school principal's written consent was necessary in order to reach the participants. Firstly, the researcher got ethical clearance from the university in order to be able to conduct the research. After that, a third-party consent form has been signed by the school principal as approval for the researcher to start conducting the research. An explanation of the research study's goals and the requirements for the participants was given in order to obtain permission (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To get qualitative

responses for the questionnaire, the researcher planned to include five members of the senior leadership team, in addition to 12 teachers and department heads.

The teachers and department heads completed the questionnaire, and the senior leadership team participated in semi-structured interviews to obtain a deeper knowledge of the methodology. Before the questionnaire, each participant received an informed consent form via email, which they all signed. The consent form explained the goals of the study, and the possible advantages of the participant responses, which will be utilised to enhance the implementation strategies and innovations, and it stressed the confidentiality of their answers. The questionnaire was created on Google Forms and forwarded to the participants. The senior leadership team consent form was sent through email and the interview time was scheduled once they gave their consent, and according to their readiness and free time. Since data security is a risk, data access is authorised only to the researcher. Access controls and password protection are only available to the researcher, who can view the data that has been gathered.

3.9 Summary

The research technique and design were covered in this chapter. It covered information on how to collect and acquire data, including sampling, data processing, research instrument trustworthiness, and ethical procedures. Presenting and discussing the study project's findings will be the next chapter. It will address how the data acquired using different research instruments should be interpreted.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

The outcomes of the open-ended questionnaire and interviews – two methods used in qualitative research – are the main topic of this chapter. This chapter addresses the research questions by analysing and interpreting the data to answer the research questions. Teachers and department leaders were asked to provide information via a Google form. Furthermore, thematic analysis was employed to examine the semi-structured interview data obtained from the senior leadership team.

4.2 Open-Ended Questionnaire

Twelve of the same school teachers responded to the questionnaire. Ten questions made up the questionnaire, which also includes a brief research introduction and the collection of participant demographics. Thematic analysis was used to examine the questionnaire's results.

4.2.1 Demographic Information

Out of the 12 participants of the open-ended questionnaire, females represented 58.3%, while males represented 41.7% of the total sample (Figure 4.1), which indicates that the questionnaire is influenced by the opinions of female slightly. Based on the age factor (Figure 4.2), it can be inferred that a significant proportion of them have already formed their educational theory, which guides their methods of teaching. The pie chart shows that 58.3% are between 36 and 45. The second highest age group with a percentage of 25% is the one between 46 and 55. The least age group is the one between 26 and 35, which was represented by 2 teachers with a percentage of 16.7%. The pie chart in Figure 4.3 shows that 75%, that is a total of 9 teachers and department heads, are bachelor's degree holders while 25%, that is a

total of 3 participants, are master's degree holders. The pie chart in Figure 4.4 shows that 50%, that is a total of 6 participants, have been working in this school for 16 years and above. This percentage and analysis helped in identifying the practices and challenges in effective curriculum implementation.

Figure 4.1

Gender of Open-Ended Questionnaire Participants

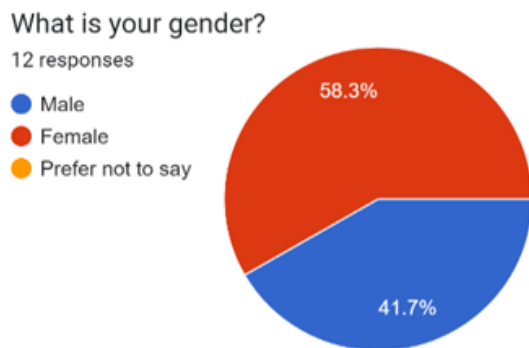


Figure 4.2

Age of Open-Ended Questionnaire Participants

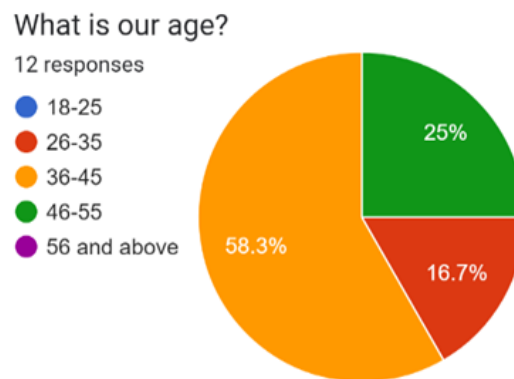


Figure 4.3

Educational Background of Open-Ended Questionnaire Participants

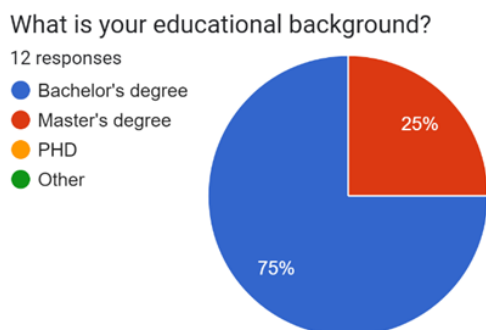
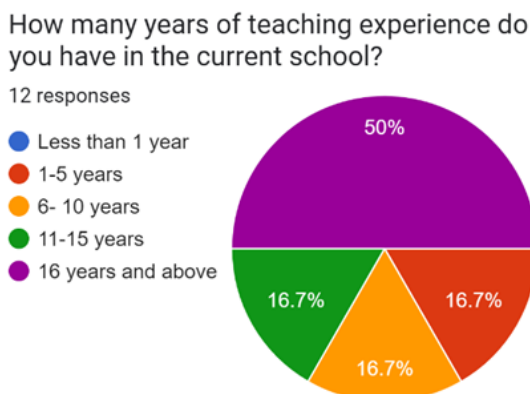


Figure 4.4

Teaching Experience of Open-Ended Questionnaire Participants



4.2.2 Open-Ended Questionnaire Thematic Analysis

Following a careful reading of each participant's open-ended questionnaire response, the data were divided into themes and sub-themes. Table 4.1 presents the thematic analysis of the open-ended questionnaire.

Table 4.1

Results of Thematic Analysis of the Open-Ended Questionnaire

Question number	Theme	Sub-themes
1	Lack of Clarity in Curriculum Documents	Vague language - Lack of specificity - Misaligned objectives - Limited resources
2	Limited Resources	Visual aids - Student motivation and engagement - Workload
3, 5, 7, & 9	Professional Development	Training programmes - Collaboration - Feedback
4 & 6	Equity and Inclusion in Education	Assessment reflects curriculum goals - Assessment and deeper understanding - Teaching methods
8	Adapting Curriculum for Effective Time Management	Prioritising essential content
10	A Positive Culture	Recognition and incentives - Collaboration and peer support

Theme 1: Lack of Clarity in Curriculum Documents

- ***Vague Language***

Scholars underscore the need of employing clear and exact language in curriculum design to improve the instructional coherence and promote improved teacher–student communication. Furthermore, researchers suggest that the use of ambiguous language might result in unequal learning chances since students from diverse backgrounds may find it difficult to understand concepts that are not clearly stated.

The answers to the questionnaire indicate that, in terms of curriculum clarity, the respondents encountered numerous challenges when putting the curriculum into practice.

Some participants mentioned that it can be difficult to employ ambiguous language in curricular texts. Sometimes it feels like trying to figure out a code. Lesson planning would be considerably simpler if the language were clearer. Other participants expressed that it is difficult to understand expectations when phrases are used ambiguously. Using more precise terminology and concrete examples would help close the gap between the curriculum and successful classroom execution. Participant 4, who is a teacher, said, "I find that the curriculum documentation sometimes uses language that's hard to interpret. It's like they expect us to read between the lines. If the language were clearer and provided more concrete examples, it would definitely make my job easier". From the opinions above, it's clear from the answers of the participants that language makes it difficult to understand expectations. Better wording and concrete examples would close the gap.

- ***Lack of Specificity***

According to Smith and Jones (2018), a curriculum that lacks specificity may prevent students from being exposed to the depth and breadth of information required for analytical

thinking, which might impact the development of critical thinking abilities. Furthermore, a study by Brown et al. (2019) discovered that students may become disengaged from their studies due to unclear curriculum frameworks since they may not see the significance and real-world applications of their coursework.

Participant 2, who is a teacher, mentioned that the curriculum's lack of definition is a persistent obstacle: "It's difficult to successfully design classes without clear instructions on what to teach. It would be really beneficial to implement with more information on content expectations". The curriculum needs to be more focused, according to a different participant. It is difficult to match instructional strategies with the curriculum when there are broad objectives without specific examples. Participant 9, who is a head of department said, "I believe if the curriculum was more explicit and specific, it would be a game-changer". It could be understood from the mentioned opinions that specificity would mean a clearer path map for them.

- ***Misaligned Objectives***

According to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), misalignment between the objectives and evaluations might cause misunderstandings and make it more difficult to assess the students' actual comprehension. Additionally, Anderson et al.'s (2018) study made clear that misalignment can prevent students from being directed towards mastering important concepts and competencies, which can impair the development of vital abilities. The participants have acknowledged that teachers require a roadmap linking the objectives to the larger educational mission and have stressed that misalignment with broader goals is a worry. Participants, such as participants 10 and 12 who are heads of departments, expressed that they occasionally thought there was a lack of alignment between the curriculum's objectives and the larger

educational goals. It appears as though there is a gap between the written word and the greater scheme of things. To make sure that everyone is traveling in the same direction, there needs to be a clearer link. On the other hand Participant 7, who is a teacher, said that the curriculum objectives are connected to the broader educational goals. She emphasised that there are links between the daily lessons and overarching mission.

Theme 2: Limited Resources

- ***Visual Aids***

The lack of visual aids presents a significant obstacle for teachers, affecting their capacity to design and implement successful learning environments (Smith, Johnson, & Brown, 2022). The participants spoke about how hard it is to explain complex ideas without visual aids, and they emphasised the idea of how limited resources make it difficult for them to provide a more engaging learning environment. Participant 5, who is a teacher, expressed that due to this she has to be more creative and innovative, but it's difficult to equal the influence that well-made visual aids can have on students' understanding and participation.

- ***Student Engagement and Motivation***

Studies conducted by Sirin (2005) demonstrate that environments with limited resources increase the poor academic climate and lower student motivation. Furthermore, a study by Baker, Goesling, and LeTendre (2002) highlights the significance of having enough resources to provide a supportive learning environment and emphasises how resource inequality causes educational inequalities. According to the participants, a major factor lowering student enthusiasm and involvement is resource limitations. Some participants expressed how hard it is to attract students' interest when there aren't any interesting and varied activities available. While they acknowledged the value of offering a variety of learning

opportunities, the participants answered that the lack of resources made it difficult for them to design engaging and dynamic lessons. Participant 11, who is a head of department, referred to the idea of printing and how it has deeply impacted the ability to use literacy centres to improve the students' literacy and meet their educational and individual needs.

- ***Workload***

Research has repeatedly demonstrated the link between a lack of resources and increased worker stress levels (Cavanaugh et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2018). Furthermore, schools with limited resources could become less innovative and adaptable to the needs of the students (Grant, 2015). Lack of resources has a significant influence on teachers' and department heads' workloads, putting them in a situation where they must overcome extra obstacles in order to deliver high-quality instruction. Participant 10, who is a head of department, stressed the idea that rather than concentrating on providing high-quality instruction, teachers waste their valuable time looking for or generating materials. Other participants said that the lack of resources greatly impacted the effectiveness in delivering the curriculum in different ways. In addition, it helped to increase the teacher talking time and reduce the student talking time, which is completely contradicting of modern methods of teaching. Participant 4, who is a teacher, said that the lack of resources doubles the effort and time spent to find suitable resources. Participant 4 added that teacher-made materials will not normally have the same standard of design and production as commercial materials, and hence may not present the same image.

Theme 3: Professional Development

- ***Training Programmes***

The importance of receiving high-quality professional development for enhancing teaching strategies and student outcomes is highlighted through research conducted by Darling-Hammond (2017). All the participants have widely accessed formal training programmes to navigate the challenges of the curriculum implementation. According to the responses provided by the participants, they have actively participated in customised training courses that were created to particularly address the difficulties involved in implementing a curriculum. These courses frequently included practical workshops, online workshops, conferences, seminars, and group discussions with teachers. One of the participants said that, as a head of curriculum, she received training on how to utilise AI-based tools or platforms to enhance the teaching methods and student engagement within the curriculum. Participant 9 referred to mentorship and how it helped to provide a valuable support system. Mentorship provided suggestions on how to modify the curriculum to fit each student's specific and individual needs, as well as insights into effective tactics and lessons from their experiences. The participant confirmed that mentorship has helped her to face obstacles with more strength and trust.

- ***Collaboration***

The study of Fullan (2007) emphasises how crucial it is for teachers and school administrators to work together in order to successfully implement curriculum modifications. According to the participants, a key strategy for overcoming obstacles in curriculum implementation has been interdisciplinary collaboration. Some participants attested to the great advantages of working with teachers in other subject areas. They stated to have taken part in departmental and grade-level meetings where they discussed problems, exchanged ideas, and worked together to design lessons. They said that this helped them to be able to

address issues more skilfully and produce a more smooth and integrated curriculum delivery by breaking barriers and encouraging collaboration. Participant 3 said that without collaboration, teachers may interpret curriculum guidelines differently, resulting in inconsistencies in the delivery of content, assessment methods, and learning experiences across classrooms, which will lead to a big gap between classes as per one of the participants. According to Park (2008), a teacher's application of the curriculum may suffer if they don't comprehend it from the beginning. Participant 4 said, "If a new teacher came and the teachers aren't cooperative, he will be lost and this will negatively affect the way they deliver information to students. Also, it might be time consuming for the new teacher as he will try different ways till students respond".

- ***Feedback***

Three participant heads of departments stated that the development of curriculum implementation requires the use of feedback systems. Frequent feedback loops give educators a chance to discuss their issues, share their experiences, and recommend changes (Smith, Johnson, & Brown, 2022). Participant 9 said that the students' feedback is incredibly valuable. It was added that the curriculum could be modified in real time to keep it interesting and current by taking into account their points of view: "We build a more flexible and responsive learning environment that better meets changing demands and implementation difficulties by integrating input into the curriculum development process" (Participant 9).

Theme 4: Equity and Inclusion in Education

- ***Ensuring Assessments Accurately Reflect Curriculum Goals***

Valid conclusions about student knowledge depend on the alignment of what is taught and assessed, as Shepard (2006) stated. It will take constant cooperation between curriculum

designers, instructors, and assessment experts to achieve this alignment and make sure that tests accurately reflect the knowledge and abilities that are being measured. Participants 11 and 12 underscored the significance of strong collaboration between curriculum designers and teachers. The participants think that constant communication and agreement on the desired learning outcomes are necessary to match the evaluations with the curriculum objectives. Regular meetings and chances for professional growth can help to promote this connection. As per Participant 11, "Our assessments have to meet the rigor of standards. Also, it is not developmentally appropriate to give mid-term and final exams for students below 5th grade".

- ***Developing Assessments that Measure Deeper Understanding***

Black and Wiliam (1998) draw attention to the difficulty of measuring deeper understanding through tests that go beyond basic knowledge. Careful consideration of Bloom's Taxonomy is necessary when creating exams that evaluate higher-order thinking skills in addition to rote memorisation. According to participants 5, 6, and 11, using open-ended questions and project-based exams can help better capture students' deeper understanding. Participants 10 and 11 said that assessments might struggle to effectively measure higher-order thinking skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, which are key components of many curricula. In order to overcome that issue, the participants suggested that these skills can be more accurately assessed by designing questions that call for application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as opposed to just memory. Furthermore, scenario-based questions or real-world issues can be used to assess higher-order thinking.

- ***Adapting Teaching Methods to Accommodate Learning Styles***

Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligences theory emphasises the difficulty of modifying teaching strategies to accommodate a range of learning styles. Teachers should use

differentiated education strategies since they are aware that students have diverse strengths and preferences. One participant thinks that the key to effective teaching is understanding and incorporating different learning styles. Participants 5 and 8 stressed the idea of creating personalised learning plans for students based on their strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles. Participants 1, 2, and 7 said that teachers are able to recognise the unique learning preferences, abilities, and difficulties of every student in order to adjust instruction. Giving students a variety of ways to interact with the material and show that they understand it, as well as using a variety of teaching techniques like discussions, hands-on activities, and visual aids, will accommodate a variety of learning styles without sacrificing the provision of extra help or challenges based on the needs of each individual student. The participants added that this will guarantee that every student is adequately challenged. The participants highlighted that teachers might establish more inclusive and productive learning environments that meet the varied needs and skills of their students by incorporating these ideas into curriculum design and instructional strategies.

Theme 5: Adapting Curriculum for Effective Time Management

- ***Prioritising Essential Content***

A more profound understanding of important concepts can be attained through a concentrated strategy that prioritises depth over breadth (Hattie & Donoghue, 2016). Teachers can make learning more manageable and effective for students by focusing just on the fundamentals. The participants said that time management may be impacted by curriculum expectations. Effective approaches to handle this include setting priorities for important ideas, making efficient use of technology, implementing active learning techniques, and modifying lesson plans in response to student progress to guarantee thorough coverage in the time

allowed. Participant 4 said, "I have a big issue to "cover" the curriculum. That is not the intent of American curriculum standards. It is better to cover less and go deeper but what we are doing [is to] keep pushing for coverage which is wrong". Participant 1 said that the curriculum is not affecting the time. She added that she gives students the same topics but extended. Participants 9 and 10 emphasised that commitment to the instructional planner sent from the Ministry of Education will help to manage time effectively. Participant 9 said the solution is in getting strategies for maximising instructional time in the classroom to meet the teaching goals and students' needs.

Theme 6: A Positive Culture

- ***Recognition and Incentives***

Building a strong and active school culture is largely dependent on praising and rewarding teachers for their constant commitment to curriculum implementation. Rewarding educators for their work by giving them recognition and incentives encourages their own motivation, which in turn creates a feeling of purpose and commitment (Pink, 2009). According to Pink (2009), three main factors influence motivation: autonomy, mastery, and purpose. A well-thought-out recognition programme complies with these guidelines, which raises teacher satisfaction and engagement. Most participants confirmed that the SLT support them by providing guidance and appreciation. According to participant 6 the SLT, empower team members to develop their professional skills and work well autonomously or with active management and guidance. Participant 6 highlighted that providing opportunities for professional growth, understanding the idea of flexibility in curriculum implementation, and public recognition for dedication help to create a motivated teaching staff.

- ***Collaboration and Peer Support***

Teachers' capacity to overcome the difficulties involved in curriculum delivery is improved when they work in an atmosphere that values open communication and group problem-solving (DuFour & Eaker, 2006). Most participants confirmed that the SLT support them by providing all the tools that a teacher needs to implement the curriculum in a professional way. In addition, they support them with the information, ideas, and resources they need, as well as by providing plans to discuss and improve the areas of weaknesses and strengthens.

4.3 Interviews

Interviews were conducted in a designated space, with no potential interruptions or sources of distraction. The SLT selected their offices to conduct the interview. Prior to the interviews, each participant completed a consent form. There were six open-ended questions in each interview. Whenever necessary, additional questions were raised. After the interviews were completed and transcriptions made, the participants had a chance to go over the transcripts. Data from the interviews were analysed into themes and sub-themes.

4.3.1 One-to-One Interviews' Thematic Analysis

Table 4.2 presents the thematic analysis of the one-to-one interviews.

Table 4.2

Results of Thematic Analysis of the One-to-One Interviews

Question number	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Resource Allocation and Management	Budget constraints - Staffing and training

Question number	Theme	Sub-theme
2	Communication and Stakeholder Engagement	Communication channels - Alignment of goals and expectations
3	Enhancing Student-Centric Curriculum Implementation	Inclusive education
4	Teachers' Turnover	Causes and initiatives
5	Adapting to Technological Advancements	Resistance to technology integration
6	Flexibility and Personalisation in Curriculum Implementation	Balance and customisation

Theme 1: Resource Allocation and Management

- ***Budget Constraints***

Every participant acknowledged that overseeing curriculum implementation under financial constraints is a complex task requiring careful preparation and resource efficiency. Creating a special curriculum budget committee with members from several departments is one of the methods that is followed in the school.

Participant 1, who is the head of elementary school, said, "*In order to determine the most important areas for curriculum development, this committee thoroughly evaluates the needs, making sure that funding allotments are in line with our educational objectives*".

The participants highlighted that they constantly assess and modify the financial allocation plans in response to the changing demands of the curriculum and instructor input,

guaranteeing a flexible and adaptable approach to resource management. Three of the senior leadership team agreed that curriculum implementation must be managed with limited funding. One of the solutions they follow is that they rank initiatives according to how well they will affect the student learning outcomes. Participant 2, who is the head of curriculum, added that they also look into joint projects and resource sharing between departments. Participant 2 stated that the development and implementation of a good curriculum depend on the strategic deployment of funding. She added that the curriculum development team works with department heads to identify priority areas for innovation and improvement. To ascertain the financial requirements of various initiatives, they also carry out a thorough needs analysis. This entails taking into account the price of professional development, purchasing educational materials, and putting new teaching techniques into practice.

One of the methods they follow in order to deal with the issue is by establishing a partnership with community stakeholders. Participant 3, who is the head of high school, added that by forming connections with local stakeholders, the students would get priceless chances to interact with curricular implementations in the real world. This improves the overall quality and applicability of students' educational experience while also being in line with our financial limits.

- ***Staffing and Training***

According to all the leaders, the primary goal is making sure the teachers have all they need to implement the curriculum. They also mentioned how the school set up a strong professional development programme with frequent training sessions, conferences, and seminars focused on the newest curriculum updates and instructional strategies. The curriculum coordinators and department heads worked together to build this programme so

that it would meet the unique needs of every teacher. They also promote a culture of continual learning by encouraging the instructors to take advantage of conferences, outside training, and peer cooperation. All the leaders emphasised that the school's objective is to give instructors the knowledge, resources, and encouragement they need to provide excellent instruction and help the students achieve their learning objectives.

Participant 4, who is the head of cycle 2, said, "*professional development and training practices throughout all departments are necessary for maintaining consistency in the implementation of the curriculum*". He added, "the training programme is given through a mix of ongoing mentorship programmes, external seminars led by knowledgeable educators, online platforms and in-house training sessions".

In addition, the school places a strong emphasis on collaborative learning settings, which allow teachers from several departments to exchange best practices and insights, and promote coherence and unity in the delivery of the curriculum.

Participant 4 added that new teachers are connected with mentors who help them navigate the complexities of the curriculum and offer continuous assistance. Furthermore, the regular courses designed especially for newly hired teachers, which cover strategies for implementing curricula, methods for assessment, and efficient classroom management, guarantees that all teachers, regardless of experience level, are equipped to contribute to the comprehensive delivery of the curriculum.

Theme 2: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

- ***Technology Integration and Communication Channels***

All the participants highlighted the importance of technology in curriculum implementation. They understand how crucial it is to use technology to implement curricula.

Some of them said that one of the challenges was to make sure that all teachers and students had access to technology.

Participant 5, who is the head of the MOE section, said, "We are working on developing guidelines for technology integration within the curriculum and providing ongoing professional development for teachers. In terms of communication, we find that a dedicated curriculum portal and regular newsletters are effective ways to keep everyone informed and aligned with our curriculum goals".

The leaders confirmed that working with department leaders to discover resources and tools specific to a given subject is productive. In order to enable teachers to exchange best practices and difficulties, they also place a strong emphasis on regular contact through workshops and subject-specific forums.

Participant 5 highlighted the importance of regular meetings and its impact on transparency among stakeholders: "I believe a combination of a centralised online platform and regular meetings can foster transparent communication and engagement among stakeholders".

- ***Alignment of Goals and Expectations***

During the interviews, most of the leaders stressed the importance of setting clear objectives for curriculum implementation. Two of them spoke about a new initiative in the school, which is collaborating with educators and administrators to identify goals in order to create a common vision. They highlighted the issue of how the goals should be realistic and achievable. One of them mentioned that they use an organised planning procedure with involvement from administrators, department heads, and teachers. This cooperative strategy promotes a sense of responsibility and helps to match expectations. They employ workshops

and training events to give clarification and answer any queries or issues that may come up in order to successfully express these goals.

Participant 1 said, "We are implementing a structured planning process that involves input from teachers, department heads, and administrators. This collaborative approach helps align expectations and fosters a sense of ownership. To communicate these goals effectively, we use workshops and training sessions to provide clarity and address any concerns or questions that may arise".

Participant 1 raised the idea of how it is important to align each department goal with the overall curriculum objectives. They accomplish this by holding frequent department meetings, in which subject-specific objectives are coordinated with the general curricular goal: *"We achieve this through regular department meetings where we discuss and align our subject-specific goals with the broader curriculum vision. To manage expectations, we actively seek input from teachers, ensuring that their perspectives are considered in goal-setting discussions"*.

Theme 3: Enhancing Student-Centric Curriculum Implementation

- ***Inclusive Education***

It was clear during the interviews that creating an inclusive learning environment is one of our leadership team's main priorities. They make sure that the curriculum implementation takes a varied approach to address a range of learning needs. Participant 5 stated that the school regularly conducts assessments to find areas where inclusivity is lacking and to get input from teachers, parents, and students. He confirmed that professional development programmes are designed to give educators the tools they need to modify their teaching strategies to accommodate various learning preferences. Participant 2 said, "We

allocate resources to support students with diverse needs, such as providing additional learning materials".

Participant 2 highlighted that she plays a vital role in converting the school's inclusive vision into workable plans for curriculum implementation. She added that in cooperation with other leaders, by using differentiated instruction strategies, the school enables teachers to modify lesson plans to meet the needs of diverse learning types. She added, "*We regularly review and update our curriculum to incorporate diverse perspectives and address the unique needs of different student populations*".

All leaders confirmed that working and collaborating with experts in special education enables leaders to recognise and solve particular problems in that field. Regular team meetings offer a forum for exchanging best practices and perspectives on successful inclusive teaching approaches.

Theme 4: Teachers' Turnover

- ***Causes and Initiatives***

All leaders confirmed that teachers' turnover is a complex challenge. They highlighted some of the challenges such as resistance to change, workload and stress to complete the curriculum content, career advancement opportunities, and the mismatch of school values and teacher values.

Participant 3 said, "We're looking into measures to improve work–life balance and simplify administrative procedures in order to address concerns about workload". Participant 4 said, "We want to foster an environment where instructors feel appreciated and inspired to contribute to our curriculum implementation objectives. To that end, we actively listen to them and employ focused approaches".

Participant 1 and 5 said that the teachers now feel more invested and empowered in the process since they have been included in the decision-making processes surrounding curriculum modifications. They confirmed that these approaches seek to improve teacher satisfaction, in addition to addressing the reasons for teacher turnover, resulting in a more cooperative and rewarding curriculum implementation process. Participants 3 and 5 added that the school has given teachers the chance to lead on certain curriculum projects, giving them a sense of control and ownership, in order to ease worries about autonomy.

Theme 5: Adapting to Technological Advancements

- ***Resistance to Technology Integration***

Regarding technology integration in curriculum implementation, the leaders confirmed that there are several reasons that cause this issue; for example, many teachers may not have received suitable training or professional development opportunities to familiarise themselves with new technologies. The lack of confidence in using these tools can lead to resistance. Participants 1, 3, and 4 mentioned that due to the busy schedules, teachers frequently struggle with time management. It can require a lot of time to learn and use new technology. They also suggested that some teachers are already resistant to change. If educators feel that using technology will interfere with their true methods, they could be resistant to use it in the classroom. Finally, they think that teachers may be resistant to using technology in the classroom if the pedagogical benefits are not made evident or comprehended. This could lead to doubts about the technology's ability to improve the students' learning experiences. In order to deal with these issues, they suggested that educators should be provided with the proper professional development.

Participant 3 said, "I would prioritise comprehensive professional development programmes for teachers. This includes workshops, training sessions, and ongoing support to ensure educators feel confident and competent in utilising new technologies. Additionally, I would encourage a culture of continuous learning to foster a positive attitude towards technology integration".

Participant 2 suggested that specific technologies, such as using online programmes to do the plenary by the end of the lesson to check the students' understanding, should be used to improve the learning outcomes and curriculum objectives.

Participant 5 mentioned that there should be a clear vision about using technology in classrooms and how that will help to overcome the issue: *"Having a clear vision for the integration of technology into the curriculum is essential. I would skilfully convey this concept to all relevant stakeholders. Overcoming resistance can be facilitated by establishing a common understanding of the value of technology in education"*.

Theme 6: Flexibility and Personalisation in Curriculum Implementation

- ***Balance and Customisation***

All of the participants confirmed that it is important generally to find the correct balance between individualised learning experiences and standardised curricula. They agreed that resources should be allocated to support a variety of instructional approaches in order to attain this balance. Additionally, teachers should be equipped with the resources and trained in individualised education.

Participant 2 mentioned that her role is to work closely with teachers in order to implement strategies that help to achieve personalisation and differentiation in the curriculum. She added that frequent curriculum reviews assist in finding areas where differentiation is

possible without losing important learning objectives. Additionally, project-based learning and elective courses provide learners with choices based on their interests: *"Regular curriculum reviews help us identify opportunities for personalisation without compromising essential learning outcomes. Additionally, we explore the integration of elective courses and project-based learning to provide students with choices that align with their interests"*.

Participants 3 and 5 added that while maintaining commitment to the main curriculum, the school provides advanced courses for students looking for greater difficulties. They mentioned that along with standardised testing, the school supports a balanced assessment approach that includes several types of evaluation and continuous feedback.

4.4 Summary

It became clear that the teachers, department heads, and senior leadership teams were managing the curriculum implementation in their schools with major challenges. It was shown by the study that the department heads and teachers had an excessive amount of work related to curriculum implementation. They face unique difficulties in doing their duties. On the other hand, the senior leadership team is in charge of observing and assessing the curriculum in order to ensure that the teachers are implementing it effectively. As instructional leaders, the senior leadership team should help establish a creative environment that supports the delivery of the curriculum. The ideal leadership style exhibited will foster strong collaboration among teachers in order to address the challenges related to curriculum implementation.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The results of the questionnaire and interview instruments are thoroughly discussed in this chapter, which presents recommendations regarding curriculum implementation and recommendation for further studies.

5.2 Discussion of Key Findings

To explore the difficulties surrounding curriculum implementation, a qualitative study including teachers, department heads, and senior leadership team was conducted. The findings come from the interviews with the senior leadership team and the understanding gained from the teacher and department heads' questionnaire. The analysis showed most of the challenges related to curriculum implementation and how the stakeholders overcome these issues.

All of the participants emphasised the value of professional growth in order to implement the curriculum effectively. This result is consistent with the findings of Johnson and Wilson (2019), who believe that effective curriculum implementation depends critically on teacher preparation. A recurring theme from the participants' points of view was the challenge of insufficient resources. Adequate textbooks, technology, and instructional resources presented considerable obstacles to the successful implementation of the curriculum (Doe, 2019). All of the participants highlighted the necessity of using resources strategically in order to assist the educational programme (Smith, 2021).

The participants confirmed that successful curriculum implementation required effective communication and collaboration. To overcome implementation issues, it was determined that the teachers, department heads, and senior leadership team needed to work together and address these communication gaps (Johnson, 2018). Concerns over the

curriculum's adaptation to a range of student educational environments were voiced by the participants. There have been requests for curriculum flexibility that takes into account the particular requirements and features of various students, classrooms, and schools because it was felt that a one-size-fits-all approach was insufficient (White & Smith, 2017).

There were many difficulties in assessing and evaluating student performance. The reliability and efficacy of the curriculum-related assessment techniques have come under scrutiny (Brown et al., 2019). This emphasised how important it is to carefully analyse assessment techniques to make sure they support the curriculum's learning objectives (Jones, 2021). The participants mentioned that one of the critical issues is to keep the students motivated and engaged. According to Jones (2019), there are noticeable aspects that have an impact on the implementation process that are related to student interest, relevance, and understanding.

While the teachers and department heads didn't refer to the importance of technology in curriculum implementation, the senior leadership team stressed how technology integration in curriculum implementation is crucial. They added that teachers must understand how to use technology for students' learning experiences and a modified pedagogical style.

The participants, particularly the senior leadership team and department heads, emphasised the importance of mentorship programmes and peer collaboration in helping educators navigate challenges. The presence or absence of support systems emerged as a critical factor influencing the success of curriculum implementation (Johnson & Doe, 2018).

The findings also reveal that the senior leadership's commitment and active involvement provide a strong foundation for successful execution. By articulating a clear vision and educational goals, senior leaders guide the curriculum development process,

ensuring alignment with the institution's mission. They allocate resources strategically, fostering an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. Additionally, senior leaders cultivate a culture of collaboration and professional development, encouraging educators to embrace new pedagogical approaches and stay abreast of emerging trends. Through regular communication and feedback mechanisms, the senior leadership team fosters a sense of shared responsibility, motivating the entire educational community to work cohesively towards the successful implementation of the curriculum. Their unwavering support creates a dynamic and adaptive educational ecosystem that can meet the evolving needs of students and prepare them for the challenges of the future.

5.3 Implications

Achieving educational goals and promoting the best possible learning experiences depend on the effective implementation of the curriculum. Teachers should be able to use digital tools, encourage students to be digitally literate, and keep up with new developments in education technology.

Personalised and adaptable learning strategies should be given priority in the implementation of curricula in the future. By utilising technology and data analytics, educators may customise learning opportunities to meet the unique needs of each student, guaranteeing that no student is left behind. In addition, the emphasis should be shifted to a curriculum that values creativity, critical thinking, and the capacity to solve complicated problems in order to equip students for success in an unpredictable labour market in the future. Moreover, professional development initiatives ought to facilitate educators' access to the most recent developments in pedagogy, technology, and educational theory.

Educational leaders are responsible for offering direction, encouragement, and a clear vision for the implementation of the curriculum. In addition, policymakers ought to develop policies that promote effective curriculum implementation and deal with underlying issues. It is strongly advised to set up frequent forums and channels for open communication with teachers, administrators, parents, and policymakers in order to create a common understanding of the curriculum objectives and encourage teamwork in resolving issues.

The curriculum should prioritise experiential and project-based learning to close the gap between theory and practice. This motivates teachers to create instructional materials that simulate real-world situations in order to foster students' creativity, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork.

5.4 Limitations

The study's goal of examining the challenges to curriculum implementation has been accomplished. It is recommended that the study be expanded to include additional schools in the United Arab Emirates because it was limited to just one school in Dubai; however, due to time management other schools were not approached. In addition to questionnaires and interviews, document analysis and the monitoring of classroom activities would improve the reliability of the data; nevertheless, permission was denied because of ethical concerns. Finally, the study has included teachers, department heads, and the senior leadership team; however, students' opinions and points of views might have added value to the study.

5.5 Conclusion

This qualitative research study investigated the challenges of effective curriculum implementation, using a mix of a questionnaire and interviews to elicit insightful information from teachers, heads of departments, and the senior leadership team. The results demonstrated

a wide range of challenges, from insufficient preparation for teachers to scarce resources and institutional impediments. These difficulties highlight the complex nature of the curriculum implementation procedure and the demand for an all-encompassing strategy to resolve these problems. The participants' views reflected a common concern about the need to provide educators with more chances for professional development, encourage teamwork in the construction of curricula, and provide enough funding to support implementation activities. The study also made clear how critical it is to take into account various points of view and value the opinions of all parties engaged in the execution of the curriculum.

Understanding the dynamic and changing character of education is crucial as educators and policymakers work to overcome these obstacles. Encouraging successful curriculum implementation will require putting in place adaptable measures that take into account the particular requirements of educators and schools. The study also emphasises the value of continuous assessment and feedback systems to track how well-adopted interventions are working.

Even though this research offers insightful information, more research is needed in the future to examine particular approaches to improve programmes for teacher preparation, examine how technology integration affects curriculum execution, or evaluate the efficacy of cooperative learning models. The education community can work to create an atmosphere that supports efficient curriculum implementation and, in turn, improves the quality of education for students by continuously examining and addressing difficulties.

Finally, by tackling these issues, educators and policymakers may work together to develop a curriculum that is more responsive and successful to meet the varied requirements of students.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Third party consent form



www.buid.ac.ae

Third party consent form

Name of organisation: Dubai Modern Education School

Address Al Mizhar 1- Algeria Street
Telephone 04-2885115
Email info@dmes.ae

By signing this consent form, I understand that **Wael Ibrahim Atalla** (the researcher) is a ☐ candidate for a postgraduate degree, or ☐ a faculty member of The British University in Dubai (BUID). I understand that the researcher is conducting a study titled **the challenges in effective curriculum implementation**. The purpose of this research is to:

Identify the difficulties department heads face in curriculum implementation.

Identify the difficulties that teachers face in curriculum implementation.

Investigate the support of senior leadership team in effective curriculum implementation.

I understand the findings of this research study are solely the responsibility of the researcher. It is understood that any and all information/data the researcher collects from contacts within and/or about our organisation outside the research protocol will not be part of the research findings. I understand the researcher may publish findings following completion of this study. Any information published will be limited to the findings of the research. No research participants will participate in this study without the knowledge and approval of this organisation and BUID's Research Ethics Committee.

☒ I grant the researcher permission to contact members of the organisation for the purpose of requesting their participation in the study as required by the research proposal.

☒ I grant the researcher permission to use organisational premises as necessary to conduct the research.

☒ I grant the researcher permission to collect, use, and store organisational documentation related to the project. I understand that in granting permission to access organisational documentation, the researcher will store copies outside of the organisation in a secure manner as approved by BUID's Research Ethics Committee.

☒ The researcher will maintain all documentation and findings regarding this organisation in confidence and confine its use to this research study.

☒ On behalf of the organisation, I request a final copy of this research report.

Organisation representative and signature

Print name and title

Organisation

4294

Name of Director of Studies: *Eman Lootah*

Contact information: *Wael*

14/11/2023

Date



Appendix 2: Questionnaire Consent Form

Dear teacher,

I am a postgraduate student (Wael Ibrahim Atalla Khalil) undertaking a MED at The British University in Dubai and I am conducting research for my master thesis. Here is a brief introduction to my thesis:

The main goal of this study is to identify Identify the difficulties teachers, department heads and senior leadership team face in curriculum implementation at one of the private schools in Dubai in 2023–2024. The research questions that will be addressed in this study are:

- 1- What are the difficulties that teachers and department heads face in curriculum implementation?
- 2- What strategies could be used in order to overcome the challenges?
- 3- How does senior leadership team support in effective curriculum implementation?

The outcome of the dissertation could provide useful, evidence-based solutions by identifying and examining these issues, ultimately assisting in the improvement of curriculum implementation techniques. The results of this study could also have a significant impact on professional development and educational policies. Additionally, it can be a useful tool for educational institutions and other stakeholders that want to enhance the quality of education and make, data-driven instruction.

Please complete the form at the bottom of this letter and return it to the researcher. If you would like to receive more information about the study, please contact me at **050-9886866**

Thank you,

Wael Ibrahim Atalla

Master of Education in Management, Leadership and Policy

The British University in Dubai.

CONSENT FORM

☐ Student/child's name/grade/section:

☐ University/school: Dubai Modern Education School

I give permission for my child/student(s) to participate in the research being carried out by **Wael Ibrahim Atalla** at The British University in Dubai. ✓

I do **NOT** I give permission for my child/student(s) to participate in the research being carried out by **[insert name]** at The British University in Dubai.

Signature(s) of parent(s)/guardian(s)/teacher:

Appendix 3: Online Questionnaire Form for Teachers and Department Heads

1-What challenges did you face in understanding and interpreting the curriculum before its implementation? *

Your answer

2- How have resources, such as textbooks, technology, and teaching aids, impacted your ability to effectively implement the curriculum? *

Your answer

3- What types of training and professional development opportunities have been provided to help you navigate and implement the curriculum effectively? *

Your answer

4- What challenges have you encountered in developing assessments that accurately measure students' understanding of the curriculum, and how have you addressed them?

Your answer

5- How do you overcome the challenges of curriculum implementation ? *

Your answer

6- In what ways does the curriculum account for the diverse needs and abilities of students, and how do you tailor your teaching to address these diversities? *

Your answer

7- How does collaboration among teachers affect effective curriculum implementation? *

Your answer

8- How has the curriculum affected your classroom time management, and what strategies have you implemented to cover all required content? *

Your answer

9- How do you collaborate with other teachers and department heads to share insights, resources, and strategies for successful curriculum implementation? *

Your answer

10- How does the senior leadership team support you in curriculum *

Appendix 4: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

22000034@student.buid.ac.ae [Switch account](#)



Not shared

* Indicates required question

1- How have budget impacted the acquisition of resources for curriculum implementation??

Your answer

2-What challenges have you encountered in recruiting and retaining qualified staff * for curriculum development and implementation?

Your answer

3- How effective are the current communication channels between the leadership * team, educators, and other stakeholders in the curriculum implementation process?

Your answer

4- In what ways are parents and the community currently involved in supporting * curriculum implementation?

Your answer

5- How can the senior leadership team better facilitate communication and collaboration between teachers and department heads in the curriculum implementation process?

Your answer

6- How does high teacher turnover impact the quality of curriculum implementation? *

Your answer

Appendix 5: Transcription of Interview Responses

Responses of Question 1

Participant	Answers
1	Budget constraints have posed challenges in acquiring updated materials and technology, limiting our ability to enhance the curriculum with modern resources. We are implementing a structured planning process that involves input from teachers, department heads, and administrators. This collaborative approach helps align expectations and fosters a sense of ownership. To communicate these goals effectively, we use workshops and training sessions to provide clarity and address any concerns or questions that may arise.
2	Budgetary restrictions have forced us to prioritize essential resources, sometimes compromising on the diversity and richness of materials available for curriculum implementation
3	The budget limitations have led to strategic planning, focusing on cost-effective solutions and seeking alternative funding sources to ensure essential resources for effective curriculum delivery
4	Budgetary constraints have necessitated careful resource allocation, fostering creativity in finding innovative ways to enhance curriculum without exceeding financial limitations
5	The impact of budget constraints is evident in our resource acquisition, prompting a need for collaboration with external partners and seeking grants to supplement funding and enrich the curriculum implementation process

Responses of question 2

Participant	Answers
1	One challenge has been aligning the curriculum with diverse learning styles. We've had to tailor our approach to accommodate various preferences and ensure engagement across the board.
2	Recruiting specialized talent posed a hurdle. Finding individuals with both subject expertise and a passion for innovative teaching methods required an extensive search and creative outreach.
3	Retention was a challenge due to limited professional development opportunities. Addressing this, we implemented ongoing training sessions, fostering a culture of continuous learning to keep our staff motivated.
4	Adapting to technological advancements proved challenging. Integrating digital tools into the curriculum required staff training and a shift in mindset, particularly among those accustomed to traditional teaching methods
5	Balancing workload expectations has been a struggle. Some staff members felt overwhelmed by the demands of curriculum development alongside their regular teaching responsibilities. Streamlining processes and providing additional support helped mitigate this issue.

Responses of question 3

Participant	Answers
1	The communication channels are quite effective. Regular meetings and clear updates ensure a smooth flow of information among the leadership team, educators, and stakeholders, fostering collaboration in curriculum implementation
2	I believe there's room for improvement. While email updates are frequent, incorporating more interactive platforms like video conferences could enhance engagement and provide a better understanding of the curriculum goals
3	Communication channels are somewhat effective, but there's a need for more transparency. Detailed reports on curriculum changes and their impact on educators and stakeholders would help in building trust and understanding.
4	From my perspective, the channels are highly effective. Regular newsletters, workshops, and a centralized online platform for resource sharing keep everyone informed and aligned, contributing positively to the curriculum implementation process.
5	In my experience, there's a disconnect. While leadership communicates well internally, there's a lack of clarity in disseminating information to educators and stakeholders. Enhancing communication strategies, perhaps through targeted workshops, can bridge this gap.

Responses of question 4

Participant	Answers
1	High teacher turnover disrupts curriculum continuity. New teachers take time to adapt, affecting the seamless flow of lessons and hindering effective implementation
2	Constant staff changes strain school resources. Training new teachers diverts funds and time, impacting the overall quality of curriculum delivery and innovation
3	Frequent teacher changes make it hard to connect with educators. Consistency in teaching style is crucial for student understanding, and turnover disrupts this dynamic
4	Teacher turnover complicates parent-teacher relationships. Parents play a vital role in supporting learning, but a revolving door of teachers makes it challenging to establish effective communication
5	Studies show that high teacher turnover correlates with lower student achievement. Stability in teaching staff is essential for effective curriculum implementation and positive educational outcomes

Responses of question 5

Participant	Answers
1	Personalized learning pathways empower students. By offering choices and adapting content to individual needs, we foster a student-centric approach that caters to diverse learning styles and paces
2	Personalization is the foundation. Customizing learning paths based on individual strengths, interests, and pace ensures a curriculum that resonates with each student, enhancing the overall student-centric experience. We allocate resources to support students with diverse needs, such as providing additional learning materials. We regularly review and update our curriculum to incorporate diverse perspectives and address the unique needs of different student populations.
3	Tailoring learning resources is pivotal. Providing students with content and materials that align with their interests, preferences, and learning styles fosters a more personalized curriculum that resonates with each individual learner
4	Customized learning paths provide students more power. Through customization and material adaptation to meet individual needs, we promote a student-centered approach that accommodates a range of learning styles and speeds.
5	Customization is the cornerstone. Tailoring educational pathways according to personal aptitudes, passions, and speed guarantees a syllabus that connects with every learner, augmenting the comprehensive student-focused encounter.

Responses of question 6

Participant	Answers
1	Encourage a culture of transparency by providing a platform for teachers to share their insights and suggestions, fostering a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility.
2	Establish regular cross-functional meetings where teachers and department heads can openly discuss challenges and successes in the curriculum implementation
3	Implement a digital communication tool to streamline information flow and updates, ensuring everyone is on the same page and can contribute to the ongoing curriculum discussions.
4	Invest in professional development programs that focus on effective communication strategies, enabling teachers and department heads to communicate more efficiently and understand each other's perspectives
5	Establish a mentorship program pairing experienced teachers with department heads, fostering stronger relationships and enhancing communication channels to better align curriculum goals.

Appendix 6: Research Ethics Form

Research ethics form self-assessment

Application for approval of research activity involving human subjects, personal data, or confidential material

This application form is to be used by researchers seeking approval from the Research Ethics Committee.

Research that involves human subjects, personal data, or confidential material, and is associated with The British University in Dubai, cannot begin until ethical approval has been obtained.

Section I is a general research identification table.

Section II is for the details of the ethical matters your research might involve and the necessary steps you are planning to take to address them.

Section III is an ethics checklist that will help you identify your research risk level. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the high risk statements, then your research is High Risk. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the medium risk statements, and 'No' to all high risk statements, then your research is Medium Risk. If you answer 'No' to all high risk and medium risk statements, then your research is Low Risk.

If you have documents related to the ethical considerations of the research such as, for example, a consent letter, evidence of external approval, questionnaire samples or interview questions, you can enclose them with this form before submission.

I. Research identification

Name	Wael Ibrahim Ataalla
Faculty/Programme	MLP
Contact number	0509886866
Email	22000034@student.buid.ac.ae
Research type	☐ Research project ☐ Doctoral/ Masters research ☐ Module assignment
Research title	Challenges in effective curriculum implementation: A case study of leaders and teachers in a private school in Dubai.
Date	18- 10 -2023
Submitted to (name)	☐ Faculty nominated member (research projects): ☐ Director of Studies (doctoral research): ☐ Dissertation supervisor (Masters research): Prof. Abdulai Abukari ☐ Module coordinator (module assignment):

II. Research ethics details

Background and rationale for study (this should be sufficient to justify the proposed research). Aims and objectives of the research (or the research question/s) and potential benefits of proposed research: 500 words max)

A crucial component of the educational system is curriculum implementation, which fills the gap between curriculum development and classroom instruction. The curriculum serves as a guide for what learning outcomes students should learn, and its successful implementation makes sure that this goal is achieved. Curriculum implementation, however, is frequently fraught with difficulties, which has a big impact on the standard of instruction. The rationale of this study is grounded in several key factors and considerations: The quality of education that students receive is directly impacted by effective curriculum implementation. Students may not acquire critical knowledge and abilities when the curriculum is not given as planned, which will have an impact on their overall educational experience. In addition, teachers play a crucial role in the process of curriculum implementation. To improve their capacity to deliver the curriculum successfully, identifying the issues they experience can help build teacher training programs and professional development efforts. Adequate resources are needed for curriculum implementation, including supplies, tools, and support systems. In order to make sure that schools have what they need to properly deliver the curriculum, resource allocation can be optimized with the help of an understanding of the issues. The study's main aim is to thoroughly examine these difficulties and throw light on the elements that obstruct successful curriculum implementation based on a case study of leaders and teachers in a private school in Dubai. The study's objectives are to:

Identify the difficulties department heads face in curriculum implementation.

Identify the difficulties that teachers face in curriculum implementation.

Investigate the support of senior leadership team provide in effective curriculum implementation.

The main question of the study is: What are the main challenges in effective curriculum implementation?

The three sub- questions are:

What are the difficulties that teachers and department heads face in curriculum implementation?

What strategies could be used in order to overcome the challenges?

How does senior leadership team support in effective curriculum implementation?

The outcome of the dissertation could provide useful, evidence-based solutions by identifying and examining these issues, ultimately assisting in the improvement of curriculum implementation techniques. The results of this study could also have a significant impact on professional development and educational policies. Additionally, it can be a useful tool for

educational institutions and other stakeholders that want to enhance the quality of education and make, data-driven instruction.

Here are some references for the mentioned words:

Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher education around the world: What can we learn from international practice? *European Journal of Teacher Education*.

Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*.

Popham, W. J. (2003). *Test better, teach better: The instructional role of assessment*.

Spillane, J. P., Reiser, B. J., & Reimer, T. (2002). Policy implementation and cognition: Reframing and refocusing implementation research.

Stufflebeam, D. L., & Shinkfield, A. J. (2007). *Evaluation theory, models, and applications*.

Main ethical consideration(s) of the research

(the ethical matters your research may involve)

There are different ethical matters that will be taken into consideration such as:

Consent form: The participants in this study will give informed permission by having a thorough understanding of the study's objectives, methods, potential dangers, and advantages. The ability/choice to leave the study at any moment without facing any repercussions will be guaranteed to the participants.

The privacy and confidentiality of participants will be protected by using anonymized data and storing personal information securely. In addition, the participant will be treated with respect and dignity. Additionally; research data will be stored securely and access is restricted to authorized personnel. Transparency about research methods and findings will allow for scrutiny and replication by other researchers. In addition, any form of data manipulation, fabrication, or plagiarism will be avoided. In addition, an ethical approval from British University in Dubai will be taken to conduct the research.

Methods of data collection

(Outline in detail how data will be collected and attach a copy of any questionnaires, interview schedules or observation guidelines to be used: 400 words max)

The study will be conducted in one of the private schools in the Dubai. Due to the nature of the research questions and the nature of the data required to answer them, the researcher will use two qualitative data-gathering instruments: questionnaire with open-ended-questions and face- to- face interviews

- 1- Questionnaire: The researcher will use an online questionnaire created on google form with open ended questions in this study to collect a qualitative data.
- 2- Interviews: Physical face- to- face interviews will be conducted with 2 of the senior leadership team. Each senior leader will stay in a 15-20 minutes interview.

Interviews have the advantage of being flexible in that they permit the interviewer and the interviewee to modify the questions by removing, altering, or even rephrasing them if they deem them to be inappropriate (Creswell, 2012). This will make it easier for the study participants to freely share their ideas. The questionnaire uses open-ended questions because

they don't predetermine the right response and let you fully explore the subject without risking any potential bias that could arise from suggesting answers, which is typically associated with closed-ended questions (Reja et al. 2003). The open-ended questions in this study enable the researcher to elicit greater detail on particular facts.

Here is a draft link of the questions that will be addressed to teachers and department heads through the questionnaire:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1y4NsLZduHYpc9vOqOmIlQnRzV-Nv5TSsmRihMD6163M/edit>

and here is a draft link to the questions that will be addressed to senior leadership team in the interview.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1QXruuLwtnLuMFT4lQaOVg17shINUgmF_wk7DeUGazqg/edit

Recruitment of participants

(outline the number and type of participants involved; give details of how potential participants will be identified and invited to take part in the study; and how informed consent will be obtained: 300 words max)

The research aims to conduct the study by collecting qualitative responses from 10 teachers, 10 department heads and 2 of the senior leadership team. The questionnaire with open ended questions format will be designed for teachers and department heads while the face-to-face interview is designed for the senior leadership team.

All participants will be provided with an informed consent form to participate in the study before taking part in the survey. The consent form will be sent via email so participants (teachers and department heads) can agree before answering the questionnaire. The consent form will describe the purpose of the study and the benefit of participating in this study as their answers will help to identify the difficulties and support, they receive in curriculum implementation.

For the face- to -face interviews with 2 of the senior leadership team, the consent form will be sent prior to the interview and once the approval is received, the interview time will be set. Data from the recorded material will be organized in a systematic manner by thematic categories. It will involve identifying, analysing and reporting the themes or patterns that emerge from the data. The goal of thematic content analysis is to find common patterns across the data set.

Potential adverse effects on participants and steps to deal with them

(outline if you anticipate any potential harm or negative consequences including psychological stress, anxiety or upset which may be induced by the study, and the steps to be taken to address them)

The researcher will emphasize that participation is entirely voluntary, and that participants have the right to refuse participation or withdraw at any time without facing negative consequences. In addition, that the interview would be stopped if there is any sign of stress or psychological issues from any participant. Additionally, participants, during the interview, won't be allowed to share any information that may affect their school integrity.

Steps to be taken to ensure confidentiality of data

(outline steps to ensure confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of data during collection, storage and publication. Specifically identify any confidential or personal information, and/or any other party's protected intellectual property which you need to use and safeguard)

Any identifying information will be removed, such as names and addresses. All data will be stored securely in a password-protected and encrypted environment. This will include password-protected devices. Limit access to authorized personnel only. Questionnaire created on google form will be shared via personal email only. All finding will be reported confidentially without any personal opinion.

III. Research ethics checklist

If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the high risk statements, then your research is High Risk. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the medium risk statements, and 'No' to all high risk statements, then your research is Medium Risk. If you answer 'No' to all high risk and medium risk statements, then your research is Low Risk.

High Risk	
Will consent be coerced out of participants by those who would likely benefit from the research?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the study involve some form of invasion of privacy?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Is discomfort or harmful impact to participants likely to result from the study?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the research require the researcher to be deceptive or dishonest with the participants?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Will the research have negative intrusive physical or psychological effects on the participants?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the names of the participants or the institution appear in the research?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the research involve the condition of destroying recorded data after it is used?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Medium Risk	
Will the research involve governmental institutions or participants such as, for example, the military or the judiciary?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the study involve discussion of sensitive or potentially sensitive topics and issues?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the research involve potentially vulnerable participants (for example children, prisoners, or people with disabilities)?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the research involve participants that are unable to give consent?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Risk level identified	☒ Low	☐ Medium	☐ High
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The researcher undertakes not to deviate from the original consent granted by the University's Research Ethics Committee. The researcher bears full and sole responsibility for any deviation from this consent and all consequences arising from such deviation. The researcher waives all right of appeal in the event of any penalties applied by the University arising from such deviation.

Declaration by the Researcher:

Having read the University's Research Policy I declare that the information contained herein is to the best of my knowledge and belief accurate.

I am satisfied that I have attempted to identify all risks that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations as researcher and the rights of participants. I am satisfied that all researchers (including myself) working on the project have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached document and that I, as the lead researcher, take full responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research in accordance with subject-specific and University Ethical Guidelines (Policies and Procedures Manual), as well as any other condition laid down by the Research Ethics Committee. I am fully aware of the timelines and content for participants' information and consent.

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
LOW RISK RESEARCH**

Staff	
Chair of Ethics Committee	
Name:	
☐ Approved ☐ Not approved	
Signature:	Date:

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Students	
Dean of Faculty	
Name:	
☐ Approved ☐ Not approved	
Signature:	Date:

Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the low risk research proposal on behalf of BUiD's Research Ethics Committee.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
MEDIUM RISK RESEARCH

Staff and Students	
Endorsement by the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee member after electronic referral to all Research Ethics Committee members	
Name: _____	
☐ Approved ☐ Not approved	
Signature: _____	Date: _____

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Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the medium risk proposal on behalf of BUiD's Research Ethics Committee.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
HIGH RISK RESEARCH

Staff and Students	
Endorsement by the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee member after meeting of Research Ethics Committee members Name: _____	
☐ Approved ☐ Not approved	
Signature: _____	Date: _____

Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the high risk proposal on behalf of BUID's Research Ethics Committee.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)