

## **The role of the curriculum adviser in the implementation of changes to the curriculum in the general education and training context: a case study**

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Curriculum advisors as curriculum leaders are exposed to curriculum changes in education daily. As a newly appointed curriculum advisor at a specific education district, being uncertain and uninformed about my job description, it was a challenge for me to guide and support teachers regarding curriculum change and implementation.

This study aimed to examine the roles and functions of curriculum advisors within school-based curriculum change and implementation and to determine how they experience it. From the literature, it appears that initiating and managing curriculum changes are significant challenges for curriculum advisors and that they find it very difficult to carry out their leadership roles as curriculum leaders and provide guidance and support effectively.

I interviewed six curriculum advisors to gain insight into their experiences and impressions within their respective contexts. I found that they received no or very little training to successfully perform these tasks.

Through a conceptual framework, their primary and secondary challenges were successfully identified and affirmed. Their leadership functions are dual in nature, as the roles in teaching leadership and adult learning may appear to be mixed. Advisors fulfil leadership functions regarding both primary and secondary challenges and these functions are a natural, open expression of their leadership roles, since the various functions are distinguishable but not separable.

Training, retraining, building relationships, and creating and facilitating empowerment opportunities to ensure professional development, are core functions of the curriculum advisor. For newly appointed subject advisors, training appears to be a clear external factor, since they felt that they were not adequately equipped when first appointed.

No South African study on the lived experiences of the curriculum advisor's curriculum leadership functions has been conducted. This study fills that gap by identifying and describing new perspectives on these advisors' experiences and contributes to the expansion of research in the field of knowledge on curriculum leadership.

A basic framework to serve as a theoretical basis and route map for the research was developed and serves as a tool for the study to identify and describe the leadership functions of curriculum

advisors regarding curriculum implementation and change. This framework can be used in future research aiming to expand the study within a broader educational context or environment.

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