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Grade 11 Physical Science teachers' experiences of implementing the new CAPS curriculum: a case study of Capricorn District, Limpopo, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Research has shown that difficulties and challenges always arise when a new curriculum is implemented. In South Africa, studies have shown that there are challenges associated with the implementation of the newly introduced curriculum, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). While some studies have investigated the challenges associated with the curriculum implementation, little has been done to unravel the experiences of teachers as curriculum implementers. The major aim of this study was to investigate the experiences of seven Grade 11 Physical Science teachers in implementing the new South African CAPS curriculum. The study was conducted in the Capricorn District, Limpopo, South Africa. Data was collected using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The data was analysed using an adapted framework of curriculum implementation. The findings show that the teachers face a variety of challenges in implementing the new curriculum. The major challenges they have experienced include; lack of professional development, resources, overcrowded classrooms and lack of support and monitoring from the department of basic education. It is recommended that the Department of Basic education should staff develop teachers so as to enable them to handle the new curriculum. Teacher training institutions should also design and implement curricula, which enable teachers to comfortably handle the challenges associated with the new curriculum.

Keywords: Physical Science, teachers, curriculum, implementation, experiences, challenges, South Africa