CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION: A CASE STUDY OF MBETANA PUBLIC ADULT LEARNING CENTRE IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

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DECLARATION

I, Lebeko Valley Maponya, declare that this mini-dissertation **"Curriculum implementation: A case study of Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre in Limpopo Province",** hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree of Master of Education in Community and Continuing Education, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this stage to any other university, that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged

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I wish to express my gratitude to many people who assisted me during the course of my study:

ABSTRACT

This study highlights the importance of effective curriculum implementation at a Public Adult Learning Centre in a rural community in Limpopo Province. The purpose of the study was to explore the curriculum implementation facing Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre (MPALC) with the view to recommend appropriate strategies to improve the centre's curriculum implementation capabilities.

Since the study was premised on the interpretivist paradigm, a qualitative research approach was employed to give a detailed account of the curriculum implementation challenges from the perspective of people with lived experiences of MPALC's curriculum implementation dynamics. The participants which include six learners, the Centre Manager and two facilitators, were chosen using the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling was preferred because it gave the researcher an opportunity to target participants deemed to possess authentic accounts of MPALC's curriculum implementation dynamics. Multiple data sources inclusive of silent observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used to gather data. The study found out that the acute shortage of textbooks and stationery, absence of fit-for purpose learning infrastructure, low employee morale due to poor working conditions, inappropriate teaching methods, and the insensitive use of the English language regardless of the learners being predominantly Tsonga speaking people are some of the challenges that hampered the effective implementation of the curriculum guidelines at MPALC. The study recommends that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) should partner with private companies through the public-private partnership frameworks with the view to improve the MPALC's operating and financial leverage.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Curriculum
- Curriculum implementation
- Strategy
- Adult Basic Education and Training
- Public Adult Learning Centre

ACRONYMS

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ALC	Adult Learning Centres
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBSA	Development Bank of South Africa
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ENAP	Ethiopian National Action Plan
FET	Further Education and Training
FETs	Further Education and Trainings
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LDBE	Limpopo Department of Basic Education
MAFISA	Micro-Agricultural Financial Institution of South Africa
MPALC	Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre
ODL	Open Distance Learning
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
PALCs	Public Adult Learning Centres
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PBL	Problem-Based Learning
SA	South Africa
SAMAF	South African Micro Finance Apex Fund
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
UCT	University of Cape Town
UNESCO	United Nations Educational; Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UYF	Umsobomvu Youth Fu

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One outlines the background and context on which the whole study is founded. Apart from outlining the; problem statement; research questions; purpose and objectives of the study; the chapter also clarifies the significance of the study to the existing body of knowledge on the topic of curriculum challenges facing Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs) within the South African context.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Most of the literature underpinning this study has commended the positive contribution and impact of adult education in combating the challenge of illiteracy in economic development. For instance, Schwartz (2014:1); Njeri (2011:44) identify adult education as one of the key drivers of any nation's literacy campaign programme. The role of the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme in eradicating illiteracy in South Africa is recognised by Francis, Dube, Mokganyetji and Chitapa (2010:5).

Francis *et al* (2010:59) re-emphasised that adult education remains a catalyst in South Africa's nation building discourse. This makes adult education an integral element of any country's broader education strategy (Francis *et al*, 2010:15). United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2010:23) argue that no country in the world can effectively deal with the problem of illiteracy in the absence of a strong adult education focus. The National Directorate for Adult Education and Training is responsible for coordinating and

superintending adult education activities in South Africa (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011:13). The fully-fledged directorate falls under the Department of Basic Education. The directorate also designs, administers the national adult education curriculum and provides oversight and leadership to the PALCs operating in this country.

In its ideal form, adult education gives adults who have never tasted a formal schooling life a rare opportunity to learn how to read, perform basic mathematical operations like counting and writing (Killen, 2012:25). At the heart of the adult education delivery system in every nation are PALCs. Properly managed and governed PALCs are considered the gateway for impact-driven adult education programmes (Njeri, 2011:34; DBE, 2013:45). Njeri (2011:35) warns that in order for PALCs to be effective and relevant, the availability of sound infrastructure, adequate budgetary support and experienced facilitators is imperative.

Whilst great strides have been made since 1994 in ensuring that the South African adult education system remains effective and responsive, the shared view is that many hurdles are still to be addressed (Killen, 2012:45; DBE, 2014:15). Like any other education programme, adult education in South Africa is not immune to challenges. One of the biggest challenges confronting adult education in South Africa is the failure by PALCs to effectively implement adult education curriculum requirements. The inconsistent application of the adult education curriculum policy has been identified by DBE as one of the teething challenges that make PALCs ineffective. This study is located within the niche area curriculum and community development in adult education.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Adherence to curriculum guidelines is listed as one of the key success factors of any adult education programme (Atchison & Alidou, 2009:1,Njeri, 2011:23). Schwartz (2014:1) argues that the failure to fulfil

curriculum requirements is the major missing link in South Africa's adult education matrix. Further, the Adult Education Review Report released by the DBE in 2015 revealed that most PALCs are still struggling to fully implement the adult education curriculum policy. Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre (MPALC) is one of the rural-based PALCs in South Africa that lacks the capacity to fully implement adult education curriculum guidelines. The central concern of this study is to explore the challenges that hinder MPALC from fully implementing curriculum guidelines as directed by DBE.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore how curriculum is implemented at MPLAC with the view to recommend strategies for future practice.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To identify curriculum implementation challenges at MPALC;
- To identify the resources available for the implementation of curriculum at MPALC;
- To assess the effects of curriculum implementation challenges at MPALC;
- To recommend the strategies to improve curriculum implementation performance at MPALC.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is common knowledge and understanding to adult curriculum planners, educators and policy makers that curriculum implementation is of utmost importance in the educational development of the adult learner (Atchison et al, 2009:1; Njeri, 2011:23 and Schwartz, 2014:1). This is attested to by Derocco and Flyn (2007:2) who argue that curriculum designers must design it in a way that it will meet the needs of the intended learners.

This study may influence PALCs to deliver the adult curriculum effectively by following the recommendations that are placed in Chapter five. This is so because the recommendations in question include the teaching methods, curriculum content and teaching aids that make PALCs not attractive to the learners.

This study could draw the attention of the DHET to the crucial impact the curriculum has in improving the effectiveness of adult education. The findings of this study may motivate stakeholders in the adult education sector to rethink creative ways on how to improve the curriculum implementation performance of PALCs.

Policy makers in the adult education sector could use the recommendations of this study to come up with policies that are mindful about important aspects that can make a positive contribution in adult education curriculum implementation methods.

This study may serve as an eye opener to the MPALC management. The study may also rekindle a national debate on the strategic essence of effective curriculum implementation in improving adult education outcomes. The study may result in the adoption of best practices in curriculum implementation at MPALC. Lastly, academics and researchers in the adult education sector may use the findings of this study to benchmark future studies on related issues.

1.7   UNDERPINNING THEORY

The learner-centred theory which emphasises the importance of giving adult learners a clearly defined role in the learning process will shape the theoretical leanings of the study. An elaborate explanation of the learner-centred approach is discussed below:

1.7.1 Learner-centred approach to teaching

The study is underpinned in the learner-centred approach to teaching theory. This theory, which has been popularised by Mezirow (1991:15) seeks to confirm the strategic importance of actively involving learners in the learning process through interactive learning approaches. The theory holds that as learners are an integral element of the learning process, nothing can happen without them (Arends, 2014:23). The learning process needs to recognise the critical role played by the learner in ensuring that the learning process is more fulfilling, relevant and responsive to the needs of the learners. Kitchenham (2008:12) argues that the learner-centred approach makes more sense in an adult learning setting because it gives adult learners more participation leverage and control over the learning process.

Education that fosters critically reflective thought, imaginative problem posing and discourse is learner-centred, participatory and interactive; and it involves group deliberation and group problem solving. Instructional materials reflect the real life experiences of the learners and are designed to foster participation in small group discussion to assess reasons, examine evidence, and arrive at a reflective judgment. Learning takes place through discovery and the imaginative use of metaphors to solve and redefine problems (Mezirow, 1991:14).

To promote discovery learning, the educator often reframes learner questions in terms of the learner's current level of understanding. Learning contracts, group projects, role play, case studies and simulations are classroom methods associated with transformative education (Freire, 1972:13). The key idea is to help the learners actively engage the concepts presented in the context of their own lives and collectively critically assess the justification of new knowledge. Together, learners undertake action research projects. They are frequently

challenged to identify and examine assumptions, including their own. Mezirow, (1991:15) identified five methods which are effective in teaching adult learners. Such methods include critical incidents, metaphor analysis, concept mapping, consciousness raising, life histories, repertory grids, and participation in social action. This theory is closely connected to this research project because it spells out how the teacher can effectively and efficiently implement the adult learner's curriculum which is the main focus of this study.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS
The following key concepts are defined:

1.8.1 Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

ABET is "*an attempt at skilling the adult learners who have never been to formal school before through training and basic life skills*" (French,2010:34). ABET is the "*general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and development, comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation applicable to a range of contexts*" (DBE,2013:10).

In this study, ABET is an initiative coordinated by the Department of Higher Education to improve the literacy skills of adults who do not know how to write, read and count; calculate and compute.

1.8.2 Public Adult Learning Centre

A Public Adult Learning Centre is an "independent public school that enrols learners who have never been or failed at the formal schooling system" (French, 2010:2).

A Public Adult Learning Centre "*is a centre that offers adult basic education and training programmes and other lifelong learning opportunities to adult learners" (*Sharp, 2010:10)

For the sake of this study, a Public Adult Learning Centre is defined as an environment or institution where adult learners are taught basic skills that can enable them to fend for themselves.

1.8.3 Curriculum

The term curriculum refers to *"the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or programme"* Carl (2000:44)*.*

Curriculum is defined as *an explicitly and implicitly intentional set of interactions designed to facilitate learning and development and to impose meaning of experience*" (Bender, Bellal & Kindler 2006:12).

For the purpose of this study, a curriculum is a course study which is designed for teaching and learning that may help to improve the responsiveness of education to pressing community needs.

1.8.4 Curriculum implementation

Curriculum implementation is defined as "*mechanisms and activities that are engaged to translate the curriculum policy into a real outcomes or tangible deliverables or results*" (Bender et al, 2006:23).

Curriculum implementation refers to the *"process of mobilising resources, skills and materials with the aim of converting the curriculum objectives into desirable deliverables"* (Bender et al, 2006:13).

For the purpose of this study, curriculum implementation refers to a process whereby the MPALC put in place adequate resources, materials, finances, personnel and infrastructure to translate the curriculum statement into expected outcomes and impacts.

1.8.5 Strategy

According to Machobane (2012:23) strategy is "*all the procedures, methods, techniques and approaches of delivering instruction in adult basic education programmes*".

A strategy is "*a result-oriented tactical plan of action aimed at achieving organisational and educational objectives*" (Gravette, 2010:45;Knowles, 2010:45).

In this study, a strategy represents responsive mechanisms employed by MPALC to improve its curriculum implementation capabilities.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The choice of the research design was influenced by the teachings of the interpretivist paradigm, which state that social reality cannot interpret itself outside the meaning people give to it (Merriam, 2009:45). In this regard, the Centre Manager, facilitators and learners were approached to give a detailed account on the many challenges hindering the effective implementation of the curriculum at MPALC. To ensure compatibility with the interpretivist teachings, the researcher employed the qualitative research method.

The qualitative method was instrumental in understanding the challenges of curriculum implementation at MPALC from the perspectives of people who coordinate and administer adult education activities at the centre. This method helped the researcher ensure a free flow of primary, authentic and undistorted information (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2013:5). In line with qualitative method traditions, semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were used to obtain intelligence on the challenges faced by MPALC in curriculum implementation (Cresswell, Ebersöhn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Niewenhuis, Pietersen, Clark & Van der Westhuisen, 2012:79). As suggested by Boudah (2011:107) the researcher focused on the actions,

the words and the interactions participants had with the topic being researched. While the participant's actions were visualised during observation trips, their words were noted during semi-structured interviews. Such interactions were used to establish a rapport.

A single-bounded case study was employed to get a comprehensive understanding on why the MPALC was lagging behind in curriculum implementation. Using the bounded case study design, the participants were challenged to base their narrative on their lived experience (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:34; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:114). As advocated by Henning,Van Rensburg and Smit (2013:5) the researcher gathered oral accounts of how the MPALC approach its curriculum implementation approach from eyewitnesses. The single bounded case study made it possible for the researcher to grasp how the participants interpreted various curriculum implementation challenges at their centre in terms of their causes and effects (Creswell, 2011:34; Eisner, 2011:45; Yin, 2011:56).

1.10 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A population is represented by all the elements on which a sample of the study can be selected (Cohen et al, 2011:114). The population comprised of 18 ABET learners, 6 adult education facilitators and the Centre Manager, drawn from the MPALC. A purposive sampling method was used to select the sample of this study. Purposive sampling was instrumental in selecting only participants deemed to possess in-depth knowledge, experience and understanding on curriculum implementation challenges at MPALC. Those members of the population considered to possess little understanding of the phenomenon being researched were deliberately excluded (Cohen et al, 2011:183). Since only people with rich knowledge and lived experiences were chosen, the participants voluntarily gave a detailed and authentic account on curriculum

implementation challenges bedevilling MPALC. A sample comprising 6 learners, 2 facilitators and 1 centre manager assisted in coming up with the relevant information for this research project.

1.11 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Three notable methods were employed in collecting data. These included document analysis, semi-structured interviews and observations.

1.11.1 Phase 1: Document analysis

In this phase, the researcher transferred significant information from documents into his diary and labelled them as to source. All written documents that shed light on curriculum implementation at MPALC were utilised. Such documents included lesson plans, assessment records, general centre time table, policy documents, classroom rules and registers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:45). The principal of the institution was very much instrumental in seeing to it that I obtain these documents for scrutiny in digging up the necessary data for this research project.

1.11.2 Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to corroborate data. With these types of interviews, the researcher was able to obtain clarity of answers from his participants. This helped him identify new emerging lines of inquiry that were related to his focal point of curriculum implementation. These questions also allowed me to probe further for clear answers (Cohen, Manion and Morisson, 2011:103). Using the semi-structured interviews, the researcher interviewed the learners, facilitators and the centre manager.

1.11.3 Phase 3: Observation

Observation was also instrumental in assisting the researcher come up with data that shed light on this study. The researcher drew an observation guide or schedule that guided him on what to actually observe that shed light to curriculum implementation. These included lesson presentations, furniture, resources and the general infrastructure. The researcher wanted to observe the good and the bad about the curriculum delivery practices and resources at the centre (Cohen et al, 2011:103) and Leedy et al (2010:46).

1.12 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis involved thematically and inductively interpreting the evidence gathered from key documents and findings from semi-structured interviews and observations. The advantage of thematic analysis is that it is helpful in contexts where key words and statements collected from witnesses need to be thoroughly analysed by way of comparing and contrasting them (Cresswell, 2014:98, Yin, 2009:34, Merriam, 2009:45). Firstly, collected data was edited for accuracy and consistency, before it was translated into intelligent and readable write-ups (Leedy et al, 2010:96). Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to establish how participants at MPALC interacted with the curriculum on daily basis. Thematic analysis means that cross-cutting issues were quickly detected and interpreted based on the meanings the different participants brought to such texts. The write-ups were translated into a draft report, which was later validated before it was finalised.

1.13 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The study report was structured as follows:

- Chapter One sets the tone of the research in terms of highlighting its contextual framework, objectives and significance to the existing body of knowledge about adult education. Further the definition of key concepts and a brief overview of the research methodology are discussed. The trustworthiness of the study and significance of the study are also highlighted. Lastly, the limitations of the study and the study's ethical considerations are also outlined.

- Chapter Two focuses on critiquing the issue of curriculum implementation from the perspective of established authors for benchmarking purposes.

- Chapter Three outlines the methodology used to collect data, process and analyse research findings;

- Chapter Four presents the findings of this research as reflected by the views collected from data collection instruments;

- Chapter Five shares the conclusions and recommendations of the study as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two aims to illustrate the literature that underpins this research project. The overall topic seeks to explore the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation at PALCs. It also aims to explore various techniques or strategies that could improve curriculum implementation at Public Adult Learning Centres.

This chapter determines how various other centres implement their adult education curriculum in the light of the following dimensions: The allocation of resources (both human and material), support given to educators and the issues pertaining to the infrastructure (teaching and learning environment) as well as funding. This chapter serves as a litmus paper aimed at assessing whether resources are positively contributing towards curriculum implementation in other centres as determined by the literature reviewed or not. It also determines the strategies that the literature recommends for the improvement of curriculum implementation as put clearly in the author's context.

2.2 ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The following resources are deemed crucial for effective curriculum implementation:

2.2.1 Human resources

A learner-friendly PALC is an academically effective adult learning centre that provides relevant quality education for the learner's knowledge, skills and livelihood. Such a centre is well resourced and requires a range of enabling conditions such as skilled, motivated and trained staff who have

good management capability (United Nations International Emergency Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2009:4). The document by UNICEFF, (2009:4) relates to this research report because it illustrates the kind of resources and the personality traits that the best or effective teachers emulate.

UNICEFF (2009:4)'s description provides a picture of how the learning centre can be made to be in order for curriculum implementation to take place effectively. The threshold of the article by UNICEFF (2009:4) is motivation of the human resource for the effective and diligent execution of their curriculum implementation tasks. It also advices that the learnership, who is the clientele in the adult teaching arena be motivated as well to effectively convert the teachings of their teachers into learning. This is what the researcher finds enlightening about this article. Khumalo (2016:2) argues that all the descriptions of UNICEFF (2009:4) given above make the learners eager to learn when their educators teach them. The researcher feels that this mode of learning induces conscious learning which is accompanied; according to the researcher's personal teaching experience; by a strong receptive capability from the side of the learners.

The Lesotho government used in-service programmes to improve the educator's teaching skills in subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science (Lesotho Ministry of Education, 2008:22).This article is related to this research project because it sets up an example of how the educator's skills can be improved. Lesotho Ministry of Education (2008:22) argues that the human resources provided by the Department of Education set goals to work towards achieving. These goals become the driving force in all teaching and learning endeavours. This goal-oriented approach to adult teaching makes teaching and learning effective. The goal of the educator is to produce knowledgeable, skilled individuals who are competent and productive in their vocational fields

(Van Deventer & Kruger, 2013:79). This research project recognises that goals make educators want to prepare thoroughly and set targets so that they do their best in their endeavour to teach adult learners.

The Ethiopian National Action Plan (ENAP) gives an outline of the two sub component modes of implementing an adult learner curriculum. Such two sub modes include: A functional adult literacy programme for youth and adults over 15 years and community skills training centres for youth and adults (Ethiopian Ministry of Education, 2008:27). This dissertation recognises that a functional literacy skill is the offspring of much expertise from the educators who are the core curriculum implementers. ENAP (2008:27) argues that it is crucial for educators to be knowledgeable on how to teach the adult learners.

The human resource providers are mindful of the calibre of people they present for adult curriculum implementation. According to Macdonald & Shirley (2009:28) an educator must have a clearer understanding of how their learners learn so that they can design their teaching to suit them. These include the fact that adults come to the learning environment with certain experiences. This, according to Macdonald & Shirley (2009:28) needs consideration by the educator. This dissertation also seeks to recognise that the experiences of the adult learner can also be used in recognising their prior learning through certifications of some sort if possible. The effectiveness of this will be measured by the level of competency he or she possesses. Macdonal & Shirley (2009)'s article relates well to this research project because it illustrates in a nutshell another technicality that could improve curriculum implementation such as for educators to understand how their learners learn in order to teach them properly. What the researcher finds enlightening is the recognition of the experiences the adult learners have before one can teach them.

Macdonald & Shirley (2009:31) argue that mindfulness in curriculum implementation is attractive to people who are looking for some deeper meaning in their lives. These people are normally reluctant to subject themselves to group membership that opposes critical thinking and individualism. Thoughtful adult teaching entails rich curricula adapted to the needs of the learners (Macdonald et al, 2009:28).

2.2.2 The Characteristics of an effective adult educator

Schwartz (2014:2) outlines the characteristics of an effective educator. When teaching adult learners, there is a shift in the relationship between faculty member and learners, and a shift in the way that learners will perceive the effectiveness of different teaching methods (Schwartz, 2014:2). This means that an adult educator is not supposed to make him or herself look superior when teaching and he or she must prepare him or herself thoroughly.

The fact that adult learners become more judgmental in some other instances requires thorough preparation and mastery of the proper techniques of teaching them. This is one of the embodiments that adult educators are mindful of and embrace. Schwartz (2014:2) argues that other areas that distinguish an effective adult educator are competencies, relationships with learners and attitudes. This is an aspect that aligns Schwartz (2014:2) to this research project since the researcher recognises that character and action complement each other. Character denotes personality trait and action is perceived when the educator teaches the learners. So Schwartz (2014:2) makes a pronouncement of the proper and appropriate mode of teaching that the educators can embody; which blatantly aligns the article to this research project.

Adult educator competencies include having relevant practice knowledge. This involves provision of relevant, real time information and teaching practice applications as well as theory and teaching material

that is up to date and evidence based. The structuring of classroom learning to allow the utilisation of different teaching methods is crucial. Educators structure classroom learning and implement a variety of teaching techniques and stimulate discussions. The researcher finds Schwartz (2014:2) enlightening and related to this research project since it illustrates the different methods that an educator can use to improve adult teaching-in particular: learner centredness.

Learners do not appreciate educators who are unprepared when entering the classroom. Adult learners value educators who are approachable, available and flexible both in regard to deadlines and class activities. The approachability of an educator, according to the researcher's point of view, is an indication of the particular person's willingness to sacrifice his or her time to assist the learners. Availability means the educator can be accessed at any time of dire need by the adult learners. The issue of deadlines means the coverage of the syllabus within a given time frame. This means that adult educators always have the passion for their work and the ambition to reach greater heights in terms of skilling the learners. Adult learners appreciate educators who are fun and enthusiastic and who listen to them (learners). Such educators view learners as having knowledge and not nonentities (Schwartz, 2014:2).

2.3 SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE ADULT EDUCATORS

One of the Jomtien Conference's goals was to expand training in skills required by youth and adults (Lesotho Ministry of Education, 2008:24). This study concurs with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2008:23) who argues that education should change the lives of the people for the better. The researcher views the yardstick to measure change as the adult learner's marketability and competency in the workplace. On the side of the educators, the Lesotho Ministry of Education (2008: 24) report that they subject educators to in-service training programmes. This

intervention strategy is likely to improve curriculum implementation by equipping adult educators with the appropriate methods and other techniques.

Rampe and Mawere (2011:10) recommend that adult educators should be trained on making connections between classroom practices and policy imperatives. This implies that it is crucial for an educator to operate according to relevant departmental policies provided by the department. Rampe & Mawere (2011:10) relate to this research project because they give important outlines of how centres should operate. Equally, adult education centres are guided by adult education policies. Without the proper implementation of the policy and best practices in the adult learner classroom, educators are doomed to applying wrong and ineffective practices in teaching their learners (Rampe & Mawere, 2011:10).

Realising that they have challenges in adult learner curriculum implementation, the Ghanaian government commit themselves to academically and professionally equip the adult educators. Their aim is to provide adult educators with the competencies that will enable them to effectively facilitate adult learner knowledge acquisition and application of skills (Murphy and Warner, 2010: 20). This study concurs with this ploy in that the skills acquired by the educators through their training programme could make them effective in the classroom at their various community learning centres, thereby improving curriculum implementation and learner performance.

Chigona & Chigona (2010) of the University of Cape Town (UCT) in South Africa (SA) used the capability approach to investigate the utilisation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by adult educators in implementing the curriculum. They found that the utilisation of Information and Communication Technology improves adult curriculum

implementation and the performance of the learners in any teaching and learning activity at the centres. They argue that the manipulation of technological resources is dependent on the capability of the educator. Such an educator requires training in these ICT skills, so that they too can impart it on their adult learners (Chigona & Chigona, 2010:9). Chigona & Chigona (2009:9) add value to this research project since they come up with other methods which can be used to teach the adult learner; which are of curriculum implementation. For example; ICT usage connects the learners to very useful educational information in the entire world.

Educator professional development is important in improving and increasing learner performance. Educators who participate in well-designed professional development programmes get better results from their learners. Well-designed professional development aligns clearly with the instructional programme and the departmental performance standards. In reading, professional development equips educators with the skills to teach all the components of the reading instruction and how they are related. Knowledge of the progression of how they should be taught and the underlying structure of the intended programme are also taught in these developmental programmes (Limpopo Department of Basic Education (LDBE), 2013:17).

LDBE (2013:17) relates to this research project since it introduces educator professional development for improvement of curriculum implementation at the learning centres. What enlightens the researcher is the LDBE (2013:17)'s promotion of reading and the inculcations of different reading strategies which they impart on the educators through professional development. LDBE (2013:17) argue that once educators undergo professional training; curriculum implementation will improve for the better.

Drayton & Falk (2009:89) bring the dimension of communities of practice as a strategy of improving curriculum implementation at the adult learning centres. According to Drayton & Falk (2009:89) such communities of practice boost the school performance and achievement by sharing their professional practice with educators and the learners. These communities are heterogeneous and they are able to share their expertise, ideas and tools among the participants.

Drayton & Falk (2009:89) complement this research project because they come up with another technique that can improve curriculum implementation at the centre. Such a strategy is sharing the good practices. Communities of practice are like; according to the researcher's experience as a teacher; clusters in which the good teaching practices are shared. The researcher is enlightened by the fact that sharing of ideas ropes people with expertise in particular educational topics to be imparted on the learners.

Andrews (2007:13) contends that other developmental programme issues include the psychological, physiological, social, cultural and systemic barriers that could influence learner participation in ABET programmes. The principles of adult learning include continuous motivation, support, meaningful learning and relevance of learning activities. Learner participation and retention help in training educators for them to gain insight into adult learning principles that underpin learning motivation and retention strategies (Andrews, 2007:14). Andrews (2007:13)'s article also relates to this research project because it involves al the aesthetic aspects needed for the learner's educational development. It is very much enlightening to learn about the principles of adult learning as pronounced above.

2.4 COMMUNAL SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE ADULT LEARNERS

Baloyi (2010:20)'s argument is that the community must be involved when educating the adult learner, like it is the case in a normal school. context. Her theory is that a community plays a crucial role in successful learning by providing the learner with three different types of support. These include academic, intellectual and interpersonal support.

2.4.1 Academic support

To try and reason it out for easier understanding, the researcher's understanding is that for academic purposes, it is important for the department to appoint facilitators who know the cultures of the community that is served by the centre so that their teaching could be planned in such a way that it does not compromise the cultures of the particular learners (Baloyi, 2010: 20).

2.4.2 Intellectual support

Intellectually the facilitators will be innovative enough to come up with the best strategies of improving curriculum implementation. Creativity in teaching is also another form of teaching that can improve curriculum implementation and learner performance. The support of intellectuals at the centre from members of the surrounding community can bring about better resources for the best adult curriculum implementation (Baloyi, 2010:18).

2.4.3 Interpersonal skills support

Interpersonal skills help the teacher interact well with the learners in class so that friendly relations exist towards better understanding of the learning content. This promotes enjoyment during the teaching and learning process on the side of the learners (Baloyi, 2010:18). The groupings made for tutorial purposes resemble a community. Each person makes important contributions as required by a given group

assignment. Baloyi (2010:18) study is related to mine because it makes propositions on how to increase learner performance at the centre.

A community model requires that each person should be expected to perform a specific role. People would assume these roles in the world of work. Baloyi (2010:23) focused on the causes of adult drop out and non-enrolment. She found that learners do not enrol at ABET centres because they use the same classes that they used as young learners, which make them think about their unfortunate past experiences of failure. Baloyi (2010:20-23) relates to this research project because she speaks about involvement of other stakeholders in the education of adults like in a normal school.

This is very strategic indeed as is also complemented by the communities of practice by Drayton & Falk (2009:89). The similarity between Baloyi (2010:20-23) and Drayton & Falk (2009:89) is the involvement of community members in the education of adult learners. According to the researcher's view point; and his experience as a teacher; this act promotes ownership of the educational programmes by the general members of the community. The adult educational resources have all members of the community as their keepers and guard to the extent that anyone vandalising them shall be offending the entire members of the community.

2.5 Learner-support in Open Distance Learning

Baloyi (2012:20) investigated learner support in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) context. He wanted to offer support to adult learners to alleviate poor participation in ABET programmes and unwanted drop-out. His argument is that learner support covers learning materials, teaching, tutoring and non-academic elements, administrative aspects, guidance and counselling. Baloyi (2012:23)'s topic seeks to support the learners so that there is consistency in enrolling at the centres. Baloyi (2012:23)

complements this research project since it pronounces how learner support contributes towards improvement of curriculum implementation. The researcher perceives support as an accompaniment towards fulfilment of one's dream of learning. Disassociation from the educator is therefore seen as leaving the educational encounter in a lurch and this usually leads to poor participation from educational programmes by the learners. This implies that educator contact with the learners motivates the learners to put more efforts in acquiring education. This is one thing that enlightens the researcher about Baloyi (2012:23).

Baloyi (2012:20) argues that when the learners are not supported, they become frustrated and less interested. Baloyi (2012:23) acknowledges that educator-learner contact is crucial. This is so in cases where learners are acquiring basic functional literacy. Provision of support to ODL learners is equated to educator-learner contact in this study. Equally, there should be willingness to learn on the side of the learner. This requires extrinsic or intrinsic motivation.

According to Baloyi (2012:33) ABET implies more than just literacy. It is intended to serve a range of social, economic and developmental roles. It is important in bringing up the dignity and self-esteem of the learners. The argument Baloyi (2012:23) brings is that learning can take place anywhere and anytime provided there is learner support from the educators. It differs from this research project because this research project focuses on what is taking place at the centres. The overriding similarity is that in Baloyi (2012:23) there is encouragement of educators to support learners; which is what this research project focuses on.

2.6 Motivation of adults to enrol at ABET centres

Dhlamini (2012:13) focused on the effectiveness of facilitation methods to motivate adult learners to participate in ABET programmes. The problem was that learners were not motivated to enrol at ABET centres and

facilitation methods were poor. The study relates to mine because it focuses on how effective teaching methods can motivate adults to enrol in ABET programmes. This will enable them to learn and develop the technical skills and knowledge needed to cope up with their life experiences.

Dhlamini (2012:18)'s argument was that the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes will assist the adult population to transform their circumstances and gain greater control over their lives. She discovered that the majority of people in townships are the ones who are faced with a high rate of unemployment and poverty.

The motivation of learners in communities to participate in ABET programmes might bring change to their lives. The aims of providing ABET, include the development of communication skills in languages, the development of numeracy skills and the development of technical skills. Educators ensure that adult learners are motivated to participate in ABET programmes. This enables them to learn and develop the technical skills and knowledge needed to cope in their life experiences (Dhlamini, 2012:19).

Dlhamini (2012:19)'s study focused on the facilitation methods. She wanted to examine how they motivate learners to participate in the ABET programmes in the Adult Centre. She wanted to investigate whether or not the facilitators are showing proactive commitment towards motivating the adults. She came up with different adult education teaching methods. She argues that in judging the appropriateness of methods, the educator needs to consider six main elements of the programme. Such elements include planning, resources, methods, activities, feedback and supervision (Dhlamini 2012:33).

Khumalo (2016:2) supplements Dhlamini (2012:19) by agreeing that the participation of adults in literacy programmes can be easily achieved

through motivation. This means that, as Baloyi (2010:54) clearly argued, the best centres show adults what they are capable of doing to improve curriculum implementation and increase learner performance. I think the issue of increasing adult learner pass rate by a particular percentage can be a yardstick for good performance. This can trigger particular adult learner motivation levels in some way or other. As one of the assumptions clearly echoed out, it is important that learners are able to make a livelihood after graduating from the centres. Khumalo (2016:2) argues further that these ABET centres should help the learners gain life skills and improve other skills such as computer literacy. Khumalo (2016) also adds value to this research project since it speaks about the increment of the motivation of adults to participate in literacy programmes at the centres.

2.7 Effective methods of teaching adults

Schwartz (2014:1) details the new methods used to effectively teach adult learners. According to her, such methods are determined by the characteristics that define the difference between the traditional learner and an adult learner. Such methods include:

- Adult learning is selective. This means that adult learners only learn what will benefit them. They don't learn something they are not interested in.
- Adult learning is self-directed. Adults are responsible for their own learning. They define their learning needs, set goals, and choose how to learn, gather materials and evaluate their progress. Learners take responsibility for their own learning. The teacher moves away from being the leader to being the facilitator of all learning.

  In online or blended environments, self-directed learning can be offered through the creation of dynamic learning environments where students may go beyond content presented by the

instructor to explore, interact with, comment on, modify, and apply the set content and additional content they discover through the learning process.

- Adults also bring years of previous knowledge and experience to the classroom, as well as an established system of values and beliefs governing their thought.

- Adults often have a problem-centred approach to learning. They are interested in content that has direct application to their lives. They want to see immediately how the course content is relevant to their current situations.

Adult learners have been away from formal schooling for many years, and may have had negative experiences with school. They re-enter the classroom with anxiety and low self-esteem. Adults may also associate traditional classroom environment with something that is appropriate for children (Schwartz 2014:1). Schwartz (2014:1) relates to this research project since it pronounces the technicalities and the considerations to be made in teaching the adults.

2.8 The importance of a safe environment

Thurlow (2007:44) also argues that a safe environment contributes towards effective curriculum implementation and learner performance because it prepares the receptive learner psychologically. It is this safe environment that makes it possible for the learner to derive meaning out of what he or she learns in the classroom.

The adult learner enjoys tremendous amount of support from the centre management, ABE educators and the actual ABET programme. The attitude of learners towards their studies is also important. When learners are working in a group, they construct, formulate and present their knowledge to a greater degree (Thurlow, 2007:45). According to Thurlow (2007:36) adult learners are always happy in an environment where an

attitude of mutual respect exists. This implies that educators, when implementing adult learner curriculum, exercise some form of respect as well. The atmosphere and style of the educator contribute to the success of the learners. Thurlow (2007:45) relates well to this research project since it talks about the importance of the environment in which all curriculum implementation is taking place. The environment in which learners learn is a safe place according to the bill of rights as enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996.

2.9 Experiential learning

Experiential learning allows adult learners to make practical use of their knowledge in real life situations. This is a type of learning that includes discussion, simulation, case study method and problem solving. These methods take the experiences of the learner into consideration. Simulation encourages experiential, active and reflective learning. Learners use their past experiences to create knowledge. (Rutherford & Hemming, 2008: 28). Collaborative learning allows the adult learner to use their shared connections and experiences to explain and build upon concepts from class. For adult learners who already hold professional positions; collaborative group work sharpens current skills. Classroom discussion is a collaborative activity that requires students to actively participate by applying critical thinking to their questions.

Narrative learning gives adult learners the opportunity to form a link between lived experience and curricular content. Narrative learning is introduced in class by means of storytelling method. Teachers tell stories that are related to the goals of the lesson. Setting ground rules and creating a supportive classroom environment are especially important when asking learners to tell their own stories. Learners know that their stories will not be a target of disagreement, judgment or argument. Receptive listening and constant vigilance is required on the part of the educator (Hamming & Rutherford, 2008:28). Hamming & Rutherford

(2008:28) also relate to this research project because they shed light on the methods used to impart knowledge on the adult learners which is what this research project focuses on.

2.10 Capability approach

Chigona and Chigona of the University of Cape Town in South Africa used the capability approach to investigate the utilisation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by adult educators in curriculum implementation. This strategy sought to diagnose how far technology can impact on the improvement of adult education curriculum implementation.

They found that the utilisation of Information and Communication Technology improves curriculum implementation and learner performances at the centres because it helps learners explore different educational resources. The manipulation of these technological resources is dependent on the capability of the teacher. Such an educator is in class on time facilitating learning (Chigona and Chigona, 2010:9).

Cooperative learning helps learners share ideas on topics that they know. It also boosts their confidence and their morale. (Machobane, 2010:33). Thurlow (2007:44) argues that learners who are engaged in self-directed learning activities are more successful in the completion of their ABET courses than those who are engaged in educator directed activities. This; according to the researcher's experience as an educator; is because learner self directed activities are insightful. Behaviourists argue that learning that is insightful is long lasting.

According to the researcher's experience as a teacher; insightfulness breeds better understanding of the learning content. Self directed learning requires learners to cooperate with each other to boost their levels of comprehension of the learning content (Thurlow, 2007: 44). Thurlow (2007:44) also argues that a safe environment contributes

towards effective curriculum implementation and learner performance because it prepares the receptive learner psychologically. It is this safe environment that makes it possible for the learner to derive meaning out of what he or she learns in the classroom. Self-directed learning and educator directed learning are the methods or technicalities that the educator and the learner embody to increase performance in the adult learner's classroom. The focus of this research project is curriculum implementation at MPALC; which is the centre of learning. The two methods spoken about by Thurlow (2007:44) make the dissertation relate to this research project.

Schiffman (2011:2) complements this study by seeking to change the behaviours of the people for the better with her educational developmental programmes. The success of the educational programmes breeds change in behaviour. The change postulated by Schiffman (2011:2) is undoubtedly a positive one because they use a self-directed learning strategy to implement an adult learner curriculum.

 For the sake of this study, success means a change in behaviour. This change means the possession of skills and competencies necessary for personal self-fulfilment. Schiffman (2011:2) relates to this research project because the change spoken about in this article is; according to the researcher's point of view; learners moving from being unskilled to being skilled for marketability which is another argument this research project postulate-effective curriculum implementation for the skilling of the adult learners for employability in the potential workplaces.

2.11 Connection between classroom practices and policy imperatives

Rampe & Mawere (2011:16) introduce a reflective practitioner approach to teaching the adult learner. In a reflective practitioner approach, the educator draws on personal experiences to account for his or her values and actions. Rampe & Mawere (2011:16) are educator oriented. Given all

of the above assumptions, one cannot overlook the fact that Rampe & Mawere (2011:18) cherish the idea that an educator does self-introspection before approaching the adult learner's classroom. This requires that the educators check on the inventory of experiences they have that can suit the learning endeavour of the adult learners. Rampe & Mawere (2011:18)'s study relates well to my study because they focus on the centre and suggest the technique to be used to teach the learners.

2.12 Other methods of teaching adults

Other adult teaching methods and specific activities identified by Schwartz (2014:2-3) are Tell-Help-Check, which is similar to think per share. This method provides adult learners the opportunities to review and confirm their understanding of critical information. It helps learners maintain interest in course content as well as offering them the opportunity to leverage their existing knowledge or experience.

The other one is problem-based learning (PBL). In this type of activity, learning is both active and self-directed. Learners are provided with a real life situation or problem and guidelines on how to solve the problem. The educator serves as facilitator and the learners take a lead in developing the solutions. It is a curricular approach to learning where learners are encouraged to take on the responsibility for their learning, even directing that learning by utilising their experience, their research and their collaboration (Schwartz 2014:3).

2.13 Comparative analysis of methods used in facilitating ABET

Sibiya (2007:36) made a comparative analysis of the methods used in implementing adult curriculum. Her argument is that the majority of black South Africans are excluded from power, information and wealth because of their inability to read and write or complete illiteracy. Sibiya (2007:36)'s theory is that methods of facilitation fall short of implementation techniques and continuity which result in adult learners relapsing to

illiteracy. Her problem is that there seems to be challenges underlying the methods of facilitation used in various programmes aimed at improving the adult learner curriculum implementation for the better.

2.14 Learner-educator contact time or time allocation

In terms of Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) as determined in section 4 of the employment of Educator's Act, 1998, all adult educators should be at the PALC during the formal school day. Equally, the policy document on Adult Education (1996:26) determines that adults should access adult education and participate in it to be skilled enough to improve the economy of South Africa. This ensures that all effort at educating the adult learner does not become a fruitless expenditure but reach the target for which it is intended. According to the researcher's point of view, the time allocated for each subject in any level or grade in any context is crucial. This study recognises that some of the subjects taught in the Further Education and Training band (FET) are also taught in the adult education context. This implies that time allocated for subjects at FETs may be similar or equal to time allocated for subjects at Adult Learning Centres (ALC) (DBE, 2011:28).

2.15 The purpose of literacy programmes

Beauzac, (2010:55) argues that the purpose of the literacy programme is to improve literacy acquisition skills and to provide learners with basic knowledge and education. Beauzac (2010:55) further acknowledges that it is not only recruitment that will make community members flock to the centre, but the best practices in showing them that the centre is able to deliver quality education. This implies that educators are committed, dedicated and loyal to their work so that quality education can be provided at the centre to attract more and more adults.

Beauzac (2010: 55) recommends that educators should meet the needs of the learners when implementing the curriculum. According to policy on

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adult learning assessment (1996:20); literacy in ABET level 1 has its own learning outcomes. This is what links this research project to Beauzac (2010:55) and adult education policy document on assessment (1996:20). According to the researcher's point of view, assessment aims to check if the teaching yields what the adult learners hope to achieve by enrolling at ABET centres.

2.16 ABET self study report

Some of the objectives of ABET Self-Study Report for the Department of Ocean and Resources Engineering of the University of Hawaii at Manoa (2009:65) include:

- To produce graduates who are effective and creative engineers applying knowledge of mathematics to solve their engineering problems,
- Can communicate and work effectively with peers, clients and the general public in promoting new ideas, products or designs and
- Can adapt to the changing needs and technology of the Ocean and Resources industry.

It is related to this research project since it speaks about the ultimate aim of all educational endeavours. This study recognises that the potential, the competency of adult learners after completing their educational programmes are crucial for the adult learners to secure jobs for themselves.

This study recognises the contributions made by Hawaii self-study report (2009:66) as they combined both gender issues and the skilling of the adult learners. The University of Hawaii (2009:70) argues that if adult learners can be skilled, they will be in a position to secure jobs; for them to alleviate poverty and to fulfil themselves.

2.17 The ultimate aim of teaching and learning

Marina & Mayer (2011:10) wrote a paper for the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA). With their paper, they sought to root out the high and growing rate of youth unemployment in South Africa. This article relates to this study because it gears its youth development towards marketability and employability, which is the ultimate aim of all teaching or training. Its curriculum content enhances the youth chances of being competent and potent to be able to fend for themselves. For the sake of this study, curriculum content is found at the PALCs, where all educational endeavours take place.

The DBSA wanted to absorb young people into the labour market and help them to engage in more income generating activities (Marina & Mayer 2011:12). They argue that the government should increase opportunities for economic participation among young people by ensuring that relevant policies operate at full capacity. These institutions include the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), the Micro-Agricultural Financial Institutions of South Africa (MAFISA), the South African Micro Finance Apex Fund (SAMAF) and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) (Marina et al 2011:11).

All these developmental institutions have a direct link or relationship to the centre. Their study is also geared towards the apex of all teaching endeavours which is competency, marketability and employability.

2.18 Transformative and reflective learning

Arends (2014:15) complements the literature reviewed for the sake of this study by highlighting two crucial dimensions to be taken heed of in implementing the adult curriculum effectively and efficiently. Such dimensions include transformative and reflective learning. According to Arends (2014:15), transformative learning involves global consciousness, which is awareness of oneself and others who are different. Through

transformative learning, Arends (2014:15) argues that each individual learns differently and his or her learning is characterised by perspective consciousness which recognises that one's view of the world may not be universally shared. The view of the world is shaped by influences that often escape conscious detection. Transformative learning creates a shift in a learner's paradigm or collective frames of reference, resulting in an introspective process of reframing one's world view (Arends 2014:15). Arends (2014:15)'s view of transformative learning is shared by Kitchenham (2008:10) who perceives transformative learning as a deep, structured shift in basic premises of thought, feelings and actions.

The practice of reflective learning catalyses the changes or perspective shifts for learners and supports adult learners during community experiences. Reflection is a careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge which result from learning. In this learning phenomenon, fundamental assumptions are considered. Learners are allowed to evaluate their own meaningful structures when met with new ideas (Arends 2014:15).

2.19 SUMMARY

Chapter two managed to come up with the literature necessary for this inquiry. The study heralded over assumptions that included adult learner drop-out, non-completion of learning programmes, adult teacher in-service training or professional development, the availability of resources such as learner-teacher support materials and the methods used to deliver curriculum to the needy adult learners. This included access and participation of adults in literacy programmes. Chapter two assisted in determining the literatures that are related to this study. The researcher was able to state blatantly where the link between this research project and the different literatures reviewed lie. The following chapter would deal with research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the methodology used to sample study participants as well as collecting, analysing and interpreting research data. Basically, the study is based on the teachings of the qualitative methodology.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was embedded in the teachings of the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm holds that social reality can only be interpreted and understood by people who possess lived experiences about social reality (Merriam, 2009:45). In this regard, the Centre Manager, facilitators and learners were approached to give a detailed account on the many challenges hindering the effective implementation of the curriculum at MPALC.

The perspective of the learners was crucial in that as the target group of ABET, their views and suggestions were instrumental in shaping the future framework and structure of the ABET curriculum policy. The assumption is that the existing ABET curriculum can only be responsive and relevant when it features in the input of the learners. The facilitators were targeted because they are the key implementers or end-users of the current curriculum. Lastly, the Centre Manager shed light on the management and administrative dynamics of the curriculum within the environmental context of the MPALC.

To ensure compatibility with the interpretivist teachings, the researcher employed the qualitative research method. The qualitative method was vital in understanding the curriculum implementation challenges at MPALC from the perspectives of people who coordinate and administer

adult education activities at the centre. This method helped the researcher ensure a free flow of primary, authentic and undistorted information (Henning, *et al* 2013:5). In line with qualitative method traditions, semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were used to obtain intelligence on the challenges faced by MPALC in curriculum implementation (Cresswell, 2012:79). As suggested by Boudah (2011:107) the researcher focused on the actions, the words and the interactions participants had with the topic being researched. While the participant's actions were visualised during observation trips, their words were noted during semi-structured interviews. Such interactions were used to establish a rapport.

A single-bounded case study was employed to get a comprehensive understanding on why the MPALC was lagging behind in curriculum implementation. Using the bounded case study design, the participants were challenged to base their narrative on their lived experience (Leedy et al, 2010:34; Cohen *et al,* 2011:114). As advocated by Henning et al, (2013:5) the researcher gathered oral accounts of how the MPALC approaches its curriculum implementation from eyewitnesses. The single bounded case study made it possible for the researcher to grasp how the participants interpreted various curriculum implementation challenges at their centre in terms of their causes and effects (Creswell, 2010:34; Eisner, 2011:45; Yin, 2011:56).

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A population is represented by all the elements on which a sample of the study can be selected (Cohen et al, 2011:114). The population comprised of the 18 ABET learners, 6 adult education facilitators and the Centre Manager, drawn from the MPALC. A purposive sampling method was used to select the sample of this study. Purposive sampling was instrumental in selecting only participants deemed to possess in-depth knowledge, experience and understanding on curriculum implementation

challenges at MPALC. Those members of the population considered to possess little understanding of the phenomenon being researched were deliberately excluded (Cohen et al, 2011:183). Since only people with rich knowledge and lived experiences were chosen, the participants voluntarily gave a detailed and authentic account on curriculum implementation challenges bedevilling MPALC.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data was collected using three notable methods. Firstly, the content of key documents such as lesson plans, assessment records, general centre timetable, teacher-learner contact time, classroom rules and learner class attendance rate provided a rich source of secondary data. The Centre Manager gave the researcher access to all the files and records that contained crucial information. Secondly, semi-structured interviews involving the learners, facilitators and the Centre Manager were conducted with the aid of an interview guide. Semi-structured interviews were preferred because they naturally offer quick feedback benefits (Leedy et al, 2010:45).

Since all the participants are predominantly Tsonga speaking and the English language seemed to be limiting the flow of information, frequent direct translation to Tsonga was made to improve rapport and good feedback. Before the interviews, participants were greeted in Tsonga before they were politely requested to sit down. The researcher started by explaining the objectives of the study and its significance to the learners, facilitators, Centre Manager and the Department of Basic Education. The demographic profile of the participants was then recorded. Each time when the participants did not understand the question, the researcher took few minutes to clarify the question. Follow-up questions were put forward where it was necessary to verify certain claims. The researcher wrote all the responses in a note book. The

interviews were also tape-recorded after the consent from the participants was secured.

Lastly, three observation trips where the centre's learning infrastructure was observed were made. A silent observation is an important procedure of gathering data in qualitative research (De Vos, 2011:34). Yin (2010:34) argues that when observation principles are activated, the researcher does not only hear what the participants say but rather portray him as an eyewitness. The observations were instrumental in getting insider knowledge on how the MPALC learners were being taught and how they reacted to different teaching methods their educators used to teach them. The observations further assisted in identifying the methods used by the educators and which management strategy the centre manager used to manage curriculum implementation. The researcher also used observations to identify the challenges that hindered curriculum implementation and the extent to which they impacted; whether they impacted positively or negatively. During the three trips undertaken, the state of the centre's infrastructure and learning environment were observed. The participants were informed about the visits five days prior to the actual visits.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis involved thematically and inductively interpreting the evidence gathered from key documents and findings from semi-structured interviews and observations. The advantage of thematic analysis is that it is helpful in contexts where key words and statements collected from witnesses need to be thoroughly analysed by way of comparing and contrasting them (Yin,2009:34). Firstly, collected data was edited for accuracy and consistency, before it was translated into intelligent and readable write-ups (Leedy & Ormrod,2010:96). Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to establish how participants at MPALC

interested with the curriculum on daily basis. Thematic analysis means that cross-cutting issues were quickly detected and interpreted based on the meanings the different participants brought to such texts. The write-ups were translated into a draft report, which was later validated before it was finalised

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

The trustworthiness of the report was assessed to assure the report's credibility. Trustworthiness means that the content of a study report is consistent and accurate enough to be trusted or relied upon. In order to establish trustworthiness, the report was assessed for credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Bryman, 2008:34).

3.6.1 Credibility

In order to establish the report's credibility, multiple methods and sources of data like interviews, observations and document analysis were used (Donald et al, 2014:535 and Creswell *et al*, 2010:38). The participants were also given the findings of the research report to verify if the report in question reflected the experiences or the views that they shared with the researcher.

3.6.2 Transferability

Transferability is concerned about assessing whether the findings of the study can easily be generalised to other PALCs operating in similar contexts (Eisner, 2011:46). Since a bounded single case study was employed, the results of the study were naturally difficult to generalise.

3.6.3 Dependability

An audit trail of data was conducted with the view to clean the data of all inaccuracies, ambiguities and inconsistencies made during the transcription process (Eisner, 2011:47).

3.6.4 Confirmability

To ensure confirmability, the researcher prevented his own views, personal values and theoretical inclinations from contaminating the research findings (Bryman, 2008:34).

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major setback was that at least three learners withdrew their participation at short notice due to pressing work commitments. As a stop-gap measure, the researcher had to replace them with three learners who were drafted on short notice.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following ethical issues were taken into consideration:

- **Permission**

The permission to conduct this study was secured from the Mafarana Department of Basic Education Circuit Office (Bryman, 2008:34). A letter to this effect is attached to the Appendix.

- **Informed consent**

Prior to commencement of the semi-structured interviews, all participants were invited to sign the interview consent forms on a voluntary basis. These consent forms were only signed after the objectives and the benefits of the study were clarified to the participants (Leedy et al 2010:56). An abridged version of the consent form is also attached to the Appendix.

- **Acknowledgement of sources**

All sources used in this study starting from the literature materials were appropriately acknowledged using the Harvard referencing guidelines.

- **Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy**

In line with confidentiality obligations, all participants were assured that their identities were not to be revealed to any one so as to avoid other people from identifying the participants from whom information was provided.

- **Access to the report**

All participants were assured that this research report will be accessible to them upon submission of a verbal request. The researcher also assured participants that their views would be shared with the Department of Basic Education officials.

- **Right to Withdrawal**

Participants were not coerced into interview sessions however, they were encouraged to participate entirely on their own choice and their right to withdrawal at any stage was respected. Indemnity letters were also designed and signed by the participants before the study commenced.

3.9 SUMMARY

Chapter three managed to illustrate the methodology that was used to conduct this research. According to this chapter; interpretivist paradigm was used to unravel the reality about the different techniques used to implement curriculum at MPALC. It is in this chapter where the population and the sampling method used for the sake of this research project were identified. Chapter three revealed that purposive sampling was used to select participants who are knowledgeable to curriculum implementation at MPALC. This chapter was able to fulfil its task of revealing the different methods used for collecting data; and how the data was analysed. The following chapter would illustrate the findings of this research project in a nutshell.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study. As a recapitulation, the study sought to explore curriculum implementation challenges facing PALCs using MPALC as a reference point. The findings are based on the data collected from semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and silent observations.

The findings are structured as follows:

1. Section A will include findings from documentary analysis.
2. Section B will comprise of findings from semi-structured interviews; and
3. Section C will summarise the findings from silent observations.

4.2 SECTION A: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The findings from document analysis were based on the analysis of the following documents:

- Lesson plans
- Assessment records
- General centre time table
- Teacher-learner contact time
- Classroom rules
- Learner class attendance rate

4.2.1 Lesson plan file

The educator had a lesson plan file. The lesson plan she sifted out of the lesson plan file had long lapsed. It was dated 05 February 2013 and the

researcher's lesson observation was on the 06th of October 2014. It was an English lesson plan taken out of an English lesson plan file. Using an outdated lesson plan could be an indication that the educator embraced a weak lesson planning focus. The policy document on adult education (1996:28) perceives lesson plans as the most important tools with which the educator can effectively implement the curriculum.

4.2.2 General centre time table

The researcher found that all the learning activities were based on a general time table whose dates had lapsed. The timetable reflected the 2013 academic year instead of the actual year of 2014. Unfortunately the teacher did not have a personal timetable. The subjects were distributed equally on the centre's general time table. Baloyi (2012:20) argues that learners should be supported throughout their learning encounters. This means that it is of utmost importance for the learners to know which subject comes at a particular given time and how long it is going to last.

4.2.3 Educator-learner contact time

The researcher found out that learning activities run for two hours per day starting from Monday to Thursday of every week. The indication on the time table was that time allocated for each subject per day is one hour. The researcher also found that the facilitator conducted the lessons according to specifications on the time table. For example, poetry as part of the English literature was indicated on the general centre time table. The lessons started at 14h00 immediately after the departure of the learners of Mbetana Primary School in which MPALC was accommodated. According to both Baloyi (2010:20) and Baloyi (2012:23) educator-learner contact is very important. This academic support; as Baloyi (2010:20) put it; motivates the learner to learn more in the hope

that he or she will make it since somebody keeps her or her company and the road towards acquiring education is being smoothened.

4.2.4 Assessment records

The researcher found out that assessment records were available. A few formal and informal assessments were recorded in a two quire note book like it was the case with lesson plans. It had records of homework, class work, assignments and tests. This is supported by the policy on adult teaching (1996:30) which stipulates the guidelines on how learners can be assessed. It also outlines the mode of promotion and retention of the learners.

4.2.5 Classroom rules

There were rules mounted on the information board in the classroom. An analysis of the rules showed that one rule sought to regulate adherence to school work writing. The rule stipulated that all learners are supposed to write their school work. The facilitator's assessment book showed that a great portion of the learners were adhering to this rule. Such rules were drawn in compatibility with the constitution of the Republic of South Africa; Act 108 of 1996 which protects the dignity and rights of everybody including the learners. These rules also promote inclusivity as postulated by the Department of Basic Education (2016:67).

4.2.6 Learner lesson attendance rate

The researcher analysed the class attendance register to check the lesson attendance rate of Level 2 learners. A close analysis of the attendance register indicated a fluctuating trend in learner lesson attendance. This inconsistency in class attendance was unfortunate as it means some learners risk missing important lessons. This contradicts the wishes of Drayton & Falk (2009:89) who believe that communities should

come together and share the good practices and knowledge on particular educational matters. This act is totally opposed to the absence of any member of the community including the learnership. According to Andrews (2007:13); developmental programme issues include pshycological; physiological; social and cultural aspects. This implies that the coming together of learners is important for group activities.

4.3 SECTION B: FINDINGS FROM SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The findings from semi-structured interviews were as follows:

4.3.1 Challenges that hinder curriculum implementation

The Department of Education (2014:17) perceives educational challenges as threat to proper curriculum implementation. The educators, the Centre Manager and learners were requested to state the challenges that hinder curriculum delivery. Table 4.1 below summarises the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation:

Table 4.1: Summary of the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation

Participant Code	Perceived curriculum related challenges
Learner 1	*"The government does not provide us with stationery. They only give it to our children".*
Learner 2	*"Sharing textbooks does not motivate us. Sometimes I go for the whole week without seeing a textbook".*
Learner 3	*"Shortage of textbooks and stationery is the major challenge demotivating us"*
Learner 4	*"We do not have access to textbooks. Sometimes sharing textbooks is problematic".*
Learner 5	*"Some facilitators prefer to use the English language as a medium of instruction and this does not go down well with us. I do not understand why the facilitators do not use Tsonga as a medium of instruction".*

Learner 6	*"The methods of teaching used by the facilitators are not learner-centred and sometimes we do not understand what the facilitators are saying because they prefer to instruct us in English instead of in Tsonga".*
Facilitator 1	*"I do not like the fact that the syllabus put too much emphasis on theory rather than vocational skills".*
Facilitator 2	*"We get stipend at the end of the month. This does not inspire us. We would appreciate if the Department of Basic Education can improve the incentives with the view to increase the morale of facilitators".*
Centre Manager	*"The rate of learner absenteeism is stubbornly high. Learners miss out on important aspects of our curriculum during their absence. The other challenge impeding effective curriculum implementation at the centre is poor budgetary support from the Department of Basic Education".*

4.3.2 Intervention strategies to address the challenges hindering curriculum implementation

The DBE (2014:17) argues that if there happen to be challenges identified at a learning centre, intervention should be swift to catch up with time and learner performance improvement. When asked to highlight some of the strategies to address the above challenges, numerous responses were given. Table 4.2 gives a summary of such responses:

Table 4.2: Summary of intervention strategies to address the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation.

Participant Code	Perceived intervention strategies
Learner 1	*"Provision of adequate textbooks and stationery will alleviate the current acute shortage of textbooks at the centre".*
Learner 2	*"The use of Tsonga language as dominant medium of instruction is imperative. The use of modern teaching aids is key in the centre's quest to improve visual-*

	based learning".
Learner 3	*"If only the government can consistently supply textbooks, everything will be fine".*
Learner 4	*"The Department of Basic Education must ensure that vocational skills like carpentry, sewing and building form part of the curriculum for the ABET programme".*
Learner 5	*"The facilitators must put more focus on interactive learning methodologies in order to increase learner participation during the learning process".*
Learner 6	*"My strong wish is to see every learner having his or her own textbook in every subject taught at the centre".*
Facilitator 1	*"A more pragmatic approach is needed to minimise the problem of high learner absenteeism".*
Facilitator 2	*"The Department of Basic Education needs to revamp the incentives given to facilitators to improve their morale".*
Centre Manager	*"I will support initiatives to include vocational skills as part of the ABET curriculum".*

4.3.3 The effects of the challenges hindering curriculum delivery

Francis et al (2010:7) contend that challenges at a learning centre possess a drastic hindrance to curriculum implementation. The effects of the challenges highlighted on item 4.4.2 above were illustrated in table 4.3 as follows:

Table 4.3:The effects of the challenges hindering curriculum delivery.

Participant Code	Perceived intervention strategies
Facilitator	*"The lack of good incentives and poor working conditions has demoralised all the facilitators. The small stipend we are getting from the Department of Basic Education and the fact that we are still being treated as temporary employees*

	has worsened our plight. Sometimes I feel like the Department of basic Education is short-changing us".
Facilitator 2	"*I become frustrated and embarrassed every time when I have to write my homework on a small piece of paper because of lack of proper stationery*".
Learner 3	"*The shortage of textbooks has a negative impact on my performance in mathematics. Since I do not have a mathematics textbook, I cannot do my homework in time*".
Centre Manager	"*The poor budgetary support from the Department of Basic Education and the failure to attract private sector funding is making it difficult to financially sustain the ever-increasing cost burden of the centre. In most cases, lack of funds makes it difficult for the centre to procure such basics like stationery and learning aids, and this often compromises the quality of service delivery*".

4.3.4 Popular teaching methods

Sibiya (2007:40) argues that one of the crucial factors that can improve curriculum implementation at the PALCs is thorough knowledge of the methods by educators who are the core curriculum implementers. When asked to state which teaching methods are integral in the effective delivery of learning instruction at the centre, numerous responses pertaining to methods were given. Table 4.4 gives a summary of responses to that effect:

Table 4.4: Summary of the effective popular adult teaching methods.

Participant Code	Perceived intervention strategies
Learner 1	"*I think the facilitators need to employ more role plays and drama series as primary methods to deliver key information on complex subjects like mathematics*".

Learner 2	*"Interactive learning is the most effective teaching method because it inspires me to be an active participant during sessions".*
Learner 3	*"Question and answer method helps to get prompt feedback from the facilitator"*
Learner 4	*"Through my experience, I find demonstrations to be the most effective learning method of teaching".*
Learner 5	*"I am in favour of role plays and demonstrations because they give practical effect to theoretical themes".*
Learner 6	*"Although to some extent I prefer the lecture method, I would recommend that facilitators blend it with role plays and demonstrations".*
Facilitator 1	*"A combination of lecture method, role plays, question and answer method and drama will produce extraordinary results".*
Facilitator 2	*"I am a fan of demonstrations because they enhance visual learning objectives".*
Centre Manager	*"Depending on the subject being taught and the topic involved, every method can be used. I cannot prescribe a particular method but I would rather advise facilitators to use their discretion based on the prevailing circumstances".*

4.3.5 Expectations versus status quo

Beauzac (2010:56) and Marina & Mayer (2011:15) argue that the ulti
mate aim of education is marketability and employability of the learners.
The learners were challenged to indicate the objectives behind them
enrolling for ABET classes at MPALC and whether those objectives were
being met. The following were their responses:

Table 4.5:The expectations of the learners behind enrolling at MPALC.

Code	Objective for enrolling in ABET classes	State whether the objective has been achieved
Learner 1	*"My burning desire was to learn how to*	*"I am of course achieving this objective*

	read the bible on my own without third-party assistance".	*although I am still struggling to read the English bible*".
Learner 2	"*My childhood dream was to sing from Tsonga hymn book in the church without any assistance from my daughter*".	"*Thanks to the ABET programme, I can now sing all the hymns in church without my daughter's support*".
Learner 3	"*I wanted to add and subtract numbers so that I will give clients accurate change when they buy from shop*".	"*I can only subtract and add two-digit numbers. I am not competent in adding and subtracting three-digit numbers*".
Learner 4	"*My greatest wish was to learn how to write and read letters in English*".	"*Although at the beginning it was unthinkable, I can safely say that I am on course making this dream a big reality*".
Learner 5	"*As a budding preacher, I wanted to improve my public speaking skills*".	"*Before I joined the ABET classes, I used to have stage fright but now it's a thing of the past*".
Learner 6	"*I saw the ABET programme as an opportunity to improve my chances of getting a job*".	*"I am frustrated on the fact that the 10 prospective employers I approached told me to my face that they do not recognise the ABET qualification*".

4.3.6 Factors affecting enrolment apathy

The policy on adult education (1996:47) determines that learners should always be at the learning centres so that they do not miss out on important curriculum content on particular days. Marina & Mayer (2011:16) concur with the above assertion by the adult education policy and add by arguing further that if learners are not always at the centre, the possibility is that they will fail. When asked to state the reasons of the enrolment apathy at the MPALC, the following responses were given:

Learner 1: *"My suspicion is that a lot of potential adult learners in the surrounding communities are not aware of the full benefits of enrolling for ABET classes at MPALC".*

Learner 4: "*I am discouraged by the fact that most of the people I know who completed their Level 4 course are struggling to get better jobs. If the ABET qualification cannot help me to get a well-paying job, I do not see the reason why I should pursue the course".*

Learner 6: *"A lot of women in my neighbourhood do not opt for ABET classes because they complain that their husbands do not financially and morally support them".*

4.3.7 Curriculum content

When requested to indicate the number of subjects being taught at the centre, the Centre Manager said,

"*Apart from Agriculture, Ancillary Health Care, Xitsonga, Mathematics and Life Orientation, we also offer Basic English lessons. Our major worry is that since May 2014, the English lessons were suspended due to the absence of the facilitator*". *We are appealing to the Department of Basic Education to expedite the process of replacing the English teacher". The literature reviewed for the sake of this research project in chapter two revealed that the Lesotho Ministry of Education (2008:22) improve the educator skills in curriculum content such as English; Mathematics and Science.*

4.3.8 Learner levels of motivation

Guided by Khumalo (2016:2); the researcher also sought information about the motivation levels of the learners. The learners expressed their satisfaction about the discussion and games methods used by the facilitators to deliver learning instruction. The learners further expressed appreciation on the use of newspaper clips to impart crucial knowledge

on topics of community interest. The learners also commended the friendly treatment they got from the facilitators.

Learner 3 also said, "*My Tsonga facilitator is my hero. She always inspire me to approach my studies with sheer determination and resilience*".

Learner 6 said; "*I am motivated by the warmth and friendliness of all the facilitators. They treat us like adults and value our contributions during classes. Whenever I do not understand certain aspects they are easily approachable".*

4.3.9 Facilitator's level of motivation

As Andrews (2007:13) argued that the principles of adult learning include continuous motivation; the researcher sought to understand the motivation levels of the facilitators. The following responses were given:

Facilitator 1 said, "*I am frustrated at the fact that the Department of Basic Education still treat us as its temporary employees. My prayer is that the Department of Basic Education must confirm us as permanently employees before the end of 2016".*

Facilitator 2 said, "*Although we do not have enough Facilitator Guides, we try our best to devise different strategies to improve curriculum delivery at this centre. Personally, I am not happy at the low salary I got at the end of the month despite the effort I put in ensuring learners are adequately taught. I strongly feel that the Department of Basic Education is not doing enough to appreciate my effort".*

4.3.10 Educator's academic qualifications

Table 4.6 below indicates the academic profile of the two facilitators and the centre manager:

Table 4.6: Teacher's academic qualifications

	Qualification	Relevant experience
Centre manager	Bachelor of Education degree specialising in Education Management	10 years
Facilitator 1	Diploma of Education specialising in Adult Education	8 years
Facilitator 2	Certificate in Education Specialising in Primary School Education	15

Table 4.6 shows that the three participants had adequate academic qualifications and a traceable track record in teaching adult learners as determined by the Lesotho Ministry of Education (2008:30) who argue that qualifications are a proper litmus paper to measure the capability of an individual to teach implement a curriculum. The average teaching experience is 11 years. The Centre Manager who possesses a Bachelor of Education degree with specialisation in Educational Management is the highest educated employee of the centre. This is in accordance with the Lesotho government (2008:30); who believe that good educational management yields very educator performance. The researcher learned that all the facilitators were appointed on part-time basis.

4.4 SECTION C: OBSERVATION

As stated earlier, the silent observations unfolded in the following pattern:

The findings from silent observations were as follows:

4.4.1 Infrastructure

Thurlow (2007:44) perceives infrastructure as an environment which needs to be safe to contribute effectively towards curriculum

implementation and learner performance. Thurlow (2007:45) argues that learning takes place properly in an environment that is well turned out. The researcher noted that the buildings used for ABET purposes at MPALC were in an advanced state of dilapidation. For instance, both the inner and outer paint was in a faded state. The floor had some cracks and windows were broken. Since MPALC was housed under Mbetana Primary School, the chairs and the tables were too small and unfit for adult learners. Out of the 30 chairs in the classroom, it was noted that five chairs were broken and in need of urgent repair. This contradicted what is contained by the bill of rights in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa; Act 108 of 1996 which determines that everyone has a right to education and an environment which is not harmful to his or her wellbeing.

4.4.2 Classroom settings

Rutherford & Hamming (2008:32) argue that the setting in the class contribute a lot towards curriculum implementation. The researcher observed that the chalkboard was dirty and heavily scribbled. It was also noted that the classroom was very hot and in need of air conditioners. Six learners shared a table and only three tables were occupied. The researcher also noted that dozens of charts were hanging on the walls of the classroom walls.

4.4.3 Availability of resources

UNICEFF (2009:7) contend that available educational resources at all learning centres should be aligned to the curriculum content being imparted on the learners. The researcher observed that the educator did not have crucial accessories like dusters and enough pieces of chalk. Instead of using the duster to clean the chalkboard the educator used a wet cloth. It was disturbing to note that at least two learners shared a mathematics textbook. The researcher also noted five learners were writing the notes on small pieces of paper.

4.4.4 Attendance

Njeri (2011:48) and Dlamini (2012:13)'s dissertations focused on the improvement of adult participation in literacy programmes. Njeri (2011:48) and Dlhamini (2012:13)'s argument is that adult participation in literacy programmes should be continuous to avoid unnecessary breaks in the acquisition of education On day one, the researcher did a head count and discovered that out of the total enrolment of 18 learners, only 12 learners were present. On day two, the attendance improved to 14 learners out of 18 learners. Lastly, on day three, only 10 learners out of 18 were in attendance.

4.5. SUMMARY

It is clear from the findings that although the MPALC has made great strides in advancing the objectives of adult education in Sedan village, the centre is still experiencing crippling challenges that hinder its ability to implement curriculum requirements as directed by the Department of Basic Education. The five most cited challenges raised by the participants include inter-alia; shortage of textbooks, inadequate stationery, poor budgetary support from the Department of Basic Education, weak focus on interactive learning techniques and poor incentives offered to facilitators. The Department of Basic Education has been urged by the participants to improve its budgetary support and procure more textbooks and stationery in order to improve the centre's curriculum implementation environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Apart from highlighting the study's conclusions and the recommendations, this chapter also summarises the findings of the study. As stated earlier, this study interrogated the curriculum implementation challenges at MPALC with the view to recommend appropriate strategies to improve curriculum implementation capabilities of the centre. Within this context, the study was premised on the following three objectives:

- To identify curriculum implementation challenges facing MPALC
- To identify the resources available for the implementation of curriculum at MPALC.
- To examine the effects of the curriculum implementation challenges at MPLAC;
- To recommend appropriate strategies to enhance MPLAC's curriculum implementation capabilities.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS UNDER OBJECTIVE 1

The discussions around objective 1 are reflected on item 5.2.1 below:

5.2.1 Objective 1: Curriculum implementation challenges facing MPALC

According to Atchison & Alidou (2009:1) adherence to curriculum guidelines is listed as one of the key success factors of any adult education programme. Evidently, the centre's ability to satisfy or fulfil its curriculum implementation objectives is hampered by at most five

crippling challenges, which include inter-alia; lack of adequate budgetary support from the Department of Higher Education and Training, shortage of mission-critical stationery and textbooks, weak focus on interactive learning methods, demotivated educators due to poor working conditions and the failure by the centre to use the Tsonga language as the dominant language of delivering learning instructions.

Figure 5.1: Summary of the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation

1. Poor budgetary support from the Department of Basic Education	2. Poor working conditions faced by facilitators
3. Shortage of mission-critical resources like learning aids, texbooks and stationery	4. Failure to consistently use Tsonga as a dominant language of delivering learning instructions
5. Weak focus on interactive learning methods	6. Enrollment apathy due to lack of understanding of the benefits of ABET programme

5.2.2 Conclusion on objective 1

Based on the facts presented on item 5.2.1 above, it can be concluded that the inability of MPALC to effectively fulfil or satisfy its curriculum requirements is positively linked to a composite of factors like poor working conditions of educators, shortage of mission-critical resources like textbooks, stationery and learning aids. At the root of these factors is the lack of adequate funding from the Department of Higher Education and Training which is worsened by lack of private sector interest in

funding adult education initiatives. These contradict the assertion given by Killen (2012:25) that requires that adult education gives adults who have never tasted a formal schooling life a rare opportunity to learn how to read, perform basic mathematical operations like counting and write.
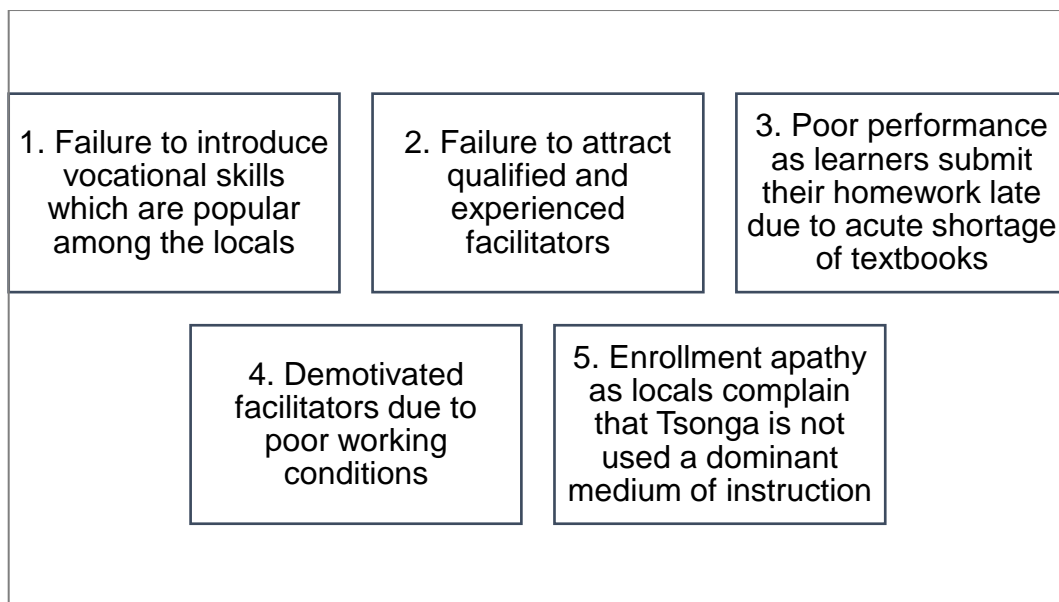
5.3 Objective 2: The effects of the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation

Derocco & Flyn (2007:2) advise curriculum designers to design it in a way that it will meet the needs of the learners. This involves the types of resources available and how they impact to curriculum implementation. This study found out that the myriad of curriculum implementation challenges confronting MPLAC impacted negatively on the ability of the centre to fulfil its curriculum obligations as required by the Department of Basic Education (2013:44). A case in point cited by the majority of the participants was the persistent shortage of textbooks and stationery which hampered the ability of the learners to do their homework and class work timeously. At least 5 learners complained that they always submitted their homework late due to non-availability of textbooks. The lack of adequate budgetary support from the Department of Basic Education and inability of the centre to attract private funding worsened the financial plight of the centre. The study found that due to lack of diverse funding opportunities, the centre could not attract qualified and experienced facilitators.

On the other hand, it was also noted that due to persistent funding challenges, Contrary to Njeri (2011:48), the centre could not introduce popular vocational skills like carpentry, sewing, knitting and building. The continued use of English as a dominant medium of instruction at the centre was also attributed to low enrolment rates at the centre. Since the centre is located in predominantly Tsonga speaking village, many participants felt that the centre needs to adopt Tsonga as the dominant

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medium of instruction. The question of language across the curriculum is made of paramount importance by the Department of Basic Education (2013:10) who believe that language across the curriculum makes content subject learning easier to understand and increases learner performance.

Figure 5.2: Summary of the challenges that hinder curriculum implementation

1. Failure to introduce vocational skills which are popular among the locals	2. Failure to attract qualified and experienced facilitators	3. Poor performance as learners submit their homework late due to acute shortage of textbooks
	4. Demotivated facilitators due to poor working conditions	5. Enrollment apathy as locals complain that Tsonga is not used a dominant medium of instruction

5.3.2 Conclusion of objective 2

Based on the facts put forward on Item 5.3.1, it can be concluded that the curriculum implementation challenges had a negative impact on the ability of the MPALC to deliver quality services to its target group. For instance, contrary to the belief of Schiffman (2011:6) that the education learners receive should equip them with the skills and competencies necessary for personal self fulfilment, the centre had to shelve the initiative to introduce vocational skills training like carpentry, building and sewing due to poor budgetary support.

5.4 Objective 3: Recommendation of the study

The following recommendations are informed with what the participants perceived to be the best solution to improve the centre's curriculum implementation capabilities:

5.4.1 ABET awareness campaigns

In order to generate adequate awareness among the local populace about the benefits of the ABET programme, the centre management is advised to team up with the Department of Basic Education with the view to mount sustained campaigns to sell the benefits of the ABET programme to local adults. This will go a long way in alleviating the persisting challenge of enrolment apathy confronting the centre. The target will be to double the enrolment figure from the current 18 to 36 learners by 2018.

5.4.2 Adequate budgetary support

In order to improve the centre's curriculum implementation leverage, the Centre management is advised to tap into potential private-public partnership opportunities to boost its coffers. The first step towards the realisation of this objective is for the centre management to develop a bankable funding proposal for onward submission to prospective private funders within the local community. The funds generated from this initiative will go a long way in advancing the centre's administrative, textbook and stationery procurement objectives.

5.4.3 Specialised curriculum training

As the ABET curriculum framework continues to evolve due to dynamic changes in adult education landscape, it is recommended that all the facilitators be sent for specialised curriculum implementation training at reputable universities.

5.4.4 Tsonga as dominant medium of instruction

In order to enhance feedback and develop maximum rapport between the learners and the facilitators, it is hereby recommended that the centre adopt the Tsonga language as the dominant medium for classroom instruction.

5.4.5 Suggested future research

Whilst this study managed to effectively interrogate prevailing curriculum challenges confronting the MPALC, future studies need to focus on investigating the feasibility of introducing vocational skills courses like building, carpentry and sewing into the current curriculum.

5.5 SUMMARY

Chapter Five is significant in that it managed to translate the findings of the study into conclusions and recommendations. Lack of adequate funding to procure adequate stationery and textbooks and poor working conditions were cited as the major impediments in the centre's quest to fulfil its curriculum implementation aspirations or objectives.

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APPENDIX I: LETTER FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

P O Box 463
Lenyenye
0857
18 September 2014

Centre Manager
Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre
P O Box X582
Letsitele
0885

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.

2. I am a student registered for the degree Master of Education in Community and Continuing Education at the University of Limpopo.

3. I hereby request the permission to conduct research study titled **"Curriculum implementation: A case study of Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre in Limpopo".**

4. The following participants will be involved in this study: one centre manager, two facilitators and six learners so that they can provide with rich data on the above topic.

Yours faithfully

Maponya LV

APPENDIX II: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

P O Box 463
Lenyenye
0857
18 September 2014

Registrar
Limpopo Province
Department of Basic Education
Research Department
Polokwane
0700

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.

2. I am a student registered for the degree Master of Education in Community and Continuing Education at the University of Limpopo

3. I hereby request the permission to conduct research study titled **"Curriculum implementation: A case study of Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre in Limpopo".**

4. The following participants will be involved in this study: one Centre Manager, two facilitators and six learners so that they can provide with rich data on the above topic.

Yours Faithfully

Maponya L V

APPENDIX III: CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH TITLE: CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION: A CASE STUDY OF MBETANA PUBLIC ADULT LEARNING CENTRE IN LIMPOPO.

Date: 15 August 2015

1. I the undersigned hereby voluntarily agree to participate in the above mentioned study.
2. I agree that the benefits and purpose of the study were clarified to me in Tsonga which is my home language.
3. I personally volunteer to participate and no undue influence has been used to entice me to participate on this study.
4. I declare that I was given an opportunity to verify everything I needed to know about the study and steps were taken to clarify everything to my satisfaction.
5. I the undersigned hereby declare that I have read and understood all the terms and conditions of this consent form and therefore give my voluntary consent to participate in it on the condition that my confidentiality will be strictly protected.

Participant's Name:

_____

APPENDIX IV: INDEMNITY FORM

Date: 18 August 2014

I --the undersigned voluntarily agree to participate in this study titled "**Curriculum implementation: A case study of Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre in Limpopo**" at my own risk and I will not hold the researcher accountable for any harm, prejudice, or any loss as a result of my participation in the study.

Participant's Name:

_____

Date

_____

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CENTRE MANAGER

1. How long have you been attached to MPALC?
2. Which constraints hinder curriculum delivery?
3. How far are your facilitators qualified to teach at the PALCs?
4. What motivates or demotivates adults to register at MPALC?
5. Which best methods are being used for curriculum delivery at this centre?
6. Are your facilitators conversant with various techniques of teaching adult learners?
7. What strategies can be employed to improve the improve curriculum delivery at the Centre?
8. What are your attitudes of the methods used by your facilitators to teach adult learners?

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

1. How long have you been teaching at this centre?
2. How do you keep your learners motivated?
3. What motivates the learners who complete their ABET programmes?
4. What is the main reason for learner's dropping out?
5. Which methods do you use to teach?
6. How effective are these methods in terms of curriculum implementation?
7. Can you recommend them to any adult learner teacher?
8. Why do you think you can recommend them?
9. Which teaching aids do you use?
10. How effective are they in enhancing curriculum implementation?
11. Which curriculum implementation support do you get from the Department of Education?
12. To what extent is the support sufficient?
13. What is your opinion of the adult learner's ability to learn?
14. Which challenges does the centre generally experience?
15. If you were the Centre Manager how would you rescue the situation?

APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS

1. How long have you been enrolling at this centre?
2. Which methods do your teachers use to teach you?
3. How effective are they in delivering curriculum to you?
4. What makes them effective?
5. Which particular aspect of the curriculum content do you find useful to you as an adult learner?
6. To what extent does the curriculum content address your educational needs?
7. Which other curriculum delivery techniques do your teachers use to teach you?
8. How effective are they in adult learner curriculum delivery programmes?
9. What makes them effective?
10. Which teaching aids are your teachers using to teach you as an adult learner?
11. How effective are they in addressing your educational needs?
12. Do you find the curriculum content to be relevant to your level?
13. How far are you likely to enrol at this centre?
14. Which methods of teaching make you understand your lessons better?
15. Can you recommend this centre to anyone who wants to enrol at an ABET centre?
16. Are you being provided with books for your smooth learning?
17. How relevant are they to you as an adult learner?
18. Which method impact positively on your ability to understand?

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

REF : 913154

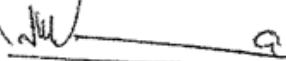ENQ : Malatji W M

DATE : 20 SEPTEMBER 2014

Dear Mr Maponya L V (Student number 201209880)

Permission to conduct research at Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre

The above matter refers: This letter serves to acknowledge receipt of a letter from your university dated the 11th of September 2014. According to it, the university is pleading with the department to grant you permission to conduct a research at Mbetana Public Adult Learning Centre. This letter serves to inform you that permission to do so have been granted, on the condition that the findings of the research should also be shared with the department.

Thanking you in advance

Thobela M.T

Circuit manager

3.

Circuit Manager

/mrs

MAFARANA CIRCUIT

Private Bag x 1420, LETABA, 0870

TEL: 015 303 2336/ 2355 / 2387/2472. FAX: 015 303 2194