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Effects of Curriculum Changes on Teaching and Learning of Economic and Management Sciences

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A B S T R A C T
Economics and Management Sciences was introduced into the South African curriculum in 2005. The programme was previously offered in the intermediate phase, however, in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement, it is only offered in the senior phase. Many studies related to curriculum changes have been conducted on commercial subjects, but most have focused on only one subject, namely, Accounting, Business Studies or Economics. No study has been found that covers all three of them, especially in the Limpopo Province. The purpose of this study was to establish the effects of this curriculum change on EMS at the Man'ombe Circuit, Limpopo Province. This study utilized a multi-case study, within the qualitative approach using thematic analyses. Purposive sampling was used to select 20 participants comprising the curriculum advisor of the EMS, circuit manager, principals, and teachers. Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, guided by an interview guide. Qualitative data were transcribed using Microsoft words and analysed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed the effects of the curriculum changes as - poor performance, challenges in teaching and learning of EMS and loss of interest in the subject, and challenges related to learning new terminologies. The study unravelled factors in relation to curriculum changes that affect the learning and teaching of economic and management sciences in the senior phase, and these have the potential to influence policy changes.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The subject, Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), was launched in Cape Town on 24 March 1997. Before the launch, during the apartheid era, there was no EMS in the General Band (GET), rather, learners studied Economics, Accounting, Typing and Business Economics as part of EMS (Coster and Pinheiro, 2021). When EMS was introduced into the South African

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high school curriculum, the Department of Basic Education provided schools with relevant resources to implement EMS, in all provinces of South Africa (Ngwenya, Sithole and Okoli, 2021). EMS is a subject that requires teachers to teach all commercial subjects at the same time. During National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), EMS was one of the subjects that was offered from intermediate phase, but National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) only offered it in the senior phase where it became compulsory for learners (Ali, 2020); EMS prepares learners for commercial subjects in the FET band (Department of Education, 2015). Ngwenya, Sithole & Okoli (2021) regard EMS as a subject that provides learners with a background in all the commercial subjects that learners could choose in the FET band. Umalusi (2015) categories EMS as a practical subject that provides students with knowledge in financial literacy, entrepreneurship and the economy.

Social constructivist theory, developed by Lev Vygotsky in 1986, underpins the current study (Saleem, Kausar and Deeba, 2021). According to this theory culture and language have an influence on individuals' intellectual growth and perception of their societies. Vygotsky's theory maintains that children expand their pre-existing knowledge and experiences by interacting with other individuals (Majola 2020). The theory is based on the following process: first, teachers should promote learners' self-confidence; second, it is necessary to promote proper communication channels between educators and learners; third, teacher must accommodate learners' views and ideas and lastly, the process should embrace all the cognitive capacities of the learners (Saleem, Kausar and Deeba, 2021). Naidoo and Mabaso (2023) emphasised that the theory obliges teachers to use baseline assessment as a strategy to check learners' prior knowledge, through using strategies, like the discussion instructional method, as it allows learners to share ideas and skills. In addition, Taber (2020) recommends that in the teaching and learning of EMS, learners should be grouped according to their abilities and capabilities, for during these sessions, learners tend to ask many questions about what they are learning in EMS and by doing so, improve the level of their thinking capacities.

Social constructivist theory was chosen for this study because the knowledge and information regarding curriculum changes and their effects can be generated by the teachers and learners (Majola, 2020). EMS teachers can use their past experiences with the old curriculum - C2005, NCS and RNCS - to align themselves with the new curriculum - CAPS. In teaching EMS, teachers use their past experiences and knowledge together with the methodologies that they had acquired from colleges or universities while they were studying (Saleem, Kausar and Deeba, 2021). Teachers should be creative and be able to identify learner-barrier in teaching and learning of EMS (Letshwene and Du Plessis, 2021). The theory of social constructivist allows teacher to search for information about the content of subjects, which makes things easy and brings development to learners, as they benefit from teachers' basic mathematical knowledge of the subject (Majola, 2020). When teaching financial literacy in EMS, teachers explain new terminologies and make sure that all learners have the resources, such as calculators and textbooks that are required (Ngwenya and Nzaza, 2022). Teachers explain the purpose of learning financial literacy and the opportunities that learners will have after mastering the content. The theory makes the business studies discipline attractive and achievable by preparing learners to fit in the 21st century's business and finance world and this is related to the aims of EMS (Naidoo and Mabaso, 2023). The teacher shows support for the learners by guiding and motivating them to achieve at the end.

Phakathi (2018) states that most teachers who offer EMS in the senior phase are not specialized in teaching the subject, and they only use their teaching experiences in other subject areas to teach EMS. Majola (2020) mentions that most teachers are trained to teach commercial subjects in the FET band, but due to lack of EMS teachers, the former are the ones who are teaching EMS in the senior phase although they do not the relevant methodologies to teach at

the senior phase. EMS is a combination of Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics, and the subject needs to be taught by educators who have knowledge of all these commercial subjects (Ngwenya and Nzaza, 2022). Pillay (2020) asserts that in a place like Germany, teachers are not allowed to teach subjects that they are not trained to teach, while in South Africa that is not the case; this have had a negative effect on learner's performance. Teachers who are not trained to teach EMS, also do not have a good attitude towards the subject, as they are forced to teach the subject due to the shortage of EMS teachers (Ngwenya, Sithole & Okoli, 2020). Other challenges affecting teaching of EMS are described below.

Mutshinya (2018) indicates that redeployment is a burning issue that has negative effects on curriculum implementation in most schools in South Africa. Most of the secondary school have phased out the commerce stream because of the teacher-learner ratio. Thaba-Nkadimene & Mmakola (2020) note that most schools in Limpopo Province allocate few educators for the commerce stream due to the teacher-learner ratio as such educators are required to teach accounting, business studies and economics in FET band as well as in senior phase, which is impossible. Most educators have heavy workloads caused by redeployment and rationalisation; hence, the school principals end up allocating non-commercial subject educators to teach EMS in the senior phase (Drake and Reid, 2018). Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) mentioned that the Department of Education should amend the policy of redeployment and consider the issue of workload that are affecting educators and learner's performance. Mutshinya (2018) reveals that the education system of England considers - the weight of the subjects, together with the hours per subject and the workload of educators when allocating educators to schools. In South Africa the Department of Education considers the teacher-learner ratio where one educator qualifies to teach thirty-five learners and forgets about the workload that are affecting teaching and learners (Ngwenya and Nzaza, 2022). Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) also indicated that even small schools in England are not affected by redeployment, whereas in South African small schools are the ones who are affected by redeployment and use multi-grade teaching by combining two grade in one class (Sule, 2020).

Shiffie, Zin and Ismail (2020) explained that parent's involvement in a school is important as they also play roles in school activities, thus it has a positive influence on the learner's performance as they produce quality results. Lack of parental involvement in EMS has a negative impact because the curriculum of the subjects requires learners to get assistance from both parents and educators (Naidoo and Mabaso, 2023). Siyaya (2019) advise that educators and parents should work together to assist EMS learners for projects and assignments; however, in deep rural areas in South Africa, majority of parents are ignorant about the education of their children because most parents are illiterate (Mercy and Mabhanda (2015). Shortage of parental involvement in EMS causes learners to underperform (Mutshinya, 2018). Educators are not getting support from the communities because parents are not familiar with the subject EMS (Siyaya, Gamede, Uleanya & Ndlovu, 2021). Studies carried out by Arek-Bawa (2018) reported that majority of parents do not attend school meetings because they are not educated, hence, educators do not receive support from the parents, for example they don't buy calculators for their children neither assist them with EMS homework and other tasks.

Moloi (2018) discovered that children who stay with their grandparents do not receive supports and are not motivated because majority of grandparents are not educated, especially in rural areas. Ngwenya (2019) argues that grandparents' lack of education, health- related issues and age result in challenges for the learners when they need help. Some of the guardians or parents of the learners are illiterate, thus and they do not attend school meetings and other events of the school as they are not concerned about education of their children (Ali, 2020). Learners want to be motivated and supported by their parents or guardians by them buying EMS resources, such as learner's study guide for EMS that it will assist them to know different

concepts for financial literacy which is one of the topic that is difficult for learners (Siyaya, Gamede, Uleanya & Ndlovu, 2021).

Mutshinya (2018) explains that the curriculum is the heartbeat or spinal cord of the schools, and it needs to be monitored with special attention. Ngwenya (2019) insist that shortage of curriculum advisors in EMS have a negative impact, and it leads to poor performance in the subject. Curriculum coverage needs to be monitored in schools by specific curriculum advisors. Curriculum advisors are the people who support educators and Departmental Head (DH) at the school level (Ngwenya and Nzaza, 2022). Curriculum advisors are responsible for conducting in-service training and workshops for educators and they also check whether the curriculum is implemented according to CAPS (Mercy & Mabhanda (2015). They also check the files of both educators and learners at the schools' level. Limited number of curriculum advisors is a challenge that has negative influence on curriculum implementations in the schools (Adedoyin and Soykan, 2020); shortage of curriculum advisors in EMS leads to poor performance. Burton (2015) reveals that most of schools in South Africa that are in deep rural areas are not visited and monitored by the curriculum advisors, rather they are monitoring schools that are in urban or within urban areas. It is the role of the curriculum advisors to update educators if there is new amendment in the curriculum policy for EMS in senior phase (Abbott and Palatnik, 2018). Curriculum advisors, thus, should continue conducting workshops to develop and impart educators with new skills and knowledge (Phakathi, 2018).

Ngwenya, Sithole & Okoli (2020) note that the Department of Basic Education does not advertise posts for curriculum advisors, hence there is challenges of shortage of curriculum advisors, for example, if a curriculum advisor dies, resigns or retires, the Department takes time to advertise the post. Abdullahu & Vokshi (2021) narrate that the Netherlands is a developed country that values the education more than South Africa. Educators in Netherland attend training session each and every term and there are many curriculum advisors while South Africa is experiencing a shortage of curriculum advisors. Ngwenya, Sithole and Okoli (2021) report that the problem of overcrowded in learning environment is a challenge as it affects learner's performance. Educators are concerned about teaching in overcrowded learning environment because it difficult for educators to assess learners in such an environment (Warui, 2019). In large class there is no space, and it is not easy for the educators to examine exercise books for the whole class within one hour. Ngwenya (2019) reveals that EMS is a subject that requires learners to participate and share information with one another and it is not easy for learners to participate in large classes because the space and time is limited.

In South Africa there is shortage of schools and resources, such as textbooks for EMS, especially in rural areas (Drake and Reid, 2018). There is a shortage of classrooms in some schools, therefore, educators find themselves teaching sixty learners in one class, instead of teaching thirty-five learners as per policy from the Department of Education (Umalusi, 2015). Researchers, like Abdullahu & Vokshi (2021) attest that there is no equipment for EMS at schools, thus, learners are underperforming in the subject as some are sharing textbooks at schools. The Department of Education takes time to distribute textbooks at schools and it does not supply schools with resources like calculators which learners from poor background cannot affording to buy (Thaba-Nkadimene and Mmakola, 2020). Shaffie, Zin and Ismail (2020) explained that educators are concerned about the lack of resource in South African schools; majority of learners are underperforming in EMS due to this challenge. Educators, for example, have to take time, do copies and distribute to learners during teaching and learning time because in some schools there is a shortage of textbooks (Pillay, 2020). Learners from poor background cannot afford even to buy calculators and study guides for EMS (Ngwenya and Nzaza, 2022).

A study carried by Letshwene (2014) indicated that EMS as a subject, provides learners with a background in all the commercial subjects that are done in the FET band, but despite the

critical role of EMS in the development of the economy, most studies focus on only one aspect of the subject, either, Accounting, Business Studies or Economics. The current study is dissimilar as it addresses all of them. In addition, there is a limited number of studies focussing on curriculum changes of commercial subjects like EMS in South Africa, and there is poor performance in EMS in all provinces of South Africa (Phakathi, 2018). The purpose of this study was to establish the effects of curriculum changes in the teaching and learning of EMS at the Man'ombe Circuit in Limpopo Province. The central research question for this study is - What are the effects of the curriculum changes in the teaching and learning of EMS, at the Man'ombe Circuit in Limpopo Province?.

2. METHOD

This study used a qualitative methodology with the selected participants. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to use data collection methods that allow participants to share their personal experiences, thoughts, and attitudes (Koch & Gitchel, 2021). The researchers believed that knowledge and information on the effects of curriculum changes would be best collected from experienced participants, hence, EMS teachers who had interacted with the subject had formed some attitude and perceptions were the main sources of data in this study.

A multi case study was used because this approach enables the investigation of real-life situations or a particular phenomenon, by assisting the researcher to obtain rich information from chosen participants (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2019; Case, 2017). The study took place at Man'ombe circuit in Limpopo Province, South Africa. Purposive sampling technique was used to select suitable participants. Twenty participants were selected - 14 EMS teachers, 1 EMS curriculum advisor, 1 circuit manager, and four principals. The sample comprised two principals from primary schools and two from secondary schools. The study included one circuit manager because this research took place at one circuit.

The reason for including school principals was their leadership role in curriculum implementation and formulation in the school, while the educators are directly involved in teaching and learning EMS. A curriculum advisor was included because he/she supports educators and monitor their work, while the circuit manager oversees what happens in the whole circuit. In the case of the teachers, seven were from primary schools and seven from secondary schools. The researchers considered school performance when selecting the teachers and principals, hence, both performing and non-performing schools were sampled. All selected participants had experience and knowledge of curriculum changes in EMS and their effects. Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were conducted to collect relevant data from the participants. According to Mishra and Gupta (2020), data should be useful and accurate to ensure the trustworthiness of a study. In this study, all the - 14 teachers, four principals, circuit managers, and one curriculum advisor for EMS - were interviewed and a voice recorder was used during the sessions. The collected data were analysed through thematic analysis, and coding was utilized to allow the grouping or categorization of data into themes and sub-themes, as recommended by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018). The following procedures as outlined by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) was used:

2.1 Becoming familiar with your data

The researchers became familiar with their data when producing transcripts from the collected data. Researchers read and re-read data from the transcripts, while looking for meaning and patterns.

2.2. Coding your data

Each unit of data was labelled with a code that summarised the extract's meaning to make each piece of data accessible for further analysis. Each unit of data was labelled with in the margin of the transcript.

2.3. Searching for themes and recognising relationships

At this stage researchers searched for patterns and relationships in the list of codes to create themes that relate to the research question. That was done through making judgements about the collected data and getting immersed in them. Upon defining the themes, themes emerged, and others became sub-themes.

2.4. Refining themes and testing propositions

Researchers continued to read and re-organise data and refine themes. Some of the themes were discarded and others combined so that one theme remained. Connections between themes were tested to reach a conclusion that relationships exist.

2.5. Measures to ensure trustworthiness

The researchers started by building trust and rapport with the participants which ensured that they collect sufficient and credible data. The researcher provided a full description of the research process. That provided the reader with an opportunity to judge the transferability of their research to a different location as stated by Saunders at al. (2016).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the data, the effects of curriculum changes were mainly – loss of interest in the subject and the creation of diverse challenges in the teaching and learning of EMS. From these five sub-themes emerged - time allocation versus content coverage, poor performance in EMS, loss of interest in the subject, the influence of EMS on commercial subjects in the FET bend, and challenges related to learning new terminologies in EMS. These sub-themes are discussed below in the sections below.

Table 1. Summary of theme and sub-theme

Theme	Sub-themes
Effects of curriculum changes.	Time allocation versus content coverage
	Poor performance in EMS
	The way curriculum changes affect the teaching and learning of EMS
	The influence of EMS on commercial subjects in FET band
	Language of learning and teaching and terminologies in EMS

3.1. Time allocation versus content coverage

The results indicated that time allocation in the teaching of EMS was too limited, therefore, educators are not able to complete the curriculum coverage. This point was vocalised in the following extracts: covering of the curriculum is suffering due to the limited time allocation, as narrated by the participants:

P5: Time allocation of EMS is limited, as a result educators fail to cover the curriculum of the subject.
P12: I think the content coverage is a burning issue; educators are not mastering the curriculum coverage of EMS because the time allocated is two hours per week.

P13: I fail to give learners effective feedback in class because the time allocation is limited.
P17: Educators are complaining that the time allocation should be increased so that they can give learners effective feedback and to do remedial work.
P19: Time allocation for EMS is low comparing it to other learning subjects and EMS is a combination of accounting, business studies and economics. It needs more hours per week, not two hours.''
Based on the views mentioned above, EMS was not allocated sufficient time in relation to the content they had to cover. Teachers, therefore, did not get enough time to complete the curriculum, do remedial work and give feedback.

3.2. Poor performance in EMS

The findings show that learners' performance of EMS is poor when compared to other subjects in the senior phase. Most learners did not perform well in the subject.

P16: Learners are progressing with low percentages in comparison to other learning subjects
P18: According to my records the performance is bad. Learners are underperforming in the subject.
P19: There is a poor performance in EMS and those who manage to progress are obtaining low marks
P20: The performance is bad comparing it to other learning areas. There is no improvement in the performance of EMS in the senior phase.''
Based on the above evidence, learners' performance was poor when compared with other subjects in the senior phase. Even those learners who managed to pass obtained low marks, with no improvement throughout the years.

3.3. The way curriculum changes affect the teaching and learning of EMS

The results indicated that phasing out of EMS in the intermediate phase has had a negative impact on the learning and teaching of EMS. Learners do not have the necessary basics, skills, and knowledge in the subject as it is not offered in Grades 4-6. This was supported by the following participants:

P3: Learners in Grade 7 have problems of coping since they are learning EMS for the first time.
P8: The changing of the curriculum has affected educators and learners as they have to learn new things. The phasing out of EMS in the intermediate phase has caused many problems in the subject.
P11: I think the phasing out of EMS in intermediate phase, which is Grades 4-6, is problematic; as a result, learners do not have the background knowledge when it comes to EMS.
P19: Before EMS was taught in the intermediate phase but now it is phased out, it is only taught in senior phase. Learners don't have the background in the subject.''
From the above extracts curriculum changes affected teaching and learning negatively. That is so because learners did not have a background in the subject as they did not do it in Grades 4-6.

3.4. Loss of interest in EMS

The curriculum changes in EMS have caused learners not to choose the commercial stream in the FET band, hence, most learners take streams other than commerce one. This was supported by the following participant:

P20: We have 14 secondary schools in the circuit but only 4 schools are studying commerce. I think EMS has caused learners not to choose commerce in the FET band which is Grades 10-12.
P19: The number of learners who are choosing to study commerce is declining in the district.
P17: In my school there is no commerce stream because learners are not enrolling in this stream because they lack a background of EMS in the senior phase.
P18: Learners are not progressing well in the commercial subjects because majority of them lack skills and foundation in the subject.
Participants indicated that learners lost interest in EMS. They were choosing different streams. In most schools EMS was not offered due to lack of interest among learners.

3.5. Language of learning and teaching and terminologies in EMS

The findings revealed that learners encounter challenges in mastering the terminology of EMS, as stated by the following participants:

'P6: I think the language of instruction is the problem. EMS has its own terminologies and learners fail to understand them.

P8: Learners have a problem of mastering the terminologies for EMS.

P14: The topic of financial literacy has a lot of terminologies and learners are not mastering them because they lack the background in EMS, from the intermediate phase.

P19: Majority of learners are not progressing in EMS because they fail to understand the terminologies. The language of teaching and learning is a barrier to most of learners.''

Based on the above evidence, participants alluded that learner encountered challenges in mastering EMS terminologies due to lack of background in the subject. That affected their progress in the subject. To facilitate understanding and reading, the research results are described first and then followed by discussion (Drnovšek et al., 2010). The results and discussion subtitles are presented separately. This section must be the most part, at least 60% of the entire body of the article (N. Saraih et al., 2018).

3.1 Discussion

The participants were of the view that time allocation in EMS is limited, and it needs to be increased from two hours to four hours per week to cover the full content. This finding corroborates those of Phakathi (2018), who stated that there is a lot of content to be dealt with, and it is not easy for EMS teachers to deliver the curriculum within two hours per week, while other subjects in the senior phase have more than two hours per week. Consequently, content coverage is a burning issue; teachers and learners do not master the full coverage of the EMS curriculum because of the limited time allocation. The Department of Education's (2012) allocates two hours per week for EMS, while other learning areas, such as Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, have more than two hours per week. Educators, therefore, find it difficult to teach learners complex topics, such as, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and economics within two hours. This compels teachers to pay attention or focus much more on topics that will form part of the assessment, in the specific term (Siyaya, 2019).

The EMS has unique terminologies, and it is not easy for learners to master all these within two hours per week. Majola (2021) maintains that some educators teach learners EMS without checking whether they understand the content, but only for the sake of covering the curriculum content.

The participants testified that poor performance in EMS was also caused by the removal of EMS from Grades Four to Six. In agreement with the current study, Siyaya (2019) predicts that poor EMS performance will continue if the Department of Education does not amend the policy so that EMS commences from the intermediate phase. Ngwenya, Sithole and Okoli (2021) predict that there will continue to be unsatisfactory results in EMS, in the senior phase because of the shortage of experienced and trained teachers in the subject.

Christensen et al. (2018) contend that if curriculum coverage is not monitored at schools, poor performance will be the outcome, hence, it is the duty and responsibility of curriculum advisors to do this. Researchers, such as Ali (2020) note that there has been no improvement in the performance of learners in EMS, thus, learners are progressing with low marks, compared with other subjects, such as in the sciences and general subjects. Coster and Pinheiro (2021) mention that in developed countries such as Europe, the performance of learners in commercial subjects is satisfactory as they obtain high marks at both primary and secondary schools because of the teaching resources and approaches that are being used to implement the curriculum, In South Africa, however, there are challenges of poor performance, in EMS, in the senior phase (Moloi, 2018).

In agreement with the results of the current study, Thamba-Nkandimene and Mmakola (2020) explained that the removal of EMS from the intermediate phase has caused serious confusion in the commerce streams. Learners progress to the senior phase without any background or foundation in Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics. Ngwenya, Sithole, and Okoli (2021) contend that it is difficult to teach in EMS in Grade Seven as learners struggle to understand the subjects' new concepts. Learners are not familiar with the subject because they do not have a foundation from the intermediate phase, thus, they take time to cope with any changes introduced in the senior phase (Coetzee, 2016). Curriculum changes which introduce EMS in the senior phase cause learners to underperform in the subject.

The findings revealed that curriculum changes, which have situated EMS in the senior phase have demotivated learners from studying Commerce in Grades 10 to 12. A literature review attests that most learners choose science and general streams in the FET band because they think commercial subjects are difficult, despite the opportunities they will have after studying commercial subjects (Kerr & Smith, 2019). Coster and Pinheiro (2021) reiterate that poor performance in EMS has resulted in learners' unwillingness to choose commerce subjects in the FET band, whereas they have the foundation for sciences and general sciences from the intermediate phase. The number of learners who are choosing to study commerce in the FET band continues to decrease on a yearly basis, and most educators who were declared as 'excess' during rationalization and redeployment are the teachers who specialized in commercial subjects. Findings from Thamba-Nkandimene and Mmakola (2020) confirm that, from 2014, the number of learners who chose commerce streams has declined on a yearly basis.

The results of the current study show that the language of learning and teaching, which is English, is still a barrier to most learners in South Africa; many learners fail to construct correct basic sentences in English. The results agree with those of Goodyear (2020), who note that EMS is a practical subject that requires learners to be critical thinkers and apply their knowledge, however, most learners underperform because of the language and terminologies of the subject. Phakathi (2018) notes that EMS has its own terminologies, such as - capital, liabilities, entrepreneurship, and cash flow, among others, however, learners fail to understand these concepts because they encounter EMS for the first time in Grade Seven.

The findings of the current study also confirmed that the theory of social constructivism allows educators to use different types of methods and strategies to implement curriculum of EMS during curriculum changes (Majola, 2020). EMS educators can use learner-centered strategy by allowing learners to actively participate while learning in class. Learners can get

more knowledge if the educator uses learner-centered strategy because the theory allows learners to generate knowledge on their own (Siyaya, 2019). This theory encourages learners to take part while they are learning.

4. CONCLUSION

This study focused on the effects of curriculum changes in teaching and learning of EMS in the senior phase - Grades Seven to Nine. All the sampled participants had experience and knowledge of the effects of curriculum changes on EMS. The study found that, - there is a discord between time allocation and content; poor performance in EMS; there are challenges arising from the curriculum changes' effects on the teaching and learning of EMS; there is a negative influence from EMS on commercial subjects in the FET band; there are difficulties for the learners due to the EMS's language of learning, teaching, and terminologies. The study recommended that the time allocated to teaching EMS should be increased. Future researchers should investigate, further, the factors that influence learners' performance in the senior phase, specifically, in EMS. The findings of the current study have the potential to alert the Department of Basic Education about factors in relation to curriculum changes affecting the learning and teaching of economic and management sciences in the senior phase and how these have had a negative impact on learners' performance in commercial subjects in the FET band. This research may also help the educators who are offering EMS and commercial subjects, curriculum advisors of EMS, curriculum coordinators, and learners in both the GET band and FET band who are interested in doing commercial subjects. This research will also help the Minister of Basic Education when amending policies.

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