

Analyzing the Managerial and Instructional Leadership Roles of Principals in Secondary School Curriculum Implementation: A Mixed-Methods Survey

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Abstract

Effective curriculum implementation depends largely on the managerial and instructional leadership of school principals. However, empirical evidence on these leadership roles in Tamil-medium secondary schools in Sri Lanka remains limited. This study analyzed the managerial and instructional leadership roles of principals in curriculum implementation in eight Tamil-medium secondary schools in the Nikaweratiya Education Zone, Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka. A mixed-methods descriptive survey design was employed. Using purposive sampling, 16 principals/deputy principals and 60 teachers participated in the study ($N = 76$). Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), while qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews and document analysis were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that principals demonstrated a moderate to high level of managerial and instructional leadership in curriculum implementation. In curriculum planning, principals reported high performance in the alignment of curriculum with national standards ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.84$), clarity of curriculum vision and goals ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.45$), and monitoring and supervision of planning processes ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.34$). During curriculum implementation, monitoring of classroom instruction ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.35$) and stakeholder communication and involvement ($M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.22$) received the highest ratings. Conversely, lower levels of effectiveness were observed in providing feedback to teachers ($M = 2.4$, $SD = 0.36$), promoting continuous professional development ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.42$), time management for curriculum implementation ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 0.82$), and ensuring compliance with curriculum policies ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 0.84$). Teachers consistently rated several leadership practices lower than principals, indicating perceptual differences regarding curriculum leadership. Qualitative findings further revealed that 70% of teachers perceived that no comprehensive or systematic actions had been taken to address curriculum implementation challenges, whereas 60% of principals reported implementing multiple strategies to overcome these barriers. Major challenges identified included limited resources, heavy administrative workloads, inadequate coordination, insufficient professional development, and weak communication between school leaders and teachers. The study concludes that while principals perform managerial and instructional leadership roles at a generally satisfactory level, strengthening collaborative leadership, systematic feedback mechanisms, teacher professional development, stakeholder engagement, and shared decision-making is essential for improving curriculum implementation and educational quality in secondary schools.

Keywords: Managerial leadership, Instructional leadership, Curriculum implementation, Principals, Secondary education.

Introduction

Education is recognized as a fundamental human right, and ensuring equitable access to quality education remains a primary objective of education systems worldwide. The achievement of this objective depends largely on the effective implementation of the school curriculum, which serves as the foundation for teaching, learning, and students' holistic development (Fernan, 2007). At the school level, the principal plays a pivotal role in ensuring that curriculum goals are translated into effective educational practices. As the chief executive and instructional leader of the school, the principal is expected to perform multiple managerial and leadership functions that contribute to the successful implementation of the curriculum (Koontz & O'Donnell, 1976). Consequently, principals are responsible for managing curriculum implementation in ways that achieve national educational goals while responding to the expectations of teachers, parents, students, and the wider community (UNESCO, 2006).

In Sri Lanka, the national curriculum is centrally designed and implemented under the guidance of the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of curriculum implementation largely depends on the leadership competencies of school principals (Perera & Wickramasinghe, 2020). Principals are responsible for planning, organizing, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating curriculum-related activities to ensure quality teaching and learning. Beyond administrative responsibilities, they are expected to provide instructional leadership by monitoring classroom practices, supporting teachers' professional development, facilitating collaborative decision-making, and promoting learner-centred teaching strategies (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017). Furthermore, effective curriculum implementation requires principals to establish strong partnerships with parents and the community, enabling schools to address students' academic, social, and emotional needs more effectively (Sivananthan, 2021; Sivananthan & Wedikandage, 2023).

Despite the significance of these responsibilities, principals encounter numerous challenges in implementing the curriculum effectively. Previous studies have identified inadequate physical and financial resources, limited teacher collaboration, increasing administrative responsibilities, and insufficient professional development opportunities as major barriers to effective curriculum implementation (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2004). These challenges require principals to demonstrate both strong managerial competencies and effective instructional leadership by providing strategic direction, supervising classroom instruction, supporting teachers, and ensuring continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes (Bush, 2008).

The Nikaweratiya Education Zone in the Kurunegala District of Sri Lanka's North Western Province is characterized by comparatively limited socio-economic and educational resources. Most Tamil-medium secondary schools within the zone operate under constrained conditions that may influence the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. In such contexts, the leadership role of the principal becomes increasingly important in mobilizing available resources, supporting teachers, coordinating stakeholders, and ensuring that curriculum objectives are successfully achieved (Samararatne, 2019). Although previous studies have examined educational leadership in general, limited empirical evidence exists regarding the combined managerial and instructional leadership roles of principals in curriculum implementation within Tamil-medium secondary schools in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the managerial and instructional leadership roles of principals in curriculum implementation in Tamil-medium secondary schools in the Nikaweratiya Education Zone. Specifically, the study examines principals' roles in curriculum planning and implementation, explores the challenges encountered during curriculum implementation, and identifies the strategies adopted by principals to address these challenges. The findings are expected to contribute to educational leadership research and provide practical recommendations for strengthening curriculum implementation and improving the quality of secondary education in Sri Lanka.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the managerial and instructional leadership roles of principals in planning for the effective implementation of the curriculum.
- To identify the principal's managerial and instructional leadership role in the effective implementation of the curriculum.
- To investigate the actions taken by the principal to overcome the challenges faced in curriculum implementation.

Literature Review

Curriculum implementation is a critical process through which educational goals are translated into meaningful learning experiences. Effective curriculum implementation requires not only well-designed curricular content but also strong school leadership capable of planning, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating curriculum-related activities (Oliva & Gordon, 2018). As the chief executive of the school, the principal is responsible for ensuring that curriculum objectives are achieved through effective managerial and instructional leadership. Consequently,

the quality of curriculum implementation is closely associated with the leadership practices of school principals (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017).

The curriculum extends beyond a collection of prescribed subject content and encompasses all planned learning experiences that contribute to students' intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development (Oliva & Gordon, 2013). Modern curriculum implementation emphasizes the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, and lifelong learning competencies rather than the mere transmission of knowledge (Fullan, 2013). Therefore, principals are expected to create school environments that encourage innovative teaching, continuous assessment, collaborative learning, and effective instructional practices.

School leadership literature identifies two complementary dimensions of principal leadership that influence curriculum implementation: managerial leadership and instructional leadership. Managerial leadership focuses on planning, organizing, resource allocation, policy implementation, coordination, and monitoring school operations (Bush, 2008). Principals are expected to establish clear curriculum goals, manage available human and physical resources effectively, coordinate curriculum activities, and ensure compliance with national educational policies. Effective managerial leadership creates the organizational conditions necessary for successful curriculum implementation.

Instructional leadership, on the other hand, emphasizes improving teaching and learning through classroom supervision, teacher support, professional development, monitoring instructional quality, and promoting evidence-based teaching practices (Hallinger, 2011). Instructional leaders work closely with teachers to improve instructional quality by providing constructive feedback, facilitating professional learning opportunities, monitoring student achievement, and fostering collaborative decision-making. Research consistently demonstrates that schools led by principals with strong instructional leadership practices achieve better curriculum implementation and improved student learning outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1996).

Several empirical studies have highlighted the importance of integrating managerial and instructional leadership in curriculum implementation. Perera et al. (1991), argue that principals' primary responsibilities include establishing school goals, planning strategies to achieve them, organizing resources, coordinating curriculum activities, and evaluating educational outcomes. Similarly, UNESCO (2006), emphasizes that curriculum implementation requires principals to balance administrative responsibilities with instructional leadership while maintaining strong partnerships with teachers, parents, and the wider community. Effective curriculum

implementation also depends on continuous communication, teacher motivation, collaborative planning, and systematic monitoring of instructional practices.

Despite these expectations, principals frequently encounter challenges that hinder effective curriculum implementation. Studies have identified inadequate financial and physical resources, teacher shortages, increasing administrative workload, limited teacher collaboration, insufficient professional development, and inadequate stakeholder participation as major constraints (Leithwood et al., 2004; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). These challenges are particularly evident in schools operating in socio-economically disadvantaged communities, where principals are often required to maximize limited resources while maintaining educational quality.

Within the Sri Lankan context, curriculum implementation follows nationally prescribed policies issued by the Ministry of Education. However, successful implementation largely depends on the leadership capacity of school principals at the school level (Perera & Wickramasinghe, 2020). Although several studies have examined educational leadership in Sri Lanka, relatively few have investigated how principals integrate managerial and instructional leadership practices to facilitate curriculum implementation, particularly in Tamil-medium secondary schools located in resource-constrained settings such as the Nikaweratiya Education Zone. This gap in the literature provides the rationale for the present study, which examines principals' managerial and instructional leadership roles, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they adopt to enhance curriculum implementation.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design embedded within a mixed-methods research framework. This methodological combination allowed for a comprehensive investigation of institutional dynamics by integrating complementary quantitative and qualitative analytical perspectives. The empirical boundaries of this investigation were localized within the Nikaweratiya Education Zone, situated in the Kurunegala District of the North Western Province, Sri Lanka. The institutional target population comprised eight specifically selected Tamil-medium secondary schools operating within this socio-economically marginalized educational zone. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to intentionally target key institutional actors involved directly in the academic leadership and execution of the curriculum. The final sample consisted of 76 participants, stratified into two distinct primary cohorts:

- Institutional Leadership Cohort: 16 administrative leaders, including school principals and deputy principals.

- Pedagogical Cohort: 60 classroom teachers, selected systematically according to their respective professional seniority levels.

To ensure data triangulation and robust internal validity, the study utilized three primary and secondary data acquisition channels:

- Questionnaires: Administered to systematically capture structured, quantifiable ratings regarding managerial planning and curriculum implementation variables.
- Interviews: Conducted to extract deeper qualitative insights, nuanced narratives, and operational experiences from the participants.
- Document Analysis: Utilized as a secondary data source to review institutional records and supplement the primary findings.

The collected data were processed in alignment with the mixed-methods architecture of the study:

- Quantitative Data Analysis: Statistical data derived from the structured questionnaires were computed and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods (specifically utilizing means and standard deviations) to assess levels of agreement and variance among the groups.
- Qualitative Data Analysis: Narrative and text-based data acquired via interviews and document reviews were evaluated through systematic thematic analysis to identify, categorize, and interpret recurring operational challenges and core experiential domains.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis of the primary quantitative and qualitative data addresses the core research objectives across four major structural dimensions: strategic-instructional planning, organizational-administrative management, instructional supervision, and administrative coordination. All variables were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale, where higher scores signify higher levels of agreement or performance.

Managerial Leadership of the Principal in Curriculum Planning

The managerial Leadership of the principal in curriculum planning was measured using 15 variables. The data were computed using mean and standard deviation values and are presented in the following tables.

Table 1

Strategic–Instructional Management (Planning Quality & Academic Direction)

Variable	Responses of participants			
	Principals (16)		Teachers (60)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Clarity of Curriculum Vision and Goals	4.3	0.45	3.6	0.36
Alignment of Curriculum with National/Institutional Standards	4.4	0.84	3.8	0.23
Principal’s Guidance in Curriculum Design and Review	3.9	0.23	4.2	0.24
Use of Student Performance Data in Planning	3.8	0.74	3.9	0.81
Promotion of Learner-Centered Curriculum Practices	4.3	0.63	4.3	0.25
Encouragement of Teacher Participation in Planning	4.1	0.52	3.5	0.64
Support for Innovation and Curriculum Adaptation	3.6	0.61	4.1	0.28
Integration of ICT and Modern Teaching Strategies	3.7	0.62	4.3	0.28

The mean scores indicate that both principals and teachers generally hold favorable views regarding curriculum-related practices, though with some variations, while the standard deviations show the level of agreement among respondents. Principals reported high agreement on the clarity of curriculum vision and goals ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.45$) and alignment with national or institutional standards ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.84$), although the relatively higher SD in the latter suggests more varied opinions among principals. Teachers, however, showed slightly lower but consistent agreement in these areas ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.36$; $M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.23$), indicating more uniform perceptions. In contrast, teachers rated the principal’s guidance in curriculum design and review higher ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.24$) than principals themselves ($M = 3.9$, $SD = 0.23$), with low SDs in both groups reflecting strong consensus. For the use of student

performance data in planning, both principals ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.74$) and teachers ($M = 3.9$, $SD = 0.81$) demonstrated moderate agreement, but the higher SD values indicate greater variability in responses. A strong and consistent agreement is evident in the promotion of learner-centered curriculum practices, with both groups reporting identical means ($M = 4.3$), though teachers' responses are more consistent ($SD = 0.25$) compared to principals ($SD = 0.63$). Regarding encouragement of teacher participation in planning, principals reported higher agreement ($M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.52$) than teachers ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 0.64$), suggesting some inconsistency in teachers' experiences. Conversely, teachers expressed stronger and more consistent agreement in support for innovation and curriculum adaptation ($M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.28$) and integration of ICT and modern teaching strategies ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.28$), compared to principals ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.61$; $M = 3.7$, $SD = 0.62$), whose responses show greater dispersion. Overall, while both groups reflect positive perceptions, the differences in mean scores and variability highlight perceptual gaps and suggest areas for improving shared understanding and consistency in curriculum implementation practices.

Table 2

Organizational–Administrative Management (Coordination & Support Systems)

Variable	Responses of participants			
	Principals (16)		Teachers (60)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Allocation of Resources for Curriculum Planning	3.6	0.55	4.3	0.61
Time Provision for Collaborative Planning Activities	4.3	0.42	4.2	0.26
Coordination among Departments and Subject Teachers	3.7	0.31	3.8	0.41
Monitoring and Supervision of Planning Processes	4.4	0.34	4.2	0.51
Stakeholder Involvement (Parents, Community, Authorities)	4.2	0.62	3.5	0.52
Policy Implementation and Compliance in Curriculum Planning	3.9	0.62	3.9	0.64
Ensuring Equity, Inclusiveness, and Accessibility in Planning	4.2	0.52	4.3	0.29

The mean scores indicate that both principals and teachers generally hold positive perceptions regarding organizational practices in curriculum planning, while the standard deviations reflect the degree of consistency in their responses. Principals reported moderate agreement in the allocation of resources for curriculum planning ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.55$), whereas teachers expressed higher agreement ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.61$), suggesting that teachers perceive resource availability more favorably, though with slightly varied opinions in both groups. Both principals ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.42$) and teachers ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.26$) showed strong agreement on the provision of time for collaborative planning activities, with teachers demonstrating more consistent views. Coordination among departments and subject teachers received moderate agreement from both principals ($M = 3.7$, $SD = 0.31$) and teachers ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.41$), indicating relatively uniform perceptions. High agreement is observed in the monitoring and supervision of planning processes, with principals ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.34$) rating this slightly higher than teachers ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.51$), though teachers' responses show greater variability. Regarding stakeholder involvement, principals reported strong agreement ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.62$), whereas teachers indicated only moderate agreement ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 0.52$), pointing to a perceptual gap and some inconsistency in experiences. Both groups showed identical mean scores for policy implementation and compliance ($M = 3.9$), with relatively higher SDs (0.62 and 0.64) suggesting diverse opinions. Finally, ensuring equity, inclusiveness, and accessibility in planning was rated highly by both principals ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.52$) and teachers ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.29$), with teachers again demonstrating more consistent agreement. Overall, while the findings reflect generally positive perceptions, variations in mean scores and standard deviations highlight differences in experiences and suggest areas where greater alignment and consistency in curriculum planning practices may be needed.

Instructional Leadership and curriculum implementation

The instructional leadership of the principal in curriculum implementation was measured using 15 variables. The data were computed using mean and standard deviation values and are presented in the following tables.

Table 3

Instructional Supervision & Academic Support (Teaching–Learning Process)

Variable	Responses of participants			
	Principals (16)		Teachers (60)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Monitoring of Classroom Instruction	4.4	0.35	4.2	0.36
Support for Effective Teaching Practices	3.6	0.72	3.1	0.63
Provision of Feedback to Teachers	2.4	0.36	2.2	0.34
Encouragement of Student-Centered Instruction	3.8	0.52	2.9	0.61
Supervision of Lesson Plan Implementation	3.3	0.43	3.2	0.55
Use of Assessment Results to Improve Teaching	3.1	0.62	3.0	0.64
Promotion of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	2.9	0.42	2.7	0.38
Ensuring Quality and Consistency in Curriculum Delivery	3.2	0.67	3.1	0.58

The mean scores suggest that both principals and teachers demonstrate moderately positive perceptions of instructional monitoring and support practices, while the standard deviations indicate generally consistent responses with some variation in specific areas. Monitoring of classroom instruction is rated highly by both principals ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.35$) and teachers ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.36$), showing strong agreement and consistent perceptions. However, support for effective teaching practices receives only moderate agreement, with principals ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.72$) rating it higher than teachers ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.63$), and the relatively higher SD values indicating some variability in views. Provision of feedback to teachers is rated low by both principals ($M = 2.4$, $SD = 0.36$) and teachers ($M = 2.2$, $SD = 0.34$), reflecting general dissatisfaction but with consistent responses. Encouragement of student-centered instruction shows moderate agreement among principals ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.52$), but lower agreement among teachers ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.61$), suggesting a perceptual gap and some inconsistency in teachers' experiences. Supervision of lesson plan implementation is rated at a moderate level by both principals ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 0.43$) and teachers ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.55$), with relatively consistent responses. Similarly, the use of assessment results to improve teaching shows moderate

agreement (principals $M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.62$; teachers $M = 3.0$, $SD = 0.64$), though the higher SD values indicate varied perceptions. Promotion of continuous professional development (CPD) is rated slightly below moderate by both principals ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.42$) and teachers ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 0.38$), suggesting limited emphasis but consistent opinions. Finally, ensuring quality and consistency in curriculum delivery also receives moderate ratings from both groups (principals $M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.67$; teachers $M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.58$), with some variability in responses. Overall, while monitoring practices appear strong, areas such as feedback provision, professional development, and support for teaching practices require improvement, and differences in mean scores highlight perceptual gaps between principals and teachers.

Table 4

Administrative Coordination & Resource Management (Organizational Support)

Variable	Responses of participants			
	Principals (16)		Teachers (60)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Allocation and Utilization of Teaching Resources	3.2	0.25	3.1	0.36
Time Management for Curriculum Implementation (timetabling)	2.8	0.82	2.7	0.63
Coordination among Teachers and Departments	2.9	0.33	2.6	0.34
Ensuring Compliance with Curriculum Policies	2.7	0.84	2.6	0.86
Supportive School Environment for Implementation	3.3	0.73	2.8	0.95
Stakeholder Communication and Involvement	4.1	0.22	3.5	0.42
Monitoring and Evaluation of Overall Curriculum Implementation	3.6	0.71	4.0	0.82

The mean scores indicate that both principals and teachers generally show moderate to low levels of agreement regarding several aspects of curriculum implementation, while the standard deviations reflect varying degrees of consistency in their responses. Allocation and utilization of teaching resources are rated at a moderate

level by both principals ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.25$) and teachers ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.36$), with relatively low SD values indicating consistent perceptions. Time management for curriculum implementation (timetabling) receives somewhat low agreement from both principals ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 0.82$) and teachers ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 0.63$), and the higher SD values suggest notable variation in opinions. Similarly, coordination among teachers and departments is rated slightly below moderate (principals $M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.33$; teachers $M = 2.6$, $SD = 0.34$), showing fairly consistent but less favorable perceptions. Ensuring compliance with curriculum policies is also rated low by both principals ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 0.84$) and teachers ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 0.86$), with high variability indicating differing experiences among respondents. The supportive school environment for implementation shows moderate agreement among principals ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 0.73$), but lower agreement among teachers ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 0.95$), suggesting a perceptual gap and considerable inconsistency, particularly among teachers. In contrast, stakeholder communication and involvement receive high agreement from principals ($M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.22$) and moderate agreement from teachers ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 0.42$), with principals showing strong consensus. Finally, monitoring and evaluation of overall curriculum implementation are rated moderately by principals ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.71$) and more highly by teachers ($M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.82$), though both groups exhibit some variability in responses. Overall, the findings suggest that while certain areas such as stakeholder communication and monitoring show relatively positive perceptions, key aspects like time management, policy compliance, and coordination require improvement, and differences in mean scores highlight perceptual gaps between principals and teachers.

Actions taken by the Principal to overcome the challenges faced in the implementation of the curriculum

The content analysis of responses related to steps taken to overcome curriculum implementation challenges reveals a clear divergence in perceptions between principals and teachers. A majority of teachers (70%) indicated that no comprehensive or systematic actions were taken to address key challenges such as identifying implementation issues, modifying teaching strategies, providing instructional guidance, or facilitating professional development. Teachers' responses suggest that efforts related to the use of student assessment data, promotion of collaborative problem-solving, introduction of innovative practices, and reallocation of resources were either limited or inconsistently implemented. Similarly, areas such as adjusting timetables, strengthening internal communication, and engaging parents and the community were perceived by many teachers as lacking structured and sustained attention. This indicates that, from the teachers' perspective, the strategies to address curriculum-related barriers are fragmented and insufficiently coordinated.

In contrast, a considerable proportion of principals (60%) reported that multiple measures were actively undertaken to address curriculum implementation challenges. According to principals, efforts were made across a broad range of areas, including monitoring and follow-up of implemented solutions, ensuring equity and support for diverse learners, seeking assistance from education authorities, and promoting collaboration among teachers. Principals also emphasized their roles in providing guidance, encouraging innovation, and utilizing feedback and assessment data to improve teaching and learning processes. However, the discrepancy between principals' and teachers' views suggests a gap between policy-level intentions and ground-level experiences. This mismatch highlights the need for more transparent communication, inclusive decision-making, and consistent implementation mechanisms to ensure that the intended strategies are effectively experienced and recognized by teachers in practice.

Conclusion and Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant managerial role of principals in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum activities within schools in the Nikaweratiya Education Zone. Overall, the results indicate that principals generally demonstrate a positive level of engagement in curriculum-related tasks such as planning processes, instructional supervision, and resource coordination. However, variations in mean scores and standard deviations across different dimensions suggest that the effectiveness of these practices is not uniform and is influenced by contextual and institutional factors.

In curriculum planning, principals were found to play a relatively strong role in setting objectives and organizing planning activities, although teacher involvement and participatory planning practices showed some inconsistency. This suggests that while planning structures exist, collaborative engagement with teachers still requires strengthening. Similarly, in curriculum implementation, principals were perceived as actively involved in monitoring classroom instruction and supervising lesson plans. However, lower mean values in areas such as feedback provision, professional development support, and encouragement of innovative teaching practices indicate gaps in instructional leadership practices.

The study also revealed perceptual differences between principals and teachers in several areas. Principals generally rated their involvement and effectiveness higher than teachers did, particularly in areas such as curriculum monitoring and resource management. Conversely, teachers reported lower levels of satisfaction in support mechanisms such as feedback, guidance, and professional development. These differences highlight a communication gap between leadership perceptions and

classroom-level experiences, which may affect the overall effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

Furthermore, challenges in curriculum implementation were evident, particularly in relation to resource limitations, workload issues, and inconsistent coordination among stakeholders. Although principals reported taking multiple measures to address these challenges, a significant proportion of teachers felt that such actions were not sufficiently systematic or comprehensive. This mismatch suggests that implementation strategies may not be effectively communicated or consistently experienced at the school level.

In conclusion, the study emphasizes that while principals in the selected schools play an essential role in curriculum management, there is a need to strengthen collaborative leadership, improve teacher involvement, and enhance supportive mechanisms such as feedback systems and professional development. Addressing these gaps would contribute to more effective curriculum implementation and improved educational outcomes in the region.

Recommendations

- To enhance curriculum implementation in schools, the principal should not rely solely on individual leadership but instead promote a system of shared leadership. For this purpose, it is essential to establish a “Curriculum Guidance Committee” comprising senior teachers.
- To increase teacher participation to 100%, annual planning workshops should be conducted involving teachers from all subject areas.
- To reduce the principal’s administrative burden and improve the quality of supervision, curriculum monitoring responsibilities should be delegated to sectional heads and subject heads.
- In order to enable teachers to focus fully on curriculum implementation, their additional non-teaching administrative duties should be minimized.
- After classroom observations, individual discussions should be held with teachers, providing constructive feedback rather than criticism, thereby ensuring their professional development.

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