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Strategic approaches to Educational Policy Implementation: Challenges and best practices

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study investigates the challenges and strategic approaches associated with educational policy implementation, drawing on lecturers' practical experiences within diverse educational contexts. The study adopts a qualitative approach to explore key barriers to policy implementation and to propose contextually relevant mitigation strategies. This study was conducted within the South African higher education context**,** focusing on lecturers operating across multiple departments within a university setting. South Africa provides a critical site for examining policy implementation due to its complex socio-political history, diverse linguistic landscape, and ongoing efforts toward inclusive and transformative education. Within this context, purposive sampling was employed to select five lecturers with relevant experience in policy processes, enabling an in-depth exploration of lived experiences related to policy enactment. The findings reveal that a significant barrier to effective implementation is the lack of clear communication regarding policy directives. Furthermore, both contextual factors and stakeholder involvement emerge as critical mediating forces shaping the relationship between policy design and practice. These findings underscore the importance of adaptive and participatory approaches in navigating the complexities of translating policy into practice. This study contributes to scholarship by advancing a contextually grounded understanding of educational policy implementation within the Global South, particularly by highlighting how micro-level actor experiences influence macro-level policy outcomes. It further proposes a practical framework centred on communication, stakeholder engagement, and contextual adaptability as key pillars for improving implementation effectiveness. The study recommends the adoption of flexible policy frameworks that are responsive to evolving institutional and societal needs.

Keywords: Educational Policy, Implementation Strategies, Educational Outcomes, Policy Formulation

INTRODUCTION

Educational policy implementation continues to be a central concern for researchers and practitioners alike. Despite the increasing sophistication of policy design, real-world enactment frequently encounters systemic barriers that undermine outcomes.[1] Policy implementation gaps are evident across many global contexts, and South Africa typifies these challenges. Key barriers include inadequate funding, poor

[1] A. Simões Loureiro and A Hadjar, "Policy Implementation and Loose Coupling in Multilingual Education: The Case of Luxembourg," *European Educational Research Journal* 23, no. 1 (2024): 74–92; L Smith and Z Williams, "Reimagining Stakeholder Involvement in Education Policy: Lessons from Inclusive School Reforms in South Africa," *South African Review of Education* 30, no. 1 (2024): 112–30.

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infrastructure, limited professional development for educators, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Moreover, stakeholder engagement remains underdeveloped, resulting in misaligned reforms that fail to resonate at the school or community level.[2] Compounding these issues is the digital divide—many schools lack internet access or technological infrastructure, thereby impeding the implementation of digital and hybrid learning policies.

In South African inclusive education, White Paper 6 was introduced to support learners with disabilities, but its full realisation is hampered by resource constraints, insufficient allied health services, and inadequate teacher training.[3] Van Vuuren's study further emphasises the critical role of communication and interdepartmental coordination in supporting learners with barriers to learning.[4]

These national-level observations reflect broader international trends: across contexts, weak communication, loose coupling between policy and practice, and cultural misalignment limit policy uptake.[5] Thus, the context-specific focus of this study—lecturers' lived experiences in navigating policy directives—offers valuable insights into the micro-level processes that shape educational reform implementation.

Against this backdrop, the present study investigates how challenges such as communication breakdowns, limited stakeholder engagement, and contextual misalignment impact the effectiveness of educational reforms. By drawing on purposively sampled qualitative narratives from lecturers operating within diverse educational settings, the paper asks: How do policy implementation barriers affect the perceived effectiveness of the educational environment? The aim is to map out strategic approaches to policy implementation that can strengthen operative frameworks and stakeholder coordination for improved educational outcomes.

While this study draws on examples related to language policy, these are used as illustrative cases within the broader focus on educational policy implementation. Therefore, the primary focus of the study remains on educational policy implementation in general, rather than on language policy as a standalone domain. Accordingly, the guiding objectives of the study are:

- To identify the key barriers to educational policy implementation.
- To explore the impact of stakeholder perceptions on the sustainability of policy implementation practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on educational policy implementation underscores the complexity of translating policy into practice, particularly in contexts marked by diverse socio-political and institutional challenges. Recent scholarship highlights persistent barriers such as weak stakeholder engagement, unclear communication, and limited institutional capacity. This review synthesizes contemporary studies to examine these challenges and identify strategic approaches that can enhance effective implementation across varied educational settings.

Communication as a Persistent Barrier

Recent studies confirm that unclear or delayed policy communication remains a critical implementation barrier.[6] During the pandemic, teachers reported last-minute, top-down policy directives issued without

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[2] African National Congress Archives (ANC), *Education Transformation and Policy Gaps: 30-Year Review* (Johannesburg: ANC Policy Unit, 2024).

[3] L. Shikwambana and M Fourie, "Barriers to Implementing Inclusive Education in South African Mainstream Schools: Stakeholder Perspectives," *Journal of Educational Studies* 22, no. 1 (2023): 34–48;L. Van Vuuren, "An Intersectoral Perspective on Inclusive Education: Exploring Collaboration between Education and Health Professionals," *South African Journal of Childhood Education* 12, no. 1 (2022): 1–10.

[4] Van Vuuren, "An Intersectoral Perspective on Inclusive Education: Exploring Collaboration between Education and Health Professionals."

[5] Frontiers, "Special Issue: Policy Implementation in Global South Education Systems," *Frontiers in Education* 8 (2023); Simões Loureiro and Hadjar, "Policy Implementation and Loose Coupling in Multilingual Education: The Case of Luxembourg."

[6] Miscommunication during COVID-19, "Policy Communication Failures and the Pandemic: Lessons from School Closures," *International Journal of Education Policy* 17, no. 2 (2021): 84–98.

prior consultation, leading to confusion and implementation fatigue.[7] This echoes findings from South Africa, where inadequate communication with parents, teachers, and community stakeholders undermined inclusive education outcomes.[8]

Stakeholder Engagement & Community Networks

Robust stakeholder engagement emerges as a facilitator of successful implementation. Smith and Williams found that inclusive communication strategies engaging teachers, parents, learners, and community members enhanced learner motivation and achievement in South African schools.[9] Emerging from these findings is a call for deliberate engagement frameworks that transcend tokenistic consultation and instead embed community perspectives into policy enactment.

Van Vuuren further argues for multi-level networks linking education, health, and social care systems to support learners with barriers.[10] Drawing on ecological system theory, participants in her study advocated for bottom-up feedback and intersectoral collaboration to convert policy into contextually relevant practice.

Organizational Coupling: Tension Between Loose and Tight Structures

Simoes Loureiro and Hadjar's analysis of plurilingual policy implementation in Luxembourg applied the theory of loose versus tight coupling in educational organizations. They argue that loosely coupled structures-where school governance and classroom practice are weakly aligned-lead to inconsistent and unpredictable implementation across schools.[11] On the other hand, overly tight coupling restricts teacher autonomy, resulting in superficial or forced conformity. Their findings caution that policy design must negotiate this paradox to support coherence without undermining local adaptability.[12]

Leadership, Capacity-Building & Professional Development

Leadership practices and capacity-building are critical components of effective implementation. Fairman et al. note that limited resources, insufficient training, and staff resistance often plague principals tasked with curriculum reform in low-resource settings.[13] Yet, adaptive leadership, characterised by mission-driven clarity, instructional support, and positive school climate, can mediate these barriers.[14]

Professional development also remains lagging behind policy expectations. As observed in the context of India's NEP reforms, outdated teacher training programmes severely limit outcomes because educators are unprepared for contemporary pedagogical and technological needs.[15] Similar deficits have been documented elsewhere, linking weak capacity-building to stalled reform implementation.

Digital & Cultural Contextual Factors

The integration of digital tools and culturally responsive pedagogy adds complexity to policy implementation. Yulin and Danso highlight that despite widespread acknowledgement of digital innovation benefits, insufficient training and institutional resistance limit uptake of educational

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[7] Miscommunication during COVID-19, "Policy Communication Failures and the Pandemic: Lessons from School Closures."

[8] Smith and Williams, "Reimagining Stakeholder Involvement in Education Policy: Lessons from Inclusive School Reforms in South Africa."

[9] Smith and Williams, "Reimagining Stakeholder Involvement in Education Policy: Lessons from Inclusive School Reforms in South Africa."

[10] Van Vuuren, "An Intersectoral Perspective on Inclusive Education: Exploring Collaboration between Education and Health Professionals."

[11] Simões Loureiro and Hadjar, "Policy Implementation and Loose Coupling in Multilingual Education: The Case of Luxembourg."

[12] Simões Loureiro and Hadjar, "Policy Implementation and Loose Coupling in Multilingual Education: The Case of Luxembourg."

[13] J.C Fairman, C Lines, and H Lortie-Forgues, "'Implementation Capacity and Distributed Leadership: Exploring Reform in Low-Resource Schools," *Journal of Educational Change* 24, no. 2 (2023): 147–67.

[14] Ping He, Fangyun Guo, and Genevive Anulika Abazie, "School Principals' Instructional Leadership as a Predictor of Teacher's Professional Development," *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* 9, no. 1 (June 13, 2024): 63, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-024-00290-0; T Chabalala and D Naidoo, " Leadership Development for Inclusive Education in South Africa: A Systemic Gap," *South African Journal of Education* 41, no. 3 (2021): 1–10.

[15] Times of India, *National Education Policy Rollout Slow Due to Untrained Teachers: Experts* (The Times of India, 2025).

technology.[16] Similarly, culturally relevant teaching, when embedded in policy, demands alignment with local communities, language practices, and cultural identities. Without that alignment, policy directives may conflict with learners' lived experiences and marginalise vulnerable groups (Ladson-Billings; Indigenous education frameworks).

Strategic Approaches and Best Practices

Drawing from Fullan's latest synthesis of educational change, successful implementation depends on integrating bottom-up collaborative cultures, coherent system-wide leadership, and iterative feedback mechanisms. Fullan emphasises building from the ground up, strengthening middle-level alignment, and engaging top-level actors in reciprocal learning.[17]

Other recommended strategies include empowerment evaluation techniques using locally generated benchmarks and participatory monitoring to support mid-course corrections and community ownership of reforms. Applying such participatory frameworks fosters adaptability and accountability in shifting contexts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For the purposes of this study, this paper is grounded in Implementation Theory.[18] This framework posits that policy design is aligned with the active participation of stakeholders.[19] When contextual realities are considered as core, this is equated to functional policy implementation. Hence, the emphasized theoretical perspective is that the systemic factors influencing policy outcomes and the context are crucial to establish a firm ground for successful policy implementation.[20] This point of departure would then lead to adaptive strategies to address evolving encounters. For synergy to exist between the education stakeholders as recipients of teaching and learning protocols, formulated policies become achievable, with successful educational outcomes.[21] Adversely, the Implementation Theory is considered viable as it bridges social choice theory and game theory, as both these theories have a common aim to investigate which social objectives can be realized through strategic interactions.

The Educational Implications of Implementation Theory

In this theory, the necessity of understanding the manner in which various educational theories inform the accomplishment of teaching practices and policies is greatly emphasized. This theory scrutinises the complexities involved in translating educational policies into practice; therefore, it becomes essential to thoroughly align theoretical frameworks with practical applications in educational settings.[22] Having a closer look at a classroom or school environment, teachers are the ones expected to create effective curricula and pedagogies while devising assessments that cater to diverse learner needs.[23] To implement such frameworks, conducive learning environments are fostered. Therefore, one needs to consider a multifaceted approach that cuts across a wide range of systemic influences, as these are core to shaping learning experiences.

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[16] L Yulin and E Danso, "Teacher Readiness for Digital Education Reform: A Cross-Cultural Review," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* 53, no. 2 (2025): 231–47.

[17] Michael Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (Teachers college press, 2025).

[18] Dilip Abreu and Hitoshi Matsushima, "Exact Implementation," *Journal of Economic Theory* 64, no. 1 (1994): 1–19.

[19] Hairon Salleh, "Facilitation for Professional Learning Community Conversations in Singapore," *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 36, no. 2 (2016): 285–300.

[20] Enakshi Sengupta et al., "Introduction to Strategies for Fostering Inclusive Classrooms in Higher Education," 2019.

[21] Jose Eos Trinidad, "Understanding When Parental Aspirations Negatively Affect Student Outcomes: The Case of Aspiration-Expectation Inconsistency," *Studies in Educational Evaluation* 60 (March 2019): 179–88, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2019.01.004.

[22] Benjamin E. Baran, Jenna N. Filipkowski, and Rebecca A. Stockwell, "Organizational Change: Perspectives From Human Resource Management," *Journal of Change Management* 19, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 201–19, https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2018.1502800.

[23] Damani A Piggott and Liza Cariaga-Lo, "Promoting Inclusion, Diversity, Access, and Equity through Enhanced Institutional Culture and Climate," *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* 220, no. Supplement_2 (2019): S74–81.

METHODOLOGY

For this paper, qualitative research approaches were deemed relevant for the context of educational policy implementation, to closely understand the underlying factors relating to the effectiveness and challenges of several educational reforms.[24] Employing qualitative research methods allowed for an in-depth exploration of perceptions related to policy execution. As such, the applied qualitative methodologies allowed us to gain insights into the interplay between educational frameworks and cultural dynamics.

An explanatory case study was adopted as the research design because it enabled a comprehensive investigation of how and why educational policies are implemented effectively or face challenges within specific educational contexts. The case study approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of particular instances of policy implementation, allowing the researcher to examine the complexities and realities of policy enactment in practice. Furthermore, it provided valuable insights into the interactions and relationships among key stakeholders involved in the implementation process. By exploring the influence of factors such as leadership, stakeholder engagement, resource availability, communication, and monitoring mechanisms, the design helped to uncover the underlying dynamics shaping implementation outcomes. Examining these processes within their real-world settings generated a richer understanding of both successful and unsuccessful implementation practices, thereby producing evidence-based insights that can inform more effective educational policy implementation strategies and decision-making.[25]

The population of this study comprises lecturers who are engaged in the interpretation and execution of educational policies by virtue of their being committee coordinators across various departments, extended to both the faculty and institutional levels. For the purposes of this specific inquiry, the identified participants comprised a sample of experienced lecturers from numerous departments. To select participants, the sampling strategy employed was purposive sampling. Five lecturers were identified with the intention of providing valuable insights based on their lived experiences related to the implementation of policies within their educational settings. Criteria for inclusion for this sample of interest included critical factors like teaching experience, involvement in policy formulation, as well as being role players in processes of curriculum development and programme reviews.

Data were generated through focus group interviews, a qualitative method suitable for eliciting shared experiences and collective meaning-making among participants. One focus group comprising five purposively selected lecturers, who shared similar characteristics related to their involvement in policy processes, was conducted. The use of focus groups enabled interaction among participants, allowing for the co-construction of insights regarding policy implementation practices within their institutional contexts.

For this inquiry, data were gathered through moderated group discussions centred on policy implementation experiences. As discussions became more robust, follow-up questions were posed to probe emerging issues that were not initially included in the interview schedule. This flexible approach is consistent with qualitative inquiry, where responsiveness to participant input enhances depth and richness of data. The choice of focus group interviews aligns with the study's interpretivist orientation, as it facilitates the exploration of socially constructed understandings of policy enactment within institutional contexts.

Although data were collected through a focus group, individual participants' contributions were coded and presented separately (e.g., S1, S2) to preserve the distinctiveness of their perspectives. This approach enabled both collective interaction and individual-level analysis within the same dataset. Data collection continued until data saturation was reached, indicated by the absence of new themes or insights emerging from participant responses.

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[24] Thomas Harding and Dean Whitehead, "Analysing Data in Qualitative Research," *Nursing & Midwifery Research: Methods and Appraisal for Evidence-Based Practice* 5, no. 2013 (2013): 141–60.

[25] Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications*, vol. 6 (sage Thousand Oaks, CA, 2018).

The qualitative analysis of this inquiry was grounded in thematic coding. This data analysis approach was conducted to identify patterns and insights related to the challenges faced and effective strategies employed during the policy implementation process. Through this coding procedure, there was an advent of central patterns and similarities, as divulged by participants' responses. This led to the formation of themes that have been discussed as the findings of this investigation.

To ensure ethical considerations, the rights of participants were explicitly explained prior to the administration of the interviews. Primarily, participants were made fully aware that taking part in our investigation would have no adverse effect on their jobs; as such, the nature, purpose, and potential impacts of the research were clearly explained before agreeing to participate. In addition to that, after participants were made aware that their identities would not be disclosed, and that they were free to withdraw from the investigation whenever they might no longer feel secure, they gave us consent, explaining that their participation was voluntary.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The data was gathered from the study participants in the form of focus group interviews. This study reveals two findings: that contextual factors and stakeholder involvement have been noted to be the core critical aspects that intersect policy and practice, these being regarded as fundamental for enhanced educational outcomes. Responses from participants highlight positive implementation when all education stakeholders, despite how diverse they are, are considered fundamental and placed at the core of all processes. Hence, policies to be implemented should allow for flexibility and adaptation to local contexts in order to yield favourable outcomes. Strong engagement from educators and community members significantly smooths the policy implementation process. Categorised below are the responses from participants.

Contextual Factors

S1 proclaimed:

> *The way I perceive things is that we people on the ground do not see eye to eye with the policymakers. Meaning, it seems as if there is some disconnection between the policymakers' point of view and the actual classroom situation and reality. A dialogue to bridge this gap is a prerequisite. In addition to that, policy implementation needs close monitoring so that we can be permitted sufficient platform to assess the gains and challenges, then apply the necessary adjustments.*

On the same accord, S2 outlined:

> *In my opinion, I have been noticing that policies lack clarity when considering what is required for classroom application. There is an urgent need for clarified guidelines. This causes some misalignment in aligning our teaching pedagogies with the intended goals.*

With a relevant opinion, S3 opined:

> *Inadequate funding is another of the biggest obstacles we face as lecturers. Yes, the manner in which policies are articulated, indeed, seems to have the best intentions. Nonetheless, with limited or no financial support, implementation is hindered, and this has an impact on learners' academic attainment.*

S4 shared similar sentiments:

> *Institutions of higher learning might be spread throughout the country, but, as academics, we operate differently due to the unique contexts of each institution. For easy adaptation, a need for flexibility in policy implementation is key. A case in point: as we embark on translanguaging when talking the language of programme reviews, as well as catering for diversity in our classrooms, there is a conflicting notion because all assessments, be they formative or summative, are administered in the English medium, as policy prescribes.*

S5 regrettably commented:

> *What I can say is that most of the time, the students' actual needs do not reflect the policies. As we are expected to make amicable adjustments, this could lead to confusion, let alone inconsistency. Many policies seem to fail during the implementation phase due to limited*

training for the staff. Furthermore, clashing academic activities are a hassle worth pinpointing, hindering one from attending a training.

Stakeholder Involvement

S1 commented:

As a language teacher, I normally appreciate that a few of us are invited when programmes are reviewed, this being equivalent to the revision of policies. But my take-home is that such changes need to be cascaded down to the entire staff in the form of a pilot before the actual implementation kicks off. Engaging all staff from the onset is critical. When they feel included in the policy-making process, the resistance decreases dramatically as they gradually own the alterations.

Commendably, S2 acknowledged:

When invitations are circulated for whatever workshop to be attended, I prioritize attendance as I know that such platforms are where we get chances to share our insights on instructional strategies.

In line with the claims above, S3 highlighted:

Collaborative working sessions, be it trainings or workshops, indeed act as eye openers that ultimately foster that sense of ownership over the emergent policy.

In accordance, S4 narrated:

As a means to draw community members closer, in my department, we launched a community partnership program. Our intention was to engage parents, local organizations, and the wider community members. Involving them was beneficial in shaping the existing policies to better fit our students' needs.

Summarily, S5 declared:

I feel sorry for those who segregate others. South Africa is a rainbow nation. All people within the education sector need to be hooked on to attain the best practices as a collective.

DISCUSSION

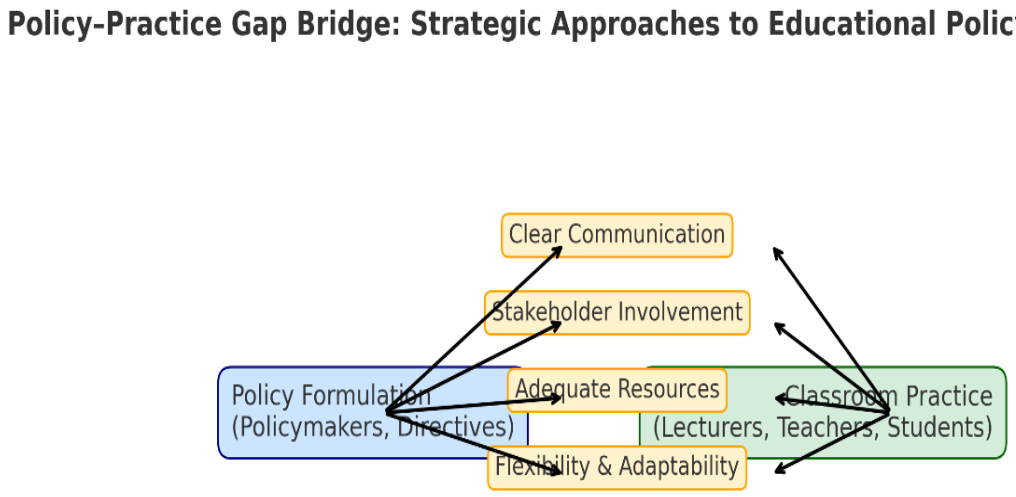


Figure 1: Policy–Practice Gap Bridge[26]

Figure 1 presents a conceptual model illustrating the relationship between policy formulation and classroom practice through four key pillars: communication, stakeholder involvement, resources, and adaptability. The model demonstrates how these interconnected elements function as structural

[26] Lora Cohen-Vogel et al., "Implementing Educational Innovations at Scale," *Educational Policy* 29, no. 1 (January 30, 2015): 257–77, https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904814560886.

supports that translate policy intentions into effective teaching and learning, enabling iterative alignment between policy directives and contextual realities.

The findings of this study reinforce this model by demonstrating that educational policy implementation is not a linear process, but rather a complex and contextually mediated practice shaped by multiple interacting factors. In particular, the prominence of communication breakdowns, as reported by participants, confirms existing literature identifying communication as a persistent barrier to effective policy enactment. [27] Inadequate dissemination of policy directives creates ambiguity at the implementation level, thereby widening the policy practice gap.

Furthermore, stakeholder involvement emerges as a critical determinant of successful implementation. This finding aligns with participatory governance perspectives, which argue that inclusive engagement fosters ownership and reduces resistance. [28] Participants' emphasis on collaborative platforms such as workshops and community partnerships highlights the importance of bottom-up approaches in strengthening policy uptake.

The study also reveals that contextual misalignment, particularly in relation to institutional diversity and resource constraints, significantly affects implementation outcomes. This supports the argument by Simões Loureiro and Hadjar that loosely coupled systems tend to produce inconsistent policy enactment. [29] Within the South African context, disparities in institutional capacity further intensify these challenges, making adaptability a critical condition for effective implementation. Adequate resources, including financial, human, and infrastructural support, are therefore essential to enable policy enactment at scale.

Interpreted through the lens of Implementation Theory, these findings suggest that policy success depends on the alignment between policy design, stakeholder agency, and contextual realities. Lecturers, as key policy actors, play a central role in mediating this alignment, demonstrating how micro-level practices influence macro-level policy outcomes.Collectively, these findings affirm that the four pillars identified in Figure 1 communication, stakeholder involvement, resources, and adaptability operate as interdependent conditions for successful policy implementation. The absence of any one of these elements weakens the implementation process and reinforces systemic inefficiencies.

These insights directly respond to the research question by demonstrating how communication gaps, limited stakeholder engagement, and contextual constraints negatively affect the perceived effectiveness of educational environments. Conversely, the presence of collaborative, well-resourced, and adaptive practices enhances implementation outcomes, thereby narrowing the gap between policy design and practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed recommendations emanate from the findings of this inquiry, intended to redefine matters entangling policy implementation. This study, therefore, recommends facilitation of consistent engagements and consultations with all stakeholders, thus ensuring that diverse and multifaceted inputs inform policy directions. Also, the allocation of appropriate and adequate resources and training to those who implement policies should be considered crucial for enhanced capacity building towards the intended policy objectives. Lastly, with regard to policy frameworks, these need to have a sense of flexibility to permit adjustments as opined by the local context and evolving community needs.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the challenges of educational policy implementation are deeply rooted in contextual disjunctions, inadequate communication, and insufficient stakeholder involvement. The insights from lecturers' lived experiences reaffirm that for policies to achieve their intended objectives, they must be clearly communicated, adequately resourced, and adaptable to diverse institutional

[27] Smith and Williams, "Reimagining Stakeholder Involvement in Education Policy: Lessons from Inclusive School Reforms in South Africa."
[28] Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change*.
[29] Simões Loureiro and Hadjar, "Policy Implementation and Loose Coupling in Multilingual Education: The Case of Luxembourg."

realities. More importantly, stakeholder engagement must move beyond tokenism to become a central pillar of the implementation process.

By situating the findings within broader implementation theory, the study affirms that systemic factors and participatory processes are fundamental to bridging the gap between policy design and practice. If policymakers and institutional leaders are to ensure that educational reforms yield meaningful outcomes, flexible frameworks that accommodate evolving contexts and diverse needs must be prioritised.

In essence, the study underscores the necessity for role players within the education system to learn from both successes and failures. Such reflective practice not only navigates the intricacies of translating policy into practice but also lays the groundwork for resilient, inclusive, and sustainable educational transformation.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Due to the study findings not being generalisable, as guided by the small sample for this qualitative inquiry, this paper proposes future study directions to deeply explore the underlying situation. Further studies should investigate the longitudinal impact of policy changes on educational outcomes. Deciding to investigate high-stakes environments could benefit future studies, as such areas are greatly affected by rapid socio-economic changes. Also, integrating both rural and urban-based institutions of higher learning could permit comparative studies that would then reveal unique challenges and solutions to the educational system. With the global context of being intertwined within the digital era imperatives, further interrogations could explore the extent to which the technology's role could facilitate communication and stakeholder engagement during the implementation. Alongside this, this form of improved communication should aim to examine comprehensive guidelines for policy implementation, targeted to provide ongoing professional development aligned to policy variations.

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Bulelwa Makena is an Associate Professor of Language Education and has served as a member of the Faculty of Education Higher Degrees and Ethics Committee at iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu, South Africa. As a self-motivated, achievement-oriented, lateral thinker and a doer, she is an author who has managed to publish scientific papers, all on DHET-accredited platforms. She serves as a reviewer for manuscripts published by DHET-accredited journals. As a session chair in both national and international conferences, supervising post-graduate students to the finality of their research projects/graduation, and a mentor for mentees who successfully publish articles, she has gradually sharpened my research and paper writing skills. As charity begins at home, it is worth mentioning that mentoring colleagues within her department has also benefited the departmental and faculty throughput.

Dineo Mamaile, as an emerging scholar, a Doctor and a Lecturer at iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu, South Africa, has engaged with a wide range of scholars through the conferences attended. Publishing in research-accredited platforms has instilled in me a sense of eagerness to collaborate and co-author with scholars from diverse disciplines. This has helped to reshape her scholarly mindset, and with the information she has already gathered, she applies such expertise to the BEd Hons students whom she

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