

Chapter 7

Alternation of Curriculum Delivery Mode in Primary Schools: A Case Study

Matlala Violet Makokotlela

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0297-7408>

University of South Africa, South Africa

Nomvula Monica Nxumalo

Tshwane South District, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This investigation aimed to explore the mode of curriculum delivery in Primary School in Tshwane South District during the Covid-19 pandemic because there is insufficient research on this subject. A case study of a Primary School was used to obtain in-depth information about the mode of curriculum delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic. Using a case study was also practical because the pandemic's restrictions posed a challenge to research many schools. Data was gathered through document analysis. A qualitative approach was employed to analyze and identify categories and emerging themes from the data. An interpretive paradigm was used while connectivism theory was employed as a lens. The findings revealed that schools used face-to-face mode of curriculum delivery during the lockdown and after schools re-opened during Covid-19, resulting in a challenge with content coverage that led to revising the annual teaching plans and trimming the curriculum.

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INTRODUCTION

The discourse around the alternation of curriculum delivery mode in schools is critical worldwide because of the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic that caused massive confusion in education as highlighted by (Jena 2020; Aborode et al. 2020) and warranted a change in the way curriculum was delivered. According to Dhawan (2020), literature shows that teachers were using face-to-face mode of curriculum delivery in the classrooms in India, suggesting that this was the mode of delivery when Covid-19 presented itself. This situation caused governments to re-think the mode of curriculum delivery in schools within the twinkle of an eye. Alternation of curriculum delivery mode in schools became a fundamental subject for effective curriculum delivery in the 21st century while it remains instrumental in the world that is digitally driven.

Generally, education institutions thought of online learning, which requires synchronous and or asynchronous devices such as laptops and mobile phones to enable learners to learn from home. Dhawan (2020) opines that the outbreak of Covid-19 tested the education structure worldwide, compelling educators to change the traditional methodology to an online mode of teaching and learning. However, the situation was different in South Africa. Ramrathan (2020) highlighted South African schools closed for a more extended period as they followed Covid-19 guidelines to curb the infections. Social distancing became a deciding factor in terms of how and when to re-open schools. However, online learning never drizzled, but face-to-face teaching and learning continued after the second wave lockdown. Scholars such as Hodges et al. (2020) assumed a shift to online teaching and learning as a solution. Unfortunately, developing countries are economically challenged with unreliable connectivity and load shedding, requiring institutions to develop possible solutions to enable reliable and sustainable teaching and learning. Even after the schools re-opened, the continued infections warranted a change in the method of teaching and learning.

A lack of significant research in terms of the mode of curriculum delivery that schools employed during and after schools re-opened in South Africa during Covid-19 prompted the researcher to explore this subject. The purpose of this study was to explore the mode of curriculum delivery in Tshwane South District during and after the lockdown due to Covid-19 using Sd primary school as a case study.

BACKGROUND

The emergence of Covid-19 prompted governments to declare a state of emergency and close down all activity, including schools. This is because the virus was highly infectious and could be deadly, causing government policies to introduce social distancing to control the spread of the virus (Viner et al., 2020). UNESCO's (2020) estimation in April 2020 was that 138 countries had closed their schools. Putri et al. (2020: pp. 4809) point that UNESCO mentioned that the "corona pandemic threatens 577 million students in the world". Aborode et al. (2020) pointed out that the closure of schools and universities impacted over 70% of the world's population. Van Lancker & Parolin (2020) posit that the situation resulted in the interruption of almost 80% of learners globally.

School closure was thus a global intervention as countries tried to curb the transmission of the virus. Countries that opted for school closure included, amongst others, Indonesia, India, Norway, and South Africa, which serve as examples for this study. Generally, school closure occurred in March 2020, which is why UNESCO (2020) could only estimate the countries that had closed their schools in April 2020.

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