

 Research Article

The Influence of Advanced Leadership Education on the Management of Pedagogical Transformation

Raymond Ndubisi Anyanwu¹ , Sanage Anne-Marie Payet²

¹Department of Education, Languages and Media, University of Seychelles, Anse Royale, Seychelles

²Takamaka Primary School, Ministry of Education, Mahe, Seychelles

Abstract

While effective change management is contingent upon robust and strategic leadership, occupying a managerial position does not inherently confer the ability to lead change successfully. This study examined the effectiveness of school managers holding advanced leadership qualifications in implementing policies designed to facilitate pedagogical transformation. The study aimed to assess teachers' policy knowledge and to determine the extent of institutional support provided for policy implementation. It is hypothesised that teachers working in schools led by managers with higher leadership credentials demonstrate greater policy knowledge and receive more professional support. Using a qualitative, descriptive, cross-sectional survey design, a semi-structured questionnaire comprising three sections - respondent demographics, policy knowledge, and support - was administered to 104 teachers from three purposively selected primary schools located on Mahé, the main island of Seychelles. Descriptive statistical techniques were applied to analyse categorical data, yielding item-response frequency percentages, while qualitative coding was used to identify emergent themes within textual data. The results indicated that while a significant number of teachers demonstrated policy knowledge deficiency, they nonetheless received adequate support, rendering the initial hypothesis only partially substantiated. Policy knowledge deficiency among teachers may result in strategic myopia, fragmented implementation of frameworks, and ultimately suboptimal outcomes. Conversely, adequate support can alleviate stress, encourage policy adoption, and contribute to improved educational attainment. This pioneering study conducted in Seychelles provides valuable insights into the impact of advanced leadership qualifications on pedagogical change management. It further presents evidence-based recommendations to address policy knowledge gaps among teachers, strengthen institutional support mechanisms, and guide future research, thereby deepening the understanding of challenges inherent in leading pedagogical transformation.

Keywords: Advanced Leadership Education, Management, Policy Implementation, Policy Knowledge, Support, Pedagogical Transformation

✉ Correspondence

Raymond Ndubisi Anyanwu

raymond.anyanwu@unisey.ac.sc

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Contextual Background

Effective leadership is a pivotal factor in the successful management of educational change (Rafique et al, 2025; Ahlström & Aas, 2024). However, not all individuals occupying managerial roles within educational settings possess the ability to navigate complex change processes (Culduz, 2024; Anderson, 2023). The pace of change across various domains of human endeavour, including education, has accelerated significantly compared to previous decades (Musaigwa, 2023; Zhang et al, 2023). Typically, the primary catalyst for change is dissatisfaction with prevailing paradigms, coupled with a desire for transformative alternatives (Fredberg et al., 2022). Among the most significant changes currently reshaping the field of education is pedagogical transformation, which UNESCO (2024) describes as a reevaluation of

the education system, including the context, purpose, process, tools, and techniques to ensure they are responsive to current realities while also catering to the needs of all students. Educational transformation is inherently a vital instrument for driving social change (Dickson, 2025). However, the process of educational change is inherently complex, shaped by a dynamic interplay of factors such as culture, policy frameworks, political influences, and technological advancements, each presenting distinct challenges for effective change management (Groenewald et al., 2024; Le Fevre, 2024).

Educational transformations are underway across diverse countries and regions, propelled by context-specific drivers and unfolding at varying rates of progress. In the United States, there is increasing discontent about marginalization and school failure ascribed to amplification of cultural divergences among students (Ladson-Billings, 2024; González et al, 2022). In most European countries, the primary concerns center on stagnating educational outcomes, widening technological gaps, and growing regional disparities (OECD, 2025; Ritzen & Zomerplaag, 2025). Most African countries have made significant progress in access to basic education, but still lag behind in achieving inclusive and quality education as well as lifelong learning (Zickafoose et al., 2024; Evans & Acosta, 2020). Amid these issues, transformation will involve a reassessment of current policies. A policy, as described by Selepe (2023), is the expression of aims and designated strategies that, when implemented in an organization, can help in resolving a particular challenge it is facing.

For Seychelles, a small island state in the Indian Ocean, establishing a comprehensive education system that promotes quality, equity, and accountability is a priority (Ministry of Education, 2000). In pursuit of these principles, the education authorities have developed a number of policies to revolutionize teaching and learning approaches in schools. These include the National Curriculum Framework (Ministry of Education, 2013a), the National Assessment Framework (Ministry of Education, 2013b), the Information and Communication Technology in Education and Training Policy (Ministry of Education, 2014), the Inclusive Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2015a), and the Early Learning Framework (Ministry of Education, 2015b). Each policy articulates a vision for education in Seychelles, detailing its rationale, purpose, standards, and implementation strategies in line with the mission of the local education system without ignoring the global agenda-Sustainable Development Goal 4. These policies exist as documents and offer guidelines for teaching and learning in all primary and secondary educational institutions in the country. However, policies have no value if they are not implemented. Policy implementation requires, among other things, actors who clearly understand the goals of the policies and are supported to implement them (Santos & Coad, 2023; Selepe, 2023).

Aside from policy development, the Seychelles education authorities have also been investing in the training of educational leaders. Through this initiative, educators aspiring to managerial positions enrolled in the master's programme in educational leadership at various higher education institutions, locally and overseas, with State sponsorship. Their curriculum includes managing and leading people, curriculum development, technology, and change. They also learn policy analysis techniques, which involves clarifying how actors, concerns, and ideas interacted within the context of policy development, including who makes policy decisions, the rationale, process, and implications (Paina et al, 2024) as well as strategic planning, which involves utilising available knowledge to define institutional goals and establish intended direction (Saalmuller, 2022). Upon completion, these educators are appointed to management positions such as headteacher, deputy head for studies, deputy head of support, and head of department. Those appointed as headteachers have the responsibility to lead the transformation of teaching and learning at their respective schools through the implementation of the designated policies.

Various policy implementation models exist in the literature. Each model offers distinct guidelines for a specific context. Hamidou Diori presented various implementation models, including rational, management, organisational development, political, and bureaucratic process models. The rational model emphasizes clarity of policy goals and objectives, accurate and consistent planning, clear and detailed task assignments, standardization, and proper monitoring. In contrast, the management model focuses on resources, emphasizing effective use of budget, organizational structure, communication, collaboration, equipment, technology, and location. The organisational model emphasizes harmony among people, effective leadership, decision-making, motivation, engagement, and team building. The political model emphasizes joint action, bargaining capacity, harmony among political actors, political motivation, and minimizing complexity and pressure in politics. On the other hand, the bureaucratic process model focuses on discretion, competency, control, and commitment of front-line implementers (Diori, 2021). It is clear

from this analysis that while most of the models emphasize implementation support, the rational model recognizes the importance of actors' knowledge of policies. Additionally, a four-stage model comprising exploration and preparation, planning and resource allocation, actual execution of policy, and normalization of processes is offered by Burke et al. (2012), who emphasized that sometimes one model may not fully address the needs of an institution, necessitating integration of models. A deeper analysis of the four-stage model reveals that policy awareness and implementation support are vital components of policy implementation.

Awareness, as described by Alordiah et al. (2023), is the capacity of an individual to be conscious of something. Simply, it is knowing or understanding something that has been introduced. It could be a new approach or system. Jati et al. (2019) suggest that a person's awareness of something can be assessed by establishing what that person knows and what they do not know, often carried out through surveys. In the policy parlance, an individual is said to have policy awareness if they understand the purpose and rationale behind the policy, possess the policy documents, read them, and encounter them in appropriate contexts (Baan et al., 2023). This perspective aligns with Alordiah et al. (2023), who describe knowledge as familiarity or comprehension of an idea, information, or description gained through discovery, experience, or education. Subsequently, policy awareness is synonymous with policy knowledge and is used in this context in this research. Some researchers have assessed teachers' knowledge of policies. Sondhiya (2022) evaluated teachers' understanding of a new education policy using a sample of 50 educators in Jabalpur district, India. Analysis of data collected through a multiple-choice questionnaire revealed a notable difference in policy knowledge based on gender, with female teachers displaying higher levels of knowledge than their male counterparts. However, no significant differences were found among teachers in terms of policy knowledge based on the type of school management. In a related study, Sharma and Bala (2021) discovered that teachers from both government and private schools had a moderate level of policy knowledge, with no difference found between male and female teachers, and no significant difference based on teaching experience.

The term 'support' has a different meaning in different contexts. In the context of this research, support means assistance provided to someone to carry out a task. Support for policy implementation, therefore, refers to assistance or resources provided to policy actors to facilitate policy enforcement (Open Education Sociology Dictionary, 2024). Baan et al. (2023) outline various ways policy actors can be supported. These include clarifying the relationship between policies and the institutional vision, organising discussions on the various policies, holding regular meetings with actors to develop strategies for achieving policy goals, and conducting workshops or training sessions to enhance pedagogical techniques. Other strategies include implementing oversight mechanisms for instructional practices, conducting regular evaluations of teaching and learning processes, and strengthening relationships between actors and administrators. In a study conducted in Insiza South District in Kenya, Chafa and Ncube (2025) found that educational leaders concentrated on fostering a collaborative school culture and improving student learning outcomes. Using samples from Malawi, Kachali (2020) explored the challenges teachers face in implementing inclusive education and discovered that only a small percentage of teachers had received training on how to promote diversity in their classrooms. Research with samples from Nigeria, West Africa, also identified factors that hinder the implementation of educational policies: a lack of quality educational resources (Uwaezuoke, 2023) and inconsistent governance and policies (Enyiazu, 2022).

A review of the literature indicates that education authorities in Seychelles have introduced a range of policies and delivered leadership training to school managers, with the objective of supporting the implementation of educational reforms aimed at fostering pedagogical transformation. The successful implementation of educational policies is contingent upon the presence of strong leadership, educators who possess a comprehensive understanding of policy frameworks, and the availability of sufficient support mechanisms within the school system. However, several challenges hinder school managers' efforts to drive pedagogical transformation, including limited understanding of policy frameworks, insufficient support structures, inconsistencies across policies, policy overload, weak governance, inadequate teacher training, and ambiguous implementation guidelines. These issues are discussed in the context of the present study's findings in Section 4.

1.2. Problem Statement

Despite notable progress by education authorities over the past two decades in developing policies to transform pedagogical practices and enhance leadership training for school managers, significant improvements in curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices remain limited. Studies have shown that policy growth without effective management can lead to increased implementation challenges and hinder overall policy effectiveness (Knill et al, 2024; Skerritt et al, 2021). Various sectors of society have expressed concerns about decreases in student achievement levels in both local and international exams over the past decade, especially exams taken at the end of Key Stages such as Primary 6, Secondary 5, and Upper Secondary (National Information Services Agency, 2025). In many instances, schools are criticized for failing to meet expectations, while teachers often attribute the shortcomings to inadequate support from education authorities and limited engagement from parents.

Research conducted in Seychelles has identified multiple factors contributing to low student attainment. The factors include the inconsistent application of academic frameworks, ineffective teaching methodologies, inadequate teacher training, limited access to educational resources, and deficiencies in school management (Bibi & Anyanwu, 2023; Deutschmann et al, 2022; Commonwealth of Learning, 2021). Similar studies in other countries, such as Pakistan (Rafique et al, 2025), Scandinavia (Ahlström & Aas, 2024), South Africa (Memela & Ramrathan, 2022), and Ethiopia (Dabesa & Cheramlak, 2021), have also identified ineffective school management as a key factor behind lower student achievement. These findings underscore that ineffective leadership presents considerable obstacles to pedagogical reform in schools, ultimately leading to policy failures (Roberge et al., 2025).

Although the majority of public primary schools in Seychelles are led by individuals holding advanced credentials in educational leadership, there remains a critical need for education authorities to evaluate the effectiveness of these leaders in driving meaningful educational change. To date, such assessments have not been systematically undertaken. Additionally, the existing practice of appointing individuals with higher qualifications to managerial roles in schools, without recognizing those capable of integrating situational and transformational leadership styles, is also technically inappropriate. These policy implementation gaps could hinder the attainment of the desired transformation in schools. Transformational leaders are adept at articulating a vision for the future of the institution, fostering a collaborative school culture, empowering educators, and making sound decisions (Chafa & Ncube, 2025; Fadhilah et al, 2024; Sliwka et al, 2024). Conversely, situational leaders are skilled in boosting work motivation and job satisfaction, aligning their roles with the needs of employees (Suardhika et al., 2025; Aslam et al., 2022).

1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study examined the effectiveness of school managers with advanced leadership qualifications in implementing educational policies aimed at driving pedagogical transformation. In Seychelles, the school manager is the head teacher. Their functions encompass planning, organising, guiding, overseeing, and evaluating (Umar, 2022). The study involved three public primary schools on Mahe, Seychelles. These schools are among those whose managers had completed master's studies in educational leadership in the past ten years. Supporting this research are the assumptions that all public primary schools in Seychelles use the same academic frameworks and that teachers would respond honestly to questions about their knowledge of policies and how they are supported.

The study aimed to assess teachers' policy knowledge and determine the extent of support they receive for policy implementation. The objectives were to identify the challenges in managing pedagogical transformation, analyse the implications of the findings, and provide data-driven recommendations to address the issues. In order to achieve the aim and objectives, several hypotheses were tested. The main hypothesis is that teachers in schools where the managers hold advanced qualifications in leadership possess comprehensive policy knowledge and receive adequate support. To confirm this main hypothesis, the following sub-hypotheses (SubHo 1 and 2) were tested:

- SubHo 1: Teachers in schools led by managers with advanced leadership qualifications possess comprehensive policy knowledge.

- SubHo 2: Teachers in schools led by managers with advanced leadership qualifications receive sufficient professional support for policy implementation.

This research represents the first empirical investigation of its kind conducted in Seychelles. Its outcomes contribute original insights into the impact of advanced leadership education on pedagogical transformation. Beyond expanding the knowledge base, the study offers evidence-based recommendations that policymakers and school managers may consider in addressing current challenges in policy implementation, informing future policy development, and guiding subsequent research efforts within the education sector.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Design

The research context for this investigation centered on primary schools led by headteachers who had completed advanced studies in educational leadership. This specific eligibility criterion defines the study as a case study, given its focus on a bounded system with clearly identified characteristics. To achieve its purpose, a qualitative descriptive cross-sectional survey design involving a sample of cases is employed. This design utilises a paper-printed questionnaire to collect non-numerical data at a specific point in time from individuals who were chosen purposively. Although the primary objective of qualitative research is to understand opinions, concepts, and experiences through non-numerical data, the current study, which involves a sample of cases, uses percentage frequency to describe the number of manifesting themes within collected data, with the figures not being the main focus of the study (Hall, 2025; Makateng & Mokala, 2025; Ansari et al, 2022).

2.2. Participants

The sample was chosen through a non-probability sampling technique, which involves deliberately selecting participants or cases based on predefined criteria most relevant to the study's purpose (Memon et al, 2025). At the time of this study, there were 23 public primary schools in Seychelles categorised into four groups based on learner population: extra-large (1,000 learners and above), large (700 to 999 learners), medium (400 to 699 learners), and small (100 to 399 learners). The schools comprise 11 medium-sized schools, 10 small-sized schools, 1 large-sized school, and 1 extra-large school. The Ministry of Education uses this classification system for administrative purposes. Among these schools, twenty are on Mahe, the main island, while two are on Praslin and one is on La Digue. From the schools on Mahe, three were chosen - one large, one medium, and one small. All three schools are located on Mahe. These schools are unique, as the selection criterion is the schools whose managers had completed advanced studies in educational leadership within the past ten years. For ethical reasons, their real names are withheld. They are referred to as X (the large-sized school), Y (the medium-sized school), and Z (the small-sized school), to protect their identities. In total, there were 170 teachers from the three schools, comprising 72 teachers in X, 60 teachers in Y, and 30 teachers in Z. Their administrators are female, Seychellois, aged above 25 years, and have less than 10 years of experience in their roles as school managers.

2.3. Research Instrument

The tool used for data collection is a semi-structured questionnaire, chosen for its economy and validity. This questionnaire is suitable for exploring themes and gathering rich data through a combination of closed and open-ended questions. With 170 teachers, it was considered cost-effective to collect data with a paper questionnaire due to the large sample size. Taherdoost's (2022) seven-step framework for questionnaire design was followed. The steps are as follows: identifying information needs, selecting survey types, formulating question types, crafting questions, organising the survey, and finalising the instrument. The questionnaire was not formally piloted; however, the initial draft underwent face validity, and feedback was used to refine the instrument. Another important consideration for validity was ensuring that the items were derived from the theoretical framework and aligned with the study's objectives. The questionnaire was written in simple English to ensure the respondents would understand and provide their opinions.

Additionally, ethical requirements were met, including obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education to access the schools, securing informed consent from the respondents, and ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of collected data to uphold the integrity of the research process and outcomes.

Structured into three main sections, the questionnaire consists of 17 items encompassing both closed and open-ended formats. An introductory statement outlining the survey’s objectives and the importance of voluntary participation is provided on the cover page. An informed consent form is located at the bottom of the same page. Section A consists of five items, numbered 1 to 5, aimed at gathering demographic information from respondents. Item 1 addresses gender (Female/Male), item 2 pertains to age categories (Under 25 years and 25 years and older), item 3 enquires about nationality (Seychellois and Non-Seychellois), item 4 requests the highest educational qualification attained (School Certificate/GCE O’ Level, A’ Level, Diploma, Bachelor, Masters, Others), and item 5 assesses professional experience (Less than 10 years and 10 years and above). The data gathered from this section were used to support the analysis of data on the two research variables that constituted the sub-research questions.

Sections B through C delve into the study’s key variables: policy awareness and implementation support. Specifically, Section B, which consists of five items numbered 6 to 10, explores participants’ awareness of the policies. Item 6 prompts respondents to list the different local policies they are aware of that support pedagogical transformation. Item 7 asks for a brief explanation of the rationale behind each policy mentioned in Item 6. Item 8 inquires which of the listed policies the participant possesses, either in hard or soft copy. Item 9 seeks to determine how many of the listed policies the participant has read in their entirety to grasp the content. Finally, item 10 asks whether the respondent has seen some of the documents within their institution. Basic information about the policies is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. List of Policies and Brief Information About Them

Name of Policy	Brief Policy Information
The National Policy on Education (Ministry of Education, 2000)	Provides the mission statement of the Ministry of Education, the principles guiding the operational goals of education services at all levels of education,
The National Curriculum Framework (Ministry of Education, 2013a)	This document serves as the official framework for curriculum decisions in all public schools. It is produced to ensure consistency within and across schools. The document outlines nine learning areas, their aims, and assessment guidelines for the respective key stages.
The National Assessment Framework (Ministry of Education, 2013b)	This document provides guidelines for assessment practices. It is produced to ensure consistency within and across schools. The document prescribes classroom and school-based assessment strategies, as well as evaluation. Additionally, strategies to safeguard quality in assessment and the management of assessment information are outlined.
The ICT in Education and Training Policy (Ministry of Education, 2014)	This document provides guidelines for integrating ICT into education. It is produced to enhance the development of an ICT culture based on the belief that technology, when used effectively, can improve teaching and learning outcomes.
The Inclusive Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2015a)	This document serves as a framework for inclusive education. It outlines the approaches and strategies for addressing issues such as flexibility, access, assessment, intervention, mainstreaming of children with disabilities, teacher training and professional development, and curriculum and assessment practices.
The Early Learning Framework (Ministry of Education, 2015b)	This document provides guidelines for various types of educational provision in the early years. It recognises that every child has the right to the best possible childhood. Additionally, it specifies the role of responsive adults in providing quality care and educational experiences to early years learners and highlights the significance of play in children’s learning.

Section C is dedicated to policy implementation. It includes seven items, numbered 11 to 17 in the questionnaire. Item 11 asks if respondents believe that their institution’s vision, mission, and values align with the policies that support the current transformation of teaching and learning at their school. Item 12 has two parts: i) ask if the head of the school has organised a session in the last two years to introduce and discuss policies that promote educational change, and ii) if yes, ask how many sessions the respondent can recall, with options including More than twice, Twice, and Once. Item 13 also has two parts: (i) asks if the respondent has participated in meetings over the past two years where school staff and stakeholders discussed a plan to enhance teaching and learning, and if yes, (ii) asks how many times this occurred, with

the same response options. Item 14 follows a similar structure: i) asks if the respondent has attended any external workshops that provided training on implementing actions to improve teaching and learning, and if yes, ii) asks how many times they have participated in such training, with the same response options. Item 15 asks about the presence of a monitoring system for teachers during lessons, with a Yes/No response, followed by a question about how many times the respondent has been observed during lessons if the answer is Yes. Item 16 asks if a comprehensive evaluation of teaching and learning has been conducted at the school in the past two years, with a Yes/No option, and if yes, it further asks who presented and discussed the findings, with options including Principal, Deputy Principal, Studies Coordinator, or Any other. Finally, Item 17 aims to identify which of these descriptors best characterises the head of their school, with options including charismatic, innovative, good listener, and visionary.

2.4. Procedure

Prior to the data collection phase, the investigators reached an agreement with the management of the selected schools to distribute the questionnaire during a scheduled professional development session for the teachers. This arrangement was made to ensure that the process of data collection would not disrupt teaching and learning activities within the schools. Each school allocated 25 minutes during the professional development session for the teachers to complete the questionnaire. At the venue, the purpose and importance of the study were clearly communicated to the teachers, and they signed the informed consent form attached to the questionnaire before filling it out. No financial or material compensation was provided for participation. Completed questionnaires, along with the consent forms, were collected at the venue to prevent any missing questionnaires. Despite these precautions, only 104 out of 170 teachers returned their completed questionnaires. Some of the teachers were not present during data collection, while others declined to participate in the survey.

2.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected primarily consisted of ordinal and textual information. With the exception of demographic data, information related to the study's problem was cleaned and grouped according to the two main issues explored: policy knowledge and implementation support. Categorical data were analysed using descriptive techniques to derive item response frequency percentages, which were subsequently examined based on majority trends to generate the results (Gevisa & Kurniati, 2025). In contrast, textual data were subjected to qualitative coding, focusing on keywords and salient expressions relevant to each item. The codes were assembled and conceptualised into themes, which were subsequently analysed to generate the results (Naeem et al. 2023).

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Demographics

Variable	Variable Categories	Frequency/ Percentage
Gender	Female	95(91%)
	Male	9(9%)
	Others	0
Age	Less than 25 years	95(91%)
	25 years and above	9(9%)
Nationality	Seychellois	97(93%)
	Non-Seychellois	7 (7%)
Highest educational qualification	School Certificate/GCE	32(31%)
	A' Level	0
	Diploma	50(48%)
	Bachelor	12(12%)
	Masters	1(1 %%)
	Others	1(1%)
Experience	Non-response	8(8%)
	Less than 25 years	53(51%)
	10 years and above	51 (49%)

3. RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 shows that out of the 104 teachers who completed the survey, the majority (91%, n=95) are female; the majority (91%, n=95) are aged 25 years or older; and the majority (93%, n=97) are Seychellois. In addition, the largest proportion, accounting for 48% (n=50), holds a Diploma in Education, while 51% (n=53) representing the majority have less than ten years of teaching experience. Based on this distribution, the respondents are demographically diverse in terms of gender, age, experience, educational attainment, and nationality.

3.2 Policy Knowledge

The first sub-hypothesis, SubHo1, states that teachers in schools led by managers with advanced leadership qualifications have comprehensive policy knowledge. Table 3 shows that among 104 teachers who took part in the survey, none was able to correctly enumerate all six policies. A significant number did not demonstrate understanding of the purpose of the policies, did not possess the policy document, had not read the documents, and had not encountered a copy at their school. Based on these results, SubHo1 is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that a significant number of teachers lack comprehensive knowledge of policies.

Table 3. Thematic Display of Results on Teachers' Policy Knowledge

Theme	Results
1. Enumerate policies	2% (n=2) of respondents listed the Early Learning Framework, 30% (n=30) listed Inclusive Education Policy, 13.5% (n=13) listed National Assessment Framework, and 74.5%, which is the majority, could not list any of the policies.
2. Understand the purpose of policies	None of the 104 respondents was able to convincingly state the purpose/rationale of the policies they listed in Theme 1.
3. Possessing policy documents	Only a few respondents (8%, n=8) have a copy of the Inclusive Education Policy document, 3% (n=3) have the Assessment Framework document, and one has the Early Learning Framework document. 91% of the respondents do not have either a hard or soft copy of any of the policy documents.
4. Read policy documents	Out of 104 respondents, 61% (n=63), representing the majority, have not read any of the policy documents, 29% (n=30) have read one document, 8% (n=8) have read two to three documents, and 3% (n=3) have read more than three documents.
5. Encounter the policy document at school	34% of respondents (n=35) have seen some policy documents within their school, while the majority (64%, n=67) have not seen any of the documents at their institution.

3.3. Support for Policy Implementation

The second hypothesis, SubHo2, states that teachers in schools led by managers with advanced leadership qualifications receive sufficient professional support for policy implementation. Table 4 shows that the majority of teachers affirmed that the importance of aligning policies with the school's vision and mission has been explained to them. They have also participated in sessions where policies were discussed, received guidance to design action plans, and were supported to improve their teaching practices. Additionally, they also affirmed that teaching and learning are monitored regularly, periodic evaluations are conducted, and a collaborative school culture is promoted. Based on these results, SubHo2, is accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that a significant proportion of teachers received adequate support for policy implementation.

Table 4. Thematic Display of Results on Level of Support for Policy Implementation Support Provided

Theme	Results
6. The importance of aligning policies with school philosophy is explained	The majority (77%) reported involvement in discussions with their management on alignment of policies with their institutional vision, mission and values, while 23% reported no such involvement.
7. Attend professional development sessions	The majority 67% (n=67) reported they had attended school-organised professional development sessions where some policies were presented and discussed, 37% (n=37)

Theme	Results
where policies are discussed.	reported that no such sessions had been held at their school. Among the 67%, who had attended such sessions, 23% had attended more than two sessions, while 21% had attended only once.
8. Provided with guidance to develop action plans.	77% (n=80) reported participating in some sessions held over the last two years where they were guided on how to develop and implement action plans to improve teaching and learning, while 23% (n=24) said there was no such meeting. Among the 77% who said they had attended such meetings, 38% representing the majority had attended only once, 25% had attended twice, and 13% had attended more than twice.
9. Receiving support to enhance pedagogical practices.	The majority (63%, n=65) reported that they had attended some externally-organised training focusing on improving teaching practices, whereas 37% (n=39) reported they had not attended such. Among the 63% who affirmed attending such a session, 27% representing the majority, said they had attended only once.
10. Regular monitoring, teaching, and learning.	All (100%, n=104) reported that their school periodically monitors teaching and learning and receives feedback. When asked the frequency of monitoring, a substantial majority (66%, n=69), reported they had been monitored more than twice, while 19% (n=20) had never experienced any form of monitoring of their lessons.
11. Periodic evaluation of teaching and learning.	68% (n=71) affirmed that periodic evaluations of teaching and learning had occurred at their school and outcomes disseminated, while 32% (n=33) did not acknowledge such evaluations. Among those who affirmed such evaluations, some reported that their headteacher, the deputy headteacher, and study coordinator played a critical role in the evaluation process, while others acknowledged that the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education is primarily responsible for conducting evaluations, usually every five years.
12. Fostering collaborative school culture	From given options, the majority, (50%, n=52) described their headteacher as a 'good listener'; 24% (n=25) described theirs as 'a visionary'; 18% (n=19) characterized theirs as 'innovative'; 4% (n=4) described their as 'autocratic,' and another 4% labelled theirs as 'charismatic'. None described their headteacher as 'laissez-faire'

3.4. The Findings

Based on the results of the test of SubHo1 and SubHo2, it is concluded that a significant number of teachers who participated in the survey demonstrated limited policy knowledge, but they received adequate support for policy implementation. These findings are discussed in the subsequent section.

4. DISCUSSION

It is important to emphasize that the trustworthiness of this research depends on the robustness of the theoretical framework, the number of participants, and the survey instrument used. However, this does not imply that there were no limitations. The results were based on the analysis of data collected from 104 teachers out of a target sample of 170 teachers in the three schools, representing 61.2% of the target sample. The margin was due to the fact that not all teachers were present on the day of the survey. Approximately 90% of public primary schools in the Seychelles are located on Mahe, the principal island of the Seychelles. Other inhabited islands, such as Praslin and La Digue, have smaller populations and fewer schools. A predefined inclusion criterion was used in selecting the three schools, enabling the identification of pertinent sites. These sites represent 13% of the population of public primary schools in Seychelles. Collectively, these three schools constituted the unit of analysis for this case study. Given the small sample size, the findings cannot be generalized to all public primary schools in Seychelles. Nevertheless, the involvement of a substantial number of teachers aids in bolstering the credibility of the findings.

Analysis of respondents' demographic characteristics reveals diversity, reflecting the multicultural nature of Seychellois society, as recognised in the National Policy on Education (Ministry of Education, 2000). Other policies, such as Curriculum, Assessment, Inclusive Education, ICT in Education, and Early Childhood Education, drive their purpose, principles, and guidelines from the National Policy. Furthermore, two policy implementation issues-policy knowledge and support for policy implementation were explored in this study. The policies and issues were integrated into the questionnaire, and the findings are only generalised to them. However, these components were extensively examined through a comprehensive and focused exposition of the study's contextual background, along with an extensive

review of current literature, leading to the clarification of concepts, a clear and concise problem statement, and a grounded purpose statement as provided in section 1. Focusing solely on teachers' viewpoints and collecting data only through surveys constitutes a limitation. However, the study targeted all teachers in the three schools. Furthermore, the survey tool was developed with strict design guidelines. The items were aligned with the indicators specified in the theoretical framework. Other measures to enhance the study's trustworthiness include strict observance of ethical guidelines, a data analysis framework that aligns with the research variables and the hypothesis, and acknowledging information sources to maintain originality.

When the hypotheses were tested, it was found that a significant number of teachers who participated in the survey had limited policy knowledge, but they did receive adequate support for policy implementation. The first segment of the findings contradicts those of Kumar and Bala (2021), who discovered that public school teachers in India had a moderate level of policy knowledge. Their study involved one policy, while the present study involved six policies, which could potentially overwhelm teachers as they may struggle to comprehend all the details in these six documents, especially if the policies have not been well disseminated. When teachers were asked to list these policies, a significant number were unable to name even one policy. This gap in policy knowledge among teachers may be attributed to the fact that the majority of them hold only a Diploma, which is one of the lowest qualifications required to become a teacher in Seychelles. It is possible that the analysis of educational policies was not part of their teacher education curriculum.

Further analysis reveals that the majority of teachers who completed the survey have less than ten years of experience as of 2024, when this study was conducted. This observation indicates that most of the teachers had not yet entered the teaching profession when some of the policies were introduced. The most recent policies include the Inclusive Education Policy and the Early Childhood policy, both introduced in 2015. Kachali (2020) attributed teachers' limited policy knowledge to their inexperience. Further analysis reveals that despite the fact that the vast majority of these teachers (91%, n=95) were female, their policy knowledge was still deficient, contradicting the findings of previous studies such as Kumar and Bala (2021) and Sondhiya (2022), who discovered high levels of understanding of policy among female teachers. It is also worth noting that the headteachers of the three schools were female and all held master's degrees in educational leadership. Considering that these headteachers learned policy analysis during their advanced studies, they should have been in a better position to enhance their teachers' understanding of policies.

The second aspect of the findings is that teachers received adequate support for policy implementation, contradicting the findings of Kachali (2020) and Uwaezuoke (2023), who found that teachers were not sufficiently equipped to implement educational policies. These studies were conducted in Malawi and Nigeria, respectively, which are different from Seychelles. Evidence from an empirical study attributed the lack of support for teachers to poor school governance (Enyiazu, 2022). The adequate support for policy implementation found in the current study can be attributed to a number of contextual factors. It is possible that through the various topics the headteachers learned during their advanced studies, such as leading people, managing resources, and galvanising stakeholders, they have become more intuitive, adaptive, and understand the importance of fostering a collaborative school culture in their schools and providing needed support to teachers. This could explain why when these teachers were asked to describe how they perceive their headteachers, the majority of them used terms such as visionary, good listener, and democratic to describe them, signifying a positive relationship between them and their headteachers.

It is also possible that the sufficient support provided to teachers could be attributed to the fact that all managers of the three schools were female, with a predominantly female teacher population (91%, n=91). This situation may have fostered a sense of mutual trust and care between the teachers and their managers, leading to the teachers rallying around the managers to ensure their success in their roles. However, this trust and care did not extend to a comprehensive policy knowledge, contradicting the findings of Sondhiya (2022), who found that female teachers showed higher levels of policy knowledge compared to male teachers. Sondhiya's study was conducted in the Jabalpur district, India, which presents a different context compared to Seychelles.

Relating the findings to the various implementation models presented by Dori (2021), it becomes clear that schools tend to favor the management model that focuses on providing resources to teachers, as well as the organizational model that emphasizes promoting harmony among individuals. There is limited evidence supporting the use of the rational and bureaucratic models. The rational model stresses the

importance of clarifying policy goals and objectives, ensuring accurate and consistent planning, providing clear and detailed task assignments, and adhering to standardization. These elements are included among the components of policy knowledge outlined by Baan et al. (2023). It is possible that the implementation framework adopted in schools did not allow for the development of the actors' policy knowledge, leading to the observed lack of policy knowledge among teachers. In accordance with Burke et al.'s (2012) four-stage model, it is also apparent that schools have overlooked the initial stage of exploration and preparation, as well as part of the second stage that focuses on planning. Instead, they have prioritized support, leading to a decreased emphasis on the development of teachers' policy knowledge, a crucial aspect of policy implementation. After this examination, it is evident that the implementation frameworks used in schools are either not sufficiently developed or lack the clarity necessary for managers to understand and effectively apply them.

The findings have implications for the management of pedagogical transformation. For example, limited policy among teachers can hinder their ability to align their practices with the organization's vision and policy goals, potentially derailing institutional mission and vision. This can also lead to a disconnect between professional development initiatives designed for teachers and their actual professional needs, impeding professional growth, effective resource utilisation, and teacher management. Additionally, it may hamper effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning practices, resulting in ineffective teaching, decreased teacher morale, and lower student performance (Rafique et al, 2025; Ahlström & Aas, 2024; Knill, 2024; Memela & Ramrathan, 2022). In contrast, adequate support for policy implementation can ease the burden on teachers, enabling them to focus on achieving institutional goals. It may also inspire teachers to embrace new policies, as they have the necessary resources for their practice. Additionally, it can promote a collaborative school environment, making it possible for teachers and other stakeholders to share information on specific issues, eventually enhancing student achievement (Chafa & Ncube, 2025; Baan et al., 2023; Uwaezuoke, 2023). While concerns related to limited policy knowledge can be effectively addressed by school leaders who can articulate a clear and concise institutional vision and empower their teachers to become effective practitioners and future leaders (Chafa & Ncube, 2025; Fadhilah et al, 2024; Sliwka et al, 2024), maintaining support for policy implementation will require leaders who are intuitive, adaptable, and can encourage their teachers to stay motivated and passionate about their job (Suardhika, et al 2025; Aslam et al, 2022).

Taken together, the findings illuminate the intricate relationship between leadership qualifications, policy knowledge, and institutional support in facilitating pedagogical transformation. Although advanced academic credentials among school managers contribute to structural capacity, they do not inherently ensure functional effectiveness in policy implementation. Addressing this implementation paradox necessitates a more nuanced and context-responsive approach to leadership development, strategic policy dissemination, and sustained teacher engagement. These insights provide a critical foundation for re-evaluating leadership strategies and guiding future initiatives aimed at strengthening educational reform in small-island contexts such as Seychelles.

5. CONCLUSION

This case study revealed that teachers in schools led by managers holding postgraduate leadership qualifications exhibited a deficiency in policy comprehension, yet they receive adequate implementation support. These findings were derived through hypothesis testing, guided by the assumptions that pedagogical practices across all public primary schools in Seychelles are governed by uniform policies and that teachers responded truthfully to the survey questions. In typical educational settings, insufficient policy awareness among teachers may impede the realisation of strategic institutional objectives. Conversely, adequate policy implementation support can promote high standards of professional practice and contribute to improved educational attainment. These findings indicate that, despite possessing advanced leadership credentials, the managers of the three schools have encountered notable challenges in leading pedagogical transformation. The results offer valuable insight into conditions that may be mirrored in other schools with similar contextual characteristics. For a small-island nation striving to build an education system grounded in quality, equity, and accountability, persisting along this trajectory may hinder progress and exacerbate systemic limitations.

To address the issue of limited policy knowledge among teachers, school managers should prioritize accessible and consistent dissemination of policy documents. Digital copies should be shared via commonly used platforms such as WhatsApp and other internal communication channels. Additionally, hard copies ought to be made available in the school library to ensure equitable access. To deepen understanding, professional development sessions should be scheduled regularly, focusing on one policy document at a time to facilitate thorough review and discussion among teaching staff. To strengthen policy engagement and implementation within schools, a system of collaboration and professional networking should be actively promoted. This would facilitate the exchange of information among teachers and foster meaningful dialogue between educators and other key stakeholders. Education authorities are encouraged to broaden recruitment criteria for school managers, prioritizing not only advanced academic qualifications but also demonstrated capacity for strategic planning and resource mobilization aligned with institutional goals. A comprehensive review of existing academic frameworks, particularly those introduced over a decade ago and left unexamined since, should be undertaken to ensure alignment with contemporary policy directives and evolving local and global educational trends. To enhance accessibility, all relevant policy documents should be systematically uploaded to the Ministry of Education's official document portal, enabling teachers to engage with them more effectively. Furthermore, schools should be granted a measured degree of autonomy to explore, adopt, or adapt policy implementation strategies, provided these remain consistent with the institution's mission, vision, and core values. Such flexibility can empower schools to respond more dynamically to contextual needs while maintaining coherence with national education priorities.

To sustain support for effective policy implementation, education authorities should prioritize investment in the professional development of teachers through both degree-awarding programs and targeted short courses. Such initiatives can empower educators to perform their roles with greater competence and confidence. Regular needs assessments should be conducted to identify specific professional gaps and ensure timely, responsive interventions. Schools must also revisit their existing monitoring and evaluation frameworks to reinforce consistency, transparency, and accountability in practice. In parallel, efforts to cultivate a collaborative school culture should be intensified, as this fosters mutual trust, open communication, and enhances teacher well-being—critical components for successful policy uptake and sustained pedagogical transformation.

Finally, future researchers should revisit the current research problem using a more representative sample to enhance the generalisability of findings. Expanding the scope of policy implementation issues beyond the two explored in this case study, and broadening the unit of observation to include perspectives beyond those of teachers, such as school managers, policymakers, and other stakeholders, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play. Such an approach would strengthen the applicability of insights across diverse educational contexts and inform more inclusive policy development.

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