

The New Kind of a Teacher, to Handle the New Subject-Life Orientation, in a Township High School in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The study focused on the new subject introduced in South African schools' curriculum, namely Life Orientation (LO). The purpose of the study was to investigate Grade 12 learners' views with regard to characteristics of a new kind of a teacher to handle Life Orientation as a subject and the role played by this teacher, other than teaching the subject only. Also the LO teacher's views regarding her role and knowledge and expertise were taken into consideration. The sample size was 39 Grade 12 learners and 1 LO teacher from a township high school in Gauteng province. The school was purposely chosen since it had a good track record of Grade 12 results for the past fifteen years. Questions evolved around what the learning content entailed and the role of the LO teacher at school. Learners were given incomplete sentences to complete and the teacher got a separate one to complete also. All ethical considerations were observed. Findings revealed that learners saw LO preparing them for life. They enjoyed conversations in class which were around real issues in life. They also highlighted that, what was missing, was more of physical training which would make Life Orientation periods more enjoyable. Learners saw their LO teacher as a loyal and caring person. Results indicated that there was a need for support since most learners went through challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Life Orientation is a compulsory school subject from Grade R to Grade twelve, whereby learners are equipped through different learning outcomes to respond positively to social demands and to develop in a holistic way (Department of Education 2002). The current Subject Life Orientation before 1994 was known as school guidance which was a

non-examinable subject, whereby focus was mainly on vocational education, character development and social appropriate behaviours (Duhon and Manson 2000). The significance of guidance and counseling in school programmes, has been highlighted by Pedersen and Carey (2003). These researchers stated that guidance and counseling cannot be left out of school programmes since it develops and promotes the academic achievement and psychological development of children. In the South African situation school guidance was not taken seriously by stakeholders in schools. There was lack of recognition of its importance due to teachers who lacked training in the subject. When the new curriculum was introduced post 1994 there was a new subject/learning area Life Orientation which was introduced in schools. The learning outcomes in Life Orientation address the personal, social, physical and career development in the

life of a learner (Department of Education 2003). These learning outcomes in Life Orientation addresses the self, the environment, responsible citizenship, a healthy and productive life, social engagement, recreation and physical activity and career choices (Department of Education 2003). For learners to develop optimally all those outcomes as outlined by the curriculum should be attained. The focus in Life Orientation is the development of self-in-society, and a holistic development of learners. The purpose of introducing Life Orientation in schools was mainly to prepare learners to be able to cope with the complexities of the dynamic life in the 21st century and this was not the case with the subject School Guidance. However, what appears in the curriculum policy documents must be interpreted by teachers who teach the learning area/subject. Therefore there are certain expectations which must be met by Life Orientation teachers in order for pedagogy to occur. The expectations which are clear articulation and implementation of outcomes stipulated in policy documents. Teachers must also be in a position to teach all outcomes in Life Orientation as expected by the Department of Education. Pedagogy is that component of teaching that comprises interventions used by a teacher to bring about learner learning, in other words interventions that occasion learning (Greer 2002:4). Greer (2002) further

elaborates by pointing out that acts of pedagogy will only be met if learners have learnt that which they could not do before. Therefore pedagogy is evident when learners are responding. One of the challenges that South Africa faces since the implementation of Life Orientation as a compulsory subject, is the application of what is taught in real life situation to ascertain that pedagogy has occurred. Looking at the learning outcomes in Life Orientation there are mainly four domains that must be covered, namely well-being, social development, physical development and career development. The challenge that arises is the kind of a teacher who will be able to teach competently all four domains in Life Orientation classes in order to impart skills, knowledge and values to learners.

Research conducted by Prinsloo (2007) on the implementation of Life Orientation programmes and the perceptions of principals and Life Orientation teachers, indicated that key challenges were professional training of LO teachers in understanding the content, outcomes and didactic methods. According to Prinsloo (2007), results varied from rural and former Model- C schools (schools that were advantaged and well-resourced in the old regime in South Africa). In rural areas, teachers were ill equipped to implement the LO programmes whereas in former Model-C schools teachers worked closely with school counselors in the implementation process. Due to lack of skills on the side of teachers there was also lack of motivation hence learners were not influenced in the formation of values. Ferguson and Roux (2003) alluded to the fact that uncertainty and lack of knowledge hampered teachers in adapting to the new content of Life Orientation.

Van Deventer (2008) in a study conducted in selected Western Cape schools, also found that teachers who lack expertise and knowledge in teaching Life Orientation, raise a concern from the learners' perspective and this affects the value attached to the subject. Other researchers like Rooth (2005) and Christiaans (2006) concur that the epistemology and skills of the teachers who teach a subject determines the status thereof. Van der Walt and De Klerk (2006) also agree with the above mentioned researchers that the status of a subject/learning area depends on the teachers that present it and how it is managed by school management.

Apart from the content knowledge of Life

Orientation teachers, Theron (2008) focused on whether the subject addressed the needs of all learners, in particular those who live in townships. The findings of Theron (2008) revealed that learners found the subject meaningful but expressed that it should be more contextually relevant and that learner consultation should ideally be encouraged to determine such relevance. It is upon this background that the current study used the eco-systemic theory as a lens in looking at how the LO teacher can assist learners in constructing knowledge. The focus will also be on the LO teacher's knowledge of the learner's background and how that influences the way the teacher uses the interaction amongst the sub-systems as outlined by Urie Bronfenbrenner in interacting with learners. The choice of the eco-systemic theory was mainly due to the fact that Life Orientation teacher cannot teach the subject without taking the micro, meso, exo, chrono and macro systems into consideration (Donald et al. 2007: 34). In the micro system the individual learner is being looked at in relation with the family. Life in the family setting has a tremendous influence on the life of a learner. The interaction amongst family members in the micro system, shape the life of a learner, since these are significant others. The learner is also surrounded by neighbours and peers and the school which are found in the meso system. Relationships that are formed in the meso system also shape the life of a learner. As children play, get into conversations, argue, fight, the life of an individual is shaped accordingly. The exo system has indirect factors which also have an impact on the life of the learner, such as the working conditions of parents and stress related factors which are projected on to the learner. The factors in the exo system are a bit subtle since one cannot easily realize that they can have an influence on the life of a child. The macro system has factors such as the beliefs, norms and values of a particular society also have an impact on the life of a learner. The society influences the lifestyle, language, beliefs and conduct in general. Every child is subjected to norms and standards of the society where they grow. One cannot divorce oneself from the societal rules and belief system. Therefore in choosing the eco- systemic theory as a lens, the researcher took into consideration the fact that the teacher must understand that the subject Life Orientation requires that a learner should be taught in a

holistic way; which will mean that the systems play a major role since they have an influence on the learner's life. The lens also assisted me in looking at the LO teacher who will be able to look at the subject Life Orientation and try to teach the learner not isolating the learner from the context where the learner comes from. Since the study was conducted in a township school, there are also dynamics which will need the kind of a teacher who understands the township lifestyle and how Life Orientation as subject will be implemented successfully in such an environment.

Research Question: What are the characteristics of a new teacher, and what should be the role of this teacher in facilitating Life Orientation in a township school?

Aim of the Study: Exploring the characteristics of a new teacher and the role of that teacher in facilitating Life Orientation in a township school.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study followed a qualitative case study design which Merriam (1988) define as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit. Case studies also give an interpretive account. For the purpose of this study the bounded phenomenon was a person namely a Life Orientation teacher as a new kind of a teacher to handle the new subject Life Orientation. In choosing a case study design, I wanted to approach the study from a naturalistic research paradigm whereby insight and understanding were sought from what the Life Orientation teacher was doing as Merriam (1988) outlined.

Data Collection

Data was collected from a township school in Gauteng province that was purposely selected due to its good Grade 12 results of more than fifteen years ranging from 87% to 97%. The discipline in that township school was also excellent. The school had a learner population of 800 and was in a quintile one category that is the poorest of the poor school. Most learners had parents who were unemployed and those who were employed ranged from domestic workers or semi-skilled industry workers, some were staying with guardians who were pensioners. The

teacher's profile was as follows; she was in the age group of fifty and formerly appointed as HOD for Guidance and counselling from 1990 while the school was still under the Bophuthatswana regime and later North West Province. Currently the school has only two years in Gauteng Province and the teacher is still the head of the department- Life Orientation. Her academic qualifications were Primary Teachers Certificate, BA degree, BA Hons in Psychology, PGCE, HIV/AIDS diploma and B.Ed Hons in Guidance and Counseling. I decided on having Grade 12 learners as participants so as to get rich data based on learners' observation regarding their Life Orientation teacher who taught them for a period of three years in the FET (Further Education and Training or Grade 10-12) phase. The Life Orientation teacher was also a participant since she was experienced in teaching the subject in the FET phase. Permission to conduct research in that school was obtained from Gauteng Department of Education, the principal of the school, the LO teacher, parents of learners who participated in the study and learners signed assent forms. An explanation was given to the teacher concerning the purpose of the study and its intention. The teacher was requested to explain to learners the purpose of the study before data was collected.

The Instruments

The researcher designed two instruments which enabled one to gather data on the LO teacher and what the content of LO was all about. The instruments consisted of open ended questions so that an in-depth data would emerge. The incomplete sentences were completed by the LO teacher on roles of the teacher and what the subject is all about. The Grade 12's also completed sentences. Their questions were different from the one completed by their teacher. Learners' instrument focused on their LO teacher-roles, teachers characteristics, LO learning content and how it prepared learners for life. Questions covered also areas that learners enjoyed the most and what they wanted to do in class to make Life Orientation enjoyable. Since this was a cross sectional study, questions were answered by Grade 12 learners in one period approximately 40 minutes. The teacher completed the questionnaire alone during her spare time. All 39 learners completed the questionnaires and the teacher returned her completed instrument.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data collected from open ended questions which were completed by the Life Orientation teacher and 39 Grade 12 learners the researcher used steps suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1988) which suggests that at the beginning stage of analysis data is unitized, whereby units of information that will, sooner or later serve as the basis for the defining categories. In the study the sentences completed by Grade 12 learners and the Life Orientation teacher was analyzed and formed the units of information that defined categories. The researcher then put each unit of information on a separate index card and coded according to the number of categories that emerged into themes. The following were areas of interest that emerged as data was analyzed:

- the role and characteristics of the Life Orientation teacher,
- the content of the subject Life Orientation in the FET phase,
- how the subject content prepared learners for life roles and challenges,
- what learners enjoyed in LO classes, and
- what learners wished could be covered by the subject content of LO.

FINDINGS

The results of the study were based on the comments from 39 Grade 12 Learners who were taught Life Orientation by one teacher from Grade 10 -12. The other comments were from the very same teacher who taught LO ever since it was introduced in schools.

Views of Grade 12 Learners

The Character Trait and Competency of the LO Teacher: The Grade 12 learners mentioned that their Life Orientation teacher was a loyal, friendly, open, caring, approachable, a listener and a helping person. I found that all learners gave similar answers to the question which needed a description of their LO teacher and the teacher and the way the teacher responded to their needs. Learners saw the LO teacher as a friend and a confidant and they could tell all their problems without fear since the teacher was approachable. To illustrate that the LO teacher was regarded as a caring and a good listener so-

me of the responses from students cited are as follows:

Question: The best Life Orientation teacher I had was good because...

Participant 1: She was a good listener and she didn't judge us no matter what type of personality we show

Participant 2: She was very understanding, and really understood what I was feeling and thinking.

Participant 3: She was a good teacher and she was also patient and caring

Participant 4: Care for learners and a person whom we can go to when we have problems and want to confide in someone

Participant 5: She is very open, knowledgeable, a good listener and a loving yet firm teacher.

Participant 6: She guided me on the information regarding tertiary institutions and bursaries with patience

They all highlighted that the teacher never discussed their problems with other teachers and was always ready to listen. The teacher was very resourceful and knowledgeable according to the description of learners. Regarding their needs as Grade 12 learners the teacher had the information regarding tertiary institutions and how one can apply for bursaries. Regarding the personality and character traits of the teacher, the learners were all saying similar things which strongly reveal that the teacher had the right qualities for the Life Orientation teacher. These qualities are essential for all LO teachers in order to be in a better position to address and teach the learning outcome on well-being or personal development. When the teacher is emotionally stable it will be easy to implement the outcome without fear that there will be conflicting messages when learners look at the day to day conduct. The teacher's response regarding her role was as follows:

Teacher: I try to handle every learner with respect when addressing the problem. I don't discuss their problems with other teachers unless if the class teacher or the principal must know about the matter. When they cry in my office I give them a chance to vent and say whatever that is troubling them although this is emotionally taxing to listen to their painful stories. I think the training that I got helped me a lot to deal with such issues.

Another valuable point in the LO teacher

was the knowledge that the teacher had. The teacher's qualifications reveal that the LO teacher studied in order to be a specialist in the subject Life Orientation. The teacher studied BA Hons in Psychology, whereby aspects of personal development and well-being that are outlined in Life Orientation are dealt with in a more academic and intense manner. Therefore, when this kind of a teacher is faced with the curriculum content in the FET phase will be competent to interpret the outcome and give what is appropriate to learners. Furthermore the teacher studied B. Ed Hons in Guidance and Counseling, which is relevant for counseling skills for the LO teacher. All learner participants (39 Grade 12) said that the teacher is a good listener, approachable, helpful, and a caring person as stated in Department of Education (2003). They all attributed these qualities since the teacher studied what a counselor should be like. Life Orientation expects the teachers to play also the role of counselors, regarding, careers, personal, emotional and social issues. The success of the participant emanated from the fact that the degree in Guidance and counseling equipped her in becoming a better LO teacher. The knowledge of the teacher includes *inter alia* HIV/AIDS diploma which cuts across all learning outcomes in LO. All these qualifications that the teacher has enable the participant to be an outstanding teacher and competent in carrying out duties.

The Content of Life Orientation in the FET Phase: Findings revealed that most of the content as outlined in the policy document of Life Orientation in the FET phase was covered. The question wanted learners to elaborate on what they have learnt from Grade 10-12. Their answers covered three out of four learning outcomes which are Well-being, Citizenship education, and careers.

Question: From the Well-being I learn...

Participant 1: About life in general, how to handle conflicts, morals, stress, communication, and knowing yourself.

Participant 2: How to live with other people and how to deal with illness.

Participant 3: Having purpose and direction in our lives and helps me to have high self-esteem.

Participant 4: How to live a balanced lifestyle. And also learn how to treat others and respect their feelings.

Question: From Citizenship education I learn...

Participant 5: About human rights, stereotypes, discrimination and equality.

Question: From Careers I learn...

Participant 6: How it feels like being in the working world

Participant 7: To make good choices and decisions

Participant 8: How to choose the right career, types of stress and how to study.

The findings indicated that the LO periods were taken seriously since all learners were able to give the curriculum content and elaborated on specific topics like stress management, study skills, career choices and other topics which interested them the most. It is also clear that the teacher took the subject seriously and offered the relevant curriculum content. Due to the knowledge and competency that the teacher had of the outcomes of LO it was easy for the participant to have confidence in executing the teaching task with ease. The findings reveal that the teacher empowered herself in the three outcomes since all 39 participants were able to say exactly what they did in the classroom. With regard to the outcome on sports and recreation none of the learner participants mentioned that content. It is clear from the results that the outcome was either not touched or it did not have an impact.

How the Subject Content Prepared Learners for Life Roles and Challenges: Findings revealed that the teacher offered the subject content in such a way that it prepares them for life. This is evident from answers given by all thirty nine participants though I will just give five examples as follows:

Question: Life Orientation prepares me for...

Participant 1: I must be ready for every challenge that I am going to come across with

Participant 2: It prepares me to choose the right career and to face challenges that I may come across with

Participant 3: Being a responsible person in the near future and to be prepared to take what the world gives me.

Participant 4: A better life after school, good relationships and to lead a healthy lifestyle

Participant 5: Dealing with challenges that may arise and how to combat all negatives

From the responses of all participants it is clear that the teacher handled the outcome personal well-being and also the issue of dealing with life's challenges was dealt with to greater lengths.

Findings reveal that LO does highlight important issues that learners should be prepared for in real life situation like unemployment and coping with stress and other challenges that may arise.

What Learners Enjoyed in LO Classes: It is interesting to note that all learners enjoyed similar things like having discussions about real issues that affect them. Active participation made learners to enjoy LO periods. Most learners highlighted that they enjoyed expressing their feelings regarding various topics. Here follows some examples of participants' answers:

Question: As a learner in the Life Orientation class, I enjoy...

Participant 1: Talking debating with my classmates and just sharing ideas about a certain topic. Learning more about outside the classroom and what it brings to me.

Participant 2: Sharing information, helping others to manage their stress and talking about our careers.

Participant 3: Participating in class, discussing the different aspects or areas of life and the importance of communication. When my teacher is teaching with confidence and interest.

Participant 4: Expressing my feelings

Participant 5: When we get to serious talk, where learners express their true feelings, opinions and views.

It seems that learners enjoy having conversations in LO classes and what emerges strongly is the issue of expressing their feelings. This indicates that learners have issues that concern them and a subject like Life Orientation allows them to say how they feel and engage in all sorts of topics.

What Learners Wished Could Be Covered by the Subject Content of LO: The findings from learners revealed that learners wanted to do more of physical training but it seems what they did was not enough. Since this content of physical training was not mentioned in the content covered by LO it means what they did, did not make an impact in their lives. There was a desire to get more lessons about the aspect of physical and body movement. With regard to what the subject reminded them of, they compared it with their homes, where their mothers were relating stories at night, challenges that they encountered in life, goal setting and life experiences. Even though most felt that LO is an important and an interesting subject there are those learners who

expressed that it is a boring subject. What was touching was when students expressed that the teacher could be available during school holidays for consultation and support, unfortunately this aspect is not covered.

Findings from data collected from the LO teacher revealed that the teacher saw LO as a subject which prepared learners for life's challenges which linked so well with what learners said with regard to the role of the teacher. The teacher expressed that the LO teacher is a person who guides and support learners. What the teacher gave as a response tallied with what learners gave in their responses. The teacher gave one quality which she has and displayed always of being a good listener, being a confidante and helping learners with decision making, career choice and crisis intervention. The teacher enjoyed teaching lessons on personal well-being like stress management, self-image, career choice, study skills, and social development or citizenship education. The part which interested the teacher the most was counseling and crisis intervention. The teacher never mentioned the aspect of physical training, which was a clear indication that this was not one of her expertise.

DISCUSSION

Previous research on Life Orientation does not outline much about the characteristics of a Life Orientation teacher. It is only Prinsloo (2007) who mentioned that "the character of the LO teacher is of the utmost importance, and that the person of the teacher determines the degree of success with which all aspects of life, survival and communication skills are conveyed to and internalized by learners". Prinsloo (2007) further suggested that an official screening process should ensure that the right caliber of person is appointed in that position of being an LO teacher. The findings in this research indicated clearly what the characteristics of an LO teacher are or should be like from the learners perspective. The findings of the study agree with what Theron (2008) found when conducting research in the township schools. The similarities lie in the fact that the role played by teachers was seen in a positive way. Learners saw the role played by the LO teacher as that one which enhanced their lives in a positive way. The subject and what the teacher does made them to see life and its challenges in a positive way.

As far as the content of the subject Life Orientation in the FET phase is concerned findings revealed that indeed learners saw the significance of the subject in their lives. They were able to see the importance of studying issues related to their well-being like stress management, communication skills, decision making, conflict resolution, motivation, self-knowledge and coping skills. The same findings were also found by Theron (2008). The interesting part was that the subject prepared them to deal with challenges in life and they acknowledged that in their responses. These challenges that learners highlighted included issues like unemployment and coping with whatever challenge that they may encounter.

What learners enjoyed in LO classes were fruitful conversations or discussions regarding real life issues. They valued active participation which encouraged every learner to express their views freely. Since these were township learners who experience challenges in their environment and their homes, these interactions in the classroom situation were valuable to them. The classroom environment created a safe space for them where they could be heard. The freedom of expression accorded to learners was something they really cherished and they felt accepted when their points of view were valued by their peers. This relates to what Carl Rogers said that every child should be accepted unconditionally (Meyer et al. 1990). The way the Life Orientation teacher facilitated the subject, made an impact whereby active participation was actually the best way of teaching the subject according to learners responses. When the learners are involved in lessons they sort of value their contribution and own the subject, unlike if the teacher tells them how to conduct themselves and the do's and don'ts in life. The direct method of teaching won't be acceptable for the learning area but instead conversation method where there is turn-taking and sequencing of ideas was highly valued (Magano et al. 2010).

Learners missed the part of Physical Education in their LO classes. The teacher was incompetent to handle that domain. This finding is in agreement with what researchers found that teachers who teach LO are either former Guidance teachers or generalist teachers and they are forced to present sections that fall beyond their realm of familiarity (Van Deventer 2008; Du Toit et al. 2007). This is one area which suggests

that though the teacher was good in the three domains of Life Orientation the Physical Education aspect was not her area of specialty. The status and practice of any subject is determined by the epistemology and skills of the teachers who teach it (Rooth 2005; Christiaans 2006).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For Life Orientation teachers there is a serious challenge to meet all expected outcomes in an exceptional way. What the study revealed is that it is unlikely that one teacher can be in a position to handle all four areas of Life Orientation showing expertise equally. It is therefore important that educationist take cognizance of the following:

More Than One Person to Handle Four Domains of Life Orientation

Expert skills in the presentation of all areas of Life Orientation cannot be overlooked. The schools should identify teachers who are skillful in dealing with personal well-being, citizenship education, sports and recreation and careers. The knowledge and skills that teachers possess will also benefit learners and there will be quality education in schools unlike when general knowledge is used. Learners will also value what they receive during LO periods.

Teach only LO -as the Subject is Inclined to Counseling and Interventions

The subject of Life Orientation is actually dealing more with the lives of learners in an intense way, the way the learners responded in the study. The results of the study indicated that learners wished that the teacher could be there during school holidays for consultation when they experience crisis in their lives. This is a clear indication that the teacher who is responsible for LO should also be allocated time for counseling learners. If the teacher is allocated other subjects to handle there won't be enough time for intervention and counseling. The context of townships is also calling out for teachers to act in 'loco parentis' whereby some children live in child-headed households. Most schools don't have Educational Psychologists or registered counselors, hence the LO teacher acts as a counselor

where need arise. In the School Based Support Teams often the LO teacher is part of the team. If the LO teacher can only teach LO will be in a position to handle all cases that the school encounters in a meticulous way and the referral system will also be efficient whereby further assistance is sought from either the District or Specialists like Psychologists and Social workers.

Training and Specialization in Each Domain

Researchers such as Prinsloo (2007), Du Toit et al. (2007) and Van Deventer (2008) recommended that LO teachers should receive training. It is imperative that the Department of Education takes this seriously and each and every domain of Life Orientation should be given attention in the training provided. The Advanced Certificate in Education programmes (an upgrading programme for teachers) also can assist in skills and knowledge of LO. It is also important that when teachers enroll for the ACE (Advanced Certificate in Education) it should be with the aim of skill and knowledge acquisition and not only for the sake of obtaining a qualification. The knowledge and skill acquired in the LO specialization through ACE programmes should be utilized appropriately. The Department of Education took an initiative of giving teachers bursaries in order to specialize in school subjects such as Life Orientation, which was a good gesture. The problem is how many of those trained teachers are utilizing the knowledge and skills acquired appropriately. Further research is necessary for all teachers who received training through ACE programmes in order to find out whether they are implementing what they have been trained on.

School Management Teams should regard LO as a Meaningful Subject and Not as an Add on Subject

Life Orientation appears on the Grade 12 certificate even though the subject is non-examinable. The fact that the subject does appear on a matric certificate should also be taken seriously. The value that learners see in the subject also suggests that the move by the Department to make it a compulsory subject was not a mistake. It, therefore, means that the School Management Committee must also take the subject seriously. When LO is taken seriously it will be allocated

time slots outlined in the policies of DOE which is two hours per week (Department of Education 2003). The subject should not be an extra subject to teachers who are not overloaded with work. The teacher knowledge and expertise should be taken into consideration and passion to teach it.

Teaching Posts Should Be Created in Order to Employ MORE than ONE Person for ONE Class

The Department of Education should create more posts to allow schools to employ more than one person to teach Life Orientation. The problem of having one person who is expected to handle all four outcomes will be alleviated. Each outcome is a specialized area in Life Orientation and needs a person who will give knowledge and skill in an excellent way; therefore it is of utmost important that more than one person is employed for one class.

HEI Should Align Their Training to Produce the New Kind of a Teacher Who Will Meet The Demands of the 21st Century

Institutions of Higher Learning should align their training in teacher education that it will cater for the demands of the 21st century. The Department of Education (2003) outline that Life Orientation equips learners to solve problems, to make informed decisions and choices and to make appropriate actions to enable them to live meaningfully in a rapidly changing society. This calls for the training to be dynamic and suitable for the context of the South African learner. The training at HEI's should be in a position to train the new kind of a teacher who will be able to handle the subject Life Orientation with expertise. This new kind of a teacher should know that the context where the learner comes from will also influence the teaching of all domains in Life Orientation. The need for these new kind of a teacher cannot be overemphasized.

The Teaching Strategies Should Accommodate the Current Learner- "Chatting Type of a Learner"

The findings of the study indicated that learners enjoyed active participation and discussions in the classrooms where they were free

to express themselves. It is of vital importance that teachers take cognizance of this that learners will enjoy more of conversations in class than direct teaching method. In the Inservice Training programmes and ACE programmes (Advanced Certificate in Education) and the current BEd programmes it will be necessary to put emphasis on the way facilitation is done in the classroom situation. Teaching strategies outlined by Killen (2007) such as discussions, co-operative learning, problem solving method and research will assist the teacher in meeting the current learner. The other method such using conversation in facilitating lessons as outlined by Magano et al. (2010) may also assist the teacher in getting the learners to participate actively during LO periods. Learners feel free to participate in class when they are given a chance to do so and when they know that there won't be any discrimination and their opinions are valued by their peers and the teacher. There is a need for learners to express their opinions, LO accords them an opportunity to do so in an organized setting.

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