

PREPAREDNESS OF LECTURERS IN INTEGRATING GENDER RESPONSIVENESS IN THE CURRICULUM IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE EASTERN CAPE

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ABSTRACT

This article sets out to explore the problem of the preparedness of lecturers in integrating a gender responsive curriculum in Community Colleges the Eastern Cape. It is essential to understand why lecturers do not incorporate a gender responsive curriculum to help Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape develop fresh approaches that will directly address the specific requirements of both males and females. This article adopts a phenomenological research design to determine lecturer's perceptions and perspectives on how well as they considered themselves ready in ensuring a gender responsive curriculum in the Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape. The methodology considered to be most suitable for grounding this study was a critical research methodology because approaches like positivism and interpretivism do not challenge inferences to increase the value of evidence collected on the ground. The required research data were gathered using semi-structured interview on eight (8) lecturers who volunteered to participate in this study. The research findings revealed that lecturers are not prepared to ensure a gender responsive curriculum in Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape. Their viewpoints therefore suggested that preparedness for the integration of a gender responsive curriculum is essential in Community Colleges.

Keywords: community colleges, curriculum, gender responsiveness, inclusiveness, phenomenology

INTRODUCTION

This article explores some of the connections between the politics of gender and the preparedness of lecturers in integrating gender responsiveness in the curriculum in the Eastern Cape. This article starts with the assumptions that there are contradictions and commonalities

in female and male ways of knowing as contained in the curricula and pedagogies in Community learning Centres in the Eastern Cape. The dilemmas and similarities linked to gender relations are mediated by sexism, political and economic dynamics and social class (CHE 2013; Akala 2016). As (Apple 2018) points out, the formal curriculum includes over formalised and planned curricular knowledge found in a variety of materials and texts served through lecturers. The curriculum also incorporates the basic perspectives and ideologies used by lecturers to plan, organise and evaluate what occurs in the classroom. The hidden curriculum on the other hand includes the everyday interactions and processes that tacitly teach vital practices, ideologies, and values (Apple 2018).

In South Africa, Post-apartheid adult education clearly stated its purpose of serving a variety of needs. The main aim was to provide good quality education to adult learners. For example, the Constitution of South Africa, Act of 108 of 1996 makes a strong case that “everyone has a right to basic education” including adult education (Republic of South Africa 1996, 6). At the same time social changes such as poverty, inequality and unemployment were seen to be on the increase. In this regard adult education was seen as an agent of social change.

Despite these intentions, the Green Paper for Post-school Education and Training under the Department of Higher Education and Training (2012) noted that the system continues to produce and reproduce gender, class, racial and other inequalities regarding access to educational opportunities and success. Moreover, the challenges faced by rural Colleges in the Eastern Cape have been reported by the portfolio committee on education (Emerging voices 2005). Some of the observations made include geographical distribution where these Colleges are situated and mostly characterised by high unemployment rate and few work opportunities. female adult learners in the Eastern cape are still prevented from attending classes by issues such as gender inequality in the classroom, gender-based violence, power relations, and sexual harassment (Tawana, 2019).

Preparing lecturers in the process of ensuring a gender responsive curriculum, therefore, depends in large measures on the availability of knowledgeable, skillful, sensitive and socially committed adult educators (Youngman 2005, 06). Oduaran and Modise (2009, 273) state that “in many nations, adult education is being urgently asked to specify ways and means by which it seeks to enhance directly the total living, productive and competitive capacities of its target audience”. Reinforcing this position, Obasi (2014, 27) argues that adult education is a field of study necessary in national development as its applicability cuts across sectors. Consequently, the research undertaken in this article sets out to:

1. Explore the biases against women that prevent these Community Colleges from

implementing a gender-responsive curriculum.

2. Explain how learning in these Community Colleges is impacted by the lack of a gender-responsive curriculum.
3. Make recommendations for strategies that these Community Colleges might use to promote a gender-responsive curriculum.

RESEARCH DESIGN

To analyse the topic of gender biases that inhibit the integration of a gender responsive curriculum in Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape, this research used a phenomenological study approach. According to Creswell (2013, 79), a phenomenological approach looks at the connections between a certain person's or group's lived experiences. Because each person views their own reality as subjective, the goal is to investigate the individual's experienced situations.

Additionally, it is recognized that reality is intersubjective because reality is created via human interaction in social life. Motivated by the goal of the study, which is to investigate how Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape could assist residents in reducing gender gaps in daily life. The natural expansion of knowledge regarding women's experiences was made possible by the application of a phenomenological research methodology with gender inequities in a patriarchal environment to encompass the community in which they are continually taught to belong. In other words, if women start to talk about this during the research process, a phenomenological method might alter how they experience their freedom. The individual experiences and perceptions of men and women can be illustrated particularly well using a phenomenological method, which makes it possible to counter structural prejudice. Additionally, the study technique might also elicit the opinions of men (as was done during the individual interviews in the two chosen Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape).

RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is a common vision that characterizes a discipline's beliefs and values and directs how issues are resolved Kivunja and Kuyini (2017, 26). To put it another way, a paradigm aims to characterize a worldview that is based on philosophical presumptions concerning the make-up of social reality. The four components listed by Lincoln and Guba as constituting a paradigm are epistemology, ontology, methodology, and axiology (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017, 26). The topic of epistemology is how we learn things and determine if something is real or not. The assumptions we make to think that something makes sense, is real, or has a specific nature are dealt with by ontology.

A study's research design, methods, approaches, and processes are all included under the umbrella term of methodology. The term "axiology" refers to the moral concerns that must be considered when designing a study. Because dominant paradigms like positivism and interpretivism have marginalized researchers' ways of knowing, we chose critical research methodology to support this article. For instance, positivism contends that establishing truth and objective reality can only be done through the scientific process. Since the positivist paradigm maintains that the world exists outside of us and that we may learn from it, a researcher utilizing it seeks to be an impartial gatherer and objective observer throughout the study process. It can only be comprehended by employing unbiased scientific techniques (Neuman 2013, 64). According to this viewpoint, the researcher must approach the research project from an epistemological perspective that is free of bias and values. In this view, the researcher's main responsibility is to "listen, observe, and form knowledge", and research participants should "speak for themselves" (Neuman 2013, 64).

Therefore, positivist research is merely a description of what was observed regarding the creation of knowledge. The interpretivists contend that our senses serve as mediators between our realities and that, in the absence of consciousness, the universe has no purpose. Reality is created by consciousness interacting with objects that have already been given meaning (Hammersley 2013, 26). simply put, there are as many realities as there are people because reality is produced by individuals. Language actively affects and molds reality rather than just passively labeling things (Hammersley 2013, 26). This indicates that reality is created to have meaning by the interaction of language with components of a separate world. However, some interpretative paradigm detractors claim that because the emphasis is on understanding behavior rather than explaining action from the participants' viewpoints, the interpretive paradigm leaves little room for challenging ideas and simply accepts them. This suggests that the interpretive paradigm has constraints even while it is responsive to meanings that might be built into further generalizations. It appears that researchers are expected to reach the same conclusion as participants, and it is unclear what function they play in helping participants understand something more deeply (Hammersley 2013, 26).

Explicitly, the participants' emancipation is the goal of critical theories. Emancipation in this context refers to having the prerequisites for learning the information required to set one free. In other words, the ability to alter society, governmental systems, and social structures in a way that improves one's capacity to live and grow freely is referred to as emancipation. Critical ideologies therefore encourage individuals to pursue more autonomy and self-definition. Critical theories focus on ideological critique to promote more autonomy and self-definition. A set of ideas and principles known as an ideological Societies have created

worldviews to conceal and reinterpret the true nature of the social structure in which they live. Therefore, the purpose of ideological critique is to expose the false justifications for ongoing or historical injustices. The idea that women are weaker than males or that they are inferior to them serves as an illustration of such an ideological critique. But occasionally, gender-oriented notions reflected in myths, beliefs, and personal statements might clash with one another or with how people behave (Giroux 2011; Riyami 2015).

Critical theory's paradigmatic purpose is founded on the ontological view that social reality is historically constrained and continually shifting due to social, political, cultural, and power-based forces (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2011; Hammersley 2013). The collective meaning that people produce in this setting serves as the source of true knowledge and can direct both individual and collective action to improve their conditions. The participants' frames of reference are used to develop knowledge, which is subsequently connected to class placements. In an ideal scenario, the contact between the researcher and the study subject results in the transformation and liberation of both parties. The collective meaning that people produce in this setting serves as the source of true knowledge and can direct both individual and collective action to improve lives. Knowledge is created via the participants' frames of reference and then connected to class positions. In a perfect world, the contact between the researcher and the study subject results in the transformation and liberation of both parties. Axiologically, critical paradigm researchers view research as a moral and political activity that requires them to choose and formally adopt a position on values (Cohen et al. 2011; Hammersley 2013).

This article adopted Critical theory as its research paradigm after examining these several paradigms. To make sense of events, critical theory strongly emphasizes the historical and social context (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba 2011, 99). As a result, critical theory meets the demands of adult learners who are frequently exposed to concerns relating to racial, social, economic, and sexual divisions. According to critical theory, it is crucial to comprehend the context in which actual people's lived experiences occur. In contrast to interpretive scholarship and the other philosophical tenets mentioned above, critical scholarship examines social conditions to reveal hidden structures, according to Cohen et al. (2011, 27). We learn from critical theory that knowledge is power. This means that being aware of one's oppression enables one to change oppressive practices. Additionally, critical theory consciously aims to combine theory and practice (Riyami 2015). Additionally, critical theory is reflective, challenging, motivating, social action oriented, and it empowers people to assess how they are responding to oppressive and male-dominated environments. Women are empowered by critical theory to confront and overcome the oppression they suffer in a male-dominated society.

It can also be viewed as adding value to earlier studies on adult basic education and the eradication of gender disparities, according to the researchers.

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS AS DATA GENERATING PROCESS

We picked semi-structured interviews for this article's purposes since they would allow for the discussion of a range of relevant topics. Because participants may base their responses on their experiences and assess the main issues that worried them rather than the researcher imposing his or her own viewpoints, semi-structured interviews were used. As stated by Patton (2002, referenced in Gray 2009, 384), using a voice recorder during interviews is advised to ensure their success. In this study, though, this only happened if the participants were okay with having their interviews taped. The ability to record audio the researcher to concentrate on the listening-intensive interview procedure by capturing the views and reality-creation processes of the participants.

SELECTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

To take part in the study, eight adult lecturers from Community Colleges were chosen. Since the emphasis in qualitative research is on the quality and depth of the findings rather than number and simplicity, smaller sample sizes are often used (Creswell 2013, 285). The average interview time with a Community College instructor was 60 minutes, providing for a thorough conversation. The selection of participants (lecturers in Community Colleges) was voluntary as far as that is concerned. In other words, we decided what needed to be known and then went in search of those ready to share their expertise and experience until the facts were saturated. In other words, it seemed doubtful that new information would come from additional research including these subjects (Creswell 2013, 286). To select the centers originally, we used purposive sampling (Gray 2009; Creswell 2013). The sample should, as much as possible, represent the entire community of the Cacadu district's learning centers in terms of the relevant characteristics (Creswell 2013, 286).

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010, 15), who also note that many institutions have policies in place to protect the rights of persons taking part in their oversight of research activities, researchers must preserve the "rights and welfare of the participants who participate in the study". The ethics research council of the University of South Africa has provided ethical standards for this study, and the researcher will comply by them. Participants must go through an ethics review process before participating in semi-structured interviews and focus groups to

make sure the techniques are fair and impartial to all participants. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012, 483) also point out that the ethics literature highlights the importance of upholding confidentiality, which denotes a dedication on the part of researchers to handle any information supplied by participants with care and refrain from using it in a way that would put them in danger or embarrass them.

The covering letters addressed the need for videotaping and audiotaping the participants by outlining the study's objectives. Couples who participated in the talks in the mixed focus groups were not questioned about their personal lives. Additionally, the duration of each focus group session was specified in detail and followed. By letting the participants choose freely whether to participate, the researcher also attempted to democratize the process. After compiling the report, the researcher went to the participants to confirm the results with them in person while carrying a copy of the research report.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The primary goal of the study was to examine the gender biases that prevent Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape from creating a gender responsive curriculum. The strategy that Community Colleges can use to support a gender-responsive curriculum was the focus of the research. To give the participants the chance to base their responses on their perceptions, semi-structured interviews were performed. Consequently, the research's conclusions were arranged according to what will be discussed further below in terms of the identification of sub-themes.

Gender biases that hinder the integration of gender responsive curriculum in community colleges

Absence of participation in curriculum planning

Participants felt that they were excluded from the Department of Higher Education's decision-making process on the development of the curriculum in relation to their lack of involvement in curriculum planning. The department's decision to exclude them from its curriculum development allowed it to impose its authority, replicate its power, and control over the curriculum's substance. The following is an illustration and summary of these worries:

"I think Community College professors ought to be included in the initial stages of curriculum creation." (Female participant).

"Even though we are the ones that implement the program, we are not involved in its initial creation." (Male participant).

"When it comes to developing curricula, there should be collaboration." (Male participant).

Inadequate communication of master plan

Lecturers in Community Colleges noted that adult lecturers in Community Colleges who support adult learners are not given enough information about the master plan to know how to implement a gender-responsive curriculum in Community Colleges. To create a gender-responsive curriculum, there is a connection between this and the underrepresentation of women in decision-making. The following comments showed and summarized this conclusion.

“No information has been provided on how to implement a gender-responsive curriculum in our Community Colleges.” (Male participant).

“Because gender issues are not covered in the curriculum at our Community Colleges, the stereotype that women are less qualified to teach is perpetuated.” (Male participant).

“I don’t recall ever reading a circular regarding gender concerns, but it’s possible that Community College teachers are being informed verbally.” (Female participant).

Gender awareness level

When it comes to incorporating or infusing a gender-responsive curriculum in Community Colleges, there was a dearth of gender awareness, which surfaced as another sub-theme throughout the semi-structured interviews. All eight lecturers in Community Colleges stated that they were not in any way sensitized on how they can infuse or integrate a gender responsive curriculum in Community Colleges. Their responses were summarized as follows:

“It is challenging to change what we cannot perceive, such as gender inequity, because we are not aware of how to incorporate gender issues in our Community Colleges.” (Male participant).

“It is challenging to teach our adult learners about gender issues. Since most women enroll in classes at our Centers, we believe that there are no gender disparities there.” (Male participant).

“Our centers provide access, and our programs are well-liked by our female learners. It is challenging to change something that we cannot perceive, like gender inequity.” (Male participant).

When further questioned about whether adult students ever make concerns to them regarding gender issues, the lecturers in these Community Colleges responded that they never receive such complaints from their adult students. The following findings were drawn:

“Adult students never talk to us about their experiences.” (Male participant).

“Gender difficulties have become commonplace in our societies, and our pupils don’t seem to be concerned about matters that can affect them.” (Female participant).

“The gender issues affect the young girls and women but not us men.” (Male participant)

How a lack of gender responsive curriculum can affect learning in community colleges.

The studies that follow discuss how teaching and learning may be impacted by the absence of gender-responsive curricula in the Eastern Cape. Under this research purpose, three themes emerged: the stereotyping of career choices, the employment of women in low-paying jobs and the lack of opportunities for women to compete with males.

Resistance in integrating gender responsive curriculum

All the participants in the semi-structured interviews addressed the problem of gender biases that prevent the integration of gender-responsive curriculum in Community Colleges by stating that they strictly followed the curriculum's prescribed content and resisted incorporating or infusing a gender-responsive curriculum's content in their instruction. This observation was corroborated by the following responses:

“I never question the curriculum; I just use it to teach my classes.” (Male participant).

“Avoiding a gender-responsive curriculum is required since we are judged on how well our adult learners did rather than how they engaged in discussions about gender issues.” (Female participant).

“Topics that are related to gender are not clearly defined to make it easier for us to integrate a gender responsive curriculum.” (Female participant).

Traditional feminine options

The notion that women would select traditionally feminine professions like teaching, nursing, and social work was mourned by every participant in the semi-structured interviews. This observation was supported by the responses, which can be summed up as follows:

“Women tend to select fewer demanding careers, such as ones that involve assisting locals.” (Female participant).

“Most women will experience more negative repercussions from choosing careers dominated by men.” (Female participant).

“Women may believe they won't be successful in demanding professions like science and engineering.” (Female participant).

Less chances to compete against males

Information gathered on how gender-responsive pedagogy in the Eastern Cape influences learning said that women wouldn't be willing to compete with men in demanding occupations.

The following response provided the conclusions:

“Adult learners who are not treated equitably would believe that they have few opportunities to achieve in society, even if they acquire a decent education.” (Male participant).

Another adult educator agreed with the statement and stated:

“Women will be less motivated to learn and do well at Community Learning Centers because they would be aware that there are no options available to them.” (Female participant).

“If a gender-responsive curriculum is not implemented, creativity may be limited. Additionally, only male students will be represented in my class, leaving no room for females.” (Female participant).

The responses from the participants on lecturers’ willingness to adopt a gender-responsive curriculum in Community Colleges of the Eastern Cape, stereotypical gender beliefs, behaviors, and policies are ubiquitous in Community Colleges, the curriculum’s subject matter, and pedagogy. These responses demonstrated an awareness of the repressive patriarchal culture, ideology, and authority prevalent in the Community Colleges represented by the participants. Furthermore, it became clear that a patriarchal society was compatible with the tenets of a modern, conservative, and prejudiced approach of knowledge selection, which contributed to the explanation of why gender diversity was lacking in Community College courses.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The discussion which follows focuses on the biases against women that prevent Community Colleges from implementing a gender-responsive curriculum, biases which have been identified in the research findings.

Curriculum, authority, and control

The results of the semi-structured interviews showed that the lecturers who supported adult students at the two Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape felt disempowered to implement a gender responsive curriculum because they were excluded from the Department of Higher Education’s decision-making process. with relation to the development of the curricula at Community Colleges. The department was able to impose its influence over the curricula of Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape by choosing not to include them as decision-makers in the formulation of the adult learning curriculum.

At the context of this article, contrasting descriptions of female students as loud by

lecturers who teach in various Community Colleges complement and assist identify the distinct level of dual and irregular gender inequalities. Similarly, according to study by Tubaundule (2014), teachers' support and involvement in the development of the curriculum have a major impact on how well the planned inclusive school curriculum is implemented. His research also showed that if lecturers are unsure of and unable to identify the aims of the curriculum, they may fall back on the technical implementation of the desired school curriculum at the classroom level.

The hidden curriculum

The results of this study showed that an invisible curriculum contributes to key factors repeating gender gaps in this district, like the curriculum's power and control issue. The expectations, praise, and criticism of lecturers differed between male and female students, with female students receiving more frequently critical remarks in this area. Apparently, McLaren (2003, 86), points out that the unintentional result of the educational process is the hidden curriculum. It consists of unofficial, implicitly expressed instructional influences, experiences, and messages that pupils have picked up while in school. These Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape was also affected by this. At the context of this article, contrasting descriptions of female students as loud by lecturers who teach in various community colleges complement and assist identify the distinct level of dual and irregular gender inequalities. Arnot (2004, 28) draws attention to the possibility that labeling, and mockery could be used to prevent both men and women from violating the feminine or the masculine space. "Noisy" is a sociological description that suggests female adult learners have unintentionally crossed the gender line. Female adult learners have also reported that when they try to tackle these incidents, their professors will claim that they are unaware of the harm that they are doing. Azimpour and Khalilzade (2015) assert that the veiled curriculum makes female adult female learners passive and silenced. The adult lecturer told the female adult learners that they treated them differently to adhere to the standards of their culture when they attempted to handle such incidents.

Gender awareness level

Lecturers from the Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape claimed in semi-structured interviews that there is a lack of gender knowledge when it comes to adopting a gender-responsive curriculum. In addition, the lecturers denied receiving any instructions on how to implement a gender-responsive curriculum in Cacadu Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape. Lecturers from the Community Colleges in the Eastern Cape claimed in semi-structured interviews that there is a lack of gender knowledge when it comes to adopting a gender-

responsive curriculum. To secure equal rights, obligations, and opportunities, people must be treated fairly. Gender equality acknowledges that each person is born with unique strengths and weaknesses and requires development professionals to take appropriate action (UNESCO 2014).

How instruction in these community colleges is impacted by a lack of gender-responsive curricula

Regarding how a lack of gender responsive curriculum affects learning in community colleges in the Eastern Cape, findings revealed that these could lead to low self-esteem among women, less competitive, with less decision-making authority.

Stereotypes around professions

Findings from the semi-structured interviews used in this article suggested that stereotypical beliefs may result from community colleges' lack of gender-responsive curricula. In this view, highlighting the link between occupational categories and gender influences preferences for educational or professional paths thought to be more suitable for men and/or women. The more gender-related professions have been discovered to express this direction's self-efficacy at high levels.

For instance, the study by Nicolao (2014) revealed that practical occupations are viewed as generally masculine and are thus favoured by men, whereas social and creative activities are viewed as typically feminine and are thus preferred by women. While men report higher levels of self-efficacy for actual professional activity, females do so for creative and social occupations. This study gives us an explanation for the phenomenon of gender segregation in education and the workplace, which tends to only consider career alternatives related to gender stereotyping.

Women's lack of preparation to compete with men

Early socialization is typically responsible for women's lack of readiness to compete, which is why men and women typically have different preferences, perceptions of their abilities, and career choices. Participants in semi-structured interviews highlighted that if gender is not included in the curriculum at community colleges, women may feel that competing is hazardous, but the worst-case scenario is that they lose. According to the study by Healy and Pate (2011, 1192), women may be less likely to choose competitive remuneration if they have a more negative attitude toward competition and perceptions about relative performance.

Working in low-wage positions

According to the research results from semi-structured interviews, there may be discrepancies

between the chances available to males and females in terms of access to school and employment if there isn't a gender-responsive curriculum. Participants pointed out that, If the curriculum excludes gender, more women will take on low status jobs and work as domestic helpers and homemakers. Women should avoid trying new things because they will be paid less and work precarious jobs. Formal schooling is typically the only way to acquire the knowledge and expertise needed for employment in the formal sector, which women have not always had the luxury of.

This was observed to be the situation in the Eastern Cape, where the lack of a curriculum that included gender forced women to look for work in the unorganized sector of the economy. It should be highlighted, though, that women might favor positions where they have more power. Having a formal work when she is exploited is not always worse for a woman than having her own business selling food. Thus, informal work need not be less valuable than formal work. Chomombo (2005) makes a significant point by pointing out that compared to men, women frequently have fewer access to jobs in these places because education is frequently seen as being beneficial to employment, especially in the formal sector.

In sum, this article was concerned with the discussion on the research findings accruing from the research conducted in community colleges in the Eastern Cape. The discussions involved the responses provided by the participants in this article and sets out to:

1. Investigate the biases against women that prevent these community colleges from implementing a gender-responsive curriculum.
2. Describe how learning in these community colleges is impacted by the lack of a gender-responsive curriculum.
3. Make recommendations for strategies that these community colleges might use to promote a gender-responsive curriculum.

In the next section of this article, attention will be directed to the recommendations that the present article puts forward based on the research findings emanating from the research that was conducted in community colleges in the Eastern Cape.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The contradictory metaphors employed by lecturers in community learning centres have revealed that lecturers are not prepared to integrate a gender responsive curriculum due to lack of involvement in the decision-making process by the Department of Higher Education. The decision not to involve them in curriculum development enabled the state to impose its control

and reproduce its power and control over the content of the curriculum in community learning centres.

These responses indicate that lecturers in community learning centres as curriculum implementers see curriculum as a complicated conversation (Pinar 2012). As such adult educators as curriculum implementers are aware that curriculum decisions entail issues of power relations (Pinar 2012). Furthermore, McLaren (in Darder et al. 2003, 86) attests that the curriculum represents much more than a programme of study, a classroom text, or a course. Rather, it represents the introduction of a particular form of knowledge.

Related to the lack of involvement in the decision-making process in the promotion of preparing lectures to integrate a gender responsive curriculum, lecturers in these centres noted that, there was an insufficient communication of the master plan to direct them as to how they can integrate a gender responsive curriculum in community learning colleges. According to the lecturers, there was no commitment on the part of the Department of Higher Education and Training to mainstream gender issues in community learning college curriculum.

The findings in semi-structured interviews reported that was the lack of gender awareness when it came to integrating gender in the curriculum in community learning centres. All lecturers in this study stated that they were not in any way sensitised on how they can integrate gender issues in the curriculum by the Department of Higher Education. However, these lecturers, noted that gender awareness was critical in helping them integrate a gender responsive curriculum in community learning centres. However, it seems these lecturers chose not to integrate gender issues although the policy allows them to do so.

In a recent study of pedagogy in secondary education in Namibia, Tubaundule (2014) also identified the prevalence of power and control in the curriculum and the significant influence it brings to bear on how teachers view their role in the classroom. The findings of his study revealed that the support and involvement of teachers in the curriculum development process have a significant influence on the implementation of the intended secondary school curriculum. Similarly, a competency based approach may be used to achieve a gender responsive curriculum. It provides an innovative way of conceiving and organising the curricular structure and objectives as well as the order to develop autonomous, critical and assertive citizens (GES, 2018).

Findings from the semi-structured interviews also indicated that adult educators who facilitate adult learners distanced themselves from policy matters arguing that it had nothing to do with them. Because they were policy matters initiated by the officials in power in the Department of Higher Education, they were not involved in the planning of these policies. It is not just the curriculum. Data also shows that the behavior towards lecturers is also gender based.

Moore (in Klassen and Lamanna 2009, 95) observes that in this instance, lecturers who facilitate adult learners end up accepting the control imposed upon them by those in power. In the light of this, acquiescence to control by those in power accounts for the continued practice of gender disparities in both the public and private sphere, especially in the case in the Cacadu district in the Eastern Cape. While this might be the case, lecturers also tend to exercise their power over the Learners. In many instances, other students willingly accept the power of the adult educators to influence their behavior or in perpetuating the gender disparities.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The problem that this article set out to address was to explore the preparedness of lecturers in ensuring a gender responsive curriculum in community colleges in the Eastern Cape. We have included measures in our recommendations that can be used to make sure lecturers are ready to ensure a gender-responsive curricula in community colleges. In the research undertaken in this article, we prioritized individual interviews as a means of creating a platform for this kind of discussion on gender responsiveness in community colleges to take place. The data we gathered and the research findings accruing from this date provided possible strategies for how lecturers might be enabled to ensure a gender-responsive curriculum in community colleges.

Based on the findings, messages regarding a lack of integrating gender responsive curriculum are at times contradictory, complex and gender biased. The findings indicate that, in community learning centres, interactions between lecturers and adult learners are gendered. The findings demonstrate that gender inequalities in the curriculum and pedagogy have local (gender regime) and global (gender order) dimensions. Global gender inequalities prevail across national frontiers, the boundaries are formed by a world-wide sexual division of labour. The broad patterns of gender based injustices that occur globally (gender order) in community learning Colleges and pedagogy may follow a similar logic but take a different form at the micro-level (gender-regimes) in local educational institutions such as schools, colleges and universities.

Within the community learning centres an overwhelming majority of lecturers believed that in the learning centres what affected student learning was authoritarian teacher centered method not gender sensitive pedagogy. The majority of lecturers were not cognizant of the fact that in certain contexts is important to focus on gender matters during the teaching process, rather than learner centered methods. The reason being that in certain circumstances, male and female learners have different personal experiences of knowing based on their different socialization. Feminist research in Australia, Canada and United Kingdom and USA brought out similar findings (Page, Robson and Uncles 2012). That is these studies show that there is

an important relationship between male and female lecturers' personal knowledge and their public knowledge regarding gender and teaching methods.

Training on gender reforms is required to give administrators, lecturers and students the chance to share experiences and reflection on those experiences that can lead to attitude change. For example, lecturers after their work in the classroom can together engage in a dialogue on their grievances. It is during this time that they can build new personal knowledge comparable with gender reform, that is the new public knowledge. Furthermore, there should be pedagogical change in community learning centres in the eastern cape aimed at developing non-hierarchical less competitive, participatory learning and teaching methods that are inclusive. The gender reform should also include ideas on how to educate and re-educate lecturers and students and who should carry out these changes (GES, 2018).

The training should therefore focus on changing those attitudes within the personal knowledge which resist gender reform. The acquiring and changing of attitudes are mainly an emotional learning process which cannot be transferred through cognitive learning process such as rational transfer of information (World Bank 2011). The rational transfer of information (confrontation approach) to administrators, lecturers, and students on how they contribute to gender-based social divisions is bound to increase resistance to gender reform. Therefore, training on gender reform should give administrators, lecturers, and adult learners the chance to share experiences and reflect on those experiences which can lead to attitudinal change. For instance, regarding adult learners' programmes, after their work in learning centres they can together engage in a dialogue on their results. It is during this dialogue stage that they may be space and time for building new personal knowledge comparable to gender reform, that is the new public knowledge.

The process of change in attitudes and values will have begun only when the contradictions are both comprehended and felt. Only if we have planted a nagging internal dissonance will we have succeeded, because it will be rigorous attempt to bring conflicting ideas, feelings, and attitudes and values into better harmony that will enable these students to make good use of their subsequent experience (Walby, 2015). The approach would also bring together adult learners and lecturers to discuss and examine issues common to community learning centres irrespective of their age, sex and social class groups. This should make the adult learners more appreciative of the lifelong process of learning and the varied perspectives of lecturers and students from different levels of the education system. Another approach that can be adopted is the *peer tutor teaching* method which is a more active vehicle for nurturing the reflective teacher because it encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. Within a tutor group of around sixteen, students being grouped into four, each triad

should be given a topic of research before making a joint presentation to their peers. The triad should be required to present for three hours, during which period they take full charge of the learning of the group.

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