A 'curriculum moment' for Adult and Community Education and Training: Acknowledging the voices and experiential knowledge of lecturers and students at community learning sites

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum reform and development is, first and foremost, a political project. It involves the selection, organisation and distribution of particular knowledge structures. But factors such as student and teacher demographics deeply influence the ways in which curricula can be implemented, enacted and used as a catalyst for change. In South Africa, a particular 'curriculum moment' has emerged in the field of Adult and Community Education and Training (ACET) through the establishment of community colleges, along with the introduction of new educator qualifications for ACET. In this article, we draw on the reflective diary entries of student lecturers on an Advanced Diploma for Educators of Adults (ADEA) course who are lecturers at community learning sites, to reflect on this moment of curriculum construction in the development of a new Diploma in Adult and Community Education and Training (DipACET). The analysis shows that while curriculum reform is crucial to professionalising the field, it will have a very limited impact if the voices of the lecturers and students at community learning sites are marginalised in the process. These lecturers have experiential knowledge which sets them apart as crucial drivers of the curriculum. Moreover, they select and organise the content to be taught, determine how it is to be taught, and decide on the kinds of knowledge that should be privileged at sites where the curriculum is implemented. We also delineate what counts as valuable knowledge and for whom it is valuable in the field of adult and community education.

Introduction

Curriculum reform and development is, first and foremost, a political project. It primarily involves the selection, organisation and distribution of particular knowledge structures (Hoadley, 2011). Furthermore, factors such as student and teacher demographics deeply influence the ways in which curricula can be implemented and, inevitably, the way they can be used as a catalyst for change. In South Africa, a particular 'curriculum moment' has arisen in the field of Adult and Community Education and Training (ACET) through the establishment of community colleges. The White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (DHET, 2013) commits the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to creating and offering a diverse range of education and training opportunities through enlarging the current public provision of ACET at adult learning sites attached to provincial community colleges (these were formerly known as Public Adult Learning Centres (PALC)). Among these new opportunities are both non-formal and formal programmes and occupational programmes for adult learners in the communities the colleges serve.

However, achieving this goal is contingent upon ensuring an increase in the number of educators and trainers in the system who are appropriately qualified. As a first step towards responding to the quantity and quality challenges of educators in the system, the DHET published a Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications for Educators and Lecturers in ACET (DHET, 2015) with the aim of professionalising the field. Following the publication of this policy, higher education institutions were invited to design programmes that would lead to various designated qualifications. It is in this way that the curriculum moment referred to previously has emerged – the first of its kind. As lecturers at a local university with a long tradition of adult educator provision, we were tasked to develop the institutional content for the new Diploma in Adult and Community Education and Training (DipACET). At the time of developing the DipACET, we were also teaching the Advanced Diploma for Educators of Adults (ADEA).

In this article, we reflect on the significant moment of curriculum development and reform in ACET in two ways. First, we situate the development of the DipACET in the broader field of adult education and training in South Africa by providing a historical overview of adult education and training in South Africa, and by describing the process of developing the DipACET. This is important at the current moment as it is the first attempt by the DHET to professionalise adult and community education through curriculum reform; previously adult and community educator and trainer qualifications were not recognised by the DHET for employment purposes. Second, we provide an educator perspective of teaching and learning in the current community colleges to highlight the important role of educators in the construction of curricula. An analysis of the diaries of 33 student lecturers at a community learning site who were enrolled in our institution's ADEA, forms the basis of this educator perspective.

At the time of their enrolment, these lecturers in training were all teaching at different community learning sites across the Western Cape and, for this reason, could provide a good representation of the present state of teaching and learning at and across the sites. While our purpose in asking students registered for the ADEA to keep reflective diaries was never to interrogate what the present state of teaching and learning at these sites was, these reflections emerged unsolicited. The reflective nature of their training programme and their positionality as students as well as adult educators allowed for this.

Ethics and definitions

Before proceeding, a word on ethics and definitions is appropriate. This article was written after the student lecturers whose reflective diaries we used had completed the ADEA. We received permission from the students to use their learning diary entries in this study on the understanding that their identities would remain confidential and that, by using the entries, no harm would be caused to themselves or to the community learning sites in which they work or the communities in which they live. Furthermore, since the learning diaries were submitted in electronic format, they are stored in a Google Drive file to which only the researchers have access.

To differentiate between the two types of 'student' in this article, we refer to the former ADEA students who are lecturers at the community learning sites as 'student lecturers' and the adult learners who are enrolled at the sites as 'students'. Furthermore, the term 'educator' is used interchangeably at times to refer to teachers/lecturers generally.

Curriculum responsiveness in post-school education and training

In a report which analysed the responsiveness of curricula in post-school education and training to graduate employability, Wedekind and Mutereke (2016) found that five significant factors affect the manner in which a curriculum enables employability. Simply stated, employability refers to the ability to find work or to grow in a current employment opportunity. Five factors identified as drivers of the curriculum were stated as follows: policy, student needs, societal and environmental concerns, employers, and education and training organisations (Wedekind & Mutereke, 2016). In this article, we refer to these five curriculum 'drivers' and added a sixth driver, namely, educators, to help us to understand and articulate the current curriculum moment in ACET.

We also use these curriculum drivers to construct our article. The influence of 'policy' can be seen throughout the first part of our article in the contextual background and as we describe the development of the new DipACET. After that, the context of the community learning sites as the institutional sites of teaching and learning is provided, which describes the influence of the 'education and training organisations' in curriculum development and implementation. In this section, both 'student needs' and 'societal and environmental concerns' are delineated. We use the voices of 33 community college student lecturers who

teach at different satellite sites to provide an understanding of this context. Finally, we conclude the article by discussing the ultimate purposes of adult education and training for adult learners. In doing so, we take into consideration the employability of adult students who complete their studies through community colleges (essentially the curriculum-driver 'employers') and in the broader South African economy. In support of our concluding remarks, and in addition to the five curriculum drivers provided by Wedekind and Mutereke (2016), we show that student lecturers or educators and trainers at community learning sites are crucial drivers of curriculum reform and implementation in post-school education.

Contextual background

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training recognises that the capacity development function of the post-school education and training (PSET) system is pivotal in ensuring that PSET contributes to the building of a 'vibrant democracy' and a 'flourishing economy' (DHET, 2013:4). As an integral component of PSET, ACET is viewed as having a critical role to play in the DHET's provision of 'quality learning opportunities for out-of-school youth and adults' (2015:10). These policy intentions are inconsistent with the ways in which ACET has been viewed and practised in the formal education and training system. A review of this history indicates that adult and community education has been neglected or marginalised, especially when it involved African adults (Baatjes & Baatjes, 2006; Aitchison, 2003).

Back in 1921–1922, the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), in accordance with its stated intention to develop African political leadership, offered night schools to African adults on the Witwatersrand (Bird, 1984). While these schools taught reading, writing and arithmetic skills, the CPSA activists ensured that their students also developed the political and economic insight that would enable them to understand the issues affecting the lives of workers (Bird, 1984:196). But the CPSA educators had limited teaching expertise, which, according to Bird (1984:196), 'improved as they went along'. Furthermore, the CPSA night schools lacked physical resources and the police used the pass laws to harass its students.

The already limited education and training opportunities that remained available for African students became even more restricted with the introduction of apartheid in 1948. All night schools catering for these students, whether run by the CPSA or by missionaries, were forced to close in the wake of the systematic introduction of laws that criminalised the teaching of African students in unregistered schools between 1948 and the early 1960s (Aitchison, 2003).

Therefore, while the 1960s are recognised as a very low point for adult and community education in South Africa for African adults, the introduction in the 1970s of the work and theories of Freire (1921–1997) served to rejuvenate the potential of adult education for political liberation. Walters and Watters (2000:52) concur with this view by highlighting the fact that Freire 'strongly influenced educators and activists linked to the liberation movements'. Freire (1970) criticised traditional schooling as a form of oppression and advocated education

as a means to liberation. It was therefore no surprise that, under the guidance of Freire's work, political 'conscientisation' became a primary strategy for counter-hegemonic political activism in the latter part of the 1970s and into the 1980s. Indeed, Aitchison (2003:139) maintains:

> Paulo Freire became an important weapon in anti-apartheid mobilisation and influenced the short-lived 'People's Education' movement of the mid-eighties. Educational institutions became the training grounds for, and actual sites of, political resistance to apartheid alongside the growing power of independent unions in factories and mines.

Up to this point, no systematic attention had been given to the formal training of adult educators and trainers. The University of Cape Town (UCT) became the first tertiary educational institution to offer an Advanced Diploma for Educators of Adults in 1980, followed by the former University of Natal with its Advanced Diploma in Adult Education (Aitchison, 2003). For its part, the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), established in 1985, introduced a non-accredited Certificate for Adult Educators in 1988. These educator programmes were all developed independently by the institutions offering the qualifications. However, the qualifications were not recognised for remuneration purposes in the national formal education and training system. Having said that, though, individual universities were able to negotiate regional agreements for the recognition of a specific adult education qualification for remuneration purposes with specific provincial departments of education. The establishment of a new suite of nationally recognised qualifications for educators of adults was therefore an important systemic step forward.

The DipACET curriculum development process: An overview

Through its Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications for Educators and Lecturers in ACET, the DHET (2015:34) declared that students could not be admitted to the historically approved AET and CET qualifications beyond 2017. Instead, it advised tertiary institutions to develop and offer new programmes and qualifications for adult and community educators and trainers by 2018, which had to be consistent with the DHET's 2015 policy requirements. The DHET invited universities to indicate which ACET qualification(s) they preferred to deliver beyond 2017, an invitation that received positive responses from a number of universities. These universities then formed a consortium to develop collaboratively the curriculum framework for the new ACET programme.

The collaborative development of the curriculum framework was not exclusively a technical issue of sharing subject knowledge and expertise. Rather, it also ensured that sufficient political legitimacy and acceptance would be obtained for the curriculum from those who were perceived to be knowledgeable in the field. This was viewed as necessary since decisions regarding the development of curricula are often subject to contestation. The process is

simultaneously concerned with both political and educational matters because curriculum knowledge

> inevitably reflects … assumptions about the distribution of individual capacities and the kind of culture to which [curriculum developers] want … people to have access (Young, 1999:464).

Accordingly, collaboration implied that decisions related to curriculum content, knowledge, learning outcomes and methodologies were reached through negotiation and consensus. Furthermore, it could be assumed that the process would not be constrained by external influence or pressure. However, Young (1999) advises that a qualification purporting to professionalise inevitably includes 'official knowledge' (Apple, 1998:5), which is recognised by its special status as being uniquely codified and expected to be learned 'according to particular rules' (Young, 1999:464).

The aim of professionalising the field of ACET was part of a political mandate to improve the delivery of adult education in order to enhance adult students' access and success. To date, these students have had limited opportunities and largely remain among the poorest of the poor (Groener, 2019). Therefore, creating new educator programmes through curriculum reform and development could be viewed as instrumental towards helping the DHET to achieve its aims.

We turn briefly now to the development of the DipACET, primarily to demonstrate the policy moment in the development of a new ACET curriculum.

DipACET curriculum development process

Policy prescripts

The Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications for Educators and Lecturers in Adult and Community Education and Training requires the DipACET curriculum framework development to meet specific policy prescripts. It states that the policy

> provide[s] a basis for the construction of core curricula for programmes leading to initial professional and post-professional qualifications for AET educators and CET lecturers (DHET, 2015:8).

This qualification is a 360-credit NQF Level 6 initial professional qualification (DHET, 2015:18). It recognises graduates as 'professionally competent educators and lecturers' with the necessary capabilities to teach in ACET settings. In addition to fixing the entry requirements for access, the policy prescribes, in great detail, the knowledge mix for programmes leading to the DipACET (see DHET 2015:19–20). Suffice to mention that the minimum requirements with which programmes need to comply include (DHET, 2015):

- stipulated credits for fundamental, disciplinary, pedagogical, situational and practical learning;
- the level as well as minimum credits for the development of ACET teaching specialisation;
- the assessment of fundamental learning credits at Level 5, which will not exceed 72 credits; and
- workplace-based learning and assessment as an integral part of the work-integrated component of the qualification.

Institutional processes

Together with meeting the necessary policy prescripts, curriculum developers at an institutional level were required to consult with local organisations' representatives and other interested role-players in the ACET community to ascertain the needs of the communities in which the qualification will be offered and contextualise the programme appropriately. It was this curriculum moment that prompted a consideration of educator voices as an additional driver of curriculum decisions in the design of a new programme.

Moreover, institutions also had to adhere to the standards and nature of the curriculum development process at a university that hosted the qualification. This would ensure the sanctity of 'official knowledge' for the curriculum and stipulate the rules by which the curriculum should be governed (Young, 1999:464).

Since policy is a key factor that drives the curriculum development process (Wedekind & Mutereke, 2016), the next section provides a lens to show exactly how policy influences curriculum decisions. And because educators that implement curricula are another driver of curriculum construction, we now consider their voices too.

Community learning sites of teaching and learning

In a module of the ADEA, a legacy qualification being delivered at the time, our student lecturers were asked to keep reflective diaries on issues related to adult teaching and learning at community learning sites, as a key component of the course. For the purpose of our study we analysed the reflective diaries, in terms of the present state of teaching and learning at community learning sites according to five factors:

- environmental and social factors;
- educators at community learning sites;
- curriculum delivery;
- student needs; and
- resources needed for effective teaching and learning.

Environmental and social factors

The community learning sites, previously known as the PALCs, are all located in very poor communities across the Western Cape province of South Africa. These communities are affected by high rates of crime and unemployment, and a large number of high-school student drop-outs owing to pregnancy, drugs or 'getting lost in the system' (see Baatjes & Baatjes, 2006; DHET, 2013). Currently, community learning sites attract mostly youths who have dropped out of school and are attending the learning site in the hope of receiving a 'second chance'. Learning at the sites is focused primarily on academic knowledge because all the learning areas lead to the national matriculation certificate. However, one student lecturer reported in her diary that at her centre [site], currently, there was an established 'partnership with the … municipality to help students with skills training'. Student lecturers indicated that the sites at which they worked are also affected by certain factors that impact on their day-to-day teaching and learning activities. These include gang violence, crime, alcohol and drug abuse, and vandalism. People here, disadvantaged by apartheid, continue to experience poverty, a lack of resources, limited opportunities for employment and access to higher education, poor-quality housing and inadequate access to a clean environment (Kehler, 2001; DHET, 2013).

Student lecturers at community learning sites

Student lecturers at adult and community learning sites are between 25 and 55 years of age. These student lecturers have, on average, between five and 25 years' experience as teachers of adults. They are predominantly underqualified: many of them acquired their current level of education through the community learning site itself, starting out as general workers. They decided to return to school and completed their studies towards a senior certificate through the community college. That eventually led to their being appointed to teach adult learners. The majority of these educators have formal qualifications which include either a National Diploma in ABET Practice or a National Certificate in Worker Facilitation. Whereas approximately 15% of them have formal teaching qualifications, the remainder lack formal training in teaching adults. But they have engaged in many post-school formal and non-formal learning programmes and, as a result, have gained rich insights into adult education and training practices through their participation. Despite some educators not having had formal training in the teaching of adults, they have learnt experientially while they participated as educators of adults over many years. The non-formal learning programmes mentioned earlier are associated with the operational procedures and methodologies of teaching and assessing adult learning, subject enrichment and developing counselling and/or pastoral skills.

A common factor among most of the student lecturers who participated in the ADEA course is that they either grew up in or currently reside in the same communities as their teaching

site and those of their students. They also face similar challenges to those of their students. As one student lecturer wrote:

> In our community, we have a lot of young children who walk around without education. They leave school at a young age and become involved in gangsterism. These factors lead to gender-based violence and our community has a high crime rate. Our children who finish matriculation walk around because their parents do not have money to pay for them to go to [a] university. I [really] can relate to some of these factors because my parents also didn't have money to send me to [a] university (IPSS, 2020, np).

By relating the economic and social realities of her lived experience, this student lecturer confirms the scholarly findings which describe similar poor and marginalised communities (Kehler, 2001; DHET, 2013).

Some student lecturers noted that residing in the same communities as their students has both positive and negative effects. Whereas the student lecturers understand the home circumstances and nature of their students very well, many of them experience the challenge of being treated with disrespect by students. In addition, some students are unable to relate to student lecturers as legitimate educators because of their diverse extracurricular relationships in their community settings.

Curriculum delivery

Many student lecturers' diaries reflect dissatisfaction with the curriculum in use at community learning sites and with the assessment practices employed. The student lecturers indicate that the curricula being taught at the sites – which reflect the basic school curriculum with subjects such as Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Life Orientation and Ancillary Health – are not relevant to the particular needs of the students wanting to find employment. While older students desire to further their education and therefore desire to work, the student lecturers noted that younger students, in general, have no such desire and use the college as a space to socialise with their peers. In describing the desire of younger students as a form of resistance to schooling opportunities, these student lecturers describe a hegemonic perspective of marginalised youth living in conditions of adversity. Such students, according to Bottrell (2007:600), are 'likely to be identified within at-risk discourses'. But youth resistance is often a 'calculus based in normative predictions and causal claims that link individuals, poverty, social problems and delinquency'. One student lecturer noted that an irrelevant curriculum is a big concern for her, especially because the students' employability will determine their 'route out of poverty' (Groener, 2019). Other student lecturers' diaries maintained that the current curriculum cannot be delivered effectively because of a lack of resources, a lack of teaching and learning materials and a lack of human capacity.

Student needs

The ages of students at the community learning sites range from 16 to 60 years, and the students have a wide range of experience and personalities. Younger students bring with them the challenging issue of a lack of discipline. More mature adults bring a sense of purpose and calmness to the learning site. Whereas most students aim to complete their matriculation qualification, as mentioned above, a significant number of them participate in the classes to gain skills for employment and financial sustainability. Since the current curriculum at community learning sites focuses on academic knowledge, younger students lose interest as they prefer to gain work-related skills. A few student lecturers' diaries noted that if the curriculum were made more relevant to supporting students' employability, there would be more interest to register at the site.

Resources needed for effective teaching and learning

Even though the national policy advocates the provision of quality ACET, limited resources at the site make this objective difficult to achieve. A typical learning site is described by one student lecturer:

> Our centre [site] doesn't have a building [itself]. We rent a classroom at … Primary School … Our centre [site] is split into satellites to accommodate all students from [the area] to register for classes and to complete their studies.

Another student lecturer indicated that the physical environment in which the site is situated is 'not always very safe'. In addition, the site has insufficient capacity to offer a range of subjects per year as 'there [are] no other [educators] available to teach' additional subjects. Owing to the lack of teaching and learning materials, many students do not complete their assignments. They are unable to do research at the sites because there is no library and they do not have access to computers. Since the textbooks are provided in English only, student lecturers have to translate some of the content for the students, which takes a lot of time and effort. These factors impact on the effectiveness with which the curriculum is implemented.

The factors mentioned above are brief descriptions of the current contexts of community learning sites. Despite their brevity, what appears to be evident is that adult students are mostly attracted to the site not for academic purposes but for employability. It is also evident that student lecturers at community learning sites are fundamental to the effective delivery and implementation of the curriculum. As we move into the next section, we take our discussion back to the significance of this curriculum moment in which these educator voices are instructive.

Discussion

A key theoretical perspective in curriculum studies is that the selection and organisation of knowledge lie at the heart of curriculum theory and development (Gamble, 2016). As we have shown thus far, developing a new curriculum for educators and trainers of adults involves decisions about what knowledge to include or exclude and whose voices to consider in the process of curriculum construction. The voices of our student lecturers suggest that they have essential insights into curriculum content.

The development process should therefore guard against university-based adult education academics becoming the primary and sole validators of curriculum knowledge by virtue of their institutional authority and power. Such a stance could be viewed as dominating the process of curriculum construction, which contradicts the accepted principle in the field of adult education which advocates that participants should strive to 'take control of their lives' (Brookfield, 2001:2).

We propose that student lecturers at community learning sites should be included as drivers of curriculum development, as they are the primary influencers of the enacted curriculum at a grassroots level. In effect, it is they who influence the content of what is taught, how it is taught, and what kind of knowledge is privileged in curricula they are implementing. It is for these reasons that their qualifications matter because they require both competence and confidence when making decisions regarding curriculum implementation.

Hoadley (2011) argues that, whereas knowledge is important in curriculum theory and development, so is the knower:

> If any act of curriculum construction is to decide what knowledge is of most worth to its citizens, then a consideration of knowledge and knowers is crucial. And the structuring of a curriculum in relation to what students can and should do at what point (selection and sequence) entails a theory of knowing (Hoadley, 2011:156).

In terms of this perspective, the process of knowing as a result of curriculum implementation is directly related to the relationship that exists between the learner and the knowledge they obtain through the curriculum, a relationship influenced by various factors.

An additional matter raised by the student lecturers' diaries, which is worthy of further exploration, in relation to educator and training qualifications is the question of years of experience – the years of experience of practising educators and trainers of adults. We contend that problematising experience would be a worthwhile exercise because of its potential value in contributing to the certification of adult educators. While we recognise that experience is highly valued in adult education, there is disagreement about theorising the relationship between experience, learning and knowledge. Some scholars privilege experience as the

source from which knowledge is extracted by means of systematic reflection on the experience (Kolb, 1984; Butterworth, 1992; Challis, 1993). Conversely, radical adult education scholars theorise experience, learning and knowledge as intertwined and inseparable (Johnson & Usher, 1996; Michelson 1996; Stuart 1996). They maintain that experience is knowledge because experience, learning and knowledge are bound together (Johnson & Usher, 1996:7).

In taking the latter view, we argue that a new ACET curriculum needs to grapple with the claims that current lecturers at community learning sites have significant teaching experience – in fact, between five and 25 years of experience in teaching adults (as indicated earlier). If experience, learning and knowledge are inseparable, what does this mean for the qualification of a student lecturer? The Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications for Educators and Lecturers in Adult and Community Education and Training (DHET, 2015) recognises that educators and lecturers in the system have gained knowledge as a result of their working experiences, and thus have 'relevant prior learning that is already in place' after the process of assessment (DHET, 2015:17).

Our analysis of the process of developing a curriculum for an ACET qualification leads us to argue that institutional stakeholders privilege what Murphy and Fleming (200:87) refer to as 'college knowledge', that is, academic or theoretically based knowledge. As has been indicated above, an analysis of the student lecturers' diaries shows us the value of 'common knowledge', since it is this type of knowledge that could lead to students' skills development and employability in their community settings.

Classification of knowledge structures differentiates between context-dependent (mundane) and context-independent (esoteric) knowledge. Context-dependent knowledge

> can be practical – like knowing how to repair a mechanical or electric fault or how to find a route on a map. It can also be procedural, like a handbook or a set of regulations for health and safety (Young & Muller, 2016:111).

In contrast, context-independent knowledge 'is developed to provide generalizations and makes claims to universality; it provides a basis for making judgements' (Young & Muller, 2016:111).

Wheelahan (2007:639) argues that context-dependent or mundane knowledge

> is tied to specific contexts and events, so that the meaning of mundane knowledge is only understandable within that specific context and the material base it rests upon.

Furthermore, context-independent or esoteric knowledge is powerful knowledge. This type of knowledge 'constitutes the site of the "unthinkable" and the "yet-to-be-thought"':

> Esoteric knowledge has the potential to challenge the social distribution of power, because of its … capacity to transform knowledge and how that knowledge is used (Wheelahan, 2007:639).

Given the current context of curriculum development in South Africa, the question of knowledge and its associated structures remains central and contested. Since knowledge is not prescribed in the current ACET curriculum, the curriculum development process is obliged to reflect on how the social context in which adult education and training is offered, will affect curriculum implementation at the level of teaching, learning and knowledge selection. We therefore suggest that the developers of ACET curricula should theorise how adult students and lecturers at community learning sites gain access to powerful knowledge.

Concluding remarks

This article confirms that the current officially underqualified student lecturers at community learning sites have years of experience in teaching adult students. This raises the compelling issue of the value of experience in obtaining an ACET qualification. It is well known that experiential learning has a special value in adult education practices. However, in relation to the new qualification for adult and community educators and trainers, it will be necessary to clarify the relationship between experience, learning and knowledge. Because the way in which this relationship is conceptualised might be a form of acknowledging the teaching and situated experiences of lecturers currently in the system, the Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications for Educators and Lecturers in Adult and Community Education and Training (DHET, 2015) does make provision for the accreditation of experiential learning. However, the question remains: Which knowledge derived from experience will be sanctioned?

The voices of educators at community learning sites suggest that adult students participate in learning with the intention of gaining access to employment skills and knowledge that help them to improve their chances of obtaining sustainable livelihoods. By including community adult educators as an additional driver of curriculum construction, we can ensure that powerful contextual and experiential knowledge of adult teaching and learning is not ignored.

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