

## PEDAGOGICAL GUIDANCE FOR CONSUMER STUDIES REFLECTED IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT (CAPS): AN INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING

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### OPSOMMING

Pedagogie behels meer as slegs onderrigmetodes (of leermetodes), aangesien dit ook die benadering tot die onderrig of leer van die vak, sowel as die beginsels onderliggend aan die leer van vakinhoud, omvat. Die pedagogie van 'n spesifieke vak behels dus die "hoe" van die leer van daardie vak – met ander woorde, hoe leer gekonstrueer word en gekonstrueer behoort te word.

Die voorlopige navorsingsbevindinge aangaande pedagogie, dui op beperkte vakspesifieke pedagogiese leiding in die Suid-Afrikaanse Verbruikerstudiecurriculum. Die bevindinge in hierdie opsig noodsaak verdere navorsing. Navorsingsresultate aangaande die normstelling van die Kurrikulum- en Assesseringsbeleidsverklaring (KABV) vir Verbruikerstudie, tesame met die kurrikula van soortgelyke vakke in Brits-Columbië, Singapoer en Kenia, benadruk dat ingeslote vakspesifieke pedagogiese leiding in kurrikulumdokumente van uiterste belang is, omdat onderwysers se kennis aangaande vakspesifieke pedagogie meer produktiewe leer kan meebring. Hoewel die fokus van hierdie artikel op pedagogie toegespits is, het die navorsing ook die volgende aspekte omvat: die analise van die breedvoerige kurrikulumontwerp; die gebruikersvriendelikheid van die dokumente; inhoud- en vaardigheidsdekking; asook kern ontwerpbeginsels.

Die voorlopige bevindinge aangaande die aard van pedagogie, tesame met die normstelling van die KABV vir Verbruikerstudie en die kurrikula van soortgelyke vakke in Brits-Columbië, Singapoer en Kenia, het lig gewerp op die tipe pedagogiese leiding wat in die Suid-Afrikaanse Verbruikerstudiecurriculum omvat behoort te word.

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### Note

This paper reports on a part of the research regarding subjects in the FET Phase in the South African school curriculum conducted by Umalusi (the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training). The research included a comparative study and the benchmarking of the Consumer Studies curriculum with respective international qualifications on twelve curriculum dimensions. This paper only reports on the benchmarking of the subject Consumer Studies with selected curricula of other countries, and with specific reference to the pedagogical guidance provided by the curricula for the teaching of this subject. The launch of the larger study transpired in the last quarter of 2014 and early 2015.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1995, shortly after the first democratic elections, numerous disparities and problems were exposed after the South African government executed a national audit on teaching. In 1997, the Department of Education (DoE) launched its new curriculum policy – *Curriculum 2005*<sup>(1)</sup> – which in its ideology, content and pedagogical approach strongly contrasted the curriculum that was used at that time (Umalusi, 2014b:11). *Curriculum 2005* drew from curriculum models being used in some highly developed countries and sought to place the South African curriculum among the most progressive international curricula.

(1) *Curriculum 2005* was introduced to the South African school system in 1998 to replace the system which was used up to that point. The new curriculum was intended to eradicate racial irregularities and to introduce a more learner-centred approach in schools (Alexander & November, 2010).

Consumer Studies was phased in to replace Home Economics as a subject in the Further Education and Training (FET)<sup>(2)</sup> Phase in South African secondary schools. It was also intended to better align the Consumer Studies curriculum with international curricula and the changing needs of individuals in contemporary times. The focus of the subject shifted from the needs and wants of the family (in Home Economics) to the needs and wants of the consumer in the 21st century (in Consumer Studies) (Umalusi, 2014b:35).

In 2002, the curriculum was reconstructed once again into a Revised National Curriculum Statement, which was approved on 15 April 2002 and implemented in 2004 (DoE, 2003:5-6). This revised version became known as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). In 2011, the NCS was reviewed yet again. The amended NCS is called the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DoE, 2009; Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011; Pinnock, 2011). On 28 December 2012, the approval of the regulations pertaining to the amended NCS for Grades R-12 was published in the Government Gazette No. 36041. According to this Gazette, the CAPS stipulates the aim, scope, content and assessment for each subject listed in the NCS for Grades R-12 (DBE, 2012:3). The CAPS document for Consumer Studies in the FET Phase was then included in the benchmarking with selected international curricula.

Regarding the subject title and the subject focus being specifically on consumers, the subject, Consumer Studies, could be considered unique. Research revealed no other country having the same subject, with the same name and precise scope as South African Consumer Studies. The international subjects with a similar scope were found to be Home Economics (in countries such as Botswana, Namibia, Malta and Australia), and Family and Consumer Sciences (in the United States of America). Though the broad scope of Home Economics, and Family and Consumer Sciences is often similar to that of Consumer Studies, the central focus in these subjects is on the family, with topics relating to the well-being of families and family members.

<sup>(2)</sup> The FET Phase is aimed at learners of approximately 16-18 years of age, and is the final phase at high school level. It covers Grades 10, 11 and 12.

Some of the topics included in South African Consumer Studies were found to be separate subjects in other countries, for example Food Technology (in the United Kingdom), or Food and Health Subject (in Norway).

As indicated previously, this paper only reports on a part of the extensive research study – particularly on the research relating to Consumer Studies. The subsequent sections of this paper therefore only focus on the pedagogical guidance provided by the respective subject curricula, which were analysed in relation to Consumer Studies.

## BACKGROUND

Pedagogy can be viewed through many lenses, each providing a different perspective on how it is interpreted. This research was conducted from a constructivist point of view, and for that reason, *pedagogy* in the context of this study refers to the methods, activities, principles or practices that best support the construction of knowledge and skills in Consumer Studies.

The importance of integrating subject “content knowledge and skills with pedagogically appropriate strategies and resources” was highlighted in the *National Educational Standards*, which was drawn up for Family and Consumer Sciences (i.e. a subject closely related to Consumer Studies) in the USA (Fox & Klemme, 2010:3). Teachers should be knowledgeable regarding the use of specific learning strategies to be able to understand how learning is constructed and to support productive learning (Pickard & Reichelt, 2008:196). In order to support optimal teaching-learning, teachers need the support of well-structured, clear, explicit and quantifiable curricula (Booyse *et al.*, 2013), including clear pedagogical guidance.

In a report aimed at improving the South African national curriculum, teachers pleaded for more guidance and direction regarding “how to teach” their subjects (DoE, 2009:48). Some of the recommendations in the Ministerial Task Team report (DoE, 2009:62) referred to the importance of including subject-specific pedagogical approaches in curricula under review. In the case of Consumer Studies, it meant that subject-specific pedagogical approaches had to be incorporated in the amendments to the NCS CAPS documents for each subject in the South African national curriculum. These amendments came into effect in January 2012 (DBE, 2011:3).

Unfortunately, the CAPS documents for several FET subjects did not adhere to this recommendation (Umalusi, 2014a:59)<sup>(3)</sup>, including the CAPS for Consumer Studies. In an overview reporting on research regarding the curriculum analysis of several FET subjects, it is noted that the curricula lack explicit guidance in terms of subject-specific pedagogy (Umalusi, 2014a:59). Other than proposing advice for dealing with inclusivity and diversity in teaching (DBE, 2011:5), suggestions for preferred pedagogical strategies to be used in the teaching of Consumer Studies, are inadequate in the CAPS.

Clear evidence was found in previous research that effective curricula should be well-designed, have clear aims, coherently include content and skills to be taught/ learned, indicate preferred pedagogical approach(es) for the specific subject, and consider the context in which the learning will take place (Booyse *et al.*, 2013:86). The benchmarking provided an opportunity to find information about pedagogical guidance in subjects similar to Consumer Studies, which might be useful in the South African context. It was evident that insights gained from this kind of pedagogical guidance provided in the curricula of countries with subjects similar to Consumer Studies, could be considered for inclusion in the South African subject, Consumer Studies, in order to enhance and support effective teaching.

However, the unique focus of Consumer Studies on the consumer (mentioned in the introduction), as well as the divergence in implementation phases in different countries, make benchmarking difficult. Both these difficulties were acknowledged as limitations in the research.

In South Africa, Consumer Studies is only introduced in the last (FET) Phase of the secondary school education. In countries such as Japan, Norway, and the Canadian province of British Columbia, similar subjects are introduced from a young age in much earlier school phases.

<sup>(3)</sup> The overview report contains a summary of the research conducted by Umalusi regarding the curricula in the following FET subjects: Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, English (First Additional Language) & English Home Language, Geography, History, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Mathematical Literacy and Mathematics.

In other countries, subjects comparable to Consumer Studies are only offered in selected phases of the education system, for example, Home Economics is only offered up to O-level in Singapore, after which it is omitted from the curriculum. Additionally, some topics contained in similar subjects are not deemed relevant to Consumer Studies content, for example, "Weaning the baby" and "The breastfeeding mother" found in the Kenyan Home Science curriculum (Republic of Kenya Ministry of Education (RKME), 2002:160).

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

With no benchmarking history, and the unique character of Consumer Studies with its focus on the consumer and entrepreneurship, a question was raised regarding the pedagogical guidance offered to teachers in this subject. It was questioned if and how extensively pedagogical guidance is offered to teachers in the Consumer Studies curriculum to achieve the aims of the new subject, and specifically to empower learners with the vital entrepreneurial knowledge and skills as is intended in the curriculum.

To address this gap, the following research question guided the part of the research reported in this paper:

*What does the comparison between the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for FET Phase Consumer Studies and the counterpart policies from respective other countries reveal about the pedagogical guidance provided in those documents?*

Special attention was also given to the potential strengthening of the CAPS in this regard.

The research, on which this paper is based, was conceptualised and conducted by Umalusi (the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training in South Africa). The larger Umalusi-study (including other subjects) focused on an analysis of the subjects in the South African FET Phase in relation to the curricula in Canada (specifically British Columbia), Singapore and Kenya. Besides other considerations, these three countries were purposely selected based on the strength of their outstanding performance in international benchmarking tests, such as TIMMS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study), PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), and SAQMEC (Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality). It was presumed that the

curricula in the chosen countries form a solid foundation for their learners' good performance and was therefore considered suitable to include in this benchmarking of curricula. Documentation used for evidence in this research was obtained from the Ministry of Education (or comparable body) of each of these countries. Certain documents, such as the "teacher's guide" mentioned in the Kenyan Home Science curriculum, were not available to the evaluators and is acknowledged as a limitation of the research. Details of the documents included in the benchmarking of the CAPS for Consumer Studies (DBE, 2011), have been itemised in Table 1.

## METHODOLOGY

Umalusi developed the instrument used for the benchmarking to allow for both quantitative and qualitative reporting on the curricula. A successive series of studies by Umalusi have developed and refined the investigated curriculum dimensions (2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2014b). The research questions driving the study, were the following:

*What does the comparison between the*

*Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for FET Phase (Grades 10 to 12) and the counterpart policies from British Columbia, Singapore and Kenya reveal about:*

- the relative depth and breadth of the content covered in the respective curricula;*
- the overall design, structure and coherence of the curricula;*
- the level of specification of various aspects of the curricula; and*
- the guidance provided by the curricula for the teaching and assessment of the subject, with special attention given to the strengthening of the CAPS?*

*In addition, are there critical factors that appear to be emerging in the curricula that should be considered in the South African context? (Umalusi, 2014b:20).*

Evaluators from higher education institutions, departments of education, subject advisors and teachers in practice, as well as curriculum and pedagogical experts, were commissioned to analyse the documents and write up the findings.

The qualitative part of the study was

**TABLE 1: DETAILS OF DOCUMENTS USED IN THIS INVESTIGATION**

<b>1 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (South Africa)</b>	
Department of Basic Education. 2011. Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS): Consumer Studies. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.	DBE, 2011
Department of Basic Education. 2011. <i>National Protocol for Assessment Grades R-12</i> . Pretoria: Government Printing Works.	These two documents form part of the NCS, but are general and not subject-specific
Department of Basic Education. 2011. <i>National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12</i> . Pretoria: Government Printing Works.	
<b>2 British Columbia</b>	
British Columbia Ministry of Education. 1998. Home Economics 11 and 12. Integrated Resource Package.	BCME, 1998
British Columbia Ministry of Education. 2007a. Home Economics: Foods and Nutrition 8 to12. Integrated Resource Package.	BCME, 2007a
British Columbia Ministry of Education. 2007b. Home Economics: Textiles 8 to12. Integrated Resource Package.	BCME, 2007b
<b>3 Singapore</b>	
Singapore Ministry of Education. 2012. Education in Singapore.	SME, 2012
Singapore Ministry of Education. 2014a. Food and Nutrition GCE Ordinary Level (Subject 6087)	SME, 2014a
Singapore Ministry of Education. 2014b. Introduction to Enterprise Development GCE Ordinary Level Syllabus SP01	SME, 2014b
<b>4 Kenya</b>	
Republic of Kenya Ministry of Education. 2002. Secondary syllabus Volume II. Subjects: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Agriculture and Home Science.	RKME, 2002

approached from a constructivist point of view. Although the larger Umalusi-study utilised a mixed methods research approach, which therefore also included quantitative data, this paper only reports on the qualitative data. An iterative in-depth document and curriculum analysis was performed using purposely-designed instruments. The data analysis was followed by an inductive interpretation of the data to make meaning of the findings.

The specification of pedagogical guidance offered in the respective curricula was one dimension of effective curricula which were investigated (part of sub-question (d) mentioned above), and is the only section of the larger study reported in this paper.

## FINDINGS

In exploring the concept “pedagogy”, it became clear that it should not be diminished to mere methodology (Segall, 2004). Both the Oxford Dictionaries (2013) and Cambridge Dictionaries Online (2013), define the term “pedagogy” as the method and practice/ activities of teaching – specifically referring to academic subjects. The Collins English Dictionary (2013) expands the definition to include the “principles, practice, or profession of teaching”. It is evident from the research that pedagogy involves more than only teaching (or learning) methods: it also includes the approach to how a subject is taught (or learned), as well as the principles fundamental to learning in that subject. In an educational context, the pedagogy of a certain subject consequently involves the “how” of the learning of that subject, namely how learning is and should be constructed (Du Toit, 2015:120).

With the understanding of what pedagogy entails, the benchmarking of the CAPS for Consumer Studies with the curricula of similar subjects in British Columbia, Singapore and Kenya, produced the following findings:

### **Broad curriculum design and user-friendliness**

In order to contextualise the pedagogical guidance offered in each of the curricula, it was considered necessary to include findings regarding the broad curriculum design and user-friendliness of each reviewed curricula.

The South African CAPS documents for Consumer Studies (see Table 1) were found to be user-friendly, since the documents are well structured and have concise language that is

easy to read and understand. Only the CAPS document for Consumer Studies was analysed in detail, since the other two documents contain general, non-subject-specific guidelines (see Table 1). The CAPS contains some general background about the South African national curriculum; general information about the organisation and structuring of the subject Consumer Studies; content-based aims for the subject; content-based teaching plans for theory and practical lessons; and explicit assessment guidance (DBE, 2011).

It was found that the British Columbian documents were well structured with tables of contents, concepts at a glance, outcomes and achievement indicators, suggested instructional strategies, and suggested assessment strategies for each outcome with recommended learning resources. An integrated resource package has been included in each course in the curriculum. These resource packages for each subject provide subject teachers with an introduction to the course, aspects to consider when delivering the programme, prescribed learning outcomes, learner achievement indicators, and a glossary (British Columbia Ministry of Education (BCME), 1998, 2007a, 2007b) (see Table 1). In addition, assessment and evaluation samples are included in the resource packages.

The Singaporean documents (Singapore Ministry of Education (SME), 2012, 2014a, 2014b) were found moderately user-friendly: while the learning outcomes and assessment objectives are clearly indicated, the layout, format and subject summary are inconsistent between different subject documents. No guidelines are included for the implementation of the subjects. Aims and assessment objectives, topics and learning outcomes have been included, as well as an examination format and criteria for assignments.

The Kenyan curriculum documents were found insufficiently user-friendly. In the introduction of this document, a “Teacher’s Guide in Lesson Preparation” is mentioned; however, this teacher’s guide was unavailable for review, adding to the rating of insufficient user-friendliness. The introduction to the document is followed by the subject-specific content for Home Science, which comprises a detailed list of topics and sub-topics to be covered in each form. No evidence regarding assessment specification was found, though the introduction of the document indicates that practical and written assignments should regularly be given.

Little guidance was found regarding the implementation of the subject, other than “teachers are called upon to be creative and improvise materials and equipment appropriately” (RKME, 2002:149). Overall, the evaluators found that the document lacks important information.

### Central design principle

To further contextualise the pedagogical guidance offered in each curricula, it was also considered necessary to include findings regarding the central design principle (i.e. the technical design aspect that organises the curriculum) of each reviewed curricula. The curricula with evidence of learning outcomes were considered outcomes-based, whereas curricula that mainly specified content or topics with or without content-linked objectives were considered as having a syllabus-type (content-based) central design principle.

It was found that the South African CAPS for Consumer Studies has a content-based curriculum design. Though “Specific aims of Consumer Studies” are mentioned (DBE, 2011:8), no reference is made to learning outcomes for Consumer Studies or the other investigated FET subjects (Umalusi, 2014a:38), and the curriculum contains a large section prescribing content topics and sub-topics as minimum content to be covered (DBE, 2011:14-59). The evaluators perceived the subject aims mentioned for Consumer Studies, as a list of content topics with no specification, description or action verbs.

The British Columbian Home Economics curriculum prescribes learning outcomes with suggested achievement indicators for each learning outcome (e.g. BCME, 2007b:18-22). The Singaporean curricula for Food and Nutrition, and the Introduction to Enterprise Development, are also outcomes-based (Singapore Ministry of Education (SME), 2014a:2-4). Within each topic, a range of sub-

topics is aligned with the learning outcomes (SME, 2014a:2-4). In the Kenyan Home Science curriculum, general and specific objectives have been linked to content, for example, topic 3.0.0 (Safety in the Home and First Aid) has specific objectives listed under 3.1.0 and content listed under 3.2.0 (RKME, 2002:151).

It was assumed that curricula, which the evaluators have found to be more user-friendly, would also be perceived as such by teachers using those curricula. User-friendly curricula allow easy access to information in the documents, enabling teachers to quickly find and use interlinking sections in their subject’s curriculum. Having a well-structured curriculum with clearly organised information supporting the subject’s aims or outcomes, would also support teachers in their task. Subject aims or outcomes can only be fully achieved if the subject is taught and learned in a manner that supports its overall aims or outcomes (Booyse *et al.*, 2013:93).

### Specification of pedagogical approaches

The evaluators kept the introductory exploration of the concept “pedagogy” in mind while analysing the curriculum documents. They investigated how pedagogy is translated in the teaching (or learning) methods, the approach to how the subject is taught (or learned), as well as the principles fundamental to learning in that subject.

In the Umalusi-study, evaluators were expected to provide a brief description of the subject-specific pedagogical approaches provided in the curricula (if any were specified), and to indicate the extent to which the curriculum provides explicit guidance regarding the preferred pedagogical approach to be adopted. The following descriptors were used: *high* describes a curriculum where detailed guidance is given regarding the preferred general and/or subject-specific pedagogical approach to be taken;

**TABLE 2: PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH SPECIFIED IN CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION**

	CAPS	British Columbia	Singapore	Kenya
Subject-specific pedagogical approach	No subject-specific pedagogical approach has been included in curriculum.	Emphasis on transferability of learning to real-life situations; development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills; resource management; and inclusive instruction.	No subject-specific pedagogical approach has been included in the investigated curricula.	Creative teaching; Continued learning; and economical use of (local) resources.
Level of indication	None	High	None	Low

*moderate* describes a curriculum where some guidance is given regarding the preferred general and/or subject-specific pedagogical approach to be taken; *low* describes a curriculum where the preferred general or subject-specific pedagogical approach is mentioned in a few places, but no details are provided; and *none* describes a curriculum that provides no information or guidance regarding the general and/or subject-specific pedagogical approach. Table 2 details the subject-specific pedagogical approaches and the level of specification or guidance included in the investigated international curricula.

Though no subject-specific pedagogical approach has been included in the **South African CAPS for Consumer Studies**, the generic principles for this curriculum include references to “active and critical learning”, and “high knowledge and high skills” (DBE, 2011:4). These generic principles would also be applicable to Consumer Studies as part of the national curriculum. These principles imply that the teaching-learning process should develop high standards or levels of knowledge and skills, using active learning approaches that will develop critical thinking skills in learners. Addressing inclusivity and diversity in teaching is also briefly mentioned (DBE, 2011:5) and should be included in the Consumer Studies pedagogy.

A high degree of pedagogical specification was found in the **British Columbian Home Economics** curriculum. Detailed suggestions have been included regarding preferred instructional strategies (BCME, 1998:5). These suggestions include:

the development of strategies to promote the relevancy and usefulness of Home Economics as a subject (transferability of learning to real-life situations is highlighted);

- the fostering and development of skills for both individuals and groups (specifically problem-solving and communication);
- the use of technology to support teaching and learning;
- fostering the optimal use and management of resources (including time, money, energy and skills);
- the fostering of research and critical thinking skills; and
- supporting the development of problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Though the integration of generic cross-curricular interests, such as sustainable

consumption, aboriginal studies and gender equality have been intentionally integrated in the curriculum (BCME, 1998:7; C-3), they were not specified as pedagogical principles for Home Economics. A subject-specific section labelled “Considerations for Instruction in Home Economics” has also been included in the curriculum (BCME, 1998:8). Each of the course-specific documents for Food and Nutrition, and Textiles, includes a detailed section describing generic methods for implementing Home Economics, such as the requirement in the subject for critical thinking and metacognition (BCME, 2007a:4; 2007b:4). The domains of learning and cognitive levels are also mentioned and explicitly linked to the specific outcomes and classroom assessment model (BCME, 2007b:17).

High subject-specific guidance regarding considerations for program delivery is included in the form of detailed specification in the curricula for Food and Nutrition (BCME, 2007a:11-15), and Textiles (BCME, 2007b:11-15). Guidance is provided regarding addressing local contexts, safety considerations, confidentiality, utilising technology for teaching-learning, copyright and responsibility, and inclusivity (including working with the community and families). The recommended pedagogical approach for Home Economics and its courses in British Columbia was found coherent and well balanced, reflecting the nature of the subject, the importance of the learning for the learner, and the context in which the learning will take place. Though teaching content is structured around outcomes, outcomes-based learning is not denoted as a particular pedagogical principle.

A holistic pedagogical approach forms the foundation of the **Singaporean curriculum**, allowing the language of learning (bilingualism), the learner (21st century skills are emphasised), the teacher (professional competency), involvement of parents, and the utilisation of information technology to support teaching-learning (SME, 2012:1-2). No subject-specific details or guidance have been included in documentation (SME, 2014a & SME, 2014b) regarding recommended or preferred pedagogical approaches. It was therefore found that the level of pedagogical indication in the Singaporean curricula is low, despite the holistic pedagogical foundation of the whole curriculum.

The **Kenyan curriculum for Home Science** contains limited guidance with only a few ambiguous pedagogical references. Teachers

are expected to improvise materials and equipment, utilise local resources and incorporate electronic media to enhance teaching-learning (RKME, 2002:149), which implies a creative teaching approach to Home Science. In addition, suggestions are included for continued learning or updating teaching content and using resources frugally (RKME, 2002:149).

### **Suitability of the pedagogical approaches specified for learners at FET level**

In addition to providing descriptions of the subject-specific pedagogical approaches and the extent to which curricula provide guidance in this regard, evaluators were also expected to comment on the appropriateness of the pedagogical approaches specified in the curricula for learners at the FET (or comparable) level of development. The limitation of incomplete curriculum documentation available to the evaluators, made it difficult to benchmark the type of learner envisioned in the curricula for Consumer Studies and similar subjects.

The **CAPS** reflects the political sentiments of South Africa, describing learners to echo inclusivity and diversity, specifically addressing socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability (DBE, 2011:4). Additionally, the South African NCS for Grades R-12 (in general) aims to produce learners who are able to solve problems, work collaboratively with others, can manage and organise themselves and their activities, can conduct research, can communicate effectively, and will understand the world as a set of related systems (DBE, 2011:5), amongst other expectations. These expectations are general and not level- or subject-specific, but are mostly suitable for learners in the FET Phase. No pedagogical guidance is however included to support the attainment of the expectations for learners and therefore the evaluators could not comment on this aspect.

The **British Columbian** curriculum documents also address learner diversity, alongside explicit guidance and suggestions of addressing learner diversity in the teaching of Home Economics (BCME, 1998:11). These curriculum documents also included guidance regarding gender equity, and the means to deal with sensitive issues in the subject (BCME, 1998:9). The pedagogical guidance included in these documents was found suitable for Grades 11 and 12 learners. The evaluators were of the opinion that the

British Columbian curriculum seemed to envision learners and teachers to be able to deal with much more challenging cognitive demands in thinking than the other curricula.

The investigated **Singaporean** documents did not mention the type of learner envisioned in the subject, nor subject-specific pedagogical guidance.

Except for a single mention of addressing "gender responsiveness" to encourage both girls and boys to take Home Science in **Kenya** (RKME, 2002:149), no mention is made regarding the type of learner envisioned in the subject, nor is preferred pedagogy addressed.

The research findings led to the conclusions and recommendations that will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The curricula reviewed for the purposes of benchmarking the South African CAPS for Consumer Studies are diverse and dealt with similar (but not exactly the same) subjects. This comparative analysis was therefore complicated. The following conclusions could, however, be drawn from the investigation:

The CAPS document for Consumer Studies is overall adequate, but pedagogical guidance is lacking, as was found in the investigation of other FET subjects (Umalusi, 2014a:59). The British Columbian curriculum is considered comprehensive, coherent and well structured. The content in the Singaporean curricula for the O-levels (SME, 2014a, 2014b) is not constructively comparable to that of the Consumer Studies curriculum. The Kenyan curriculum is exceedingly suitable in the Kenyan context (from the evaluators' viewpoint); however, not all its content is applicable for the South African Consumer Studies curriculum.

Levels of pedagogical guidance included in the different countries' curricula are diverse. Limited pedagogical guidance, with inadequate reference made to this important aspect, was found in the CAPS document for South African Consumer Studies, the Singaporean curricula, and the Kenyan Home Science curriculum. The British Columbian curricula showed evidence of clear and detailed subject-specific pedagogical guidance.

Subject-specific pedagogical guidance is an important aspect that should be included in

curriculum documents, particularly because teachers' knowledge regarding subject-appropriate pedagogy fosters more productive learning by learners (Pickard & Reichelt, 2008:196). To reinforce the potential advantages associated with Consumer Studies, this subject has to be taught and learned in a manner that will support its overall aims. This, in turn, implies that clear and concise pedagogical guidance should be included in the South African Consumer Studies curriculum, specifically regarding entrepreneurial learning and the practical production aspects included in the subject content (Booyse *et al.*, 2013:93). Therefore, it seems to be a critical deficiency that subject-specific pedagogical guidance is so inadequate in most of the investigated curricula.

The benchmarking of the CAPS with the curricula of British Columbia, Singapore and Kenya led to the following recommendations, which could contribute to the strengthening of the CAPS for Consumer Studies:

In the Singaporean curriculum for "Introduction to Enterprise Development", a simple business plan is developed to support entrepreneurial learning. This practice of integrating elements of entrepreneurial learning into a single, life-relevant unit is recommended for inclusion in the CAPS for Consumer Studies, whereas entrepreneurial elements are currently dealt with separately, but not as a whole.

Clear and detailed subject-specific pedagogical guidance, as was found in the British Columbian documents (BCME, 1998:16), should be included in the CAPS for Consumer Studies. Such guidance should not only include teaching-learning strategies, but the principles fundamental to learning in Consumer Studies – especially entrepreneurial learning – should also be stipulated. Detailed guidance regarding activities and practices, which best supports the construction of knowledge and skills in Consumer Studies, should be included. The curriculum document should include more guidance regarding the preferred approach to how the subject is taught (or learned), as well as the principles fundamental to learning in Consumer Studies.

Both the Singaporean documents (SME, 2012:2) and the British Columbian documents (BCME, 1998:5) explicitly address the utilisation of technology (and specifically information technology) in the subject. The utilisation of technology to support teaching and learning

(thereby contributing to pedagogy) in Consumer Studies should be addressed in the curriculum by providing teachers with structured guidance to make teaching and learning in this subject even more relevant in the 21st century and to learners of this century. Such technology should not be limited to computers and tablets, but should also include smartphone technologies that partially allow for the vast discrepancies in resource distribution in South African schools.

Structured and organised collaboration between teachers and other role-players in the subject (e.g. industry, departmental personnel and community members) in Consumer Studies is essential and could be promoted through the inclusion of guidance in the curriculum regarding the appropriate use of social media, blogs, podcasts and webinars, for example. The horizons of teachers and learners in this subject would be expanded and teachers would be provided with reputable points of contact and information for such communication, and for further research.

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