

The impact of employing various pedagogical strategies to enhance the quality of learning and teaching of history in the further education and training phase

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Jongikhaya Mvenene

Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha

South Africa

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1898-5819>

mvenenej@gmail.com

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Abstract

The use of interactive, learner-centred and active learning strategies facilitates the teaching of history in the twenty-first century. Anchored in the conversation theory, which aligns with the social constructivist framework, the study aims to examine the impact of employing different innovative pedagogical strategies and practices used by history teachers as vehicles to enhance and promote quality learning and teaching in history classrooms. A shift from traditional instructional teaching has given way to emerging strategies that aim to produce critical and independent thinkers who can apply historical knowledge in diverse contexts. The basis of the analysis is on various strategies, including direct instruction, discussion, small-group work, cooperative learning, problem-solving, inquiry, case studies, role-playing and writing as teaching methods. The focus of history learning and teaching is on inculcating problem-solving skills in the learners. Content analysis of books, policy documents, dissertations, theses and journal articles as well as some records retrieved from the Internet, was employed to generate data using a qualitative research approach. The results show that history teachers, as required by history curricula, have gradually shifted from using age-old teaching strategies to emerging learner-centred methods, reflecting a shift from rote-learning to learning with understanding. It is recommended that learner-centred teaching strategies be employed to enhance learner performance and improve the quality of learning and teaching in the history subject.

Keywords: Conversation theory; curriculum and assessment policy statement; historical enquiry; learner-centred strategies; innovative pedagogical strategies; quality learning and teaching.

Introduction and background

Though the pre-1994 period was characterised by history teaching, which was “ideologically biased in favour of the political establishment and against the majority of South Africans”, the post-1994 period took a positive turn towards transforming education in South Africa (Davids, 2016:89). The reforms in education found expression in the introduction of Curriculum 2005 (implemented in 1997), “which collapsed the boundaries of knowledge and placed an emphasis on group work, relevance, local curriculum construction and local choice of content” (Hoadley, 2011) and the Revised National Curriculum Statement of 2007. Bertram (2012:22) describes the Curriculum 2005 as “the major post-apartheid curriculum reform movement” in South Africa.

The introduction of the history National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) paved the way for the introduction of new teaching strategies that are interactive and learner-centred (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011c). The NCS and CAPS prescribed the curricula for history, marking a shift from apartheid content and context, in which emphasis was on Eurocentric curricula. The prescribing of topics to be taught in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase of history does not prevent an educator from teaching additional topics or extending others (Brookbanks, 2018).

CAPS was promulgated in 2011 by the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) to replace the previous curriculum, the NCS of 2002 and 2003. To that effect, Siebörger (2021:150) describes CAPS as “not a new curriculum but a revised curriculum.” The NCS for history, in line with Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), Curriculum 2005 and CAPS, aims to make history learner-centred, emancipatory and skills-based, thereby placing learners at the centre of teaching-learning activities.

CAPS offers the following aims of history teaching: to create an interest in the past, provide knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the past and the forces that shaped it, an understanding of historical enquiry and sources and evidence of history (DBE, 2011c:10). Since the introduction of NCS and CAPS curricula, there has been a shift in focus and attention from traditional methods of learning and teaching towards employing different pedagogical strategies designed to improve learner performance in history

classrooms. Of great importance was the Department of Education's desire to encourage history teachers to use teaching strategies that promote and enhance quality learning and teaching.

According to the South African Council for Quality Assurance in General and FET, known as Umalusi (2013:24), as cited by Siebörger (2021:144), CAPS "indicates the anticipated teaching hours per topic... topics in the CAPS were specified in far more detail than in the NCS, [as a result] it was much easier to interpret them and select relevant content knowledge". However, CAPS "underplayed aspects such as human rights, human agency, heritage, and democracy" (Umalusi, 2014:74, cited in Siebörger, 2021:149). In terms of skills development in history learning and teaching, CAPS and NCS provide similar skills, although their approaches differ. For example, Siebörger (2021:152) writes, "in the NCS, teachers chose to teach skills according to their choice of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. In the CAPS, however, there was a table of skills. An accompanying observation on the CAPS was a quotation from it to the effect that memory skills remain important (DBE, 2011b:11; Umalusi, 2013:29, as cited in Siebörger, 2021:148).

The focus of the study is on the curriculum reform for FET school history curriculum in post-apartheid South Africa, with special reference to the CAPS curriculum for schools in the FET history curriculum phase, which comprises Grades 10-12. study aims to examine the impact of innovative pedagogical strategies that can be used by history teachers with the intention of producing quality learning and teaching in South African history secondary schools. Though no discussion of each strategy is provided, mention of these is made. They include direct instruction, discussion, small-group work, cooperative learning, problem-solving, inquiry, case studies, role-playing and writing as teaching strategies (Killen, 2010). The study makes an argument for participative practices, moving away from teacher-centred strategies and passive learner classrooms. It, therefore, seeks to examine new strategies of teaching history to produce critical thinkers in secondary schools. When equipped with critical thinking skills, learners are empowered to make informed decisions and participate actively in real-life situations.

The purpose of the study is to examine the efficacy and impact of the pedagogical strategies of history teachers in promoting quality learning and teaching in secondary schools. The extent to which teachers implement innovative pedagogical practices to enhance quality learning and teaching is examined. The concept of quality learning and teaching was launched in 2008 by the South African government under the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC), which was meant to improve the quality

of education through the active involvement and mobilisation of stakeholders, such as parents, teachers, community members and all people who have an interest in education. As Killen (2010:135) suggests, quality learning is promoted by “focusing on intellectual quality, creating an environment that fosters learning, and making learning relevant and important for learners”. Innovative learner-centred active learning strategies, such as active learning situations, debates, demonstrations, simulations and problem-solving, should enable learners to relate past events to their present lives.

The old-age teaching methods were henceforth perceived and condemned as promoting learners’ passiveness in the learning-teaching situation. In this connection, previous studies have revealed that traditional teaching strategies hinder learners from acquiring a quality, holistic workload, rethinking and balanced educational experience (Gontyeleni, 2019; Ntshangase, 2022:10; Nxasana et al., 2023:140). The teacher-centred methods contribute to learning and teaching that lacks quality and the development of skills and values in learners. Its primary purpose was to inculcate passive learning and deliver knowledge, thereby encouraging rote learning without considering the need to prepare learners for societal responsibilities and meet challenges with determination (Wang, 2022).

Wang (2022) observes that traditional pedagogy, as a teacher-centred approach, did not accommodate understanding of historical concepts and how these were used in different contexts. It had no room for helping learners to make personal connections with what they are reading, or to think critically about it. Mathur and Singh (2022:99) claim that traditional pedagogical strategies put a premium on affinity “between the teacher and the knowledge they possess, of which learners are recipients”. They further opine that teachers are playing the role of being “primarily information transmitters, and the learners’ role is to absorb the information in forms of memorisation and note taking” (Mathur & Singh, 2022:95-102). Hence, the emphasis on learning and teaching history should hinge on innovative and learner-centred pedagogical strategies, marking a shift away from teacher-centred approaches.

The terms ‘pedagogical strategy’ and ‘teaching methods’ must be unpacked to gain an understanding of the content and context of the article. It is, however, synonymous with teaching strategies that are learner-centred, participative, collaborative and interactive. The concept of pedagogic strategy comprises two key elements: pedagogy and strategy. The former, according to Nkwanyana-Sithole (2023:14), is “knowledge about integration of subject expertise and skilled teaching of a particular subject, being able to combine different types of content”. For Juneja (2015:43), the latter (strategy) may be understood

as “the blueprint of decisions and so being able to integrate, utilise, and allocate resources to meet the objectives”. In this manner, pedagogical strategies relevant to active and dynamic learning-teaching discourse focus on learning and teaching approaches as fields of active engagement between the teacher and learners, where subject content serves as the object of interaction and interest. Pedagogical strategies are, therefore, progressive in nature and designed to achieve long-term learning goals.

McInerney and Green-Thompson (2020:27) describe teaching methods as “approaches, strategies, and techniques used by educators to enhance teaching and learning”. They continue to state that “these methods aim to help students develop their ability to write effectively, clearly, and coherently” and are used to facilitate learning and to accommodate different learning styles (McInerney & Green-Thompson, 2020:29). Thus, prior research was undertaken “to discover the known and unknown so that I can be guided as to what requires further investigation” (Denney & Tewksbury, 2013:218).

While a pedagogical strategy is designed to achieve learning goals and a broad long-term plan, a teaching method refers to how the strategy is implemented in the delivery of content and how learners comprehend the lessons. According to Jyothish (2021), a teaching method is primarily a scientific approach to delivering curriculum, taking into account the psychological and physical needs of children. The aim is to realise the critical outcomes and predetermined goals of teaching a particular topic. Methods of teaching serve as a means by which an important link is established in the teaching cycle and dynamism is introduced into the learning-teaching discourse. McInerney and Green-Thompson (2020:25) describe a teaching method as “a set of principles, procedures, or strategies to be implemented by educators to support learning”.

In the discourse, teachers as facilitators of learning are expected to possess and demonstrate modernised teaching skills relevant for the generation of learners they teach (Alessa & Hussein, 2023:62). Subsequently, there has been a gradual evolution from traditional to modern pedagogical strategies, prompting teachers to continually develop and improve their pedagogy to meet the developmental needs and interests of learners (Mathur & Singh, 2022). In learner-centred approaches, also referred to as discovery learning, inductive learning, or inquiry learning, the teacher puts the learner at the centre of learning and teaching activities. In this way, “knowledge is constructed rather than discovered, and that learning and teaching should focus on learner understanding rather than memorisation” (Killen, 2015:98) of uncoordinated historical facts.

Literature review

The literature reviewed in this study examines the impact of employing various pedagogical strategies to enhance quality learning and teaching in history education in secondary schools. It examines literature that addresses issues of promoting interactive learning to foster engagement and a deep understanding of history content. It analyses CAPS as a government policy to be implemented in schools and assesses its application in the South African FET classrooms.

Snyder (2019:332) maintains that “a literature review is a systematic way of collecting and synthesising previous research on a topic ... a way of building your research on existing knowledge of all academic research activities in a specific discipline.” For the purposes of this study, various sources were consulted to gain an understanding of the interactive, emerging pedagogical strategies used in the learning and teaching of history for enhancing quality learning and teaching, and to improve learner performance in history secondary school classrooms.

The literature review provides a platform to discuss learning and teaching strategies, building a logical link for researchers of history learning and teaching and to show the relevance of the study “to what has already been researched by other scholars in the past” (Mashile, 2020:34). Therefore, an in-depth analysis of books, policy documents and articles was conducted, and findings were delivered based on documentary evidence, “consideration, and sometimes understanding” (Jesson et al, 2011:42).

Before embarking on the CAPS history curriculum, reference has been made to traditional methods of teaching as a scaffolding for examining and assessing the new strategies. However, the strategies have not been discussed. It is, however, the strategies impact that has been evaluated and assessed as they enhance and promote quality learning and teaching in secondary schools of history.

According to Wang (2022:272), traditional teaching methods are “teacher-centred... [and are intended]... to impart book knowledge to learners”. It has as its focus area the teaching of recitation and memorisation as fundamental aspects of traditional teaching methods, where the ability to memorise and recite the lesson is evidence of learning (Stephen Perse Foundation, 2017). In the process, the complexities of language diversity and communication barriers are often overlooked, with the spotlight placed on delivering pedagogical content. Consequently, many history learners find it challenging to engage with historical content, resulting in a gradual decline in their performance (Fishbein et al., 2018:23, as cited in Mulaudzi, 2024:38).

Killen (2010:98) describes teacher-centred methods as “direct instruction, deductive teaching or expository teaching” in which there is constructive interaction between learners and teachers. In teacher-centred approaches, “the teacher has direct control over what is taught and how learners are presented with the information they are to learn” (Killen, 2010:98).

Indeed, the use of traditional teacher-centred methods places a premium on, as argued by Kanjee and Hardman (2024:65), “the transmission of content rather than the development of concepts.” Furthermore, Kanjee and Hardman (2024:60) note that the primary aim of teachers in employing this method is to “cover the curriculum and have little time to spend developing understanding” of historical concepts to apply them in different contexts. Kanjee and Hardman (2024:63) also posit that “traditional pedagogical Mode... [of lesson delivery]... focuses on transmission of content rather than the development of concepts”. In this way, learners are faced with a situation in which teachers shift from enabling learners to comprehend historical concepts to curriculum coverage, contrary to the requirements of CAPS, which was promulgated in 2011 by the South African DBE to replace the previous curriculum, the NCS of 2002 and 2003 (DBE, 2011c).

The curriculum policy on education, CAPS, requires history teachers to implement best practices in the learning and teaching of history. However, actual practices are constrained by inhibiting factors, such as inadequate school infrastructure, the quality of teachers, a lack of electricity, connectivity challenges and the rurality of some FET schools.

This situation affected the implementation of CAPS by history teachers. These disparities are due to South Africa facing physical and human resource shortages in terms of infrastructure, the affordability of technology, community facilities, school policy on ICT use, socio-cultural and linguistic factors as well as economic and political factors.

To counteract the challenges and constraints mentioned above, a variety of teaching and learning strategies can be adopted to improve learners’ performance in history. The strategies include, but are not limited to, discussion, cooperative learning, project work, role-play and experimentation (Carl & Negumbo, 2017:98). Different learner-centred strategies could also be employed to maximise teachers’ effective integration of ICT tools and online teaching in enhancing history teaching and learning experiences in FET curriculum secondary schools in South Africa. According to Odendaal-Kroon and Poole (2018:230), it is of vital importance to enhance history learning and teaching by employing technological tools and online teaching technologies for the development of historical skills and “broader skills that are

attuned to the needs of an increasingly globalised world”. As De Sousa et al., (2017:20) posit, “history lessons have become more active and learner-centred with respect to ICT integration and the use of multimedia resources in teaching and learning at schools in South Africa”.

The issue of security and infrastructure maintenance also hindered the implementation of this policy. Not all schools in rural communities have the financial resources to provide for security and maintenance. Hence, in many instances, reports of school breakages and malfunctioning machinery increased. Consequently, Christie et al.’s (2004:64) argument that the “policy implementation (the enacted curriculum) should be true to the policy vision (the official curriculum)” becomes inapplicable. This view is in line with Bernstein’s theory of fidelity and pedagogic device, which underlines “a distinction between what is relayed (the message) and an underlying pedagogic device that structures and organises the content and distribution of what is relayed (Bertram, 2012:1-22). Bertram (2012:19) argues that according to Bernstein’s theory, “the key process is recontextualisation, whereby knowledge produced at one site, the site of knowledge production (mainly, but not exclusively, the university), is selectively transferred to sites of reproduction (mainly, but not exclusively, the school)”.

While OBE was an approach to teaching and learning, NCS focused more on outcomes and integration of content from different subject areas than on teaching content of specific subjects per grade (Robinson & Lomofsky, 2015:70). The introduction of CAPS was “a way of restoring teachers’ authority as subject specialists”, with guidance being given on content specification, clear and concise assessment requirements (Robinson & Lomofsky, 2015:70). The motto of CAPS is: structured, clear, practical, helping teachers unlock the power of NCS.

It is important to note that “in CAPS the curriculum was designed around the topics, while the NCS was designed around the Learning Outcomes” (Umalusi, 2013:42, as cited in Siebörger, 2021:144). According to Maluleka and Ledwaba (2023:87), “CAPS is an amendment to RNCS (DBE, 2011a). This means that RNCS was not eliminated. It appears that the reasoning was to strike a balance between an RNCS, which was outcomes-oriented, and a CAPS, which is more content-oriented”.

Savich (2009) argues that numerous teaching strategies are employed in history learning and teaching. These include traditional teaching methods, which emphasise not only the memorisation of historical facts, but also limit the capacity to think historically (Harris & Girard, 2014:218). The teaching methods also prohibit teacher-student

interactions (Anderson, 2008), which, for Sebbowa (2016), compromise the quality and innovativeness of history education.

Jyothish (2021) offers a compelling argument on the teachers' responsibility to employ several methods that will bring life into history lessons, making them more vibrant and interesting. The author points out that "active learning techniques, films, library research, and historical fiction can all be used to make teaching and learning on history more invigorating", vibrant and interesting (Jyothish, 2021:204). Killen (2010:135) enters the discourse, adding direct instruction, discussion, small-group work, cooperative learning, problem-solving, inquiry, case studies, role-play and writing as teaching strategies to the methods at the disposal of teachers. For Firth (2017:156), teachers must provide the learner with "a variety of sources [to enable the learner] to construct a narrative which does justice to the complexity of events and concepts".

Killen (2010:99) observes that there is no teaching strategy that "is better than others in all circumstances [and], so you have to be able to use a variety of teaching strategies and make rational decisions about when each one is likely to be most effective". Thus, the implementation of different, innovative strategies should be uppermost in the planning, preparation and delivery of history lessons. The planning of learner activities should consider the abilities, classroom inhibiting factors and needs of the learners in order to create an atmosphere of vibrant and dynamic history classrooms in which individual attention is applied consistently and continually.

Corroborating Killen's (2010:99) argument, Sebbowa and Muyinda (2018:129) further observe that "there is no single best way to teach history, but considerations should be given to multiple ways of constructing various history meanings". Moreover, Jyothish (2021:208) makes a convincing and apt claim that a variety of pedagogical strategies are designed in such a way that they "make the subject interesting, vital and lively, lending lustre and colour to the delivery of lessons". In other words, the history teacher should deliver lessons with a view to developing learners' interest and aspirations in the subject. The learners' desire for further studies in the subject should derive from the teacher's presentation of lessons and how they bring life to history as a subject of worth.

As Jyothish (2021:206) postulates, a combination of different teaching methods may also be employed to "to avoid monotony, ... [for] ... If a teacher always adopts [the] same method, it will be monotonous". Jyothish (2021:208) argues that the use of a variety of pedagogical strategies fosters history "learners' total development in the realms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains."

Adopting various strategies in the classroom “is aimed to create certain desirable changes of behaviour through the transaction of Knowledge in History” (Jyothish, 2021:206). Planned teacher and learner activities in consideration of skills to be inculcated to learners and outcomes to be achieved at the end of each lesson, enable the teacher to facilitate the lesson with confidence. This practice allows history “learners to acquire much-needed skills, such as reading, thinking, and writing like historians, while engaging with a complicated and contested past and juxtaposing that past with contemporary issues” (Maluleka & Ledwaba, 2023:79).

These outcomes evolve from what the history teachers want to achieve, what they want learners to know and be able to do, including the attitudes and values that the teacher wants learners to have as a result of learning that has taken place. They presuppose the detailed content and the pedagogical strategies to be employed by the teacher (Killen, 2010).

Sebbowa and Muyinda (2018:145) recommend that “learner-centred methods like group discussions, demonstrations and role play, which involve learning through active experimentation and reflective historical thinking, would be effective” in the delivery of pedagogical content. Contrary to the aims and nature of traditional teaching methods, modern teaching methods focus on the intellectual and social development of learners, enhancing and boosting “critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills in learners” (Sebbowa and Muyinda, 2018:145), research techniques (such as finding and sorting of evidence, evaluation of both written and oral sources, selection of relevant information and the organisation of material), the ability to respect and debate different points of view and make balanced judgements, the ability to argue logically, state problems and offer solutions as well as writing well-structured answers (Stephen Perse Foundation, 2017).

Thorough lesson planning and preparation are done prior to stepping into the classroom, in which the interaction “between the teacher and the learners through a series of planned activities performed by the teacher in the classroom” unfolds (Jyothish, 2021:204). Lesson planning should be designed so that clear and achievable outcomes are well-articulated and appropriate to the level of academic and social development of the students (Killen, 2010). Planned activities that unfold in the classroom, as tactics to communicate the curriculum, are referred to as the method of teaching or pedagogical strategies at the teacher’s disposal (Jyothish, 2021).

In planning lessons, teachers must aim towards inculcating values and positive attitudes in learners. To achieve clear and achievable aims, as observed by Ayres et al. (2004), learners need to have a positive attitude towards their school and the subjects they are studying. Teachers should have a primary aim to engage in quality teaching to produce quality learning, and to achieve this, they should work towards “identifying which approaches to teaching facilitate quality learning” (Killen, 2010:64).

More importantly, teachers should help learners develop a clear understanding of the pedagogical content, create an environment that promotes quality learning and teaching, and in so doing, “make learning relevant to all learners regardless of their cultural, ethnic or academic differences” (Killen, 2010:64). In planning lessons, it is the teacher’s duty to consider why they are teaching what they are teaching and whose ends are being served by what and how they teach (Killen, 2010:64). This should be placed within the context of moral, ethical, social and political dimensions.

This mode of lesson preparation is a platform to equip teachers with the confidence and inspiration they need in the classroom. Without thorough planning of lessons, the teacher’s interaction with learners becomes a tedious and fruitless exercise. Teachers could develop solid strategies for teaching South African history by using a variety of historical sources, that is, primary and secondary sources, as well as employing skills in analysing evidence and integrating written and oral sources in the preparation, compilation and delivery of history lessons. As a result, learners’ perceptions of history might improve considerably as they could be exposed to a balanced presentation of history (Mvenene, 2018:22-23).

Extensive reading and careful preparation of lessons “provide teachers with the necessary content knowledge base to be able to teach about South African history in more exciting and relevant ways” (Mvenene, 2018:22). Endorsing Mvenene (2018:22), Reynolds et al. (2024:24) advance a convincing argument that “extensive reading entails language learners’ independent reading of abundant materials suitable for their proficiency levels.” They continue to argue that “previous studies have revealed extensive reading as effective for improving various aspects of second language (L2) proficiency”.

Therefore, the teaching of history should promote the reading of primary and secondary sources available in libraries and museums. History teachers have a responsibility to encourage learners to undertake field trips to monuments. Educational tours and field trips usually cover historical and cultural sights. In travelling to historical monuments, teachers and learners can gain insight into the magnificent forts, palaces and tombs, learning about

the art and architecture of ancient cultures (Jyothish, 2021:204). History learners may also be encouraged to undertake study tours to archives, where primary literary sources are preserved for historical reconstruction. Study tours to museums are of pedagogical significance, as museums preserve unique, tangible primary evidence of humankind and the environment, such as rich inscriptions, coins and other artefacts. Jyothish (2021:204) claims that “these epigraphic and numismatic sources provide primary knowledge of our history”. Aptly so, Nash’s (2015:33) assertion seems appropriate when the author claims that, “Although historians have their own preconceptions and approaches, it remains an inescapable fact that the history they investigate and eventually write about cannot be done without historical sources. History literally depends on the existence of historical sources; otherwise, there is no evidence on which to base any history.”

Mention is made of archaeological sources, literary sources and oral sources. The teachers’ role should be to make these sources accessible to history learners and use them as a basis for introducing new topics. These reading materials should be used to enable the learners to explore different perspectives on historical knowledge and make a constructive assessment of available evidence. This exercise enhances learners’ skills of critical thinking and analysis, designed to promote future independent thinkers and responsible citizens.

Each pedagogical strategy, when supplemented with appropriate reading material, can be used in any history classroom. Each strategy effectively engages learners in the process of learning history for a deeper understanding. Sources provided to history learners should consider the nature of the subject and the complexity of language about the academic and linguistic development of learners. As Graden (1996:380), Farrell and Guz (2019:117) have appropriately claimed, previous studies have shown that teachers’ choices of learning materials are often influenced by factors such as class hours, students’ language proficiency, and the constraints of educational contexts.

In the use of various teaching strategies, barriers to learning in overcrowded classrooms must be addressed. Large classes, learner indiscipline and teachers’ attitude are such inhibiting factors towards quality learning and education. Instances of language and literacy development in learners are another factor to consider as a history teacher. Learners’ level of literacy, that is, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the language of learning and teaching, may present the teacher with challenges in achieving learning outcomes. Be that as it may, history teachers should employ a variety of pedagogical methods as well as “various curriculum differentiation strategies such as those included in the Department of Basic Education’s *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning*” (DBE, 2011b).

Theoretical framework

The current study is grounded in the conversation theory. The relevance of this theory as a framework for the article lies in the reality that the conversation theory “fits into the social constructivist’s framework as it proposes that learning and knowledge are gained in terms of conversations and interactions between different systems of knowledge” (Warnich & Gordon, 2015:46).

For Warnich and Gordon (2015:60), “the conversation theory suggests that for learning to be successful, continual two-way conversations and interactions are required”. The interactive, learner-centred strategies align well with this theory, as teaching-learning activities take place “between teachers and learners, among the learners themselves, between actions and reflections” (Pask, 1976:15). Under the circumstances in which learners’ role and active participation take precedent, “learners will come to a shared understanding of the world” (Sharples, 2002:504-520).

According to Labaree (2009), a theoretical framework is the structure that supports a theory in a research study. It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. Henning et al. (2008:25) contend that: “A theoretical framework positions your research in the discipline or subject in which you are working. It enables you to theorise about your research. It helps you make your assumptions about the interconnectedness of the world explicit.”

The learning and teaching situations, as well as the teaching styles and methods, are influenced by the frameworks the teacher uses to understand how teaching and learning occur (Robinson & Lomofsky, 2015). Robinson and Lomofsky (2015:49) go on to state that “frameworks influence the relationship between how the teacher teaches and how the learners learn.”

Research design and methodology

The research design used in the study was a case study. This study drew on both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The method used for the study is content analysis of books, policy documents, theses, dissertations and articles from accredited journals. Some documents were retrieved from the Internet. Regarding research design and methodology, Halsall and Wassermann (2018:64) contend that, “research design and methodology are interlinked, with the former providing the planned structure, and the latter the means of data collection and analysis”.

According to Pandey and Pandey (2021:78), the term “research methodology” refers to the procedure used for collecting data to answer research questions. Walliman (2021:35) describes it as “a broad approach to scientific inquiry explaining how research questions should be asked and answered”. This study adopted an interpretivist paradigm to understand the truths about the impact of employing diverse pedagogical approaches to promote learner engagement and understanding of historical content. As pointed out above, a qualitative case study design was employed, focusing on document analysis including books, policy documents, dissertations, theses and journal articles.

Discussion of findings

Using a combination of teaching strategies is significant, as it should be intended to not only inculcate the love of work, but also “aim at providing opportunities to pupils to apply the knowledge that they have acquired” (Jyothish, 2021:204). For the purposes of inculcating desirable values such as respect, integrity, honesty and responsibility as well as positive attitudes, using history as a vehicle to entrench good citizenship in the learners is essential for history teachers to vary pedagogical strategies and to expose learners to extensive reading of available historical sources and compare with oral sources, particularly when dealing with contemporary issues. Quality learning and teaching are critical components using history as a basis for promoting learners’ constructive and critical engagements with historical sources.

The teaching of history should instil in learners a sense of responsibility and good citizenship. Equally so, learners’ attitude and responsibility as citizens of the state are promoted through history learning and teaching. Jyothish (2021:202) that, “None of the teaching methods describe here will have an effect on students, unless they are taught from a humanistic perspective. History must be presented in a fashion in which students can relate it to their lives and find meaning in it.”

As Jyothish (2021:207) further observes, when a humanistic approach is employed and “used in conjunction with some of the methods mentioned, it makes history much more fulfilling for both the students and the teachers”.

Sebbowa and Muyinda (2018:134) argue that, “engaging with interactive learner-centred methods in History classes arouses learners’ imaginations and ability to see the contemporary events through the lens of the people in the past. The teacher’s role shifts to guide and facilitate interpretation and construction of different accounts of the past”.

Scholars maintain that “school experiences, contexts and active involvement in shared heritage with the teacher playing a big role in their conception” give shape and structure to learners’ ideas and understanding of the value and significance of the past experiences (Mohamud & Whitburn, 2014:43). It stands to reason why interactive learner-centred methods of teaching have been—and are—given preference, as they bridge the gap between the learners and their teachers (Sebbowa & Muyinda, 2018).

Thus, the use of a single teaching approach is non-developmental and promotes inactivity, boredom and a lack of interest among learners. To avoid this monotony, Sebbowa and Muyinda (2018:142) argue for the different approaches that are “basic and innovative methods of teaching History to suit the changing needs of the student in the 21st Century”. The use of these strategies should be designed to instil a love of the subject and enable learners to apply the acquired knowledge in various contexts.

Recommendations

The learning and teaching of history should be aimed at producing learners with diverse skills usable in dealing with current issues and challenges. The use of a variety of innovative pedagogical strategies enhances the quality of learning and teaching in secondary schools. Teacher-centred methods promote rote memorisation. Hence, the recommendation is for innovative and learner-centred pedagogical strategies to shift away from teacher-centred approaches.

As pointed out above, it is worth recommending the utilisation of different learner-centred teaching strategies to improve learner performance and enhance the quality of learning and teaching in history. The planning of learner activities and the provision of resources are crucial in promoting active learning and teaching that fosters quality education, not only in urban areas, but also in rural schools.

Ethical clearance

Having utilised content analysis of written sources, such as articles, policy documents, dissertations, theses and books, the author (J Myenene) opted for purposive sampling and selected literature that deals with the impact of employing different pedagogical strategies to enhance quality learning and teaching and improve performance in secondary schools in the twenty-first century. Purposive sampling was employed for the purposes of this study, which was based on the suitability of the documents for the article’s purpose (Maposa, 2016). No ethical clearance is required as the articles, dissertations, theses and books used

are in the public domain, and the study does not involve any human subjects (Bertram, 2016).

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it is correct to claim that history learning and teaching require both the teacher and learners to be keen and ready to research widely around history topics before a particular topic is introduced in the classroom. Different teaching strategies should be used to improve learners' performance and to enhance quality education that is relevant to their communities and society.

The teaching and learning of history for improving learners' performance in schools and enhancing the quality of education necessitate that teachers and learners work together to answer questions and solve problems that arise as active learning takes place. Learners' level of academic development, their needs and diversity are critical for the delivery of history lessons that ultimately lead to the achievement of lesson outcomes. When planning and designing history lessons, the teacher must consider the learners' level of academic development, as well as their diversity or lack thereof.

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