

Curricula in Teacher Education for Diversity in the University of Namibia

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Abstract

Namibia's classroom compositions are diverse. Its policies on diversity reflect Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the goal on quality education that ensures inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Namibia's diversity policies advocate for teacher education that is responsive to the country's needs. What is unknown is what a socio-cultural curriculum means in Namibian teacher education. This article focuses on the nature of the University of Namibia's (UNAM) BEd curriculum and how student teachers learn its contents. I argue that teacher education for diversity should go beyond traditional teacher education programmes. Its curricula should adopt a socio-cultural view. Coursework and teaching practice should reflect the needs of learners and society. Data collection consisted of curricular documents and interviews with the Dean, and Lecturers. Content analysis was used. Findings revealed that the BEd curriculum inclines more towards a socio-cultural view. However, teaching practice lacks dedication in regard to diversity teaching. Consequently, the BEd programme only partially equips student teachers with competencies required to teach diverse learners because coursework alone cannot suffice. The study contributes to knowledge of what a socio-cultural curriculum means in Namibian teacher education.

Key words: Namibia teacher education for diversity, diversity teaching, curriculum, policies, practices.

Introduction

Researchers acknowledge the current diversity in the majority of classrooms, and stress both the importance of preparing teachers who are capable of teaching in such diverse classrooms (Klug et al., 2006; Villegas & Lucas, 2002b), and also how it is the task of teacher education institutions to prepare competent teachers who are able to handle diverse learners (Valentin, 2006), and who are equipped with appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach all learners (Klug et al., 2006). The need to conduct research in the area of teacher education for diversity is thus clearly recognised. Moletsane, Hemson, and Muthukrishna (2004) noted a lack in the knowledge on the understanding of diversity underlying teacher education programmes; Darling-Hammond (2006) noted that there are fewer discussions about what goes on in the courses and clinical experiences to which student teachers are exposed; Donnelly (2010) noted the need to investigate the effectiveness of the course organisation, content and pedagogy intended to produce teachers who meet the needs of all learners, while Burns and Shadoian-Gersing (2010) claimed that there are no clear answers as to the best ways in which to prepare teachers to deal with diverse classrooms. Furthermore, the need to conduct research in this area is also demonstrated by studies that revealed the problem of a lack of appropriate expertise to teach diverse learners and meet other diversity challenges (Cooper & He, 2012; Johnson & Chang, 2012; Vandeyar, 2010; Wilmot & Naidoo, 2011; Coronel & Gómez-Hurtado, 2015; Parker-Jenkins & Masterson, 2013; Santoro & Forghani-Arani, 2015). These concerns culminated into an argument for this study that teacher education for diversity goes beyond traditional teacher education programmes, demanding diversity focused curricula if teachers of diversity are to be produced. In other words, its curricula should adopt a socio-cultural view. A socio-cultural curriculum is shaped by contextual influences within and beyond the classroom—it is contextualised to local social situations (Gleeson, 2010). Hence, curricula for diversity education should reflect the needs of learners and society (Sowell & Stollenwerk, 2000).

Despite this new understanding about curricula, there appears to be a scarcity of studies on what a socio-cultural curriculum means in Namibian teacher education. Namibia has national policies and goals of diversity, unity, inclusivity, justice and democracy (Table 1.1). The Education policy, *Towards Education for All*, in particular, demands a teacher education that is responsive to the needs of all learners. As Table 1.1 indicates, Namibia has other education policies that highlight its goals of diversity, unity and inclusivity.

Table 1.1: Namibian policies on diversity, unity and inclusivity

Policy	Relation to diversity, unity, and inclusivity
The 1990 Namibian Constitution	Prohibits all forms of discrimination; allows freedom to profess and promote any culture, language, religion, and tradition.
The Education Policy document – <i>Towards Education for All</i> , 1993	Equity and access goals aim at providing equitable access to schools; aims to eradicate all forms of discrimination and segregation; advocates an LCE that values learners’ needs and life experiences; expects teachers to help learners to integrate school and life outside of school; expects UNAM to provide education that is responsive to the needs of the people of Namibia.
The Language Policy for Schools in Namibia: A discussion document (2003)	Recognises languages as medium of cultural transmission and a person’s identity; provides for the use of the mother tongue as medium of instruction (MOI) in pre-primary and Grades 1-3, and as a subject from grade 4; allows schools to organise co-curricular activities to promote any language, especially those not used as MOI: sensitises learners to appreciate multiculturalism
The Education Act of 2001	Allows learners freedom to practise any religion, and makes provision for cultural activities to take place at schools.
Investing in People, Developing a Country, 1998.	Equitable access to educational institutions; allows affirmative action to be applied to redress past imbalances; requires higher education to be relevant and contextual to national goals.
The Ministry of Education Sector Policy on Inclusive Education (2013)	This policy enhances Namibia’s aim of inclusivity. Despite the fact that the definition of inclusive education includes all learners, it exclusively targets equity for educationally marginalised learners.
The Harambee Prosperity Plan, 2016	Built on a construct of an inclusive ‘Namibian House’ where no-one feels left out. It promotes the ideologies of equality, equity, and fairness. It is people centred and inclusive.
The National Professional Standards (NPST) for	Element 5, namely, ‘demonstrate understanding of diversity’ emphasises diversity teaching. This includes knowledge of culturally responsive teaching, the recognition of learners’ backgrounds, and advocacy the use

Teachers in Namibia, 2006	of resources that promote diversity; teaching for diversity ideologies is incorporated across many competences, including, among others, non-discriminatory practices and prejudices, consideration of learner differences in planning, teaching, resources and assessment.
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As stipulated in table 1.1, policies and directives on diversity, unity, and inclusivity are given. The Language Policy is on the way in which education institutions should manage the diverse languages in Namibia and also sensitise learners about multiculturalism. This policy recognises the multicultural nature of the Namibian population by providing for learners to learn through their mother tongues during the early grades (Pre-primary and grades 1-3). The Education Act of 2001 echoes the Constitution and sensitises education institutions about the freedoms that every Namibian citizen should enjoy while the Ministry of Education Sector Policy on Inclusive Education espouses the attainment of equity by educationally marginalised learners. The Harambee Prosperity Plan is largely guided by the principles of distributive justice (Fraser, 2001; Young, 2011). It aims to reduce inequalities among the Namibian people. It assures the Namibians “a house where everyone feels a sense of belonging, where everyone is presented with a fair opportunity to prosper in an inclusive manner and by so doing, ensures that no one feels left out” (Republic of Namibia, 2016, p. 4). It is people centred and inclusive and works towards prosperity for all. Lastly, the National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia is not necessarily a policy as such but, rather, a model that provides directives on how teacher education programmes should be conceptualised. In the main, it incorporates, through its standards, the ideologies of teaching for diversity. As these policies have been formulated at the national level, it is not known how education institutions’ curricula reflect such agendas.

This study focuses on the nature of curricula and practices intended to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions of student teachers to enable them to teach for diversity at the University of Namibia (UNAM). It forms part of a PhD study undertaken at the University of Namibia. Two issues are embedded in this question, namely, the nature of the curriculum and contents; and the implementation of such a curriculum, i.e., how student teachers learn the curriculum. The essence is to establish whether the B.Ed. curriculum is socio-cultural or technical skill-based.

The Namibian context and the rationale

During the colonial epoch, segregation on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender and social class translated to schools also been segregated. It was the aim of post-independence policies to desegregate all the schools. Hence the composition of Namibian classrooms [today] is diverse and unique as the socio-political contextual issues give it shape. Namibian primary and secondary school classrooms, particularly urban schools, are heterogeneous due to their multicultural nature constituted by learners from different social classes, races, and ethnic groups. Likewise, teachers come from different backgrounds with different perceptions regarding learners. It is this uniqueness of Namibia that necessitated this study. Therefore, perceiving such classrooms from a sociocultural perspective entails bringing such unique features of Namibia that are shaped by social class, race and ethnicity from the society into the classrooms.

The goal of this article is threefold. It seeks to contribute to a better understanding of what a socio-cultural curriculum entails in practice. It also aims to contribute to the limited discussions of what goes on within courses and in teaching practice that student teachers are exposed to with regards to diversity teaching. Furthermore, this study interrogates the interrelationship between what happens in the classroom and what happens in society from a sociocultural perspective, i.e., the technocratic versus sociocultural view of the curriculum. It is the hope of the author that it contributes to the Ministry of Education' curriculum policies discussions for Namibian schools.

Literature review

Curricula in teacher education for diversity

In this study the curriculum for teacher education for diversity is guided by Cornbleth's (1988) argument that “our conceptions and ways of reasoning about curriculum reflect and shape how we think and talk about, study, and act on the education made available to students”. In line with this argument, there are two conflicting curriculum theories in the literature, namely, the technical and non-technical approaches (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Thus, a curriculum may incline towards either of these two approaches.

Technical approaches are more subject-centred and tend to focus on the development of the teachers' technical skills and classroom techniques (Tatto, 1997). This technocratic or the narrow view (Themane, 2011) perceives a curriculum in terms of syllabus content, rules and procedures (Gleeson, 2010), and a list of courses (Cornbleth, 1988; Themane, 2011). In this view, the curriculum is decontextualised and independent of “time and place” (Cornbleth, 1988) and

teachers are expected to adhere to a standardised curriculum and prescribed teaching methods (Ball, 2009; Zeichner & Ndimande, 2008). Zeichner and Gore (1990) criticised this model's failure to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge to respond to learners' needs. Its top-down approach to curriculum development has also been criticised (Sowell & Stollenwerk, 2000) as was its association with the Fidelity curriculum approach (Snyder, Bolin, & Zuwalt, 1992). The Fidelity curriculum makes teachers into mere implementers of the curriculum; agents who just follow instructions given by curriculum developers on how to teach learners the content (Snyder, Bolin, & Zuwalt, 1992). This approach, sees teachers adopt a 'blind compliance' stance (Themane, 2011) where they simply deliver the curriculum without adapting it (Snyder et al., 1992). As Snyder et al. (1992) emphasise, the aim of adapting the curriculum is, among other things, to meet the needs of the learners. The latter approach to curriculum development and implementation is referred to as the adaptation approach with the teacher making adjustments to the materials, topics, and teaching methods to suit the learners' needs (Snyder et al., 1992).

Considering the general inadequacy of a technical skill-based curriculum (Banks et al., 2005), the proponents of diversity teaching called for a curriculum that inclined more towards non-technical skills (i.e., the socio-cultural curriculum) (D'Amant, 2012; Du Toit, 2011; Themane, 2011). As a non-technical approach to the curriculum, it is more student-centred (Ornstein & Hunkins (2004), while the needs of both the learners and society form the major source of the curriculum content (Sowell & Stollenwerk, 2000). This reflects the constructivist approach that recognises, among other things, multiple perspectives, the promotion of critical thinking and collaboration (Villegas & Lucas, 2002b). The approach also contends that all learners are capable of learning (Kea, Campbell-Whatley, & Richards, 2006; Meier & Hartell, 2009).

Teacher education programmes (TEPs) which are aligned to the constructivist approach focus on the development of the teachers' knowledge and skills to enable them to address the needs of diverse learners while learning occurs in context (Sowell & Stollenwerk, 2000). This view recognises teachers as indispensable due to their knowledge of both learners and contexts (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004) and allows teachers to develop their own interpretations of situations as they interact with the learners and content (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). D'Amant (2012), Du Toit, (2011) and Themane (2011) refer to this approach as the broad or socio-cultural view as it goes beyond the list of courses to be taught to include societal issues. Cornbleth (1988) describes this curriculum view as being "in context" and the curriculum as "a contextualised social process". In

other words, the curriculum is shaped by contextual influences within and beyond the classroom and, thus, the curriculum is contextualised to local social situations (Gleeson, 2010). Bernstein (1990), in his sociolinguistic theory, asks the following questions: “How does the outside become the inside?” and “How does the inside reveal itself and shape the outside?” A question then arises as to the knowledge, skills and dispositions that make up a socio-cultural curriculum?

Socio-cultural curriculum content

The study’s central argument is that teacher education for diversity goes beyond traditional teacher education programmes. It requires new thinking about curricula and practices to succeed. That is, it requires a set of special competencies consisting of knowledge, skills and dispositions, and these constitute a socio-cultural curriculum. Interrogating the contents of what make up a socio-cultural curriculum contributes to ongoing debates of what teachers for diversity need to know.

Coursework

There are two epistemological positions on the nature of integrating diversity issues into coursework to be found in the literature, namely, the information-centred model and the integrative-generative model (Murrell et al., 1997). The information-centred model (Murrell et al., 1997) or the segregated approach (Zeichner, 1993) is an add-on approach in terms of which either a single course may focus on diversity issues or a few courses may include diversity topics (Murrell et al., 1997; Zeichner, 1993) without any changes to the curriculum’s structure, purpose and characteristics (Banks, 2001). Villegas and Lucas (2002a) find this approach to be inadequate. It does not address issues in depth (Garcia & Lopez, 2005; Kea et al., 2006; Valentin, 2006); there is no long-term impact on attitude change (Murrell et al., 1997); and it lacks a vision for preparing teachers for diversity.

A conflicting perspective, the integrated approach, infuses diversity content across various courses and field experiences (Kea et al., 2006; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2007), and across the curriculum (Vranješević, 2014). It ensures, among other things, in-depth coverage of issues across the programme; provides various opportunities to observe effective teaching in multicultural classrooms across courses; and, finally, the student teachers exposed to this approach become confident of their ability to teach in diverse classrooms (Chisholm 1994). Valentin (2006) emphasises that infusing diversity throughout courses involves all stakeholders and results in key issues being covered in each course.

Teaching practice

The need for the duration of teaching practice in diverse contexts to be extended is well supported (Meier, 2010; Cooper & He, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2006). Reeves and Robinson (2014) argue that teaching practice may not benefit student teachers if the time provided is not sufficient to enable them to apply the theory they have learnt in practice. One proposal is for student teachers to go on teaching practice as early as the first year (Meier, 2005; Torm et al., 2012). However, Darling-Hammond (2006) observes that most effective programmes require at least a full academic year of study as this allows student teachers time to experience and apply “complex repertoires of practices” so that they “grow roots on their practice” (p.8). Longer periods of teaching practice also enable students to gain sufficient experience to start to work independently of the expert teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Torm et al. (2012) argue that teaching practice should not be a ‘once off’ session but should take place throughout the training period as this would allow student teachers to develop their own personal working theory.

The effect of longer durations was reported in a study of Matoti and Odora (2013) with the student teachers in this study indicating that they had appreciated teaching practice due to its frequency during the four years of study and, particularly, the six months in their final year. They claimed this had improved their confidence, planning skills and pedagogical approaches.

The study context

The main objective of the article was to explore how UNAM, through its Bachelor of Education (BEd), incorporates diversity, unity and inclusivity issues in its curriculum. UNAM, with its five campuses, is the only government university in Namibia that prepares teachers, while the BEd is the only programme at UNAM that prepares teachers for the three phase levels, namely, BEd Lower Primary, BEd Upper Primary and BEd Secondary. Two phases were studied at two sites – the secondary phase at the UNAM main campus and the primary phase at the UNAM Khomasdal campus. Only three lecturers taught the Social Sciences at both campuses, and these and the Dean of the Faculty of Education, formed part of this study. I chose Social Sciences firstly because this field of study deals exclusively with issues of diversity (Harris & Clarke, 2011; Sheppard, 2010). It was, therefore presumed that the philosophy of the Social Science curriculum would be premised on both constructivist principles and social justice values. Moreover, it was also anticipated that the coursework would include diversity issues, and teaching practice would be intentional about diversity teaching.

Methods

Data sources

The main source of data was the UNAM Prospectus of the Faculty of Education as this seemed to be the only document that contained information on both the courses offered, and teaching practice. The document study commenced from mid-February 2016 and lasted until mid-March 2016. Three issues guided the document study: curriculum and diversity issues; courses and diversity issues; and teaching practice and diversity issues. Although documents formed the main source of data collection, the Dean and the three lecturers were also interviewed to clarify some issues.

The individual, face to face interviews with the first two lecturers were conducted in April 2016 while the interviews with the Dean of the Faculty and the third lecturer were both conducted in June and July 2016 respectively. The aim of the semi-structured interviews with the lecturers was, among others, to find answers to the following questions:

- How does the BEd programme prepare student teachers for diverse classrooms?
- How are diversity, unity and inclusivity issues integrated in the BEd courses?

Topics covered included among others, the philosophy underpinning the B. Ed. Curriculum; the presence of diversity in the B.Ed. curriculum, and adequacy of the B.Ed. curriculum with regards to enabling student teachers teach for diversity. During the interviews, I also took field notes, and I completed a summary contact form (Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014).

Data analysis

The data analysis applied Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) work on analysing qualitative data; highlighting three concurrent flows of activities, namely, data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. Content analysis (Louis et al., 2007; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) underpinned all three of the activities as proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) and followed the processes of coding, categorising, pattern seeking, and theme formulation. I opted for this technique because it provided an opportunity to analyse the text and obtain a better understanding of what had been said (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

Data condensation and data display

Data condensation is the first stage of data analysis although it continues after the data collection until the completion of the report. Its earlier stages include the management and processing of the data. During this stage, I condensed, summarised and simplified the data. Data display constitutes a further level of data condensation (Miles et al., 2014) and is a way of 'assembling' data into

easily accessible portions of information. When information is displayed, it becomes easier to form an impression of what is happening regarding the issue under investigation. This helps the researcher to overcome the challenge of extended and bulky text (Miles et al., 2014). Large volumes of information may be overwhelming and there may be a tendency to hastily jump to conclusions on the basis of ‘vivid information’ only, thus ignoring other valuable data (Miles et al., 2014). This study used different displays for the different sets of data.

Data from documents

The data from the documents was summarised into a document summary form (Miles et al., 2014). Three issues guided the summary, namely, the name or description of the document, evidence of diversity issues, and reflections on the meaning of the data in terms of diversity issues and teaching. These summaries were organised under curriculum and diversity issues; courses and diversity issues; and teaching practice and diversity issues. The aim was to establish the existence of diversity and diversity teaching in the UNAM BEd Social Science curriculum, courses and teaching practice, as well as the philosophies underpinning the BEd programme.

Data from interviews

The audio data from the interviews with both the lecturers and the student teachers were transcribed as text into a Microsoft Word document. Both sets of data were then converted into tables. This process comprised various steps.

Step 1:

I read through each phrase, sentence or paragraph to determine where to place a full-stop, as the cut-point per row. For example, for the extract below, I would first decide the cut-points which, in my case, were full stops. I would then read through the extract and insert full stops where necessary. This was determined primarily by the main idea in each phrase, sentence or paragraph.

The curriculum for the B.Ed. is more focused on the constructivism idea. We are moving to the idea of constructivism whereby we only expose learners and they should be in a position to construct their own knowledge; to construct their own meaning. Meaning, we provide them with a learning environment, we provide them with materials and then they can create their own meaning out of it. That is basically the philosophy UNAM is driving all of us towards, particularly teacher education.

Step 2:

I would highlight the whole text; press ‘insert table’ on the menu bar and then press the ‘convert text to table’ command and instruct it to ‘separate text at full stops. Each sentence, phrase or paragraph would then break only at a full stop. The outcome would then resemble the table below.

<i>The curriculum for the B.Ed. is more focused on the constructivism idea.</i>
<i>We are moving to the idea of constructivism whereby we only expose learners and they should be in a position to construct their own knowledge; to construct their own meaning.</i>
<i>Meaning, we provide them with a learning environment, we provide them with materials and then they can create their own meaning out of it.</i>
<i>That is basically the philosophy UNAM is driving all of us towards, particularly teacher education.</i>

Step 3:

The table is then copied and pasted into Micro-soft EXCEL. Like Word, EXCEL also has rows and columns. My reason for using EXCEL was that it is easier to sort data using EXCEL than using Word.

Step 4:

Coding commenced. In line with the fact that qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of identifying patterns and themes from the data collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), I derived codes and categories from the data. However, this was not the sole technique I used. I also used an inductive-deductive logic (Creswell, 2013) process in terms of which the codes that emerged from the data were preceded by predetermined codes that served as my ‘start list’ (Miles et al., 2014). These codes had been derived from the research question, and other variables from the literature. These codes were broadly classified under two general categories derived from the research question, namely, curriculum philosophy, course contents, and curriculum implementation. These codes were revisited and revised throughout the data analysis process.

Each table comprised five columns and several rows. The first column contained the data. I read through each data segment in a row and gave a label to represent the meaning in the data segment. I used open codes (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland,

2006). The open codes came from my start list and some emerged from the data. These were sorted and the same codes were grouped together.

<i>Data</i>	<i>Open codes</i>	<i>Focused codes</i>	<i>Pattern coding</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
<i>The curriculum for the B.Ed. is more focused on the constructivism idea.</i>				
<i>We are moving to the idea of constructivism whereby we only expose learners and they should be in a position to construct their own knowledge; to construct their own meaning.</i>				
<i>Meaning, we provide them with a learning environment, we provide them with materials and then they can create their own meaning out of it.</i>				
<i>That is basically the philosophy UNAM is driving all of us towards, particularly teacher education.</i>				

Step 5:

This step involved the focused codes (Lofland et al., 2006) in the third column. I analysed each group of open codes and decided on the category that best suited the group. The focused codes were again sorted and the same codes were grouped together.

Step 6:

Pattern coding commenced in the fourth column. This is the stage of analysis that ‘pulls together’ the different coded segments into one category that provides understanding, inferences, and explanations of the data (Miles et al., 2014). The patterns were again sorted and all the same patterns were grouped together.

Step 7:

Once patterns had been identified, I moved to memoing (Miles et al., 2014). At this stage of the analysis my aim of memoing was to make sense of the data. I reflected on the data

and, in the fifth column where I wrote remarks, I explained my thinking about the issues which had emerged from the data and identified commonalities and differences. The remarks (Miles et al., 2014) helped me to add meaning to the data, make linkages between segments of the data and revise and relocate codes in case of unsuitability. This last stage of memoing and reflective remarks led to the formulation of themes under which the findings were reported.

Drawing and verifying conclusions

All the levels of analysis I have discussed thus far led me to Miles et al.'s (2014) last flow of activities, namely, conclusion drawing and verification. The verification of the findings for quality and truth (Miles et al., 2014) involved comparing the findings from the interviews, and documents. The aim of this was to find commonalities and anomalies pertaining to the responses to the following research question: *What curricula and practices are intended to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions of student teachers required to teach for diversity?* The all-encompassing aim was 'to build a chain of evidence', to draw meanings and to make sense (Miles et al., 2014) of the nature of the UNAM BEd Social Science curriculum. It was crucial at this stage to establish what Miles et al. (2014) refer to as a 'conceptual analogue' that required me to relate the study findings to the literature that had assisted me to explain the findings.

Findings

BEd Curriculum Philosophy

The outcome of the investigation revealed that UNAM's Prospectus seems to be the only document that provides information on and directs the BEd programme. The findings revealed that the UNAM Prospectus (University of Namibia, 2016), inter alia, outlined the role and mission of the Faculty of Education, the programmes, the rationale for and the exit outcomes of the programme, the teaching-learning model and the curriculum framework. The rationale and exit outcomes, particularly in respect of the BEd Upper Primary, presuppose that the BEd programme is underpinned by constructivist and socio-cultural principles as it centres on learner-centredness; cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977); and curriculum differentiation (Tomlinson, 2001).

The philosophies underlying the BEd programme were also highlighted during the interviews conducted with the Dean of the Faculty of Education and the Social Science lecturers. The Dean described the philosophy as that of '*teaching the whole person*'. In this context, this implies equipping teachers with all the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. Integral to this

knowledge base are issues of context, adaptability and relevance, thus implying that a teacher is well equipped to teach and handle any situation as well as teach in any setting and anywhere. She also identified reflective practice as an important skill so that teachers *'don't just mindlessly go about teaching'*. The skill of critical reflection is crucial to diversity teaching (Howard, 2003).

One of the lecturers interviewed approached the philosophy underlying the BED programme from a political perspective and brought in societal issues. The lecturer based the philosophy on the role of education in nation building – a view that “brings the outside inside” (Bernstein, 1990). The two other lecturers interviewed responded exclusively from an epistemological perspective. They perceived constructivism as UNAM’s philosophy that among others, advocates for the appreciation of multiple perspectives; the consideration of learners’ previous knowledge; and the promotion of collaborative learning (Bhattacharjee 2015).

Courses and diversity teaching

UNAM adopts an integration approach as diversity issues are infused throughout the BED programme’s various courses (Zeichner, 1993). This was revealed by aligning the courses with NPST competences. The NPST is a teacher education model to which “pre-service Providers ... will all be required to align their curricula, programmes and qualifications to meet the requirement of those standards” (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 6). To align their courses with the NPST, the UNAM’s course outlines indicate, next to each course content, the specific NPST competence the course addresses. The frequency of each competence across courses appears in the last column (Appendix 1 & 2). In the main the outcome of this analysis reveals the presence of diversity, unity and inclusivity issues.

Appendix 1 illustrates the compulsory courses in the BEd programme Upper Primary. As appendix 1 indicates, element 5 of competence 3 – ‘demonstrate understanding of diversity’ and competence 13 – ‘learners with special needs’ – both explicitly reflect diversity issues. These two and most of the other competences are framed by constructivist principles and socio-cultural perspectives. Teaching for diversity issues as advocated by these competences centre primarily on knowledge and skills of, among others, LCE principles, diversity pedagogies, assessment equity, and the contextualising of subject content to learner needs. The dispositions include, among others, non-discrimination, un-bias, and good relationships with parents and the community. It is only competences C18, C24, and C26 that do not integrate diversity, unity and inclusivity issues (Appendix 1).

However, there is no certainty that the criteria for aligning courses to specific competences took into account diversity issues. Accordingly, the analysis was taken to another level and included the course aims that broadly encapsulate each course's contribution to the programme. If diversity issues are one of the foci of the BEd programme, these should be stipulated either in the broad course aims or the exit learning outcomes. The analysis included all the compulsory courses. In a way the outcome of this analysis deviated from the first one.

Table 7.1 Evidence of diversity teaching in Upper Primary courses

Seven courses explicit about diversity issues	Ten courses implicit about diversity issues	Five courses no diversity issues
Social Science Education (Major 1)	Childhood Learning	Computer Literacy
Language Education (Major 2)	Curriculum Studies	English for Academic Purposes
Inclusive Education	Educational Foundations	English for Teachers
Child Development	Educational Management	First Aid Education
Social Contemporary Issues	Educational Research	Integrated Media Technology Education
Professional and Community Development	Eng. Communication and Study Skills	
School Based Studies	Guidance and Counselling	
	Project Based Learning	
	Science of Teaching	
	Assessment and Evaluation of Teaching	

As Table 7.1 illustrates, only seven out of 22 courses explicitly incorporate diversity issues. However, the *intention* of the seven courses differs. For example, Social Science Education, Language Education, and Inclusive Educational are intentional about diversity teaching whereas School Based Studies (SBS), Child Development, Social Contemporary Issues, Professional and Community Development cover diversity ideologies but mainly at the level of awareness only (Valentin, 2006). Science of Teaching and SBS in particular provide student teachers with 'effective instructional' and 'practice-based' experiences (University of Namibia, 2016). Therefore, teaching for diversity should be one of its exit learning outcomes. It appeared that, in

the main, teaching diverse learners did not appear to be a priority in the BEd Upper Primary courses.

The outcome of the secondary phase compulsory courses in the Faculty and its alignment to the NPST competences does not deviate significantly from the Upper Primary Phase (Appendix 2). In the main, it may be said that the BEd courses (Secondary Phase) are aligned to the NPST competences. As already indicated, the NPST competences, except for C18, C24, and C26, generally incorporate the principles and ideologies of diversity teaching (Appendix 2).

Table 7.2: Evidence of diversity teaching in Secondary Phase courses

Eight courses explicit about diversity issues	Ten courses implicit about diversity issues	Six courses no diversity issues
Teaching Methods School Subject	Comparative Education	Computer Literacy
School Subject (History or Geography)	Curriculum Development and Practice (HDP)	English for Academic Purposes
Inclusive Education	Educational Foundations	English for Teachers
Human Development and Learning (HDL)	Educational Management	First Aid Education
Social Contemporary Issues	Educational Research	Integrated Media Technology Education
Professional and Community Development (PCD)	English Communication and Study Skills	Education Technologist
Teaching Practice	Guidance and Counselling	
Philosophy of Education	Project Based Learning	
	General Teaching Methods	
	Assessment and Evaluation of Teaching	

This outcome of Table 7.2 implies that, upon graduation, a BEd (Secondary) graduate should be competent to teach learners from diverse backgrounds. However, as already observed, there is no

guarantee that these courses are intentional about diversity teaching and, hence, a deeper analysis of the course aims and exit learning outcomes was necessary.

As was the case with the Upper Primary Phase, the course aims and exit learning outcomes were analysed for their intentions in respect of teaching for diversity. The same approach applied and the analysis included all compulsory core courses done by all UNAM students. The outcome of the analysis of the Secondary Phase compulsory courses closely matched that of the Upper Primary Phase courses. Contrary to what appendix 2 depicts, this deeper analysis revealed that, out of twenty-four courses, as Table 7.2 illustrates, only eight courses explicitly incorporated diversity issues. However, as was the case with Upper Primary Phase courses, the intentions of the eight courses differ.

It appeared that Teaching Methods for Geography, and History, School Subjects History and Geography, as well as Inclusive Education were intended to include teaching for diversity. Inclusive Education adopts a broad view of diversity, and aims to prepare student teachers to address the needs of all learners; including learners with special needs. Other courses under the same classification, such as Professional and Community Development, Human Development and Learning, Philosophy of Education, and Teaching Practice cover diversity ideologies but mainly at the level of awareness only (Valentin, 2006). Courses classified as 'Implicit about diversity Issues' integrate the ideologies of diversity teaching, but not overtly. Although 8 subjects only appeared to be explicit and intentional about diversity teaching, coupling them with the ten courses deemed to be implicit about diversity issues, it may, perhaps, be concluded that student teachers graduating as Secondary Phase Social Science teachers would be aware of issues pertinent to diversity teaching. In general, the compulsory courses, although their level of intentions toward diversity teaching varies, may produce student teachers with the required knowledge, skills and dispositions to handle diverse settings. However, to increase the assurance of possessing this knowledge base, the courses should be more intentional about diversity teaching.

Specialisation courses and diversity teaching

The lecturers taught the specialisation area of Social Science Education (SSE). Student teachers in the Upper Primary phase take SSE as major 1, and this includes both subject content and teaching methodology. For the Secondary Phase, student teachers may take History or Geography as school subjects and also choose between the teaching methods of History or Geography and Development Studies.

The aims of the SSE (Upper Primary) course show evidence of diversity teaching. The overall picture demonstrates that student teachers would be prepared and sensitised in relation to equity practices, multiculturalism, learner differences, as well as constructivist principles. The SSE (Upper Primary) adopts the socio-cultural view of the curriculum (Cornbleth, 1988) that contextualises learning to local social situations (Gleeson, 2010).

At subject level, the Geography modules such as Human Geography, Settlement Geography, Economic Geography, Environmental Studies, Regional Geography, Political Geography, and Social Geography address socio-cultural and socio-political issues, underpinned primarily by equity and social justice principles. Social Geography, in particular, addresses socio-cultural and socio-economic issues as well as inequities and inequalities between people. The subject History, among others, covers socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political issues pertaining to discrimination, dominance, inequities and inequalities, collaboration, resistance and apartheid ideologies. Exposing student teachers to these issues helps them to understand learner differences and needs.

The exit learning outcomes of the teaching methods module of the Secondary Phase incorporate teaching for diversity ideologies pertaining to multiculturalism, school-community partnership, contextualisation of learning, and learner differences and needs. Clearly this module aims to prepare student teachers to handle learners in diverse classrooms. Its intentions go beyond mere awareness. Overall, the SSE specialisation courses showed that student teachers would be prepared and sensitised about equity practices, multiculturalism, learner differences, as well as constructivist principles. These courses adopted the socio-cultural view of the curriculum (Cornbleth, 1988) that contextualises learning to local social situations (Gleeson, 2010).

Diversity teaching during teaching practice

The curriculum frameworks show that teaching practice is spread across the three years of the BED programme (Table 7.3). It is in three phases and happens from year 2 to 4 (University of Namibia, 2016).

Table 7.3: Duration of Teaching Practice

Phase 1 Upper Primary	Phase 2 Upper Primary	Phase 3 Upper Primary
<i>Year 2, Semester 1: 2 weeks</i>	<i>Year 3, Semester 1: 4 weeks</i>	<i>Year 4, Semester 1: 12 weeks</i>
<i>Year 2, Semester 2: 2 weeks</i>	<i>Year 3, Semester 2: 2 weeks</i>	
Phase 1 Secondary	Phase 2 Secondary	Phase 3 Secondary
<i>Year 2, Semester 1: 3 weeks</i>	<i>Year 3, Semester 1: 3 weeks</i>	<i>Year 4, Semester 1: 8 weeks</i>

The duration of teaching practice ranges from 3 to 12 weeks with longer periods for the Upper Primary phase as compared to the Secondary Phase. In the case of this study it was assumed that some of the theories they take to teaching practice are centred on diversity teaching. A close scrutiny of both phases shows that the aims of teaching practice for both phases are the same. However, not one of the aims throughout the three TP phases (years 2-4) reveal any intentional teaching for diversity. The question thus arises as to whether student teachers are expected to be traditional and to possess technical skills (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004) only, or whether they are expected to acquire more than just technical skills and gain pedagogical learner knowledge (Grimmett & Mackinnon, 1992) for diverse classrooms. One of its aims of exposing ‘students to the realities of ... classrooms in Namibia’ may encompass diversity issues but this remains uncertain and ambiguous.

Discussion and recommendations

BEd curriculum philosophy

The evidence from this study reveals that the UNAM did not have a teacher education curriculum document, or if it did, it was not well-known by many. None of the documents, or the lecturers consulted made reference to a curriculum document apart from the prospectus. A prospectus seemed to function as a curriculum, although, its dedicated purpose was to serve as an information and advertisement tool. Whereas, as defined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers of Namibia, “a curriculum is a plan of instruction that details what student teachers are to know, how they are to learn it, what the teacher's role is, and the context in which learning and teaching will take place” (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 123). It is also a possibility that the Prospectus was either regarded as the curriculum for the B.Ed. Programme, or was the only document providing curricular contents. As observed in this study, its absence seemed to have negative impacts. For instance, some issues pertaining to philosophical underpinnings could neither be

easily established nor clearly articulated by lecturers, particularly socio-cultural issues. This study recommends that the UNAM should have a curriculum document that covers the philosophical underpinnings of what to be learnt, how it is to be learnt, and where teaching and learning take place.

The motive to investigate the philosophies that undergird the UNAM BEd Social Science curriculum is central to this article. From a teaching for diversity perspective, a constructivist, and socio-cultural curriculum would be ideal in a teacher education programme with a diversity teaching intent. The findings revealed that the rationale particularly of the BEd Social Science Upper primary centres on learner-centred-ness; cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977); and curriculum differentiation (Tomlinson, 2001). It is underpinned by constructivist principles, and takes into consideration societal and learners' needs. The interviews with lecturers confirmed what is espoused by the Prospectus that societal issues and constructivism informed the curriculum. However, societal issues as basis of the BEd curriculum did not clearly stand out; they were largely implicit. Due to the nature of the subject they taught, one would have expected the lecturers to be explicit about how socio-cultural issues underpinned the Social Science curriculum, and the BEd Programme as a whole. Nevertheless, one can deduct from these findings that the BEd Social Science curriculum's philosophy is socio-cultural and it adopted constructivist principles to teaching and learning.

Coursework and diversity teaching

As established from the findings, compulsory courses generally, to varying degrees, could render student teachers with the needed knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach diverse learners. The existing situation, for instance, the B.Ed. Upper Primary, whereby seven courses were explicit about diversity issues and ten were covert, gives hope about diversity teaching. However, one would argue with more optimism that student teachers would be well prepared if diversity issues were infused across the entire curriculum, or if the other 10 courses were explicit about diversity issues as well. Because courses, such as the Science of Teaching and School Based Studies, responsible for providing student teachers with 'effective instruction' and practice-based' experiences (Prospectus, 2016) were not explicit about diversity teaching, the hope for diversity teaching is minimal. One can argue that if the B.Ed. Programme had diversity intent, the two courses among others should have been intentional about diversity teaching. The NPST as already

suggested, being the national framework for teacher education, should have competences dedicated to diversity teaching to increase the assurance of this knowledge base.

These findings lead to the conclusion that some courses within the B.Ed. Programme would contribute to the development of the student teachers' knowledge base. However, infusing diversity, unity and inclusivity issues across the curriculum would have benefited student teachers more.

Teaching practice and diversity teaching

Three key conclusions can be drawn about the UNAM B.Ed. teaching practice. First, teaching practice for both phase levels begins in year 2. However, when gauged against the relevant literature, the timing of the teaching practice is open to criticism. The proposal is to begin as early as the first year and throughout the entire period of study, thus implying there should be an additional teaching practice phase in year one. With regards to the duration, as opposed to the proposals by renowned scholars such as Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) is at least a year. UNAM teaching practice is far shorter and it does not even add up to half a year, especially in the Secondary Phase. Thus, it would appear that the BEd student teachers do not have the benefit of much teaching practice. This could mean that their practice will not improve; they will not become independent and, as Torm et al., (2012) contend, they will not develop a personal working theory, nor, as Darling-Hammond (2006) observes, they will not experience and apply “complex repertoires of practices”; and “grow roots on their practice” (p. 8).

Second, good practices in terms of teaching practice for diversity centre, among other things, on extended durations in diverse contexts (Meier, 2010; Cooper & He, 2012). Teaching practice may not be of benefit if the student teachers are not given sufficient time to put the theoretical knowledge they have been taught into practice (Reeves & Robinson, 2014). Hence, the suggestion of a full academic year of teaching practice as this will gradually enable student teachers to improve their practice, thus making them more independent (Darling-Hammond, LePage, Hammerness, & Duffy, 2005) and also develop their own personal working theory (Torm et al., 2012). The duration of teaching practice at UNAM is contrary to that proposed in Matoti and Odora's study (2013) that reported the benefit of longer durations of teaching practice. In the institution that Matoti and Odora studied, teaching practice took place every year in the four-year course with the longest period being the whole semester (six months) in the final year. Student

teachers appreciated the experience and they improved their confidence as well as their practical skills in planning and pedagogical

Third, none of the aims of teaching practice for both phase levels across the years shows intentions about diversity teaching. Were teachers expected to be traditional and to possess technical skills (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004) only, or were they expected to go beyond technical skills and possess pedagogical learner knowledge (Grimmett & Mackinnon, 1992) for diverse classrooms? However, one of teaching practice's aims of exposing 'students to the realities of ... classrooms in Namibia' might encompass diversity issues, but this remains uncertain and ambiguous. To compel student teachers to pay attention to diversity issues, and diversity teaching protocols, diversity teaching should form part of the teaching practice aims, and perhaps a requirement. Student teachers could demonstrate the ability to teach diverse classrooms as part of the requirements to attain the B.Ed. qualification.

Overall, the UNAM B.Ed. curriculum seem to incline more towards a technocratic view that is decontextualized from societal issues. Overall, the philosophy of the UNAM BEd Social Science curriculum was premised on both constructivist principles and social justice values, and inclined more towards a socio-cultural view, as some courses explicitly integrated diversity issues. However, the contribution from courses alone cannot suffice. Teaching practice, as a teacher learning tool, should be organised in ways that provide opportunities for student teachers to experience and teach diverse classrooms. Lecturers too, as teachers of teachers, should be role models. This study recommends that teaching practice should be dedicated to diversity teaching. Diversity teaching should form part of the requirements of becoming a teacher. It can be concluded that, the UNAM B.Ed.'s curriculum only partially equips student teachers with knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach diverse classrooms.

Appendix 1: Diversity issues in Upper Primary courses

Competence Number	Ed. Foundations	IMT	School Based Studies	Inclusive education	AEL	Educational Research	Guidance and counselling	Education management	First Aid Education	PCD	Child development	English for teachers	Childhood learning	Science of teaching	curriculum studies	Social Science Education	Language Education	Project based learning	Frequency
3																			14
12																			8
27																			7
1																			6
2																			6
8																			6
15																			6
28																			6
6																			5
10																			5
11																			5
13																			5
16																			5
25																			5
4																			4
5																			4
7																			4
21																			4
9																			3
14																			3
17																			3
19																			3
20																			3
23																			3
26																			3
18																			2
22																			2
24																			2
29																			2
30																			1

Appendix 2: Diversity issues in Secondary Phase courses

Competence number	Ed. Foundations	HDL	IMTE	Teaching Practice	GTM	Inclusive education	CDP	Teaching methods 1 & 2	AEL	Educational research	Guidance and counselling	Project based learning	Comparative Education	Education management	First Aid Education	PCD	Philosophy of education	English for teachers	Frequency
3																			15
27																			8
8																			7
28																			7
26																			6
4																			5
6																			5
12																			5
15																			5
1																			4
9																			4
10																			4
11																			4
14																			4
16																			4
5																			3
7																			3
13																			3
24																			3
25																			3
2																			2
17																			2
18																			2
19																			2
20																			2
21																			2
29																			2
22																			1
23																			1
30																			1

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