

Identifying values and beliefs in an outcomes-based curriculum

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The introduction of Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement emphasised the Outcomes-Based Education approach to school education. In an analysis of Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement, value and belief systems are identified and integrated in most of the eight learning areas. The multicultural and multireligious character of the South African society holds important implications for education, as the different values that are inherent in each belief system have to be accommodated in societal structures. Research has indicated that most teachers have not played an active or successful role in teaching different values and beliefs in schools. Most of these teachers will now be responsible for the implementation of C2005 and the NCS and their associated values. There is therefore a need for teachers to be sensitised to the different values embedded in each belief system and all cultural orientations. The prevalence of values and belief systems in the OBE curricula of C2005 and the NCS will have to be acknowledged, identified, and promoted.

Introduction

Value, religious and belief contents have always been part of education. In an analysis of the NCS (2002) it appears that these contents surface in most of the learning areas (Rhodes, 2003). The lack of skills of educators to identify values in religious education (Rhodes, 1997) and their lack of knowledge about value and belief systems will make it very difficult, if not impossible, to attain the aims in OBE in this regard (knowledge, skills, and values). As the multireligious character of public schools in SA also reveals the cultural diversity in this sector, it is also relevant to take note of the problems that educators experience in a multicultural school environment (Roux, 1997). The question, however, is: Can educators manage the diversity of values in the multicultural school environment and will educators be able to identify and manage to introduce ethical and religious contents into the relevant curriculum, as proposed in Curriculum 2005?

The implementation of Curriculum 2005 (C2005, 1997) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS, 2002) and the lack of clear directives for teachers about the identification of values within the curriculum hold implications for the attainment of educational goals and outcomes. Previous research (Rhodes, 1997) indicated that learners simply did not adapt to moral values taught in religious education classes (then Christian education) and in the school environments in general. If teachers could not implement values of the previous content-based curriculum, the question to be asked is:

Why should the new approach to facilitate values and content of different beliefs in the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) curricula be successful?

In order to answer this question, a research project (Rhodes, 2003) was initiated. The main aim of the project was to develop an instrument in order to assist teachers in identifying values from different value and belief systems in Curriculum 2005 (C2005, 1997) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS, 2002). Guidelines were also developed to help teachers to facilitate these identified values within the OBE school curriculum. The main aim of this article is to describe and demonstrate the designed instrument for identifying the different value and belief systems in an OBE curriculum.

Clarification of concepts

In order to understand the paradigm of reasoning for developing the instrument it is necessary to clarify an understanding of the different concepts used in this article. Condensed clarifications are given.

Multicultural

There are many definitions and understandings of the concept multicultural according to Taylor (Gutman, 1994). Roux (1998:80) defines the concept as signifying the diverse experiences, traditions and view-

points of persons belonging to a specific group or community. The South African society consists of people of different backgrounds — ethnic, racial, languages, belief and value systems — and is thus a multicultural society. However, even though some aspects of a culture are shared, such as language or religion, the society is still pluralistic in its basic nature.

Multireligious

Despite people sharing the same culture and language and their being homogeneous in all other aspects of a culture, such a grouping can still be multireligious. According to Tait (Rossouw, 1995) South Africa has always been a multireligious society. However the incorrect perception that South Africa is a homogeneous group with a main religion still exists. Summers (Summers & Waddington, 1996:2) was also very explicit in his comments on this perception because it has an important influence on issues regarding the normal social order, religion in society, multi-religiousness and especially religion in education. Many reports and comments, e.g. on religion in education, since 1996 have indicated that multi-religiousness is also a given in South African schools.

Religion/faith/beliefs

The concept *religion* has many facets. Clarifications of the concept will differ according to the emphasis of the different facets of religion. Parks (Fowler *et al.*, 1992:106) makes a distinction between religion, faith and belief. For the purpose of this article a distinction will be drawn between the terms *faith* and *belief*. Faith has a deeper meaning than belief. Faith involves unconscious motivations, which can be congruent to our beliefs and actions (Berryman, 1985). Although belief could be included in a faith, faith cannot be fully incorporated in a belief or belief system. Faith is normally embedded in a religious conviction, whilst a belief or a belief system does not necessarily constitute a religious conviction.

Values

Defining values and especially values in education is not an easy task and is a concern for many educators (Bailey, 2000:10). *Values*, as we understand it, can be defined as the beliefs held by individuals to which they attach special priority or worth, and by which they tend to order their lives (Hill, 1991:4). However, a value is also more than a belief; it constitutes a worthiness of a norm or a principle embedded in a person, a group (normally referred to as a culture group) a religion or a belief system.

Possible approaches to identifying values in a curriculum

An analysis of C2005 (1997) and NCS (2002) clearly shows that

values are integrated in all eight learning areas (Rhodes, 2003). With the focus in the school curriculum on knowledge, skills and values, teachers will have to facilitate different value and belief systems into all learning areas across the curriculum, but especially in the eighth learning area, Life Orientation. As curriculum changes normally set new paradigms (Roux, 1999), this new approach to identifying values across the curriculum also necessitates rethinking of different values as well as of the facilitation processes. Values underlie the educational process and one way of achieving the educational outcomes set out in the NCS (2002) and the Manifesto on Values in Education (2002) is to introduce different values into the curriculum. An important question to be asked is:

What are the influences of such changes on the identification of different values in a curriculum?

Different values are inherent in each belief system and have to be accommodated in all societal structures. This accommodation of different belief systems also has a bearing on the school environment, as a meeting place of different values, beliefs and cultures. Each learner bears within himself or herself, the wealth of different cultures and beliefs that are manifested as morals. However, unfortunately prejudices towards diversity in society and schools also prevail and can be counterproductive to the implicit values system of the education process.

The initiative of identifying specific values by the working committee on Values in Education (September, 2000) and the Manifesto on Values in Education (2001) was a starting point towards the identification of specific values to be taken into account in the education process. The next step should therefore be the implementation of these identified values across the curriculum. Teachers have to be sensitised to the different values embedded in each belief system and cultural orientation. One of the main issues is that the prevalence of values in the curriculum must first be acknowledged before instruments to identify values in the curriculum, can be developed. Furthermore, teachers need to be equipped to facilitate these identified values. However, the question is whether teachers have the necessary training and skills to facilitate the different identified value and belief systems. An instrument and guidelines that will equip teachers to identify and facilitate different value and belief systems within an outcomes-based curriculum seems to be the only option to overcome the lack of professional training in this regard.

Teachers have to approach the values question with a sense of responsibility. This means that teachers have to realize the importance of their role as facilitators of values. In attempting to realize this role, teachers should take cognisance of the following:

- realizing the important role the educator has to play in the facilitation of all aspects of the curriculum;
- understanding the principles of the foundation of OBE;
- having a sound knowledge of the OBE curriculum and its principles and objectives;
- understanding the outcomes set for each learning area in the OBE curriculum;
- being sensitive about what is valued by learners;
- being objective in the assessment of knowledge; and
- not being judgmental in any way towards learners.

The two most prominent models for managing values in schools are the value-neutral or value-clarification and the value-articulation approaches. According to Kirschenbaum (1977), some of the criticisms against the value-neutral approach are that it is unsuitable as an approach to identify values in the curriculum. The following reasons are given:

- values are only seen as expressions of personal choice and the term value is inadequate in its description;
- values are not unique individual expressions of persons;
- values are formulated by religion, political traditions, customs, etc.;
- conflicting traditions and interpretations of social heritage are important aspects to take into consideration; and

- a study of values can only be an attempt to explain how a person develops his or her own values.

On the other hand the value-articulation method seems to be a more applicable approach to the identification of values in education. This means that the affirmation of values has to take place in a way that makes it more meaningful to people. It requires that values expressed by learners will have to be understood in order to be explained to others. According to this approach, values must be identified and explained so that everybody understands them (Kirschenbaum, 1977: 401; 402). For years there are many different claims to support the fact that values do exist in schools (Taylor in Smith, 1970; Straughan, 1980; Bialy, 2000). Having identified values in the curriculum, the teachers are thus confronted with the dilemma of how to facilitate these values and we argued that the outcomes of the OBE-curriculum are value-laden.

Designing an instrument for values-identification

The design of this specific instrument that can assist teachers to identify values in the curriculum is the result of a needs analysis amongst respondents, in both the junior and the senior phase in schools in the Western Cape, who participated in a research project (Rhodes, 2003). When a functional and effective instrument for the identification of values in the curriculum is designed, specific requirements should also be adhered to. The following have been identified as basic requirements:

- to give teachers enough information about values;
- to identify different types of values;
- to set up keywords and phrases to identify values;
- to identify a system to strain values from the content;
- to propose ways of dealing with these values; and most importantly,
- to ensure that the system is easy to operate.

The following components are part of the instrument, and will be discussed in detail: the different learning areas; a value screen and identified criteria; an octagon value screen that allows partial view of the learning content and an optical glass (different keywords) that indicate a value according to a particular category.

In Figure 1 the different components of the instrument are outlined. As learning material in all the learning areas (A) contains certain values, the values in the learning material (B) need to be identified by means of a filter that sieves the values in order to be identified as values. The filter in the diagram is constructed by means of a selection of values-criteria (C). These criteria will be augmented to provide teachers with the tools to filter specific values (D) from a selected piece of learning material.

The different components of the values screen

In order to understand the functioning of the different interactive sections of the values identification instrument the different components and functions will be explained:

1. The different learning areas

In Figure 2 the eight learning areas of the curricula are displayed. The circle represents C2005 (1997) and the NCS (2002) and all the learning areas with their associated outcomes.

2. The values screen and criteria

In the development of the values screen (Figure 3) the factors determining values within a society are identified and used as identified by Taylor (Smith, 1970:49). These values are called basic values and correspond with activities in society, such as moral, aesthetic, intellectual, religious, economic, political and legal activities, etiquette and custom. The selected values criteria (with minor modifications) are based on eight basic points of view that determine these values. The following criteria for the values screen are the first component: religion; values and beliefs systems; human and social values; ideologies; policies and procedures; ethics and morals; aesthetics and norms of appreciation and culture.

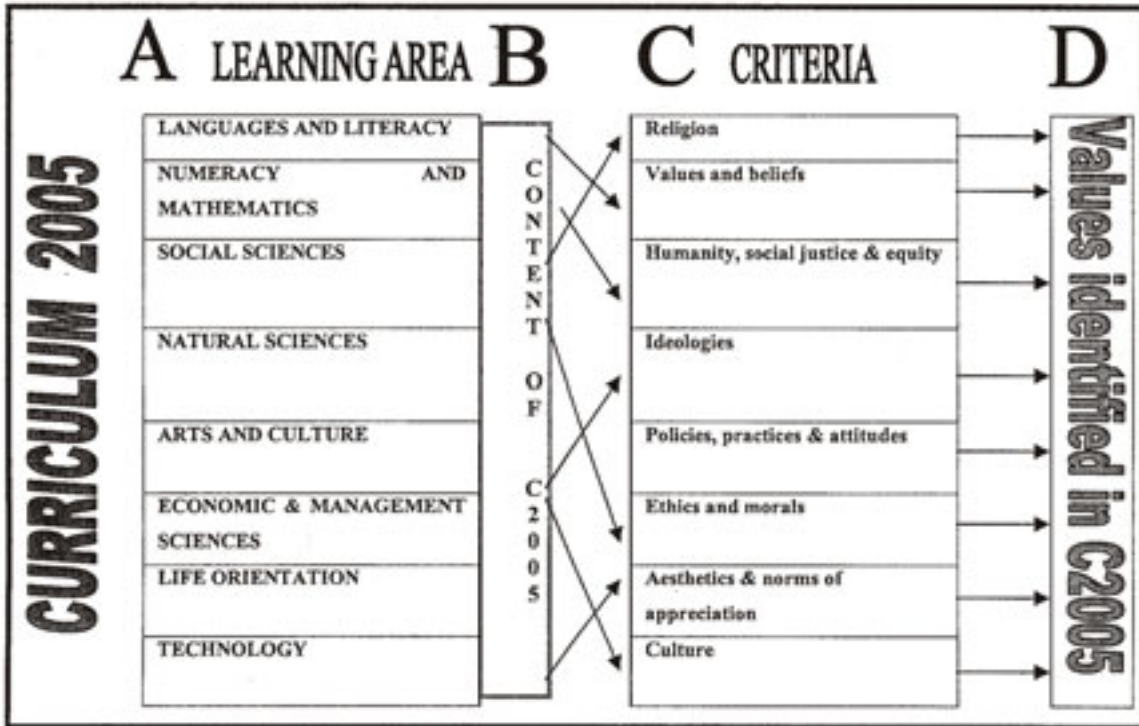


Figure 1

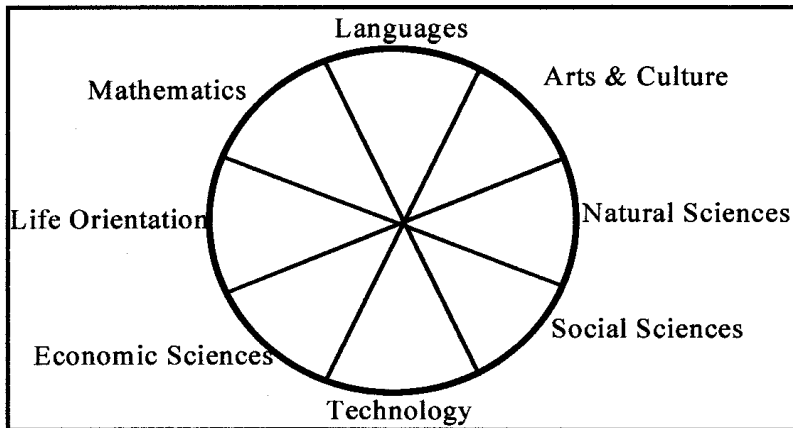


Figure 2

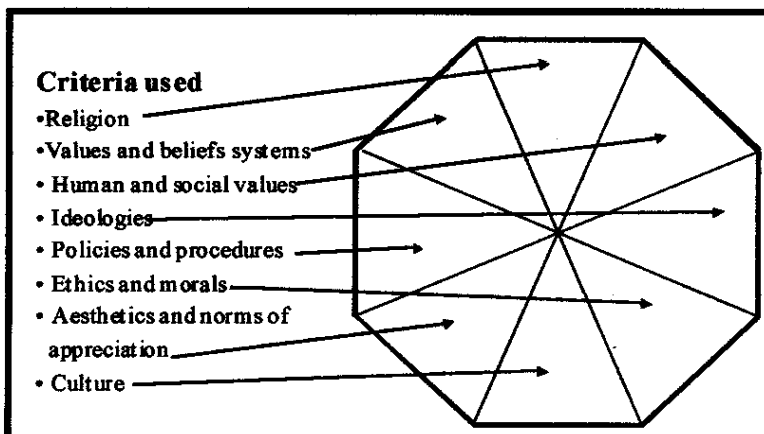


Figure 3

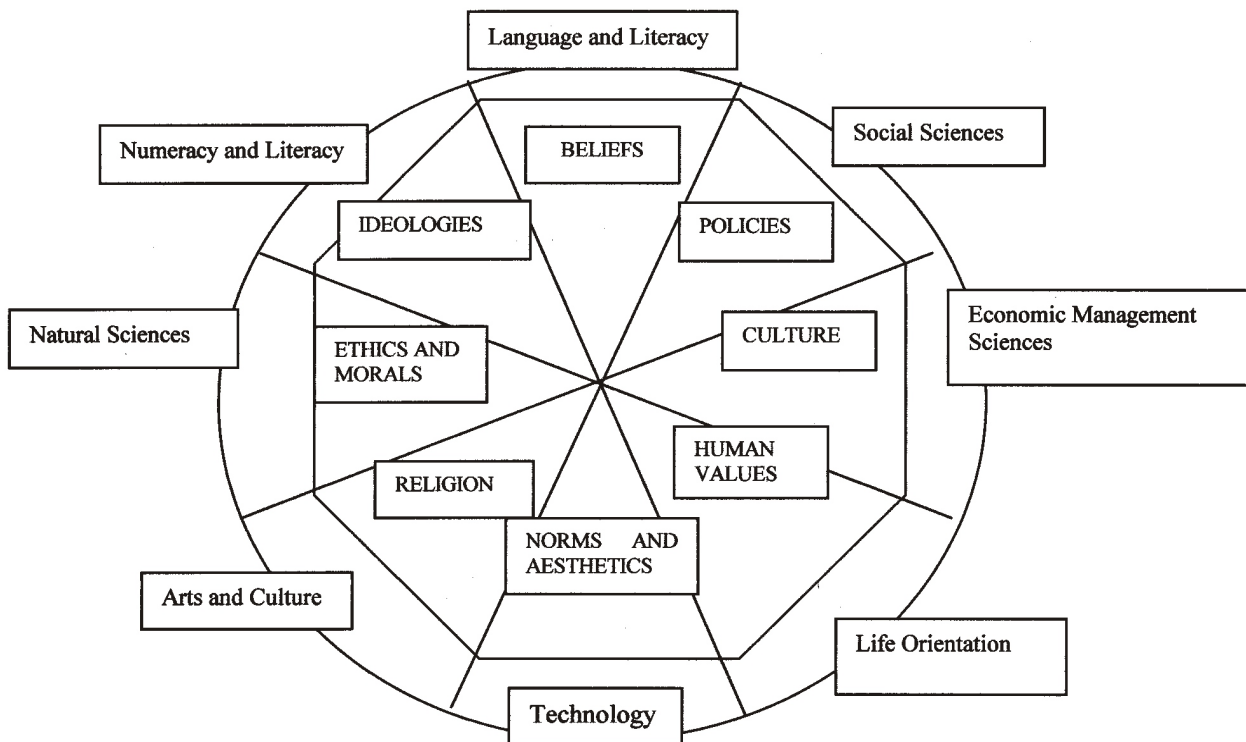


Figure 4

The second component is the octagonal values screen (Figure 4). It is semi-transparent. The octagon is able to turn freely on its centre. It does not cover the full circle, as there are values that will not be identified without the study of a specific belief or culture. The screen allows partial view of the learning content of the curricula through an optical glass created by the different keywords that indicate a value according to a particular category. The wider outer circle represents the curriculum and all the learning areas with their associated outcomes. This octagon is able to turn freely on its centre and the screen allows a partial view of the learning content through an optical glass created by keywords that will indicate a value according to a particular category.

The value screen is placed over one particular learning area or material. If no values can be identified according to criteria used, the reason could be that there are no identifiable values according to that category. By rotating the screen each criterion used is given the opportunity to allow viewing of the learning material in order to identify possible values.

3. *The selection of keywords used in instrument*

The keywords are selected to reveal the nature of the activity being described. The keyword is not the value itself, but an indication of the presence of a value. In this way the keywords alert the teacher to a possible value in the curriculum. A short indication of chosen criteria and keywords are given in Figure 5.

The keywords act as the optical glass through which identification of values can take place. As the values screen moves over a selected piece of learning material any value in any category can be identified. The screen can be modified by addition of keywords once a certain keyword is known to indicate a value to include that within the specific frame. The keywords identified will indicate the presence of values as highlighted by the section of the values screen used. If the keyword quality or beauty is identified in the learning material or described in the outcomes, it is an indication of the values under the category Aesthetics and norms of appreciation. These keywords are an example to indicate values as a judgment but beauty or quality will need directives that will indicate their value in a specific situation. It

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| <p>Religion worship, dogma, dietary laws, dress code, laws for daily living, ecclesiastic expectations, rites of passage, birth, initiation, maturity, marriage, death, sacred places, taboos, leaders, holy men</p> | <p>Beliefs beliefs systems, customs, meaning of life, neighbourly love, human life, making meaning of life and death</p> |
| <p>Ideologies economic systems e.g. capitalism, socialism etc., political systems, democracy, autocracy, social systems, philanthropic</p> | <p>Humanitarian human interaction, caring, respect, identity of people and groups, race, language and dialect, identification of groups in society e.g. aged, youth, poor, disabled, etc.</p> |
| <p>Policies and practices the way society is organized: e.g. bureaucracy, affirmative action, democracy, referral to specific societal structures, transformation</p> | <p>Ethics and morals about right and wrong, judgments on behaviour, moral issues, good, bad, evil</p> |
| <p>Aesthetics and norms of appreciation quality, beauty, desired characteristics for society, ought, must, etc., sensitivity and affection, esteem, honour, admiration, veneration</p> | <p>Culture characteristics of a society not necessarily religious, language, customs, dress, housing, feasts, festivals</p> |

Figure 5

is important that the value identification instrument must turn in a full circle in order to ensure that all the values of a particular section of the learning material can be identified. In this manner the values of any learning activity and learning material can be identified before facilitating an activity. Figure 6 indicates the values screen in operation.

The relevance of this instrument to teachers (in-service and pre-service training)

Research has shown that teachers struggle to adopt change, be it a new education model, curriculum, or facilitation strategy. If a curriculum

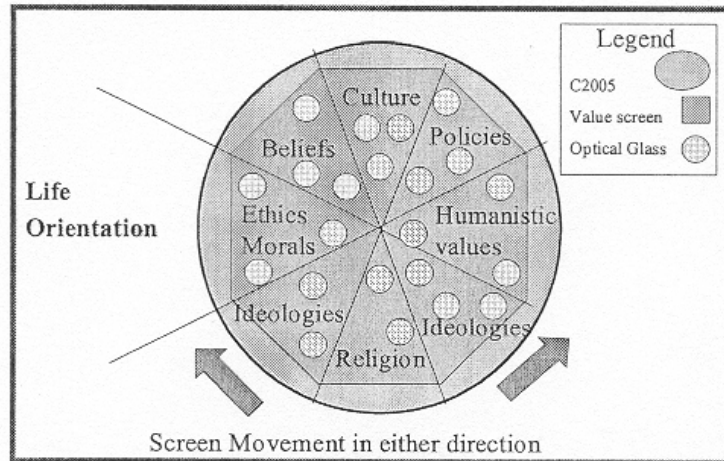


Figure 6

indicates that the facilitation of different values systems is part of the education process, one should assist teachers, especially those from different religious and cultural backgrounds, to identify the values in different belief systems and social groupings. The availability and accessibility of a functional values-identification instrument will benefit teachers in in-service and pre-service training processes. As knowledge of different value and belief systems is a crucial part of facilitating values, this instrument will initially assist teachers in identifying the different values. This may help to improve their understanding of human interaction in society. This understanding can then lead to a greater social coherence as well as to the development of an acceptable common values system, especially within the school and broader society. It can be reasoned that understanding will lead to the reduction and/or the avoidance of unnecessary conflict as people will be better informed about the beliefs and values of different societal groups. An increased sensitivity towards others can only be developed through knowledge of different values and beliefs and a respect for diversity. Education for justice and social citizenship are key features of both the scrutinized curricula and have primarily been designed to ensure a non-racist, non-sexist and democratic South Africa (Manifesto on Values, 2001). A culture of respect for human rights and dignity can only be cultivated in an environment of knowledge of the values of different groups.

Another important aspect is that understanding the different values systems present in the South African society will accommodate a multicultural classroom that caters for the need of every learner in the class. The aim of the National Curriculum Statement (2001:9) is to ensure that constitutional and democratic values are expressed and that the values of a democratic state are built into the curriculum. Through fostering the *Ubuntu* principle and interaction, the development of a common value system for school and society can be enhanced.

Conclusion

The introduction of C2005 (1997) and NCS (2002) into the school system was not without problems. Teachers' lack of skills to facilitate the curriculum as well as their inability to identify values within the curriculum urged this new approach and procedures to identify and manage values across the given curricula. The identification of values is only the starting-point of the facilitation strategies of the selected values. The instrument built into its design, through the different categories, an indication of under which category an identified value could be placed. The further development of the values screen, through either expanding or replacing categories, is another way in

which to enhance the ability of this instrument in order to assist teachers in identifying different values and beliefs in a multicultural school environment.

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