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METHODS OF ASSESSING LEARNING NEEDS FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

by

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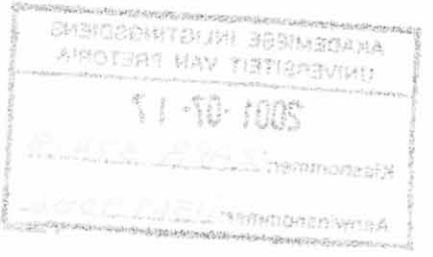

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DEDICATED TO MY DAUGHTERS

Tsakasile, Nozipho and Sihle

With love

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SUMMARY

METHODS OF ASSESSING LEARNING NEEDS FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

BY

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Degree for which the thesis is presented: PhD

The aim of this study is to explore the concept of community education and to investigate methods and techniques that can be implemented to assess the learning needs of individuals and communities in the community education process, in order to provide relevant community education programmes.

Community education can be defined as the educational process in which the provisions (services, programmes, resources) of all the educational agencies in a community are utilised in a co-operative and co-ordinated manner, to provide for all of the learning needs of all the people of a community, to develop the community and to solve the problems of the community.

Community education is a practical educational strategy in which members of the community are actively involved in education that is relevant to them, and that also addresses their needs and problems.

In any given community the infrastructure for community education will include the following: a community learning centre; a co-ordinator of community education; advisory councils; and community resources.

The community education process is an educational one and is a continuation of formal, non-formal and informal educational programmes in a community. The ten phases in the community education process provide the learners in a community with procedures and resources which enable them to obtain information and skills. During the first three phases of the community education process the focus is on establishing the necessary infrastructure for community education. The next six phases deal with the planning and bringing into operation of educational programmes. The last phase occurs continuously and here the focus is on action research.

The ten phases in the community education process are: the appointment of a co-ordinator of community education; creating an educational milieu; establishment of an organisational structure for participative planning; identifying and analysing the problems, needs, and interests of individuals and institutions in the community; formulating programme objectives; designing educational programmes; identifying and mobilising community resources; operation of educational programmes; evaluation of educational programmes, rediagnosis of learning needs, and adjustment of the educational provisions of the various educational agencies in the community; and continuous research.

A broad spectrum of learning needs that exist for individuals and community members was identified. Examples of learning needs include: functional literacy, numeracy skills, parental and family education, technological skills, health, citizenship, recreation and sport.

The learning needs of individuals and communities must be identified and assessed before a community education programme is designed and put into operation. The assessment of educational and learning needs should not be done in a haphazard manner, instead it should be undertaken in a systematic, formalised and accountable manner. With regard to Phase 4 (identifying and analysing problems and needs) of the community education process, the following methods and techniques were identified: questionnaires, interviews, research reports, group discussion, observation, small group techniques, the key-informant method, the community-forum method, the social indicators method and the combination method.

When the identified methods and techniques have been used to assess learning needs, relevant community education programmes can be designed and put into operation to address the learning needs and problems of a given community.

KEY WORDS

- **Community education**
- **Learning needs**
- **Formal education**
- **Non-formal education**
- **Informal education**
- **Needs assessment (methods and techniques)**
- **Learning society**
- **Community development**
- **Community learning centre**
- **Community school**

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OPSOMMING

METODES OM LEERBEHOEFTES TE IDENTIFISEER VIR GEMEENSKAPSONDERWYS-PROGRAMME

deur

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Graad: PhD

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die konsep gemeenskapsonderwys te verken en ondersoek in te stel na metodes en tegnieke wat geïmplementeer kan word om die leerbehoeftes van individue en gemeenskappe in die gemeenskapsonderwys-proses te identifiseer, ten einde relevante gemeenskapsonderwys-programme te voorsien.

Gemeenskapsonderwys kan gedefinieer word as die onderwysproses waarin die voorsieninge (dienste, programme, hulpbronne) van al die onderwysagente in 'n gemeenskap koöperatief en gekoördineerd benut word, om in al die leerbehoeftes van al die lede van die gemeenskap te voorsien, om die gemeenskap te ontwikkel en om probleme van die gemeenskap op te los.

Gemeenskapsonderwys is 'n praktiese onderwysstrategie waardeur gemeenskapslede aktief betrokke is by onderwys wat relevant is en ook hul behoeftes en probleme aanspreek.

In enige gegewe infrastruktuur vir gemeenskapsonderwys word die volgende ingesluit: 'n gemeenskapsleersentrum; 'n direkteur van gemeenskapsonderwys; adviesrade en gemeenskapshulpbronne.

Die gemeenskapsonderwys-proses is 'n onderwysproses en is 'n voortsetting van formele, nie-formele en informele onderwysprogramme in die gemeenskap. Die tien fases van die gemeenskapsonderwys-proses voorsien die leerders in die gemeenskap van prosedures en hulpbronne waardeur inligting en vaardighede bekom kan word. Tydens die eerste drie fases van die gemeenskapsonderwys-proses is die fokus op die vestiging van die nodige infrastruktuur vir gemeenskapsonderwys. Die daaropvolgende ses fases handel oor die beplanning en operasionalisering van onderwysprogramme. Die laaste fase is 'n deurlopende aktiwiteit en fokus op aksienavorsing.

Die tien fases in die gemeenskapsonderwys-proses is die volgende: aanstelling van 'n direkteur van gemeenskapsonderwys; skep van 'n onderwysmilieu; vestiging van 'n organisatoriese struktuur vir deelnemende onderwys; identifisering en ontleding van die probleme, beleefde behoeftes en belange van individue en instellings in die gemeenskap; formulering van programdoelwitte; ontwerp van onderwysprogramme; identifisering en mobilisering van gemeenskapshulpbronne; operasionalisering van onderwysprogramme; evaluering van onderwysprogramme, herdiagnosering van leerbehoeftes, en aanpassing van die onderwysvoorsieninge van die onderskeie onderwysagente in die gemeenskap; voortdurende navorsing.

'n Breë spektrum van bestaande leerbehoeftes van individue en gemeenskapslede is geïdentifiseer. Voorbeelde van leerbehoeftes sluit die volgende in: funksionele geletterdheid, rekenkundige vaardigheid, ouer- en gesinsopvoeding, tegnologiese vaardighede, gesondheid, burgerskap, rekreasie en sport.

Die leerbehoeftes van individue en gemeenskappe moet eers geïdentifiseer en bepaal word, voordat gemeenskapsonderwys-programme ontwerp en geoperasionaliseer kan word. Die bepaling van onderwys- en leerbehoeftes behoort op 'n sistematiese,

formele en verantwoordbare wyse onderneem te word en nie op 'n lukrake wyse nie. Met verwysing na Fase 4 (identifisering en ontleding van die probleme, beleefde behoeftes en belange van individue en instellings in die gemeenskap) van die gemeenskapsonderwys-proses is die volgende metodes en tegnieke geïdentifiseer: vraelyste, onderhoude, navorsingsverslae, groepbesprekings, waarneming (observasie), kleingroeptegnieke, die sleutelinformant-metode, die gemeenskapsforum, die sosiale indikatore metode en die kombinasie-metode.

Indien die geïdentifiseerde metodes en tegnieke gebruik word vir die bepaling van leerbehoeftes kan relevante gemeenskapsonderwys-programme ontwerp en geoperasionaliseer word om die leerbehoeftes en probleme van 'n bepaalde gemeenskap aan te spreek.

SLEUTELTERME

- Gemeenskapsonderwys
- Leerbehoeftes
- Formele onderwys
- Nie-formele onderwys
- Informele onderwys
- Behoeftebepaling (metodes en tegnieke)
- Die lerende gemeenskap
- Gemeenskapsontwikkeling
- Gemeenskapsleersentrum
- Gemeenskapskool

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