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ABSTRACT

M Ed. by Coursework: Research Report

Study Topic: An investigation of the integration of environmental and sustainability content into the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) Primary Agriculture Level 3-4 curriculum in the South African TVET system.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the integration of environmental and sustainability content into Primary Agriculture Curriculum offered at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in South Africa. The investigation of the integration of this thematic area within Primary Agriculture is driven by the fact that the agriculture sector in South Africa remains a significant contributor to the country's economic growth. The sector plays a central role in the alleviation of poverty and food insecurity in rural areas. The South African National Development Plan demands that all levels of agricultural education and training programmes must be used to advance skills development in the agriculture sector. Globally, agriculture plays a significant role to humankind as reflected in its connection to no less than 11 out of 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the adoption of SDGs in 2015, agriculture has become a common thread which holds the 17 SDGs together.

On the other hand, the agriculture sector faces innumerable sustainability challenges such as climate change, land degradation, declining water quality, unsustainable practices, competition over arable and land reform contestations. Agricultural activities are responsible for 13.5% of greenhouse gas emissions across the world. Whilst agricultural enterprises contribute to climate change, they remain enormously vulnerable to its effects. There is therefore a dire need across the globe for policy and academia to advance building skills for sustainable living.

With the United Nations (UN) adoption of sustainable development as a global framework for development, TVET colleges are favorably placed to build a sustainable world by preparing a work-force empowered with sustainability values and practices through vocational and technical qualifications. The TVET is the sphere of the education and training system that has a direct link to workplaces. However, work performance is not only dependent on building skills, but also knowledge and understanding that underpin work. In the world of today, sustainable development forms part of the new knowledge and understanding that should be incorporated into vocational education. TVET curricula can be used to create inspiring and creative learning environments by nurturing ethics, attitudes and values compatible with environmental protection. The method to integrate sustainability skills into TVET curriculum should be carried out by infusing them into existing development of hard skills and soft skills. In conclusion, it is very important to emphasize that to address socio-economic and sustainability concerns, skills underpinned with sustainable development knowledge, values

and ethics are needed. Hence, the rationale for this study to investigate integration of sustainable development into the Primary Agriculture Curriculum.