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**CONTEXTUAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE USE OF LEARNER-
CENTRED APPROACHES IN THE TEACHING OF HOME ECONOMICS: A
CASE OF TWO UNIVERSITIES IN ZIMBABWE**

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DECLARATION

I, Emily Motsi declare that **Contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics: A case of two universities in Zimbabwe** is my own work. Complete references have been used to acknowledge all sources or quotes that I have used.

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "E. Motsi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'E' and a stylized 'Motsi'.

Emily Motsi

Date: 15 January 2018.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late father, Mr. Mark Mupeti who always believed in me and always encouraged me to be the best that I could be. I also dedicate this work to my mother, Tracy Mupeti, and my children Keith and Karen for their support, patience and understanding during the course of my studies.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics in two universities in Zimbabwe. The sample consisted of eight students and four lecturers who were purposively sampled. The study was anchored in the interpretivist paradigm and it adopted a qualitative approach and case-study design. Data collection instruments consisted of structured in-depth interviews, observations and documents. Interviews were conducted with students and lecturers at their respective universities with observations and document analysis inter-spaced in between. Data analysis consisted of a thematic approach where common themes were identified in participants' responses and analysed and discussed accordingly, with data from observed and documented analysis being used to buttress/refute observations made from the interviews. A number of findings emanated from the study. Students had varied conceptions of learner-centred approaches. Some viewed learner-centred approaches as methods of teaching that were participatory, while others viewed them as learning situations in which learners were actively engaged and developed specific capabilities such as problem-solving. Lecturers conceptualised learner-centred approaches as methods that led to active learner participation with the lecturer playing more of a facilitative role. The study revealed that contextual factors such as time available in each course, flexibility of content, the use of teaching methods characterised by active learner participation, the use of constructive and interactive learning activities, had facilitative as well as inhibiting influences on the use of learner-centred approaches. Social factors such as cooperativeness within the peer group, lecturer availability for consultations, technical staff support as well as structural factors such as the availability of textbooks and e-resources, provision of materials and tools, and access to the internet had a facilitative influence on use of learner-centred approaches. The main inhibitive structural factors were the absence of purpose-built facilities and limited space that caused overcrowding. University administration support for integration of learner-centred approaches was fairly evident in the two universities. To sustain the use of learner-centred approaches, lecturers required support through professional development. The study recommended that universities have well-articulated commitments to use learner-centred approaches through a Teaching and Learning Policy. Home Economics course designers should consider contextual factors in course design and course delivery to ensure effective implementation of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of the subject. Seminars and workshops should be organised by the University Teaching and Learning Centres to enhance the teacher educators' knowledge on interactive teaching methodologies and strategies for creating student-centred learning environments.

Key words: contextual factors, Home Economics, interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, learner-centred approaches, teaching and learning.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAFCS	American Association of Family and Consumer Science
AHEA	American Home Economics Association
CHAT	Cultural-historical activity theory
EFA	Education for All
HEIA	Home Economics Institute of Australia
IFHE	International Federation for Home Economics
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
UN	United Nations
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NAP	National Action Plans
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural organisation
Zim- Asset	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 Introduction

This study examined contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. It was important to conduct such a study because research (Mendoca & Popov, 2014; Tawalbeh & Al Asmari, 2015) suggests that there are factors that influence classroom practice when using learner-centred approaches that use constructivism as a basis for teaching and learning. The primary aim of the study was to understand how structural, organisational and socio-cultural factors influence the use of learner-centred instructional methods in B.Ed. Home Economics Teacher Development programmes.

This chapter presents the research problem and its setting, and the background of the study, starting from the international scene (U.S. and Europe) then Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and then the Zimbabwean situation where the study is based. Together with the discussion of the background to the study, is a discussion of the developments in teaching and research on learner-centred approaches in Home Economics. The chapter also presents the research questions, purpose of the study, objectives, assumptions, significance of the study, and delimitation of the study. It also defines key terms and gives an outline of the organisation of chapters.

1.2 Background to the study

Within the field of Home Economics, the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) (2008), as the lead professional body, formalised an international understanding of Home Economics as both a field of study and profession whose major goal is to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities. In addition, IFHE, advocated the inclusion of the following dimensions in all subjects, courses of study and professional activities: (1) a focus on fundamental needs and practical concerns of individuals and families in everyday life; (2) integration of knowledge, processes and practical skills from multiple disciplines synthesised through interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary inquiry and pertinent paradigms and (3) capacity to take critical, transformative and emancipatory action at all levels and sectors of society (IFHE, 2008; Pendergast, 2008).

Drawing from the position statement presented by IFHE, other professional bodies have proposed context-based definitions guiding curriculum teaching and learning, as well as research in Home Economics. The American Home Economics Association (AHEA) (2004) defines Home Economics as an applied science subject based on the integration of different academic disciplines, such as the natural and social science, in solving problems of individuals and families. The Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA) (2010), views the central focus of Home Economics as the well-being of individuals and families in everyday living. Taking an action-oriented and empowerment approach, the Home Economics curriculum develops in students, critical and creative approaches to solving practical concerns of individuals and families (HEIA, 2010). In Africa and particularly in Zimbabwe, Home Economics

is viewed as an applied discipline aimed at improving the quality of life among individuals and families. It has been contextualised to reflect a focus on occupational skills, indigenous knowledge systems and entrepreneurship. Learning through discovery, and experimentation with local materials, is emphasised (Mberengwa & Johnson, 1997). The common and clear unifying themes reflected within the varied definitions is the focus on well-being, and empowerment and action-oriented approach to problem-solving and the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of the discipline.

Home Economics originated in the United States of America in the 19th century, emerging in response to the social issues at the time (Street, 2006). The curriculum content included development of sanitation, improvement of health and the management of the home and family based on scientific principles. Emphasis in teaching was on development of life-skills (American Association of Family and Consumer Science (AAFCS), 2006). In the 20th century, Home Economics evolved in response to the social, economic and political climate of World War 2, the increase in social affluence and increased consumerism of the 1980s (Street, 2006). Issues affecting individuals and families became more complex and a new set of skills was required to ensure effective adaptation to new environments. This resulted in transition in orientation, from a technical paradigm (focusing on teacher-centred approaches and skills proficiency) to a critical science paradigm (that integrates constructivist learner-centred approaches and critical thinking skills). The focus in content was on consumer economics as well as psychological and social issues affecting the family. Emphasis in teaching was on developing critical thinking and practical reasoning.

In the later part of the 20th century and early 21st century, issues regarding globalisation, ICT technology and sustainability became prominent (Street 2006). Features of the content included technology, global interdependence, resource development and management and sustainable development. Teaching prepared students to operate in a seamless world, and programmes were tailored to enable students to deal with a range of real life challenges. Countries such as Canada, Australia and Finland adopted the same model of Home Economics of the United States but have contextualised their programmes to suit national educational visions and objectives. The changes that have occurred in the teaching and learning focus of Home Economics in the U. S. and other European countries, are reflective of emerging paradigms and learning theories applied in the discipline (Pendergast 2006; Street 2006). These changes have been instrumental to the integration of a learner-centred pedagogy in Home Economics curricula.

Turning to Africa, Home Economics programmes offered in Western, Eastern and Sub-Saharan Africa are modelled after the earlier American curriculum model, embedded in the technical paradigm (Mberengwa & Johnson, 1997). The focus in teaching in African Home Economics programmes is on improving the quality of life of individuals and families. Issues currently affecting the African families are poverty, food insecurity, displacement and health problems; especially HIV/AIDs. The Home Economics curriculum in many African nations has thus; integrated within it, knowledge and competencies that enable individuals and families to effectively deal with these issues. To ensure sound development of technical skills proficiency, the dominant pedagogy, particularly in school and teacher development programmes is

based on an integration of the lecture, demonstration method and guided laboratory experiences all with leanings towards a teacher-centred approach.

In Zimbabwe, the origins of Home Economics (then referred to as Domestic Science) can be traced to the educational provision of early colonial settlers and missionaries in the then Rhodesia, (Nhundu 1995). Home Economics was introduced to women as skills-training for servitude as domestic helps for the white population, and for the improvement of health and sanitation in villages, (Mberengwa & Johnson 1997). In the 1970s, Domestic Science was re-named Home Economics (Mberengwa & Johnson 1997). It was practically-oriented and aimed at developing home management and occupational skills. At this point, Home Economics was positioned at the periphery of the curriculum, and was not given much emphasis. The subject faced two major challenges. First; that of an image problem, as it was usually designated a subject for the less academically-able students and of less value, especially when seeking employment in white collar jobs. Second; it was criticised for being too Euro-centric (Mberengwa & Mthombeni 2014), as some skills it sought to develop were not be relevant to students in rural communities. Currently, significant changes have occurred in the Home Economics curriculum, in line with the visions of an independent Zimbabwe. Home Economics is now part of a repertoire of technical subjects and is well positioned in the curriculum, emphasised and valued for its role in developing technical and entrepreneurial skills essential to economic transformation.

The emphasis placed on Home Economics and other technical subjects is due to various policy initiatives driving educational efforts in Zimbabwe. Delivery of technical

vocational education in higher education in Zimbabwe is undergoing transformation due to various external and internal policy initiatives. Major initiatives towards transformation of TVET in higher education have been taken internationally and nationally; in both policy and practice. The main educational policies influencing this transformation at the international level are:

- (i) Education for All (EFA) (2000)

Goal 3 – “Life-long Skills, is ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes”

This third EFA goal has had implications for Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at national and international level (Marope, Chakroun & Holmes, 2015). The goal is credited with raising the visibility of TVET and skills development and creating a more prominent place for TVET on the global education policy agenda (Marope et al., 2015). Programmes such as Home Economics enable the realisation of the third EFA goal through provision of technical skills and other life-long skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking and problem-solving skills. These skills are essential as they assist youths and adult learners to cope with the challenges of a rapidly developing technology-based world (National Action Plans, 2005).

A number of policy initiatives from the national context formed the background to some educational policies that influenced Technical Vocational Education in Zimbabwe. These policies include:

- (i) The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (Nziramasanga, 1999).
- (ii) Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation Zim-Asset (2013).

The Presidential commission of inquiry into education and training was set up to review education and training in Zimbabwe after concerns regarding the relevance and quality of education were raised by the general public. One of the major recommendations was that the education system should prepare children for the world of work by equipping them with basic, survival technical and vocational skills. This initiative was one of the impetuses for transforming higher education through effective technical and vocational skills delivery in Zimbabwe thereby ensuring development of high quality human resource to meet the goal envisioned by the commission (Phuti & Maphosa, 2007).

The Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation is a policy blue print created to achieve national transformation and development, (Zim-Asset 2013). Food security and nutrition, social services and poverty eradication, infrastructure and utilities, value addition and beneficiation are the four strategic clusters around which the plan is built (Zim-Asset, 2013). The social services and poverty eradication has implications for technical education development. The thrust of the cluster is to improve the standard of living of Zimbabweans (Zim-Asset 2013). One of the programmes identified as a key driver towards the achievement of this

goal is human capital development. Strategies to achieve this include; prioritising development of vocational and entrepreneurial skills-oriented curricula, (Zim-Asset 2013). This has resulted in more emphasis placed on the B.Ed. Home Economics programme.

The Bachelor of Education Home Economics programmes offered through the Faculty of Education in the two universities under study were in-service professional development programmes, meant to upgrade secondary school technical subjects teachers with certificate or diploma qualifications, to teach at advanced level or at technical teachers' colleges (Phuti & Maphosa, 2007). Professional development programmes, such as the B.Ed. Home Economics programme play an important role in changing teachers' teaching methods and developing deeper understanding of teaching innovations, (Pitsoe & Maile, 2012).

Offered in the B.Ed. programme are technical subject content upgrade (integrating areas such as Design and Technology), relevant education content, leadership courses, and ICT (Phuti & Maphosa, 2007). The impact of these programmes is their significant contribution to human resource and staff development. The government supports these programmes through providing special Manpower Development leave conditions to allow serving teachers to attend full-time or part-time studies (Phuti & Maphosa, 2007).

In the B. Ed. Home Economics curriculum, Home Economics is conceptualised as having three major concept areas of study which include; Food Technology and Nutrition and related study areas, Textiles and Clothing Technology and Family

Studies. Integrated in these three concept areas is theoretical and practical learning. The approach to teaching, and the theoretical and practical component in these three concept areas is the same. The teacher has at his/her disposal, a range of teacher-centred or learner-centred instructional methods to use. The present study focuses on the teaching of the whole range of concept areas in Home Economics.

As postulated by the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) (2008), the fundamental goal of teaching Home Economics at all levels is to develop students and professionals with the capacity to take critical transformative and emancipatory action at all levels and sectors of society (IFHE, 2008; Pendergast 2008; Pendergast, McGregor & Turkki, 2012). Students and professionals are expected to develop a positive disposition towards participatory democracy and to actively engage with issues focusing on fundamental needs and practical concerns of individuals and families in everyday life (IFHE, 2008; Pendergast 2008; Pendergast et al., 2012). In order for students to take up this advocacy role they need to be provided with opportunities that allow them to actively engage in questioning, thinking and reasoning. Since learner-centred approaches enable students to actively construct meaning and understanding during each phase of the learning process, they can serve as a vital tool for realising the goals of Home Economics Education.

A change in philosophical underpinning of Home Economics has contributed to adoption of learner-centred instructional methodologies in university education. The philosophical underpinnings of Home Economics as a discipline have undergone transformation over the years; moving from a technical to a communicative, through

to a critical and emancipatory paradigm. Change in ideology and paradigm was brought about by the need to refocus Home Economics practice in the 21st century, to meet demands of the emerging ideologies and paradigms.

Awareness of the dominant and emerging ideologies and paradigms provided Home Economists with a stimulus for change in approach and practice (McGregor, Pendergast, Seiuk, Eghan & Engberg, 2008). According to these scholars, work with families and communities needed to move beyond enabling families and communities to cope with problems of daily living. Long term sustainability of the family as a social institution and the advancement of the human condition are now viewed as the paramount focus of Home Economics practice (McGregor et al., 2008).

Home Economics is action oriented (Brown, 1993). Three systems of action; i.e. technical, interpretative and critical emancipatory; were conceptualised by the philosophers in the field of Home Economics (Brown & Paolucci, 1979; McGregor, 2007). These three ways of thinking, therefore became the basis for determining approaches to practice and curriculum. Historically, Home Economics professional practice and curriculum was grounded in the empirical positivist paradigm referred to as the technical paradigm (Mberengwa & Johnson, 1997; McGregor et al., 2008). Practice and curriculum from a technical approach, focuses on the “how to” questions and development of technical skills to enable individuals and families to cope with problems of daily living. Accomplishing goals using criteria set by experts is the main concern of the technical action approach (McGregor et al., 2008). Teaching in this regard follows the “novice” vs. “expert” approach. To ensure skills

acquisition and proficiency, the expert demonstrates the skill and provides the novice opportunity to practice the skill through guided laboratory experiences. Behaviourist learning principles of modelling and imitation are the basis of instruction in this approach.

Practice from an interpretative approach however, enables people to, not only cope and get by but also to understand, adapt and conform to change (McGregor et al., 2008). The approach fosters inward change and affords the individual greater control over life situations. The goal of this approach is to facilitate change in beliefs about self and community, generating positivity, creativity and autonomous action in improving one's life conditions (McGregor et al., 2008). Teaching engages conversations/discussions, cooperative dialogue as the teacher and learners explore values, attitudes, beliefs, and meanings that influence individual and societal actions. Development of such competencies requires active learner engagement in the learning process as teacher and learners co-construct new belief systems (McGregor et al., 2008). Constructivist learning approaches that develop reasoning, judgement, and problem-solving skills are the basis of instruction in this approach.

Self-reflection and self-direction to determine courses of action are the two key processes in the critical/emancipatory practice (McGregor et al., 2008). Emancipatory practice is concerned with understanding oppressive power dynamics that prevent individuals from reaching their full potential in the larger global world. According to McGregor et al., (2008) teaching from a critical emancipatory approach affords the teacher and learner an opportunity to cooperatively examine myths and misconceptions in individual, family and community life and design or re-design

appropriate social action. Reflective thought, critical thinking, creativity and problem solving are the competencies required to engage in this process. It is only through a learner-centred pedagogy that such competencies are developed and nurtured (Mberengwa & Johnson, 1997; McGregor et al., 2008).

Scholars in the field of Home Economics, such as Mberengwa and Johnson (1997) and Mberengwa and Mthombeni (2012), have noted with concern, that teaching of Home Economics in Zimbabwe is still more of skills oriented; emphasising on the technical systems of action which are heavily grounded in behaviourist principles of teaching and learning. This mode of learning has been criticised for its limited development of critical and problem solving skills in students. As Brown (1993) comments, such learners do not develop their thinking skills sufficiently and may be dependent or defensive learners, rather than creative or original thinkers. Though the technical orientation is essential to skills development at school and tertiary level, Home Economics programmes at university level should be more concerned with exploring critical and emancipatory processes needed in family and work life.

As Mberengwa and Mthombeni (2012) reiterate, the pedagogy used to teach Home Economics in Higher Education plays an important role in influencing university students' outcomes and their socialisation process. Mberengwa and Mthombeni (2012) recommend a Home Economics Higher Education pedagogy that develops Home Economics professionals who are; lifelong learners, specialist at integrating divergent complex ideas, and critical thinkers who are also creative and innovative in their problem posing and problem solving. Learner-centred approaches such as problem-based, project-based, case-based learning, independent study, seminar

presentations, discussions, chat forums and collaborative group work are ideal for development of such skills and competencies.

A learner-centred pedagogy has been adopted in the school curriculum, in line with prescriptions of the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiatives, as a way to improve the quality of teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2007; Westbrook, Shah, Durrani, Tikly, Khan & Dunne, 2009). In Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa, calls have been made for policies and reforms in the education systems; to promote a teaching system that is student-centred. (Mooko, Tabulawa, Maruatona & Koosimile, 2009). Mooko et al., (2009) note with concern, that teacher training programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa still resort to traditional teacher-dominated methods which place teachers at the centre of the teaching and learning process. The demerits of teacher-centred approaches according to Sall, Ndiaye, Diarra and Seck (2009), are intellectual passiveness and socially-acquired submissiveness; both of which are viewed as detrimental to the development of critical thinking. Sall et al., (2009) call for the training of teachers who are capable of using active learner-centred approaches, whose desirable outcomes include development of a critical mind, curiosity, initativeness and a desire for learning.

The notion of learner-centred education originated over 200 years ago in child education. Its meaning has, however, expanded over the year and now includes learners of all ages. As Henson (2003) explains, learner-centred education has both philosophical and psychological roots. The philosophical roots emerge from the teachings of two philosopher; Confucius and Socrates, who placed emphasis on the

learner. They are both credited as leading proponents of learner-centred instruction (Henson, 2003; Harris & Cullen, 2007). Learner-centred methods are strands of the 'Progressive Methods', whose origins can be traced to Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the philosophical tradition of empiricism and experiential education, propounded by the English philosopher John Locke (Henson, 2003; Ellis, 2004; DeVito, 2008).

A key proponent of experiential learning, the American philosopher and educator, John Dewey, was instrumental in shaping the learner-centred movement in the United States of America (Henson, 2003). Dewey believed that one pre-eminent goal of education was to develop the individual as a citizen, able to democratically exercise their right in society. He viewed learner centred education as one effective means for achieving this goal (Henson, 2003). In 16th century Europe, Johann Pestalozzi, influenced by Rousseau's writings opened a school with a learner-centred curriculum in Switzerland, while in Germany; Fredrick Froebel used learner-centred experience based ideas to develop the world's first kindergarten (Henson, 2003). Henson (2003) further explains that in the 20th century, learner-centred education was influenced by the work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, and Russian sociologist Lev Vygotsky.

In recent years, there has been a call in higher education for a shift from teacher-centred methods of instruction to learner-centred pedagogy, as a way of improving the quality of education and learning (Harris & Cullen, 2008; Palanissamy, Syed & Kumar, 2017). Teaching in Higher Education has gained prominence due to societal imperatives, not only to improve employability skills, but also contribute to economic growth, and engage with quality assurance mechanisms and assurance to public

fund accountability (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012). Competencies such as motivation for continual learning, adaptability, teamwork, communication skills, innovative thinking, analytical and problem-solving have become critical (Materu 2007; Palanissamy et al., 2017). Calls have thus, been made for tertiary and higher education institutions to adjust their programmes, curricula, teaching and learning methods to adapt to these demands (Materu, 2007).

To facilitate learner active participation, most universities in Zimbabwe involved in teacher professional development have incorporated innovative instructional methodologies in pre-service and in-service teacher development programmes. Transformation of the teaching of university courses from lecturer-centred to learner-centred as a result of quality assurance policies instituted in these universities, has led to the introduction of learner-centred approaches in B.Ed. Home Economics Teacher Development programmes. Through policy guidelines set out in Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance manuals developed in the universities under study, Home Economics courses are being developed and taught more and more using a diverse range of learner-centred instructional methodologies. The intended outcome of these quality assurance policies on teaching and learning, is that different university departments will ensure sustained use of learner-centred approaches in teaching of various university courses. Another crucial outcome anticipated from these quality assurance policies, is a change in teaching practice.

Several studies (Mpofu, 2002; Fox, 2009; Ma & Pendergast, 2010; Komugisha, 2012; Du Toit, 2012) have examined the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. The studies have focused on different aspects related

to the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics. For example, Fox (2009) examined student outcomes from using learner-centred approaches. Ma and Pendergast (2010) examined the effectiveness of an innovative learner-centred approach utilising computer-supported collaborative learning. From a study, Mpofu (2002) observed that Home Economics teachers had positive attitudes towards learner-centred approaches and that the teachers engaged in learner-centred practices. Komugisha (2012) and Du Toit (2012) both focused on the social and cognitive processes involved in the use of learner-centred approaches.

The studies indicated above generally looked at outcomes, attitudes, cognitive and social processes in the use of learner-centred approaches and the strategies to enable them. The problematic issues relating to the context in which learner-centred approaches are used in Home Economics have not been examined; reflecting a gap in literature on this aspect.

Literature (Windschilt, 2002; O' Sullivan, 2002, 2004; Chisholm & Leyenderker, 2008, Matika & Gates, 2010; Tabulawa, 2013) suggests that there are context based factors which inhibit or facilitate the use of learner-centred approaches in education. Windschilt (2002) identifies these as conceptual, pedagogical, cultural and political factors within the learning environment. Within the curriculum implementation literature, issues such as the cultural contexts and value conflicts have been identified as critical hurdles to effective and sustained use of learner-centred approaches (O' Sullivan, 2002, 2004; Chisholm & Leyenderker, 2008, Matika & Gates, 2010). The literature presented above reflects that implementation of learner-centred approaches is influenced by contextual factors.

Five recent studies (Vavrus, 2009; Matika and Gates, 2011; Mendoca & Popov, 2014; Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012; Tawalbeh & Al Asmari, 2015) investigated contextual factors that plagued the implementation of learner-centred approaches in Teacher Education programmes in non-western countries. Though the studies were not specifically within the Home Economics discipline, much can be learnt from them as they focused on use/application of learner-centred approaches in higher/teacher education in a non-western context. Across the five studies there was evidence that a number of structural and organisational factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches.

Contextual factors are viewed in this study as located within the context in which the students learn (the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices) and had to be identified. The four contextual factors identified in literature as influencing the use of learner-centred approaches within the teaching and learning context included duration of course/intervention (Beaten, Kyndt, Struyven & Dochy, 2010; Parker, Mosborg, Bransford, Vye, Wilkerson & Abbot, 2011), subject/content (Wste, 2013), course delivery context (Zhu, Ennis & Chen, 2011) and student interactivity (Chi, 2009; Beaten et al., 2010). There was evidence from several studies that subject context factors, such as time available in a course (Doyle, 2005; Colley, 2010), over-focus on content (Wste, 2013; Weimer, 2013), high level of interactivity in learning activities (Chi, 2009) and large classes (Altinyelken, 2011; Gladys, Zacharia, Gracious & Nicholas, 2012), either negatively or positively influenced use of learner-centred approaches.

The studies and literature presented above contributed to the identification of the contextual factors that influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Higher/Teacher Education. This was of value to the present study as its intention was, not to rate the importance of identified factors or establish possible directional relationship between factors but to obtain an in-depth understanding of how these contextual factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. Therefore, the common approach to contextual factor research, which involves use of the quantitative approach and inferential statistical procedures was not used. Rather, the qualitative approach, usually used in case-based studies of innovations in education (Mansour, 2008; Ravitz, 2010; Zeiser, Taylor, Rickles, Garet & Segeritz, 2014), was adopted. The qualitative approach was used because the intent of this contextual factor research was to obtain a deeper understanding of factors positively and negatively influencing the sustained use of learner-centred approaches in the B.Ed. Home Economics programmes.

The studies and literature presented above show that there are multiple contextual factors that influence the use of learner-centred approaches. This suggests that a multi-level examination of these contextual factors is needed in the present study. The nature of the present study's research questions reflect this multi-level examination of contextual factors that influence the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of B. Ed. Home Economics. This multi-level approach is in line with Fullan's (2007) recommendation to researchers and educators where he suggests, that in contextual factor research, several factors should be examined in order to avoid an over-simplified analysis of educational innovations.

Given the pivotal role of learner-centred approaches in facilitating reforms in teaching in higher education in Zimbabwe, as well as realising the goals of the subject, it was essential to explore the instructional practices in B.Ed. Home Economics programmes. How context based factors influenced the effective and sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics is not known. Examining the complex context of teaching and the lecturers' interaction with their students as they use various learner-centred approaches could be key to discovering answers to this question. It is against this background, that the present study examined how contextual factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in B.Ed. Home Economics teacher development programmes in universities in Zimbabwe, with the aim of uncovering facilitative, inhibitive and other unknown factors to effective and sustained use of learner-centred approaches in the Home Economics classroom.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Integration of learner-centred approaches in education, to improve quality of education through the prescription of UN agendas such MDGs, EFA, (UNESCO, 2007; Westbrook et al., 2009), is on the rise at all levels in Sub-Saharan Africa and in Zimbabwe. At university level in Zimbabwe, the transformation of the teaching of university courses from lecturer-centred to learner-centred approaches driven by university quality assurance policies, has led to the integration of learner-centred approaches in B. Ed. Home Economics Teacher Development programmes. The intended outcome is a change in teaching practice, as lecturers shift from using teacher-centred methods to fully embracing learner-centred approaches.

There could be a mismatch between the intended and actual practice with regard to integration of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics teacher development programmes. An observations made by the researcher, is that lecturers have not developed full fidelity to learner-centred approaches as they constantly vacillate between using teacher-centred methods and applying learner-centred approaches in a limited way. This may be caused by the influence of various contextual factors within the learning environment.

Various contextual factors were identified in the background of the study as influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in higher/teacher education (Vavrus 2009; Matika and Gates 2011; Mendoca & Popov 2014; Gyamtso & Maxwell 2012; Tawalbeh & Al Asmari 2015). Implementation of learner-centred approaches was identified in the background as generally problematic; with their effectiveness and sustainability being affected by context based factors (O' Sullivan 2002, 2004; Chisholm & Leyenderker 2008, Matika & Gates 2010; Tabulawa, 2013). Factors specific to the context in which learning occurred, which have an enabling or constraining influence on the use of learner-centred approaches, were also identified in the background of the study (Doyle 2005; Chi, 2009; Colley 2010; Altinyelken, 2011; Gladys et al 2012; Wste, 2013).

In addition, studies reviewed in the background of the study, that examined the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics (Mpofu 2002; Fox 2009; Ma & Pendergast 2010; Komugisha 2012; Du Toit 2012) reflected a gap in knowledge as they mainly focused on outcomes, attitudes, cognitive and social processes, and the strategies to enable use them. None of these studies examined

ways in which lecturers and students conceptualised and dealt with constructivist ethos embedded in learner-centred approaches in the Home Economics lecture room. Furthermore, no study, particularly in Zimbabwe, examined the realities of using learner-centred approaches based on constructivist instruction at university level. To obtain a deeper understanding of how contextual factors can be used to explain the discrepancy between intended and actual practice with regards to the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics. Given this situation, this study sought to examine how contextual factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in B.Ed. Home Economics programmes, at two selected universities in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to examine how contextual factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics at university level.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following main and sub-research questions:

1.5.1 Main research question

1.5.1. 1. How do contextual factors influence the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics at university level?

1.5.2 Sub-research questions.

1.5.2.1. How does the in-service student teachers' and lecturers' conceptualisation of learner-centred approaches influence the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?

1.5.2.2. What are the in-service student teachers' and lecturers' views on how the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices influence the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?

1.5.2.3. How do the prevailing faculty and university-wide policies and practices influence the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?

1.5.2.4. What do lecturers view as the kind of support that is likely to influence the sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?

1.5.2.5. What are the implications of the study's findings for Home Economics teacher development programmes?

1.6 Assumptions of the study

The researcher assumed that:

- There is a mismatch between the intended and actual practice with regard to the use of learner-centred approaches in the B.Ed. Home Economics Teacher Development programmes; caused by the influence of various contextual factors within the learning environment.
- Lecturers fail to take advantage of the curriculum features and learning activities in Home Economics, that offer opportunities for student-centred

learning due to failure to use the requisite teaching methods in a comprehensive and systematic way.

- The views of lecturers influence their decisions to adopt and use learner-centred approaches in the teaching of the B.Ed. Home Economics programmes.

1.7 Objectives of the study

1.7.1. The main objective of the study was to:

1.7.1.1. establish how contextual factors influence the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics at university level.

1.7.2. The following sub-objectives derived from the main objective sought to:

1.7.2.1. establish how in-service student teachers' and lecturers' conceptualisation of learner-centred approaches influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics;

1.7.2.2. determine in-service student teachers' and lecturers' views on how the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics;

1.7.2.3. ascertain how the faculty and university-wide policies and practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics; and

1.7.2.4. establish what lecturers view as the kind of support likely to influence the sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

1.7.2.5. establish the implications of the study's findings for Home Economics Teacher Development programmes.

1.8 Significance of the study

It is anticipated that this research study will contribute to knowledge through facilitating an improved understanding of the obstacles lecturers and students face when dealing with educational conservatism that works against the use of constructivism as a basis of instruction in Home Economics teacher development programmes. The study may also extend knowledge on educational change and teaching and learning innovations in developing countries.

With regard to practice, the findings of the study may enable course designers to develop strategies that support effective and sustained use of learner-centred methods in existing Home Economics teacher development programmes. The current challenge in Higher Education is to address issues related to quality in education. This study is significant in that it attempts to ensure quality in university education in Zimbabwe through advocating quality assurance policies calling for the incorporation of learner-centred approaches that facilitate active learner participation. Such approaches are imperative if Higher Education in Zimbabwe, and perhaps elsewhere as well is to provide students with learning experiences that lead to the development of critical thinking, problem-solving and lifelong learning skills.

The anticipated product of this study is a framework of guidelines and recommendations to spearhead and support effective and sustained use of learner-centred approaches in existing Home Economics pre- and in-service teacher development programmes. It is anticipated that the guidelines would be useful to

teacher educators in pre- and in-service training of Home Economics teachers in Zimbabwe as teacher professional development is the main vehicle through which change in schools can be realised.

1.9 Delimitations

The study was limited to in-service Home Economics Teacher Development programmes at two selected universities in Zimbabwe. Since the scope of potential contextual factors is large, the study was limited to examining socio-cultural and structural factors within the learning environment (that is, learner-centred approaches as they are being used in the Home Economics theory and practical lectures). The broader political and economic factors were not included.

1.10 Definition of Terms

The following terms which were used in the study needed clarification:

1.10.1 Learner-centred approaches

Various definitions of the term learner-centred approach are offered in literature. Most of the definitions have characteristic features such as; 1) focus on increased student responsibility for learning, 2) co-construction of knowledge by the student and the teacher, 3) focus on learning rather than instruction. Prince and Felder (2006) view learner-centred approaches as instructional methods that impose more responsibility on students for their own learning than the traditional lecture approach. Geven and Santa (2010) present a similar but extended perspective which incorporates four aspects of learner-centred approaches namely; active learner

responsibility for learning, proactive management of learning experiences, independent knowledge construction and teachers as facilitators of learning.

These definitions present both a democratic and emancipatory perspective to learning (Ahmed, 2013; Al-Zu'be, 2013). The definitions presented above have been criticised for their omission of critical elements of the learner-centred approach such as inquiry, critical thinking and problem solving (Vavrus, Thomas & Bartlett, 2011). Matika and Gates (2010) define learner-centred approach as:

“An approach that informs the practices of teaching based on the assumption that people learn best by actively constructing and assimilating knowledge rather than passive addition of discrete facts to an existing store of knowledge” (p.396).

According to Vavrus et al., (2011), this definition assumes that engaging students in critical thinking and problem solving is a more superior way of teaching compared to the transmission model focusing on passive acquisition of knowledge and rote learning. Learner-centred approaches encompass a range of instructional methods including; inquiry learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, case-based teaching, discovery learning and just-in-time teaching (Prince & Felder, 2006). In this study, learner-centred approaches refer to the repertoire of instructional methods utilised in teaching the practical and theory components of Home Economics courses. These methods include project-based learning, independent study, seminar presentations, collaborative learning, chat forums and case studies.

1.10.2 Contextual factors

Different definitions are presented in literature with regard to contextual factors. A general definition of contextual factors is offered by Kronsbein, Meiser and Leyer (2014), where a contextual factor is viewed as a characteristic of a circumstance or situation affecting an entity. Garrison (2014) gives a definition of contextual factors which fits more within the context of teaching practice, as aspects of the school situation in which teachers, work that can potentially influence teachers' knowledge and practice.

Several frameworks for conceptualising or identifying contextual factors that influence classroom practice exist in literature. The conceptual models (Kozma, 2003; Hall & Kidman, 2004; Groff & Mouza, 2008) offer a multi-level analysis of factors that influence processes in the teaching and learning context. Contextual factors research is conducted in different disciplines such as public health (Stange & Glasgow, 2013), business (Kronsbein et al., 2014) and education (O' Sullivan 2004). The common threads identified across these disciplines for justifying research on contextual factors include: (1) understanding how an implementation process can be manifested in different settings and situations, and (2) obtaining an understanding of how the effectiveness and sustainability of a programme is affected by the contextual factors within the implementation setting (Stange & Glasgow, 2013). In this study, contextual factors refer to situational elements in the learning environment such as the curriculum, learning activities, assessment practices, subject culture, and university policies and practices, that affect the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching of Home Economics.

1.10.3 Constructivist Pedagogy/Instruction

Constructivism is a theory about how people learn which is based on the premise that the learner individually constructs or discovers knowledge (Hua-Liu & Matthews, 2005; Mogashoa, 2014). The constructivist view of learning forms the base for constructivist pedagogy. Mogashoa (2014) defines constructivist pedagogy as the creation of classroom environments, activities and methods that are grounded in constructivist theory of learning with goals that focus on individual students developing deeper understanding in the subject of interest. Constructivist teaching has specific characteristics namely; (a) learners are actively involved in a democratic environment, (b) activities are interactive and learner-centred and (c) the teacher acts as facilitator of learning, (Mogashoa, 2014; Sarita, 2017). In this study, constructivist pedagogy/instruction was used as defined above.

1.10.4 Home Economics

Home Economics is an applied science subject based on the integration of different academic disciplines such as the natural and social sciences in solving problems of individuals and families, (American Home Economics Association, 2004). The U. S. and European countries' conceptualisation of Home Economics curriculum reflects a body of knowledge has been developed that has a direct relationship with daily issues individuals face as they interact with family and other environments (Street, 2006).

There are five major concept areas of study which provide areas of specialisation within the Home Economics discipline at higher academic level. These are: Food Technology and Human Nutrition; Family Management and Economics; Human and Family development; Housing; and Textiles and Clothing Technology. However, in

the Zimbabwean, college and university curriculum, Home Economics is conceptualised as having three major concept areas of study which are: Food Technology and Nutrition related study areas, Textiles and Clothing Technology, and Family Studies. Consistent with the definition above, in this study, Home Economics is defined as having three areas namely; Food Technology and Nutrition, Textiles, Clothing Design and Family Studies.

1.11 Chapter summary

This chapter gave the background that gave impetus to this study. This included the trends in teaching and research on learner-centred approaches and contextual factors influencing the learning environment. The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, research objectives guiding the study, assumptions, significance of the study, the delimitations of the study and definitions of terms used in the study were presented. The next chapter reviews literature that informed the study.

1.12 Organisation of the study

This study is organised into five chapters.

Chapter 1: The Problem and its setting. This chapter covered the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, assumptions, research objectives, and significance of the study. Delimitations and the definition of terms were also described in this section.

Chapter 2: Review of literature. This chapter discusses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study and reviews literature based on the research questions, to establish what is already known or not known about the questions raised by the researcher, and reviews findings of related

empirical studies to determine the gap in knowledge that the present study should fill.

Chapter 3: Research methodology. This chapter presents the research methodology for the study. It describes and justifies the interpretive paradigm and qualitative approach used in the study. The descriptive case study, semi-structured interviews, observations and documents, credibility and trustworthiness of research data, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures are also explained. Ethical issues considered in the study are also discussed.

Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis/discussion. This chapter presents the data collected, and analyses and discusses them.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. This chapter gives a summary of the whole study draws conclusions and proffers recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature that informed the study. The literature review in this study serves two purposes. First; it builds a logical framework for the research and relates the study to the on-going dialogue in the literature and related studies. Through the literature review the study is therefore, able to stay on focus. Second; the literature review provides a benchmark for comparing the results of the study with other findings. This is significant as previous research work tends to guide new research efforts.

The chapter presents the review of related literature on contextual factors and learner-centred approaches under the following subheadings: theoretical framework, conceptual framework, empirical studies and literature based on the research questions raised in this study in order to see what is known or not known about these questions.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In this study, the theoretical framework expresses an understanding of theories and concepts relevant to the analysis of contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics. Learner-centred approaches have, ingrained within them both individual and social aspects of learning. As Nguyen, Williams and Forret (2015) explain, learning theories that explain how learning occurs in a social context, and involve the creation and self-organisation of knowledge by the individual, are essential to explore.

Two theoretical frameworks; the socio-cultural learning theory and the cultural-historical activity theory, provide a complementary foundation for this study. The socio-cultural theory creates a context for the analysis of the nature of classroom practice (with regard to teaching using learner-centred approaches) and offers an understanding of classrooms as learning systems, operating under the influence of various contextual constraints or enablers. The cultural-historical activity theory on the other hand, provides an analytic framework to analyse and interpret the influences contextual factors have on decisions to use learner-centred approaches in the teaching Home Economics. The theoretical combinations complement to uncover the complexities involved when participation in new forms of practice is done within old structures and routines, (Knapp, 2008). The first theoretical framework to be discussed is the socio-cultural theory.

2.2.1 Socio-cultural learning theory

The socio-cultural theory of learning founded on the work of Lev Vygotsky, provides an essential framework for understanding the mechanisms involved in the process of teaching and learning within a classroom setting. Vygotsky (1978) developed the socio-cultural learning theory through his re-conceptualisation of cognition as a function of social interaction, and not as emanating from within the individual as propounded in earlier generations of learning theories. Off-shoots of the socio-cultural theory, based on Vygotsky's work, can be found in the writings on the activity theory (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993) and cultural-historical activity theory (Cole & Engestrom, 1994; Cole, 1996). Elucidation of the theory is also found in the work of Rogoff (1990) and Wertsch (1991).

The socio-cultural learning theory draws on a theory of knowledge known as constructivism. The epistemology according to the socio-cultural theory is that: first, knowledge is not an abstract phenomenon but is a state of understanding constructed by every knowledgeable individual. In other words knowledge is not something external to the learner, awaiting discovery by the learner (Vavrus et al., 2011). Second, knowledge is socially and culturally-constructed. As Eun (2010) explains, knowledge is co-created among teacher or mentor and students or adult learners, as they engage in inquiry-based activities that serve to solve authentic and meaningful problems. Knowledge from this perspective, must be engaged with rather than delivered or transmitted (Vavrus et al. 2011). Third, knowledge construction is always mediated and facilitated by cultural practices and artefacts. Krajcik and Shin (2014) view the process of building scientific artefacts as one of the ways in which students construct their own knowledge.

2.2.1.1 Vygotsky's thoughts and Socio-cultural learning theory.

The socio-cultural learning theory has several important tenets. Four tenets with implications for the analysis of the process of teaching and learning in a classroom setting are discussed. The first tenet is that development proceeds from the social (intermental) plane to the individual (intramental) plane (Eun, 2010). As Scott and Palinscar (2013) elaborate, learning and development are facilitated by social interactions. As conceptualised by Vygotsky, learning occurs through two processes. First; at the social level (interpersonal or intermental plane) between an individual and other people while engaged in a shared social activity (Robbins, 2007). Second; what is learned is then internalised or appropriated by the individual (at the

intramental plane) into higher thinking processes (Robbins, 2007). Here, learning is viewed as a social process (Knapp, 2008).

Within the context of teaching, this tenet presupposes that teaching and learning processes are essentially collaborative (Bornstein, 2007). Vygotsky (1987) insists on this collaborative instructional practice and reiterates that all higher psychological functions develop in the process of cooperation and collaboration. For social and collaborative instruction to take root, the following social factors are requisite; shared learning goals, active participation of all in goal accomplishment, mutual respect, and recognition that knowledge is co-constructed and co-created in the process of problem-solving rather than through transmission of established facts (Bornstein, 2007).

The second tenet is that learning is mediated. Cognitive development is viewed as a mediated mental activity (Vygotsky, 1987; Lantolf, 2013). Mediation is the basic mechanism for development, and it is the process where all higher cognitive functions develop (Eun, 2015; Al-Madhi & Al-Wadi, 2015). As Wertsch (1994) explains:

“Mediation is the key to understand how human mental functioning is tied to cultural, institutional and historical settings since these settings provide the cultural tools that are mastered by individuals to form this functioning” (Wertsch, 1994, p. 204).

Kozulin (2003) identifies three types of mediation; mediation through social interaction, mediation through material tools, and mediation through symbolic systems. Vygotsky (1987) argues that certain types of cognitive functioning such as conceptual thinking cannot develop without such social and cultural mediation.

Therefore, instruction that aims to develop higher psychological functions should be built around mediation. Physical interaction between people, tools and symbols, therefore, play a vital mediating role in this process (Vygotsky 1987; Robbins 2007; Yamagata-Lynch, 2016).

The third tenet is that human development occurs through the medium of activity (Vygotsky, 1978; Leont'ev, 1981). Both practical activities (work of the hand) and symbolic activities (work of language) are seen as interdependent and contributing to cognitive development (Eun, 2010). In addition, declarative knowledge (theoretical) and procedural knowledge (practical) are viewed as critical to the enactment of an activity. The assumption is that instruction (teaching and learning) should be activity-oriented. Activity-oriented instruction focuses on providing opportunities in the classroom for students to apply theoretical knowledge and practical skills to solving real-life problems. According to Stetsenko and Arietvitch (2002), connecting knowledge and practical activities allows students to understand knowledge as an instrument of meaningful, historically- evolved cultural practices. As Eun (2010) confirms, it is only through this understanding that students are able to apply their knowledge, as well as generate new knowledge.

In the fourth tenet, Vygotsky (1987) sees development as occurring through an integrated system. Development occurs through the change in the systemic interrelationship among diverse functions or domains, and not through individual development of specific functions and domains (Vygotsky, 1987; Eun, 2010). Using an example of human development, it is the relationship between the cognitive and affective domains within the system rather than the individual development of each

domain that results in the development of the individual (Vygotsky, 1987; Eun, 2010). The main implication of this tenet for teaching and learning, is that the diverse domains of learning need to come together to form an integrated unit. In order for an integrated instruction to be realised, collaborative efforts from diverse domains of school learning are essential. This, as Eun (2010) explains, results in systemic and balanced approach to development.

The socio-cultural theoretical lens illuminates the nature of learning that occurs in a learning environment, where learning is social in nature and is situated in a cultural, historical and institutional context. Teaching, from this perspective, will be shaped by the social, cultural, political and historical contexts within which it occurs (Tabulawa, 2010). The importance of culture and holistic contexts is further supported by the socio-cultural approach, as the realities of classroom practice are located and interpreted in these contexts (Tabulawa, 2010).

The socio-cultural theory assisted the researcher to: 1) clarify the nature (characteristics) of the teaching context, where it was viewed as social-based, with a balanced level of student and teacher activity, mediated through various tools and systems, and with an integrated approach to instruction; 2) establish the aspects to focus on in the research questions, such as the semiotic systems (curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices), social aspects (lecturer/student, student/student interactions), institutional structures (lecture-room, department and university settings), cultural aspects (the university vision, policies and practices regarding support for learner-centred approaches) and historical (analysis of historical trajectories in which teaching activities in Home Economics have been occurring), 3) interpret and discuss research findings by establishing the extent to

which findings confirm or refute the existence of interrelated social and cultural influences that affect teaching and learning events, as revealed in the theory.

2.2.1.2 Cultural-historical activity theory.

The second important offshoot of the socio-cultural theory contributing to this study's understanding of contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches was the Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT). The cultural-historical activity theory, based on the concepts of Vygotsky and Leont'ev (1978) provides a framework that can be used to examine human activity or practice (Fenwick, Edwards & Sawchuk, 2011; Foot, 2014). It is an elaboration of the socio-cultural notion that all human learning and development takes place in the form of activities (Roos, 2010; Foot, 2014). CHAT is valued for its focus on context issues, analysis of key factors that mediate teaching and learning, and the understanding dynamic forces, challenges and conflict that underlie educational processes (Roth & Lee, 2007).

Engestrom (2001) developed a second generation CHAT where he proposes five core principles of an activity set. The first principle is that the unit of analysis is the activity as a whole. Fig. 1 below represents the unit of analysis and indicates the different components of influence on teaching or an activity in general (Engestrom, 2001). The activity has a *subject* of the activity. The subject pursues a certain goal (*object*). During the activity, the subject uses *tools* or mediating artefacts to achieve goals. The activity is governed by explicit and implicit *rules*, and takes place in a specific social and cultural *community*. It implies certain roles or *division of labour* for those involved (Engestrom, 2001).

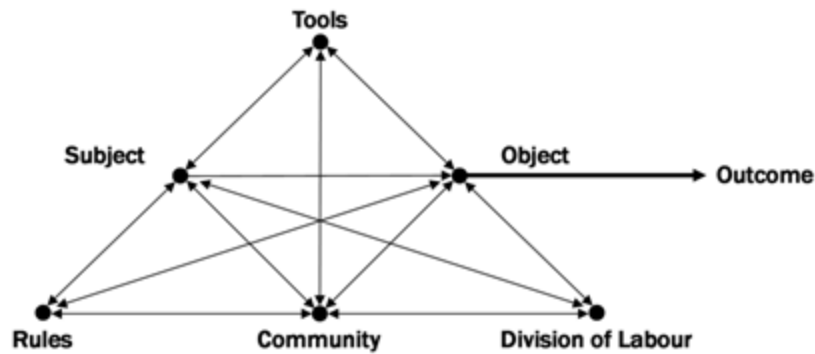


Figure 2-1:Engeström's (2001), Second generation cultural-historical activity theory

The second principle of the activity theory is multi-voicedness, where an activity involves a collection of interacting individuals and communities who express different interests and views. The third principle emphasises the historicity of activity: an activity is assumed to be developing over time; and understanding its current form requires knowledge about its past. The fourth principle focuses on the role of contradictions as a source of change and development of the activity system. Contradictions resulting from the multi-voicedness of the system or relations between two components may provide an incentive for change and transformation of the activity. The final principle relates to the possibility of expansive transformation of the activity as contradictions act as incentives for change leading to the collective change of the activity. In view of the five core principles, activity is better understood in the context of human interaction, which in turn, is socially and culturally-determined (Coverdale, 2009; Ferwick et al., 2011). Thus, social and cultural practices that occur in the real world can be explained by relating them to the cultural and historical contexts in which the activity is taking place (Uden, Valderas & Pastor, 2008; Foot, 2014).

The theory observes that activities of individuals in a teaching and learning environment are set within a complex context. The researcher used CHAT both as a theoretical and practical framework. As a theoretical lens, the theory was used to illuminate how social, cultural, historical and organisational factors embedded in the structure of the B.Ed. Home Economics programme influenced the effective and sustained use of learner-centred approaches. As a practical framework, CHAT was used as an analytic framework for: 1) determining the unit of analysis i.e. the teaching activity system, and locating it within a social structure – the B.Ed. Home Economics programme; 2) data analysis to locate important contradictions and/or positive outcomes, and use these to explain how different factors enable or constrain lecturers and students as they apply learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics; 3) interpretation and discussion of research findings by using Engestrom (2001) principles of activity sets as revealed in the theory.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in this study focused on two concepts; contextual factors and learner-centred approaches. Each of the concepts is explored below.

2.3.1 Contextual Factors

Before exploring the individual factors that influence the use of learner-centred approaches, it is essential to elaborate on the significance of context in teaching and learning, as well as the conceptual frameworks used to study contextual factors influencing the use of innovative teaching practices. The following is a discussion of the two aspects.

2.3.1.1 The significance of context in teaching and learning.

Within the field of education, a number of researchers and theorists (Terwell, 2005; Buckley, 2010; Fenwick & Cooper, 2013) point that social, cultural and economic contexts have an effect on teaching and learning. The notion of context in education may have several interpretations and implications. It may refer to the classroom itself; relating to facilities, materials and physical resources. Institutional context may refer to school regulations, philosophy, facilities. The broader environment surrounding the school is a context containing the location, norms and neighbourhood.

Advocates of a context approach in teaching (Bax, 2003; Borg, 2006; Barkhuizen, 2008) illustrate the significance of context in teaching. Borg (2006) emphasises that there is a relationship between teacher practice and context. Borg (2006) notes that the social, institutional, instructional and physical contexts in which teachers operate, have a major impact on their practice. Consequently, he believes that the study of teacher practice in isolation of context may lead to a flawed characterisation of teacher and teaching practice (Borg, 2006). Bax (2003) notes that, consideration of contextual factors such as school culture, syllabuses, school policies and wider socio-political factors is key to effective teaching. He believes that effective teaching is not shaped by methodology alone, but by a consideration of contextual factors in which the learning occurs. Barkhuizen (2008), however, views ability to make informed decisions about practice and students learning as being influenced by the teaching context.

Different definitions are presented in literature with regard to contextual factors. A general definition of contextual factors is offered by Kronsbein, Meiser and Leyer,

(2014) where a contextual factor is viewed as a characteristic of a circumstance or situation affecting an entity. Garrison (2014) gives a definition of contextual factors which fits more within the context of teaching practice, describing them as aspects of the school situation in which teachers' work that can potentially influence teacher's knowledge and practice.

2.3.1.2 Conceptual Models used in the study of Contextual Factors

The context in which teaching occurs is often complex. In structuring a study examining a context or activity system, Jones, Dirckinck-Holmfeld and Lindstrom (2006) recommend granularity in analysis where the system is divided into levels which signify its connections to larger networks. Several frameworks for conceptualising or classifying contextual factors that influence classroom practice which incorporate a macro, meso and micro analysis, exist in literature.

The conceptual models presented in the discussion below offer a multi-level analysis of factors that influence processes in the teaching and learning context. The three conceptual frameworks identified in this review as offering appropriate guidelines for framing the examination of contextual factors influencing decisions to use learner-centred approach in teaching Home Economics include; the Groff and Mouza (2008) Layers of Influence Model; the Hall and Kidman (2004) T-L Map and the Kozma (2003) Multiple Level Analysis Framework.

2.3.1.2.1 The Groff and Mouza (2008) Layers of Influence model.

The Groff and Mouza (2008) Layers of Influence model was specifically developed for innovations at school/classroom level. The layer of influence model is primarily

used in reference to innovative teaching and learning practices (Groff & Mouza, 2008; Kirkland & Sutch, 2009). The model describes how influences, which support an individual to realise an innovation are drawn from multiple levels. This idea of a multiple level analysis is drawn from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory (1979), which posits concentric layers of influences which connect the school to wider contexts.

Three broad levels of influences; the micro, meso and macro, are incorporated into this conceptual framework. Micro level influences are directly relevant to the innovator, such as his/her capacity and disposition to act as an innovator. Meso level influences are factors that include local level influences such as school cultures, school management structures, school infrastructure and local influences from the wider community and local authority. Macro level influences include government led initiatives, national policy, national curricula, and wider research (Groff & Mouza, 2008).

2.3.1.2.2 Hall and Kidman (2004) T-L Map.

Hall and Kidman (2004) provide a conceptual framework for understanding contextual factors that influence teaching and learning utilising concept mapping. The conceptual map is used within the context of university teaching and it enables lecturers to recognise contextual factors that impact student learning in the courses they teach. Known as the T-L Map, the conceptual model offers a multi-level analysis, grounded in Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework of human development. The map identifies three levels of contexts in which university teachers and students operate. The three contextual components include: the teaching-

learning context, the institutional context and sub contexts, and the wider community contexts; made up of local, national and international influences.

As described by Hall and Kidman (2004), at the centre of the map is the teaching and learning context of the course. In this context, are the learning and assessment activities, student interactions and networking, as well as content and support tools and materials. Of importance within the institutional context, is the ethos towards teaching and learning, communicated by the different academic units within the institution. The second level comprises the institutional context. Within this context are the institutional strategic directions, policies, conditions and rules that govern the teaching, learning and assessment practices. The institution cannot exist in isolation but is influenced by the wider community whose influence impacts on teaching and learning of specific courses. Influences from this context include government policies on Higher Education, as well as research and international developments in education and in specific disciplines. In addition there are influences stemming from the needs of professional bodies, industry, employers and the community.

Besides identifying contextual components, Hall and Kidman's (2004) conceptual map clarifies the relationship between the students, the content of the course, and the teacher; all viewed as the corner-stone of any formal teaching and learning context. The relational aspect is based on the premise that the way students work to unpack the content directly influences the effectiveness of learning (Hall & Kidman, 2004). The components that link the three cornerstones are understanding, expertise and rapport i.e. student understanding of the content, staff expertise of the subject and staff student rapport respectively.

2.3.1.2.3 Kozma (2003) Multiple Level Analysis Framework

Kozma (2003) developed another multiple level analysis framework which focuses explicitly on teacher classroom practice. He proposed three levels of influences on teachers' understanding and adoption of novel classroom instructional practices (Fulmer, Lee & Tan, 2015). Emerging from research on varying contextual factors that influence teacher adoption of technology and related teaching practices, three distinct, but interacting levels of contextual factors; micro, meso and macro were identified.

The micro-level constitutes the immediate contexts of classrooms. Included in this context are a variety of classroom-level influences which include, individual student and teacher factors. Social factors related to teacher-student interactions in the environment, as well as tools and technologies that support learning are also included in this level (Kozma, 2003). Factors outside of the classroom, but with direct influence on the classroom are found at the meso level. Examples of meso level factors include school policies, school leadership support, school climate, and school wide access to tools and support staff for teaching and learning. As Fulmer et al., (2015) explain meso level factors tend to be conceptually broad than the school, and include factors that extend beyond the school; such as parental and immediate community expectations. At the macro level, are distal factors that have no direct effect on the classroom but may affect the meso level (Kozma, 2003). Fulmer et al., (2015) note that, the breadth of these influences is usually dependent on the education system. Macro level influences include national educational policies, institutional policies and statements. In addition, cultural norms, social, economic and political pressures surrounding teaching and learning are part of influences at the macro level.

Looking across the three conceptual frameworks, one notes that they all present a multi-level analysis approach where influences that impact on classroom practice or teaching and learning are drawn from multiple levels. Similarly, three levels of influences drawn from the micro, meso and macro level were incorporated in all four frameworks. In addition, all three conceptual models are more geared towards teaching and learning situations.

The conceptual model used to structure this research study was an adaptation of the Groff and Mouza (2008) Layers of Influence model, where the teaching activity system was divided into macro, meso and micro levels. By using this conceptual framework, an instructional innovation (such as the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching of Home Economics) can be viewed within the contexts of the layers that influence its application.

With reference to this study, the three contexts envisioned as influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics were as follows: at the micro level, influences emanating from the students' and lecturers' disposition such as their conceptions of learner-centred approaches were examined. The meso level context encompassed influences from the curriculum/subject content, learning activities and assessment practices. At the macro level context, focus was on the university-wide teaching and learning policies as well as the department, faculty and university practices that influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching of Home Economics.

Figure 2.2 below shows the researcher's adaptation of the conceptual model of contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics.

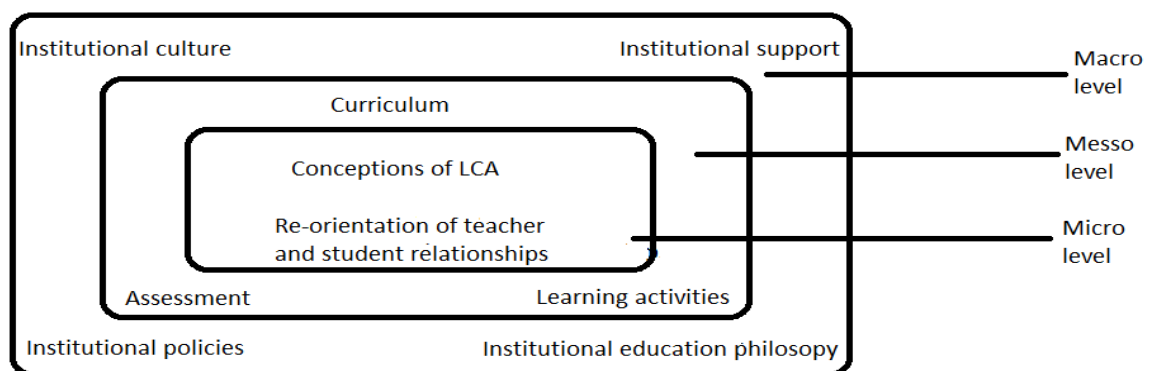


Figure 2-2: Conceptual Model of Contextual Factors influencing the use of Learner-centred Approaches in the teaching of Home Economics

2.3.1.3 Contextual Factors influencing classroom practice.

Contextual factors presented in the following discussion have been grouped into two categories. Category one represents factors emanating from the teaching and learning context and category two has factors from the institutional context.

2.3.1.3.1 Factors from the teaching and learning context.

(A). Aspects of the teacher educators' work space.

Aspects such as time and class size have been found to influence the way teacher educators can implement learner-centred approaches. Research, (Doyle, 2008; Colley, 2010) confirms that, in using learner centred approaches, more time is required. A criticism levelled against learner-centred approaches is the concern over the amount of time the approaches can consume. A study by Flint (2004) showed that, course instructors expressed concern over having to reduce the amount of content covered in their course in order to cater for collaborative and problem-based learning. Time constraints have thus been identified as a barrier to implementation of learner-centred approaches in Higher Education.

Too large a number of students in a class are a factor commonly identified as inhibiting the use of learner-centred approaches in various educational settings. Inability to provide effective scaffolding in individual problem-based activities and control of student behaviour in collaborative activities is often cited as issues emanating from using learner-centred approaches in crowded classrooms (Jabbour, 2013). Studies (Yilmaz, 2009; Altinyelken 2011; Gladys et al., 2012; Jabbour, 2013) have reported large class size as a barrier that impedes use of learner-centred approaches.

(B). Aspects of the students' work space

The work-load in the learning environment is noted in literature as an important factor influencing students' use of active and independent learning approaches. Several researchers, who include, Cope and Staehr, (2005) and Diseth, (2007), have shown that excessive perceived or inappropriate work-loads negatively impacted on

students' use of certain learner-centred approaches. Heavy work-loads do not allow students to develop deep learning and understanding of course material.

(C). Curriculum driven factors

The constructivist learning theory has been considered a relevant theoretical foundation for curriculum innovation where the active role of the learner is acknowledged. It also serves as a focal point for development of the curriculum. Rather than transmitting the content for the learner to passively receive information, a constructivist curriculum gives ample opportunities for the learner to actively engage in connecting prior experience with new knowledge to construct personally meaningful understanding (Zhu, Ennis & Chen, 2011).

Curriculum design strategies recommended for learner-centred approaches include;

- Flexibility in designing of course content material. Teacher-centred curriculum designers base their final curricula on available content. Such a design strategy is considered constrictive for instructors and students. To correct this Pagan (2006) suggests that less restrictive course goals be used and avoiding focusing excessively on course material.
- Incorporation of teaching methods that require high student activity levels. This is done through utilising core constructivist teaching approaches such as the problem solving and collaborative learning approach. As Echevarria (2003) explains course goals should provide realistic problems that elicit social cognition, facilitate student application of external knowledge and encourage scientific reasoning.

- Use of subjective context based assessment techniques to meet the assessment requirements of a flexible curriculum.
- Creating learning environments that are open, safe, challenging and encourage verbal activity by students.

(D). Nature of Learner-centred activities

A prerequisite of learner-centred approaches is that learners be actively engaged with learning materials. The emphasis in this view is on what students are actually doing, i.e. level of student engagement within the learning environment. The concept of student engagement is based on constructivist assumption that learning is influenced by how individuals participate in educationally purposeful activities (Coates, 2005; Kuh, 2009). Activities that engage students in learning include those promoting involvement in enriching educational experiences or working collaboratively with other students. As Prince and Felder (2006) explain, active learning must always involve students in discussing questions and solving problems with much of the work in and out of class being done by students working in groups (collaborative and cooperative learning).

Various learner-centred instructional approaches (also referred to as inductive instructional methods) can be used to engage students in learning. Common among these inductive instructional methods are inquiry, problem-based, project-based, case based, discovery and just-in-time teaching. Prince and Felder (2006) identify the following key features of these methods:

- Problems, projects and cases provide contextual learning

- Students discover course content for themselves
- Learning is self-directed
- Learning is active
- Learning is team-based (i.e. collaborative or cooperative).

For teaching using active/inductive methods to be effective, proponents of constructivism (Brunner, Vygotsky) offer the following suggestions:

- beginning instruction with content and experiences familiar with students;
- presenting new material in the context of its intended real-world application and relating it to other areas of knowledge;
- offering instruction that requires students to extrapolate materials presented by the teacher as a way of reducing dependence on the teacher as a primary source of required information; and
- providing activities where students work together in small groups.

In active learning, instructional designers need to be able to differentiate the level of activity displayed in each instructional method. Chi (2009) provides a taxonomy that offers a way to differentiate active, constructive and interactive activities and underlying learning process. The conceptualisation is based on the learning theories (cognitive, social constructivism) that view learning as an active process. Being active can be characterised as doing something while learning (often involving physical movement). A learning activity without physical movement e.g. a student watching a video is considered passive as overall, the student is doing nothing (Chi, 2009).

In constructive activities learners produce some additional output and such output often (but not always) contains new content relevant ideas that go beyond the

information given in the learning material. Being interactive can refer to several types of overt activities such as a learner talking with another person (peer, teacher, tutor), responding to a system (such as an intelligent tutoring system, an animated agent) or interacting in some physical way involving motor movements (Chi, 2009). Interactive activities involve participating in two kinds of dialogue patterns either with experts (introductory dialogue) or with peers (joint dialogues).

Within instructional dialogues, learners can be participating in guided construction activities (e.g. responding to scaffoldings hints, revise errors from corrective feedback) and within joint dialogue, learners can be participating in sequential-construction or co-construction activities (e.g. build and elaborate on a partner's contributions, argue and defend a position, criticise partner's contributions). Differentiating the overt activities can guide designers of learning environments in determining which activity they are, in fact, requiring from students (Chi, 2009).

(E). Assessment driven factors.

A key premise of learner-centred assessment is that, students are believed to have innate authentic evaluation. Learner-centred approaches require the students to have self-evaluation of their own learning. Students' evaluation of their own learning is in line with constructivist views (Huitt, 2009; Kauchak & Eggen, 2012). For these scholars, assessment practices in interactive learning are a two-way traffic involving the teacher and learner or learner and peer.

Application of the constructivist paradigm has enabled the re-examination of feedback practices (Boud, 2007; Nicol, 2010; Sadler, 2010). The re-examination has led to an increase in student participation in assessment (Boud, 2007; Nicol, 2010). As such, Nicol (2010) recommends that a dialogical process should characterise the

feedback process; with feedback inputs from the teacher and students response to the feedback both contributing to productive learning. Research (Nicol, 2010; Carless, Salter, Yang & Lam, 2011; Price, Handley & Miller, 2011) testifies that, if students are to learn from feedback they must have opportunities to construct their own meanings from received messages. Students need to do something with the feedback; such as analysing it asking questioning on it, discussing it with others, and connecting it with prior knowledge (Nicol, 2010; Carless et al., 2011; Price et al., 2011).

One way of engaging students actively with the feedback process is to implement peer review (Liu & Carless, 2006; Cartney, 2010; Nicol, 2010). Peer review is an important alternative to teacher feedback. Peer review feedback has several benefits. Research shows that students often perceive feedback from peers as more;

1. understandable and helpful because it is written in a more accessible language (Falchikov, 2005).
2. effective in closing the gap between receipt of feedback and its application (Nicol, Thomas & Breslin, 2014).

Curriculum design features must therefore, integrate opportunities for students to develop the capabilities to operate as judges of their own learning (Boud & Melloy, 2013). As Nicol, (2010) explains when peer assessment features are integrated in curriculum design the active role of students is acknowledged; enabling their conceptions of feedback to move from being mechanistic to being responsive.

(F). Interaction related factors

Active learning is not an easy instructional method to implement (Windschilt, 2002; Prince & Felder 2006). Various psycho-social, structural and socio-cultural factors can impact on student experiences of active learning. Relationships with the teacher and peers are considered critical to the learning situation. Various psycho-social influences can impact student engagement in active learning. For example, in using the various active social-based learning methods (cooperative/collaborative) teachers may face unpredictable and unfamiliar scenes of student interactions beyond their expertise.

Students also face challenges as they assume unaccustomed levels of responsibility for their learning, and are forced to adopt a new culture of learning. Hostility and resistance to use of active learning has been cited by Prince and Felder (2006) as an implementation feature of active learning. The resistance usually emerges as students deal with issues such as project management and interpersonal conflicts, which commonly occur when students work in groups (Prince & Felder, 2006). Other interaction related factors identified by Mendoca and Popov (2014), included, hierarchical interpersonal relationships, authoritative teaching traditions, and a low dialogical learning environment.

(G). Nature of the academic discipline

The nature of the academic discipline is supposed to influence the kind of thinking strategies students use to learn (Vermunt, 2005). Different disciplines pose different demands on the way subject matter can best be studied and would therefore, lead to use of different strategies to reach understanding of the subject matter. Beaten et al., (2010) reiterate that it's not only the didactic elements in a course but also the nature

of content and subject of the course which influences use of learner-centred approaches. Research by Kember, Leung and McNaught (2000) concluded that the teaching and learning environment in subjects within the art and social sciences was more conducive to the use of learner-centred approaches than to science and economics disciplines.

2.3.1.3.2 Factors from the institutional context.

(A). Institutional teaching and learning policies

Implementation of different courses within an institution/university setting is regulated through university, faculty and department regulations. Course outlines are developed for each course using guidelines provided by the institution's Teaching and Learning unit. Quality assurance units established in different institutions/universities develop policy documents to guide teaching and learning with the faculty and departments having the mandate to ensure compliance to set standards. Such institutional policies impact on the extent of the use of learner-centred approaches because from them is drawn the educational philosophy underpinning all teaching and learning activities.

The presence of an institutional policy guiding the implementation of an innovative practice such as the use of learner-centred approaches to learning is documented in research as an essential element to developing and sustaining such practice. Research which has examined strategies utilised by institutions that have demonstrated success in implementing innovative practices (Kotter, 2012; Kezar, 2014; Brown & Kurzweil, 2016) cites commitment to a student-centred mission as one of the strategies that is used. As Brown and Kurzweil (2016) argue, statements prioritising a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning, and concrete plans

for operationalising the goal, are the foundation of successful efforts to change institutional culture and practice.

(B). Structural factors

Several structural factors that influence the organisation of teaching and learning have been identified as impeding the use of learner-centred approaches, in literature. The impact of these contextual constraints is usually felt most in teacher education institutions in non-western countries where resources are limited. Institutional barriers, e.g. schedules and university rules (Tawalbeh & Al Asmari, 2015); inadequate resources e.g. library and internet facilities (Gyamtsso & Maxwell, 2012); examination system and material infrastructure (Vavrus, 2009); limited physical facilities such as laboratory equipment (Mendoca & Popov 2014) are a few of the structural factors that influence the use of learner-centred approaches that were identified through empirical studies.

(C). Institutional culture

Several studies point to school culture as an important contextual factor. As Anguinus and Roth (2005) comment, culture influences key issues when considering innovation and change. For example, a study by Ravitz (2010) and one by Zeiser, Taylor, Rickles, Garet and Segeritz (2014) suggests the importance of a supportive school culture that aligns with the learner-centred approach. Their research makes it clear that a supportive school culture facilitates effective implementation of learner-centred methods of instruction. Through the use of socio-cultural constructivist perspectives a number of researchers such as Mansour (2008), have been able to unpack the interrelated cultural influences that can impact use of learner-centred approaches.

(D). Technology

Another aspect in the learning environment that is an important factor to the use of learner-centred approaches is technology; though its integration poses challenges. As an example, integration of technology maximises learning in learner-centred approaches such as individualised and independent learning, (Krajcik & Shin, 2014). Other merits of technology include; changing the learning environment from a teacher-centred to a more student centred environment; permitting students to have more control over content and creating a more collaborative learning environment.

2.3.2 Learner-centred approaches.

Discussion of learner-centred approaches focused on how the concept is conceptualised and the characteristic features of learner-centred approaches.

2.3.2.1 Conceptualisation of learner-centred approaches.

Conceptions or understandings of learner-centred approaches are an important factor that influences teacher's practice. Conceptualisations of the learner centred approach available in literature are varied. Msonde (2011) classifies understanding of learner-centred approaches into four orientations namely; methodological, curriculum, power relations and object of learning orientation.

Scholars who view learner-centred approaches from a methodological perspective tend to emphasise certain teaching and learning methods, and enforcement of participatory methodologies (Msonde, 2011). Different frameworks have thus been generated to act as guidelines in implementation of learner-centred approaches. For example, the University of Glasgow (2004) identified a set of teaching and learning methods relevant to learner-centred approaches which can be applied in and outside

the lecture format. Strategies such as group discussions, debates, peer mentoring and use of portfolios could be used outside of a lecture. Methods recommended for use alongside a lecture included buzz groups, quizzes, poster presentations. The view of learner-centred approaches from a methodological orientation is based on the premise that increase in student participation with less talk from the teacher would enhance student learning. Teaching methods that have learner involvement in the teaching and learning process would therefore, be considered as having greater potential for fostering learner-centred approaches (Mushi, 2004).

The methodological orientation is usually criticized for: (1) offering instructional/curricula prescriptions that cause high teacher dependency certain instructional methods. (Watanabe, 2008; Olesen & Sexton 2009); and (2) creating the assumption that active participation by learner guarantees their learning (Msonde, 2011).

A view of learner-centred approaches from a curriculum orientation is driven by the humanistic philosophers (such as Carl Rodgers), who believe learning is facilitated when students participate in the learning process (Huitt, 2009). One of the basic principles of the humanistic approach to education is that students learn best what they want and need to know (Gage & Berliner, 1991). The teacher within the humanistic perspective is therefore, expected to allow students to have a choice in the selection of learning tasks, activities and content (Huitt, 2009). Individual needs and interests are emphasized in the humanistic learning theory. A learner-centred approach based on a curriculum orientation would have a curriculum that is student-needs oriented, in setting learning and assessment activities (Msonde, 2011). Arends et al. (2011) argue that when implementing learner-centred approach from this perspective, a student should be allowed to select and organise content to be

taught as they believe this allows the student to learn the content of his needs or interests.

The second basic principle in the humanistic approach to education guiding the curriculum oriented perspective is that self-evaluation is the only meaningful evaluation of a student's work (Gage & Berliner, 1991). Based on this principle humanist insist that teachers should allow students to make decisions on how learning should be assessed (O'Neill et al. 2005; Yilmaz, 2009; Alexander et al. 2010). Explaining the essence of student-needs oriented curriculum Mushi (2005), argues that;

“Students should be actively engaged in educational needs analysis, formulation of learning objectives, course development, teaching and learning process as well as in assessment of learning outcomes” (Mushi, 2005, p.35).

The student-needs oriented curriculum has its major drawback where the teacher has to cater for every need in the classroom. As Edwards (2001) argues, learners have multiple needs and interests. A teacher would therefore, find it difficult to handle such variations in a classroom situation (Edwards, 2001; Msonde, 2011).

For teaching and learning to be considered learner-centred, a key change to practice involves changes in the balance of power towards the learner (Weimer 2002; Bart, 2011). According to Msonde (2011), the power-relation orientation emerges from critical and feminist pedagogy where power relations in the classroom are viewed as not equitably distributed. Advocates of the learner-centred approaches from a power-relation orientation recommend participatory active teaching methods, where the student's involvement in learning is higher than that of the teacher. The learning environment recommended as ideal for nurturing such practices is the one where

students have freedom, power and responsibility for their learning (Huitt, 2009). As Weimer (2002) argues, the locus of the learning process is shifted from the teacher to the learner, and this shift overtly signifies an altered power relationship (Weimer, 2002; Huitt, 2009).

The fourth and final categorisation of conception of learner-centred approaches generated by Msonde (2011) is the understanding of learner-centred approaches in terms of the object of learning orientation. This is an orientation based on an understanding of learner-centred approaches in terms of *what the student is expected to learn* i.e. the object of learning (Msonde 2011). The implication of this is that, what matters most in teaching are the capabilities students are expected to develop during the teaching and learning process (Marton & Lo, 2007; Marton & Pang, 2008; Msonde, 2009). Morton and Pang (2008) identify both direct and indirect objects of learning. Content of a course, knowledge co-generated by the learner and teacher or by learner and learner, are the direct objects of learning. Skills (investigative, reflective, cognitive, communication, collaborative) and attitudes gained as students engage content are the indirect objects of learning (Marton & Pang, 2008, Msonde; 2009). The focus on the object of learning orientation is on the content being studied, and the capabilities a student is expected to develop as they learn the content (Msonde, 2011).

Conceptions or understandings of learner-centred approaches have also been examined through empirical study. Through an interpretive and constructivist qualitative case study, Mtitu (2014) examined how nine Tanzanian teachers conceptualised learner-centred instruction. The findings showed that the teachers had varied understanding of learner-centred instruction. Despite the differences in

understanding they all presented an idea of students actively taking part in the teaching and learning process.

The variations in perceptions included a view of learner-centred approaches as a westernised teaching approach which instils a culture of disrespect in students. Learner-centred approaches were also understood as an instructional approach that transfers authority and power from teachers to students. Learner-centred approaches were also conceived as practices where students create knowledge through different classroom activities which allowed them to share their existing experiences. The research concluded that teacher pedagogical decision making and practice was limited by the teachers' understanding of learner-centred teaching.

2.3.2.1.1 Characteristics of Learner-centred instruction.

Characteristics of learner-centred approaches are vividly expressed when contrasted against teacher-centred approaches. Weimer (2002), in her seminal work, presented a classic characterisation of learner-centred approaches where she contrasts five key aspects of teacher centred and learner-centred approaches. The differences between the two approaches are identified in terms of; the goal of student activity, role of the teacher, student's motivational orientation, assessment, and student interaction.

In the contrast of the two approaches, Weimer (2002) suggests that the goal of student activity in teacher-centred approaches is meeting goals set by the teacher, whilst providing an answer to a central question is the goal of student activity in learner-centred approaches. In contrasting the role of the teacher, design of the

instructional process is the key role in teacher-centred approaches, with the key teacher role being facilitating learning in the learner-centred approach.

With regard to motivation, teacher-centred approaches depend on extrinsic motivators such as grades and degrees to facilitate learning. However, in learner-centred approaches, students are driven by the goals they set for themselves (Weimer, 2002). Assessment in teacher-centred approaches is more objective, in contrast to learner-centred approaches where there is use of more open-ended methods where students are involved in the assessment process. Weimer (2002) also differentiates nature of student interaction, where in teacher-centred approaches interaction is basically under teacher control, whilst self-governance of interaction through collaborative learning is emphasised in learner-centred approaches.

Nzilano (2015) presents a more comprehensive dichotomised characterisation of learner-centred versus teacher-centred instruction than the one provided by Weimer (2002) which incorporates differences regarding content, focus, teacher education approach and technology use.

Table 2-1: Characterisation of learner-centred approaches

DOMAIN	TEACHER-CENTRED	LEARNER-CENTRED
General Approach	Fixed roles, guided by directives and technical rationality.	Guided by construction of knowledge and flexible roles.
Goal and objective	Defined by the teacher	Derived from learner or negotiated by the teacher and learner.
Task ownership	Teacher-centred and low voice of student (didactic)	Learner-centred and high voice of student (dialectical/interactive)
Content focus	Discipline-based on textbooks	Interdisciplinary-based social interaction, internet based sources.
Assessment focus	A product of the teaching, based on command, control and norm referenced	Authentic, interwoven with learning process and criterion referenced.
Education of teachers	Developing acquisition of skills and techniques	Linking theory and action, developing reflective and diagnostic skills.
Teacher responsibility	To instruct or transmit knowledge to students	To promote student learning by promoting opportunities for direct integration with knowledge
Technology use	Drill and practice	Communication, expression, collaboration and information access.

Source: Shifts in teaching perspective from transmission to constructivism. (Nzilano, 2015).

2.3.2.1.2 Strategies to support and sustain the use of learner-centred approaches

Learner-centred approaches encompass a shift to the use of constructivist principles of teaching and learning. Literature (Aliusta & Ozer, 2016) stresses that the shift to a student-centred learning approach is a complex process as it requires teacher educators to acquire new knowledge and skills and unlearn previous beliefs and practices so as to adopt new roles. Two strategies that can be used to support and sustain the use of learner-centred approaches include professional development and use of 'Communities of Practice'.

Professional development is one strategy that can be used to improve the teaching practice, knowledge and skills of teacher educators (Mizell, 2010; Helleve, 2010; Pitsoe & Maile, 2012). Professional development is viewed in literature (Fullan, 2006; Elmore, 2007; Mizell, 2010; Helleve, 2010; Pitsoe & Maile, 2012) as the most effective strategy to use to enable practising teachers to change their classroom practice. According to Fullan (2006) and Elmore (2007), the focus of the professional development should be on engaging teacher educators in critical reflection, collaboration and inquiry and action research. Engaging with these learning strategies will enable the teacher to adopt new knowledge, skills and beliefs about teaching and learning (Fullan, 2006; Elmore, 2007; Hossain, 2010; Pitsoe & Maile, 2012). The professional development model recommended in literature (Darling-Hammond, 2006) is one that calls for extensive practice, intensive supervision and expert modelling coupled with the use of reflective methods. The use of such a model ensures that teachers can translate new theories about learning into practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Professional development that is offered through

disconnected seminars that do not link theory to practice is not recommended in research (Korthagen, 2011; Anderson & Freebody, 2012).

The second strategy recommended in literature to support and sustain the use of learner-centred approaches is using 'Communities of Practice'. Communities of Practice relate to collective learning in a shared domain of human activity (Kimble, 2008; Wenger, 2014). As Wenger (2014) elaborates, Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a common concern for something in their practice and learn to improve their performance through regular interactions.

Using Communities of Practice as a collective learning strategy is recognised in literature as the 'best practice' procedure as it takes cognisance of the complexity of practice and integrates in its strategy, different learning theories such as experiential learning, connectivism and social constructivism (Bates, 2014). Communities of Practice offer participants opportunities for collaboration, dialogue, mutual active engagement, and reflection; as they share a common concern for something in their practice (Jimenez-Silva & Olson, 2012; Wenger, 2014; McCloughlin, 2017).

2.4 Empirical studies on contextual factors influencing use of Learner-centred Approaches (Instruction) in Higher Education

Several studies (Edwards & Thatcher, 2004; Kinchin, De-Leij & Hay 2005; Montgomery, 2008) have demonstrated the growth of interest in student-centred learning in higher education discourse. They have led to the application of various learner-centred techniques in specific areas of practice. Although disciplines such as English as a second language, Engineering and Science have done well, Home Economics seems to be lagging behind. In Higher Education in Zimbabwe, there is

limited research on the use of student/learner-centred approaches in teaching of university courses.

Matika and Gates (2011) examined factors that influenced the appropriation and application (or lack) of learner-centred education among student teachers in a university teacher education programme in Malawi. In particular, they focused on how individual and systemic dimensions within the teacher education setting mediated students' thinking about learner-centred education. To investigate how trainee teachers utilized learner-centred education during their classroom pedagogical practice, Matika and Gates (2011) used observational, journaling and interview data from four student teachers who had been purposively selected to participate in the qualitative case study.

The researchers found that there were various inter-related influences to appropriation and application of learner-centred education by the student teachers during their teaching practice. Though the student teachers exhibited varying degrees of appropriation and application of the approach, they were generally affected by such factors as the teacher education system, student teacher personal stance, pedagogical and learner culture, classroom structures, and the national curriculum; in their endeavour to use learner-centred approaches during their teaching practice sessions. The study's findings, thus suggested that appropriation and application of learner centred education was constrained by various individual and contextual factors. These findings were in sync with Mendoca and Popov's (2014) findings which showed that application of learner-centred approaches is inhibited by various context based factors. Various researchers (O'Sullivan, 2006; Vavrus, 2009 and Matika & Gates, 2011) note that due to such constraints, there has

not been much widespread change in classroom practice with regard to use of learner-centred approaches in Southern Africa.

Using an ethnographic study involving four participants, Vavrus (2009) explored how one teachers' college in Tanzania sought to infuse social constructivism into its curriculum through the design of student-centred learning environment and the use of active inquiry based methods. The researcher was interested in establishing two issues: first; how the student teachers negotiated the professional expectation of them as models of the new approach given their previous experiences as student in the formalistic teaching environments, and second; how the academic staff with different schooling experiences responded to the college's effort to change practice. The study's findings showed that the student teachers' efforts to model the approach in teaching and efforts to institute a paradigm shift from formalistic to a constructivist orientation to teaching and learning were influenced by the examination system and material infrastructure. An additional factor that emerged from the study was the length and quality of teacher education programmes which limited the likelihood of a shift from formalism to constructivism. As Vavrus (2009), noted graduates of short crash courses or distance learning were likely to grasp some of the methods, such as brainstorming or group work but were unlikely to make deep seated changes in their practice as the constructivist philosophy runs counter to their own educational experiences.

In another study that considered instructors' perceptions and barriers to implementation of learner-centred instruction at a university in Saudi Arabia, Tawalbeh and Al Asmari (2015) identified nine context-based factors that hindered the use of the approach. Using survey data from one hundred and forty-four

instructors, the study revealed the following factors as barriers to the application of learner-centred approaches: insufficient time, inflexible seating arrangement, lack of knowledge about learner-centred instruction, institutional barriers (schedules, university rules), student negative attitudes towards learner-centred approaches, unsupportive subject culture (institutionalised practices and expectations), crowded classes, lack of experience with learner-centred instruction in previous educational stages, and subjects lending themselves to teacher-centred instruction. While these factors were identified through factor analysis, Tawalbeh and Al Asmari (2015) did not investigate further to obtain a deeper understanding of how the different factors influenced implementation of learner-centred instruction.

Lastly, in a pilot study conducted in a university in Bhutan which intended to highlight the practices and culture of teaching and learning, Gyamtso and Maxwell (2012) examined factors that facilitate or impede the use of learner-centred instructional practices. The study, based on constructivist principles and using a case study design, utilized multiple methods to elicit responses from eight academics, two hundred and twenty-two students and five administrators. The study established that approaches to teaching and learning varied with some being teacher-centred and others more learner-centred. With regards to factors that impede teaching and learning practice, four factors were identified namely; the historical-cultural context (where learning has traditionally been influenced by monastic education), inadequate resources (library and internet facilities), insufficient academic staff knowledge and experiences with learner-centred practices.

Looking across the findings of the four studies, there is evidence that the use of learner-centred approaches in non-western contexts may be related to teacher and

contextual factors. Resonating with all the studies were issues regarding structural, social, cultural and pedagogical factors in the application of learner-centred approaches/education. There is evidence from the studies that several factors influence the use of the learner-centred approaches. Though all the studies described the features of these factors, a deeper discussion of how they influence the application of learner-centred approaches was not extensively done, hence the present study.

2.5 Review of literature based on the research questions.

This section briefly reviews literature based on the research questions raised in the study, to see what is known and not known about the questions. This helps to further see the gaps in knowledge that the present study sought to fill.

2.5.1. The first research question wanted to find out how the in-service student teachers' and lecturers' conceptions of learner-centred approaches influenced the use of the approaches in Home Economics? There are varied definitions offered in literature regarding the term conceptions. The definition by Pratt (1992) a notable researcher in the field, is the most illuminating. He defines conceptions as

“specific meanings attached to phenomena that mediate our response to situations involving those phenomena” (Pratt, 1992, p.2004).

Conceptions are formed for virtually every aspect of our perceived world, and these abstract representations are used to delimit something from and relate it to other aspects of our world (Pratt, 1992)

What is already known in literature is that, conceptions of teaching are generally categorised into three groups; two contrasting conceptions the teacher-centred and

learner-centred and an in-between conception known as the intermediate transitional conception. Other terms that have been applied to the two contrasting conceptions are the “traditional view” and the “constructivist view” (Cheng, Chan, Tang & Chen, 2009; Aypay, 2011). From this has emerged the dichotomised characterisation of learner-centred versus teacher-centred approaches.

The second thing that is known is that conceptions or understanding of learner-centred approaches are an important factor that influences teachers’ practice. Mtitu (2014), who examined how nine Tanzanian teachers conceptualised learner-centred instruction, found out that teacher pedagogical decision making and practice was limited by the teachers’ understanding of learner-centred teaching.

Third, conceptions of learner-centred approaches varied depending on orientation. Msonde (2011) classified understanding of learner-centred approaches into four orientations namely; methodological, curriculum, power relations and object of learning orientation. The object of learning orientation is considered as the most appropriate orientation to support use of learner-centred approaches. Mtitu’s (2010) research study showed that the teachers generally had varied understanding/conceptions of learner-centred instruction, which included a view of it as a westernised teaching approach which instils a culture of disrespect in students, and as an instructional approach that transfers authority and power from the teacher to students. Learner-centred approaches were also conceived as methods where students created knowledge through different classroom activities which allowed them to share their existing experiences. Lastly, what is already known through literature and empirical study is that, conceptions can be reoriented if teacher

educators work in a community that supports a new conception of teaching and learning, and the changes in practice that concretise it (Somekh, 2008).

What is not known is whether students and lecturers have the appropriate conception of learner-centred approaches necessary for teaching of Home Economics. It is also not known whether lecturers are making efforts to re-orient their relationship with students as per the 'new conceptions of learners characterised in learner-centred approaches.

2.5.2. The second research question sought to find out how aspects viewed in this study as being located within the subject context i.e. the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices influence the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics? What is already known about the curriculum is, first; that the curriculum must be appropriate for use of learner-centred approaches. Zhu et al. (2011) consider a curriculum for learner-centred approaches suitable if it emphasises two aspects; the context in which learning is taking place, and guidance for the teacher to construct learning tasks that use learner experiences in the large context.

Second, that the curriculum be a 'good fit' with existing practice (Somekh, 2008). Implementation of innovative curriculum works best if it fits with long established processes. For example, learner-centred approaches utilising technology are easier to implement in subjects such as Business Studies or Computer Science which have their roots in learning office practices such as typing. In subjects such as Science or Home Economics, learner-centred approaches utilising technology are usually not a good fit with the long established pedagogic process of imparting conceptual

knowledge through exposition from the chalkboard and procedural knowledge through demonstrations and laboratory experiences.

Third, research on constructivist curriculum implementation has identifies the curriculum delivery contexts as one of the factors that influence implementation (Fraser-Thomas & Beaudion, 2002). Within the curriculum delivery context, institutional or organisational factors are the main category of factors within school context that hinder or facilitate curricular implementation. Zhu et al., (2011) identified institutional factors such as a pedagogical restrictive context (lack of dedicated instructional space, instructional equipment and materials due to marginal status of subject in school) scheduling conflicts, and lack of support as key contextual constraints to implementation of innovative constructivist curriculum.

What is not known, are the current levels of flexibility in the design of course content, levels of student engagement and how these aspects influence the appropriation of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics. In addition, what is not known are the practices that facilitate a 'good fit' of the constructivist curriculum. It is also not known whether these practices are being taken advantage of in the teaching Home Economics courses, and how their use or non-use is influencing appropriation of learner-centred approaches in the subject area. Research on curriculum delivery has generally identified contextual constraints influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in different subject areas. Though it is ideal for this study to confirm existence of such constraints in Home Economics teacher development programmes, what is not known are the contextual factors that enhance the use of learner-centred approaches in the subject area.

The second dimension of this research objective which the study sought to establish was how the nature of learning activities influenced the use of learner-centred approaches. What is already known in literature concerning this aspect is that, learner-centred approaches require the use of learning activities that actively engage learners with learning materials. The emphasis is on what students are actually doing, i.e. the level of student engagement within the learning environment. The concept of student engagement is based on constructivist assumption that learning is influenced by how individuals participate in educationally purposeful activities (Coates 2005; Kuh 2009). Activities that engage students in learning should have components of enriching educational experiences or working collaboratively with other students.

The second aspect which is already known in literature is that, the level of interactivity in a learning activity influences the educational usefulness of individual and social-based learning approaches. Thus; various models of differentiating overt activities in analysis of a learning environment exist in literature. Chi (2009) provides one such model through a taxonomy that offers a way to differentiate active, constructive and interactive activities. The conceptualisation is based on the learning theories (cognitive, social constructivism) that view learning as an active process.

The third aspect which is already known in literature is that, various psycho-social and socio-cultural factors can impact student experiences of active learning and teacher use of these approaches. For example, in using the various active social-based learning methods (cooperative/collaborative), teacher educators and students may face challenges in dealing with demands of a new culture of learning (Prince & Felder, 2006).

What is not known with regard to nature of learning activities, which this research study seeks to address, is the pattern of interactivity present in learning activities used in Home Economics courses and the contextual factors that facilitate or inhibit design and use of constructive and interactive learning activities. How these two aspects influence use of learner-centred approaches is not known as well.

The third dimension of this research objective which the study sought to know was how assessment practices influence the use of learner-centred approaches. What is already known in literature is that traditional assessment approaches do not support use of learner-centred approaches. Learner-centred approaches require the students to have self-evaluation of their own learning and this is in line with constructivist views (Huitt, 2000; Kauchak & Eggen, 2007). The second aspect already known in literature is that new assessment frameworks can only be created through a systemic change and co-construction of a new understanding of assessment (Krumskiv, 2006). What is not known with regard to this study, in relation to assessment practices, is whether assessment instruments have been re-conceptualised and how inhibitive and facilitative factors have influenced the creation of a new assessment framework.

2.5.3. The third research objective sought to find out how the faculty and university-wide policies and practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics? What is already known concerning the influence of institutional policies and practices is that, institutional support of transformative pedagogies is vital, and this occurs through policy directives that call for integration of learner-centred approaches across the whole university curriculum. The impact of such institutional action is that it influences the way programmes/courses are

structured and also leads to re-organisation of the learning environment. The second aspect already known is that the teacher education system has significant implications for the development and sustainability of learner-centred approaches in university teacher education programmes (Matika & Gates, 2010). Too much focus on teacher-centred approaches and resistance to shifting from teacher-centred to learner-centred approaches limits the likelihood of full appropriation of constructivist pedagogies in teacher education programmes (Vavrus, 2009). Recommendations have thus, been made for systemic changes which emanate from the institutional academic boards, right up to the lecture-room where issues regarding the institutional educational philosophy and practises are analysed and reconceptualised. What is not known with regard to this study is the way the system (in the two universities under study) has changed to support the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics, as well as how wide-spread these changes are, and the influence they have had on the appropriation of learner-centred approaches in the subject area.

2.5.4. The fourth research objective sought to find out lecturers' views on the kind of support that was likely to influence sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics? What is already known with regards to sustained use of transformative pedagogies is that, strong support from leadership and a community of peers is vital to the sustenance of learner-centred approaches in an educational programme. Teacher educators need to work in a community and with leadership which supports; a new conception of the learner, and team work as well as providing tools that enable learners to control their learning (Somekh, 2008).

What is also known is that, structural changes are critical to adoption of learner-centred approaches. Material infrastructure, technology, and course scheduling can limit the likelihood of transition from teacher-centred to a constructivist (learner-centred) teaching approaches. These contextual constraints (established from views of students and teacher educators as well as through direct observation of the learning environment) have been identified as common influences on efforts to implement learner-centred pedagogies in teacher education programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chisholm & Leyenderker, 2008; Matika & Gates, 2010; Vavrus et al., 2011).

The third aspect already known from literature is that appropriation of learner-centred approaches is sustained through integration of action research in teaching and adoption of research-based pedagogic innovations. Use of action research provides teacher educators with opportunities for situated learning, (Somekh, 2008). This is vital as it enables teacher educators' active learning and affords them opportunities to try out different learner-centred teaching strategies and evaluate outcomes on the basis of evidence. Research-based pedagogic innovations have the potential to build change in social practice, which is informed by the practical power of theoretical knowledge, (Somekh, 2008). This however, requires a holistic strategy that focuses on: 1) initial training of participants to equip them with relevant planning, facilitation and assessment skills; 2) practice; and 3) continuous support to ensure change in teacher practice. What is not known which actuates this study, is whether the support sought by the lecturers is in line with practices recommended in literature. If it is not, what type of support framework can be developed as a result of the research study being undertaken?

What is known and not known about the research questions has been explored through this literature review. The gaps in knowledge that the present study fills have also been identified which justifies this study.

2.6 Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study. Two theoretical frameworks; the socio-cultural and cultural-historical activity theories provided a complementary foundation for this study. The socio-cultural approach created a context for the analysis of the nature of classroom practice and reforms in teaching and learning while the cultural-historical activity theory provided an analytic framework to analyse and interpret influences of contextual factors on decisions to use learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics. The literature established that there is a relationship between teacher practice and context; suggesting that the social, institutional, instructional and physical contexts in which teachers operate have a major impact on their practice. Though several conceptual models for studying contextual factors that influence classroom practices exist in literature, those that offer a multi-level analysis were the most appropriate to apply within the context of this study.

Four empirical studies explored contextual factors related to the use of learner-centred approaches. Resonating with the four studies were issues regarding structural, social, cultural and pedagogical factors in the application of learner-centred approaches/education. What is known and not known about the research questions was explored through the literature review. The gaps in knowledge that the present study aims to fill were identified, which justified undertaking this study.

The next chapter discusses the methodology that was used to examine contextual factors that influence use of learner-centred approaches in B.Ed. Home Economics programmes. The philosophical assumptions and design strategies underpinning this research study are presented.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions and design strategies underpinning this research study. The section commences with a review of common philosophical assumptions about what constitutes valid research and the research methods appropriate for the development of knowledge in a given study. In addition, discussed in this chapter is the research methodology and design used in the study; that is the research paradigm, research approach, instruments, data collection and analysis methods, and ethical considerations. A diagrammatic representation of the research methodology, as used in this study is given before the chapter ends with a summary.

3.2 Research paradigm

The term paradigm has been defined differently by various scholars. Bogdan and Biklen (2008), define a paradigm as a collection of logically-related assumptions, concepts and propositions that orient research. Creswell (2014) sees a paradigm as relating to epistemology, ontology or even research methodology. A research paradigm is critical in a study as it sets the intent, motivation and expectation for research, (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2015). As Perren and Ram (2004) point out, positioning a research study in a specific paradigm enables researchers to reflect on the ontological and epistemological consequences of their perspective.

The two overarching research paradigms commonly cited in literature are the positivistic and post-positivistic paradigms. The positivistic paradigm is usually used

in the natural sciences whilst the post-positivist paradigm is used in the human and social science. These paradigms form different ways in which researchers understand social reality and the nature of knowledge and shape a researcher's approach to research (Creswell, 2014). While the present study used the post-positivistic paradigm comprising the interpretive/constructivist methodology, the positivistic paradigm was described briefly in order to see why it was not suitable for this study.

3.2.1 Positivism

The core idea of positivism holds that genuine knowledge is based on sense experience and can be measured by means of observation and experiments (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Thus positivism maintains that the scientist objectively observes natural and social phenomenon from outside, and establishes uniform causal links between elements of the phenomenon (Mack, 2010).

The ontological position of positivism is one of realism. Realism is the view that objects have an existence independent of the knower (Cohen et al., 2007). The ontological assumptions of positivism are that there is a single objective reality which is external to the researcher; and that this reality can be captured by the senses and predictable (Cohen et al., 2007; Mack, 2010; McGregor & Murnane, 2010). In conducting research, positivist researchers take a controlled structural approach, of identifying a clear research topic, constructing appropriate hypotheses, and adopting a suitable scientific methodology (Cohen et al., 2007; Mack, 2010).

The positivist epistemology is one of objectivism. Positivists view knowledge as emerging from a set of indisputable truths, which are objective and deduced deductively from a theory or hypothesis, (Cohen et al., 2007; Mack, 2010). Thus,

through scientific observation and empirical inquiry it is possible to obtain hard, secure objective knowledge (Cohen et al., 2007; Mack, 2010). Objectivity is therefore important in positivist research. This is achieved through use of consistent, rational and logical approaches coupled with statistical and mathematical techniques to uncover this objective reality. In addition, neutrality and clear distinctions between fact and value judgements are viewed as critical to attaining objectivity in research.

Positivist methodology is directed at generating description, predictions and explanation of phenomenon with the ultimate goal of making time and context free generalisations (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2009). Formalised statistical and mathematical methods are the predominant techniques used by the researcher to ensure intellectual rigor ('truthfulness', 'validity' and 'legitimacy') of inferences and conclusions drawn from analysis of research results (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2009). Results generated from the research study (since the researcher is considered an expert) can be used to legitimise prescriptive policies and control measures (McGregor & Murnane, 2010).

3.2.2 Post-positivism

Post-positivism emerged from a movement that did not accept positivism as the only way to view reality (McGregor & Murnane, 2010). Post-positivism assumes that there are other ways to view reality aside from using scientific methods. Researchers who adopt a post-positivistic paradigm do not seek to test hypotheses but generate their hypotheses through inductive reasoning. Instead of generating explanations of how something operates, the post-positivistic paradigm strives to understand human behaviour and to reveal power relationships and structures (McGregor & Murnane, 2010). Research within the post-positivistic paradigm is viewed as value-laden and

subjective. Within the paradigm research occurs in natural rather than experimental settings. Post-positivism encompasses the interpretive and critical methodologies. The description of the interpretive paradigm given below shows why it was the most appropriate one for the present study.

3.2.2.1 Interpretivism/constructivism

Interpretivism is also referred to as constructivism because of its emphasis on the ability of individuals to construct meaning (Mack, 2010). The 'meaning making process' (hermeneutics) and the need to consider human beings' subjective interpretations and perceptions in understanding social phenomena (phenomenology) are the basis on which interpretivist paradigm was established (Mack, 2010).

In their main tenet, interpretivists dispel the positivist notion that phenomenon can objectively be observed from outside. Rather, they argue that phenomenon particularly that which is social in nature, must be observed from the inside through direct experiences of the people (Mack, 2010). Furthermore, they point out that uniform causal links that can be established in natural sciences are difficult to determine in settings where there is likely to be co-construction of meaning of a phenomenon e.g. in educational settings (Mack, 2010).

The ontological position of interpretivism is relativism. The ontological assumption of interpretivism is that there are multiple subjective realities, and social reality is seen by multiple people who interpret events, differently thereby generating multiple perspectives of an incident (Lincoln & Guba, 2007; Mack, 2010). In addition, interpretivists believe that people interpret and make their own meaning of events thereby events distinctive and impossible to generalise (Lincoln & Guba, 2007;

Mack, 2010). In conducting research, interpretivists adopt more personal and flexible structures which are receptive to capturing human experiences and making sense of what is perceived as reality (Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 2013).

The interpretive epistemology is one of subjectivism which is based on real world phenomenon (Scotland, 2012). Epistemological assumptions of the interpretivist paradigm include the belief that valid knowledge is the one gained through a strategy that respects the differences between people and aims to establish the subjective meaning of social action i.e. seeking understanding of events through perceived knowledge (Mack, 2010). In addition, interpretivists view knowledge as stemming from a particular situation, that is to say as being contextual and being gained inductively through personal experience with the aim of creating a theory (Mack, 2010).

Interpretivist methodology seeks to understand and interpret social reality through the eyes of different participants (Cohen et al., 2007; McGregor & Murnane, 2010). As Neuman (2000) explains, it is important for the interpretivist researcher to understand motives, meanings, reasons and other time and context bound subjective experiences in order to effectively interpret social reality. The goal of interpretivist research is to understand and interpret human behaviour rather than to generalise and predict causes and effects (McGregor & Murnane, 2010). In designing the study, the researcher ensures that dialogue occurs with and among participants. Methods include *case studies* (in-depth study of events and processes over time), *phenomenology* (the study of direct experiences without interference from pre-conceptions), *hermeneutics* (deriving meaning hidden in language) and *ethnography* (the study of cultural groups over a period of time) (Scotland, 2012).

The axiological position of interpretivists is that research should not be value free and unbiased. Rather, it should be value laden and subjective (McGregor & Murnane, 2010). This is based on the belief that neither the researcher nor participants can remain neutral during the research process as research occurs in specific cultural, social and historical context. Within this paradigm research occurs in natural rather than experimental settings, and there is no control of subjects but participants collaborate in the research process. Results in interpretive research are used to gain better understanding of the lived experiences of a group of people or community where the new insights gained are used to inform change processes (McGregor & Murnane, 2010).

Four key assumptions linked to the interpretive/constructivist paradigm underpinning this study are that: First; reality consists of subjective experiences of the external world, and is socially-constructed (Mertens, 2005). Access to this reality is through social construction by means of language, consciousness and shared meaning (Myers, 2013). In addition, there are multiple realities, where meanings are varied and multiple (Creswell, 2014). Second; humans experience and make sense of their world while situated in their historical, social and cultural contexts (Creswell, 2014.)

Third; in the research process, the enquirer and the enquired into are interlocked in an interactive process; each influencing the other (Mertens, 2009). Researchers acknowledge that their own experiences shape their interpretations (Creswell, 2014) and as a result, values in interpretivist/constructivist research are made explicit (Guba & Lincoln, 2007). Fourth; approaches to systematic inquiry are primarily qualitative, being hermeneutical (seeking interpretations of meanings) or phenomenological (describing individuals' experience of a phenomenon) in nature, (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Based on the assumptions identified above, the intention of the interpretivist/constructivist approach to research is understanding of the world through the perceptions and experiences of participants. This enables researchers to use these experiences to construct and interpret understanding from data gathered (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Interpretivist researchers also focus on the specific context in which the construction of meaning of a situation or phenomenon occurs (Creswell, 2014). Owing to the fact that there is an interactive link between the researcher and participant in the research process, the interpretivist researcher selects more interactive methods of data collection, (Guba & Lincoln, 2007). Interpretation made by the researcher can be from a phenomenological or hermeneutical perspective.

The purpose of this study was to understand and interpret students' and lecturers' perspectives on the contextual factors that influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in courses they were undertaking in the B.Ed. Home Economics programme. Inherent in this exploration was an understanding of how socio-cultural, institutional and structural influences impacted the successful use of learner-centred approaches as students engaged with these approaches during their study.

There are four reasons why the interpretive/constructivist paradigm was appropriate for this study. First, the study sought to understand and interpret students' and lecturers' views of social, cultural and institutional factors that influenced teaching and learning as they engage in using learner-centred approaches. The interpretive paradigm gave the researcher scope to address issues of influence and to ask questions such as 'how'. In addition, it enabled the researcher to understand the context and processes whereby transformative pedagogies (learner-centred

approaches) were influenced by context. The second reason why the interpretive/constructivist paradigm is appropriate for this study is that there are multiple perspectives (from the different participants; that is the students and lecturers) of the nature of influences to be understood. The researcher needed to know that the students and lecturers would have varied knowledge, views, interpretations and experiences. In addition, the researcher sought to understand influences of contextual factors through the subjective experiences and meanings assigned to these influences by students and lecturers.

Third, the participants affected by the influences were situated in a historical and cultural context, (the lecture room, faculty and university environment) which impacted on how they successfully used learner-centred approaches. Fourth, the understanding generated from data gathered through interactive methods revealed underlying patterns which provided insights into facilitative and inhibitive influences to successful use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics teacher development programmes.

3.2.3 Research approach

The world view or paradigm determines an appropriate research approach for a study. The research approach is a '*strategy of enquiry*' which moves from an underlying assumption to research design and data collection, (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Myers, 2013). Three research approaches; the quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods are currently used in social science research.

Creswell (2007) makes a distinction among the three approaches by explaining that the focus in qualitative research is to explore the meaning individuals or groups

ascribe to a social or human problem, that quantitative research tests objective theories by examining the relationship among variables, and that mixed methods research combines both qualitative and quantitative forms to make inquiry into complex phenomenon of social and natural contexts.

The process of research in the three approaches differs as well. Qualitative research involves emerging questions and procedures, collection of data in the participant's setting, analysing data inductively and interpreting the meaning of the data, (Creswell, 2007). In quantitative and mixed method approach, variables are measured, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures, (Creswell, 2007).

The way research is viewed in the three approaches is also different. As Creswell (2007) points out, qualitative research values an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of the complexity of a situation. Those who engage in quantitative research have assumptions about testing theories deductively, building in protections against bias, controlling for alternative explanations, and generalising and replicating the findings (Creswell, 2007). Mixed methods research values the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research, (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The role of the researcher in the three approaches is different as well. The role of the researcher in the quantitative approach is that of a dispassionate observer where the researcher is distant from the research setting to ensure objectivity, while in the qualitative approach, the researcher is fully immersed into the research phenomenon, creating a potential for partiality and bias (Guba & Lincoln, 2007;

Morgan, 2007). In the mixed method approach the relationship between the researcher and the phenomenon is determined by what the researcher deems appropriate to that particular study (Guba & Lincoln, 2007; Morgan, 2007).

3.2.4 Qualitative Approach

A research study which applies the interpretivist paradigm generally operates using the qualitative approach as was the case with this study. According to Marshall and Rossman (2010), qualitative research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomenon. Hogan, Dolan and Donnelly (2009), view it as an approach concerned with social and personal processes and relations. It is an approach that seeks to explore specific meanings, emotions and practices that emerge through interactions and interdependence between people, (Hogan et al., 2009). Qualitative approaches tend to have an advantage of paying special attention to qualities of experiences that quantitative approaches tend to obscure. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue, the term 'qualitative' suggests qualities, processes and meanings that are not examinable through experimentation or measurable in terms of quantity.

There are a number of reasons why a researcher chooses to use the qualitative approach. Reasons given by Curry, Nembhad and Bradley (2009), include the need to investigate complex phenomena that are difficult to measure quantitatively or to generate data necessary for a comprehensive understanding of a problem. In delineating distinctive features of qualitative approaches, Strauss and Corbin (1990) identify three key components. The first component is the *data*, which can be drawn from various sources such as interviews, observation, documents and records. The second component comprises the *procedures* the researchers use to interpret and

organise data. The third component is the *written or verbal reports* presented as journal articles, theses or books.

Developing an understanding of individuals and events in their natural state, and taking into account the relevant context, is a key purpose of qualitative research (Patton, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2010). As Denzin and Ryan, (2008) explain, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter and attempts to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. Qualitative approaches are thus; multi-method in focus; utilising methods that respect the humanity of participants in the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Researchers who use the qualitative approach are more concerned with the process than the outcomes or products (Denzin & Ryan, 2008). Denzin and Lincoln (2007) also note that qualitative approaches have value in educational research as they are appropriate for understanding human learning.

Several key characteristics are identifiable in the qualitative approach, and these distinctive attributes create a certain uniqueness sought by researchers using an interpretive or constructivist paradigm. Roller and Lavrakas (2015), Creswell (2013), and Marshall and Rossman (2010) identify the following key characteristics that define the qualitative approach:

- It is naturalistic; behaviour or processes are studied as they occur naturally within a setting.
- It focuses on context; the outcomes in the qualitative approach depend on the context from which data is obtained.
- It uses multiple sources to derive meaning from the data.
- It is process oriented, by focusing on the *why* and *how* of behaviour.

- It uses inductive analysis, where generalisations (to specific settings) are induced from synthesised data.
- It places value on participants' perspectives, i.e. focus on participants' understandings and meanings.
- It allows the research design to evolve and change as the study takes place.
- It sees the researcher as a key instrument. Researchers do not rely on instruments developed by others; they collect the data themselves through interviewing participants, examining documents or observing behaviour.

These characteristics were considered in the process of this research. This research study is qualitative in nature as its purpose was to seek an in-depth understanding of the influence contextual factors have on a group of in-service student teachers and their lecturers as they engaged learner-centred approaches during theory and practical lectures. This is in tandem with the key purpose of the interpretive paradigm of obtaining insight and in-depth information about a phenomenon. Using a quantitative approach which describes the world using numbers and measures instead of words was unlikely to produce the same level of depth.

To obtain this in-depth understanding of the nature of influences contextual factors have on the use of learner-centred approaches required the use of a multi-method focus offered by qualitative approaches. This enabled the researcher to use interviews, document analysis and observations for collecting data. Furthermore, since the research was more concerned with the process of students and lecturers using learner-centred approaches, the qualitative approach was more appropriate. The use of the quantitative approach was not ideal as it could obscure some of the insights and experiences of students and lecturers that the researcher needed to

understand in order to address the issue of contextual factors that impacted on the learning environment.

3.3 Research design

A research design is commonly described using terms such as strategy or plan. Babbie and Mouton (2010) provide a very general definition when they describe a research design as a plan or blue print for conducting research while Yin (2014) gives a more specific definition when he defines it as the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study. Also emphasising the processes of research, Leedy and Ormrod (2015) contend that, a research design provides the overall structure for the data collection and data analysis procedures that a researcher follows.

The research design that was used in this study is a descriptive and interpretive case study. A number of definitions and descriptions are presented in literature which assists a researcher to understand the case study research design. The definitions presented below are from the key contemporary exponents (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 2014) who have used and evaluated case study research design in social science research.

According to Merriam (2009, p. 40) a case study is

“An in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system”

Creswell, (2014, p. 290), defines a case study as a

qualitative design, which explores in depth, a program, event, process or activity of one or more individuals. The case(s) are bounded by time and

activity and detailed information is collected using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time

Looking at the two definitions, differences in emphasis can be noted. Merriam (2009), maintains focus on what is studied (the case) and the products of the research (i.e. the description and analysis of the case). Creswell's (2014) definition sets the case study in a specific approach i.e. the qualitative approach. In addition, it focuses on what is studied (the case) and the scope, of a case study design. While differences exist, the key similarity among the case study definitions is the focus on an in-depth analysis of a case (bounded system) within its context. To the present researcher, this captures the essence of a case study design and the simple definition is useful to examining the contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics.

Despite variations in approaches, exponents of case study design (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014; Creswell, 2014) agree on the case study design being,

- suitable for a holistic in-depth examination of a complex issue (phenomena, event, situation, organisation, program, individual or group) in a context.
- used to illuminate understanding of complex problem.
- used to gain understanding of issues in real life settings and are recommended to answer how and why research questions.
- one that uses multiple methods to collect and analyse data to provide a comprehensive view of the issue being studied.

However, despite having all these characteristics, the primary defining features of a case study are that it is rooted in a specific context (Creswell, 2014). The approach makes use of a variety of methods of data collection such as interviews, document

reviews, archival records, and direct and participant observations (Creswell, 2014). As a result 'thick descriptions' of the problem being studied are generated (Yin, 2009).

A case study design, just like other designs, requires a specific philosophical position that guides the research process. It is noted in literature that the case study design orientation can range from post positivist (Yin, 2014) to constructivist/ interpretivist (Stake, 2009) through to the pragmatic constructivism (Merriam, 2009). This philosophical versatility, as Stewart (2014) and Yin (2014) call it, gives the researcher an opportunity to decide the methodological orientation to use in a case study. Literature shows that case study research is most often described as a qualitative inquiry, which integrates interpretive practices within in its design, (Stake, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

Given the interpretive/constructivist position and qualitative approach adopted in this study, the descriptive case study was considered the most appropriate approach to employ because it allowed the researcher to use multiple data collection techniques such as interview, observation and document analysis; and a variety of participant perspectives emerged from the students and lecturers involved in the study. Furthermore, it provided the ideal framework to generate thick descriptions of the contextual factors, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of influence context- related factors had on the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of B.Ed. Home Economics. Such an in-depth understanding would not be achieved if the researcher were to use a research design such as a survey.

What follows is a detailed description of the key components of the case study design, which includes a description of the case, case parameters and the case in context.

3.3.1 The Case

The case(s), i.e. the object of the case study identified as the entity of interest or unit(s) of analysis has to be clearly defined. A case can be; an individual or several individual (cases), an event or entity such as an implementation process, or programme, or a social situation or phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Defining or selection of the case(s) is based on the purpose and conditions of the study (Harrison, Birks, Franklin & Miles, 2017) and it determines the limits of data collection and analysis (Yin, 2014).

The case under study was a teaching approach (the use of learner-centred approach) where, the influences of social, cultural, historical and institutional factors had on two groups of in-service student teachers and lecturers as they engaged in learner-centred approaches in the teaching of B.Ed. Home Economics was examined.

The entity of interest, unit of analysis or what Stake (2009) refers to as the 'bounded system' can be studied with one of four types of case studies. Yin (2003), argues that, depending on purpose, the 'bounded system' can be studied using an exploratory, explanatory, descriptive or illustrative case study. Descriptive case studies describe a phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurs (Yin, 2003). The case under study was descriptive in nature, as the study sought to examine and describe the realities of using learner-centred approaches based on constructivist instruction in Home Economics programmes at university level.

There are specific designs of case studies that can be used, and determining the specific design to use in addressing the research questions is an important element for the researcher to consider. In designing case studies, a single or multiple-case design can be used. Yin (2003) created four variants of the two distinctive forms which include the single-case holistic (single unit of analysis), single-case embedded (multiple units of analysis embedded in single case), multiple-case holistic (multiple units of analysis) and multiple-case embedded design (multiple units of analysis embedded in multiple cases). Illustrated in figure 3.1 below is the single-case embedded design adopted in this study.

3.4.1.1. Single-case embedded design

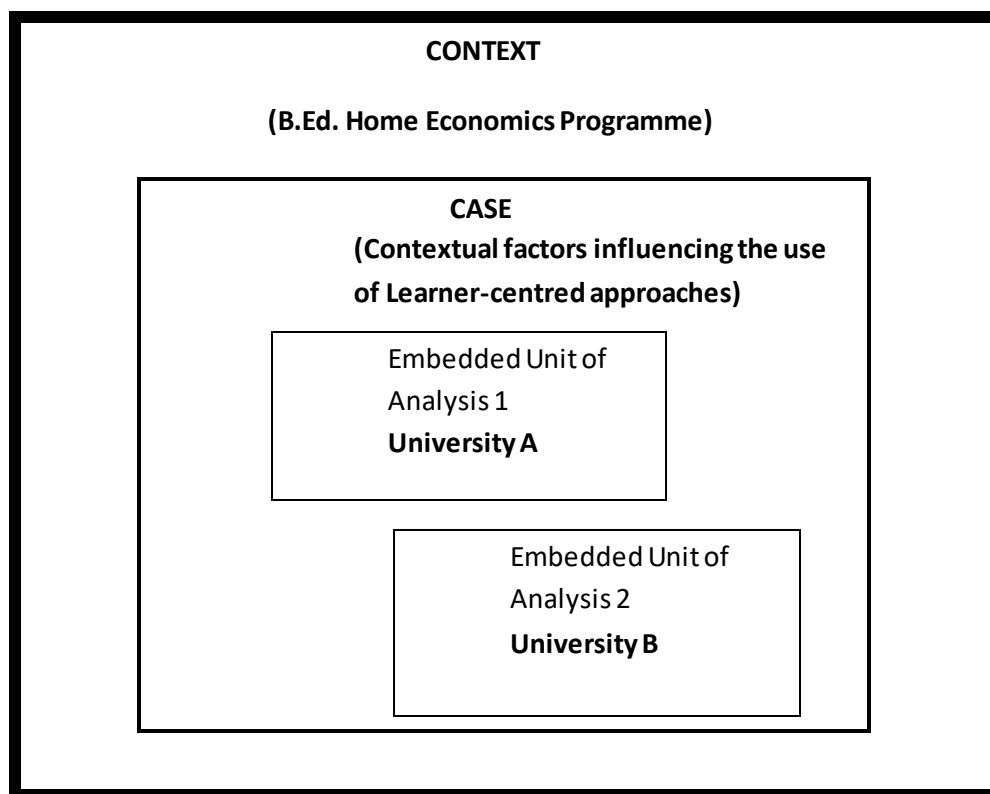


Figure 3-1: Single-case embedded design used in this study. (Adapted from Cosmos Corporation, in Yin, 2003)

As reflected in the illustration the *context* of the study is the B.Ed. Home Economics programme. The *case* is the process of using learner-centred approaches in teaching and the examination of contextual factors influencing the use of these approaches in Home Economics. The *embedded units of analysis* are the two universities included in the study.

3.3.2 Case Parameters

Definitions of a case study presented by Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2014) indicate that a case is a '*bounded system*'. There exists in literature, different suggestions of the manner in which a case is bounded. Creswell (2014) and Stake (2009) both suggest that a case is bounded by time and activity, while Huberman and Miles' (1995) believe that it is bounded by the context within which the case is situated. Using Huberman and Miles's (1995) conceptualisation this case study was bounded by setting and student characteristics.

3.3.2.1 The Setting

The case was bounded by the subject, teaching and learning, and institutional setting. Teaching using learner-centred approaches occurred in Home Economics courses in the two universities within the Faculties of Education. The theory and practical components of the courses were taught in the Home Economics lecture rooms or laboratories. All courses were taught by the university department lecturers.

3.3.2.2 Student characteristics

The students were enrolled in an in-service B.Ed. Home Economics programme. The student teachers were holders of a Diploma in Education, and were registered in the level 2 of the B.Ed. Home Economics programme.

3.3.3 Case in Context

In order to understand the influence of contextual factors on the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics, the case was explored in its context. As Yin (2014, p. 13) states that, a case study research *“investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context”*. One reason cited by Lincoln and Guba (2007) for situating a case in its context, is based on the belief that phenomenon must be studied in its full setting since process/actions in a phenomenon can be caused by multiple factors. In order to situate the case in its context, an overview of the B.Ed. programme in the two study sites is provided.

The Bachelor of Education Home Economics programmes offered through the Faculty of Education in the two universities under study were in-service professional development programmes. The curriculum in the two universities has three major concept areas of study which include; Food Technology and Nutrition related study areas, Textiles and Clothing Technology and Family Studies. Integrated in these three concept areas were theoretical and practical learning. The approach to teaching the theoretical and practical component in these three concept areas was the same. The lecturers used a range of teacher-centred and learner-centred instructional methods in teaching the various courses.

3.4 Participants in the study

An important task in the design of a study using the qualitative approach is the identification of appropriate participants. As Sargeant (2012) explains, decisions regarding selection of participants are usually based on the research questions, theoretical perspectives and evidence informing the study. The total number of participants in this study were 12, comprising 8 in-service student teachers and 4 lecturers from the two selected universities.

The students and lecturers were selected purposively. Use of purposeful selection was in keeping with the interpretivist perspective which holds that participants are knowing beings who possess important consequences for how behaviour or actions are interpreted (Patton, 2002). Creswell (2014) defines purposive selection as a method of sampling where the researcher selects individuals who will best assist in understanding the research problem and questions.

As Patton (2002) explains, the benefit of purposive selection is that, the common patterns that emerge from the specific informants are of value in capturing the core experience and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon. In this study, purposive selection enabled the researcher to get the right individuals to help answer the research questions. The right individuals in this case, were second year students and their lecturers, who had already spent a year using learner-centred methods of instruction in the practical and theory component of Home Economics courses. Being in the second year of study, the students were thus, deemed to have the essential exposure to use of learner-centred approaches in the teacher development programme.

3.5 Research instruments

To obtain an in-depth understanding of the nature of influences contextual factors had on the use of learner-centred approaches required the use of a multi-method focus which is offered by qualitative approaches. The data collection techniques that were therefore be used in this study included; face-to-face semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis.

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are methods of gathering information through an oral talk using a set of pre-planned core questions (Shneiderman & Plaisant, 2005). The interview is designed to exchange information between the participant and the researcher. A social relationship is created through interviewing and the quantity and quality of information exchanged is dependent on how astute and creative the interviewer is in understanding and managing the situation (Monette, Sullivan & Dejong, 2011). Shank (2006) and Creswell (2013) offer the following guidelines for conducting productive interviews:

- Identifying general questions and follow-up questions in advance.
- Establishing and maintaining rapport.
- Focusing on the actual rather than the hypothetical or abstract phenomenon.
- Allowing participants to choose their own ways of expressing their thoughts.
- Considering the influence of participants' cultural backgrounds on responses given to questions asked.
- Not openly showing disapproval, surprise or agreement to response given by participants.

The main advantages of the interview method of data collection within the context of exploring the use of an instructional method is that, it allows those engaging with the methods to give specific, constructive suggestions and the researcher to gather specific and detailed information from a few participants. Despite noting the value of interviews in enabling the researcher to control the line of questioning, Creswell (2014) raises an issue about the likely bias in responses brought in by the presence of the researcher. Depending on the need and design, interviews can be unstructured, structured and semi-structured; and be conducted with individuals, or focus-groups. This study used semi-structured interviews.

3.5.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews use both closed and open questions. The researcher interviewed students and lecturers using a semi-structured interview approach to obtain detailed information relating to their views, appraisals and concerns on the, nature of socio-cultural and institutional influences as they engaged with various learner-centred approaches in practical and theory components of the courses being undertaken. In order to ensure consistency, the researcher developed an interview protocol with a set of pre-planned core questions so that the same areas were covered with each interviewee.

3.5.1.2 The interview Protocol

For the purpose of this study, the semi-structured part of the interview was developed according to the research questions, and using information from the

conceptual framework and literature review. The interview questions included the following aspects:

- understanding of learner-centred approaches;
- level of flexibility in the design of course content;
- level of integration in courses of strategies that engage students;
- contextual constraints and enabling factors influencing curriculum delivery;
- level of interactivity in learning activities and how these influenced the use of learner-centred approaches;
- Contextual factors that enabled or constrained the design and use of constructive and interactive learning activities;
- whether and in which way assessment instruments have been re-structured;
- factors influencing creation of new assessment instruments; and
- whether and in which way the institution has changed to support use of learner-centred approaches.

3.5.2 Observations

The study used structured non participant observations. Observations are noted for their advantage in enabling a researcher to have first-hand experience with participants and allowing them to record information as it occurs, despite observations being intrusive (Creswell, 2014). Observations were conducted of lectures where theory and practicals were learnt.

3.6.2.1. Observation Protocol

The following aspects were included in the observation protocol:

- nature of learning activity;

- level of interactivity present in learning activities and how this influenced the use of learner-centred approaches;
- contextual factors that enabled or constrained the design and use of constructive and interactive learning activities; and
- technology support.

The purpose of the observation was to provide an account of the context of the source of information in order to facilitate an understanding of the context in which students and lecturers use learner-centred approaches in teaching and learning of Home Economics.

3.5.3 Documents

Documents are objects used by participants in everyday activity of the context under study, (Hatch, 2002). Documentation is important in case study research. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) assert that documentation is essential in developing a complete understanding of the physical and social environment under study, while Hatch (2002) focuses more on the cultural aspects as he views documents as a powerful indicator of value systems operating within institutions. Yin (2003) considers the value of documents as being in data triangulation, where they are used to support and/or enhance other data sources.

3.5.3.1 Document analysis Protocol

Collection of documents, just as in gathering of interview and observational data must be based on the organisation of the study, (Stake, 2009). A document analysis protocol was therefore, designed to analyse the following documents; the university

teaching and learning quality assurance manuals, course outlines, department programme regulations and mission statements. The purpose of analysing these documents was to establish;

- the nature of guidelines and standards prescribed for the integration of learner-centred approaches in theory and practical Home Economics lectures,
- compatibility of assessment procedures with learning activities,
- content structure,
- unique course design features, and
- department information – mission, vision statements and teaching philosophy.

3.6 Data collection

3.6.1 Commencement of data collection

Data collection procedures commenced when the researcher obtained an ethics clearance letter from the university and letters authorising entry into the study sites from the registrars of the two selected universities.

3.6.2 Time

Data collection occurred between April and June 2017. During this period, the researcher avoided collecting data during times such as examination periods, which place high academic demands on students, thereby impacting on their availability and the adequacy of time for conducting interviews.

3.6.3 Entry

After obtaining authorisation to enter the study sites, permission was sought from the programme coordinators to approach individual students and lecturers. Following the granting of permission, the researcher held two initial meetings; one with students and the other with lecturers, where an introductory letter that described the study and level of participation required and consent forms were discussed and distributed. During the discussion, the lecturers and students were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and withdrawal could be made without any reprisals and a request was made for them to sign the consent forms. The researcher also advised the participants that interviews and observations would be recorded and permission was sought from the participants to use audio and video recording devices. Students and lecturers were contacted via telephone to schedule an interview at a mutually convenient time.

3.6.4 Collection of data through face-to-face interviews

Semi-structured interviews were utilised to gather data from students and lecturers. All interviews were conducted by the researcher at the two study sites. Interviews included an introduction and an opportunity for dialogue between the researcher and participants with regards to the topic under study. At the end of the interview the researcher did a recap of the data provided by the participant and offered them participant an opportunity to confirm, change or expand on the final interview transcript. This summary acted as a member checking process. The interviewing process with each respondent lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. Hand written notes and audio recording were used to capture information. The participants were thanked for their participation at the end of the interview.

3.6.5 Collection of data through observations

Non participant observation was conducted with the intention of obtaining a deeper appreciation of the context in which learner-centred approaches were used in the teaching of Home Economics as well as to provide data to triangulate with interviews and documents. The researcher initially obtained the programme timetable from the coordinator and drew up a schedule of the theory and practical lectures that were to be observed. A total of 10 observations were conducted at each study site in Food, Textiles and Family Studies courses. Observations lasted the duration of the lecture (i.e. 2-3 hours). Hand written notes and video-recording were used to capture information.

3.6.6 Collection of data through documents

Arrangement were made with the Department chairperson and Programme coordinator for the researcher to access records, namely; teaching and learning quality assurance manuals, faculty and department regulations and course outlines. Documents were analysed in the department office at each of the study sites to avoid exit of material which could be considered confidential. Hand written notes were used to record information.

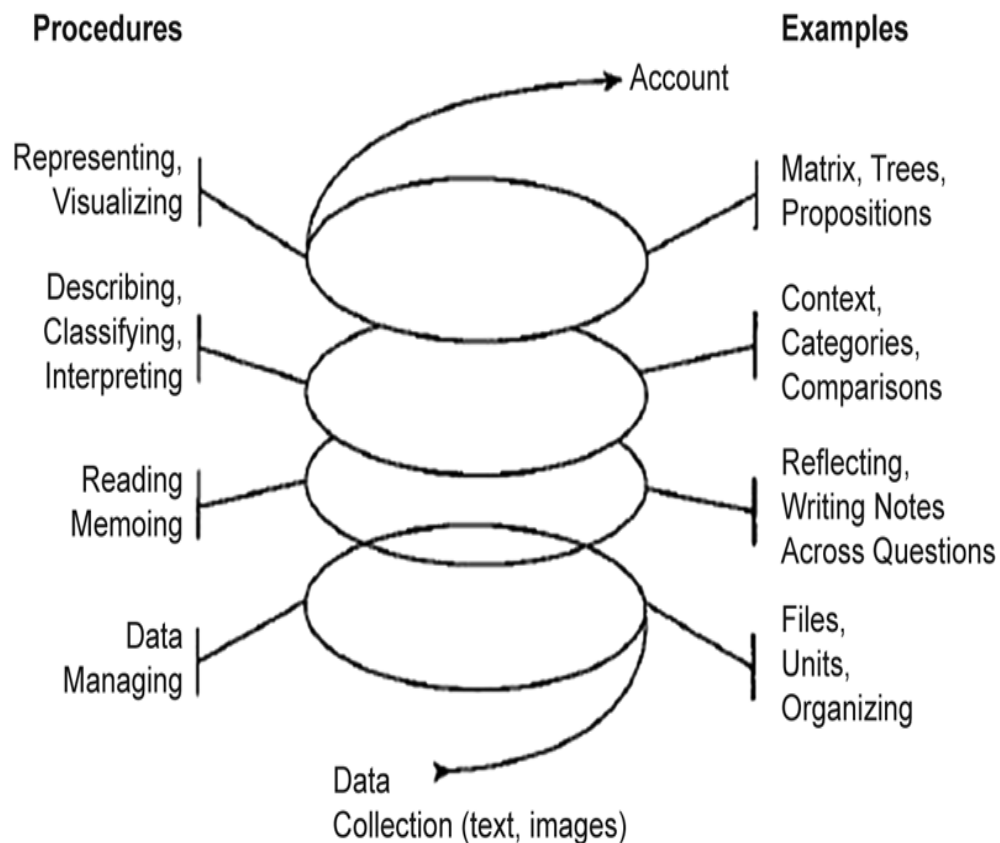
3.7 Data analysis

The key function of qualitative data analysis is to facilitate understanding of a phenomenon being studied through interpretation of the data and resulting themes (Sargeant, 2012). This interpretive analysis is generally viewed as occurring in specific stages. Saldana (2011) sets three stages which he refers to as pattern construction; category construction; and the interaction, interplay and interrelationship stage. This model features the two distinctive processes involved in

qualitative interpretive analysis; data reduction and inductive analysis. Data reduction involves breaking down huge amounts of data into categories that describing the content (Saldana, 2011; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2013). Inductive analysis is focused on uncovering patterns, themes and categories in data sets, and raising the concepts developed in the inductive process to a higher level of abstraction that allows tracing of interrelationships between patterns and themes, (Punch, 2004).

The unique feature of data analysis in research using the qualitative approach is that it is an on-going process that is emergent and iterative in nature, (Hennings, 2004; Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor, 2008). Spencer et al., (2008) point out that, this on-going process of qualitative analysis begins at the start of the research study and ends while writing the results. The emergent and iterative nature of qualitative analysis stems from the cyclic process of collecting data, analysing the data, collecting more data and analysing that data throughout the research study, (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Spencer et al., 2008).

Creswell (2014) delineates four phases of data analysis which are: data management; reading and memoing; describing, classifying and interpreting; and representing and visualising, as illustrated in the diagram below.



Source: Creswell (2007)

Figure 3-2: Four phases of Data Analysis. Source Creswell (2007)

In this research study, data were analysed following the three phases of data analysis as outlined by Creswell (2007). The following is a description of the three phases of data analysis as used in this study.

3.7.1 Data Management

According to Creswell (2007), data management is the first step in the data analysis process. It involves the creation of an inventory of all the data and organisation of the data into file folder or computer files. In this study, the interview responses from the participants were transcribed manually in preparation for data analysis. Hand written notes from the observation and document analysis were edited to make them coherent. Video recordings were edited to filter out any redundant content. All the

data generated in the study was then recorded in electronic Word documents and Excel spread-sheets.

3.7.2 Reading and memoing

In the second stage of data analysis, the researcher should engage with the data through reading and reflection (Creswell, 2007). This process involves reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts and field notes to get a sense of the data as a whole before breaking it into parts. In this study, the researcher read and re-read and reflected on what has been read so as to become familiar with the interview and observational data on contextual factors influence on the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics in two selected universities. Becoming familiar with the data was important as it aided the researcher in the coding and generation of categories and themes.

Memoing or writing of analytic memos is a process that takes place during the whole data analysis phase. Johnson and Christensen (2008) describe memos as reflective notes that researchers write to themselves about what they are learning from the data. Through memoing, a researcher captures significant issues that they find in the data and records these reflective notes in the margin of the transcript documents. These reflective notes (memos) which can be in the form of a phrase, paragraph or a page were therefore, an important part of this phase of data analysis. In this study, the researcher wrote analytic memos in the margins of the transcribed interview, observational and document data as the coding process was taking place.

3.7.3 Describing, classifying and interpreting

All qualitative analysis attempts to synthesise information and explain relationships and theorise why and how the relationships occur (Creswell, 2007). This, according to Creswell (2007), is the phase in the data analysis spiral, where the data is described, classified and interpreted. In the description stage, the researcher describes the various pertinent aspects of the study which include the setting, individuals being studied, the purposes of any activities examined, the viewpoints of participants, and the effect of any activities on the participants.

Classifying is a process where qualitative data are sorted into categories and themes. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), categories are generated through prolonged engagement with the data. Creation of categories commences through the critical process of coding. As Flick (2002), explains coding as the process by which data are broken down, conceptualised and put together in a new way. Neuman (2011) describes three steps that are followed in the coding process namely; open, axial and selective coding. Open coding involves naming or labelling segments of data. As Neuman (2011) explains, the focus in open coding is on the wording, phrasing, context, consistency, frequency, extensiveness and specificity of comments. Axial coding is done by reviewing and examining the code identified in the open coding process, (Neuman, 2011). Categories and patterns are identified in this step and organised in terms of causality, context and coherence (Neuman, 2011).

The third and final coding procedure involves selective scanning of all codes that were identified for comparison, contrast and linkage to the research questions

(Neuman, 2011). With regard to this study, the analytic process of open, axial and selective coding was used to generate themes from the various categories of data which the researcher created. The theoretical framework i.e. Engestrom's (2001) principles of activity sets was used in the data analysis to locate important constraints and/or positive outcomes and use these to explain how different factors enabled or constrained lecturers and students as they applied learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. Most importantly, the researcher utilised a repetitive and reflective process in the data analysis to get a real understanding of the context and students' and lecturers' experiences as they appropriated learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

3.8 Data trustworthiness and credibility

Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011) identify the following terms common in discussions of qualitative research literature; trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility. *Trustworthiness* is the term commonly used in qualitative research as a measure of the quality of research. It is the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy (Creswell, 2014). There are several strategies and criteria that can be used to enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. There are four strategies for establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative research, namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. These are constructed parallel to the analogous quantitative criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity, (Kumar, 2014).

3.8.1 Credibility

According to Trochim and Donnelly (2007) credibility involves determining that qualitative results are credible or believable from the perspective of the participants in the research. Credibility in the qualitative approach is comparable to internal validity in the quantitative approach. Several criteria can be used to ensure credibility in qualitative approach, but in this study, the researcher selected to use the following: triangulation, member-checking and peer examination.

3.8.1.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is a powerful strategy for ensuring credibility. It is an approach that utilises multiple data sources, (different groupings, settings), multiple informants, and multiple methods (participant observation, focus group interviews), in order to gather multiple perspectives on the same issue and have a more complete understanding of the phenomena (Creswell, 2009). Triangulation is used to compare data to decide if they corroborate (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2009), and thus, to validate research findings. It is one of the most important ways to improve the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. In this study, triangulation of data methods was used.

3.8.1.2 Member-checking

Member-checking is a technique that consists of continually testing with informants the researcher's data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions, (Lincoln & Guba, 2011). Qualitative research studies explore people's perceptions, experiences, feelings and beliefs. The participants become the best judges of whether or not research findings reflect their opinions accurately, (Kumar, 2014). Member-checking ensures that the researcher has accurately translated the

informants' viewpoints into data to avoid misrepresentation. In this study, member-checking was done through a recap of the data provided by the participants at the end of the interview. The researcher offered participants an opportunity to confirm, change or expand on the final interview transcript. This strategy was effective in ensuring that the information gathered was a true representation of both the students' and lecturers' experiences.

3.8.1.3 Peer-Examination

Peer-examination is based on the same principle as member-checking. Peer-examination is a process where the research process is observed and scrutinised externally (Willis, 2007; Creswell, 2013). In this study, the researcher discussed the research process and findings with impartial colleagues who had experience with qualitative methods. This helped to refine the findings of the study.

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability in the qualitative approach relates to external validity in the quantitative approach. It refers to the extent to which the results of a qualitative research can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings, (Shank, 2006; Zhang & Wilgemuth, 2007; Trochim & Donnelly, 2007). Lincoln and Guba (2011) note that, transferability is addressed through providing the reader with a 'thick rich description' of the situation under investigation. Judgement over the transferability of findings is thus not made by the researcher. As Lincoln and Guba (2011) point out, it is only the reader of the study interested in the findings who can determine if they are transferable to other contexts.

Thick descriptions of contextual factors influencing use of learner-centred approaches, and a description of the context in which teaching using learner-centred approaches occurred was provided. This ensured that the reader had adequate information to determine transferability of findings to their own context.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability relates to the consistency of findings. It is concerned with whether similar results can be obtained if the qualitative study is replicated. The qualitative approach does not use standardised procedures as those found in quantitative approaches, Yin (2009) instead, suggests the use of dense description of data gathering, analysis and interpretation of research findings. This, as Yin (2009) explains enables another researcher to follow clearly the decision trail used by the researcher in the study. Another strategy recommended by Creswell (2014), which this study adopted was the use of thick descriptions of research findings.

3.8.3.1 Use of thick descriptions to convey findings

Thick descriptions and multiple perspectives are used to convey finding about the themes thereby making results richer and more realistic (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher used a detailed narrative combined with excerpts (direct quotes) to make the findings realistic.

3.8.4 Conformability

Since this study was situated in an interpretive paradigm and followed a subjective epistemology that believes that reality consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world, data and interpretational conformability was more important to

consider than researcher objectivity. Conformability refers to the degree to which the results can be confirmed or corroborated by others, (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007; Zhang & Wilgemuth, 2007). It deals with the details of the methodology used (Shank, 2006) as well as ensures that findings reported in the study are drawn from the experiences and ideas of the participants, and not from the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004).

3.8.4.1 Auditing

One strategy suggested by Kefting (1991) to establish conformability is the use of 'auditing'. This is a process where an external auditor goes through the events in a study to understand how and why decisions were made. The researcher asked her research supervisors to go through the process of the research study to understand how decisions were made. This helped to ensure that the data gathered did not contradict themselves.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics is concerned with right and wrong, and a researcher has to consider how the research purpose, methods, reporting and outcomes abide with ethical principles and practices, (Cohen et al., 2007; Singleton & Straits, 2010). The ethical issues identified in literature include: informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, issues of risk or harm of participants and the right to withdraw (Sieber, 2009; Gibson & Brown, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011; Roberts. 2012).

3.9.1 Ethical considerations in data collection.

The ethical issues which were considered for data collection included informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, and issues of risk or harm of participants.

Informed consent is when participants in a study have full details of the purposes of the study, risks involved and are given freedom to choose to participate or not. As Kumar (2014) explains, it is considered unethical to collect information without the participants expressed willingness and informed consent. This principle of informed consent emanates from the participant's right to freedom and self-determination (Cohen et al., 2011).

To obtain informed consent, the researcher disclosed the intent of the study and sought voluntary participation. Signed consent forms were sought before proceeding with data collection. Consent to use audio and video recording devices was sought before commencing interviews and observations.

Confidentiality and anonymity is differentiated by Cohen et al., (2011) where confidentiality is defined as not disclosing information gathered from participants or not identifying respondents using information they have provided while anonymity refers to protection against identification. Confidentiality is an extension of the concept of privacy and the matter of concern is ensuring non access to information about participants by the public (Pattern, 2009; Sieber, 2009). Issues of maintaining the privacy of participants have implications on data storage and information dissemination. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, participants were assured of non-disclosure of information before administering any instrument. All the audio and video tapes and field notes were stored securely in the researchers' locked desk drawer and the information was used for research purposes only.

According to Roberts (2012), official approval or *permission* must be sought before one enters into a research site. For official approval or permission to enter into a research site, the researcher sought permission from the registrars of the two

selected universities in writing, to gain access into the learning settings where the study was conducted. Not using the collected information to *harm the participants'* private lives or betray them is another important ethical issue to consider in research (Cohen et al., 2011). Kumar (2014) expanded the elements considered as harmful and included such things as discomfort, anxiety, harassment, invasion of privacy or demeaning procedures. To avoid harm to the participants, the researcher ensured that she upheld the personal dignity of participants during interactions with them and adhered to the principles of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy during the whole data collection process.

3.9.2 Ethical considerations in data analysis, interpretation, and reporting research findings and in writing the research report

Roberts (2012) identifies significant ethical issue that relate to data analysis and interpretation, reporting of findings and writing of the research report. Analysing and interpreting of data should be done appropriately strictly avoiding fabricating and falsifying results. Reporting of research findings should be done honestly and objectively, by not hiding negative results or engaging in selective reporting or omitting conflicting data. In writing the report the language of the report must be free from bias and be non-discriminatory. The present researcher observed all these issues.

3.10 Summary diagram of the research methodology adopted in this study

Figure 3.3, below, shows a summary of the research methodology adopted in this study which specifies the philosophy, approach, design, methods and procedures used.

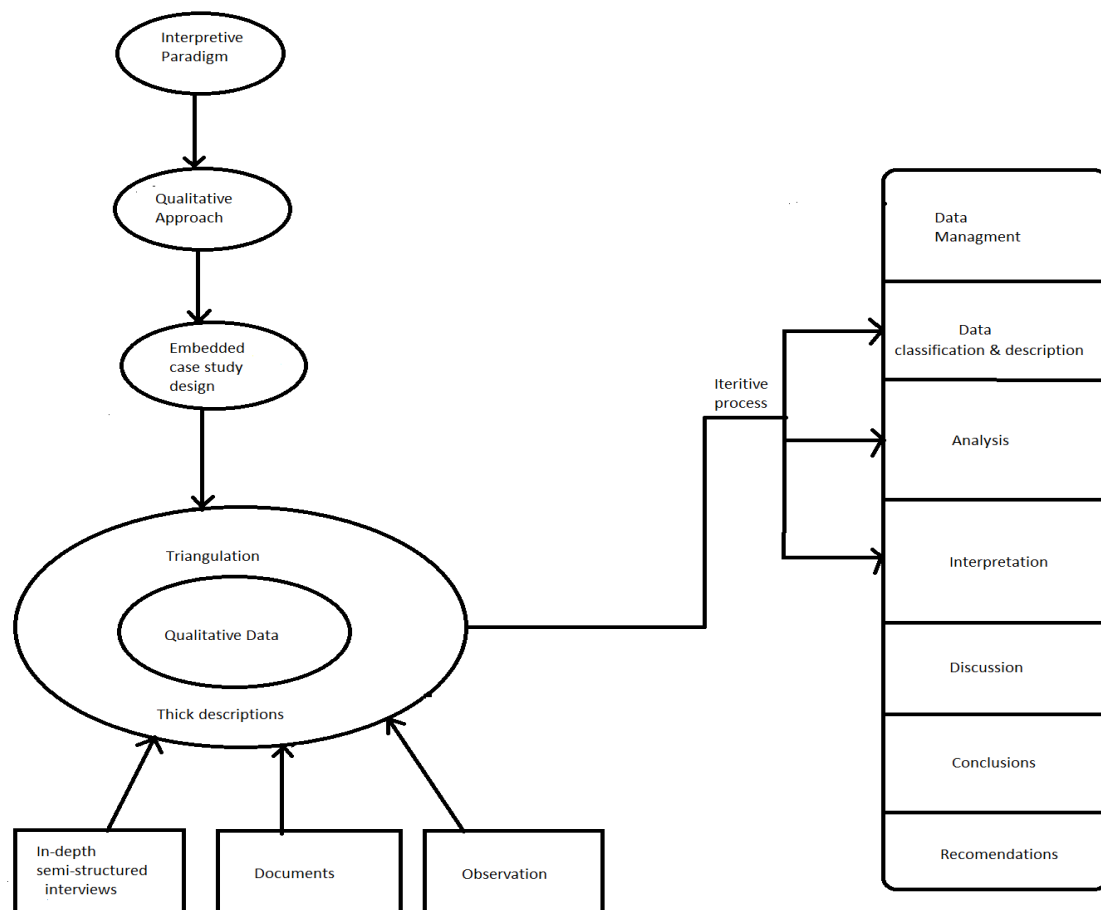


Figure 3-3: Summary diagram of the research methodology adopted in this study

3.11 Summary

This chapter presented the research methodology used in this study. The study was situated in the interpretive paradigm and utilised the qualitative approach. The study design was a case study in which semi-structured interviews, documents and observations were used as data collection methods. Data analysis was framed around Creswell's (2007) data analysis framework with three phases i.e. data management, data description, classification and interpretation, and data analysis. The chapter ends with a diagrammatic representation of the research methodology as used in this study. The next chapter presents, analyses and discusses the collected data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and discusses the findings of the study generated through data collected using interviews, observations and documents. The data are presented, analysed and discussed in line with the main instrument which was the interview. Data from observations and documents were used to buttress findings from the interviews.

To ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the data, triangulation of data collected from the three instruments was used to avoid chances of drawing false conclusions. Data collected addressed the concerns of both the research questions and objectives of the study which were as a matter of rule, aligned to the research questions.

The main research question was: *How do contextual factors influence the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics at university level?*

The sub-questions were:

- How do the in-service student teachers' and lecturers' conceptions of learner-centred approaches influence the use of the approaches in Home Economics?
- How do the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices influence the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?
- How do the prevailing faculty and university-wide policies and practices influence the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?

- What do in-service student teachers and lecturers view as the kind of support that is likely to influence sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics?
- What are the implications of the study's findings for Home Economics teacher development programmes?

The objectives tied to these research questions were to:

- establish how the in-service student teachers' and lecturers' conceptions of learner-centred approaches influenced the use of the approaches in Home Economics;
- determine how the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics;
- ascertain how the faculty and university-wide policies and practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics;
- establish lecturers' views on the kind of support that is likely to influence the sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics; and
- establish the implications of the study's findings for Home Economics Teacher Development programmes.

Data were presented and immediately analysed and discussed in order to avoid the repetition that is often observed in work where data presentation, analysis and discussion are presented in two separate chapters.

4.2 Identification of students, lecturers, documents and observations in this study

The participants who were in the student category were identified as follows:

SA: 1-4, students from University A

SB: 5-8, students from University B

Participants in the lecturer category were identified as follows:

LA 1: Lecturer from University A

LA 2: Lecturer from University A

LB 3: Lecturer from University B

LB 4: Lecturer from University B

Documents that were analysed were identified as follows:

CA₁₋₅ documents from University A

CB₆₋₁₀ documents from University B

Observations conducted were identified as follows:

OA 1-5 observations from University A

OB 6-10 observations from University B

4.3 Demographic characteristics of participants

The demographic characteristics examined in this research study included age, gender, years of teaching experience and professional qualifications. The purpose was to see if these variables influenced the responses of the participants, in any way.

Age was the first variable the researcher enquired from the participants during the interviews. Table 4.1 below shows the age ranges of the students and lecturers who participated in the study.

Table 4-1:Participants by age (n=12)

Variables	Participants	
	University A	University B
Age (Students)		
30 – 39 years	3	2
40 - 49 years	1	1
50 years and above		1
Total	4	4
Age (Lecturers)		
40 – 49 years		
50 - 59 years	1	2
60 years and above	1	
Total	2	2

Table 4.1 shows that in University A, three of the four students had ages ranging from thirty to thirty-nine years and the remaining one was in the forty to forty-nine years age range. In University B, two students had ages in the thirty to thirty-nine-

year bracket, one was from forty and forty-nine years and the other one was over fifty. Of the four lecturers who participated in the study, one was in the forty to forty-nine age range; two were in the fifty to fifty-nine age bracket whilst, the last one was 60 and above years old. As can be seen from the data presented, the present study's participants had ages ranging from thirty to sixty and above years.

The differences in age among the respondents did not significantly influence the responses they gave in this study. However, it can be inferred from the results reflected in Table 4.1 that the students were mature and this maturity is reflective of them having trained in the old dispensation where traditional teacher-centred methodologies were prevalent. This maturity however, can enable the students to discern the benefits of using learner-centred approaches and the detriments of the continued use of teacher-centred approaches in an era advocating higher engagement of the learner in the teaching and learning process. This age range usually is for teachers who, having served for some five to ten years, desire to take professional development courses to improve their teaching knowledge and skills and meet the demands of a changing world. As Pitsoe and Maile, (2012) argue, professional development programmes (such as the B.Ed. Home Economics programme) play an important role in changing teachers' teaching methods and developing deeper understanding of teaching innovations.

From the age ranges of the lecturers in the present study, it can be inferred that they were mature and had a lot of experience teaching Home Economics; with some of them having had initial experience teaching in the schools and teacher training colleges before finally lecturing at a university as revealed by the interview data. The lecturers had also experienced a paradigm shift in the teaching of Home Economics, where, as academics, they were now at the forefront of transforming the teaching of

Home Economics from a technical paradigm (focusing on teacher-centred approaches and skills proficiency) to a critical science paradigm (that integrated constructivist learner-centred approaches and critical thinking skills). Pendergast, McGregor and Turkki (2012) emphasize that, the changes that have occurred in teaching and learning focus of Home Economics are reflective of emerging paradigms and learning theories applied in the discipline. These changes are significant in that they have been instrumental to the integration of a learner-centred pedagogy in Home Economics curricula.

Gender was the second variable the researcher had to determine. Table 4.2 below shows participants by gender.

Table 4-2: Participants by gender (n=12)

Variables	Participants	
	University A	University B
Gender(Students)		
Female	3	4
Male	1	0
Total	4	4
Gender (Lecturers)		
Female	2	2
Male	0	0
Total	2	2

Table 4.2 shows that, out of the eight students who participated in the study seven were female and one was male. All the four lecturers were female. The researcher

also established, through documents, that most of the lecturers in the B.Ed. programme in the two universities were female. At University A, out of a staff complement of six, five lecturers were female and one was male. In University B, all three lecturers in the Home Economics subject area were female and as shall be seen later, there are a number of reasons for this. The study established that the gender of the respondent did not have an impact on the responses given concerning the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching. This observation is similar to observations made by other studies (Aybek & Aglgul, 2011; Fidan & Duman, 2014; Aygoren & Saracaloglu, 2015) where gender was not a significant factor in teachers' perception of the characteristics of a constructivist learning environment. For Aydogdu and Selanik-Ay (2016), the similarities in responses could be a function of the teachers receiving similar educational experiences during training.

Observations made in this study showed a gender imbalance among the students and lecturers in favour of females. Gender imbalance among Home Economics students that favours females is a common trend in Zimbabwe as well as in other African and western countries (Azubuke, 2012; Masinire, 2015; Epale, 2016). Studies (Epale, 2016) generally show that girls are more likely to take up Home Economics whilst boys drift away from Home Economics. In a similar vein, research in Nigeria (Azubuke, 2012; Nnubia, 2013) confirms that males are losing interest in studying Home Economics due to perpetuation of gender stereotyping and lack of strong male role models in the subject area.

In Zimbabwe, research findings by Chimwayange (2005) confirmed that fewer boys enrolled in Home Economics subjects such as Fashion and Fabrics due to gender role stereotyping that prevented the boys from taking-up such subjects. This, in turn had an effect on the number of males who then progressed to do Home Economics-

related subjects in tertiary and higher education. Research findings from various scholars within Zimbabwe (Mutekwe & Mutekwe 2014) attribute this to various structural and institutional barriers. For example, Mutekwe and Modiba (2014) and Mutekwe and Mutekwe (2014) argue that patriarchal ideology continues to perpetuate gender role stereotyping, and that acts as a barrier to achieving gender balance in Technical subjects such as Home Economics. Masinire (2015), using a symbolic interactionist perspective in exploring gender construction in technical subjects, highlighted the continued perpetuation of gender inequality in Home Economics subjects. He describes how cultural ideologies, policy and practices in the curriculum were entangled in students' daily lives, perpetuating gender inequality at school and beyond.

Gender imbalance among students and lecturers that favoured females was thus; a common trend in Zimbabwean Home Economics subjects/programmes at school, college and university levels. Home Economics, with its food, clothing and family/home-related content, is generally considered a female specific study area. Though in post-independence Zimbabwe, the government took steps to equalise educational opportunities between male and female students, various structural, institutional and socio-cultural barriers still impede male participation in female-dominated technical vocational subjects, such as Home Economics (Shiza & Kariwo 2011; Masinire, 2015).

Professional qualifications held by the participants were the third variable the researcher enquired from the participants. Table 4.3 below shows the professional qualifications of the participants.

Table 4-3: Professional qualifications of the participants (n=12)

Variables	Participants	
	University A	University B
Professional qualifications (Students)		
Diploma in education	3	4
Bridging Course certificate	1	Nil
Total	4	4
Professional qualifications (Lecturers)		
Master of Education	2	2
Total	2	2

Table 4.3 shows that in University A, out of the four students, three were holders of a Diploma in Education. One student did not possess a teaching certificate or diploma but had been enrolled in the B.Ed. Home Economics programme through a special dispensation after completing a bridging course in pedagogics. In University B, all the four students had completed a Diploma in Education. It can be inferred from the data presented above that there were professionally-qualified teachers in the in-service teacher education programme offered in the two universities. The implementation of the B.Ed. Home Economics programme in the two universities was thus not hampered as the teachers' level of pedagogics knowledge is taken into account in their being accepted into the programme.

Consideration of the teacher's level of knowledge is important in the teaching and learning context. The teachers' level of knowledge was important in this study as it

influences the teachers' decisions to adopt learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. Research (Voss, Kunter & Baumert, 2011) suggests that in making pedagogical decisions, teachers combine their knowledge of the teaching and learning process with an analysis of contextual and situational factors to guide their teaching actions. Thus, making decisions to use learner-centred approaches in the teaching and learning of Home Economics may hinge on the quality of pedagogical knowledge held by the teacher.

With regard to the professional qualifications of the lecturers in the two universities, all four lecturers were holders of a Master of Education degree. One lecturer held a Diploma in Education, whilst the remaining three were in possession of a Certificate in Education. This Certificate in Education was offered in teacher education institutions just before and immediately after independence in Zimbabwe, and is considered as an equivalent certification to the current Diploma in Education. Lecturers in this study, who were all holders of a graduate degree, showed a more open and deeper understanding of learner-centred approaches. This resonates with research findings by Ozenic and Dogan (2012) and Aydogdu and Selanik-Ay (2016) that teachers who were holders of a Masters or Bachelor's degrees tended to be more open to the use of constructivist approaches. This, as Ozenic and Dogan (2012) and Aydogdu and Selanik-Ay (2016) explain, may be due to the graduate courses empowering teachers with competencies and knowledge to use learner-centred approaches in teaching.

Level of teaching experience was the fourth demographic variable that was sought during the interview conducted with the students. Table 4.4 below shows the students' teaching experience

Table 4-4: Students' teaching experience (n=8)

Variables	Participants	
	University A	University B
Teaching Experience		
0-5 years	1	nil
6-15 years	1	1
16-25 years	2	3
25 years and above	nil	nil
Total	4	4

Table 4.4 indicates that, in University A, the teaching experience of the four students ranged from five to twenty-five years. In University B, the teaching experience of the four students ranged from ten to twenty-three years. The number of years of experience in teaching showed that the students had a number of years in the teaching field, to learn formally, and informally, teaching processes such as creation of content and assessment tools, managing the learning environment, and engaging students using various teaching approaches. It was important to consider the student teachers' experiences in this study, as they provided an indication of the amount of time the teacher spent using various teaching methods in the classroom. As noted by Hodge (2010), adult students bring a lot of experience into the teaching and learning context, therefore emphasis in teaching and learning should be on approaches that tap into these experiences. In the context of this study, the teaching

experience therefore, provides a platform from which student teachers can reflect on merits of adopting learner-centred over teacher-centred approaches.

As indicated at the beginning of the discussion on demographic variables, it was assumed the variables would influence the way participants' responded. It was however noted that these variables did not influence the way participants responded. The participants responded in the same way despite differences in age, gender, qualifications and teaching experience.

4.4 Results emerging from interviews, observations and documents

In this section, analysis of findings starts with a presentation of the patterns emerging from data in the two universities. Themes are developed by comparing and grouping patterns emerging within and across the data from the two research sites. Then the major themes are discussed. The analysis and discussion of findings was guided by the research questions and objectives of the study.

4.4.1 Student and lecturer conceptions of learner-centred approaches

The first sub-research question sought to find out how the in-service student teachers' and lecturers' conceptions of learner-centred approaches influenced the use of the approaches in Home Economics. The aim was to establish whether students and lecturers had the appropriate conception of learner-centred approaches necessary to sustain use of the approaches in the teaching and learning of Home Economics.

When asked to explain what they understood by the term learner-centred approaches, three students demonstrated similar understanding of learner-centred

approaches as involving increased participation of learners through use of certain methods of teaching. The following three students all presented the idea of learners taking part in the learning process with;

SA₁ described learner-centred approaches as:

Approaches whereby the learners will be taking part more in the learning, demonstration, report backs, all the things will be done by the learners.

SA₂ indicated that:

In learner-centred approaches there is more activity by the pupils.

SA₃ viewed the approach as one where:

The pupils do most of the work, the teacher will simply be giving instructions and directing whilst pupils do most of the work like group tasks and the like.

The three participants' similarity in understanding of learner-centred approaches is reflected in the level of emphasis placed on the learner participatory aspect in the pedagogical process. The main idea expressed by all the three participants was about the learners having high level of activity and being the main participants in the learning process, through use of specific methods of teaching such as group work. The three participants mainly perceived learner-centred approaches in terms of methods of teaching and learning that are participatory. This was in line with research by Msonde (2011) which established that teachers who viewed learner-centred approaches in terms of methods of teaching that are participatory exhibit such a methodological orientation. According to Msonde (2011), the learner-centred methodological perspective tends to emphasise certain teaching and learning methods, and enforce participatory methodologies. That is based on the premise that

increase in student participation with less talk from the teacher would enhance student learning (Mushi, 2004).

The responses from the three students show an awareness of the recommendations made by the Zimbabwean Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC) to adopt participatory methodologies in school syllabuses as a way to strengthen the interrelatedness between teaching and learning and, to facilitate learner active participation. In an effort to ensure successful implementation of participatory methodologies, many teachers were in-serviced and efforts made to make sure that pre-service training programmes took on board, the new initiatives (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2001). By applying the cultural-historical activity theory's (framing this study), principle of historicity of an activity (where an activity is assumed to develop over time and understanding its current form requires knowledge about its past); it may be correct to assume that the context in which the three students received their pre-service training may have had an influence on their orientation towards learner-centred approaches. Such an assumption is vindicated by research studies (Humaidi, Thiwayba & Mekhlafi, 2014), which found that the students developed high positive attitudes towards learner-centred approaches during their pre-service training.

The instructional context can also influence the type of teaching and learning that will be adopted. When the researcher analysed documents such as Course Outlines, it was noted that the methodology selected for instruction tended to include more of the participatory methods such as group discussions and presentations. Observation of lectures and practical work also confirmed the use of participatory methods such as student presentations, group work and project-based work. Participatory methods were therefore the main teaching approaches used in the two universities. It can

therefore be inferred that the instructional context in which the students were undertaking the B.Ed. programme had an influence on their orientation of using learner-centred approach. This is in line with some studies' findings (Stes, Gijbels & Van Pategem, 2008), which identified the main teaching method used in a course or discipline as one of the factors in the instructional context that influence a student teachers' approach to teaching and learning. In addition, previous studies examining characteristics of the teaching/learning context during teacher training (Knudson & Maxson 2001; Cheng 2002) reported that the nature of course or module used had an influence on the student teachers' approach to teaching in practice. This means that the student's exposure to and use of participatory methods in the instructional context may also have an influence on reinforcing the methodological orientation they too will adopt later.

Participatory methodologies are ideal as they provide for a balanced level of lecturer and student activity. From a socio-cultural perspective, uses of participatory methodologies are a positive dimension as it encapsulates the social nature of learning. However, the negative aspects of the methodological orientation are that they offer instructional prescriptions that cause high teacher dependency on certain instructional methods (Watanabe, 2008; Olesen & Cexton, 2009) and create the assumption that active participation by learner guarantees their learning (Msonde, 2011). While this is one of the orientations that a teacher can hold onto, it may not be the most appropriate in Home Economics. Student teachers may continue to use learner-centred approaches without realising that real learning may not be taking place. Real learning occurs when students use inductive instructional methods that engage students in learning (Kuh, 2009; Jony, 2016).

The understanding of learner-centred approaches by the three students also suggests a key shared pedagogical aspect, i.e. a shift in instructional approach from teacher to learner centredness. This increased focus on the learner in the teaching and learning process is best captured in the fourth students' description of her understanding of learner-centred approaches.

SA₄ stated:

These are approaches that are centred on the child/learner, that motivate the learner and allow the learner to participate, explore and experiment in the environment and to discover whatever should be learnt and that allows the learner to manipulate whatever is in the learning environment.

This student's view places the learner at the centre of the learning process. Aspects such as the transfer of power from the teacher to the student, creation of knowledge through investigative instructional methods, learners actively engaging with learning materials and students working collaboratively which emerged from the four students' descriptions, reflect the multi-dimensional understanding of learner-centred approaches.

SB₅ indicated that the learner-centred approach was:

an approach whereby the teacher believes that the learners are also a source of information. She gives the learners a choice to do group demonstrations. The learners can lead in group presentations. They are also given topics to research and they will come and present. It's like the learners are active and the teacher is passive and is there to guide the learners.

SB₆ said that in learner-centred approaches:

Learners are given the opportunity to investigate, they are given topics to work on and research on and give feedback; then the teacher reinforces what the learners have said.

SB₇ perceived it as:

an approach whereby there is a lot of participation from the student. The students create knowledge of their own. The students are given time to practise what they know, to research on their own and to have hands-on activities on what they are learning; to explore and to share their knowledge.

SB₈ simply stated:

When it's learner-centred, the students are expected to bring in their knowledge in the learning process and they are also encouraged to research.

Based on the above, it is noted that the five students' understanding of learner-centred approaches showed a shift in focus from the lecturer/teacher to the student. Their views expressed aspects that focused more on what the student is doing in the teaching and learning process. The students' understanding of learner-centred approaches reinforced a core principle in student-centred learning reported in literature (Attard, Di Iorio, Geven & Santa, 2010; McCabe & O'Connor, 2014), where the learner assumes greater ownership of their learning as a result of a shift in responsibility for learning from lecturer to student.

The students in this study also identified characteristic features of learner-centredness such as active participation and autonomy that have been reported in various studies (Macaulay & Nagley, 2008; Hua, Harris & Ollin, 2011). In addition, the students' orientation of learner-centred approaches leans more towards *what the student is expected to learn* i.e. the object of learning (Msonde 2011). The implication of this is that, what matters most in teaching are the capabilities students are expected to develop during the teaching and learning process (Marton & Lo,

2007; Marton & Pang, 2008; Msonde, 2009). Morton and Pang (2008) identify both direct and indirect objects of learning. Content of a course, knowledge co-generated by the student and teacher or by student and student are the direct objects of learning whilst skills (investigative, reflective, cognitive, communication, collaborative) and attitudes gained as students engage content are the indirect objects of learning (Marton & Pang, 2008, Msonde; 2009).

Views of students' understanding of learner-centred approaches presented so far in this study portray elements of direct and indirect objects of learning as reference is made to things like topics/subject matter, knowledge, investigative and collaborative activities. Having Home Economics student teachers with an understanding of learner-centred approaches driven from an 'object of learning orientation' is a positive development for enhancing teaching in the subject area. Such a development creates opportunities for Home Economics teacher educators to capitalise on this as they create education/training platforms that are aimed at changing the culture of learning in Home Economics.

Overall, from the responses of the eight students, it can be established that students' understanding of learner-centred approaches was varied as three participants perceived learner-centred approaches in terms of methods of teaching that are participatory, while the other five students' views focused more on what the student is doing in the teaching and learning process; where the learner assumes some ownership of their learning. The possibility of having variations in understanding of the term learner-centred approaches has been established in various studies conducted in Africa (Mtitu, 2010; Msonde, 2011) and this study confirms this as the eight students in the two universities had different conceptions of the approach. This is in line with findings from Mtitu's (2010), research study that examined nine

Tanzanian teachers' conceptualisation of learner-centred instruction, which showed that the teachers he had studied generally had varied understanding/conceptions of the approaches. The only departure that this study has from Mtitu's (2010), study was that they were only two core variations that emerged. Views of learner-centred approaches as a westernised teaching approach which instils a culture of disrespect in students or as an instructional approach that transfers authority and power from the teacher to students established in Mtitu's (2010) research did not emerge in the present study.

Absence of such views in the present study's finding may be interpreted to suggest a shift in views among the students, away from long standing cultural beliefs that demand complete respect and passivity from learners in classroom interactions. The socio-cultural theory's assumptions about knowledge are that it is co-created among teacher or mentor and students or learners as they engage in inquiry-based activities (Eun, 2010). Based on this assumption, it is therefore essential that a shift towards a more balanced and shared relationship be encouraged in Home Economics teaching and learning environments to ensure effective use of learner-centred approach in the subject area.

Lecturers in the two universities were also asked to explain what they understood by the term learner-centred approaches. The four lecturers presented an idea of students taking a more active part in the learning process with their role being more facilitative in nature. Views that acknowledge the co-partnership between student and teacher in the learning process, active learner participation and development of investigative skills were themes that flowed through the lecturers' viewpoints.

LA₁ commented:

My understanding is that learning would be taking place; there will be a teacher and a learner but the teacher would do more of facilitation so that there is active learning on the part of the learner, with the learner taking the lead and the teacher facilitating to make sure the learning is taking place. There is active participation of the learner.

LA₂ viewed learner-centred approaches as:

approaches that consider the position of the learner, that place the learner in the centre of learning where the learner is more active than the teacher and again to some extent, considering the interest of the learner in particular.

LB₃ stated:

Learner-centred approaches are learner driven. The teacher is simply there to facilitate learning while the learners are researching. Of course, the teacher will be guiding them so that they have parameters to work in, but they research on their own, they find out. It's investigative and they try to solve a problem on their own and the teacher simply helps them do topic or task given.

LB₄ added:

Mostly the learners will look for information with the help of the teacher. The students are sort of given some work so that they can look for the information themselves.

From the data emerging in the responses of the four lecturers, it can be inferred that all the four lecturers' understanding of learner-centred approaches showed that they recognised the 'centrality of the learner' in the learning process. Putting 'the learner first' presents a fundamental difference between teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches. Generally the learner-centred approach is viewed as a counter movement to the traditional teacher-driven model of education, (Baeten, Dochy & Struyven, 2012; Hoidn, 2016; Palanissamy, Hoidn, Syed & Kumar, 2017; Aliusta & Ozer, 2017). The teacher-centred view places the lecturer at the centre of the

learning environment, with the lecturer acting as the key source of knowledge, relative to the students' lack of experience and knowledge (Wright, 2011). In contrast, learner centred approaches place the learner at the centre of the learning environment where both the learner and lecturer have a shared responsibility for creating learning experiences (Massoulah & Jooneghan 2012; Moate & Cox 2015; Hoidn, 2016).

In teaching from a learner-centred perspective, enabling and not telling is emphasised (Todorovski, 2015). In such a situation, the lecturer is expected to provide students with opportunities to learn independently or collaboratively, and should coach them in the skills they need to do this effectively (Tanui, 2010). An understanding of learning and teaching from this perspective is essential in Home Economics. It enables Home Economics teachers to take advantage of the activity-oriented practical-based nature of the subject, to design learning activities that allow students to solve problems, analyse tasks, create artefacts with the lecturer's main role being to model and coach students in using research, reflective communication, evaluation and thinking skills. Such an approach would be different from the traditional teaching approach in Home Economics where theory is presented first and practical activities are used afterwards to practise the theory.

The four lecturers' understanding of learner-centred approaches also reflects a key change in practice where the lecturer's role is evolving from that of instructor or transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of student learning. The adoption of this facilitative role is reflected in the following views expressed by lecturers when asked about the role they played as students engaged in learner-centred approaches such as individual or group presentations.

LB₃ said:

I see my role as a guide and consultant. Being the guide I give them parameters on what I expect and the standard. I also can assist them improve aspects of the presentation to help everyone appreciate or understand the topic better. My role as students do their presentations is basically to follow closely what they are presenting and fill in gaps that could have been left out and in a diplomatic manner correct any misconception to ensure everyone is clear of what the presentation should give to them.

In response to the same question, LA₁ stated:

My role as students prepare their presentation is to ensure that I see the work before it is presented to check on sufficiency, quality and appropriateness of the work. As they progress, if there are issues they are not clear about they ask me so that when they present before their colleagues, they are confident. During the presentation, I help to facilitate, that is to ensure smooth sailing of the presentation.

The responses showed that the lecturers' role was that of a guide who was on the side-line, supporting the students as they played a more dominant role of searching for information, organising and presenting the content. Besides being a guide, the lecturer acted as a content quality controller and provided guidelines on expected standards. The activities performed by the lecturers are similar to what Zivkovic (2014) established in his study on the importance of oral presentations among university students. Lecturers in Zivkovic's (2014) study were mainly involved in preparing detailed guidelines for organising the presentation, guiding students in their research, providing feedback on sequencing of ideas and supporting the students. The lecturers' role as guide, organiser and supporter were compatible with expected espoused roles in the socio-cultural learning theory. According to Vygotsky (1978), when lecturers perform all these roles, they act as mediators who coach and encourage students to formulate their own level of understanding.

To corroborate responses given by the lecturers, students were asked to describe the role of the lecturer as students prepared and conducted their presentations. Similar views were reflected in all the eight students' responses. Generally, the responses reflected that lecturers acted more as guides, constructive critics, clarifiers, advisors and quality controllers. The following responses reflect that position:

SA₃ indicated:

As students prepare for the presentation, the lecturer is there to guide us on any difficulties with the questions, simply clarifies the issues and helps us get the sources to answer the question. As students present, the lecturer has to listen to the answers given and maybe writing comments on what is to be clarified if the students have gone wrong somewhere; that is, when they may chip in after the presentation and tell them the right way they should have done it.

The themes of lecturer as a guide, clarifier also emerge in the following student's response where,

SB₈ stated:

The role of the lecturer as students prepare to present is to guide. The lecturer should make reference to what he/she wants, at times you are given a topic, you do your own research, and maybe it's not exactly what the lecturer intended to produce at the end of the day because you are all going to write an exam. What is presented should have the right content. During the presentation, the lecturer should make comments. There are times when you are presenting and you forget your information and the lecturer fills in the gaps; adds or subtracts some of the points presented.

Observation of lessons in which student presentations were conducted revealed that the manner in which lecturers conducted themselves was, as described by the

students. In these presentations, the lecturers guided the activity and also acted as subject experts who corrected and clarified content during the presentation or in the summaries given at the end.

The word 'guide' appeared in both the lecturers' and students' description, indicating that both were ascribing a facilitative role to the lecturer. This is in line with literature (Giles et al., 2008; Attard et al., 2010) which suggests that the lecturer's perceived role in student-centred learning is that of a silent manager who is there to direct, advise and empower the student as well as creating a safe, conducive and participative environment for learning. Such perceptions reflect a pedagogical shift towards a more balanced and shared relationship which, McCabe and O'Connor (2010), however, caution as a transition that can be difficult for some teachers.

As Weimer (2013) and Aliusta and Ozer (2017) explain, the key role of the lecturer in learner-centred approaches is that of a 'facilitator' to learning. In that facilitative role, lecturers are expected to behave in an interactive manner, providing support and encouragement to the learner (Moore, Arhurd & Powell, 2010; Weimer, 2013; Walker & Sore, 2015). Thus, the lecturer's role is to ask questions, pose problems, and prompt discussions that will lead to students developing their own conclusions on subject matter they encounter (Walker & Sore, 2015; Aliusta & Ozer 2017).

The stance towards a more facilitative than an instructive role reflected in the four lecturers' responses is commendable and is a key change in practice essential to success in realising a critical science paradigm in Home Economics curriculum in Zimbabwe. The adoption of this facilitative role is reflected in the views expressed by students when asked about the role played by the lecturer as students used certain learner-centred approaches such as group presentations. However, it is important to

acknowledge that, though this is a positive move, previous deep-seated practices usually take time to change. It is therefore, essential that Home Economics lecturers receive support to further develop and sustain their facilitative roles through training that allows them to have a thorough understanding of principles and characteristics of constructivist teaching.

Overall, the findings show that the four lecturers in the two universities had a common understanding of learner-centred approaches that recognised the ‘centrality of the learner’ in the learning process, and that their role as lecturers was that of facilitators of student learning. This study’s exploration of lecturer conceptions of learner-centred approaches was mainly based on Msonde’s (2011) work where he classified understanding of learner-centred approaches into four orientations, namely; methodological, curriculum, power relations and object of learning orientation. In this study, the four lecturers’ conceptions of learner-centred approaches were not clear-cut into distinct categories as conceptualised in Msonde’s (2011) typology. Rather they fused aspects from the participatory and “object of learning” orientation. This study therefore, presents a departure from Msonde’s (2011) typology to suggest that it is possible to have more leaning towards a particular orientation but with aspects from other categorisations infused in that particular orientation. The researcher, however, acknowledges the significance of Msonde’s (2011) typology in creating an understanding of a position a student or lecturer can take, with regard to their conception of learner-centred approaches.

Besides establishing the type of conceptions lecturers held with regard to learner-centred approaches, this study sought to determine how these conceptions influenced the lecturer’s use of the approaches in teaching Home Economics. As determined through literature, teachers’ beliefs/conceptions influence teacher

practice (Wilhelm & Li, 2008; Mtitu, 2014). Evidence of the influence of the lecturer's conception of learner-centred approaches in teaching was established through observations (see Table 4.7 & Table 4.8) conducted in the two universities where active learner participation and use of participatory instructional methods was evident. This study's findings therefore, suggest that the type of conceptions held by the lecturers could be the basis upon which the lecturers chose to engage students' actively, through the use of such approaches as project-based, inquiry-based and collaborative-based learning.

4.4.2 Subject context factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics

The second sub-research question sought to find out how contextual factors viewed in this study as located within the context in which the students learn (i.e. the curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices) influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics. In the following sections, the researcher presents and discusses the findings regarding each of the three factors.

The first part of the second sub-research question focused on the curriculum. The aim was to determine how aspects of the curriculum (the programme structure, content in the subject, course design and course delivery) provided conditions in the teaching and learning environment that were conducive or non-conducive to the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of the subject. To answer these aspects interviews, document and observations were used.

4.4.2.1 Program structure-related factors (duration of course)

With regard to the programme structure, it was established through documents (i.e. Department and Faculty Regulations) and observations that University A was running a Block Release Programme offered over the school vacation period. Each semester had three Block periods in which twelve hours of face-to-face contact were allocated for the five modular courses that were each taught in thirty-six hours. Before leaving each Block Session, the students were given assignments and reading lists to work on when they were back at the schools.

University B was operating a full-time programme. Students were on campus full time as they had applied for, and had been granted Manpower Development Leave by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. The full-time programme had two semesters which were fifteen weeks long. In each semester, students registered for four courses that were each taught in sixty hours. The result shows that there was a significant difference in the number of teaching hours allocated to courses in university A and to those in university B. University A allocated thirty-six hours whilst University B allocated sixty hours teaching time to each of its courses. Home Economics courses offered in University B had more teaching time than those in University A, which had inadequate time. The duration of the course (i.e. the time available in a given course) is an important contextual factor that influences the use of learner-centred approaches as it impacts on the effectiveness of the methods in ensuring authentic learning. The amount of time available in a given course affects the depth of learning (i.e. surface or deep) that occurs. This is supported by literature which indicates that inadequate time affects opportunities for students to engage in deep learning essential to effectiveness of learner-centred approaches (Herrington &

Weaven 2008; Gijbels, Coerstjens, Vanthournout, Struyf & Van Petegm, 2009; Beaten, Dochy & Struyven. 2010).

It was important for the researcher to establish the nature of the programme offered at each university as the aspect of a programme being full-time, block release or part-time was a contextual factor that impacted the adequacy of time to ensure comprehensive use of learner-centred approaches in teaching and learning. Aspects such as time have been found to influence the way teacher educators implement learner-centred approaches. Research, (Doyle, 2008; Colley, 2010) confirms that in using learner centred approaches, more time is required. Adequate time is required in order to offer students authentic and meaningful learning. In fact, the learner-centred approach design principles identified by Parker et al., (2011) and Ravitz (2010) require that learning approaches used (such as project-based learning) guide instruction for an entire course and not appear as single time-limit units. As such, short time periods allocated to teaching of Home Economics courses therefore, raise concern about the authenticity and meaningfulness of project or task-based and collaborative activities students engage in. Collaborative activities by their nature, require dialogue to provide opportunities for co-creation of knowledge whilst project-based work has a lengthy knowledge generation process which utilises investigative, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving and evaluative skills (Mitchell, Foulgher, Wetzel & Rathley, 2009; Ravitz, 2010; Parker et al, 2011; Krajcik & Shin, 2014).

In Zimbabwean universities Teacher Education programmes are offered on a Full-time, Part-time and Block Release basis. The block release programme is currently an ideal format to adopt for in-service programmes especially where teachers are not given Manpower Development Leave, as the programme is run over the school

vacation period. However, if not structured correctly, it can have courses with reduced contact hours per course as a way of meeting time needs of an overcrowded programme. Therefore, the programme's structure, which impacts on time within a given course, is a contextual factor Home Economics course designers have to consider if learner-centred approaches are to be applied.

4.4.2.2 Levels of flexibility in course content design

To determine the levels of flexibility in Home Economics course content design, a comparative analysis was conducted. In order to conduct the comparative analysis, characteristic features of the constructivist approach to course content design were first determined through a literature review (Pagan, 2006; Seyyedrezaie & Barani, 2013). Features of the constructivist approach were then compared and contrasted to features noted in the course outlines/modules used in the two Universities. Table 4.5 presents the results of the comparative analysis.

Table 4-5: Comparative analyses of characteristic features of constructivist approach to course design present in Home Economics Curriculum

Aspect	Features observed in University A & B course-outline/Modules	Features of a Constructivist approach to course design identified in Literature (Pagan, 2006; Seyyedrezaie & Barani, 2013)
Course Content	Set boundaries on what is relevant in the course content	Content areas have no strict boundaries
	Content is broken into small segments	Relevant content is found in multiple disciplines.
	Lecturer as the expert identifying the relevant course content.	Lecturer defines a major content domain but does not limit its scope

Source: (Pagan, 2006; Seyyedrezaie & Barani, 2013)

From the comparative analysis of the features in course outlines/modules presented in Table 4.5, it was established that the course content design approach used in the two universities was the content driven approach. The elements in the course outline which reflected this were:

- an identification of the important components and specific knowledge from the Home Economics domain to be taught to the student,
- breakdown of content into topics,
- set boundaries on what is relevant in the course content
- specific considerations on what determines course relevance.
- lecturer as the expert identifying what is relevant in the course content.

The results of the analysis show that there is an over-focus on content in designing course outlines/modules. This over focus on content was also brought up in the interviews when lecturers were asked to indicate what they considered as the most important element in designing a curriculum or course outline/module.

LA₁ commented:

The key aspect in designing a curriculum or course outlines is the proper content to be taught which should be relevant and the methodological approaches that go along with the content. So it's basically the content and the methods that I am going to use to deliver.

What was relevant in the course content was determined by a consideration of specific elements as reflected in the following lecturer's response to the question on what the key component to consider in curriculum or course outline/module design was:

LB₄ indicated:

The job market, the current issues also play a role in determining the content in a course. Also we should look at international demand so that our students are not just local students but those who can also fit in the global world. This should guide the content and also the level of the students should guide the content in terms of level e.g. curriculum for B.Ed. or Masters, the level at which it should be taught.

It can therefore be inferred from the observations given above that course design was content-driven as course outline/modules were built around a set of topics centred on prevailing issues. In addition, course design was a teacher-centred activity as Home Economics lecturers determined the course content. These two aspects of being content driven and being teacher-centred show that the course

outlines/modules used in the two universities do not have adequate level of flexibility in course content design for effective appropriation of learner-centred approaches.

Too much focus on content was a contextual factor restricting the effective use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics Teacher Education programmes as lecturers value content for its ability to create expertise in students at either the Bachelors' or Masters' level. This study's finding on the restrictive effect of over focus on content was a contextual dimension that has been identified in research (Weimer, 2013; Wste, 2013) as negatively influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in Higher Education. Research by Weimer (2013) on lecturer attitudes towards content in the use of learner-centred approaches found out that the reason why lecturers focused more on coverage of content was because they wanted to build strong knowledge foundations in students. The effect of this was that the lecturer covered a lot of course content with no real learning on the part of the student as students would most probably be memorising facts to be reproduced in examinations. In examining challenges in the implementation of learner-centred approaches in a teacher education programme, Wste (2013) found that a strong belief in the importance of content and in the authority of the teacher as a knowledge expert hindered acceptance of learner-centred approaches that offered more control to the learner in the learning process.

The change recommended by Weimer (2013) is for the content to find its use not only in building solid knowledge foundation but also in developing learning skills and learner awareness. As Verst (2010) observes, viewing content differently has the positive effect of altering the role of the lecturer, influencing the methods used to teach the content, and on how students prepare for lessons. Weimer's (2013) recommendation for use of content for the development of learning skills is in line

with socio-cultural and Cultural Historical Activity Theory perspectives of content as a semiotic tool used to mediate learning. A basic tenet of the socio-cultural learning theory is that learning is mediated. One of the three methods of mediation is through semiotic systems (Kozulin, 2003). Content is part of semiotic systems that mediate learning. Instruction that aims to develop learning skills is built around mediation (Robbins, 2007). The use of content for the development of learning skills therefore plays a vital mediating role in this process.

The influence of over-focusing on content in Home Economics teaching is that content will not be used for the development of critical skills such as critical and creative thinking, reflective, research and collaborative skills. Home Economics teacher educators must therefore move away from just aiming at covering content and focus on assisting their students in developing thinking and problem-solving skills using the content in the subject area. The flexibility in course content design, which allows content to have a dual function of developing solid knowledge base, and developing, learning skills, is achieved through the use of constructivist approaches to course design. The characteristic features of a constructivist approach to course design identified in literature (Pagan, 2006; Seyyedrezaie & Barani, 2013) as reflected in Table 4.5, therefore, become the ideal standards to use to enhance flexibility of course content design in Home Economics teacher education programmes.

4.4.2.3 Factors related to the nature of the subject

With regard to the nature of the subject, the aim was to determine how this factor provided conditions that were conducive or non-conducive to the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of the subject. Practices that provided conditions

in the teaching and learning environment that were conducive or non-conducive to the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of the subject were established through analysing course outline/modules as well as through lesson observation. From the analysis of course outline/modules, two features within the subject area (Home Economics) were identified.

The first feature identified as providing conditions conducive to the effective use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics was the use of a learning outcomes approach to course design. The learning outcomes approach is a process in course design that focuses on learning outcomes i.e. what students can do after a learning experience (CEDEFOP, 2009; Attard, Di Iorio, Geven & Santa, 2010; Birtwistle & Wageneer, 2016).

Learning outcomes are explicit statements of what the learner is expected to know, understand or demonstrate at the end of a learning period (Birtwistle & Wageneer, 2016). They include knowledge, skills, personal/social or methodological abilities a learner should attain after successfully completing a course unit (Crespro et. al, 2010). Learning outcomes can be applied at different levels of education. In the case of the course outlines/modules that were analysed learning outcomes were applied at the module level.

The following are examples of statements drawn from the course outlines/modules which reflect this learning outcomes approach to teaching and learning used in Home Economics course outlines/modules in the universities under study.

In Module C 5 it was stated:

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- *exhibit creative competence in the use of textile design skills and colour applications such as dyeing and printing.*

In Course outline C7 it was indicated:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- *assess critical family economic issues affecting Zimbabweans.*

These two examples, though drawn from different Home Economics subject areas show that the intent of the teaching and learning processes was on what students can do at the end of a learning experience. This is in line with literature on learning outcomes which confirms that learning outcomes stated in this manner reflect a focus on the achievements of the learner (Crespro et al., 2010). Practice that utilises this approach is seen as fulfilling one of the core parameters governing the implementation of learner-centred approaches (Attard et al., 2010). This is therefore a feature in Home Economics course design that brings in a learner-centred dimension into the teaching of the subject. Literature (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2005; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005; Birtwistle & Wageneer, 2016) confirms that such a practice is an example of a paradigm shift towards student-centred learning.

The learning outcomes approach brings a lot of benefit to a programme such as Home Economics. Evidence has been found in research (Prosser et al., 2006) that shows that the learning outcomes approach leads to improved student performance. It has also been found to give direction to the way student learning is structured (Birtwistle & Wageneer, 2016). Additional benefits cited in literature include improved course design and students' experiences and ability to provide a link between teaching, learning and assessment (Prosser et al., 2006; Birtwistle & Wageneer,

2016). Understanding of this attribute among course designers will facilitate a significant paradigm shift in the teaching of Home Economics where the emphasis in teaching moves from what the lecturer can teach (content) to what the student will be able to do (outcome).

The second feature identified as providing conditions conducive to the effective use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics was that teaching and learning in Home Economics is already contextual. Evidence for the contextual nature of teaching and learning was found in course outlines/modules. Through analysis of documents such as the course outlines/modules, the researcher observed that course outline/module course descriptions were stated in a manner that indicated the nature of context in which the learning outcomes would be operationalised through. For example,

course description for module CA₄ stated:

This course focuses on fundamental nutritional issues and nutritional problems affecting individuals, households, communities and the region. The course will attempt to improve the students' nutrition knowledge and where possible, apply the knowledge to make nutritional assessment, plan, prepare, cook and serve meals....

What can be established in the course description is that the subject matter (Food and Human Nutrition) was being taught in relation to real life world settings i.e. households and communities. Another example of a course description that provided indications of a context was:

course outline CB₆ which mentioned that:

This module introduces students to theory and practice in interior design from different cultural perspectives. Emphasis is placed on the Zimbabwean and African contexts with a thrust in promoting students' appreciation of our cultural aesthetic values.

Reflected in this course description is that the subject matter (Interior Design) was taught within the context of Zimbabwean as well as an African perspective. Context in this situation therefore, enables the student to draw inspiration and construct interior design artefacts that relate to the world they live in.

The findings emerging from the course descriptions showed that the teaching, learning and assigned tasks were set in a context. This was in line with literature (Smith, 2010) which confirms that the contextual nature of a subject is demonstrated through teaching and learning activities that relate subject matter to real life world settings, simulated issues or meaningful problems. There is evidence from research within Home Economics (Shamsid-Deen & Smith, 2006; Smith & Katz, 2006; Smith, 2010) which shows that learner-centred approaches such as problem-solving, cooperative, project, inquiry and case-based learning can be used as viable strategies that enable students to relate the subject matter within Home Economics to the context in which teaching and learning occurs.

Benefits of focusing on context in learning and teaching include a high level of responsiveness among students and exposure to more meaningful learning as students engage in learning that directly applies to their lives (Smith, 2010). Home Economics teaching aims to improve the quality of lives of individuals, families and the community. This principle shows that Home Economics as a subject, integrates

family and community living contexts in teaching. The impact of this is that it provides a viable platform for the integration of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics as students are presented with real-life situations, simulation or meaningful problems to work on.

4.4.2.4 Course delivery context-related factors

Within the curriculum delivery context, institutional or organisational factors are the main category of factors that hinder or facilitate the implementation of learner-centred approaches. The context in which the Home Economics courses were taught/delivered was therefore, considered in this study as an important factor that would influence the use of learner-centred approaches in the subject area. In this regard, students in the two universities were asked, during interviews, to indicate the aspects within the department that made them work effectively; and those that hindered their work. Table 4.6 presents a summary of aspects as reflected in students' interview responses.

Table 4-6: Features in the department that made students work effectively and those that hindered student's work

Enabling Factors	Constraining Factors
Availability of textbooks and e-resources	Heavy work load
Cooperativeness within the peer groups	Lack of purpose-built facilities
Provision of materials and tools	Travelling long distances to satellite campuses
Provision of background information/details to assignment/project expectations	Slow internet connectivity
ICT skills	Lack of whiteboard or interactive boards
Availability of lecturers for student consultations	Crowded classrooms
Availability of technical support staff.	Time schedules for other department/faculty wide courses
Access to internet	

Source: Generated from Students' interview data

Table 4.6 shows that there were a range of aspects that enabled and constrained students as they used learner-centred approaches such as project work, presentations and independent research work. Key among the enabling features were socially-based factors such as cooperativeness within the peer group and the scaffolding role provided by the lecturer through their being available for consultations.

Cooperativeness featured mainly in project-based work where students' creativity and innovativeness were an expected attribute to be exhibited. The cooperativeness was used as a peer/group scaffolding technique for students to work together encouraging each other to do the best they could in assigned project work. This element is reflected in the following response.

SA₂ indicated:

As we work we encourage every member of our group to be as creative as best as they can be. We want to produce the best as a group. As a group, we expect to produce very nice articles this year.

This cooperativeness can also be related to modelling of expert behaviour between learner and learner.

The other key socially-based aspect identified among the enabling factors was the availability of lecturers for consultation as students engaged in such learner-centred approaches as project work, presentations and literature reviews. Such lecturer-student interactions provided platforms for dialogue.

SB₆ commented:

The availability of the lecturers and also the one-on-one sessions we had with our lecturers created more confidence in us. Whenever we had challenges, the lecturers were very approachable for clarification of notes and they treated us with respect.

Interaction related factors such as relationship with lecturer were some of the enabling factors identified in this study. These interactional factors are in line with the socio-cultural theory which views learning as a social process (Knapp, 2008). Relationships with the lecturer and peers are considered to be critical to the learning situation. Within the context of teaching, this element presupposes that teaching and learning processes are essentially collaborative (Bornstein, 2007). Relationships with the lecturer (emerging in this study as lecturer consultation) and peers were thus; considered to be critical to the learning situation.

With regard to constraining factors, Table 4.6 shows that most of the factors presented by the students were structurally and organisationally-related factors, such

as absence of a purpose-built Home Economics facility, unavailability of appropriate space, limitations in scheduling of venues and time. Issues relating to inappropriateness of space are reflected in the following response by:

SB₇ who said:

What I felt could have been more helpful were the facilities themselves. The rooms were not conducive to the design approach. We needed space to come up with the patterns. Sometimes we had to work on the floor or use whatever space was available.

SB₈ reiterated:

There was lack of space in which to do design work. We would go around looking for small tables and put them together. The rooms were occupied, access to machines when another class was in session, was difficult.

Execution of practical-based activities was hampered by limitations in scheduling of venues. This was a feature unique to university A's context where satellite campuses had to be established as provisional measures to meet space demands. However, these provisional measures were having an impact on students' abilities to engage in practical based work as reflected in SB₄'s response.

The location where we do our practicals that are out of this teaching centre affects time available to do practicals. We don't have a kitchen facility at this teaching venue. We have to travel some distance to the practical base venue. We have to look for our own transport and this is very time-consuming.

The time available for learning was thus affected by the scheduling of practical sessions in venues off campus and having students commuting to these venues. Availability of adequate time to engage in authentic learning is a key requirement when using constructivist learner-centred approaches.

It can be inferred from the findings that structural factors were the main constraining factors to the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics courses in the two universities under study. Key among the structural factors identified in this study was the absence of purpose-built facilities and limited space that caused overcrowding. These findings confirm results from several other studies; (Vavrus, 2009; Zhu et al., 2011; Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012; Mendoca & Popov, 2014 and Tawalbeh & Al Asmari, 2015) which identified structural factors such as schedules and university rules and material infrastructure, limited physical facilities such as laboratory and equipment; as major impediments to effective appropriation of learner-centred approaches.

Absence of a purpose-built Home Economics facility in each of the two universities was a structural factor that compromised the quality of the learning environment. Through observations, it was established that University A was offering its B.Ed. programme at two satellite campuses. One satellite campus was stationed at a high school where the facility was rented during the school vacation period. This site offered the programme space to conduct theory lessons only. The second satellite campus (stationed a distance from the first one) had laboratories that were used for textiles and food preparation activities. University B was offering its B.Ed. programme in a laboratory within the university campus. This laboratory was used for theory lessons and textile practicals only. To conduct food or textiles experimental work, the programme used a chemistry laboratory within the faculty. University B, did however, have a purpose-built facility that was still under construction. The findings show that both University A and University B were not offering their B.Ed. programme in purpose-built facilities.

Establishing whether the B.Ed. Home Economics programme was being run in purpose-built facilities was essential because the availability of such facilities is a contextual factor that influences the organisation of teaching and learning. Unavailability of purpose-built facilities in the two universities was evidence of a structural factor that impeded the effective use of learner-centred approaches. Purpose-built facilities with the requisite laboratories, studios and equipment are essential in Home Economics programmes as these facilities provide an environment conducive to foster and support creativity and innovation in execution of project or problem-based work. This problem of lack of appropriate learning space and facilities is, however, not unique to Zimbabwean universities. Vavrus (2009) and Mendoca and Popov (2014) note that this contextual constraint is usually found in Teacher Education institutions in non-western countries where resources are limited. This influences the use of learner-centred approaches in these countries. Materials, equipment, tools, technology and physical infrastructure are part of the learning scaffolds essential in a student-centred learning environment.

One difficulty often reported in literature with regard to the implementation of learner-centred approaches is the lack of resources to support in-depth student learning. Researchers within the field of Home Economics (Piispanen, 2008; Malin, 2011) reiterate that opportunities for using problem-based learning in Home Economics are reduced due to lack of modern appliance, tools and well planned and properly functioning physical spaces. Absence of appropriate materials and physical infrastructure in the learning environment prevents the creation of effective learning scaffolds essential in student-centred learning. As Malin and Palojecki (2014) explain, a well-planned physical space is a scaffold that increases social interaction between students and between students and lecturers during group-based tasks.

Several researchers (Hug, Krajcik & Marx, 2005; Jonassen, 2011; Tamim & Grant, 2013) have also cited the provision of students with learning scaffolds as one method educators can use to facilitate deep learning and student engagement typical in learner-centred teaching approaches.

Universities in Zimbabwe receive support from the government to cover infrastructural developments. With the many priorities towards economic recovery which the government has set for itself, funding of university infrastructure development may thus be placed at the bottom of the list. This therefore requires Home Economics course designers to creatively approach the issues of space for learning by optimising what is available in organising teaching and learning using various learner-centred approaches.

One structural inhibitor emanating from a contextual setting of using rented or loaned out space was the issue of crowded classrooms. At University A, crowded classrooms were caused by having large class sizes. Crowded classrooms make group activities difficult and as such, are a barrier to the use of interactive learner-centred methodologies. This study's finding supports what has been established in previous research (Bolden & Newton, 2008; Yilmaz, 2009; Altinyelken, 2011; Gladys et al, 2012) that large class size are a barrier that impedes use of learner-centred approaches.

An inhibitive factor emanating from the students' work space was the heavy work-load. This study is therefore confirming the research findings (Beaten et. al., 2010) that suggest that the work-load in the learning environment is an important factor that influences students' use of active and independent learning approaches. Several researchers, (Cope & Staehr, 2005; Diseth, 2007; Beaten et. al., 2010), have shown

that excessive perceived or inappropriate work-loads negatively impact on students' use of certain learner-centred approaches. The influence of heavy work-loads on the use of certain learner-centred approaches is that they do not allow students to develop deep learning and understanding of course material (Cope & Staehr, 2005; Diseth, 2007; Beaten et. al, 2010).

Despite the fact that there were a number of inhibitive structural factors, results from Table 4.6 show that there were some facilitative structural factors. These included availability of textbooks and e-resources, provision of materials and tools and access to the internet. Literature (Tanui 2012) confirms that learning resources like textbooks and e-resources enable students to take up the responsibility of learning actively and independently. Technology, particularly internet, is important to the use of learner-centred approaches. There is evidence in literature (Krajcik & Shin 2014; Ravitz & Blazeovski, 2014) that integration of technology with teaching, maximises learning in such learner-centred approaches as individualised and independent learning. Despite the challenges that institutions face in providing technology, the merits of technology in learner-centred approaches identified in literature (Krajcik & Shin 2014; Ravitz & Blazeovski, 2014) include facilitating change of the learning context from teacher-centred to one that is more student-centred and providing students with hands-on activities that engage their problem-solving skills. In addition, technology facilitates creation of a more collaborative learning environment and gives students more control over content (Tanui, 2012).

Overall, three contextual factors identified in literature i.e. duration of course/intervention, (Beaten et al., 2010, Parker et al. 2011), subject/content, (Wste 2013), course delivery context, (Zhu et al., 2011), as influencing the use of learner-

centred approaches were examined. The findings emerging from the two universities are similar and confirm what has been established in research concerning the influence of each of these contextual factors on the use of learner-centred approaches.

In summary, what has been established in this study so far, is that programmes structured using the Block Release programme format led to decrease in time available in each course. This had an influence on the time available in each course for effective use of learner-centred approaches that required time such as project-based and collaborative learning activities. The comparative analysis where the level of flexibility in content was contrasted to constructivist course content features recommended in literature (Pagan, 2006; Seyyedrezaie & Barani, 2013), revealed that there were low levels of flexibility in course content design in both universities. Low levels of flexibility in course content indicated that there was excessive focus on content in the teaching of Home Economics. The influences of this on learner-centred approaches is that less opportunity may-be availed for using content to develop critical skills such as critical and creative thinking, reflection, research and collaborative skills.

The contextual factors that plague the implementation of learner-centred approaches in Teacher Education programmes in non-western countries identified in other studies (Vavrus, 2009; Zhu et al., 2011; Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012; Mendoca & Popov, 2014 and Tawalbeh & Al Asmari, 2015) were confirmed in this study. Contextual factors that constrained the use of learner-centred approaches in the two universities were the absence of purpose-built facilities, limitations in scheduling of venues, travelling long distances to satellite campuses and crowded classrooms.

This study did, however, depart from the usual focus in research on constraining factors in curriculum delivery and offered some insight into factors enabling the implementation of learner-centred approaches within the teaching and learning context of a Home Economics programme. The facilitative institutional factors included availability of textbooks and e-resources, provision of materials and tools, and access to the internet. An additional dimension to this study was that it unearthed course design features that provide conditions conducive to the use of learner-centred approaches within the Home Economics programme, which included; the use of a learning outcomes approach to course design and contextual nature of a subject which provides an effective platform for use of learner-centred approaches, such as problem-solving, cooperative, project, inquiry and case-based learning.

4.4.2.5 Level of interactivity in learning activities

The second part of the second sub-research question which focused on the learning activities, sought to determine the characteristics of the teaching methods and the level of interactivity present in learning activities used in Home Economics courses. Observations and interviews were the main tools used to collect data to answer these questions. A total of ten lessons were observed in the two universities. The lessons were in the three Home Economics subject areas (Food Technology and Nutrition, Textiles and Clothing Design and Family Studies).

The characteristics of the teaching methods in a programme have been identified in literature (Beaten et al., 2010) as a contextual factor that influences use of learner-centred approaches. Documents (course outline/modules) and observations were the main instruments used to determine the characteristic features of the teaching

methods used in the two universities. From the analysis of documents and observations, the study established that interactions dominant in course design in University A were the student-lecturer type interactions through demonstrations, guided laboratory experiences, and lectures. Integrated and used in a limited manner were the learner-learner and learner-content interactions. Group presentations and paired practical task work were the most common strategies that employed learner-learner interactions.

In University B, student-lecturer type interactions were mainly through demonstrations; lecturer facilitation of design project-work, and lectures. Integrated and used fairly extensively were the learner-learner and learner-content interactions. Group presentations and group practical task work were the most common strategies that employed learner-learner interactions. An additional strategy to engage learner-learner interactions was the use of group experimental tasks. Learner-content interactions were mainly in the form of assigned readings. Learner-technology interactions were also included and these were mainly through on-line literature searches. Observation of lessons indicated that assigned readings or literature searches were given, mainly to enable students to prepare for the next lecture.

The results show that a range of teacher-driven and learner-driven interactions were present in the teaching methods used in the two universities. Opportunities for students to interact with technology and content were also provided. Within this range of instructional methods were a number that were learner-centred e.g. student presentations, project-based work, problem-solving and on-line literature search.

Research (Shamsid-Deen & Smith, 2006; Smith & Katz, 2006; Smith, 2010) shows that problem-solving, cooperative, project, inquiry and case-based learning are viable instructional strategies that are being used in teaching of Home Economics.

The range of interactions exemplified in the Home Economics programmes in the two universities shows that the lecturers are using some forms of constructivist strategies. Though this was not overtly articulated in Home Economics Department documents, this study's results showed that there was a definite shift towards learner-centredness in Home Economics programmes through utilisation of more learner-learner and learner-technology interactions in teaching and learning. This study therefore confirms finding by other studies (Ma & Pendergast, 2010; Du Toit, 2012) that provide evidence of the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics programmes.

A study in South Africa by Du Toit (2012) documents the use of a project-based teaching and learning strategy in a Consumer Studies Teacher Development programme. Studies have also been conducted that reflect an increasing trend in adoption of learner-centred pedagogies that utilise computer technology in Home Economics. For example, Ma and Pendergast (2010) examined the effectiveness of an innovative learner-centred approach utilising computer-supported collaborative learning among Home Economics teachers in Asia and Limon (2015) explored the extensiveness of Home Economics teacher usage of ICT technologies in Hong Kong and the Philippines. This studies, therefore, acts as a prompt to Home Economics educators to engage in using learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics.

Student interactivity is a contextual factor that influences the use of learner-centred approaches. The present study sought to examine the level of interactivity in the learning activities used in the two universities. Observations were the main tool used to address these issues. Ten lessons were observed in the two research sites. The lessons were in the three Home Economics subject areas (Food Technology and Nutrition, Textiles and Clothing Design and Family Studies).

Level of interactivity was determined using Chi's (2009) taxonomy of learning interactivity (described in the following section) which gauges whether activities in a learning exercise are active, constructive or interactive. Passive activities occur when overtly the student is doing nothing e.g. listening to a lecture or watching a video. Active learning is characterised as doing something while learning (often involving physical movement). In constructive activities, learners produce some additional outputs and such output often (but not always) contain new content or relevant ideas that go beyond the information given in the learning material. Being interactive can refer to several types of overt activities involving talking.

A range of learning activities were exhibited in the five lessons observed in University A. Table 4.7 presents a summary of the level of interactivity demonstrated in the lessons observed in University A.

Table 4-7: Pattern of interactivity present in learning activities used in Home Economics courses in University A

Observation	Content of Lesson	Level of Interactivity			
		Passive	Active	Constructive	Interactive
OB ₁	Subject Area-Nutrition Type of lesson-Theory Instructional Methods used: • Lecture • Question & Answer	√			
OB ₂	Subject Area-Nutrition Type of lesson-Practical Instructional method used: • Student led practical		√	√	
OB ₃	Subject Area-Textiles Type of lesson-Practical Instructional method used • Practical • Group/spot demos • Pair work		√		√
OB ₄	Subject Area-Textiles Type of lesson-Practical Instructional methods used: • Project-based work • Individual work		√	√	
OB ₅	Subject area-Family Studies Type of lesson-Theory Instructional methods used: • Student presentations • Question and answer • Discussions		√		√

Key: Passive: No overt action

Active: Doing some action

Constructive: Production of new content/idea

Interactive: Dialogue

Table 4.7 shows that learning activities in University A were more of active with very few constructive or interactive activities. As reflected in Table 4.7 constructive activities were manifest in lessons that used student-led practical and project-based work. Interactive activities were in such methods as group work, pair work and student presentation. The theory lesson where lecture method was used was categorised as passive because students mainly listened to the lecturers' explanation, wrote notes and responded to the few questions posed to them. Table 4.7 also shows that the practical lessons were the ones that provided the most opportunities for active and constructive learning activities.

Five lessons were also observed in University B in order to determine the level of interactivity in learning activities across the three Home Economics subject areas (Food Technology and Nutrition, Textiles and Clothing Design and Family Studies). Table 4.8 presents a summary of the level of interactivity demonstrated in the lessons observed in University B.

Table 4-8: Pattern of interactivity present in learning activities used in Home Economics courses in University B

Observation	Content of Lesson	Level of Interactivity			
		Passive	Active	Constructive	Interactive
OB ₆	Subject Area-Textiles Type of lesson-Theory Instructional Methods used: • Experimental work • Group tasks		√		√
OB ₇	Subject Area-Textiles Type of lesson-Practical Instructional method used: • Project-based work • Problem solving		√	√	√
OB ₈	Subject Area-Nutrition Type of lesson-Theory Instructional method used • Student presentations • Discussion • Question and answer		√	√	√
OB ₉	Subject Area-Nutrition Type of lesson-Practical Instructional methods used: • Experimental work • Group work		√		√
OB ₁₀	Subject area-Family Studies Type of lesson-Theory Instructional methods used: • Student presentations • Question and answer • Discussions		√	√	√

Key: Passive: No overt action

Active: Doing some action

Constructive: Production of new content/idea

Interactive: Dialogue

Table 4.8 shows that learning activities in University B were active, constructive as well as interactive. Table 4.8 also shows that there were high levels of interactive activities in both theory and practical lessons. Instructional methods that provided opportunities for interactive activities included student presentations, group work and discussion whilst constructive activities featured in problem-solving, experimental and project-based work. It can be inferred from the data in Table 4.8 that Home Economics courses in University B were taught using learner-centred approaches that offered more active learner participation as evidenced by the presence of active, constructive and interactive activities.

Besides lesson observations, the researcher sought, through interviews to understand whether students used active learning approaches or not. Students indicated that they had opportunities to use independent and collaborative learning activities as reflected in the following statements.

SA₃ said:

Yes, we have those opportunities for independent learning, like right now we have presentations and projects we are doing alone. The value of such learning experiences is that you are independent to come up with your own designs which show your creativity and originality because you are the one who would have done that.

SA₁ added:

We have opportunities for independent learning when we are given an assignment topic. Besides concentrating on the information to answer the question, you also learn more by researching where you want to get information relevant to what you want to do.

As reflected in the responses given by the students, independent learning, not only enabled students to be creators of their own original work but also enabled them to

develop their research skills as they made internet searches for information. For some students, independent learning provided opportunities to interact and reflect on content encountered in different courses. The sentiment is reflected in the following statement where:

SB₇ commented:

Yes, we learned a lot as a group, but in independent learning I had to learn how to approach the content and how to implement what I am learning as an individual and how to fit what I have learnt into the program itself. My own independent learning and thinking would have come in class discussion where I was able to contribute from an independent point of view. My views, values and expectations in the way that I looked at the content represented independent learning to me.

Opportunities to collaborate with other students were presented when students were assigned pair or group tasks. Collaborative work was viewed as valuable in reducing work-load in group tasks and enabling one to deal with academic as well as social problems.

SB₆ who indicated that:

Group work minimises work; instead of being made to present your own topic presenting in three's or four's, the content is shared and is not much. Through group work you come together, you become closer and you might not just end up researching for academic work, you may even become closer in solving personal problems.

The essence of collaborative learning and its role in social learning was clearly expressed in the following statement by,

SB₇ who stated:

The groups I belonged to were the one thing that I came to appreciate. As an adult, I saw myself stretching through learning with others. It was not just my knowledge or way of doing things, but there was a lot of collaborative thinking and working in groups and when it came even to assignments or preparing for exams, we worked a lot as a group. It also helped me to bond with my group mates because it was not just collaborating for social life, but also for the purpose of academic life and you would know in the group if you do not know this someone will come with an answer to the question.

The results from observations and students' interviews showed that there was a fair level of interactivity in Home Economics learning activities in the two universities. Comparing levels of interactivity in the two universities, the results showed that in University A, learning activities were more of active, with constructive and interactive activities used but to a limited extent. In University B, the whole range of interactivity was demonstrated with learning activities utilising active, constructive and interactive activities. Learning activities in University B tended to have a fairly higher level of constructive activities because the philosophy guiding teaching across the department was grounded in the design-based (problem-solving) approach. The design-based approach offers learners an opportunity to design and make artefacts using problem solving, thinking and evaluative processes. Literature (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; Ravitz, 2012) shows that when such methods are used, more active and constructive learning occurs.

These results therefore show that there were fair levels of active learning utilised in the teaching of Home Economics in the two universities. The above finding is supportive of literature reviewed for this study (Rowley, Jensen & Rowley, 2005; Ma & Pendergast, 2010) which indicated that active learning commensurate with the

constructivist model of learning had been identified in Home Economics teaching and learning settings. One research study which provides evidence for this is by Rowley et al (2005) which distinctly set out to precisely document the implementation of active learning practices in a Home Economics programme. The presence of active learning practices in the teaching of Home Economics within the SDAC region has also been documented (Komagushi 2012; Du Toit 2012).

The presence of active learning in the teaching of Home Economics is in line with socio-cultural thinking regarding learning. The socio-cultural perspective supports use of active learning. One of the basic tenets of the socio-cultural theory is that learning is associated with activity and this active learning is essential to the development of higher cognitive functioning (Vygotsky, 1978; Leont'ev, 1981). The assumption of this tenet is that teaching and learning should be activity-oriented. Home Economics by nature is a practical, activity-oriented subject. The declarative knowledge (theoretical) and procedural knowledge (practical) subsumed within the subject provides a foundation for the enactment of various activities during teaching and learning. These then are the cultural aspects within the subject context shaping the teaching of Home Economics.

The second finding which can be drawn from observation and interview data is that, there was some real learning occurring in Home Economics programmes as fair amount of active, constructive and interactive activities were incorporated in teaching and learning of Home Economics in the two universities. Determination of levels of interactivity in a learning activity provides indications of whether real learning is taking place, particularly the meaning-making/generation of knowledge type of learning. Chi, (2009) argues that the nature of interactivity of an activity should be clearly established so as to determine the value of the activity to student learning.

These findings are in line with taxonomies provided in literature (Chi 2009) that differentiate the level of activity displayed in each instructional method in terms of being active, constructive and interactive.

Ensuring that real learning is occurring is a fundamental principle of constructivism. Activities in Home Economics should thus, be judged by the value of the activity to student learning. In setting out learning activities in Home Economics, course designers should be guided by the learning theories such as the socio-cultural theory undergirding this study. Epistemology according to the socio-cultural theory is that knowledge is a state of understanding constructed by every knowledgeable person (Eun, 2010; Vavrus et al., 2014). This means that every individual is capable of generating knowledge if placed in the right environment. In this case, the right environment is one where the Home Economics student is in an environment that values teaching and learning approaches that have high levels of student engagement through the use of active, constructive and interactive learning activities. One critical advantage that Home Economics as a subject has is that the practical and family and consumer focused-nature of the subject provides a favourable context for the utilisation of active, constructive and interactive learning activities.

In addition, according to the epistemology of socio-cultural theory, knowledge construction is always mediated and facilitated by cultural practices and artefacts (Scott & Palinscar 2013). Krajcik and Shin (2014) view the process of building scientific artefacts as one of the ways in which students construct their own knowledge. The artefacts, be they in textiles, clothing, food or home furnishing become the avenues through which students in Home Economics create that which adds more to knowledge or skills, as they work in projects or problem- based

activities. Observations and interviews were further used to collect data on the presence of factors that enable or constrain the design and use of constructive and interactive learning activities in Home Economics courses. Table 4.9 shows the factors identified in constructive and interactive learning activities in Universities A and B.

Table 4-9: Factors that enable or constrain the design and use of constructive and interactive learning activities in Home Economics courses in Universities A and B.

Learning Activity	University A		University B	
	Enabling Factors	Constraining Factors	Enabling Factors	Constraining Factors
Constructive	Provision of materials for students to complete their artefacts.	Absence of instructional strategies that develop students' knowledge construction skills	Use of instructional strategies that develop students' knowledge construction skills	Limited provision of materials for students to complete their artefacts.
	Use of concrete cases/tasks (case studies/projects)		Use of concrete cases/tasks (case studies/projects)	
	Modelling of the desired skill by lecturer then student complete the task on their own.		Modelling of the desired skill by lecturer then student complete the task on their own.	
	Modelling of expert behaviour by student to student		Modelling of expert behaviour by student to student	
Interactive	Collaborative learning evident	Absence of strategies that stimulate reflective dialogue	Collaborative learning evident	Limited use of strategies that stimulate reflective dialogue
		Low English language proficiency		

Table 4.9 shows that a number of constraining and enabling factors affected the design and use of constructive and interactive activities in University A. The enabling features in constructive activities included the use of concrete case/tasks and projects which made learning contextual. Modelling of skills by the lecturer was done in practical lessons through individual and group demonstrations. A key constraint to constructive activities was the absence of appropriate instructional strategies such as problem-solving (design) approach, resulting in very limited development of students thinking and knowledge making skills.

Table 4.9 also shows the constraining and enabling factors in University A that influenced the design and use of interactive instructional methods such as group discussions and group or pair work. Enabling features (gathered through observations) included the presence of a collaborative spirit during pair work practicals as students assisted each other in tasks such as developing garment patterns. Discussions were mainly constrained by limited dialogue caused by low language proficiency. There was absence, in some discussions, of strategies that stimulate reflective discussions.

Table 4.9 shows that the learning environment in University B had more enabling features where the instructional methods (problem-solving/design approach) were used to develop students' problem-solving skills and knowledge construction skills. Facilitation for development of these attributes was through the project work assigned in the three subject areas. Through observation, it was noted that the lecturer's relationship with students was an enabling one, as they guided students in individual project work. The major constraining factor to the use of constructive activities was the limited provision of materials for completion of 'design and construction tasks. The department did not provide the students with all the materials

as students were expected to purchase those materials and tools that were not provided to them. Some students therefore faced challenges in procuring the best materials suited to the design and construction tasks assigned to them. With regard to the interactive activities, Table 4.9 shows that dialogue was evident mainly in the class discussions. Collaborative learning and the facilitation role of the lecturer were the other enabling features that enhanced the use of interactive activities. One key constraining factor was the limited use of instructional strategies that stimulate reflective discussions.

The data in Table 4.9 indicate that there were a number of enabling factors offering support to students' use of constructive and interactive learning activities as reflected in the socio-cultural theory underpinning this study. A key tenet of the socio-cultural theory is that learning is mediated. Cognitive development is viewed as a mediated mental activity (Vygotsky, 1987; Lantolf, 2013). Mediation is seen as the basic mechanism for development and it is the process where all higher cognitive functions develop (Eun, 2015; Al-Madhi & Al-Wadi, 2015). As shown in the data in Table 4.6, there were social, cognitive and cultural support mechanisms or scaffolds that were available to students which assisted their learning. Socially related support systems were mainly the lecturer's facilitative role and the interactions between students during collaborative learning activities.

Collaborative learning activities in the form of group work play an important mediational role in students' learning. The following excerpts reflect some of the mediational benefits of collaborative group work indicated by some of the students. For example, for one student, group discussion enabled the student to capture and easily recall information.

SA₁ mentioned that:

From my own point of view, I like group discussions very much; it seems I recall much more information given in a discussion. It's easy for me to capture ideas when they are explained by my peers.

Collaborative activities such as group discussions can have a mediational effect enabling students to correct misconceptions and encourage each other.

SB₈ indicated that:

We learnt a lot from each other during group discussions. We participate, correct each other and encourage each other to work hard because we want to do better than the previous groups.

The cognitive support system was in the form of instructional strategies that were used. For example, in University B, problem-solving (design process) was used as a medium for the development of knowledge construction skills. Lesson observations also revealed that scaffolding techniques such as modelling (demonstrating execution of certain processes in practical lessons) and coaching were used as support strategies during teaching and learning in the two universities.

Scaffolding is a concept Vygotsky (1987) incorporates in his theory where the teacher and others support the learner's cognitive development by providing support structures to get the learner to the next level or stage of development. In a teaching and learning context, scaffolding is an instructional structure in which the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task, and then gradually allows the learner to take sole responsibility for the learning task. Scaffolding is a process likely to occur in the Home Economics lecture room as learners and the lecturers utilise various active, socially based learning approaches.

4.4.2.6 Re-conceptualization of Assessment instruments

The third part of the second sub-research question sought to establish how assessment practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches. What was essential to establish with regard to assessment practices was whether assessment instruments had been re-conceived and how constraining and enabling factors had influenced the creation of a new assessment framework, if available. Data from the documents and interviews were used to establish these two aspects.

Analysis of documents (course outlines and programme regulations) showed that assessment practices in the two universities were still focused more on summative evaluation. The elements in the course outlines and regulations which reflected this were:

- Emphasis on ensuring that results are objective and reducing possible bias from evaluation procedures.
- Emphasis on documenting change in students' understanding and not in meaning-making.
- Reliance on the use of essay questions, tests, theory and practical exercises to evaluate students' performance.

Summative evaluation was the common assessment practice used in the two universities. No features of a more learner-centred approach to assessment (i.e. assessment for learning) were present in University A.

Despite the common features among assessment practices in the two universities, a different feature integrating some assessment for learning was noted in University B. This feature was related to their use of the design (problem-solving) approach in the practical activities. Assessment for learning is a learner-centred approach to

assessment, in which evaluation of students' design projects enables the testing of understanding and inquiry skills (i.e. problem synthesis- explaining, interpreting and presenting solutions to problems, research skills- collecting and interpreting data).

It was pertinent to establish, through the interviews, whether lecturers had oriented their relationship with students to embrace the 'new conception of a learner' as epitomised in constructivist instructional methodologies. To determine this, lecturers were asked to comment on the extent to which they would engage students in decision-making regarding assessment.

Lecturer responses on the involvement of students in decisions regarding assessment were centred more on allowing students to give feedback through course evaluation. The aspect of involving them in assessment of their own work was viewed as a process that would occur at the end of the assessment when the lecturer had awarded a grade. The student's input would only involve checking the fairness of marks allocated.

LA₁ commented:

Yes, I think students should also comment. Many a times lecturers just evaluate work the way they feel. Allowing students to have a say will see to it that both parties are doing it fairly so that students are not disadvantaged.

Involvement of students in assessment was viewed as feasible to a certain extent, as long as there was some control by the lecturer. One of the lecturers viewed student input as being possible in evaluating activities such as student seminar presentations.

LB₃ said:

It's good as long as it doesn't withdraw the lecturer from the assessment exercise. I think students can have an input as students present their work while everyone is listening. The lecturer and other students help each other to score the presentation or bring their comments and use them to weigh the score. But it needs a lot of control. It just can't be students conducting the assessment.

This response of involving students in assessment of presentations was in line with Lui and Carless' (2006) research findings, in their research on peer feedback, that peer assessment was mainly used in group presentations as it was easy for the lecturer to check and collate marks given by students. Fear of introducing subjectivity into the assessment was a concern that emerged. This was reflected in the following response by

LB4:

Student participation in assessment should be to a certain level and not the whole of the assessment. Being students, they could be subjective. They might all want to pass and they wouldn't want a colleague not to do well. They might be biased and more favourable to their peers.

These observations revealed that lecturers in the two universities had not re-oriented their thinking regarding involving students in learner-centred assessment approaches. As reflected in the responses, lecturers had a cautious view on involving students in assessment practices. The students' role in assessment was envisaged as possible, only as feedback in course evaluation, group presentation or practical work, and not in the students' individual assignments. Course evaluation focuses on the evaluation of the lecturer as it determines how well they organised, controlled and delivered lectures. Practices reflected in the lecturer's statements showed a tendency to want to control and exclude students from certain assessment activities. This coincided with previous research by Lui and Carless (2006) which

indicated that academics were resistant to involving students in assessment, as assessment was generally considered to be the sole responsibility of the teacher.

Teacher control of assessment processes is not a feature of learner-centred assessment (Nicol, 2010; Weimer, 2013). A key premise of learner-centred assessment is that students have innate authentic knowledge of assessment (Msonde, 2011). Students in learner-centred assessment are therefore key participants in the assessment process due to possessing this innate knowledge of assessment. Due to the interactive nature of learning, assessment is seen as a two-way process involving either the teacher and learner or learner and peer (Kauchak & Eggen, 2007; Huitt, 2009). Curriculum design features must therefore, integrate opportunities for students to develop the capabilities to operate as judges of their own learning (Boud & Melloy, 2013). As Nicol, (2010) explains, such assessment features are integrated in curriculum design, the active role of students is acknowledged.

Students were also asked their views regarding their involvement in assessment of their work. Responses given by most students showed a preference for non-involvement in assessment process as reflected in the following comment:

SA1:

No, I don't think students should be involved in decisions on assessment because one can have a bias of trying to defend the mark one would have awarded. The way I see it is that I have more respect for the evaluation that is given by the lecturer.

The similarities in views towards biased assessment emerged in students' responses, though, as reflected in the following response, greater chances of bias

were deemed possible. Bias was deemed possible due to the nature of relationships students would have with their peers as reflected in the following response:

SA₃ said:

To some extent, I don't think it's okay because you can simply assess someone on the basis of say, his or her relationship with you.

SB₅ added:

There should be no student involvement in assessment. I think the student can just help one another on how to improve on those projects, but the lecturer should give the final mark. Students cannot give marks, because they can be biased, unlike lecturers.

One of the students felt that the involvement of students in assessment of their work was of value.

S₄ said:

To some extent, it will help us maybe during the discussions on how well we can improve. During the analysis, other students can give me feedback on how I can improve on my work. The feedback should not be used in my final grade but only help me to improve on my work.

Findings generated from the students' responses revealed two key things; students' reservations concerning participating in assessment that involves determination of, and concern about bias in summative assessment processes. Reservations about participating in assessment that included grading could be an indication that students were not used to being involved in such decision-making processes. This is line with previous research (Aliusta & Ozer, 2016) which indicated that students are usually reluctant to participate in decision-making in assessment activities because they are not used to it. Students were generally concerned that their involvement in

assessment would bring bias to summative assessment processes. The students' concerns over bias were similar to what was established in a study by Lui and Carless (2006), which reported that issues of reliability and relationships affecting fair grading were raised by lecturers and students in their study. As Price, O'Donovan and Rust (2007) explain, concern about the reliability of assessment arises when assessment is used as a performance indicator for the student or institution. Students may thus, be expressing concern on ending up with performance indicators that are unfair and biased.

Assessment practices in Home Economics Teacher Development Programmes need to reflect increased student involvement. In order to increase lecturer and student co-participation in assessment, Attard et al., (2010) recommend that both lecturers and students be trained on the philosophy, methods and skills underlying student-centred learning.

Re-orientation of lecturers' and students' attitudes, beliefs and actions to embrace learner-centred assessment is essential to the effective implementation of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. Though this is an ideal element in ensuring effective appropriation of learner-centred approaches, it is essential to acknowledge that research has shown that involving students in assessment is a contentious and problematic issue (Di Napoli, 2004). Formative and summative assessment in universities (as well as in other learning institutions) is usually used to determine grades that are linked to certification and accreditation. Inclusion of peer or student self-assessment is therefore not usually considered valid enough to use in assigning grades for accreditation and certification.

An alternative way of implementing learner-centred assessment is through using peer reviews. Through interviews, it was established that the use of peer assessment was a new concept with both lecturers and students showing reluctance towards using the technique. These results confirm what has already been established by Sweeney (2012) in her research on the use of assessment for learning in Home Economics, where she found that both students and teachers had reservations about using peer assessment techniques. In peer reviews, students assess their peer's work and provide written feedback (Liu & Carless, 2006; Cartney, 2010; Nicol, 2011). Student evaluation in this context, is used for productive learning and not for determining the quality of a student's performance (Price et al, 2007; Nicol, 2011).

Re-orientation of assessment practices was not a process considered possible by all the four lecturers in the two universities. When the lecturers were asked whether they would consider changing current assessment practices to include more learner-centred ones, the following responses showed an unwillingness to change due to lack of knowledge about how such assessments are done.

LB4 said:

I personally am not aware of programmes where students can assess themselves. I only know of instances where they can do their assignments online and mark it for themselves like what is done in other universities. I think that's where the weakness is; in that we are not aware of these methods of self-assessment. We can be made aware of such kind of assessment by the faculty or whoever is knowledgeable through training programmes.

For the other lecturer, however, the reason for not considering changing assessment practices to include more student involvement was largely because such practices were time-consuming. The following statement reflected her view:

LA2:

No, I would not consider changing the current assessment procedures to use those that increase student involvement as such procedures need time. They are time-consuming. The heavy teaching loads and demands to publish regularly does not give lecturers time to even consider adopting such approaches.

Re-orientation of assessment practices in line with principles of student-centred learning is essential in making teaching and learning in Home Economics Teacher Education programmes learner-centred. Though this is a vital process, the observations showed that lecturers were not considering changing assessment practices due to lack of knowledge regarding assessment for learning practices such as peer assessment. This result was congruent with what other studies have established. Florez and Sammons (2013) report that insufficient knowledge concerning the implementation of learner-centred assessment was one of the sources of resistance towards adopting the assessment practice. Concern over the time-consuming nature of the learner-centred assessment raised by one of the lecturers had been confirmed in previous research (Langan, et al. 2005; Hopfenbeck, Petou & Tolo, 2015) as discouraging the adoption of peer assessment in student-centred learning.

Assessment procedures that require more student involvement are usually more complex and add to the lecturer's teaching work load (Lui & Carless, 2006; Hopfenbeck et al., 2015). In addition, concerns about the other core functions (i.e. research, community service) which the lecturers have to accomplish may create resistance towards change of assessment practices to those that are more learner-centred.

Overall, the above findings showed two things. First; that assessment practices in the two universities still reflected more of the teacher-centred practices, though efforts to integrate assessment for learning (a learner-centred approach to assessment) were evident in university B. Second; lecturers were not envisaging changing assessment practices to more learner-centred ones, mainly due to lack of capacity (knowledge and competencies) to correctly and confidently use learner-centred assessment procedures. There was, however, willingness expressed to undergo professional development, to enhance knowledge and skills regarding the use of learner-centred assessment.

4.4.3 Institutional policies and practices influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics

The third sub-research question sought to find out how faculty and university-wide policies and practices influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics. With respect to this question, two essential aspects to answering the question were, first; establishing the way the system (in the two universities under study) had changed to support the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching and learning and second; determining how wide-spread these changes were and the influenced this has had on appropriation of learner-centred approaches in the subject area. Data from documents and interviews were used to address these two issues.

Quality Assurance manuals were the documents analysed to establish the university's support on student-centred teaching and learning. They were examined to determine policy guidelines set out on teaching and learning. It was noted that in University A, the institutional quality assurance policy document listed focus on quality teaching and learning as one of the key elements towards striving for quality

practices. Copies of the quality assurance policy documents were in the faculty office.

In University B, a comprehensive booklet had been designed and it contained several elements deemed essential to the university's quality assurance of teaching and learning processes. A key element that was listed and described was the Teaching and Learning Methodologies. Key expected procedures, processes (the use of teaching methodologies that integrated ICT, multi-media and learner-centred approaches) and benchmarks/standards were also outlined. Copies of the quality assurance documents were availed to the faculty and departments.

The presence of an institutional policy guiding the implementation of an innovative practice such as the use of learner-centred approaches to learning noted in the two universities is documented in research as an essential element to developing and sustaining such practice. Research (Kotter, 2012; Kezar, 2014; Brown & Kurzweil, 2016) which has examined strategies utilised by institutions that have demonstrated success in implementing innovative practices cite commitment to a student-centred mission as one of the strategies that is used.

The analysis of documents showed that University B had articulated its commitment to student-centred learning through its detailed Teaching and Learning Policy Manual. As Brown and Kurzweil (2016) argue, statements prioritising a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning, and concrete plans for operationalising the goal are the foundation to successful efforts to change institutional culture and practice.

The availability of policy documents focusing on the prioritisation of learner-centred approaches can be construed as a reflection of the way the system in University B

had changed to support the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching and learning. Policy documents in University B showed an appreciation of the need for quality in teaching and learning processes. What would definitely reflect a change in the system towards the use of learner-centred approaches would be a clearly defined statement prioritising the use of the approaches in teaching and learning. Institutional support for the use of learner-centred approaches is the key to the development and sustenance of this instructional practice across the university programmes, including the Home Economics Teacher Development programme.

In order to determine the level of the use of learner-centred approaches across the department, faculty and university; lecturers were interviewed. Lecturers in University A were asked whether the use of learner-centred approaches was a feature in the department, as well as about their departments' level of engagement with issues relating to teaching methods:

LA₁ said:

Not really. The assumption is that lecturers did teaching methods at Teachers' Colleges and we never deliberate on these issues. It's just assumed the lecturer knows.

LA₂ added:

Nothing much is done to engage department lecturers on issues relating to teaching methods mainly due to lack of leadership and unavailability of time due to heavy workloads.

These observations showed that in University A, there was no deliberate engagement of lecturers on issues regarding teaching at department level.

When lecturers from University B were asked whether the use of learner-centred approaches was a feature in the department and whether their department engaged on issues relating to teaching methods, the following comments exemplify some of the lecturers' sentiments.

LB₃ stated:

Yes, within the department we do share the same perspective in terms of the use of learner-centred approaches. There is a design-based approach in the teaching and learning factored across all subject areas.

LB₄ concurred when she said:

Yes, we do share the same perspective on the use of learner-centred approaches. We do because I have seen that we almost have the same approaches of teaching where we are giving student presentations, research work and group work.

The researcher also sought to determine, from the lecturers, how wide-spread the use of learner-centred approaches was, at faculty level. LA₁ from University A gave the following response;

No, we have never discussed the use of learner-centred approaches at faculty level. If students are getting exposed to these methods, it's determined by the lecturer. We have not sat down and determined it.

In University B, lecturers were also asked to indicate the extent to which learner-centred approaches were used at faculty level.

LB₄ indicated:

Though we have not formally discussed it at faculty level, other departments in the faculty do use some learner-centred approaches. We have seen unintentionally some of these presentations being done in some lectures, and also we hear from the students that they are preparing a presentation for such and such a subject.

These two observations revealed that discussions regarding the use of learner-centred approaches were not formally organised at faculty level. There was, however, evidence, particularly from university B, that some use of learner-centred approaches was present within the faculty.

To corroborate the lecturers' responses on these matters, students were asked the same question on whether they encountered the use of learner-centred approaches in the faculty wide/common courses they attended. SA₁ in University A stated:

In faculty-wide courses it was more of lecture method and then we would have group discussion. We had a few seminar presentations in one of the Special Needs Education courses. If I were to rate the frequency of use, I think 50 % of the methods were lecture methods and 50 % were learner-centred.

The use of both teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches is a theme emerging in the following response.

SA₂ said:

Courses outside the department used both learner and teacher-centred approaches because, at first, we were given some lectures and later on, we were given chance to do presentations. In terms of ratio, I can say 25% of the teaching was learner-centred. Lecturers used the lecture method for a long time when they were explaining their modules; then later on they gave us work to present in groups.

Students in University B also responded to the question on how widespread the use of learner-centred approaches was in the faculty.

SB₆ mentioned that:

Most of them were teacher-centred. Research methods was teacher-centred. It was lectures mainly. ICT was learner-centred. We did some of the things

such as learning to use Excel, Microsoft word as well as posting assignments. Many faced problems because they learnt it on their own but it helped a lot.

SB₇ concurred when she commented that:

In ICT teaching was more of learner-centred. In the research methods, our lecturer focused more on the lecture method.

Responses from the students in the two universities showed that the lecture method was quite common in courses offered at faculty level. Courses such as Research Methods generally used teacher-centred approaches with ICT courses offering opportunities for using learner-centred approaches through learner-technology interactions.

The researcher also sought to determine, from the lecturers, how wide-spread the use of learner centred approaches was at university level. In University A, lecturers indicated that they were not sure about how wide-spread use of learner-centred approaches was in other faculties but assumed such methods, were maybe in use, as lecturers had received training in the use of an e-Learning management platform.

In response to this, LA₁ said:

The Teaching and Learning Centre has provided some staff development programmes on teaching methods. The last workshop we had focused on methodologies that involved e-learning, where students are active participants doing their researches on the net. Lecturers were also trained to send notes and mark assignments on-line.

In University B, lecturers were also asked to indicate how wide-spread the use of learner-centred approaches were at university level. In responding to this question:

LB4 said:

Yes, the university promotes the use of learner-centred approaches. Mainly, we get this from the students in other departments talking about their presentations.

Institutional support for the use of learner-centred approaches was also evident in the following response by LB3;

I think the university is encouraging the use of learner-centred approaches because I once attended a workshop based on learner-centred methodologies, and I remember the Vice Chancellor, in this workshop, saying we have to facilitate learning. I am sure it is starting from the head of the institution and this shows that the administration is supportive.

The findings from documents, student and lecturer responses showed that at university level (in the two universities), support for the use of learner-centred approaches was subsumed in policy guidelines on teaching and learning as reflected mainly in the Quality Assurance Policy Documents. University B did however have more concrete support for learner-centred approaches through publication of explicit processes of ensuring integration of learner-centred approaches in teaching across the university. In both universities, there was evidence of some support emanating from the university administration through facilitation of university-wide workshops on e-learning based approaches. University administration's support for integration of learner-centred approaches was evident in the two universities. The significance of such support is confirmed in literature (Kezar, 2014; Grossman et al., 2015) where senior administration's support is identified as a core factor for effecting institutional culture change towards student-centred teaching and learning.

At faculty level, there was no explicit acknowledgement of the use of learner-centred approaches in the two universities. However, learner-centred approaches were in

use as reflected in students' responses. The level of the use of learner-centred approaches was not high, as mass lectures using the lecture method were generally utilised in these faculty-wide courses. The ICT courses had some element of student-centredness as students had opportunities to work individually to perfect their ICT skills. Differences in the level of use of learner-centred approaches across the faculty, emerging from the two universities, are congruent with what has been established in other studies (Kim & Hwang, 2017) showing differences in practices regarding use of student-centred approaches across disciplines in one university faculty in a Korean university.

At department level, a common approach to teaching and learning using learner-centred approaches was evident in University B. This was even expressed in the departments' core values, and as such, it enabled the use of learner-centred across all subject areas within the department. In University A, learner-centred approaches were used as a choice lecturers make, as there was no common guiding philosophy to their implementation.

The findings from the responses of the lecturers showed that there was more deliberate support for the use of learner-centred approaches in University B than in University A. A culture that is supportive towards the implementation of learner-centred approaches is essential to the appropriation of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. This is in line with literature (Ravitz 2010; Zeiser et al., 2014) which stresses the importance of a supportive institutional culture that aligns with the learner-centred approach. The influence of a supportive institutional culture is that it facilitates effective implementation of learner-centred methods of teaching and learning in Home Economics teacher development programmes.

4.4.4 Support that is likely to influence sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics

The fourth sub-research question sought to find out lecturers' views on the kind of support that was likely to influence the sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

The researcher needed to determine the kind of support lecturers perceived as essential. Lecturers in the two universities were therefore, asked to indicate the kind of support they required to increase the use and sustenance of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics. Some of the interviewed lecturers commented on the kind of support required and the specific areas they would like the training to focus on. In response to this question, LA₁ desired to improve her competencies in using e-learning in teaching.

LA₁ said;

The support I require is that I become very competent with regard to the use of e-Learning so that it will be easy to transmit course content and assignments onwards to our students.

For LA₂ creating discussion platforms for Home Economics academics and reducing class sizes was the support she sought.

LA₂ stated:

Scaling down class sizes, learner and lecturer contact is affected as we fail to really reach the learners. There is also need to create a platform where lecturers meet and share ideas on the use of these approaches. Lots more training is very essential as most lecturers need to be refreshed on methods of teaching.

For, LB₃, training to use of technology in learning was the main area of learning she desired.

LB₃ indicated:

Availability of modified classrooms that allow the use of modern technology as well as staff development for lecturers to appreciate the newer methods coming is essential. We know about these newer methods but don't know how to use them.

LB₄ reiterated:

Training is necessary so that we will be doing standardized work as well as up-skilling of the lecturer. The method we were discussing on peer assessment; I need to be trained on such approaches.

It was evident from the lecturers' responses that the main support they required was professional development and engaging with other Home Economics educators in Communities of Practice. The support perceived as essential by the lecturers was in line with practices recommended in literature (Aliusta & Ozer, 2016) which stress that the shift to a student-centred learning approach is a complex process which requires teacher educators to acquire new knowledge and skills and unlearn previous beliefs.

Professional development is viewed in literature (Fullan, 2006; Elmore, 2007; Mizell, 2010; Helleve, 2010; Pitsoe & Maile, 2012) as the most effective strategy to enable practising teachers to change their classroom practice. The professional development model recommended in literature (Darling-Hammond, 2006) is one that calls for extensive practice, intensive supervision and expert modelling, coupled with the use of reflective methods. The use of such a model ensures that teachers can translate new theories about learning into practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Professional development that is offered through the traditional 'one shot' approach or disconnected seminars that do not link theory to practice is not recommended in

research (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Anderson & Freebody, 2012; Korthagen & Kessels, 2015).

When indicating the kind of support lecturers required, a lecturer in University A mentioned that she would like to be afforded opportunities to meet with other lecturers and share ideas on the use of learner-centred approaches in 'Communities of Practice'. Communities of Practice are a strategy of collective learning in a shared domain of human activity (Kimble, 2008; Wenger, 2014). With reference to this study, a group of Home Economics teacher educators working together to seek greater understanding of the theory and practice of student-centred learning would constitute a Community of Practice. As Wenger (2014) elaborates, Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a common concern for something in their practice, and learn to improve their performance through regular interactions.

Using Communities of Practice as a collective learning strategy is recognized in literature as the 'best practice' procedure in that it takes cognisance of the complexity of practice and integrates in its strategy different learning theories such as experiential learning, connectivism and social constructivism (Bates, 2014). The use of Communities of Practice is also recommended as the best practice in that the design and development of the learning strategy is informed by research from other related areas such as collaborative learning (Cambridge, Kaplan & Suter, 2005) and digital learning (Know, 2014). The socio-cultural theory underpinning this study is in support of the use of learning strategies such as Communities of Practice as it fits in with one of the key assumptions that learning is a social process.

Communities of Practice offer participants opportunities for collaboration, dialogue, mutual active engagement and reflection as they share a common concern for

something in their practice (Jimenez-Silva, 2012; Wenger, 2014; McCloughlin, 2017). These are all elements embedded in social learning processes. Patton and Parker, 2017) used a socio-cultural perspective to demonstrate the usefulness and applicability of Community of Practice framework to the analysis of learning among a group of teacher educators with a common purpose and concerns. Results provided a justification for the use of a Community of Practice framework in enabling Home Economics teacher educators to explore the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, qualitative data that were collected for this study were presented, analysed and discussed. The main objective of the study was to examine how contextual factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics at university level. The objectives reflected the main and sub-research questions. In the process of data presentation, analysis and discussion, data from observations and documents were used to corroborate findings from the interviews. To ensure trustworthiness and credibility of data, triangulation of the data was used to reduce chances of drawing false conclusions.

Generally, the findings of the present study indicated that although there were a number of contextual factors that did not enabling a deeper and systematic approach to the use of learner-centred approaches, there were positive features within the curriculum, and learning activities that offered opportunities to create a more comprehensive and systematic approach to the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. This confirmed the basic premise of the present study, that lecturers fail to take advantage of the features within the curriculum and

learning activities in Home Economics that offer opportunities for student-centred learning. This is possibly due to the lack of a comprehensive and systematic approach to using the approaches in teaching.

The next chapter provides a summary of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations that can be adopted by course designers and policy-makers in an effort to increase learner-centredness in teaching and learning of Home Economics in Higher Education. After making recommendations based on the findings of the study, the chapter also makes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the whole study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. Five sections are presented in this chapter. The first section presents a summary of the study by highlighting the key points from each of the preceding four chapters. The second section presents a summary of the findings, taking into consideration the research questions, research objectives and assumptions of the study. In the third section, conclusions based on the study's findings are drawn. The fourth section offers recommendations based on the major findings while the fifth and final section suggests areas for future research.

This study aimed to examine contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. The assumptions underpinning the study were that there are a number of contextual factors that constrained the systematic approach to the use of learner-centred approaches, causing lecturers to fail to take advantage of the features within the curriculum, learning activities and assessment in Home Economics that offered opportunities for student-centred learning.

5.2 Summary

This section gives a summary of key points from each of the four preceding chapters. This is part of the summary of the preceding chapters 1-4.

Chapter One highlighted the problem and its context. The chapter began by highlighting the international scene, moved into Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, then finally into Zimbabwe, where the present study was conducted. The chapter discussed developments in teaching and research on learner-centred approaches in Home Economics. Generally, the background showed that no study, particularly in Zimbabwe, has examined the realities of using learner-centred approaches based on constructivist instruction at university level, to obtain a deeper understanding of how contextual factors can be used to explain the discrepancy between intended and actual practice with regards to the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics. The chapter then gave the statement of the problem, presented the purpose of the study, the research questions, research objectives and assumptions of the study. The chapter further discussed the significance of the study where it was highlighted that the findings of the study might enable course designers to develop strategies that may assist in supporting effective and sustained use of learner-centred methods in existing Home Economics teacher development programmes. The chapter then described the delimitations of the study and defined the key terms as used in the study. In the last section, the chapter gave an outline of the organisation of chapters.

Chapter Two reviewed the literature. The chapter focused on the theoretical framework, conceptual framework and literature based on the research questions in order to see what is known and what is not known about the questions raised in the study. The review mainly centred on two theories which have a bearing on the present study. The first was the Socio-cultural theory by Vygotsky (1978) which provided a context for the analysis of the nature of classroom practice with regard to using of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics teacher development

programmes. It recognises the need for one to consider the influence of various social, cultural and institutional contextual constraints or enablers in trying to understand the implementation of a more learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. The second theory was Engestrom's (2001) second generation Cultural-historical Activity theory which provides a framework that can be used to examine human activity or practice (Roos, 2012). It recognises the need for one to focus on the social, cultural and historical context in which teaching and learning is occurring in order to understand the classroom/departmental/institutional practices obtaining in that context.

On the models offering appropriate guidelines for framing the examination of contextual factors influencing decisions to use the learner-centred approach in teaching Home Economics, the review of literature focused on the Groff and Mouza (2008) Layers of Influence Model; the Hall and Kidman (2004) T-L Map and the Kozma (2003) Multiple Level Analysis Framework. The conceptual model used to structure the analysis of influences was an adaptation of the Groff and Mouza (2008) Layers of Influence Model where the teaching and learning environment was divided into micro, meso and macro levels. By using this model, the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching of Home Economics was examined within the contexts of the three layers (i.e. the micro, meso and macro) that influence its application. Further, the chapter discussed the contextual factors emanating from the teaching and learning context and factors from the institutional context that influence use of learner-centred approaches in Teacher Education. The chapter then ended with a discussion of research findings from other studies regarding contextual factors influencing the implementation of learner-centred approaches in Teacher Education, and identified a gap in literature in which the topic under the present study filled.

Chapter Three was a discussion of the methodology that guided the research process. Components discussed were the research paradigm, research approach, instruments, issues of trustworthiness and credibility, data collection and analysis methods and ethical considerations. In this study, the researcher wanted to understand and interpret students' and lecturers' views on social, cultural and institutional factors that influence teaching and learning as they engage in learner-centred approaches. To this end, the researcher took a subjective approach in order to obtain deeper insights into issues surrounding the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics in Teacher Education programmes. Thus, a paradigm that was ideal to capture interpretivist ideas was considered, hence the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm was adopted. The approach was qualitative and the design was a case study.

The interpretivist/constructivist paradigm and qualitative approach were considered for their ability to use interactive methods that allow for an unearthing of underlying patterns which could provide insight and in-depth information into facilitative and inhibitive influences to the successful use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics Teacher Development programmes. Qualitative data were collected through interviews, observation and document analysis.

Chapter Four focused on data presentation, analysis and discussion. The researcher presented and immediately analysed and discussed the data in this chapter in order to avoid the repetition that is often observed in work where data presentation and analysis and discussion are placed in separate chapters. The data were presented, analysed and discussed in line with the research questions and objectives. Data from observations and documents were used to buttress findings from the interviews.

To ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the data, triangulation of data collected from the three instruments was used to avoid chances of drawing false conclusions. In the analysis of findings, patterns emerging from data in the two universities were presented first. Themes were then developed by comparing and grouping patterns emerging within and across the data from the two universities. Finally, the major themes were discussed.

The chapter was divided into two sections. The first section examined the demographic characteristics of the participants. The demographic characteristics examined included age, gender, years of teaching experience and professional qualifications. The purpose of examining these variables was to see if they influenced in any way, the responses given by the participants. The second section presented, analysed and discussed the items in the interview, observation and document analysis protocols to establish how contextual factors influenced the teaching of Home Economics in Teacher Development programmes.

The study revealed that students held varied conceptions or understanding of learner-centred approaches. Two variations were found; one variation was where a few students (3) viewed learner-centred approaches as methods of teaching that were participatory. An understanding of this nature is categorised in literature (Mushi, 2004; Msonde, 2011) as the methodological orientation. This is a perspective that tends to emphasise the use of certain teaching methods such as group work and discussions, with the assumption that such methods would enhance student learning through lessening teacher talk and increasing learner participation. Students who held such a view of learner-centred approaches were considered as not holding the requisite conceptions to ensure effective appropriation of the approaches in Home

Economics, as there was a possibility that they may continue to use learner-centred approaches without realising that real learning may not be taking place. In the second variation, the majority of the students (5) viewed learner-centred approaches as learning that provided situations for learners to be actively engaged and in the process, developed capabilities in learners such as investigative and problem-solving skills. This perspective focuses more on what the student is doing in the learning process, with the learner assuming some ownership of their learning as the learner and teacher become co-partners in the teaching and learning process. Students who held such a view of learner-centred approaches were considered as possessing the requisite conceptions to ensure effective appropriation of the approaches in Home Economics. Possession of the requisite conceptions of learner-centred approaches was considered a positive development that could be capitalised upon in changing the culture of learning in Home Economics.

With regard to lecturer conception of learner-centred approaches, the study revealed that all four lecturers had similar understanding in which they viewed learner-centred approaches as methods that lead to active learner participation with the lecturer playing more of a facilitative role. In this perspective, the lecturers were considered to have recognised the need to put the learner first, with their roles in the teaching and learning process evolving from that of a transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of student learning. The four lecturers were therefore considered as having the requisite conception of learner-centred approaches that would enable them to be more interactive and supportive in student learning. Evidence of the influence of the lecturers' conception of learner-centred approaches in teaching was established through observations conducted in the two universities where active learner participation and the use of constructive and interactive learning activities were

evident. These observations suggest that the type of conceptions held by the lecturers may have been the basis, upon which the lecturers chose to engage students actively through the use of such approaches as project-based, inquiry-based and collaborative-based learning.

The study revealed that three contextual factors (i.e. duration of course, the content, and course delivery context) had an impact on the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics in the two universities. The duration of the course was a factor that was established as having influence on the effective use of learner-centred approaches such as project-based and group-based tasks. It emerged in the study that Home Economics Teacher Education programmes structured using the Block Release programme format led to decrease in time available in each course. The time available in each course affected the effectiveness of learner-centred approaches such as project-based and collaborative learning activities that require time for authentic learning to occur.

With regard to the content, the study revealed that the excessive focus on content in the teaching of Home Economics was a factor which led to the use of content mainly for building knowledge foundation in students. This is largely due to the fact that accumulation of knowledge is considered as an important element in the study of any programme; this is also noted as a general trend which occurs in learning in Higher Education. It emerged from the study that the lecturers considered content and methods to deliver the content as the key aspects in designing a course outline/module. Content was therefore, rarely used to develop learning skills through affording students with opportunities to engage with the content; thus, liberating them from having to listen to lecturers delivering content. The effect of it was that the

lecturer covered a lot of course content with no real learning on the part of the student. The students in turn, would most probably be memorising facts to be reproduced in an examination. The flexibility in course design which allows for a dual function of content of developing solid knowledge base and developing learning skills is achieved through the use of constructivist approaches to course design.

Various social, structural, organisational and work-space-related factors were identified in the study as having an influence on curriculum delivery in Home Economics. The study revealed that there were a range of aspects that enabled and constrained students as they used learner-centred approaches such as individual and group project work, presentations and independent research work. Key among the enabling features were social related factors such as cooperativeness within the peer group and the scaffolding role provided by the lecturer through their availability for consultations and support offered by the technical staff. The structural facilitative factors included the availability of textbooks and e-resources, provision of materials and tools for practical/project work and access to the internet. Such learning resources enabled students to learn actively and independently.

The main constraining structural factors identified in this study were the absence of purpose-built facilities, limited space that caused overcrowding. It emerged in the study that the two universities were offering their Home Economics programme in rented or loaned-out space. Absence of a purpose-built Home Economics facility in each of the two universities was identified as a major structural factor that compromised the quality of the learning environment. Crowded classrooms made group activities difficult, and as such, were a barrier to the use of interactive learner-centred methodologies. The work-space-related factor that students found inhibitive

was the heavy work-load. This finding confirms research findings (Diseth, 2007; Beaten et. al., 2010) that suggest that the work-load in the learning environment is an important factor that influences students' use of active and independent learning approaches.

An assumption the present study had made on the failure by lecturers to take advantage of the features within the curriculum, learning activities and assessment in Home Economics that offered opportunities for student-centred learning was confirmed. The study revealed that there were two course design features that provided conditions conducive to the use of learner-centred approaches within the Home Economics programme. These included the use of a learning outcomes approach to course design and contextual nature of a subject. The use of a learning outcomes approach to course design is a feature in Home Economics course design that brings a learner-centred dimension into the teaching of the subject. Utilisation of this attribute can facilitate a significant paradigm shift in the teaching of Home Economics, where the emphasis in teaching moves from what the lecturer can teach (content) to what the student will be able to do (outcome). Home Economics is a subject that is contextual in nature. Home Economics teaching aims at improving the quality of life of individuals, families and community. The subject virtually always integrates family and community living contexts in its teaching. This creates opportunities for students to engage with problems, issues or tasks that directly apply to their lives and learner-centred approaches such as problem-based and collaborative learning are used in teaching Home Economics. The two features therefore provide an effective platform for the use of learner-centred approaches such as problem-solving, cooperative, project, inquiry and case-based learning.

However, what is required is a deliberate, committed and well informed approach to the integration of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics.

The study's examination of the characteristics of the teaching methods and the level of interactivity present in learning activities used in Home Economics courses revealed that there was a wide-range of learner driven-interactions present in the teaching methods used in the two universities. It emerged in the study that students had opportunities to engage in learner-learner, learner-technology and learner-content interactions through the use of methods such as group presentations, group practical work, group experimental tasks, assigned readings and on-line literature searches. This wide-range of learner-driven interactions evident in the learner-centred methods cited above was a factor that promoted the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics.

With regard to level of interactivity, the study revealed that there was a fair level of interactivity in Home Economics learning activities in the two universities through the use of active, constructive and interactive activities and this level of interactivity was a factor that promoted the use of learner-centred approaches. One of the universities (University B) had fairly higher levels of the use of constructive activities because the philosophy guiding teaching across the department was grounded in the design-based (problem-solving) approach. A fair level of interactivity in learning activities used in Home Economics is an indication that some real learning is taking place as students are actively engaged in the learning process. The practical and family and consumer-focused nature of the Home Economics provides a favourable context for the utilisation of active, constructive and interactive learning activities. The study did, however, reveal a number of social and structural factors that enabled as well as

constrained the use of these constructive and interactive learning activities. The main enabling features influencing the use of interactive learning activities was the presence of a collaborative spirit during paired or group practical work. The main constraining factor was the limited use of instructional strategies that stimulate reflective discussions. In the use of constructive learning activities, the study revealed that the main enabling factors in both universities were the use of modelling of task execution by the lecturer as well as learner-to-learner modelling of skills which they were very good at. These provided vital directions to the students as they designed and constructed various artefacts. It emerged in the study that students in one of the universities (University A) were not exposed to the problem-solving (design) approach, and as a result, this became a key inhibitor to the use of constructive activities, resulting in very limited development of students thinking and knowledge-making skills.

Two findings emerged from the study with regard to assessment. First, that assessment practices in the two universities still reflected more of the teacher-centred practices, though efforts to integrate assessment for learning (a learner-centred approach to assessment) were evident in one of the universities (University B). Second, lecturers were not envisaging changing assessment practices to a more learner-centred one mainly due to lack of capacity (knowledge and competencies) to correctly and confidently use learner-centred assessment procedures. There was, however, willingness expressed in receiving professional development to enhance the lecturers' knowledge and skills regarding the use of learner-centred assessment. The current assessment practices were thus, a factor that did not permit effective use of learner-centred approaches as it is essential that student-centred learning be reflected, not only in course design and teaching, but also in assessment.

University administration support for the integration of learner-centred approaches was evident in the two universities in two ways. First, support for the use of learner-centred approaches was subsumed in policy guidelines on teaching and learning as reflected mainly in the Quality Assurance Policy Documents. It emerged in the study that one of the Universities (University B) had articulated its commitment to student-centred learning through a more comprehensive Teaching and Learning Policy Manual. Second, university administration support was through facilitation of university-wide workshops on e-learning based learning; a learner-centred approach. With regard to the wide-spread use of learner-centred approaches across the faculty, department and university, the study revealed that at faculty level there was no explicit acknowledgement of the use of learner-centred approaches across the faculty in the two universities. It, however, emerged in the study that students had attended lectures in which learner-centred approaches had been used.

The level of the use of learner-centred approaches was not high as mass lectures, using the lecture method, were generally still utilised in these faculty-wide courses. At department level, a common approach to teaching and learning using learner-centred approaches was evident in one of the universities (University B) whilst in the other, learner-centred approaches were used at the lecturers' discretion. There was no common guiding philosophy to their implementation. The study, however, established that there was more deliberate support for the use of learner-centred approaches in University B than in University A.

The study revealed that in order to sustain the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics, lecturers required support through professional development and engaging with other Home Economics educators in Communities

of Practice. Professional development is viewed in literature (Fullan, 2006; Elmore, 2007) as the most effective strategy to use to enable practising teachers to change their classroom practice whilst the use of Communities of Practice framework enables Home Economics teacher educators to explore the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics.

5.3 Conclusions

The findings of the study that showed that students had varied understanding of learner-centred approaches suggests that pre-service and in-service Teaching Methods courses need to be largely centred on interactive methods where the philosophy, functions and strategies of these interactive methods are explored so as to bring all students to the same level of understanding of learner-centred approaches. The lecturers displayed a common understanding of learner-centred approaches that saw the student as an active participant in learning, with the lecturers' roles shifting more towards those of a facilitator of learning. This suggests that the lecturers' views regarding teaching may be shifting from the teacher-centred to a more learner-centred approach. Though this is a commendable development, the shift in views was not yet commensurate with practice, as the study revealed that the same lecturers were not yet ready to adopt learner-centred assessment procedures. Professional development is therefore, essential to enable lecturers to align their views/beliefs regarding teaching, learning and assessment to the philosophy of constructivism, so as to better support the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics.

In realising increased and effective use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics, factors such as time available in a course, flexibility of content,

the use of methods characterised by active learner participation, the use of constructive and interactive learning activities and learner-centred assessment should be considered. In addition, infrastructure, teaching and learning tools, equipment and materials (that come with a purpose-built structure), institutional commitment, professional developments for lecturers are a necessary support provision. It was evident from the research findings that the universities under study needed to improve on these areas. This would enable Home Economics teacher educators and course designers to create learning environments that support student learning.

From interviews, observations and documents, inferences can be drawn that contextual factors subsumed to be located in the teaching and learning environment had facilitative and inhibitive influences on the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. A comprehensive, committed and structured approach to the appropriation of learner-centred approaches is therefore, essential if a truly student-centred learning environment is to be realised. Education and training are an essential first step to changing the culture of learning in Home Economics from a teacher-centred to student-centred one.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations based on the findings of the study

Based on the above findings and conclusions the researcher recommends the following:

- universities should have well-articulated commitments to appropriation of learner-centred approaches through their Quality Assurance, Teaching and

Learning Policy. The presence of an institutional policy guiding implementation of an innovative practice such as use of learner-centred approaches is an essential element to developing and sustaining the practice. Making a commitment to prioritising learner-centred approaches and establishing specific guidelines, standards and concrete plans for operationalising the goal, are essential to success in changing institutional culture and practice in the universities.

- Home Economics course designers should consider contextual factors in course design and course delivery to ensure effective implementation of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of the subject. The teacher education and university settings in which learner-centred approaches are being appropriated are different and diverse. The differences in settings and situations in these universities mean that appropriation of learner-centred approaches is bound to manifest itself differently in these settings. Therefore, seeking an understanding of how contextual factors affect the process of using learner-centred approaches and the intended outcomes is essential to ensuring the effective and sustainable use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics.
- Home Economics teacher educators and course designers should take advantage of the facilitative features in the Home Economics curriculum and in learning activities to create a comprehensive approach to integration of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. The approach to integrating learner-centred approaches would involve the

following steps; first, developing a programme vision in which a commitment to student-centred learning is articulated and a teaching philosophy based on the design (problem-solving) approach is adopted; second, developing course goals that are outcome-based and reflect the contextual nature of the Home Economics subject area; third, adopting a two pronged approach to the use of course content where, on one hand, content is used to develop a knowledge base and on the other hand, it is used to develop competencies such as problem-solving, critical, inquiry, creative and reflective skills through providing students with opportunities to engage with the content; fourth, utilising learner-centred teaching and learning approaches such as problem-based, project-based and collaborative learning across all the three Home Economics subject areas; fifth, designing learning activities which are active, constructive and interactive as a way of increasing student active participation in learning; and finally, reformatting assessment practices by integrating assessment for learning (e.g. formative, continuous, peer assessment, use of portfolios) which increases student involvement in the assessment process. Above all, the development of a more comprehensive plan requires that there be collaboration and contributions among all the lecturers in the Home Economics subject area.

- the University Teaching and Learning Centres should organise workshops and other in-service training which are designed to enhance the teacher educators' knowledge on interactive teaching methodologies and strategies for creating student-centred learning environments.

- Home Economics departments should be assisted by the Universities to acquire appropriate purpose-built facilities, equipment and tools to facilitate effective organisation of teaching and learning. Availability of appropriate purpose-built facilities, equipment and tools is essential to the creation of learning environments conducive to knowledge creation processes, active and collaborative learning. In order to plan and construct effective learning environments consideration should be given to issues such as adequacy and physical layout of space to cater for different seating arrangement and configurations, appropriate treatment of the interior, as well as adequacy of learning materials and technological equipment.

5.4.2 Recommendations for future research

This study examined how contextual factors influenced the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. The researcher established that there were a number of factors that had a facilitative as well as an inhibitive influence on the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics. The end result is that despite efforts by universities to transform the teaching of university courses from lecturer-centred to learner-centred driven by University Quality Assurance Policies a truly learner-centred learning environment has not been realised in Home Economics Teacher Development programmes. After analysing the findings of this study and related literature on contextual factors influencing the appropriation of learner-centred approaches, the researcher makes the following suggestions for future studies:

- Noting that this study was done in universities with different levels of commitment towards the use of learner-centred approaches, a further study

could be carried out in universities and departments with a well-articulated commitment to use of learner-centred approaches in teaching and learning. In such a study, the three broad levels of influences can be expanded to examine at the micro level the capacity of the teacher educator. At the meso level, the wider community influences can be examined. The macro level, influences could be derived from government-led initiatives, national policies, and the new Zimbabwean primary and secondary school curriculum. The aim will be to establish the nature and extent these influences have on the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching Home Economics.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: MUS101SMOT01

Project title: An examination of Contextual Factors influencing use of Learner-centered Approaches in the teaching of Home Economics: A case of two universities in Zimbabwe.

Nature of Project: PhD in Education

Principal Researcher: Emily Motsi

Supervisor: Prof T.D Mushoriwa

Co-supervisor: Dr P Mavuso

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

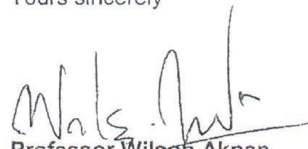
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Wilson Akpan
Acting Dean of Research

23 November 2016

APPENDIX II: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITY A

23 January 2017

Mrs E. Motsi
University of Zimbabwe
P.O Box MP 167
Mount Pleasant
HARARE

Dear Mrs Motsi

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRYOUT RESEARCH AT

Reference is made to the above subject.

This is to confirm that your request has been approved, but please note that we would request a copy of your findings too.

Wishing you good luck in your studies.

Sincerely



S. Gwatidzo (Mrs)



APPENDIX III: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITY B



17 October 2016

Mrs E Motsi
Department of Technical Education
UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

Dear Mrs Motsi

RE PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT

Reference is made to your letter dated 11 October 2016.

I am pleased to inform you that the Vice Chancellor has approved your request for permission to carry out research on "**An Examination of Contextual Factors Influencing Use of Learner-Centre Approach in Teaching Home Economics: A Case of Two Universities in Zimbabwe**" at

Please be advised accordingly.

Yours sincerely

S M CHEVO
Registrar

MNG/lg



APPENDIX IV: REQUEST TO BE PERMITTED TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE



University of Fort Hare
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Alice (main) Campus:
Private Bag X1314, King William's Town, Road Alice, 5700, RSA
Tel: +27 (0) 40 602 - 2412 • Fax: +27 (0) 40 653 - 2448

East London Campus:
Private Bag X9083, 50 Church Street, East London, 5201, RSA
Tel: +27 (0) 43 704 - 7227 / 7218 • Fax: +27 (0) 43 704 - 7113



2nd October, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

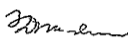
Re: Request to be permitted to conduct Research.

This letter serves to indicate that Mrs E Motsi(Student No.201614705) is a PhD student at the University of Fort Hare and is under my supervision. Her research topic is: **An examination of contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economics: A case of two universities in Zimbabwe.**

Mrs Motsi is now at the data collection stage. I would greatly appreciate if you would allow her and help her where necessary, to have access to your Institution(s) which she wishes to involve in her study.

Should there be any queries or problems, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanking you in advance.


Prof TD Mushoriwa (PhD)

Cell: +27 (0) 780830012

E-mail Tmushoriwa @ufh.ac.za



www.ufh.ac.za

APPENDIX V: ETHICS RESEARCH CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

NAME OF APPLICANT

Ethics Human 2011

<<Approved

>>

OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref:

Date:



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

I am a doctoral student at the University of Fort Hare in the Department of Further and Continuing Education. I am asking students and lecturers to answer some questions, which I hope will benefit existing and future Home Economics Teacher Education programmes.

I am conducting a research on Contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of B. Ed. Home Economics. I am interested in finding out more about the environmental, social and cultural factors that facilitate or hinder effective use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of Home Economic. I are carrying out this research to provide an improved understanding of the obstacles lecturers and students face when dealing with educational conservatism that works against use of learner-centred methodologies in Home Economics teacher development programs.

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not is yours alone. However, I would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with me. If you choose not take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and tell me that you don't want to go on with the interview. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be recording your name anywhere on the questionnaire and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no "come-backs" from the answers you give.

The interview will last around forty five minutes. I will be asking you questions and ask that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. I know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to answering questions there are no right and wrong answers

INFORMED CONSENT

Document approved by UREC: 11 August 2011, V01

NAME OF APPLICANT

<<Approved

>>

Ethics Human 2011

OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref:

Date:

I hereby agree to participate in the research regarding: Contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching of B. Ed. Home Economics. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LECTURERS

Interview schedule for lecturers on contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching Home Economics at two universities in Zimbabwe.

Section A: Demographic information of respondents

Age.....

Sex.....

1. What is your academic qualification?

.....

2. What is your highest professional educational qualification?

.....

Section B: Lecturer conceptualization of learner-centred approaches.

3. What do you understand by the term learner-centred teaching?

.....

.....

4. What do you see as your role as students engage in such learning activities as individual projects or student presentations?

.....

.....

Section C: Influence of curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices on use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

5. In your view what should be the key aspects guiding the design of a curriculum or programme?

.....

.....

6. (a) Which learning activities do you use in your lectures that are learner-centred in focus?

.....

.....

- (b) Please explain how you use them.

.....

.....

7. (a) Does the current assessment method you use in your programme provide opportunities for students to be involved in evaluation? Please explain.

.....

.....

- (b) Please explain.

.....

.....

8. (a) Would you consider changing assessment procedures to provide opportunities for students to be involved in assessment?

.....

.....

- (b) If yes, what changes would you make?

.....

.....

- (c) If no, why would you not consider changing the assessment procedures?

.....

.....

Section D: Influence of institutional policies and practices on the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching B.Ed. Home Economics.

9. (a) Does the department share your perspective with regards to using learner-centred approaches?

.....
.....

(b) Please explain

.....
.....

10. How often do you discuss within the department issues relating to methods of teaching?

.....
.....

11. How wide-spread is the use of learner-centred approaches at faculty level?

.....
.....

12. How wide-spread is the use of learner-centred approaches at university level?

.....
.....

Section E: Support likely to influence sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

13. How should the lecturers be supported by the university in order to effectively utilise learner-centred approaches in their teaching?

.....
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

Interview schedule for student on contextual factors influencing the use of learner-centred approaches in the teaching Home Economics at two universities in Zimbabwe.

Section A: Demographic data of respondents

Age.....

Sex.....

1. What is your academic qualification?

.....

2. What is your highest professional qualification?

.....

3. For how long have you been teaching?

.....

Section B: Student conceptions of learner-centred approaches

4. What do you understand by the term learner-centred approaches?

.....

.....

5. What do you see as the role of the lecturer as students engage in such learning activities such as individual projects or student presentations?

.....

.....

Section C: Influence of curriculum, learning activities and assessment practices on use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

6. (a) In your opinion are the current courses you are taking providing opportunities for you to use independent learning approaches?

.....

.....

(b) Please explain.

.....

.....

(c) (a) In your opinion are the current courses you are taking providing opportunities for you to use collaborative learning approaches?

.....

.....

(b) Please explain

.....

.....

(c) What do you see as the benefits of using collaborative/group approaches?

.....

.....

(d) (a) Does the current assessment method used in your programme provide opportunities for students to be involved in assessment?

.....

.....

(b) Please explain.

.....

.....

Section D: Influence of institutional policies and practices on the use of learner-centred approaches in teaching B.Ed. Home Economics.

(e) (a) How wide-spread is the use of learner-centred approaches in faculty-wide courses?

.....

.....

Section E: Support likely to influence sustained use of learner-centred approaches in Home Economics.

(f) Which aspects within the department enable you to work effectively on textiles/food or family studies assignments and projects?

.....

.....

(g) Which aspects in the department hinder you from effectively working on your textiles/food or family studies assignments and projects?

.....

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX VII: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL A

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL A

KEY INDICATORS	Yes/No	COMMENTS
Teaching/Learning Strategies • Use of active learning • Use of cooperative/ collaborative learning. • Use of strategies to develop student's thinking and knowledge construction skills.		
Learning Environment • Lecturer facilitation/coaching evident • Interaction emphasised • Dialogue valued and integrated • Adequacy of time		
Support Strategies • Use of concrete cases/ problems/situations. • Modelling of expert behaviour by lecturer to student or student to student. • Technology available. • Provision of facilities, tools and materials.		

APPENDIX IX: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL B

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL B

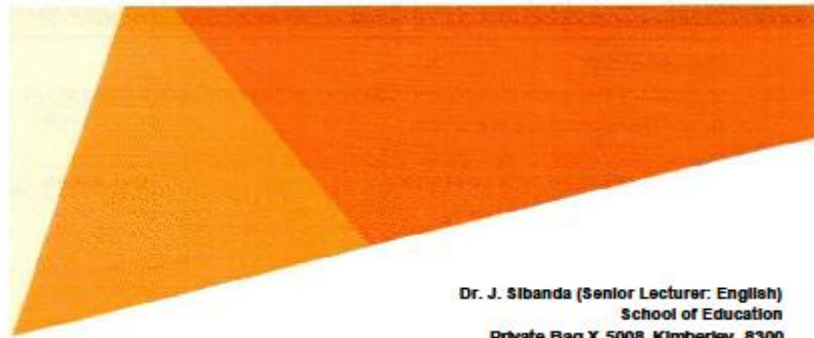
Observation Number	Content of Lesson	Level of Interactivity			
		Passive	Active	Constructive	Interactive

APPENDIX X: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

ITEM	COMMENTS
Course Outlines/Modules • Content structure • Unique course design features • Course teaching hours • Assessment structure	
Faculty regulations • Programme structure regulations • Programme regulations • Program duration	
Programme regulations • Structure of Home Economics subject components	
Department Information brochures • Vision, mission statements • Teaching philosophy	
Quality Assurance manuals • Vision, mission statements • Prescribed guidelines and standards • Accessibility of Document	

APPENDIX XI: EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE



Dr. J. Sibanda (Senior Lecturer: English)
School of Education
Private Bag X 5008, Kimberley, 8300
North Campus, Chapel Street, Kimberley
E-mail: jabulani.sibanda@spu.ac.za
jtsibnd@gmail.com
Website: www.spu.ac.za
Tel: 27534910142
Cell: 0845282087
26 November 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that I have proof read and edited the following PhD thesis using Windows 'Tracking' System to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the author(s) to action:

Contextual Factors Influencing the Use of Learner- Centred Approaches in the Teaching of Home Economics: A Case of Two Universities in Zimbabwe

By

Emily Motsi

Although the greatest care was taken in the editing of this document, the final responsibility for the product rests with the author.

Sincerely

26. 11. 2017

SIGNATURE

DATE