

# Part 1

**OVERVIEW, CONCEPTS, THEMES, PATTERNS**



# School inclusion and exclusion in South Africa: some theoretical and methodological considerations

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## Introduction

How the questions of social inclusion and exclusion in education might be approached theoretically and methodologically are important issues to grapple with. This is particularly so given the pervasive and insidious ways in which social exclusion continues to reinvent itself. In this contribution we reflect briefly on (i) the theoretical debates that preceded and surrounded the South Africa-India School Inclusion and Exclusion project, and (ii) the research methodology issues of doing work in this area. The key question framing the study was essentially that of how South Africa and India were meeting their constitutional obligations to the inclusion of all of their learners in terms of access, participation and the outcomes of the educational process.

### *Purpose of the research*

The specific objectives of the South African part of this research were:

- To critically review the key inclusionary education policies of the new government;
- To provide a nuanced account, in carefully selected sites, of the mechanisms and processes of educational inclusion and exclusion for different racial groups;
- To provide policy makers with an account of the effects of specific policies of inclusion in South African and Indian education, in terms of the experiences, understanding and perspectives of the policy 'target groups'.

The study is important for a number of reasons. First, effective access to education, particularly at the lower levels, crucially depends on how policies are implemented and received at the institutional, community and individual levels. The extent of the 'policy gap' between intention and practice is now acknowledged (Sayed & Jansen 2000) as a crucial factor in explaining why people do, or do not, take up educational opportunities.

Second, while there is discussion about factors precipitating exclusion (Anitha 2000; Kumar 1989), there is little about *how excluded groups experience specific inclusion policies*.

Third, in addition to the economic discussion, with respect to exclusion, the *cultural and social factors that lead different groups to place value on education differently and their relationship with the economic* require deeper empirical investigation.

Fourth, the meanings ascribed to 'caste' and 'race' in relation to policies of educational inclusion and exclusion need to be analysed, to ascertain how issues relating to 'caste' and 'race' are framed within policy (Gupta 2000; McCarthy 1997; Quigley 1993). Policy approaches that treat these categories as static are likely to misinterpret the challenges of inclusion.

Fifth, there is need in current development research to voice the concerns of marginalised groups in policy and to link policy processes and outcomes to the ways in which people locate their experience and relationship with institutions of policy delivery within their multiple and overlapping identities.

## Research context

The context of the study is important in itself and has significance beyond South Africa. There are two important reasons for conducting this kind of study on South Africa:

- The first is that South Africa provides an opportunity, such as only possibly the United States presents, for examining how the complex iterations of difference are negotiated through the school;
- The second is that South Africa is a transitional society moving from authoritarianism to democracy.

In framing the study in these terms, it is necessary to provide a brief description of the schools actually studied. The study located itself in three provinces with very different 'racial' dynamics, namely the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

- The Western Cape (WC) is a largely 'white' and 'coloured' area with many well-resourced ex-Model C schools (ex-'white' schools). In schooling terms the province has seen an interesting form of deracialisation with ex-Model C schools, which is marked along class lines with more 'coloured' and a few middle-class 'African' students being admitted to such schools.
- KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) reflects the problems and tensions of deracialisation within the 'black' group. Being a province with an 'Indian' and 'African' majority, it reflects the positioning and identity of the 'Indian' population in relation to the 'African' population, including at school levels.
- The Eastern Cape (EC) is not only one of the poorest provinces in the country, but also offers interesting insights into 'race' given its constitution as a province of former 'homelands' alongside of relatively wealthy 'white' urban centres. It also has a strong rural base.

Eleven schools distributed in the three provinces reflecting the structure of the former apartheid education system and a range of socio-economic backgrounds was selected.

## Research questions and hypotheses

The questions guiding the study were:

- What are the conceptual and philosophical underpinnings of inclusive educational policies in respect of the groups who have been marginalised under the apartheid system?
- What specific mechanisms and strategies have national and selected state/provincial educational departments and their schools put in place to ensure educational inclusion and overcome specific histories of exclusion?
- What are the factors that shape exclusion from education? How do different groups and individuals experience and respond to specific educational policies designed to provide access and inclusion? What are the intended and unintended outcomes of educational policies designed to foster inclusion?

## Theoretical overview

A discussion of the concept of social exclusion is underway in numerous contexts to assess its value in expanding understandings of injustice and inequality. Kabeer (2000) and de Haan (2000), for example, pointedly ask whether the concepts of inclusion and exclusion, with their origins in the North, are appropriate for countries in the South. Betts (2001: 2) argues, to illustrate the point, that the discourse of poverty 'provides a much more powerful frame' for many countries.

The primary purpose of this paper is to look at how discourses of inclusion and exclusion have been conceptualised and appropriated and to assess the value of these approaches for countries like South Africa and India. The paper argues that the main conceptual weakness of current understandings is their failure to adequately engage with social justice concerns.

### *Some caveats*

The notion of educational exclusion is currently enjoying much prominence in social policy research and in matters of public policy (Betts 2001; de Haan 2000; Kabeer 2000; Lindblad & Popkewitz 2000; Preece 1999; Slee 2000). Evident in this prominence, however, is the difficulty in reaching an agreement about what educational exclusion might mean, what it refers to, and what it includes and excludes.<sup>1</sup>

There are four qualifications that need to be introduced in discussing the notions of educational exclusion and inclusion. First, the usage of these concepts in the literature comes with the strong normative stance that inclusion is by definition good and exclusion, similarly so, is bad. While this may be laudable, it fails to recognise the possibility that inclusive policies may result in new forms of exclusion. Second, the notion of inclusion operates on the principle of 'normalisation' in which groups – be they kinship groups, social classes, structures or whatever – are defined and constituted (socially) in their 'ideal' forms with the potential of 'abnormalising' others who fall outside of these categories. As a consequence, such groups, communities and individuals often then are targeted for special inclusive measures. Such an approach, however, often ignores the existing and complex social relations in society which give rise to and perpetuate inequities. Third, the concepts elide differences between

and within groups, communities and individuals in that they ignore 'who' is being included or excluded. Fourth, the discourse of educational exclusion and inclusion fails to specify the relationships between race, class, gender and other forms of difference and inequity in society and to show how these articulate with each other. Various theorists have advocated different versions of the complex interrelationships between race, class and gender. Apple and Weiss (1983) present the 'parallelist' framework in which race, class and gender interact with three spheres of societal activity (economic, cultural and political). This they call a 'relational framework'. Others, such as Sarup (1986), put forward a cumulative, linear, hierarchical framework in which, for example, gender, race and class add up to the 'triple oppression' of women. While none of the frameworks is incorrect, they do not, as McCarthy (1999: 547) notes, capture the 'mix of contingencies, interests, needs, differential assets, and capacities in local settings such as schools'.

A later section of the paper returns to these points in an attempt at developing an interlocking approach. The following section reviews the key debates in the discussions on educational inclusion and exclusion.

### *Diverse meanings of inclusion and exclusion*

As a point of departure, it is interesting to note that some of the literature casts the discussion largely in terms of inclusion (OFSTED 2000; Slee 2001), others in terms of exclusion (de Haan 2000), and yet others in terms of both inclusion and exclusion (Betts 2001).

The concepts, however, imply a juxtaposition in that social inclusion of certain persons or groups implies exclusion of others. However, inclusion and exclusion need to be viewed as being conjoined, and not as diametrically opposing forces.

What follows below discusses the diverse approaches that have been attributed to the concept of social exclusion. It draws on the classificatory schema developed by Silver (de Haan 2000). In this schema three paradigms of social exclusion are presented.

#### **The solidarity paradigm**

This paradigm is dominant in France and influenced by the work of Rousseau. Rousseau argued that 'exclusion is the rupture of a social bond between the

individual and society that is cultural and moral ... the poor, unemployed and ethnic minorities are defined as outsiders' (in de Haan 2000: 6). Exclusion here, then, constructs 'outsiders' and renders societies dysfunctional. Inclusionary measures are thus aimed at establishing social cohesion and stability.

### The specialisation paradigm

Based on the work of Hobbes, and hegemonic in the United States, this approach proposes that:

individuals are able to move across boundaries of social differentiation and economic division of labour. Liberal models of citizenship emphasise the contractual exchange of rights and obligations ... exclusion reflects discrimination, the drawing of group distinctions that denies individuals full access to or participation in exchange or interaction. Causes of exclusion are often seen in unenforced rights and market failures. (de Haan 2000: 6)

### The monopoly paradigm

This approach is influenced by Weber's work, which argues that 'the social order is coercive, imposed through hierarchical power relations. Exclusion is defined as a consequence of the formation of group monopolies [which] restrict access of outsiders through social closure' (de Haan 2000: 6).

### *Meanings of inclusion and exclusion in the South*

While these paradigms are useful, Kabeer cautions researchers in the South to apply them carefully lest they simply 'relabel long-standing and locally developed approaches to social problems or, alternatively ... promote a tendency to assess southern realities in terms of the extent to which they converge, or diverge from some "standard" northern model' (2000: 83). This view warns that any research into social exclusion should focus on the processes and indeed the rules through which inequality and injustice occur in the contexts within which they are experienced.

Flowing from this, Jackson (1999) asks how discourses of inclusion and exclusion obscure or mask the agendas of co-operation and control, and suggests that feminist research and gender analysis might offer both better-situated understandings of the character and experience of marginality, and useful



insights for the emerging applications of social exclusion frameworks to developing countries.

Jackson's (1999) argument can be complemented by considering the following:

- Does the inclusion of citizens in programmes lead to their incorporation in ways that subject them to the status quo, or in ways that expect them to comply with and meet standards predetermined by authorities without their co-operation?
- Or even in those contexts which offer complementary (albeit integrated and progressive) processes of inclusion, are there sufficient means of empowerment to help students re-shape the contexts of their educational experience so that these contexts are enriched by new perspectives (see Carrim 1992; Jansen 1998; Soudien 1996; Vally & Dalambo 1999; and in Northern countries, Gillborn 1995; Robinson Pant 2000).

One of the main critiques of social exclusion is its 'one size fits all' approach (de Haan 2000: 10). This approach assumes that social inequality can be overcome by providing the same opportunities equally for all citizens. While this would go a long way towards correcting historic imbalances and injustices, it is short-sighted, as will be discussed in the next section. One size does not fit all because citizens are not located in homogeneous, symmetrical and stable social, economic and political positions. How one addresses the differences and the different kinds of inequalities thrown up by the complex social contexts in which people find themselves is a strategic matter.

This discussion highlights how complex questions of social justice are in debates around inclusion and exclusion. It is with this backdrop that the paper moves to looking at the way these discourses are framed in policy.

### *Discourses of inclusion that influence policy*

The paper examines four discourses that are dominant in public policy (Dyson 1999): (i) a rights and ethics discourse; (ii) an efficacy discourse; (iii) a political discourse; and (iv) a pragmatic discourse.

#### **The rights and ethics discourse**

Proposing that children have a right to education, this discourse emerged in the 1950s with the intention of 'equalising opportunities and spreading

economic and cultural benefits more widely through society' (Dyson 1999:39). Special education is seen as reproducing societal divides by separating 'disabled' persons from the rest of society and protecting such services from addressing the need for 'integration'.

A discourse of targeting has developed in response to this (Deacon 2000). Proponents of this view argue for the need for 'well-resourced' countries in the 'developed' world to redistribute resources globally so that those less developed countries are able to meet the basic rights of their citizens. In this light, then, notions of inclusion and exclusion provide governments with 'measures' to determine whether development targets in relation to social rights are being achieved.

### The efficacy discourse

This discourse argues that inclusive schools are more cost-efficient, socially beneficial and educationally effective than segregated special schools. The efficacy discourse critiques special education, arguing that expected outcomes of special programmes (mainly remedial teaching of reading) have appeared unsuccessful (Dyson 1999). Special education is also seen as more costly in all respects, including overheads, infrastructural costs and human resource investment (Dyson 1999). In addition to these arguments, research also indicates that physically disabled students do not learn differently from 'other' students.

In inclusive environments, institutions are challenged to include 'disabilities' in ways that normalise differences and make them a part of everyday life. Inclusive education thus challenges all school-goers to develop the skills to deal with difference as a normal part of life.

### The political discourse

In this discourse, marginalised groups argue for their political rights under the rubric of securing inclusion. In the political process they may align themselves with other groups or other struggles to broaden their lobbying base. The political struggle of marginalised groups may be at the level of ideas and concepts, in challenging conventional views about themselves, and in changing policies.

### The pragmatic discourse

This discourse is practical in focusing on the dimensions of inclusive education as well as the means by which it may be enacted. Certain protagonists of this discourse believe that inclusive schools have 'determinate characteristics'

vis-à-vis structure, programmes, systems, practices, culture and ethos, which distinguish them from non-inclusive schools. The discourse is also concerned with outlining an 'inclusive pedagogy' that relates to theories of instruction and learning (Dyson 1999: 42). The discourse promotes the view that 'right action' in relation to policy and practice will lead to successful inclusive education.

The discussion above points to three important issues. First, the influence of social inclusion and exclusion in education has been due to the assertions and experiences of disabled people's movements and 'special needs schools'. It has now grown to include all people who are subject to forms of discrimination. Second, the incorporation of social inclusion and exclusion in policy formulation has led to various treatments of the issues. Some policy approaches are particular, while others are generic, some are macro-oriented, while some are concentrated on micro processes of implementation. Third, all approaches to policy in this regard have been motivated by concerns of establishing and/or increasing equality and equity in society. It will be useful to now examine the ways in which equity and equality issues in education are treated.

## **Approaches to social exclusion and social inclusion in education: equity and equality considerations**

Social inclusion initiatives appear to fall into the trap of assuming that what is posited as social equality will address all divides. Many approaches do not take account of equity and in fact undermine the project of achieving social justice. As will be shown below, the complex interrelationship of race, class, gender and other instances of injustice means that programmes promoting equality often tend to focus on one of these aspects at the expense of the others and, so, lose the thread connecting the others. As the following quotation explains:

Equality is more conducive to measurement and standardisation [while,] in comparison, the intangible aspects of equity resist quantification. Equity is often mistakenly measured in terms of equality such as input resources [expenditures] or educational outcomes [achievement scores] ... Equity transcends the notion of equality by focusing on the qualitative value of justice. Central as

the movement towards racial equality may be in reforms presently under consideration in South Africa, the question remains whether these reforms will also address inequities which stem from class, gender and so on, and therefore meet the criteria of justice. (Fry 1991/2, quoted in Soudien 1998: 127)

The distinction between equity and equality is manifest in two important education inclusion approaches.

### *The citizenship approach*

Educational inclusion, which challenges normative understandings of what groups are and how they are constituted, is, as has been argued earlier, about fundamental change and real transformation. This notion of citizenship, however, does not yet have currency in many countries, including countries in the South where governments have failed to accord their 'nationals' full citizenship rights. For example, in the colonial and post-colonial contexts many states regarded and regard some of their subjects as 'other' and withhold from them rights as citizens. However, complex citizenship laws have served to perpetuate forms of exclusion where, for example, in some countries being born in a country does not necessarily guarantee one rights of citizenship. Citizenship, as a construct, was and is, therefore, a model for exclusion in that only citizens could have rights.

Structural pluralism, which comprises the differential incorporation of social groups into a common political society, is another model perpetuating forms of exclusion (ILO 1994). Examples of this are South Africa's apartheid system and India's caste system (Nayak 1994).

### *The multicultural approach*

In efforts to accommodate 'difference', educational inclusion has taken the form of multicultural education or education for pluralism. There have been numerous criticisms of these concepts, not least the fact that they serve to mask real injustices, such as those of racial and cultural discrimination, and tend to stereotype the issues, which supposedly belong to different groups, and so impose on them common, homogenised features and singular 'solutions' in

extremely inappropriate ways (Carrim 1995; Carrim & Soudien 1999; Gillborn 1995; Troyna 1993). Developing this line of thought, multiculturalism also assumes that persons belong to a single culture, without beginning to accept the possibility that people may have allegiances to and commitments to a variety of cultures. Similar arguments are levelled against 'multiracial education'. Figueroa (1991) draws on Mullard (1982) to identify phases in the development of this concept in Britain. They are 'assimilationist, integrationist and cultural pluralist'. All three phases, it is believed, 'stemmed from the same social imperative – to maintain as far as possible the dominant structure of institutions, values and beliefs' (Mullard 1982: 121, quoted in Figueroa 1991: 47). Multiracial education was concerned with including alien ('black') groups while maintaining the dominant order, which was assumed to be entirely unproblematic and without structural difficulties. The approaches denied the existence of 'race', focusing instead on culture as a factor of 'difference'. Multiracial education 'teaches black pupils that they will always remain second-class citizens' (Figueroa 1991: 48).

In these approaches social exclusion initiatives operate around somewhat crude categorisations of various social groups in relation to power and access to goods and services. Without investigation of the processes of social exclusion and the forms of counter-services provided by the 'excluded' groups, the approaches do not say anything about how people who are supposedly excluded view themselves. It becomes clear through the ensuing discussion that institutional access alone – the creation of physical space – does not answer the call for educational inclusion. Besides issues of affordability, cultural and political environments and practices both within and outside of educational institutions may perpetuate exclusion even after students have technically been 'placed'.

### **An interlocking framework**

As argued earlier, educational exclusion operates in a sea of social exclusionary processes that affect access to basic rights in a number of domains: 'adequate' or 'quality' food, shelter, social security, employment, education, and so on. It usually occurs in the guise and context of the acceptance of unproblematised identities within the broader society. To pursue just one example, particular sections of society are assumed (almost legitimately) to have greater rights of access to commodities, housing, education, sporting facilities, local amenities, and so on, because of their socio-economic status. In other words,

the socio-economic structures of societies are taken as given and the educational exclusion that proceeds from them is regarded as being entirely normal. Thus educational inclusion, much as the rest of society, is framed by these inequalities and the various ideologies used to reinforce them. In the context of this, social inclusion could easily constitute a form of window-dressing.

Most considerations of the situation described tend to produce two readings as a solution. The first is to simply use (or return to) notions of class, caste, race, gender, and so on, and to determine their relative significance in any context. The second is to work with discourses of exclusion and inclusion and ask how they address concerns of social justice.

Towards developing a more reflective approach, it is argued here that McCarthy's (1997) notion of 'nonsynchrony' takes one beyond the essentialist and managerialist problems of dominant social theory. He proposes an interlocking framework (see Sayed 2002) where race, gender, class, region, language, and so on, all intersect in ways that recognise an individual or group's unique and particular experiences. This approach is also similar to Hall's (1996) theory of articulation. It argues that these factors cannot be placed on a two-dimensional grid that simply seeks the intersection of two of the categories. Such a grid would merely tell of the dual effect of two of these categories on a number of groups. The concept of an interlocking framework recognises the highly complex ways in which race, class, gender and other categories intersect and interrelate to produce unique individual and group experiences. The fact that there is a dominant articulating principle of conflict or inequality does not, or should not, undermine the prevalence of other levels of injustice. It simply suggests that the political approach pivots around a primary and articulating factor which might be dominant for that moment. What such an approach makes possible is the recognition of the complex context in which injustice occurs. It brings an analysis within reach, for example, of the fluid and shifting setting of the developing world.

Nonsynchrony thus helps explain the contradictory nature in which relations of domination 'articulate' to present differently textured conditions, and in addition, the way in which struggles may engage with these interfaces in unique and peculiar ways, reshaping and sometimes transforming the dynamic to produce a different set of contradictions.

Applying the relational interlocking framework of articulations to institutional contexts calls attention to:

- *The point of institutional access.* Access policies determine who does and who does not have access to particular institutions. Students are often excluded on the basis of economic status or geographical location with schools only accepting students who fall within their ‘catchment’ area. Other levels of access relate closely to institutional access in terms of a school’s dominant culture undermining the cultures of some of its learners.
- *Institutional setting and ethos.* Institutions may formally include but subtly continue to exclude learners. For example, particular indicators of inclusion are participation in school structures such as the Student Representatives’ Council, sports teams and also participation in the classroom. Governance of institutions is a key area that determines not only policies pertaining to access, but also those relating to institutional culture and practice.
- *The curriculum.* The curriculum is a focus of power. The curriculum has to address not only the varied interests of its expanded learner-base, but equally those offensive aspects that reinforce inequality and must be reassessed and transformed. New students may be included without any changes made to the curriculum to reflect their interests and histories or to offer ‘new ways of seeing’.
- *Social location of institutions.* The relations between institutions and the wider social contexts within which they exist need to be taken into account seriously. The articulations between forces outside of schools, their filtration into schools, the ways they are reinforced and/or are opposed within schools, need to be taken into consideration, not only to understand the dynamics within the institution but also to gain a more complex understanding of what exactly the institution in fact includes and excludes, and how and why.

Educational inclusion thus presumes a broad-based collective will to effect transformation at every level of society. It requires grand schemes with an architecture that frames and facilitates transformation as well as political will at a sectoral, institutional and classroom level to create truly inclusive spaces. Britain’s Social Exclusion Unit has reported on its efforts at ‘joined-up’ thinking in tackling problems of social exclusion, including those on the educational front. Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, who heads up the unit,

expresses the desire to build on successes from its first four-year run, claiming that:

Analysis carried out by the unit has shown me just how interconnected and self-reinforcing the problems of social exclusion are [ranging from] disparities in educational attainment, truancy and poor housing conditions – all examples of the cycle of deprivation and disinvestment ... We recognise these sorts of multiple problems cannot be solved by looking at single issues. We now place emphasis on 'joining up' policy between government departments and taking a long-term approach, applying three basic principles: reintegration, prevention – addressing the causes not just the symptoms – and mainstreaming ... The key to all of this is partnership. (*The Guardian*, 16 January 2001: 3–4)

How these issues might be taken into the research field is what the paper now turns to.

## Methodological approaches to researching inclusion and exclusion

Research is often, in and of itself, exclusionary and inclusionary. The prerogatives of any research both constrain and open up possibilities of what may be investigated, how and by whom. In this regard, the discussion now seeks to engage with research as an instance of inclusion and exclusion and looks at the implied tensions and contradictions in researching issues related to inclusion-exclusion in education. The following are the focal points around which this discussion is conducted:

- The complicity of research in the determination of what is included and excluded;
- The subject position and identity of the researcher and the bearing of this on the context of the research;
- The research context and its determinative influence on what and how it may be researched, as well as what may be described and analysed.

The paper carries on to outline the methodological tools that were used in conducting the research on inclusion-exclusion in three provinces in South Africa: Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. It attempts to make clear that



an eclectic approach, within a qualitative framework, prevailed throughout. The inconsistencies in the approach that was used are also highlighted.

### *Research as inclusionary and exclusionary*

In designing any research project, a particular object is selected for investigation and exploration. 'Race', gender and class were central variables in this study: they are explicitly *included*. They formed the selected discursive objects through which inclusion and exclusion were viewed. Ability/disability, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS or marital status, for example, were discursively *excluded*. If and when they emerged within the processes and data of the research, they were placed in relation to the included discursive objects, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, and at other moments marginally. Discursively, then, research, in itself, is inclusionary and exclusionary. It has been so in this study too!

### *The identities of researchers and their bearing on research contexts*

Research within the social sciences, which focuses on human beings, takes the position that objectivity is problematic, if not impossible (Gillborn 1995; Gomm & Woods 1993; Hammersley 1993). All research is always, it is argued, informed by the values and orientations of the researcher and research. No research is 'value-free' (Carr & Kemmis 1986). At the same time, though, care needs to be exercised when claims are made, and whilst researchers/research cannot be objective it does not necessarily mean that they are entirely subjective. Research/researchers still need to be cognisant of the need for verifiability in their work.

The purpose of the above discussion has been to point to the issues surrounding the question of positionality – the identity and values of the researcher. A central question for this study, therefore, was the composition of the research team. The general approach to the research was to work with identified lead researchers, who would have a great deal of flexibility in their approach to the research and who had a good conceptual understanding of the issues of inclusion and exclusion. In engaging with this discussion, numerous debates

took place about the issue of the 'race' of the researchers. In the end, the approach taken was that of using researchers who were committed to the social project of inclusion. Clearly, and this was recognised, this produced particular forms of exclusion.

We have shown how, as with other research projects, this study was inclusionary and exclusionary in terms of the selection of research sites and researchers. As discussed above, the identity and positionality of the researchers influence the research context. How did this happen within this study? One example from the fieldwork demonstrates the complexities that were confronted. In the WC, the project co-ordinator applied unsuccessfully to a number of schools for permission to do the study. In order to secure a former Model C school, the project acceded to an arrangement it had sought to avoid. A 'white' member of the research team volunteered to look for a 'white' school and was able to find one. As a result of this he moved from the 'Indian/coloured' school where he had been originally. The effect of this was to organise the research team along racial lines: the Xhosa-speaking researcher at an 'African' Xhosa-medium school – mainly for language reasons; the 'coloured' researcher at a largely 'coloured', Muslim school, and the 'white' researcher at a former 'white' school.

Two issues suggested themselves for discussion as a result of this. The first was accepting the possibility that the former 'white' schools, in so readily accepting the application of the 'white' researcher and rejecting those of the 'black' researcher, were demonstrating racial bias. While this of course could not be proved, the incident did raise questions about how 'race' works, particularly in terms of how the selected people with whom this research study hoped to work perceive each other and the meanings they impose on others, and the kinds of discourses one is permitted access to.

These developments within this study led to rather fundamental dilemmas for the researchers. On the one hand, the aim was to both investigate and contribute to understandings of processes of inclusion and exclusion. On the other hand, the study itself was inclusionary and exclusionary. The study also hoped to move beyond racial identifications and yet became caught up in colluding with them.

## *Methodological approaches and instruments used*

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in this study; multiple types of research instruments were used; and the study took place largely within a qualitative research framework. The value of this methodological eclecticism is that it at once yielded far richer data than would have been the case if only one approach or instrument was used, and the different approaches and instruments used enabled more possibilities for 'triangulation' (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983), thereby reinforcing the validity and reliability of the claims that are made about what the data reveal. However, in this study there were various levels and forms of 'triangulation', suggesting perhaps a kind of 'polyangulation'. 'Polyangulation' shifts the meaning of 'triangulation' from its original meaning, which was 'loosely based on an analogy with navigation and surveying' (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983: 198). It draws on advances in technology such as satellite systems for navigation and surveying and suggests that we ought to go beyond the paradigmatic limitations that come with 'triangulation'.

The argument here is that, based on the experiences of this study, researching processes of inclusion and exclusion, due to their complexity, forces the research to be more inclusive methodologically, pushing the boundaries of traditional research to operate more laterally and on multiple levels, combining approaches and methods, and expanding triangulation to a more pluralised level. This study has therefore generated significant insights about doing research in the social sciences, which could contribute to understanding and developing research designs and instruments. The notion of 'polyangulation' is, therefore, one that may prove to be useful to other studies of this kind.

The research was conceptualised as a two-phase project. The first phase sought to establish a baseline for the project consisting essentially of observation and survey data. The second phase was intended to explore themes and issues that had emerged in the first phase.

Common instruments for South Africa and India were developed in workshops that brought the research team together in the closing months of 2000 and in early 2001. The instruments were piloted separately in each of the provinces and adapted to suit the local conditions.

## Phase One

The major data collection in the EC and the WC took place in three classrooms, that is, a Grade 3 class and two Grade 7 classes. Grade 3 was chosen because this was the final year of the foundation phase and the beginning of the schools' intermediate primary phase and it was felt that the learners would be able to respond individually to the survey and interview protocols. Two Grade 7 classes, English and mathematics classes, were also used to gain access to learners' experiences in what are the two most difficult subjects in the curriculum for learners in these provinces.

For settings where the research was composed of two phases, Phase One included observations, learner surveys, learner interview schedules, educator interview schedules and semi-structured parent interviews. In both the WC and the EC the first phase started with a week and a half of intense observation and note-taking of classroom and general school life. An observation schedule was developed which attempted to document and record the most pertinent facets of the classroom experience relating to inclusion and exclusion. Diaries and field notes were kept. Observations were followed by the administering of learner questionnaires. While educators administered the questionnaires, the researchers made preliminary selections of learners for interviews. Learners were selected based on the following criteria: gender, race, language, academic ability (mixed ability) and personality (extrovert and introvert).<sup>2</sup> The interview explored the issues raised in the instrument in more detail. The selection of parents was guided by the selection of learners. The parent interview explored issues around why children were sent to a particular school; the process of gaining access to the school; involvement in school life and committees; interactions with educators and the principal; frequency and reasons for visiting the school; level of satisfaction with the quality of the education received; time their child spent on play and on homework; whether they were familiar with their child's friends; and means taken to ensure their child studied. The educator interview explored issues of diversity through questions that looked at class composition; how the class was constructed; teaching methods used; methods of discipline; seating arrangements; parental participation in the school; as well as questions specifically engaging issues of diversity in the classroom.

## Phase Two

Since the academic year runs according to the calendar year in South Africa (January to December), from 2001 to 2002 the Grade 3 learners moved to Grade 4, and the sample of Grade 7 learners moved on to high school. It was thus decided to follow the educator rather than the learners, as the educators are perhaps the most stable and critical element in the make-up of a school. So while the same educators were used for Phase Two (April to August 2002) of the study, a new sample of learners and parents became part of the study. Phase One dealt more generically with issues around diversity; Phase Two was designed to focus in on the specific issues around diversity.

To gain a deeper understanding of the arguments and rationalisations made by learners and educators about their behaviour with respect to difference and diversity, the research team took the decision to develop a research instrument that would give respondents an opportunity to explore specific settings. Two scenarios were designed which sought to stimulate debate and even controversy. The first scenario gave an example of an 'exclusion' situation that was removed from the learners' and educators' immediate context (set in England). The intention was to avoid a picture that would either offend or intimidate anybody. The names of the major actors and the central incident in the scenario were adjusted for former Department of Education and Training (DET<sup>3</sup>) and non-former DET settings.

The scenarios were administered to learners, and the analyses of the findings were shown to the educators concerned. This feedback was useful for the educators in gaining insight into the responses of their learners (which informed the answers to the second educators' questionnaire). The findings were also presented to the class concerned in the form of a feedback. After the feedback was given, the second scenario was presented to the class.

The research in the KZN study was compressed into one phase and was somewhat different to the WC and EC. The significant difference was that the KZN research is more a series of relatively discrete case studies. Data was collected over a two-month period (April to May 2002) with varying degrees of time spent at different schools in relation to the design of the study described below and varying strategies used. While common instruments were used, and access was negotiated at all the schools with both the principals and the provincial authorities, the research approaches at individual schools varied. When the

study began, a meeting of all the schools in the study was called at which the research team briefed the schools and addressed issues of difficulty. At this meeting discussions were held about the kinds of issues to be pursued and how they would be pursued.

## Difficulties encountered and limitations of this study

This section documents some of the major difficulties encountered in the process of conducting this research, as well as the limitations of this study. In this regard five major areas are considered: funding; gaining access to the selected research sites; resistance to research by school actors; time; and scope.

- Funding resources for the project were limited and determined how much time and attention individuals could give to the project. This was a major disability. It needs to be emphasised that work of this kind is labour-intensive and requires financial resources that will support researchers in the field for extended periods of time.
- As discussed earlier in the paper, research contexts have a determinative influence on the research and it was noted that gaining access to schools was difficult. Not only were researchers denied access in some cases, but in other cases schools implicitly and/or explicitly selected which researchers would be given access to their schools – ‘blacks’ in ‘black’ schools, ‘whites’ in ‘white’ schools, and so on.
- Educators and principals of schools tended to be most reluctant to be subjects of research. They tended to see the research as policing, showing up their deficiencies and judging their performances. Their reactions then tended to be defensive, and in most instances prevented observations of classroom practices.
- In relation to time, given the range of categories in the study, it was not always possible for the researchers to interview all the respondents or to conduct interviews over the whole duration of the project, which was effectively only two years (the two years were for the study as a whole – from designing the research, recruiting researchers, conducting the research and producing reports).
- Finally, and linked to time, is the scope of this study. The scope is vast, conceptually, methodologically and empirically. As indicated earlier, the study stretched across macro, meso and micro levels of education in three

provinces. At the same time, this study is also a part of an international comparative exercise with India. As such, the scope of this study was a pressure on the research process in that researchers were expected to operate on multiple levels, and within very tight time constraints. In this regard, if the study had been of a smaller scale, it would have been able to explore issues in much more depth than is possible here.

## Conclusion

These comments have sought to place the concepts of educational inclusion and educational exclusion in the context of the social exclusion, social inclusion debate in the South. The discussion has considered these concepts in relation to the multi-dimensional issues of exclusion and shown ways in which the concepts could usefully be employed in the South. It has emphasised that the issues are neither simple nor easy to tackle. Educational inclusion requires careful consideration of every aspect of schooling and the social context in which it finds itself. Innovative approaches to educational inclusion will need to address issues at macro, micro, personal and interpersonal levels. Connections between school and community cultures have to be drawn, as well as between educational and community programmes of inclusion. The concepts of 'diversity' and difference are fundamental to inclusive initiatives lest these seek to create homogenous communities. Social and educational exclusion are seen to occur around a complex of injustices, which can be addressed usefully through understanding the culture of power and using the nonsynchronous model and interlocking framework, within a theory of articulation, as tools of analysis. The concepts of inclusion and exclusion press for much closer conscious and self-conscious consideration of identity and role: who is doing the excluding and including; who is choosing the excluding and including; how are these processes of inclusion and exclusion facilitated; and what are the dominant views and relations of social, economic and political power? The approach of the study emphasises the importance of such interrogation at the levels of research and policy formation to ensure that they do not implicitly perpetuate injustices.

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## Notes

- 1 This chapter does not exhaustively review the concepts of educational exclusion and inclusion. For a more detailed discussion see Sayed 2002.
- 2 'Introvert' and 'extrovert' were useful criteria for selection of learners as it became apparent from the interviews that bullying and family problems were often related to introversion, hence isolation and exclusion.
- 3 DET, Department of Education and Training, former African schools.

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# Deracialisation of Gauteng schools – a quantitative analysis

Mohammad Sujee

## Introduction

The term ‘deracialisation’ in the South African context can be interpreted as the activity that seeks to undo the prejudices in the country that have existed since colonisation. The aim of this paper is to initiate debate on the current levels by which education institutions in Gauteng have been able to break down the rigid racial compartments that were institutionalised in our education system by the apartheid regime.<sup>1</sup> This paper terms this as ‘deracialisation’. A full study was not attempted; rather the paper focuses on what the status quo was in education for the Gauteng province from 1996 to 2002. The year 1996 was chosen as a baseline as it was the first year that recorded complete data collection from schools by the Gauteng Department of Education (DoE). The paper will thus attempt to answer questions on the learner and educator profiles and on how rapidly or slowly deracialisation is taking place across all public ordinary schools in Gauteng. The approach is to look at environments by their ex-department<sup>2</sup> classification and examine how these former departments have begun to ‘deracialise’, that is, integrate racially.

One of the aims in post-apartheid South Africa is the fulfilment of the obligation set out in the Constitution of South Africa (1996), that is, the right to basic education, ‘to ensure equity and the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices’. A key element when ensuring these constitutional obligations is the transformation of education. One of the constitutional obligations placed on the DoE is the pursuance of ‘access’ to education and to ensure the principles of ‘equity’ and ‘redress’. Within this, questions on deracialisation of schools and the extent of learner migration across schools have arisen. Recent research has attempted to track patterns of migration, the

extent to which deracialisation has occurred, as well as to provide explanations for this and the implications thereof (Carrim 2003; Carrim & Soudien 1999; Sekete, Shilubane & Moila 2001; Soudien 2004; Vally & Dalamba 1999; Vally & Zafar 2001).

Some of the trends noted in this research include perceptions that migration has occurred from former DET schools to formerly white, Indian and coloured schools, and that migration has occurred mainly to English-medium schools. Reasons for migration include the quest for school quality. Using the Gauteng Province as a case study, this paper attempts to contribute to the developing literature on migration and the changing demographics of schooling in South Africa.

Much debate surrounds the issue of the movement of learners and educators from township schools into the former Transvaal Education Department (TED) schools in the formerly white suburbs. There is an increase in the number of black<sup>3</sup> learners who now attend schools in this former TED department. As a result, there is a perception amongst the public and some sections of the media that the deracialisation of schools is taking place because of this movement and that learners are vacating townships, resulting in the emptying of township schools. The question that also arises is whether the educator component of schools mirrors the general population demographics and whether there is racial integration taking place amongst educators and school governors in the public school sector.

## Deracialisation of learner enrolment in schools

The 'apartheid ideal' was a completely segregated society with an entirely segregated education system. All schools were racially defined and played a major role in the construction of racial and social class identities in South Africa. The racist construction of people as white, Indian, coloured or African and the bolstering of ethnicity amongst these four and amongst Africans has, of course, supported different social and class experiences of people (Carrim 1992). It is clear that as South Africa proceeds towards the transformation and democratisation of its society there is going to be movement of people from one area to another. People are now free to move to areas of their choice and to those areas that have been better resourced by the apartheid architects who ensured

the establishment of privileges for one group at the expense and denial of others. The apartheid design ensured ‘separate and unequal provision of housing, schooling, social amenities and economic and political oppression and exploitation of “black” South Africans. As such, “black” South Africans were for all intent and purposes excluded from the “mainstream” of South African society’ (Carrim 2003: 21). In education, therefore, there has been a movement of learners to schools that had space and to those schools that are perceived by parents to be better resourced.

The school population shifts that are indicated in Figures 2.2 to 2.5 on the following pages strongly support the existence of a perceived hierarchy of privilege and quality starting with the former DET as the least resourced, to the former House of Representatives (HOR) and former House of Delegates (HOD), and ending with the former TED as the most privileged. The former department that has moved most towards a provincially representative racial composition is the former HOD, where Indians now comprise a minority (Arends, Gustaffson, Mbuli, Moloto & Sujee 1999: 38). The movement of learners from one former department to another, however, does not imply that there is a decrease in the number of learners in the former DET schools or former HOR or former HOD schools, but rather that there has been an increase in the number of learners from the other population groups into these former departments. According to Carrim (1992), the desegregation of schools began in 1985 in the former HOD and HOR schools. The enrolment of black learners only began in 1990 in the former TED, when the then Minister of Education (House of Assembly) announced that white state schools could enrol black (African, Indian and coloured) learners. This then ensured that all the former departments began to ‘officially’ enrol learners from all race groups. There are opinions that if these schools (former TED, HOR and HOD) had not enrolled African learners, they would have been under-utilised and therefore forced to close and/or make educators redundant.

Learner enrolment in township schools (former African areas) has not decreased but rather increased over the years and this can be attributed to a number of factors. One such factor is the enforcement of the South African Schools Act of 1996 that ensured access to schools by learners. This has resulted in an increase of African learners in the province from 69 per cent in 1996 to 74 per cent in 2002. Demographic trends in the population as a whole comprise a second factor, for example, whenever learners transferred out of township

schools, these schools enrolled other learners who came into these areas from outlying and rural areas. Thus these vacated seats were filled. Learner movement from one school to another has been difficult to monitor, as there is no tracking system or learner profile system. As a result, the movement of learners from township schools to suburban schools will continue to be debated. The enrolment rates of schools by race does however enable us to track some movement and most importantly the extent to which Gauteng schools are being deracialised.

The question then is: To what extent have Gauteng schools deracialised in terms of learner representivity, keeping in mind that we have come from a history that has divided the population by race? Table 2.1 and Figures 2.1 to 2.5 provide an indication of the level of learner representivity in these schools.

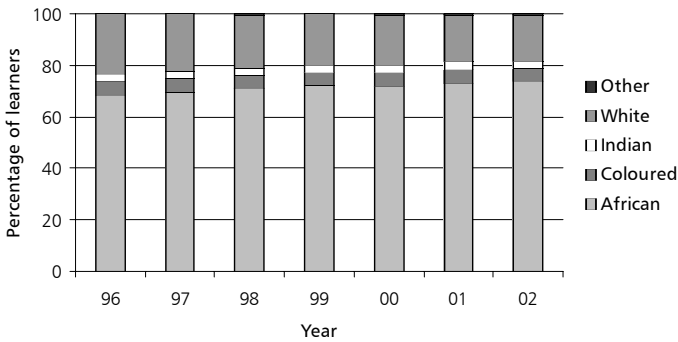
The school population reflected in Table 2.1 shows that in 2002 there were 74 per cent African learners, 4.9 per cent coloured learners, 2.7 per cent Indian learners, 18 per cent white learners and 0.2 per cent other learners in Gauteng. There was a decrease in the number of Indian and white learners in their respective former departments (Figures 2.2 to 2.4), but nevertheless the majority of learners from these respective population groups are still within the public school sector and the figure correlates very closely with the population demographics of Gauteng. The census data (2001) revealed that the African and white population for Gauteng comprised 73.8 per cent and 19.9 per cent of the total provincial population respectively. The school data in 2002 reflected that 74 per cent of learners were African and 18 per cent of learners were white. This decrease in the number of white learners can be attributed to migration and general demographic shifts in the population.

Figures 2.2 to 2.5 show the level at which racial desegregation amongst learners is taking place in the former departments. The former HOR, HOD and

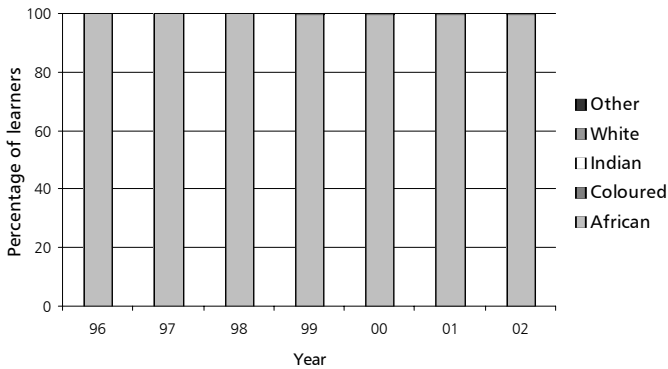
**Table 2.1** Percentage of the Gauteng Province population by race

Data source	African (%)	Coloured (%)	Indian (%)	White (%)
Census 2001 (Stats SA)	73.8	3.8	2.5*	19.9
Gauteng Annual Schools Survey: Ordinary Schools 2002	74.0	4.9	2.7	18.0

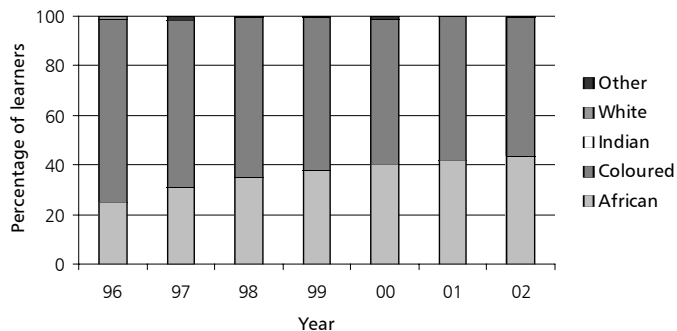
\*Census classified the group as Indian/Asian

**Figure 2.1** Learners by race in Gauteng schools

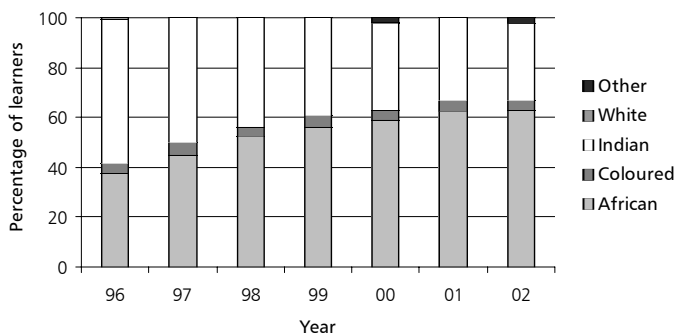
	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
African	68.5	69.7	71.2	72.0	72.0	72.9	74.0
Coloured	5.4	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.3	4.9
Indian	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	3.0	2.7
White	23.4	22.4	20.6	20.1	19.9	18.4	18.0
Other		0.3	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4

**Figure 2.2** Percentage of learners by race in ex-DET schools

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
African	99.9	100.1	99.8	99.7	99.7	99.3	99.6
Coloured	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.3
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other		0	0	0	0	0	0

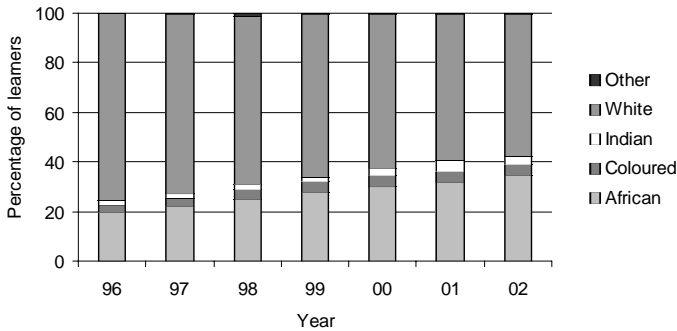
**Figure 2.3** Percentage of learners by race in ex-HOR schools

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
African	24.9	31.2	35.0	37.6	40.2	41.7	43.7
Coloured	74.1	67.1	64.6	62.1	58.6	58.1	56.0
Indian	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2
White	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other		1.4	0.0	0.1	0.9	0.0	0.1

**Figure 2.4** Percentage of learners by race in ex-HOD schools

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
African	37.5	45.2	52.0	56.3	58.8	62.3	62.8
Coloured	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.8	4.1
Indian	57.9	49.9	43.5	39.1	35.3	32.7	31.1
White	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Other		0.1	0.1	0.2	2.0	0.1	2.0



**Figure 2.5** Percentage of learners by race in ex-TED schools

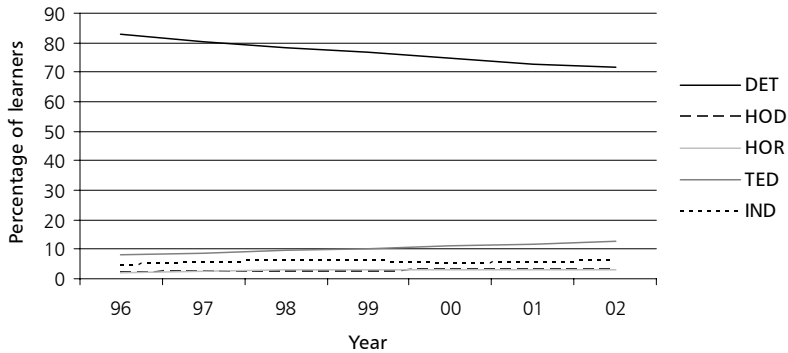
	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
African	19.6	22.1	25.1	27.8	29.8	31.6	34.2
Coloured	3.2	3.4	3.9	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.8
Indian	1.4	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.8	4.3	3.4
White	75.9	72.2	67.8	65.4	62.6	58.9	57.1
Other		0.6	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5

TED schools have increased their enrolment of African learners substantially and it is in the former HOD schools (Figure 2.4) that the number of African learners has increased dramatically and constitutes the majority of learners in these schools. Figure 2.3 also illustrates that the former HOR schools have increased in African enrolment.

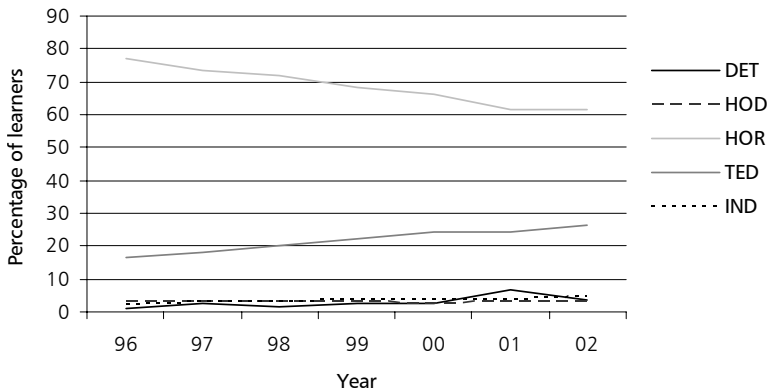
The rate of deracialisation in the former departments is increasing with the exception of the former DET schools (Figure 2.2). This is likely to be a result of the geographical positioning of the school and highlights the old hierarchy of apartheid, as a result of which the resources are still found in the suburban schools. It also discloses that in the other former department schools, there was space to accommodate African learners and it further highlights the perception of people that the 'top' of the old apartheid hierarchy is where 'quality' education is to be found.

## Where are the learners moving to?

There has been a shift (25 per cent) of African learners from the former DET schools to the other former departments and independent schools from

**Figure 2.6** Percentage of African learners

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
DET	83.1	80.3	78.2	76.8	74.7	72.9	71.5
HOD	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.9	3.1	3.0
HOR	2.0	2.6	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.2
TED	8.1	8.8	9.5	10.3	11.4	11.9	12.5
IND	4.7	5.6	6.1	5.9	5.3	5.7	6.1

**Figure 2.7** Percentage of coloured learners

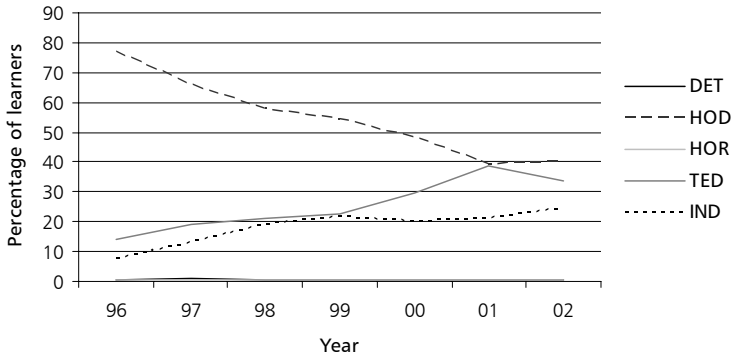
	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
DET	1.1	2.4	1.3	2.5	2.6	6.7	3.6
HOD	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.3	2.9
HOR	77.3	73.6	72.1	68.3	66.1	61.6	61.8
TED	16.5	17.9	20.2	22.2	24.4	24.3	26.5
IND	2.2	2.9	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.6

1996–2002. The greatest movement has been among Indian and coloured learners (Figures 2.7 and 2.8) who have moved from their respective former department into the former TED and independent schools. The majority of white learners (86 per cent) are in the former TED schools, but this number has decreased from 1996 as some learners have moved into independent schools. The percentage of white learners in independent schools has increased from 8 per cent in 1996 to 13.5 per cent in 2002 (Figure 2.9).

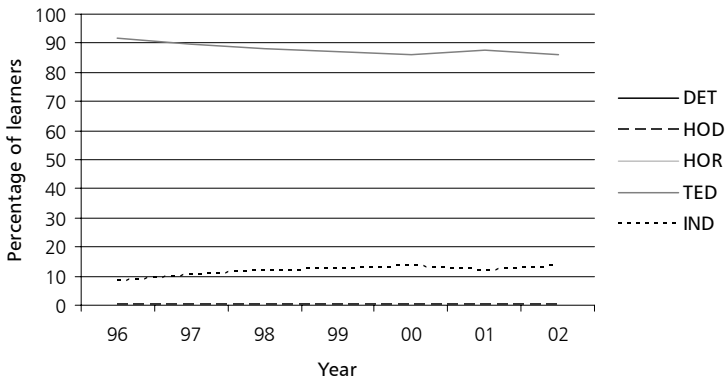
Over 74 per cent of African learners, as indicated in Figure 2.6, are in the former DET schools and just over 12 per cent are in the former TED schools. There is a decrease in the percentage of learners in the former DET schools but this does not indicate that the learner numbers have actually decreased. The contrary is true. There has been an increase in the number of learners from 692 658 learners in 1996 to 840 969 learners in 2002. A further study could be undertaken with regard to individual schools or by area and this may show that trends differ from area to area. A similar pattern can be seen in Figure 2.7 with regard to coloured learners. There are a substantial number of coloured learners (26 per cent) moving into the former TED schools.

It is the Indian learners who have migrated significantly out of the former HOD schools (Figure 2.8) and moved into the former TED schools and independent schools. There is a high percentage decrease of Indian learners from the former HOD schools – from 78 per cent to 40 per cent. This can be attributed to the logical movement of people to areas of ‘better resources’ or by social choice. It is in this former departmental sector that much deracialisation is taking place. Carrim and Soudien argue that the opening up of schools had a knock-on effect, that is, the entry of African learners into coloured schools precipitated a flight of the coloured middle class into the former TED schools. This change, in turn, stimulated the departure of middle-class whites to the more expensive, and therefore more exclusive, public and private schools (Carrim & Soudien 1999: 164). This knock-on effect can also be attributed to other former departments, especially the former HOD schools.

In 1996, there were 7 per cent (4) former HOD schools, 14 per cent (10) HOR schools and 50 per cent (242) former TED schools that recorded low deracialisation (less than 10 per cent) patterns (see Table 2.2). The percentage of schools with low deracialisation decreased to 5 per cent (3) of the former HOD schools, 4 per cent (3) of the former HOR schools and 34 per cent (190)

**Figure 2.8** Percentage of Indian learners

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
DET	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5
HOD	76.7	66.0	58.0	54.5	48.4	39.1	40.0
HOR	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.4
TED	14.3	19.0	21.2	22.4	29.9	38.5	33.7
IND	7.7	13.1	19.0	21.4	20.0	21.2	24.8

**Figure 2.9** Percentage of white learners

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
DET	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HOD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HOR	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TED	91.6	89.5	88.1	87.1	86.3	87.4	86.1
IND	8.0	10.2	11.7	12.6	13.2	12.1	13.5

of the former TED schools in 2002. The number of schools that had moderate deracialisation patterns in these former departments in 2002 was 12 per cent of the former HOD schools, 41 per cent of the former HOR schools and 28 per cent of the former TED schools. The majority of the former HOD (83 per cent) and HOR (53 per cent) schools had high deracialisation (greater than 39 per cent) patterns in their schools.

It is evident that the pace of deracialisation in the former TED schools is slow. This may perhaps be as a result of the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) practised at the schools, coupled with the high school fees charged by these schools, which impedes the movement of African learners and black learners in general. There is a high correlation between schools that have Afrikaans as the LOLT and a low number of African learners. Over 94 per cent (180) of schools that had Afrikaans as the LOLT in 2002 have low deracialisation patterns. However, while school fees in former TED schools may have a general exclusionary effect for black learners, it is interesting to note that former TED schools charging high fees in 2002 had high deracialisation patterns. This indicates the attractiveness of such schools for wealthy black parents.

In the former DET schools, less than 1 per cent of learners are from the other population groups. This is expected as the movement of people in general is towards the suburbs where resources are located. As indicated above, the general trend of apartheid was the provision of resources in a hierarchical way on the basis of race. This apartheid legacy inherited by the democratic South Africa cannot be undone in such a short space of time and therefore the flow of learners from the other population groups will not move in the direction of the former DET schools in the medium term.

**Table 2.2** Percentage of schools with African learners in the former TED, HOR and HOD schools

Ex-Dept	<10%		10–39%		>39%	
	African learners		African learners		African learners	
	Low deracialisation		Moderate deracialisation		High deracialisation	
	1996	2002	1996	2002	1996	2002
HOD	7	5	52	12	41	83
HOR	14	4	72	41	13	53
TED	50	34	30	28	20	36

## Racial representivity among educators in public ordinary schools

When the provincial educator mass is analysed, it appears that the educator complement is racially representative and that there is compliance to the Employment Equity Act (1998). However, when the data is broken down by school or in relation to learner representivity, and by taking other factors into consideration, it is evident that there is little or no deracialisation of the educator body in some of the public ordinary schools. For example, where there were more than 80 per cent black learners, the majority of the educators were white.

In the former TED, deracialisation of the educator core is taking place at an even slower pace than among learners. This is also apparent in schools where there is a majority of black learners (over 80 per cent); one tends to find that the majority of the educators are white. In 2002, 9 per cent (50) of the former TED schools had over 90 per cent white educators, whilst over 80 per cent of its learner enrolment was black. One per cent (6) of schools had 100 per cent black learner enrolment, where the educator complement was 100 per cent white.

The former TED schools have begun to employ more educators from 'other' population groups. In 2002, 75 per cent of these schools had more than 90 per cent white educators compared to 87 per cent of schools in 2000. Table 2.3 below shows that the percentage of black educators has increased in the former TED schools by 3.7 percentage points – this increase further disaggregated shows an increase from 2.1 per cent, 0.8 per cent and 1 per cent in 2000 of African, coloured and Indian educators to 3.8 per cent, 1.4 per cent and 2.3 per cent in 2002 respectively.

In the former HOD schools, 13 per cent of schools in 2002 had more than 90 per cent Indian educators compared to 15 per cent in 2000. The number of

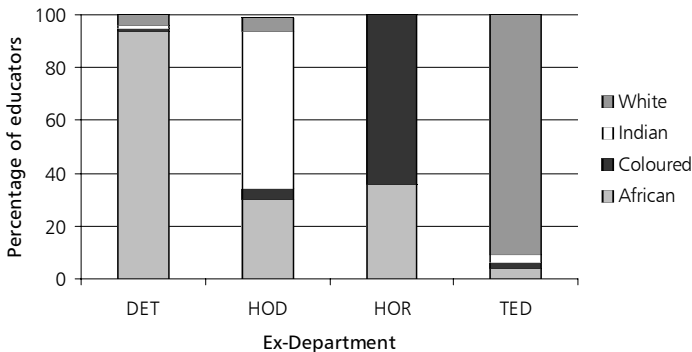
**Table 2.3** Percentage of educators by race (and by ex-department) – 2000 and 2002

	Ex-DET		Ex-HOR		Ex-HOD		Ex-TED		Total public	
	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002
African	98.9	99.0	6	12	14	20	2.1	3.8	60.5	61.2
Coloured	0.2	0.2	88	82	2	3	0.8	1.4	5.9	5.3
Indian	0.2	0.2	1	1	74	69	1.0	2.3	3.4	3.5
White	0.7	0.6	5	5	10	8	96.0	92.4	30.2	30.0

African educators had increased from 14 per cent in 2000 to 20 per cent in 2002. A similar increase of African educators in the former HOR schools is evident. The percentage of African educators in this former department had increased by 6 per cent as well. In the former DET schools, 1 per cent of non-African educators existed in 2000 and the same exists in 2002. The majority of the educators in the service of the Gauteng Department of Education are African – 61 per cent of the total educators employed in schools, of whom 92 per cent are in the former DET schools.

Figure 2.10 illustrates the percentage of educators employed in 2002 by the school governing bodies (SGBs) of public ordinary schools. The educators employed by SGBs account for 10 per cent of the total educators in the public ordinary school sector. However, over 90 per cent of these educators were employed in the former TED schools with the majority (90 per cent) being white. Similar patterns of employment are also prevalent in the former DET where the majority of educators employed by the SGB are African. The SGBs in the former HOD and HOR have employed a substantial number of educators from the ‘other’ population groups, that is, those who are not Indian or coloured respectively.

**Figure 2.10** Percentage of educators employed by the SGB (by race) in 2002



Ex Dept	African	Coloured	Indian	White
DET	94	1	1	5
HOD	30	4	60	5
HOR	36	64	0	0
TED	4	2	3	91

It is therefore evident that there is a limited amount of deracialisation with regard to the employment of educators in some schools in Gauteng. This is much more apparent when the data is categorised according to the former departments. It is noticeable that the greater majority of the educators in each respective former department represents the apartheid legacy. The movement of educators by the different race groups in the former departments is not discounted but the reconstruction of the racial composition in each of the former departments is taking place at a lingering and protracted rate.

## Representivity on the school governing body

In 2002 there was a visible form of deracialisation of the SGBs (see Table 2.4) of schools. Overall, there was 65 per cent African representation of the 74 per cent African learners and 27 per cent white parent representation of 18 per cent white learners on SGBs. In the main, black parents were elected on the SGBs where the black or African learner population did not constitute a majority.

This overall picture, however, hides the actual representation of parents on individual school's SGBs. For example, when the data is disaggregated in the former TED schools where there were over 60 percent black learners, there were 49 per cent black parents on the governing bodies of schools but where there were fewer (less than 20 per cent) black learners, 1 per cent of black parents were elected on to the SGBs of these schools.

This imbalance in parent representation is also evident in the former HOD and HOR schools. In the former HOD where there were more than 60 per cent African learners, there were 24 per cent African parents and 71 per cent Indian

**Table 2.4** Percentage of SGB members by race (by ex-department) in 2002

Ex-Dept	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Other	Total
DET	99.3	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.1	56.9
HOD	19.8	3.7	71.5	4.7	0.2	3.1
HOR	19.7	78.9	0.5	0.8	0.0	3.8
TED	14.9	2.6	2.8	79.4	0.3	33.5
GP*	65.2	4.1	3.4	27.2	0.1	100

\*Totals do not add up to GP, as new schools have been excluded from the table



parents represented on the SGB. In the former HOR schools, there were 40 per cent African parents represented on the SGB. It is apparent that where there were fewer learners of one population group in a school, the likelihood of that group's parents being represented on the SGB was very slim.

## Conclusion

This study constitutes a quantitative analysis, using learner enrolment and educator statistics, to track racial representivity within schools. From a macro perspective, the enrolment of learners at schools appears to be deracialised to a large degree in most schools and to a lesser degree in certain schools where there are impediments such as the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) used. There is considerably more deracialisation of schools charging higher fees compared to the schools in which the LOLT is Afrikaans. It seems that higher school-fee charging English-medium schools of the former TED are preferred by non-English (as a home language) speaking parents. A study could be undertaken to establish why learners have moved into these schools and whether this reflects a real desire for racial integration on the part of learners and parents or rather the desire to access better resourced schools that parents perceive will give their children a competitive edge. School resources have not as yet equalised. The school funding norms and the provisioning of other resources and programmes implemented on the basis of redress and equity by the Gauteng DoE will take a much longer time to attain equity at all levels in all schools. However, the high school fees charged by some schools can undo these strategies and would enforce social inequality in public schools.

Learners from the former HOD schools are the most mobile group in terms of integration. The question that emerges is why the learners from this former department are so mobile? What role does their socio-economic status play in this? Deracialisation is also occurring faster among learners than with educators and governors. This could possibly be because of the fact that while legislation and policies compel schools to admit all learners, there is no legislation or policy that obliges schools to employ educators in a manner that ensures racial equity, nor ensuring that composition of SGBs must reflect the school population.

It is evident that the exclusivity of the apartheid design has been broken down in most schools in Gauteng. Many schools have opened their doors to 'other race groups' and have begun the process of reconstructing the fabric of society in an inclusive manner rather than 'deracialising'. However, the population demographics are such that there are going to be single-race schools, especially amongst the poorest of the poor. The challenge for the Gauteng DoE, as well as for the national department, is to ensure that there are programmes that will expose these learners to diversity, multi-culturalism, multi-faith and religious tolerance.

Deracialisation of schools requires further research into the attitudes, friendships and group dynamics within schools so as to develop a real sense of whether racial integration is really taking place or not. Recent research undertaken shows that different forms of exclusion and racism still exist in the education system and in schools in particular. It also draws attention to the racial tension in schools, especially where schools promote the previous hegemony and ethos of the school. Furthermore, it has been found that schools outside of the former DET do not promote African languages and there is an inadequate representation of Africans or blacks on school governing bodies. The racial 'mixing' of schools is irreversible. The challenge is rather for schools to foster interaction and to develop an ethos that reflects the diverse social, cultural, religious, political and economic backgrounds of its learners.

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## Notes

- 1 This article is an updated version of the article 'School migration and demography in Gauteng schools', published in the *Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa*, Volume 10, No. 1 by the Wits Education Policy Unit. The analysis reflected in this document is based on the Annual Surveys for Ordinary Schools of the Gauteng Department of Education for the years 1996 to 2002. However, the analysis and interpretation of the data should be attributed to the author in his personal capacity and not to the Department. The author would like to thank the Gauteng DoE for allowing the use of its data and to present these findings; and also to thank A Chanee, S Motala, B Fleisch, ML Moodie and fellow colleagues for their invaluable assistance and support.
- 2 Former apartheid education departments separated by race – TED, former Transvaal Educational and Training Department (white); DET, former Department of Education

and Training (African); HOR, former House of Representatives (coloured) and HOD, House of Delegates (Indian).

- 3 The term 'black' in this article refers to African, Indian and coloured.

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# Educating South African teachers for the challenge of school integration: towards a teaching and research agenda

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## Introduction

Almost ten years into our democracy, South African schools are still grappling with the apartheid legacy of separate and unequal schooling. This is in spite of the plethora of legislation and policies (for example, the *South African Schools Act* of 1996; *White Paper on Education and Training*, March 1995; *Education White Paper 6*, July 2001 and others) that mandate all public schools to provide equal educational opportunities for *all* learners. Many teachers and schools are either unwilling or are unable to implement the requisite changes to respond qualitatively to this mandate. The main reasons for this include lack of commitment to school integration, as well as inadequate and/or inappropriate teacher and school development for the required changes.

This paper, therefore, examines first the changing schooling context in which graduating teachers teach. Second, the paper reviews literature related to interventions that aim to prepare teachers for effectively teaching in integrated contexts. Third, it investigates the extent to which practising teachers educated under apartheid systems are being properly and adequately re-skilled to teach in a changing schooling and societal context. The paper identifies challenges facing tertiary institutions in their efforts to prepare teachers professionally for teaching in newly integrated schools, and maps out a possible research agenda for developing and implementing ameliorative interventions in teacher education.

How, then, are teachers dealing with the diverse learner identities in their classrooms?

## Schooling contexts

This paper argues that true school integration, which promotes equality of access as well as of educational opportunity for *all*, is still elusive in most school contexts in South Africa. Instead, school and classroom policies and practices that are informed by such understandings of integration as simply accepting learners from other racial groups, continue to flourish. Beyond access, schools continue to respond to their changing demographics by adopting approaches that allow them to maintain the status quo. As reviewed in Moletsane (1999), these include the assimilationist approach in which learners are expected to fit into the existing ethos and culture of the school and for the school to continue with 'business as usual'. A second approach is the colour-blind approach in which teachers claim not to see colour/race and refuse to engage with issues around it in their dealings with learners. A third and most common is the contributionist approach in which learners are asked to acknowledge and know about the contributions (mostly food and dress) of other racial and cultural groups. In uni-racial schools, the denialist approach dominates, in which teachers claim that issues of diversity do not concern them, as their learners all come from the same background.

The following excerpts, one drawn from a newspaper article by Suzanne Leclerc-Madlala (*Sunday Times Extra*, 17 August 2003) and the other two from our own research and supervision of teaching practice in schools, illustrate the different ways in which teachers are dealing (or not dealing) with issues of diversity in their classrooms and schools and the ways these still act to reinforce discrimination and inequalities.

### *Excerpt 1: The contributionist approach*

In a social studies class in a middle-class, formerly white school, learners are asked to 'break into their cultural groups', with each group assigned one of the four corners of the classroom.<sup>1</sup> Neatly, there are four corners for the four obvious groups – 'whites, coloureds, Indians and Zulus' (yes, 'Zulus'). But what was obvious to the teacher was not so obvious to the learners. They milled around the corners and humorously sought advice from one another as to where they should go. Joel, the French boy, who is black, decided the 'white' group was appropriate. The visiting Venezuelan girl joined the 'Indian' group, and the

Xhosa-speaking boy joined the ‘Zulus’. If the teacher was up to the task, she could have used this as a marvellous opportunity for demonstrating the stupidity inherent in such simplistic attempts to categorise people. Instead, the teacher became impatient with the pupils’ to-ing and fro-ing, and instructed them where they should go! And so, the biracial girl was marched off to the ‘coloured’ corner. Joel, the French kid, was put in with the ‘Zulus’, the Venezuelan was assigned to the ‘whites’, and the African-American girl was taken out of the ‘Zulus’ group and re-assigned ‘coloured’.

Predictably, once in their ‘appropriate’ groups, the assignment given, which produced and reinforced the usual stereotypes, was:

Discuss your culture: its traditional foods, customs, dress, and music, whatever else that marks you off as special. Then each of you will take a turn presenting to the class one aspect of your unique culture.

### *Excerpt 2: The assimilationist approach*

The lesson is set in a working-class, previously Indian school located in an informal settlement bordering a Durban township.<sup>2</sup> Ninety-five per cent of the learner population is African, three per cent Indian, and two per cent coloured. However, of the 36 educators, 26 are Indian, and 10 African; nine are male and 27 are female. Teachers claim that racial/ethnic diversity is not an issue, as poverty is a unifying factor among the learners. Unemployment and crime are high in the area. School fees have been R275 per annum for the last eight years.

A Grade 7 teacher taught a lesson spread over two periods on ‘multicultural education’. According to the teacher, the aim of the lesson is to get learners to understand and appreciate difference – a topic in the new OBE and Curriculum 2005. The educator commenced her lesson by asking the learners: ‘What is multicultural education?’ Responses given by learners included:

Teaching in a classroom where learners come from different kinds of homes.

Different people do things differently like pray, eat different food, speak different languages, have different accents.

We look different, like our hair is ‘crouse’, yours is straight, we got ‘putu lips’, like that; you know what I’m saying.

The educator recorded the responses on a flip chart. A brief discussion followed on each point.

T: Learners, how many race groups in our class do you identify?

L: We have blacks, Indians, coloureds and we also have white and African parents – they stay in Malagazi – their children become coloureds. Thuli is ... like ... that kind child. And then we have Thabo – I don’t know what he is. He’s a white muntu. (*Everybody laughs. The teacher reprimands the learners and explains that Thabo is an albino, using Michael Jackson’s skin condition to explain the condition.*)

The teacher then divided the class into groups according to different topics (religion, food, dress, homes, celebrations, prayers, appearance/features) and assigned this as homework. During the feedback session the next day, predictable and stereotypical responses from the various groups were presented, but not challenged by the teacher.

### ***Excerpt 3: The denialist response***

This is a primary school (Grade 1–7) in rural KwaZulu-Natal, with over 1 000 learners, 22 educators and one support staff member.<sup>3</sup> Teachers and learners come from isiZulu-speaking and a few from isiXhosa-speaking backgrounds. When asked, the teachers indicated that there *was no diversity* in the learner population. All come from poor homes – the unemployment rate is very high. Many of the children are cared for by grandparents. Families are either single parent or fathers work in Johannesburg. They do not include anything about multicultural education in the lessons because it is not really an issue at the school. However, first, the teachers indicated that some children at the school do face barriers to learning:

We do have children with problems like sight and hearing problems. We also have high numbers of learners with a problem of being underachievers, not disabled learners.



Another described the school's response:

In my class, children are divided into three categories. I decide on these categories by watching how they cope with activities assigned to them. There are those who are quick to learn, those who are slow to learn, and those who 'drive teachers mad' – by this I refer to learners who are extremely slow.

Second, a member of the SGB expressed concern about child abuse in the community – and even at the school. At a community meeting, a mother of a learner (age 16 and in Grade 6) who was raped by a teacher at the school explained what happened:

My daughter left school before writing June exams last year. I did not know what was wrong because she disappeared and I searched for her all over and my limited money was exhausted in that search. I got her at her granny's house. When I got there and tried to talk with her she ran away ... She just cried, saying she did not want to go to school ... Since this incident she has not told me that Mr K raped her. I thought of putting her in one of the schools in Winterton, but the problem is transport – she must take a bus or taxi to school and I don't have that money.

Parents and community members are extremely concerned that no appropriate action has been taken against the teachers involved. Parents feel that teachers are not committed to the school or to the learners. None of them is from the area, and they travel in every day. None of them has their children at the school. As one parent said, all have their children in 'white or Indian schools in the town. So they don't care about our children. They come late to school, stay away often.'

### *Conceptualising diversity issues*

What do the above responses tell us? The three excerpts point to the complexity of the issues that confront teachers in all classroom contexts. The unequal power relations and oppressive behaviours that result from them mean that, at any one time, different factors related to individual and group identity (race, class, gender, sexuality, religion and so on) can interconnect to negatively

impact on teaching and learning. These factors range from racial/cultural discrimination, gender-based violence (including sexual abuse, harassment and rape), ability/disability, social class, language, and others, which act to exclude or alienate certain learners from schooling and learning. In this paper, we argue that these do not act in isolation. Rather, two or more interact to impact on an individual's ability and/or willingness to learn and remain in school. This means that conceptualisations of diversity and interventions that isolate and deal with one and exclude the others (as for example anti-racist education does) may not work. Rather, a framework that encompasses all forms of oppression resulting from unequal power relations needs to inform teacher education and professional development interventions.

In South Africa and elsewhere, such movements as multiculturalism and anti-racist education have historically informed debates around issues of diversity in education. While these are useful frameworks for the South African context, they have significant limitations. Firstly, as Akhurst (1997) has argued, multiculturalism, which encourages contact with other groups in the hope that this would lead to intercultural understanding and changes in attitudes as similarities are discovered, is limited in its capacity to address issues of diversity. Critiques of multiculturalism include the fact that it fails to actively address issues of unequal power relations, which perpetuate different forms of discrimination (Cole 1989 cited by Akhurst 1997). Second, while anti-racist education goes a step further and locates itself in opposition to more forms of inequalities (race, class, gender), it still falls short of acknowledging all sources of unequal power relations and the forms of discrimination they perpetuate. For example, HIV/AIDS stigma, child abuse and other forms of gender-based violence, ability/disability, and the different ways all these factors may interact to exclude certain individuals and groups from social institutions, including schools, are not automatically addressed in an anti-racist framework.

To address this, we argue for a human rights framework, which examines the relationships and intersections between race, class, gender, HIV/AIDS status and other forms of difference and inequity in schools, their communities and society in the context of shifting power relations. This kind of analysis will need to be context-specific in order to expose the processes through which inequity and injustice are experienced and perpetuated. In other words, there is a need to deconstruct concepts of oppression, inclusion and exclusion in relation to how relevant they are in addressing questions of equity, equality,

and social justice, and human rights within schools and their communities. The scenarios presented in this paper suggest that patterns of inequity play themselves out in insidious and complex ways in schools, and highlight the interplay of factors that contribute to exclusions and oppressions. Thus, this paper argues that debates around issues of diversity need to be located in the context of the social exclusion/inclusion debate from an equity and human rights perspective.

Given the above scenarios in the different school contexts, what is the role of teacher education in South Africa? How should teacher education programmes be preparing teachers for this role?

## **Teacher education and research for integrated schools**

Given what we know about the ways in which diversity is played out and managed in schools, the role of teacher education and the extent to which it enables present and future teachers to address issues of diversity in their classrooms and schools needs to be examined. Due to the paucity of teacher education interventions and research into such programmes in South Africa, it is not yet possible to address these questions from our context. Thus, in this paper, we draw on some of the rather limited research available from the US and elsewhere on the impact of interventions in teacher education designed to address diversity in education.

In particular, we develop our framework from the works of Hargreaves (2001) on the emotional geographies of teaching and Paccione (2000) on developing a commitment to multicultural education among student teachers. However, we argue for the extension of this work to include a commitment to human rights and inclusive educational practice. We acknowledge the numerous questions about context and relevance, which the use of such research from the North raises, but see in it the potential for drawing lessons for mapping out a research and teaching agenda for the South African context.

Thus, in seeking to understand the forms of teaching and research interventions in teacher education that are necessary for effectively responding to the challenge of diversity in schools, the next section attempts to map some of the issues that confront such a research programme, as well as the forms of interventions that would best address diversity in our context.

### *What constitutes good practice internationally in this area?*

It is notable that relevant research focuses on a broad range of learning outcomes – not just conceptual understanding but also change in attitudes, knowledge of relevant historical events, a commitment to certain values regarding democracy and equity, and a willingness to take action against oppression. To this effect, knowledge of diversity, skills for effectively working with diverse populations, and transforming attitudes towards cultural diversity are all goals for a teacher prepared in interventions that address issues of diversity (Paccione 2000).

#### **Understandings of diversity**

As argued above, we believe that only a particular, shared understanding of diversity may help a school and teacher education institution to develop interventions that effectively respond to issues of diversity in the South African context. Thus, a starting question in the research and teaching agenda would be: What understandings of diversity underpin existing teacher education and school interventions?

To illustrate, for the US context with majority white teachers, Lawrence and Tatum (1997) focus on anti-racist action as a key aim for a programme working with teachers. In the South African context, while the anti-racist approach may be relevant for historically white schools, which are still staffed by predominantly white teachers, many African schools remain uni-racial in their staff and student enrolment, and would require a different response. Thus, an appropriate response must involve a more contextual analysis as different local environments would require varied responses. Such a response must reject the cultural stereotyping exposed by LeClerc-Madlala (2003) in the first scenario presented above, and focus instead on the way social power is allocated inequitably on the basis of difference.

For us, diversity involves the interrelationships among race, class, gender, ability/disability, HIV status, and others – failure to address one area of experience may impede development in another. For example, when introduced to the work on sexism in the module ‘Diversity and learning’ in the first year of our BEd degree, white women students tend to see sexism as impacting seriously on African and Indian women, while viewing themselves as unaffected by it. Our view was that racism is operating to distance white women from issues of gender that affect all women.

A critical element in the understanding of diversity should not only highlight the ways in which privileged groups collude with the system. The collusion of subordinated groups with the system must also be examined. Thus, concepts such as 'internalised domination' (Adams, Blumenfeld, Castaneda, Hackman, Peters & Zuniga 2000) and 'internalised racism' (Lipsky 1977) are valuable, as they shift the analysis to an understanding not just of power relationships, but also to the ways in which participants in a system act in ways that maintain rather than challenge them. We contend that this approach to diversity is more helpful than one that focuses primarily on the challenging of oppressive practices and attitudes. Such an approach will be more effective in addressing the needs of African or white staff in uni-racial schools, as well as staff dealing with other forms of social exclusion, including HIV stigma, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, religious intolerance and others. Different interventions may thus be based on quite different premises, and research needs to highlight the nature of these differences.

### **Student teacher biographies**

As many researchers have argued (for example, Paccione 2000; Tatum 2000), teacher education institutions need to consider the personal and academic attributes of the applicants before accepting them into their programmes. Questions regarding the nature of student teacher biographies (identity) and how this impacts on their commitment (and ability) to support their learners' positive development of their identities (Tatum 2000), need to inform the research agenda on recruitment into, as well as the content of, teacher education. A research agenda in this area needs to analyse the different kinds of life and educational experiences student teachers have had that may contribute to, or act against, a commitment and ability to effectively deal with issues of diversity and discrimination in their own classrooms. Most importantly, the question, can commitment to socially just practices in teaching be developed or is this determined by one's biography (Paccione 2000), needs to be addressed.

In the South African context, given the fact that most of our student teachers (at least at our own institution) are white and largely young and female, it is important that teaching and research interventions seek to acknowledge and understand their personal, social, and political fears and insecurities. These may include fears about affirmative action, as well as perceptions of reverse racism, which tend to legitimise, at least in their own minds, prejudice against the 'other', and to perpetuate discrimination.

### Emotional and relational aspects of teaching

Teaching and learning in post-apartheid South Africa is, of necessity, laden with emotions. For example, as teachers and learners confront issues of poverty, child abuse, HIV/AIDS orphans, rape and others, schools become much more than places for academic learning. Rather, they become community centres in which all sectors of the community expect to benefit from social, emotional and educational services. In this context, teachers perform multiple roles and provide a variety of services to a constituency wider than their learners. In such an endeavour, they need to be able to confront their own and their constituencies' emotional reactions as they tackle the various issues of discrimination and diversity in their schools and communities.

Thus, a research agenda that investigates the emotional and relational aspects of teaching in diverse settings, and how teachers understand and act on these (Hargreaves 2001), needs to be developed. According to Denzin (1984), teachers need to develop an emotional understanding or an 'emotional intersubjectivity that people are able to create in their interactions' (cited by Hargreaves 2001: 1058) with those with whom they come into contact (learners, parents and community members). When this understanding is lacking, emotional misunderstanding, in which 'people believe they know what others are feeling but are fundamentally mistaken', may occur. A research and teaching agenda needs to work towards developing interventions that aim to reduce what Hargreaves calls the emotional geographies that separate individuals (teachers) from others (parents and learners). According to him, these refer to the 'excessive forms of distance ... in human interaction that threaten [the] basic bonds and relationships that are essential to emotional understanding and the high quality interaction that arises from it' (Hargreaves 2001: 1059). The alienation of parents, particularly Africans, from schools is well documented in South Africa, with teachers complaining about poor parental involvement (Moletsane 2002). This may be due to the emotional misunderstanding between them and their children's teachers. Closing this gap may help towards bringing parents back into the educational process and in assisting teachers and schools in dealing with educational and social challenges, particularly in the era of AIDS and poverty.

### Understanding learner characteristics

Based on the above, understanding and working with learner characteristics is essential if issues of diversity are to be effectively dealt with in schools. As

teacher educators and researchers, it is important that we engage with teachers (and their learners) as they really are, not as we would like them to be or expect them to be, and that we assist them to do the same. Thus, we need to ask: Do teachers and teacher trainees know who their learners really are? If they do not, can we really expect them to provide learners with equal opportunities to learning and success? What strategies can we employ to develop this understanding?

### Creating democratic teaching and learning spaces

In a chapter that examined the ways in which educational institutions serve both to reinforce oppressive behaviours and to promote liberation of people, Osajima (1995) concluded that to do the latter, it is important that institutions create and maintain democratic teaching and learning spaces. These would include safe spaces for teachers and their learners in which to engage in frank discussion and dissent on issues pertaining to power relations and privilege among a few and the oppression of the majority. Concurring with Hargreaves (2001), Osajima concludes that the presence of difference, conflict and emotion in the teaching and learning situation presents teachers with challenges that require directed intervention. In this context, the design, content and delivery of interventions are crucial – otherwise they can be counterproductive. Classroom pedagogy and environment need to provide student teachers with genuinely supportive opportunities to explore issues in relation to ‘self’ and others.

So, what would such interventions look like?

### The design and delivery of programmes

This paper argues that teacher education courses need to integrate debates on processes of oppression and social exclusion. These processes are located within the wider social and political contexts of society. They imply a denial of human rights. Thus, they need to engage with oppressions within a human rights framework. The scenarios presented earlier in this paper reveal blindness to and silence around human rights violations children suffer daily in schools and communities.

In referring to the aims of teacher education interventions that address issues of diversity, Paccione (2000) uses the concepts of cultural awareness, cultural

sensitivity and cultural competence. Citing Chen (1997), Paccione suggests that cultural awareness refers to the cognitive domain, cultural sensitivity to the affective domain, and cultural competence to the behavioural domain. Such a broad range of competencies requires attention to the particular pedagogical processes in teacher education, a point we return to below.

### *Contextualised programming*

This paper argues that interventions aimed at educating teachers for diversity must not be decontextualised electives. Rather, they must provide students with real opportunities to deal with real issues in the communities they are aiming to serve. To this effect, Paccione posits that ‘two specific areas of intervention are most influential in the development of educators on issues of diversity. Foremost is the support for cultural immersion experiences and coursework ... that evokes a critical analysis of the socio-political status quo [in society]’ (2000: 980). Research from the US suggests that this is particularly understood as ways of placing students in culturally diverse contexts. However, schools of education, ours included, provide two forms of cultural immersion themselves: the experience of being in the institution, and that of teaching practice. Both of these expose students to new social environments that may promote or impede specific understandings of diversity.

#### **Institutional experience**

In relation to institutional experience, in May 2003 a campus forum of staff and students identified a series of specific complaints regarding racism on our campus. These comments were made mainly but not only by black students. The complaints included disrespect shown by white students to black staff and by white staff to black staff and students, as well as a racialised social life amongst students. The implication is that despite diversity amongst staff (50 per cent of academic staff are black – Indian, coloured and African) and students, a norm of white privilege is communicated through the social relationships on campus. This takes place through the perceived relationships between white and black academic and administrative staff, through the perceptions of authority as vesting in white staff, through the marginalisation of black languages in social interaction, and through the exclusion of black foreigners. We doubt if this is an atypical situation in a historically advantaged university in South Africa. The implication is that the existing socialisation of



students into racial roles is being reinforced rather than challenged by the experience of university life, and that the commitment towards a more inclusive institution, embodied in university policies, is not evidenced in the relationships amongst staff and students.

While these complaints were put forward by student teachers, in-service students enter the same institution hoping to achieve a more productive intellectual and professional life, and if these negative features are in place they represent an obstacle to the achievement of that hope. Thus, there is no doubt that to provide students with a more inclusive environment the institution needs to actively seek to challenge and change exclusionary values and practices.

Second, teacher education courses that address issues of diversity and the different forms of oppression need to be developed and implemented. Again, such courses need to be informed by a shared understanding of diversity as the interaction among a wide variety of identities and life experiences among individuals and groups. A number of programmes are emerging specifically in the area of gender and inclusive education, but relatively few in the area of racism, and still fewer that integrate and holistically address the various identities and life experiences that impact on individuals.

The limitation of coursework is precisely that – even though a model of inclusive practice may exist that is coherent with shared aims and values within a course, it may not cohere with the rest of the curriculum within pre-service education in particular, which has four years of study. Thus, ideally, inclusive education values and practices must permeate all levels of the students' four years of experience in the institution. However, our experience in having one course that addressed issues of diversity in a systematic and critical way was that it has become a reference point for students who could identify with its vision and values, and who are committed to issues of diversity. Thus the same campus forum that expressed concerns over racism made a recommendation that all students, and all staff – academic and administrative – be required to take the same course.

### Teaching practice

Teaching practice is significant in initial teacher education as the opportunity for skills development and as the site for socialisation into the profession, as well as for the integrated assessment of the different elements of professional development. In 2002 we began raising questions as to whether teaching

practice is being conducted in a way consistent with our understanding of diversity. To understand this, Quin conducted an exploratory investigation into these issues, and observed:

a student's behaviour in response to a vociferously keen black girl during a question and answer session on the mat in a Grade 3 class. This girl's behaviour was just like the white boys', but the teacher consistently ignored the pointed, eager hand in front of her nose with a sort of 'I won't respond to bad manners' look. Yet she indulged all the boys who behaved in a similar manner and obviously appreciated their active participation. In essence, owing to their gender/race combination, the boys were being affirmed for their active enthusiasm, while the girl's race/gender combination meant that her assertive eagerness was repressed – an example of 'passive' sexism and/or racism. (2002: 10)

Quin identified the lack of any assessment criteria related to the management of diversity. A positive feature that she noted is the willingness of many student teachers who had *not* previously engaged in coursework in this area to hear and to understand comments on the problems of such situations.

There are also questions around the allocation of students to specific schools. A particular problem has been the allocation of white students to schools in black areas, and the fears of white students and parents about such placements. The issue of allocation is not a simple one, as preferences of students need to be taken into account – for example, some black students have raised the same concerns as white students about security.

One way of addressing this may be informed by Paccione's (2000) stages of development of an active commitment to diversity education, from contextual awareness, to emergent awareness, transformational awareness and committed action. Using this framework, the development of individual students needs to be understood and handled carefully, in moving students from what they experience as safe and familiar surroundings towards moving out of their 'comfort zones'. For example, the placing of a white student in an African school, or vice versa, should be handled in the context of the student's level of commitment to inclusive education practices. As Paccione warns:

for an individual who is still in the stage of contextual awareness, a cultural immersion experience may have traumatic consequences. (2000: 21)

A problem unique to South Africa is the placing of foreign black students in isiZulu or other African language environments without specific planning and support. Such students may experience an expectation (by locals) that white students would not face – that they communicate in the vernacular – and hence be particularly disadvantaged. It is essential that the operation of teaching practice extend and sustain students' development with regard to diversity.

The difficulties of managing teaching practice are leading to new emphases, for example the training of school-based teachers as mentors. A key problem with the mentoring approach is that it may too readily assume that a foundation of good inclusive education practice is in place and that mentors would be equipped to support trainee teachers in relation to issues of diversity and inclusion. Given our history, and the history of teacher education under apartheid, this would not be a reasonable assumption. Such training in our view should be credit-bearing, as it would be an opportunity for teachers to strengthen their professional development as teachers, and not simply as mentors. This would then include specific attention to issues of diversity. In addition, best practices elsewhere in the country (for example, the University of Pretoria's placement of white students in African township schools) need to be carefully studied and adapted for other settings.

As the intersection of formal education and workplace learning, teaching practice is a highly productive area for the development of research work, and within that area, issues of diversity should be foregrounded, as they are central to the development of a more critically informed profession.

## Conclusion

This paper has addressed the extent to which pre-service teacher education is preparing teachers effectively for teaching in integrated contexts, as well as the extent to which practising teachers educated under apartheid systems are being properly and adequately re-skilled to teach in a changing schooling and societal context. Our experience and research in this area suggests that teacher education programmes are still utilising strategies that reinforce unequal

power relations, which in turn perpetuate discrimination and exclusion in society and schools. To disrupt this we recommend intervention at three levels: developing the institutional culture; changing the teaching practice experience; and revamping the teacher education curriculum. Given the salience of the above aspects, we propose that research into teacher education and diversity focus on such questions as:

- What understandings of diversity underlie pre-service and in-service teacher education, and what specific interventions are in place as a result of these?
- To what extent do these understandings of diversity inform practices regarding the different forms of exclusion on campus and in schools?
- What is the nature of teacher biographies (teachers' lives) and how do these impact on individuals' commitment (and ability) to support learners' positive development (Tatum 2000)?
- What pedagogical processes should be employed in teacher education courses to facilitate reflection, engagement with 'self', and students' own biographies?

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### Notes

- 1 Adapted from Leclerc-Madlala, 2003.
- 2 Compiled from observation field notes, July 2003.
- 3 Compiled from notes during teaching practice supervision, August 2003.

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# A review of national strategies and forums engaging with racism and human rights in education

Shameme Manjoo

## Introduction

This paper reviews the national strategies that engage with issues of racism and human rights in the education sector. I will begin by discussing, in some detail, two specialist national forums convened by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), namely the Discussion/Consultative Forum on Anti-Racism in the Education and Training Sector (CFRE) and the National Forum on Democracy and Human Rights Education (NFDHRE). Before describing other strategies currently operative in the national arena I will reflect briefly on the implications of the involvement in these forums for a range of education stakeholders, the successes and challenges experienced by the CFRE and the NFDHRE and conclude with some recommendations that may inform the workings of other national strategies.

## Specialist forums convened by the SAHRC

### *The Discussion/Consultative Forum on Anti-Racism in the Education and Training Sector (CFRE)*

The CFRE was hosted by the SAHRC over the period October 2000 to September 2002. The SAHRC no longer hosts the Forum, which is presently not active. The products and lessons generated by the CFRE have relevance for communities of practice engaging with the challenges that continue to arise from discriminatory practices in schools, educational establishments and training institutions in South Africa.

The Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, officially launched the CFRE on Robben Island on 18 October 2000. Representatives from the national and provincial departments of education, teacher unions, learner organisations, school governing bodies, NGOs, academics and practitioners attended the launch. The CFRE held four meetings over three years. An attempt was made to hold these meetings in three different provinces: Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape. Members constituted a group of actors recognised for their expertise and active participation in the field of anti-racist education. The CFRE received financial assistance from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

### Background to the CFRE

Given the legacy of apartheid, it is not surprising that the highest number of complaints recorded by the SAHRC on a thematic basis are around the theme of 'unfair discrimination, racism and racial discrimination'. Most of the complaints and reports received by the SAHRC in the period 1996 to 1998 alleging racism and racial discrimination came from the education and schooling sector.

Based on complaints received from schools, the SAHRC was obliged to conduct the first major study on 'racial integration' in South African schools and a report entitled *Racism, 'racial integration' and desegregation in South African public secondary schools* (Vally & Dalamba 1999) was released in 1999. The report (which is available on the SAHRC website) highlighted the following:

- The fact that racism in schools is extremely prevalent, intense and is disturbingly seen as 'normal';
- Denial that racism still exists in schools;
- A false belief that equal access to education by all racial groups is *ipso facto* proof that there is no racism in schools;
- Lack of understanding of how racism manifests itself in different forms;
- The belief that racism exists only in its overt form;
- Unacceptable incidences of racial conflict in schools by parents, teachers, learners and school governing bodies.

The report made the following recommendations:

- An immediate intervention in 'hotspots' (working on short-, medium- and long-term strategies) was required;
- A proposal for more structures to facilitate anti-discrimination in schools and a parallel, independent co-ordinating and discussion forum or structure consisting of state departments and organisations in civil society;



- The formulation of an anti-discrimination policy in each school;
- Anti-discrimination training and education;
- In-service education and training (INSET) and pre-service education and training (PRESET) for educators;
- Understanding the need for school clustering;
- Examining social justice values in C2005. Critically examining education policies, legislation and implementation;
- Highlighting the importance of whole-school development;
- Designating a special day to focus on anti-discrimination;
- Promoting the role and importance of arts and culture.

The findings of the report and the recommendations made therein were discussed at the Conference on Racial Integration in Schools hosted by the SAHRC in March 1999. Flowing from the report the guiding theme of the conference was *Towards an anti-racist programme at all levels of education*. The working groups at the conference addressed and made recommendations on a number of issues. A strong recommendation that emerged was the need to set up a structure that would enable policy makers, researchers and practitioners to share ideas and develop common strategies and interventions.

### Objectives and purposes of the CFRE

The objectives and purposes of the Forum were:

- To pull together expertise, scope the field for anti-racism practices, bring together the crucial role players and practitioners in the education field with the aim of developing a conceptual framework and ‘shared’ understanding of the nature and extent of racism and racial discrimination and how it might be eradicated;
- Capacity building amongst different role players in order to take responsibility for assisting in combating racial discrimination;
- Auditing and indexing racism as a means to develop informed interventions and progress;
- Information dissemination and development of databases with the broader public, government departments, service providers, etc. as beneficiaries;
- Developing anti-racism standards, recommendations and guidelines on policies, practices, materials and assessment criteria to be applied in various sectors;
- In general, building capacity aimed at developing a culture of non-discrimination in the country and supporting anti-racism initiatives.

## Achievements

- In terms of documenting the activities of the CFRE, a comprehensive report of its activities, including the products that had been developed, was circulated at the end of 2002. The products included:
  - A report on *Racism in South African schools* by Salim Vally and Samiera Zafar;
  - A monitoring report;
  - A database of organisations;
  - A paper on *Macro-indicators of racism in the schooling system* by Monica Bot, Adele Gordon and Firoz Patel;
  - A space on the SAHRC website (see [www.sahrc.org.za](http://www.sahrc.org.za) – on the SAHRC homepage – the link is ‘Information for teachers’).
- Initiatives and best practices in anti-racist training were showcased and workshoped at the meetings of the Forum.
- While educators generally were represented in the Forum by unions and national and provincial departments of education, a singular strength of the Forum was the intense level of engagement and contribution of a group of educators within the Pietermaritzburg Anti-discrimination Task Team. Thus the Forum provided a space for this group of practitioners to use the conversations within the Forum to facilitate transformation in their staffrooms and at their schools. Unfortunately this was the only grouping of teachers represented in the Forum.
- Individuals representing their organisations were very active in their organisational capacity in significant policy processes.
- Despite the limitations of the Forum and the problems related to it, members were positive about the value the Forum added to their work. This was aided by the specialist nature of the Forum.

## Challenges

- The Forum’s operations were hampered by problems that included management, co-ordination, communications and limited initiatives from working groups – fairly generic issues confronting most networks/forums.
- Members had varied expectations of the Forum beyond its stated objectives and purposes. While this in itself reflected the commitment of members, the nature and structure of the Forum posed inherent limitations on what the Forum could achieve and on how it should operate. In many instances these expectations fell outside the initial scope of the work of the Forum.

- The Forum was not able to initiate a co-ordinated Forum activity. This had never been an objective of the Forum though discussions within the Forum had indicated interest in such an idea.
- The public profile of the Forum was not high.
- The products need to be made more widely available to the education sector.

### *The National Forum on Democracy and Human Rights Education (NFDHRE)*

The NFDHRE is co-convened by the SAHRC and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The NFDHRE brings together practitioners with particular experience in human rights and democracy, human rights law, diversity and anti-racism work. Some of the approaches supported by member organisations in combating racism include peace education, conflict resolution and civic education.

#### **Background to the NFDHRE**

The NFDHRE was established in 1996, following a consultative conference organised by the SAHRC and Streetlaw (then based at the Centre for Socio-legal Studies at the University of Natal, Durban). At the outset, the main aim of the Forum was to facilitate the institutionalisation of human rights education by ensuring the inclusion of democracy and human rights and inclusivity in the new curriculum, and to provide support to this process. The NFDHRE mission statement has since been redrafted to include a broader scope of interests and activities in the field of democracy and human rights education. Since its inception, the NGOs and other civil society organisations (CSOs),<sup>1</sup> government departments and state institutions have played an essential role in this partnership. This close partnering with CSOs is in line with the Paris Principles (Commonwealth Secretariat Report 2001: 18), which lays down best practice for national human rights institutions such as the SAHRC. These principles include the responsibility to partner with civil organisations, governmental organisations and international organisations to entrench and build a culture of human rights. Most of the NGOs/CSOs deliver educational services in the field of human rights and democracy, act as agents for innovation and initiate new approaches and methods.

## Achievements of the NFDHRE

- The NFDHRE has served as a consistent touchpoint for the synergy that has developed amongst CSOs, government departments and state institutions. Symbiotic relationships have emerged – in October 2002, for example, the NFDHRE showcased the Values Network developed by the Race and Values Directorate of the Department of National Education, with the DoE, in turn, using provincial NFDHRE forums to relay information to members.
- The membership of the Forum is multi-disciplinary, committed, representative and varied, for example it has democracy and human rights education theorists and practitioners, lawyers, paralegals, children's rights specialists, Chapter 9 institutions, teacher unions and provincial and national departments of education. However, the fluidity of representation from the different organisations has been both a strength and a weakness. The various individuals who have participated have enriched the discussions and driven projects successfully. However, some initiatives have fizzled out when certain individuals left the Forum.
- The establishment of provincial forums in the Free State, Gauteng, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Western Cape and the North West provinces can be considered to be a major success.
- The Forum successfully lobbied the formal educational sector to recognise the need for democracy and human rights education – the Revised National Curriculum Statement on Human Rights and Inclusivity and the establishment of the Standard Generating Body (SGB) for Democracy, Human Rights and Peace Education in July 2003 may be attributed to the energy and commitment of NFDHRE members who monitor and report on developments such as these. The SGB was registered in 2001 and formally constituted in 2003. This year, SGB members have prioritised capacity building around the generation of unit standards and qualifications.
- The Forum is an effective reference group.
- Forum members are kept up to date with national and provincial developments in the field of human rights and democracy.

## Challenges

- The NFDHRE is not funded and depends solely on the resources of member organisations to sustain its programmes.
- The Forum needs to raise its profile; there has been no concerted marketing campaign.

- It needs to enhance the exchange of information and resources amongst its member organisations.
- 2003 was a challenging year. The national Forum will only be able to meet once this year. Intense periods of engagement have alternated with lulls, and periods of apathy.

### *Reflections*

I would like to reflect briefly on the existence of these forums using the concepts of 'communities of practice', and 'identity formation' from the literature. Dison (2003) has developed a theoretical framework in which she examines the research capacity of researchers through the lenses of identity formation and how this relates to their practice. She defines identity formation as being linked to organisational practices, structure and processes of socialisation. Her description of the role of concepts of communities of practice, activity systems theory and academic identity, among other complex factors, enhances understanding of how learning involves becoming a full participant in relation to a community of practice. This, she argues, necessitates shifting one's identity in accordance with a particular community of practice.

This begs the question: To what extent do members of communities of practice, such as forums engaging with issues of racism and human rights, shift their identities to be in alignment with human rights values? Sustaining dialogue and meaningful conversations within forums is an interactive process demanding what Lave and Wenger describe as involving the 'whole person' in learning (in Dison 2003: 3). This demands that the person relates to the social community s/he is engaging with by becoming a full participant, a member, a 'certain kind of person' – a person, it may be argued, who models human rights values in the way in which they engage with others and within processes.

The process of engaging within forums has a triple agenda. Firstly, there is a focus on particular problems or issues. Secondly, there is a focus on the relationships amongst and between parties – on building alliances and networks. Thirdly, and least obviously, there is the opportunity for participants to model their practice, to 'live' or 'walk the talk' – to demonstrate a certain 'embeddedness' of constitutional values of equality, respect and human dignity. These constitutional values would also be the values of the community of practice to which they belong. It is the third agenda that participants are often least aware of.

There is clearly a need to theorise more in this area and to develop further the understandings in relation to members of forums such as the CFRE and the NFDHRE.

Most members of human rights/anti-racism forums operate in contexts where there are definite similarities in values at a number of levels: the values and objectives of the institutions they work in on a full-time basis, the values and objectives of the CFRE and NFDHRE with which they relate sporadically, and the broader national South African context which embraces constitutional values. There is also a fourth level – the personal level. This quadruple resonance should certainly enhance the nature of their identity formation.

There are richer and multivarious ethnographic and other theories that can be drawn on to fully explore the ways in which the identities of individuals develop. For now, members of human rights forums should accept the challenge of imbuing constitutional values into their ways of relating and in their identity formation. Geertz (in Dison 2003) suggests that a community of practice affects one's personal commitment and one's way of being in the world. To take this one step further, if human rights forums are informed by a constitutional values framework, then conforming to those values could ultimately begin to define a great part of one's life. This has implications for the way one becomes a full participant in the community of practice, and might imply identity shifts in order to become one.

## Overview of anti-discrimination forums in South Africa

A brief overview of existing strategies and initiatives that have been set up to address racism in South Africa, and which examine effective ways to combat racism, follows.

### *The National Consultative Forum Against Racism (NCFAR)*

This forum was set up in 2002 in accordance with the recommendations made by the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) in Durban during 2001. According to recommendations, each country is to set up a National Action Plan in order to determine effective ways of addressing racism in their respective countries.

The National Conference Against Racism hosted by the SAHRC in 2000 also made a number of recommendations. As a result, the government (led by the Department of Justice), Foreign Affairs, the SAHRC and civil society met during 2002 to discuss setting up a forum in order to combat racism. One of the major features of this forum is to monitor racism in the country and also utilise effective mechanisms to address it. Presently the Department of Justice is leading the Forum and the SAHRC (as its partner) is to act in a monitoring capacity. Civil society has however set up its own forum (which will be discussed next). The Forum based within government is known as the National Consultative Forum Against Racism (NCFAR).

Two consultative meetings have been hosted by the NCFAR thus far. Invitations were extended to government departments, Chapter 9 institutions, faith-based organisations, as well as business. Out of these meetings a task team has been selected to look more closely at implementation issues. The Forum was launched in July 2003 by Minister of Justice Penuell Maduna.

At present the NCFAR has drawn up a framework National Action Plan utilising the format of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Human Rights. The framework looks at each of the rights as set out in the Bill of Rights and asks the relevant government department to indicate what policy-making, legislative and administrative steps have been taken to address racism.

The NCFAR will be working together with the civil society anti-racism forum, the National Consultative Forum for Human Rights, as well as the SAHRC.

### *Civil society forum – Faze 2*

This forum is derived from the civil society secretariat whose task it was to prepare for the WCAR held in Durban in September 2001. The secretariat has now formed itself into a Section 21 organisation known as Faze 2.

This forum held a civil society national summit in July 2003 to gauge from civil society what the most urgent needs are. A concept paper was drawn up by the forum and distributed to participants for comment. Approximately 63 participants representing different organisations nationally attended the summit. A number of important issues came out of the discussions. These were:

- Access to services can be hampered by racism in that poorer people have less access to information, less access to service points and are not as mobile as rich people;
- Better support for services should be requested through the media and community radio;
- Issues of xenophobia need to be addressed;
- Youth have been marginalised yet have a lot to offer. There is a need to ensure effective youth participation;
- Requests for inter-faith dialogue and for different faiths to unite around racism;
- Concerns were raised about racism still being perpetuated through the media and the lack of access to resources by black journalists and communities;
- Need for anti-racism training amongst teachers and scholars;
- Need for gender conceptualisation.

The Anti-discrimination Forum has hosted three debates looking at issues of youth and racism, racism and the law and inter-faith dialogue. The Forum aims to deal with the following issues:

- Promoting anti-racism in schools;
- Monitoring racism in civil society and government especially during the run up to the elections;
- Providing professional and psychological counselling for victims of racism;
- Continuing to host dialogues throughout the country on issues of racism;
- Hosting provincial meetings to determine major issues of racism.

The two forums are currently working together in order to best serve the interest of their different constituencies.

### *National Consultative Forum for Human Rights (NCFHR)*

The National Consultative Forum for Human Rights (NCFHR) arose out of the NAP that was launched in 1998. The NAP sets out the policies, legislation and administrative steps completed by government since the start of the new democracy in 1994. The document also lays out special challenges that remain for government to address in trying to fulfil its human rights obligations.



The NCFHR has been set up comprising government departments, Chapter 9 institutions as well as civil society. A small secretariat exists whose aim it is to monitor human rights implementation by government. An interim report has been completed since the launch of the action plan in 1998 and has just been submitted to Cabinet. This report covers the period 1999–2001. A further report up to the period ending 2003 is currently being planned by the secretariat in order to determine how far government has gone in meeting the challenges of human rights.

This Forum will act as an important link for the new NCFAR as much of the information will derive from the NCFHR. Information sought by the NCFAR will however focus specifically on racism rather than on human rights broadly.

## Recommendations and good practice for forums/national strategies

Individuals or organisations who participate in the national strategies listed may wish to consider the following lessons from the SAHRC engagement with its own forums in order to enhance the efficacy of NCFHR, NCFAR and Faze 2.

- One of the strengths of a forum is that it creates a space for discussion, reflection and for a pluralism of ideas, relieving the isolation of practitioners in their individual contexts. Practitioners across sectors should seize the opportunity offered by forums to enjoy the time and space to talk, deepen understandings and insights, develop theory, forge close bonds, listen, think and bounce ideas off one another. The value of the ‘talk shop phenomenon’ cannot be underestimated. However, all understandings should be geared towards practical implementation.
- The SAHRC’s engagement with the CFRE has highlighted the need to develop and strengthen anti-racist social movements and departmental initiatives, and at the same time address the problem of school fees. School fees are impacting on equity in education, as are the cultural, security and curricula factors that discriminate against women and girls.
- Specialist forums are more focused, while broader cross-sectoral national strategies demand greater co-ordination efforts. The latter should ensure that programmes for intervention should extend from the education and training policy level to programmes for grassroots organisations. Zafar (2001) contends that for any National Action Plan to succeed, co-ordinated

inter-sectoral approaches need to be backed by political support and dedicated funding. She advises that anti-racist movements should be cross-sectoral and mass-based and should tackle poverty and unemployment directly – crucial to combating racism is the need to challenge other related intolerances (and, I would add, inequalities) both in the education system and in broader society (SAHRC 2002: 36; Zafar 2001: 27).

- Both the CFRE and the NFDHRE are specialist forums conceptualised and inaugurated to respond to the needs of the education and training sector. The transfer value of lessons and products of the CFRE for application in other sectors has not been explored and needs attention.
- Forums showcase and draw on the expertise, resources and experience of members. However, there is a need to utilise the expertise in a more concerted way.
- Most achievements of forums discussed in this paper are as a result of the energies of individual members and rarely comprise joint projects or co-ordinated campaigns. The work of the NCFHR, Faze 2 and the NCFAR will be enhanced by the deliberate pursuit and organisation of joint projects and co-ordinated campaigns.
- The very nature of a forum is often a loose network – a forum is only as strong as the participation and commitment of its members.
- If our objective is to eradicate racism and discrimination in schools, we should actively forge linkages to broad social movements and pursue viable partnerships among all actors in the field of education.
- The raising of the public profile of all national strategies is imperative for success. The development of support networks of information and the dissemination and promotion of the information to create public awareness is a key recommendation of the WCAR NGO Forum (2001: 48).
- In the multiplicity of forums that have been inaugurated since 1994, to what extent are different strategies duplicating and/or feeding off each other, or informing each other? Many forums end up being parallel initiatives, with much energy consumed in reinventing and reorganising strategies, programmes and approaches. Research energy should be devoted to monitoring forums and developing cumulative agendas with lessons and questions sharpened and carried from one meeting to the next, building on and documenting a common body of knowledge that could be utilised in an inter- and intra-forum way.

In conclusion, the commitment of Chapter 9 institutions, government departments, NGOs and CSOs to network, to co-ordinate their actions and to reflect and act together is laudable and has impacted positively on developments in the field of human rights and democracy. There is adequate proof of the great success of their efforts to work and to act in association.

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### Notes

- 1 CSOS – an umbrella term for non-governmental, non-profit, community-based and faith-based organisations.

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