

# SCHOLARSHIP OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN DIVERSITY

Engaging discourses from the South



EDITED BY  
ERIKA SERFONTEIN, CHARL C. WOLHUTER & SHANTHA NAIDOO

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**SCHOLARSHIP OF EDUCATION  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN DIVERSITY**  
Engaging discourses from the South



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Volume 4

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EDITORS  
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The publisher (AOSIS) endorses the South African 'National Scholarly Book Publishers Forum Best Practice for Peer-Review of Scholarly Books'. The manuscript underwent an evaluation to compare the level of originality with other published works and was subjected to rigorous two-step peer-review before publication, with the identities of the reviewers not revealed to the editor(s) or author(s). The reviewers were independent of the publisher, editor(s) and author(s). The publisher shared feedback on the similarity report and the reviewers' inputs with the manuscript's editor(s) or author(s) to improve the manuscript. Where the reviewers recommended revision and improvements the editor(s) or author(s) responded adequately to such recommendations. The reviewers commented positively on the scholarly merits of the manuscript and recommended that the book be published.

## Research justification

The overarching objective of this manuscript with the title *Scholarship of Education and Human Rights in Diversity: Engaging Discourses from the South* is to highlight the need and value of imbuing the dynamic intersections between education, human rights and diversity. The chapters approach key intellectual conundrums of the day from a Global South perspective to reflect a credible scholarly footprint in Africa and, in the case of this manuscript, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region with specific emphasis on South Africa. This seems fitting, considering that the field is deeply rooted in Western, Eurocentric and overall Global North dominance. To challenge this dominance, the manuscript represents scholarship in the field to contribute a South African perspective on human rights and diversity in education by showcasing its innovative scholarly research. In so doing, the manuscript creates alternative pathways for enriching the scholarly and public discourse on human rights and education in diversity, thus advancing this field in the Global South and registering a visible impact on practice for which a compelling desideratum exists and, accordingly, to stimulate future research to re-balance complementary perspectives from the Global North.

This scholarly book is aimed at academics, professionals and researchers. The contributors include experts in the fields of Comparative and International Education, Curriculum Studies, Education Law, Life Orientation, as well as Philosophy and Research Methodology. The panel of scholars belongs to the Education and Human Rights in Diversity (Edu-HRight) Research Unit of the North-West University, conducting in-depth research on human rights and social justice in and for education with regard to bio-psycho-social perspectives, citizenship, comparative international perspectives, learner discipline and diverse contexts, as well as legal perspectives, governance and democracy.

The methodologies and approaches followed by the scholars include metabletic and exemplary methods, comparative methods, intersectional methods, multiple interpretative methods and contextual analysis, document analysis, comparative analysis, as well as idealist interpretivism, critical art pedagogy, interdisciplinary mixed-method approaches, multi-method approaches and conceptual approaches. Five major theoretical frameworks are surveyed, namely, the rational actor, the world culture theory, privileging power relations in society, neoliberal economics and recontextualisation.

The chapters in this manuscript are the outcome of research by scholars and contain only original research. No part of the manuscript was plagiarised from another publication or published elsewhere.

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# Abbreviations and acronyms, figures and tables appearing in the text and notes

## List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BA	Bachelor of Arts degree; bachelor's degree
BCES	Bulgarian Comparative Education Society
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CAPS	<i>Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement</i>
CC	Constitutional Court
CDA	critical discourse analysis
CE	citizenship education
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CIES	Comparative and International Education Society
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CRT	critical race theory
CVDA	critical visual discourse analysis
DBE	Department of Basic Education
ECER	European Conference on Educational Research
GCED	global citizenship education
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GERM	global education reform movement
GSEA	globally structured educational agenda
HEI	higher education institutions
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
Hons	Honours degree
HRBA	human rights-based approach
HREiD	Human Rights Education in Diversity project group
ICT	information and communications technology
IEA	International Education Assessment
IoT	Internet of things
ISfTE	International Society for Teacher Education
MA	Master of Arts degree; master's degree
NCESS	National Committee on Education Support Services



NCSNET	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NWU	North-West University
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy degree; doctoral degree
PISA	International Programme of Student Assessment
PU for CHE	Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education
RAU	Rand Afrikaans University
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADTU	South African Teachers' Union
SAERA	South African Education Research Association
SANPAD	South Africa Netherlands Research Programme for Alternatives in Development
SAOU	Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie
SDG	sustainable development goal
SDGs	sustainable development goals
SGB	school governing bodies
SUN	Stellenbosch University
SUNY	State University of New York
TIMSS	Trends in Mathematics and Science Study
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFS	University of the Free State
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	University of Pretoria
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WHEM	Women in Higher Education Management

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# Scholarship on education and human rights in diversity: The desideratum of complementing asymmetry in the crafted global culture theory with perspectives from the Global South

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## ■ Abstract

The thesis of this volume is that the *Creed of Human Rights*, the belief in the power of education to change society for the better and the philosophy of celebrating diversity – three defining features of the world of the early 20th century – have a lopsided, unbalanced, even preposterous structure of having

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been crafted in the context of the Global North. The theoretical edifice of all three likewise reflects this global asymmetry. There is a need for a rebalancing with complementary perspectives from the Global South. The thesis of this volume is that perspectives of the Global South constitute a compelling desideratum. The chapters in this volume are an attempt to imbue the corpus of knowledge on the intersection of human rights, education and diversity with perspectives from Global South contexts. This chapter is a prospectus and setting up of a framework for reading the chapters in the remainder of the volume, in which this desideratum is unpacked by a panel of scholars of the Global South. All these authors are engaged in scholarship on the intersection between human rights, education and diversity. Five major theoretical frameworks are surveyed, namely, the rational actor, world culture theory, privileging power relations in society, neoliberal economics and recontextualisation. The choice of using recontextualisation as a theoretical framework to latch on to the chapters of the book without discarding the others is motivated.

## ■ Introduction

With three hallmarks of the current age, namely, the rise of the *Creed of Human Rights* as moral code of a globalised world, looking up to education as the ‘panacea of every societal ill’ and celebrating diversity (rather than the millennia-old historical pattern of frowning upon diversity or, even worse, foisting down a uniformity), a virile scholar community is engaged in investigating the intersection between these three hallmarks, and commensurately, a prolific, still accumulating body of scholarly publications has been appearing. The thesis of this volume is that this corpus of literature and the three features of the world on which it has been predicated have a lopsided, unbalanced, even preposterous structure of having been crafted in the context of the Global North and that there is a need for a rebalancing of complementary perspectives from the Global North.

Over the past 70 years, a strong trend of secularisation is visible in the world, that is, religion is taken out of the public sphere (such as education or the political sphere) and is regarded as a personal matter to be kept out of civic life (see Van der Walt & Wolhuter 2005). It should be stated here that this secularisation drive has been driven by contextual realities and dynamics of the Global North. The scholarly depiction of this drive, too, is heavily biased, being shaped by the context of the Global North (see Hotam 2017, p. 538, 539). One of the functions of religion is to set in place a moral code for society. The change from monoreligious to multireligious societies has rendered this arrangement problematic. This predicament was deepened by the secularisation drive, that is, removing religion from the public to the private domain. In any case, in the rapidly globalised world, the existence of national

religions as a basis for morality seems more and more, if not anachronistic, then at least it should be supplemented by a moral code of universal scope and authority. It is to fill this vacuum that the *Creed of Human Rights* has come to the fore as the moral code for a globalised world. Yet, despite its claim to universal validity, this code has been crafted within the context of the power relations in the world at the time of its construction. This history of the *Creed of Human Rights* is investigated in Chapters 2 and 3.

A second conspicuous trend in the world over the past 70 years has been the rise in the belief in education as a wonder cure for every societal ill. After millennia of existence at the periphery of society and outright absence in the lives of the majority of people, an about-turn appeared after the Second World War. Education is called upon to serve any role in improving society, from effect individual mobility to eradicating unemployment, to entrench a culture of democracy and respect for human rights, and to effect economic growth and modernisation (in as far as the last term has not become a discredited word).

In scholarship on the crafting of education systems by state and society, and on the global cross-national movement of education ideas, policies and practices, at least five theoretical frameworks are extant (see Tarlau 2017). The first is the technocratic or rational actor theory, according to which decisions on policy and on taking over best policies, ideas and practices from abroad are taken by means of uncontaminated rational deliberation. This rational approach is predicated on a pluralistic vision of the state 'as a consensual collective expression of individual views' (Carnoy & Levin 1985, p. 27). Few would dispute that this model, however ideal, is naive and found wanting in practice. One instance is, for example, the thesis expounded by Mary Archer (1984) on how education systems become self-contained bureaucratic monstrosities, serving their own interest instead of prioritising the supply of education to its supposed target market. One other factor is the pivotal role of leadership in the enactment of any idea or policy in education. The whole scholarly field of Education Leadership is currently making a meteoric rising, and the *raison d'être* of this field is a stream of empirical evidence as to the critical role of leadership in successful or exemplary schools (e.g. see Zvavahera 2013).

The second theoretical framework is that of neo-institutionalism or world culture theory. With a group of scholars from Stanford University, such as John Meyer, John Boli and F.O. Ramirez, at the helm, world culture theorists argue that in the globalised world, a new, global culture has attained fashion status. Even nations and governments in the Global South (or developing world, to use the dated, somewhat discredited term) follow this world culture in their expansion and reconstruction of education, not because such education expansion or reform serves the interests or needs of the nations or

countries concerned, but purely because it has become fashionable (see, e.g. Carney, Rappleye & Silova 2012; Schaub, Henck & Baker 2017). Two landmark publications defining world culture theory in education have been Meyer, Boli and Ramirez's (1985) much-cited article on the origins and spread of mass education across the globe and University of Pennsylvania scholar David Baker's (2014) book on how the culture of schooling has spread all over the world.

The proponents of world culture theory do not have power relations or economic production systems as a central tenet in their theoretical framework. In a direct response to world culture theory, and linking to frameworks such as world systems analysis, neo-colonialism and dependency theory, Roger Dale (2000) proposed Marxist-inspired globally structured educational agenda (GSEA), in which he depicts:

[G]lobalization as a set of political-economic arrangements for the organisation of the global economy, driven by the need to maintain the capitalist system rather than by any set of values. (p. 436)

Linking up with his earlier publications on education policy and state theory (Dale 1989), Dale contended that the prime problem of the state is its support of a regime of accumulation, ensuring the reproduction of this economic system and legitimising the capitalist mode of production and the state itself (Dale 2000, p. 437). This GSEA represents the third theoretical orientation in analysing and conceptualising the crafting of education systems and policies. Asymmetrical power relations and their potentially pernicious impact on civil society and on the lives of individuals and the human rights of people should, however, not be conceptualised in narrow orthodox Marxist (means of economic production, two classes, namely, a capitalist class and a worker class). In the current age, there is an information and communications technology (ICT) revolution, and this technology, together with large databases, has enabled giant companies to exploit data, to spread disinformation, to intrude on the privacy of people and to manipulate people (especially consumer behaviour).

A fourth theoretical framework identifiable in the crafting of education systems and education reform represents a wholesale appropriation of the tenets of the neoliberal economic revolution, which has been sweeping through the world over the past three decades. Key concepts of this revolution, such as the profit motive, efficiency, performance measurement and performance appraisal and managerialism are now dragged into the education sector. Finnish education scholar Pasi Sahlberg has introduced the notion of a global education reform movement (GERM) to describe this policy reform regime. According to Sahlberg (2016), a GERM (though not a universal reform movement, as many nations are not following this model) can be discerned. The GERM movement exhibits five features. The first feature is competition and choice. There is a competition between schools, which is encouraged, for

example, by schools being regularly assessed by authorities and the results of such assessments being made public. People are given a choice of which schools to attend or which schools to send their children to. The second feature is that teaching, learning and curricula are standardised. The third feature is an emphasis on reading mathematics and science, as core skills in the curriculum, is evident. The fourth feature is that corporate models of change can be detected. Fifthly, test-based accountability is very salient. At the global level, the GERM movement gets forceful impetus from the rise of international test series (in particular, the International Programme of Student Assessment [PISA] tests) and the global university ranking industry.

Finally, there are a group of scholars that critique rationalism and world culture theory from a different epistemological perspective, namely, 'recontextualisation', or the need to examine the national local context in order to understand policy transfer, thus also setting themselves on the opposite pole of any theoretical orientation supposing a global education reform regime (such as GERM and GSEA). Tarlau (2017, p. 678) stated that these studies do not represent a coherent and singular theoretical perspective. This theoretical orientation of privileging context as the shaping force of education systems, ideas, policies and practice is a central tenet of the scholarly field of comparative and international education. What is of importance here is not only the way these scholars view education systems but also how they conceptualise their own object and method of scholarly investigation (see Wolhuter et al. 2018). In fact, this is the very strongest of paradigmatic orientations extant in that field (see Wolhuter 2008). It is called the 'factors and forces' paradigm (so-called because of the emphasis put on studying societal forces or factors as shaping forces of education systems) (see Wolhuter 2021). This line of analysis reaches back to Sir Michael Sadler's epoch-making 1900 Guildford lecture, entitled 'How far can we learn anything of practical use from the study of foreign systems of education', and the paradigm has been belaboured by the triumvirate, or big three of the field, Isaac Kandel (1881-1965), Nicholas Hans (1888-1969) and Friedrich Schneider (1881-1969), during the interwar years, followed by many others later. In modern-day publications, this line of thought is well represented in the publications of, for example, Columbia University comparativist Gita Steiner-Khamsi (2004; Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow 2012).

While each of the five theoretical frameworks probably contains a kernel of truth, this book will bolt on, especially the last (while also drawing on each of the others), namely, the salience of context, in elaborating its thesis. This thesis is that the current regimen of education for human rights in diversity in the world has been constructed lopsided and is in need of rectification, informed by the contextual imperatives from the Global South, to be specific. Without trying in any way to formulate a united field theory, this book will, however, also draw on the other four frameworks as scaffolds in belabouring its point

of the imperative to imbue the scholarly discourse on human rights and education with perspectives from the Global South.

The third hallmark of the current age in history is the celebration of diversity (cf. Wolhuter 2018). After centuries of homogenising (even hegemonic) forces holding sway in societies, from somewhere around the mid-point during the second half of the 20th century, diversity came to be valued.

The recognition, respect and valuing of diversity are evident in human rights documents following the prototype of these documents, the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (UN 2016), which has become the prototype of all manifestos of human rights in the world. Through its education arm, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN has seized on education as a way to entrench the *Creed of Human Rights*, and specifically human rights education, for a global village of diverse societies. The UN declared the 10-year period from 1995 to 2004 as the UN Decade for Human Rights Education, and at the end of the decade, in December 2004, the General Assembly of the UN ‘launched the World Programme for Human Rights Education “as a global initiative, to promote the implementation of human rights education everywhere”’ (Froese-Germain & Riel 2013, p. 1). Since then, three phases of the World Programme for Human Rights Education have been rolled out, while a fourth is currently being pursued. The first phase covered the period 2005–2009 and focused on the primary and secondary school systems; the second phase covered 2010–2014 and focused on higher education and civil servants, law enforcement officials and the military (UN and UNESCO 2017, p. 3). The third phase (2015–2019) set itself out to (UN and UNESCO 2017, pp. 4–5):

- advance implementation and consolidate the work done
- provide human rights education and training for educators in formal and non-formal education and training, particularly those working with children and youth, undertaking related research and mapping, sharing good practices and lessons learned, and sharing information among all actors
- apply and strengthen sound educational methodologies based on good practices and assessed through continuous evaluation, fostering dialogue, cooperation, networking and information-sharing among relevant stakeholders
- further the integration of human rights education and training into school and training curricula.

The human rights council, in its resolution 39/3 (27 September 2018), decided to make youth the focus group of the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2020–2024), with special emphasis on education and training in equality, human rights and non-discrimination, and inclusion and respect for diversity with the aim of building inclusive and peaceful

societies, and to align the fourth phase with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and specifically with target 4.7 of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) (UN 2020).

In Chapter 2, the scholarly discourse on the intersection between education, human rights and diversity is mapped and assessed against the imperatives of the nascent fourth phase of the UN Programme of Human Rights Education in order to reveal the desiderata of infusing in this scholarly discourse perspectives from the Global South. In Chapter 3, the authors explore this intersection between human rights, education and diversity from a legal lens. In the contemporary age, education institutions are increasingly diverse communities. It is only within a fixed legal framework with supremacy and legitimacy of law that safe, secure and disciplined learning can take place in such institutions. Establishing these in the contextual ecologies of the Global South has its own set of challenges. On the contrary, the development of a strong legal framework, co-shaped by the contextual contours of societies of the Global South, is noteworthy for nations of the Global North. These nations find themselves more and more in a domestic context resembling those of the societies of the Global South.

To belabour this last point, in Chapter 4, the author charts the rise of the Global South as a significant geographic and growing demographic, economic, political and military bloc in the world. Moreover, as the author of the chapter explains, scholars argue that the socio-political dynamics playing out in the Global South makes the Global South the vanguard of a new world order. The Global North is set to embark on a journey on the road currently being travelled by the Global South. This makes the absence of perspectives from the Global South in the discourse on human rights education all the more objectionable. Hence, this chapter argues for imbuing scholarship on education and human rights in diversity with a Southern dimension and points out beacons for the construction of such a dimension.

Throughout the Global South, the whole issues of human rights, diversity and education are inextricably linked to the colonial experience, still fresh in the memory of many nations in this part of the world. In Chapter 5, the author argues, in the case of South Africa, that education will be able to make a contribution towards the creation of a stable society (by implication, a society built on respect for human rights and a society respecting and valuing diversity) unless upcoming generations are guided to deal with colonialism and the colonial past. This should ideally take place through citizenship education (CE) as a full-fledged subject in its own right.

In foregrounding the Global South, a vibrant scholarly and public discourse on education, as part of a bigger discourse along the entire line of the social sciences, is that of decolonisation, respectively, the decolonisation of education. In Chapter 6, the authors unpack the imperative for decolonising

the curriculum. The authors point out that the decolonisation discourse in South Africa has been on a somewhat different trajectory than the decolonisation discourse elsewhere in Africa. Arguing that the lived experiences of students and faculty need to be incorporated in the decolonisation of education discourse, they report about their empirical investigation of the lived experiences of an especially information-rich constituency at one South African university, namely, lecturers of Curriculum Studies at the Faculty of Education. Being scholars versed in curriculum theory and issues, and located at three campuses at a university, three campuses where the full diversity of the South African student corps are present make this empirical study very informative. Furthermore, the authors use erudite and respected South African scholar of higher education Jonathan Jansen's (2017) theoretical framework of the entire range of meanings of decolonisation as an interpretative framework for interviews recorded in their research. This chapter presents the perceptions of Curriculum Studies lecturers and their (non)involvement in embracing their curricula as an intellectual space for decolonising teacher education. The research indicated that what lecturers regard as influential theories, teaching approaches and possible challenges of the decolonial moment are revealed to contribute to much-needed discourses of cognitive (in)justice. This form of justice as embodied and embedded in the moral and ethical pursuits of human rights education is considered to create alternative pathways for re-imagining teacher education.

Critical art pedagogy is a powerful transformative instructional methodology that helps to shape the understanding of contemporary prejudices and injustices, providing possibilities for social contestations, identities and subversion practices. Furthermore, visual narratives created and used in critical art pedagogies are 'socio-political artefacts' capable of illuminating hegemonic influences. Visual narratives are powerful tools in art pedagogy, particularly when regarding the impact of their reception. Thus, when considering how human rights and diversity are represented in visual narratives, it is crucial to not only pay attention to what kind of prejudices are available but also pay attention to how they are interpreted and reviewed. In Chapter 7, the visual representation of human rights and diversity issues, particularly gender issues, and what has been said about hegemonic representations of human rights and diversity in academic and scholarship reception are investigated. To explore how human rights and diversity issues in visual gender representations are revealed, particularly hegemonic representations of male-female relations in society, and the implicit messages thereof regarding human rights and diversity, the authors present their empirical research. Students at a university in Zimbabwe were asked to (1) create a visual artwork through painting expressing a *gendered theme*; and (2) select images and photographs from local museums, galleries, magazines, books or the Internet that they believe reflect gender asymmetry (imbalance or bias) experienced in Zimbabwe. These exercises were then followed up

with group interviews with the research subjects, after which the transcribed interviews were subjected to discourse analysis. The visual narratives revealed postcolonial desires to overturn gender oppression in patriarchal, heteronormative practices to equal rights.

Many factors in the contextual ecology of the Global South (such as poverty) are conducive to moral decay. South Africa is an extreme example of moral decay in the nations of the Global South. The following statistics will suffice. A shocking Statistics South Africa report from 2020 reports that there were 330,000 teenage mothers, and among them, there were 660 babies born from mothers ten-years-old and younger (Francke 2021). Six out of every ten births registered have no reliable information about the fathers; that is, in the father space of the registration form, it is stated as 'unknown' (Francke 2021). Reginah Mhale, Deputy Minister of Basic Education in South Africa, has expressed concern about teenage pregnancy when reporting that almost 130,000 babies were born from mothers between the ages of 10- and 19-years-old in 2019 (Solomons 2021). This moral decay has a human rights facet and also a human rights and education side. This is markedly illustrated by the high birth rate among teenage mothers and absent fathers. Obviously, it is highly unlikely that such children, and their education needs, will be properly taken care of. Many analysts see a relationship between these high rates of teenage pregnancies and gender-based violence and rape (Solomons 2021). Some analysts relate this moral decay to the political environment and the human rights dispensation, which is part of the political environment. Such analyses of conservative analysts are also echoed in the public discourse in some circles. On the contrary, addressing moral decay must surely also involve appealing to a common belief in human rights. In Chapter 8, the author investigates the moral decay currently rampant in South Africa within the framework of the political dispensation.

If the argument as to the need to imbue the current scholarly and public discourse on human rights education in diversity with Southern perspectives is accepted, the question remains as to how to go about carrying out this exercise. In Chapter 9, the authors present the scholarly field of comparative and international education as having the instrumentarium to effect such a change.

One of the most despicable violations of human rights, especially in the contexts of the Global South where the rule of law is weak in places, is that of human trafficking. In Chapter 10, the authors focus on the intersection between education, human rights and diversity, reconstructing the lived experiences of trafficking victims and survivors from a Ricoeurian perspective.

One form of human rights violation rife in both the Global North and the Global South is racism, with one salient education aspect being racial inclusiveness in schools. The authors of Chapter 11 offer a psycho-social perspective on the issue of racial inclusiveness in schools.



One of the most objectionable violations of human rights in education is bullying in schools. In Chapter 12, the authors investigate this phenomenon within the context of South African schools and society. In Chapter 13, the authors investigate one of the issues closely related to the issue of bullying in schools, that is, maintaining sound learner discipline. They focus on this critical issue in South African education through the lens of restorative discipline.

Thus, the main argument to which the chapters in the volume build up is the need to enrich or to strengthen both the scholarly and the public discourse on human rights education with perspectives from the Global South, as the current, historically developed discourse and the corpus of knowledge, concepts and theoretical framework upon which it has been based has become incomplete, inadequate and wanting. Especially if the – commendable – nuances now brought to the global human rights education project, such as diversity, social justice and pursuing the SDGs, are to come to fruition, the enrichment of the scholarly discourse on human rights education with perspectives from the Global South has become very compelling. An example will suffice. It was stated earlier how the technology of the ICT revolution has created a new node of power in the world. How this node and those who have their hands on the lever of this new instrument of power can ride roughshod over the human rights of others and can undermine democracy has been convincingly argued in the recent blockbuster book by Shoshana Zuboff (2019), *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. In a much-cited article published in the *Yale Law Journal*, Columbia University Legal Scholar Lina Khan (2017) showed how large companies have accrued undue power enabling them to violate the human rights of people by exploiting data and by spreading disinformation. Twentieth century French philosopher Michael Foucault has popularised his term governmentability [*gouvernementabilité*], under which he understands the (under modern technology) increasing ability of governments to shape, guide or affect the conduct of people. The arguments in these publications refer, in the first place, to what is taking place within the parameters of the nation-state (and the nation-states of the Global North, where civil society is strong and relatively autonomous). But if belief can be lent to these arguments, they apply exponentially stronger to the hapless people of the Global South in their much more unenviable situation at the subaltern side of the international relations spectrum.

## ■ Conclusion

Each of the various chapters in this volume represents an attempt to imbue the corpus of knowledge on the intersection of human rights, education and diversity with perspectives from Global South contexts. The chapters are the outcome of research by scholars attached to the Research Unit: Education

and Human Rights in Diversity at the Faculty of Education, North-West University (NWU), South Africa. These scholars work in the various projects constituting this unit. Each chapter teases out one aspect of the central thesis of the book, namely, the need to imbue the scholarly discourse on education and human rights in diversity from perspectives of the Global South.



# The intersection of education, human rights and diversity: Mapping the scholarly discourse

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## ■ Abstract

This chapter follows the first in exploring the themes constituting the intersection between education, human rights and diversity, as well as mapping the scholarly discourse of this intersection: the state of published research, dominant paradigms and desiderata in the corpus of research. The chapter culminates with the conclusion that the intersection between education, human rights and diversity falls out in the following six thematic areas, namely, diverse

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contexts, citizenship education (CE), international comparative perspectives, legal perspectives, bio-social perspectives and learner discipline, corresponding to the subareas of the unit. A glaring desideratum is imbuing this scholarly discussion with perspectives from the Global South.

## ■ Introduction

The *Creed of Human Rights* has become the moral compass of the globalised 21st-century world. In this century, society has come to look up to education as the wonder cure for every societal ill and also as the means to create the kind of society envisaged. Then, this century is also one in which societies are becoming more and more diverse, and it is a century in which diversity is valued and celebrated rather than being suppressed, as previously. In the diverse world, the Global South is also coming of age. This chapter explores the intersection between these four forceful 21st-century trends, namely, the *Creed of Human Rights*, education, diversity and the rise of the Global South. Doing that, it also aims at giving a panoptic explication of the activities of the Education and Human Rights in Diversity (Edu-HRight) Research Unit at the North-West University (NWU), South Africa.

Ensuing sections of the chapter then explore, in turn, the *Creed of Human Rights*, education in the contemporary world, diversity in society and the rise of the Global South. One of the educational objectives of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) organisation – the lodestar supranational grouping of the Global South – and which also is part of the educational objectives of the five member states, is the recognition and respect for diversity, not only in the individual education systems but also in society. Subsequently, the intersection between these four is mapped. This intersection falls out in the following six thematic areas, namely, diverse contexts, CE, international comparative perspectives, legal perspectives, bio-social perspectives and learner discipline, corresponding to the subareas of the unit. Each of these will then be described.

## ■ The *Creed of Human Rights* as the moral code of the 21st-century world

Leading comparative and international education scholar, Carlos Torres, incumbent of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair of Global Citizenship Education at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), contends that the following three statements – what he terms as the ‘Global Commons’ – are universal, common to all people across all cultures and regions (Torres 2015):

- We all have only one planet.
- We all desire peace.
- We should all enjoy the right to pursue life, prosperity, and happiness.

However, the long history of humankind was in no way kind to the living of what is upheld to be humane, at least according to Torres' description. From 3600 BC to 2006, there were only 292 years of peace, that is when there was no war raging in the world; in this time span from 3600 BC to 2006, there were a total of 292 wars in which 3.5 billion people lost their lives. Violence and slaughter reached a zenith in the 20th century, with the technological means that became available by then. Ray Rummell (1994) described the 20th century as a democide century – democide is defined as state- or government-induced violence that was responsible for 168,198,000 deaths.

In the aftermath of the two nuclear bomb attacks used to end the Second World War, Albert Einstein is known for having commented: 'I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones'. With this, he meant that technological development had reached such a stage that the continual waging of war would instantaneously precipitate a total annihilation of all cultural products, if not of humanity as well. This means that humanity was forced to work out a formula for peaceful co-existence, as war was no longer an option and, in an increasingly multireligious world, neither was religion.

It was in this vacuum that the *Creed of Human Rights* was invoked or came to the fore as the moral code for a globalised world (Prozesky 2018). The basic idea of the *Creed of Human Rights* is that every human being is, by nature of being a human being, endowed with and entitled to a set of basic human rights. These rights are inalienable beyond the reach of the will of any ruler, government or even democratically elected majority. It is difficult to track down the origin of this creed. Tom Holland (2019, p. 133 *et seq.*), in his research history of Christianity, tracks the origin of the *Creed of Human Rights* to the Christian religion and its hold first on the West and later on the global community. The first explicit, erudite formulation and preaching of this creed can be found in the writings of John Locke and Thomas Jefferson in the 18th century. The creed found embodiment in the Constitution of the United States of America (USA) three quarters into the 18th century. After the atrocities of the Second World War and preceding years, the issue became internationalised. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This declaration became a proto document for the adoption of similar manifestos as part of the constitutions of many countries and a point of reference for many political activist lobbies.

Certainly, protagonists of the *Creed of Human Rights* can cite many benevolent developments in society, to which the *Creed of Human Rights* should be given at least partial credit. In his survey of the trends in the present world shaping a new era, Harari (2015, pp. 14-19), for example, showed how, compared to previous eras in history, wars have all but disappeared, and violence has much decreased. Similarly, a massive education expansion effort took off globally in the mid-20th century and is still surging ahead with no sign

of running out of momentum (see Wolhuter 2021, 2022). One of the basic motivations behind this expansion was the *Creed of Human Rights* (see Wolhuter 2022). In fact, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948 enumerated the right to (at least basic) education as one of the fundamental human rights.

For all its achievements, however, protagonists of the *Creed of Human Rights* also have their share of criticism to fend off. In large parts of the world, the populace finds it impossible to have their rights enforced, even in cases where these are statutory and constitutionally guaranteed (see Wolhuter 2019). In his follow-up book on features of the contemporary world, Harari (2018) was less optimistic, as he pointed out, for example, how political populism (and its antithetical stands on many human rights) is rising in large parts of the world. To the ecological crisis facing humanity and the earth, the *Creed of Human Rights* has no apparent, ready answer. As Harari looks at the political side, Thomas Piketty's (2020) analysis of the economical features and trends of the modern world, the stark and growing inequality, in particular, portrays a picture of a world not principled on human rights. Finally, as will be expanded on later in this chapter, in large parts of the world (local or national), the pressures exerted by contextual imperatives grossly contort (even pervert) the (supposedly universal) *Creed of Human Rights*.

## ■ The global education expansion project

Besides the rise of the *Creed of Human Rights*, a second global societal trend that has irrevocably changed the world over the past 70 years is the global education expansion project.

For much of history, up to the middle of the 20th century, education existed at the fringe of society (and public life) and was considered a liability (an expense) rather than an asset. To illustrate the first, it was only in 1955 that the global aggregate adult literacy rate reached 50%, that is, when the majority of the adults in the world could read or write. To illustrate the second statement, the only time education is mentioned in Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776 and which became the bible of the free market economy in the world, is one reference when education was criticised as keeping otherwise potentially productive young people out of the labour market.

A Copernican Revolution suddenly took off in the decades after the Second World War, and especially in the 1960s, a new appreciation of the value of education in the lives of individuals, especially the value of education as an ameliorative social force, gained traction. This new belief has many facets and many social antecedents and causes, and only one can be highlighted here. To link up to the example of education of economy touched upon in the preceding paragraph, in his Presidential Address to the American Association of Economists in 1961, Theodor Schultz formulated his theory of human capital. This theory, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1979,

contends that the quality of human resources (i.e. education, training and skills of human resources) is a production factor in the economy or in an enterprise, besides other production factors such as capital, entrepreneurship, land, stock and consumers. This theory was the polar opposite of the historical view (of Adam Smith and others) of education as a consumer item or a waste. This theory ushered in a new era of thinking about the relationship between education and the economy (Sobel 1982). Just in time, Harbison and Meyers' (1964) study, calculating the correlation between the size of the education system and economic output in 75 countries (and finding very high correlation coefficients), provided an empirical substantiation for human capital theory. In similar ways, education came to be seen as the lever to effect any kind of desirable change, for example, to promote social mobility, entrench a culture of democracy, establish global peace, eradicate drug abuse or reduce the number of traffic accidents.

This global education expansion drive since the mid-20th century has reached massive proportions and is still surging ahead with no sign of abating. A measure of its extent can be gleaned from enrolment statistics. For example, globally, primary school enrolments grew from 177.1 million in 1950 almost fourfold to reach 654.8 million in 2000, then more than a hundred million were added to reach 750.7 million in 2018 (UNESCO 2021; Wolhuter 2021). Growth in enrolments at the level of higher education has been even more impressive: globally, higher education enrolments were 500,000 in 1990; it has swollen more than ninefold from 6.3 million in 1950 to 99.5 million in 2000 to more than double again in the ensuing short space of eighteen years, to reach 223.7 million in 2018 (UNESCO 2021; Wolhuter 2021).

The global education expansion project has had a notable effect on global culture, as is convincingly illustrated by comparative and international education scholar David Baker (2014) in his book on this topic. Surely, this global education expansion project can boast of its achievements, at least measured against the expectations harboured about education. Many studies have empirically demonstrated, on aggregate, in a large pool, the societal elevating effect of education. For an enumeration of an interesting assortment of these, ranging from positive correlations between education and longevity, between the level of education and chances of surviving the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia, and between health care and the education levels of a person's neighbours in Malawi, see Lutz and Klingholz (2017).

For all its achievements, the global education expansion project has its share of discontents, shortcomings and failures. Access to and participation in even the basic levels of education have not reached all of the world (see Wolhuter 2021). Then, while the quantitative expansion of education may be impressive on the quality and equality fronts, formidable challenges remain (see Wolhuter 2021). While rates of return analyses and calculations as to the societal returns of education virtually unfailingly demonstrate positive



correlations at the aggregate level, these are not universally valid laws. A host of contextual factors mediate the effect of education on the lives of individuals and on society. For example, despite impressive figures on rates of return analyses (in a recent World Bank survey on the literature on private rates of return to education, full discounting method, Psacharopoulos and Patrinos [2018, p. 11] reported rates of return to education on education investment; world averages on 25.4%, 15.1% and 15.8%, respectively, at primary education, secondary education, and higher education levels), graduate unemployment remains a reality for many higher education graduates in the world. The World Bank (2017, p. 92) reported the following graduate unemployment rates in various parts of the world: East-Asia-Pacific: 7.8%, Europe and Central Asia: 10%, Latin America: 23%, Middle East-northern Africa: 18.9%, South Asia: 11.7% and sub-Saharan Africa: 31.1%.

## ■ Diversity in society

A third feature of the 21st-century society is, firstly, increased diversity in society and, secondly, an appreciation of such diversity.

The growing diversity in societies worldwide can be traced to a number of interrelated trends. These include the information and communications technology (ICT) revolution and transportation revolution, demographic shifts, the dwindling power of the nation-state, democratisation, individualisation and the rise of the *Creed of Human Rights*. The ICT revolution (Internet, mobile phone, social media) makes possible the relatively cheap organisation growth and sustainability of an infinite variety of interest groups. The ICT revolution and the transportation revolution have resulted in a more mobile society. This entails not only daily or short-term mobility but also large-scale international mobility.

The number of international migrants in the world (i.e. those who live in a country other than the country in which they were born) totals 258 million or 3.4% of the global population (Institute National d'Etudes Demographiques 2020). This number of international migrants in the world increases by 2.4% per year (Institute National d'Etudes Demographiques 2020). Countries in the world have immigrants making up various percentages of their population, rising to 88.4% in the case of the United Arab Emirates. The country with the largest number of immigrants is the United States of America, with 49.8 million. The two countries with the largest number of emigrants are India and Mexico with 17 million and 11 million per year, respectively. Two strong global vectors in migration patterns are from South (Global South) to North (Global North) and from East (Asia) to West (Western Europe and North America).

The strong migration currents mean that the comparatively homogenous societies of the past have been replaced by more heterogenous (the fashionable term is or was 'multicultural') societies. The nation-state, whose

consolidation and expansion of its power base was a key feature of the world from at least the beginning of the 19th century right up to the 1980s, has since then started to lose its power, as it was clear that it had overextended itself and that the forces of the ICT revolution and that of globalisation had begun to erode the power base of the nation-state (see Davidson & Rees-Mogg 1992). The democratisation process that filled the power vacuum left by the dwindling nation-state, together with the rise of the *Creed of Human Rights*, allowed for more diversity to flourish in society.

While this increased diversity is often termed 'multicultural societies', that term (even if the problems attached to the term 'cultural', that is, problems of definition and of political abuse, are overlooked) is perhaps too a reductionist term to use to denote diversity in society. Apart from linguistic, religious and other forms of diversity, which may be subsumed under 'culture' rather easily, other forms of diversity include diversity in gender orientation, diversity in abilities (including physical and mental abilities), diversity in interests and diversity in age.

For a long time, the dominant pattern in society and in the nation-state, in particular, was one where the dominant or hegemonic culture was foisted down on everyone. Any deviance from the norm set by the hegemonic cultural grouping was not only frowned upon but also heavily sanctioned. Concomitant to the rise of diversity in societies worldwide since the mid-20th century, a second change occurred, namely, a tolerance and, more so, an appreciation or valuing of diversity developed. This valuing is visible in, for example, the rise of the creed of multiculturalism, mainstreaming in education, and the development of the educational policy of inclusive education. In the absorption of new streams of immigrants in countries such as Canada, Australia and the United States of America, for example, policies and practices of multiculturalism have replaced policies and practices of assimilation and integration of past eras. A variety of definitions of multiculturalism exist, but for the purpose of this chapter, the term is used with the following meaning, as it is used, according to Magsino (1995, p. 256) in the political and social discourse in Canada:

- cultural retention and development: government supports and encourages all cultural groups, which lend structure and vitality to Canadian society
- respect for, and sharing of cultural heritage, in order to promote a richer life and national unity for all
- full participation in Canadian society for members of all cultural groups
- individual freedom of choice with respect to identification and participation in cultural activities.

The earlier mentioned trends, such as the ICT revolution, democratisation, individualisation and the *Creed of Human Rights*, all played their part in this reversal of policies and attitudes to diversity. To these should be added the

emergence of knowledge economies and what Richard Florida calls the 'creative class'. The most advanced national economies of the world are now entering a phase called the knowledge economy. A knowledge economy is an economy where the production and consumption of new knowledge have become the driving axis of the economy. Richard Florida defined the creative class as a class of workers whose job is to create meaningful new forms (2002). By the time of the writing of his book, 2002, 38.3 million Americans (or 30% of the American workforce) could be classified as part of the creative class (Florida 2002). This number has increased by more than 10% in the 20-year period preceding the publication of the book (Florida 2002).

## ■ Global South

A fourth and final feature of the contemporary world to be highlighted in this chapter is the self-affirmation of the Global South. Historically, for at least half a millennium, the global order was dominated by (Western) Europe, later joined by the United States of America. Through imperialism, superior technology and military power and demographic and economic weight, the Global North assumed leadership. In recent years, the Global South has risen as an antipode to the Global North. The term Global South was introduced by Carl Oglesby in 1969. In recent years, it has gained traction in both scholarly literature and in public debate. The term has come to be used instead of terms such as Third World or developing countries, both of which are widely regarded as problematic, even derogative terms. Global South refers broadly to Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the (what was long termed) developing countries of Asia, including the People's Republic of China. Turkey can also be included in the category of countries of the Global South.

The rise of the Global South in the world constellation has a number of simultaneous causes and facets. These include the demographic, economic, political and educational.

Demographically, the Global South makes up an increasing part of the total global population. One illustration of this is the (rather blunt) statement that at the beginning of the 20th century, Caucasians (or white people) made up 25% of the world population, but by the end of the 20th century that has decreased to 10%, and according to projections based on current trends, it will dwindle to less than a single percentage by the end of the 21st century. Another illustration: in 1960, the population of Europe was twice that of Africa; by 1985, they drew level at about 500 million each; and by 2025, Africa will have three times as many people as Europe. While the population growth rate in the world has been subsiding in recent years, still each year 83 million people are added to the global population, and 97% of this is in developing countries (Consultancy UK 2015).

Politically, large parts of the Global South were, at the time of the end of the Second World War, still part of the colonial project of the Global North, especially Africa, the Middle East and Asia. One country after the other then attained independence. India (as the second most populous nation on earth) led the trend when it attained independence on 15 August 1947. During the Cold War, playing the Western and Eastern Bloc off against each other gave the countries of the Global South some leverage they lost at the conclusion of the Cold War in 1989. However, the nascent multipolar international political constellation – where the United States of America as a singular power node is replaced by a host of others (the European Union, China, Russia, India, the BRICS formation, which will be elaborated later) once again give the Global South some muscle. After 1990, a wave of democratisations occurred in many countries of the Global South. These changes gave these countries more respectability than they had during the time before 1990 when many of the countries were not democracies.

Economically, the Global South is also a bloc assuming ever more weight in the international arena. Over the 1965–1999 period, the average annual gross domestic product growth rate was 4.1% in low-income countries, 4.2% in middle-income countries and 3.2% in high-income countries (World Bank 2013). It should be added that because of differential population growth rates, the per capita disparities increased during these years (World Bank 2013). But as of 1990, accelerated growth has been detected in large parts of the Global South. Extrapolating present trends, China is set to overtake the United States of America as the world's largest economy in 2028 (Reuters 2020). Recently, the taxon 'Emerging Countries' has started to gain traction, denoting the vanguard of the Global South nations, on the cusp of breaking through to the category of developed countries (Wolhuter 2021, 2022). Especially impressive, though, is the grouping known as the BRICS countries.

BRICS is a grouping of five countries, namely, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The BRICS supranational organisation came into being in 2010 (see De Beer & Vos 2021). The combined surface area of the BRICS countries is 29.6 million square kilometres or 19.9% of the total area of 148.9 million square kilometres of all countries in the world combined. This constitutes a significant part of the world. Demographically, the grouping figures even more strongly. Together, the BRICS countries are home to 42%, that is, almost half, of the global population. Economically, the BRICS countries represent a sizeable, growing mass in the global economy. From 2005 to 2015, the share of the economies of the BRICS countries to the global gross economic output rose from 10.2% to 21.9% (Wolhuter & Chigisheva, 2020-1, p. 10). 'Economists at Goldman Sachs predicted that by 2050 the economic output of the BRICS group would surpass that of the G7 countries (seven most advanced countries)' (Goldman Sachs 2010).

## ■ The intersection between education, the *Creed of Human Rights*, diversity and the Global South in the contemporary world

On the intersection between the *Creed of Human Rights* and education, two themes can be discerned, namely, education as a human right and human rights education. On the first, in the earliest writings on human rights in the 17th century, such as those of John Locke, and the earliest manifestos of human rights, such as the Constitution of the USA, education did not figure as a right. It made an entry into the human rights discourse with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Since then, it has been included in many declarations, constitutional sections and acts of human rights. Consensus has never been reached on how much education is a human right. The trend-setter human rights document, the aforementioned UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, states that education is a basic human right, the elementary stages of education should be free to all, access to secondary education should be progressively broadened and higher education should be accessible to everyone on the basis of merit. Human Rights Education has been well summarised by the UN (2011).<sup>1</sup>

To bring diversity into the picture, for centuries, actually millennia, formal education systems were used as instruments used to foist down the hegemonic culture in society on the populace. The Cohen hypothesis as to why schools were innovated and established in society explains this succinctly (see Wolhuter 2019, p. 59). However, in the second half of the 20th century, a reversal took place in large parts of the world. The belief in multiculturalism and, in the sphere of education, multicultural education has begun to gain traction. Multiculturalism and multicultural education entail the acknowledgement and appreciation or giving of positive recognition to the diversity of cultures making up society. This belief chimes in with the human right of freedom of cultural expression. Multicultural education, too, has gone through a development trajectory. However, in recent years, it has been superseded by intercultural education. Intercultural education is a term with many definitions, but in this chapter, it is used as clarified by Markou (1997), as entailing four essential components:

- Education with empathy, which means showing deep understanding for others and trying to understand their position.

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1. See UN (2011; in Wolhuter 2019, pp. 39–64) about human rights, education for human rights and education through human rights: '(1) Education about human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection. (2) Education through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners. (3) Education for human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others' – see Wolhuter (2019, pp. 39–64).

- Education with solidarity, which means that an appeal is directed to the cultivation of a collective conscience and to the promotion of social justice.
- Education with intercultural respect.
- Education with ethicist thinking, which implies the presence of dialogue.

Proponents of the *Creed of Human Rights* usually claim that human rights are natural and universal (i.e. not bound to time or space). However, as will be expanded on in the next chapter, the *Creed of Human Rights* does not always map neatly onto all contexts. In the contours of the societal contexts of the Global South in particular, and in the societal diversity manifest in the nations of the Global South, there are difficulties in fitting into the *Creed of Human Rights*. This problem is compounded by the fact that the *Creed of Human Rights* was conceptualised and worked out in the Global North. This also applies to both the article on education as a human right and to human rights education, as will be elaborated upon later in this chapter and more so in the next chapter.

In this intersection between human rights, education and diversity, the authors wish to highlight the following six salient themes:

- **Diverse contexts:** Diverse contexts are the way in which human rights and human rights education find expression in various contexts are co-shaped by contexts, are realised in diverse contexts and encounter contextual impediments or obstacles.
- **Citizenship education:** It is through CE that the new, rising generation is taught about human rights, its role as the moral compass of society and how to respect, live and practice human rights as responsible citizens.
- **Comparative and international perspectives:** The scholarly field of comparative and international education is best equipped to explicate the interrelationships between societal contextual forces, on the one hand, and the conceptualisation and realisation of human rights and human rights education, on the other hand.
- **Legal perspectives:** It is through the conduit of the legal system (e.g. legislation, policy, court cases, academic literature and empirical data) that education in human rights in diverse societies and human rights education in diverse societies are formalised.
- **Bio-psycho-social perspectives:** In the final instance, education and human and human rights are aimed at the well-being of each person. Well-being entails the biological, psychic and social spheres.
- **Learner discipline:** Despite not figuring highly (if at all) on the education research agenda, learner or student discipline remains an unresolved challenge faced by teachers all over the world today (see Russo, Oosthuizen & Wolhuter 2015-a, 2015-b). Human Rights and the new stance towards diversity have all set new parameters for both the conceptualisation of learner discipline problems and ways to address these, both of which many teachers are standing at a loss.

Across all six of these themes, the Global South is very prominent. Each of these themes will now be unpacked, while the issue of the Global South will be the topic of the following chapter in the book.

## ■ Diverse contexts

Human rights violations and injustices occur within the multifaceted and interconnectedness of diverse contexts in societies. These contexts (be they geographical, demographic, social, economic, political or religious and life and world philosophical) and the institutions of these contexts (e.g. religious institutions, social institutions and political institutions) are a causal factor in many human rights violations. These causal links, therefore, need to be explicated in order to determine how education can contribute towards addressing these violations. Contextual and institutional impediments in ensuring every person gets their right to education likewise need to be teased out and brought to the fore.

## ■ Citizenship education<sup>2</sup>

Although many meanings have been attached to the word ‘citizenship’, a reference point in the scholarly discourse on citizenship has always been the definition given by British sociologist T.H. Marshall in his book *Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays* (1950), namely, that citizenship refers to a status given to those who are full members of a community. That status entails both rights and obligations. Marshall expatiated further that these rights and obligations may range from place to place and from time to time. Usually, they are of a civil, political and social kind. Civil rights and duties refer to individual freedoms (e.g. freedom of expression and of speech), political rights to the right to take part in the exercise of political power, while the social element refers to being able to live in a society as a civilised being, in accordance with the prevailing standards in society with economic welfare and security to the right to share fully in that social heritage. In contemporary society, these rights are spelt out in human rights manifestos. Similarly, the *Creed of Human Rights* supposes obligations as the flipside of rights (although these are seldom explicitly spelt out in human rights manifestos).

As stated, citizenship has been given many meanings. The same applies to the term ‘citizenship education’. The authors side with the conceptual clarification of ‘citizenship’ as formulated by T.H. Marshall, but distance itself with the notion – historically strong in public and scholarly discourse alike – of CE indicating that the learner should be taught to submit themselves to the dictates and interest of the state. On the contrary, the context of the 21st

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2. This section of the chapter is based on an existing publication, Wolhuter (2019, pp. 39-64).

century directs a strong imperative for GCED. The ICT revolution and transportation revolution, and on the back of that, demographic mobility and the rise of an international economy, have denuded much of the power base of the nation-state. Furthermore, in the contemporary world, threats, crises and challenges such as the ecological crisis, the need for sustainable development, global terrorism, nuclear arms and probable developments as part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), with the blurring of the borders between the physical, biological and technological worlds (such as artificial intelligence and genetic manipulation) create an even more urgent call for GCED. UNESCO (2015) defined GCED as:

[A] framing paradigm which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and sustainable. (p. 9)

Despite this concise and clear definition of UNESCO, there are a large variety of definitions and conceptualisations of GCED in circulation in scholarly literature. Oxley and Morris (2013, p. 303) distinguished between two major types of conceptualisations, namely, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic conceptualisations of GCED. The former is Northern Hemispheric centred and emphasises globalisation and global citizenship from above, while the latter focuses on globalisation from below, power relations, critical perspectives and on agency, especially in the Global South. This once again underscores the importance of comparative and international perspectives, the Global South in particular, as an arena for the intersection explored in this book. The next sections in this sector will zoom in on these.

Oxley and Morris (2013, p. 306) distinguished between eight categories of global citizenship and GCED, namely, the political, economic, moral, cultural, social, critical, environmental and spiritual. Human rights run deep through each of these. Each of these areas of human rights is beset with difficult questions and issues which can only be dealt with by an educated mind.

## ■ Comparative and international perspectives

Comparative and international education is a field of scholarship studying education from a three-in-one perspective (Wolhuter 2021). These three perspectives are an education system perspective, a contextual perspective and a comparative perspective.

'Comparative education', in the first instance, studies education *systems*. While in the modern world, *national* education systems are the most salient, it is possible to detect or delineate education systems at a range of different geographical levels (see Bray & Thomas 1995). These can include systems at the sub-national level (provinces, districts, even individual education institutions and classes) and education systems at larger than the national level (such as the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna process in the European



Union – a system at supranational level) right up to the global level as the most extensive level (which will be elaborated in the next paragraph).

In view of powerful societal trends (such as globalisation, the ICT revolution and the transportation revolution) as well as corresponding trends in education (e.g. the rise of international testing regimes, such as the International Education Assessment [IEA], and PISA, International Programme for Student Assessment), a call has been rising in recent times that the name 'comparative education' should evolve to comparative and international education to reflect the changes in the field which were brought by these societal and education trends in the world (see Wolhuter 2016). The term 'international education' has had a long history with an assortment of different meanings attached to it (for a survey of these, see Wilson 1994). However, 'international education' is used, as defined by Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014, p. 60), to refer to scholarship studying education at a global or worldwide level. With the scholarly field of comparative education then evolving into comparative and international education, the idea is that lower-order area studies (such as studies at the level of national education systems) and comparisons between such lower-level area studies should finally build into or strengthen the all-encompassing, global study of the International Education project.

While protagonists of human rights often claim or at least suppose the universal, invariable validity of the *Creed of Human Rights*, it is evident from comparative and international education publications that human rights education and the realisation of the *Creed of Human Rights* in education are shaped by contextual contours wherever this creed finds a foothold. Sutton and Levinson (2001) described a process they termed 'appropriation', whereby actors make concepts or policies or practices of the world culture of education their own by interpreting it in the lights of local beliefs. Unfortunately, this localisation of the *Creed of Human Rights* and of human rights education means not only finer calibrations always to fit local contextual variations but also contorted and even perverted. In a rare comparative education publication on non-formal education, Wahl (2016) demonstrated how local police officers in India, after having gone through a course of human rights education, use the *Creed of Human Rights* for their own interests, using the script of human rights as a rationalisation for actually violating human rights. There is also the problem that education policy principals and education planners pay lip service to human rights education, yet, especially at grassroots level, little of such education is visible. For example, in a recent analysis of textbooks used in schools in Turkey, Sen (2021) found little evidence of official subscription to human rights education in textbooks. He called this window dressing.

What should be borne in mind is general criticisms against especially large and unwieldy bureaucratic systems, that such systems become self-serving monstrosities, defeating the ends to which they were created in the first place and enslaving rather than serving the people for which they were created.

In the field of education, Mary Archer, in her book *Social Origins of Educational Systems: Take Off, Inflation and Growth* (1984), depicted education systems as rapidly and easily (after being established) growing into, or degenerating, into expensive self-serving inefficient organisations, caring little for any other interests and limiting the agency of the people (especially actors in the system such as teachers). There is also the problem of the policy-practice gap, of which self-serving bureaucratic monstrosities are but one contributory factor. A vivid explanation of how ineffectual and counterproductive a colossal bureaucratic structure can be found in the book *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington Are Dashed in Oaklands* by J. Pressman and A. Wildavsky (1984). Taking a by no means atypical example of a simple project commissioned in Washington and destined for implementation in Oaklands, California, requiring 30 decisions by 70 committees of 30 people each, and assuming an 80% probability of agreement on each clearance point, a statistical calculation put the chances of completion on one in a million.

To summarise, in the scholarly exploration and explication of the intersection between human rights, education and diversity in society, it behoves scholars in the field of comparative and international education to use their expertise and methodological and conceptual tools to straddle the divide between the universal claim of the theoretical edifice of the *Creed of Human Rights* and the force of contortion brought about by the contextual contours where this creed is to find concrete embodiment. The dual assignment is to ensure that the universal promise and guarantee of the rights are not violated, and that at the same time these rights should appear so as to be of significance in the life of people in the variegated societal contexts around the globe. Vigilance should be exercised as to the possibility that this *Creed of Human Rights* is so perverted to serve personal interests that the original objective of the creed is not defeated. The value of comparative and international perspectives in illuminating the intersection between human rights and education has once again been underscored by the recent publication of the book by Mary Drinkwater, Fazel Rizvi, and Karen Edge, *Transnational Perspectives on Democracy, Citizenship, Human Rights and Peace Education* (2019).

To expatiate on the societal contextual panorama in the world and the kaleidoscope of education systems it has spawned, the rising node is the Global South. The rise of the Global South, and the significance of its societal diversity and education efforts for education and human rights, will be the subject of the next chapter in this volume.

The vanguard of the Global South's advancing march to the world stage is the BRICS countries (see Wolhuter & Chigisheva 2020). With respect to the field of comparative and international education, the value of the BRICS countries as a knowledge repository has been argued (see Wolhuter & Chigisheva 2020). These are related to both the societal contextual features and dynamics and the education development in this set of countries.

It is a raising concern that teachers and even school management teams have limited knowledge about comparative and international education as well as its use within the classroom and in the general management of the school. The corpus of knowledge and conceptual framework of comparative and international education contain valuable information regarding, among other things, legislation, policy, administration of the education system, the structure of the education system as well as how to meet the special educational needs of learners, teachers and the educational activities (Steyn et al. 2017). The teacher and education manager ignorant of comparative and international education are jeopardised with regard to their potential contribution not only to the effectiveness of the teaching process but also to the effectiveness of the overall education system. Within the conceptual framework of comparative and international education, the determinants of the education system are also thoroughly described and explained. These determinants are divided into two concepts, namely, internal determinants and external determinants (Steyn et al. 2017). Internal determinants refer to factors that are within the education system. These factors include the following: factors of historical nature, factors of reciprocal nature and factors of educational nature and trends (Steyn et al. 2017). The informed teacher and education manager knowledgeable of comparative and international education will know to take these factors into account when making important decisions that may influence the nature and essence of the teaching events within the classroom (Buthelezi & Wolhuter 2018; Challens & Van der Vyver 2019). One example is the factor of a historical nature that can guide and formulate decisions by not repeating mistakes made in the past (Steyn et al. 2017; Wolhuter et al. 2018). External determinants are contextual factors that exist outside the education system and have an influence on the education system. These factors include the following: demography, geography, science and technology, language, culture, philosophy, socio-economic trends and political trends (Steyn et al. 2017). Each of the mentioned factors has a direct influence on the diversity of a school community, and when these factors are not taken into account, respect for diversity will be adversely affected. If some of these factors can be singled out, reference can be made to the diversity of language, culture, religion and socio-economic status of the school community (Steyn et al. 2017). Assuming that these last few factors are treated in an inappropriate manner within the school community, it will necessarily mean that the uniqueness of the individual and the right to equality are disregarded. The recognition of diversity as well as the uniqueness of the individual does not mean that the principle of unity within the community is disregarded but rather strengthens the sense of unity and the right to live out the individual's own nature and character within this unit. From the history of various education systems, it has been proven that the disregard for diversity, as well as the principle of inequality, has led to the eradication of the feeling of unity within the community (Wolhuter et al. 2018).

## ■ Legal perspectives

As the source documents of human rights, and of education as a human right in particular, are constitutions and acts, and as much of the discussion and growing understanding of human rights takes place in processes of litigation, legal perspectives have a special role to play in explicating the intersection between human rights, education and diversity. In the ensuing chapter of this volume, the legal aspect of the intersection between human rights, diversity and education is explored and portrayed in more detail.

## ■ Bio-psycho-social perspectives

As was stated, in the final instance, education and human and human rights are aimed at the well-being of each person. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of human needs provides a need for the scope of what the bio-psycho-social well-being of each person entails:

- need for self-actualisation
- need for esteem
- need for belonging
- security needs
- physiological needs.

At the education *system* level, caution should be taken against a view of reducing the human being to a production and consumption unit and to the sole purpose of an education system to enhance the stock of human capital of a nation. Such a preposterous or reductionistic view was brought into and made strong in the public and scholarly discourse on education by modernisation theory and especially by human capital theory, and later by neoliberal economics as well. In global surveys of education expansion and reforms, neoliberalism is often pitted against the *Creed of Human Rights* as the two main drivers of global education expansion and reform (see Wolhuter & Van der Walt 2019). In Chapter 10 of this volume, the authors argue about the antithetical relation between neoliberal economics and a culture of respect for human rights. In this respect, a few other measures in assessing education and in serving as yardsticks measuring the outcome of education reform (rather than merely rates of return analyses or calculating the correlation between education and economic growth) could be suggested. Gross National Happiness is one such index consisting of nine domains, namely, psychological well-being, ecological diversity, community vitality, good governance, cultural diversity and resilience, education, time use, living standards and health care (cf. Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH Research 2016). Using this index in studying human rights and education may well yield interesting results.

## ■ Learner discipline

A particularly important issue lying in the intersection between education, human rights and diversity is that of learner discipline. The axiom that a certain modicum of learner discipline is a requirement for education (teaching and learning) to take place in any educational institution can surely be tabled without any fear of gainsay. Firstly, however, the methods teachers historically relied on to maintain learner discipline (corporal punishment, in particular, comes to mind) can no longer be used in an era of respect for human rights. Secondly, in an era of diverse societies, and diverse learner corps, diversity has shown itself to be one area making it difficult to lay down the parameters of what is needed for sound learner discipline. Here the attention just needs to be turned to unsavoury incidents about hairstyle policy in South Africa's schools and which has been the cause of severe inter-race relations problems at South African schools in recent years (see De Wee 2021; The Guardian 2016). While it is easy to state with lofty grandstanding that schools should be value-driven and not rule-driven, that does not help in solving the issue at a concrete level. It has been mentioned earlier that the valuing and treasuring of diversity is not something just required out of respect for human rights (that too), but the new knowledge economy requires such a setup too. Scott Page (2019) showed how businesses and other organisations could improve their performance by tapping the power of differences in how people think.

Learner discipline is not a minor problem teachers and learners in schools in South Africa and beyond have to contend with. In 2019, the principal of a top-achieving school in the Vaal Triangle region of South Africa sent out a letter to parents informing them that the school management would no longer fill vacant teacher posts of teachers who left the school because of the ill-discipline of learners (Marx 2019, p. 6). In 2017, an extensive survey among teachers conducted by the South African Teachers' Union (SADTU, or Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie [SAOU]) revealed that 85.1% of the respondents had an experience of learners interfering with their attempts to maintain discipline, 79.4% had been verbally abused by learners, parents, colleagues or school management, 10.3% had been physically attacked, 13.9% had suffered victimisation and 25.2% had suffered damage to their property (Marx 2019). Not only are teachers the suffering party, but learners themselves are also at the receiving end, suffering adverse effects of the ill-discipline of other learners. By all indications, this problem of learner discipline and its adverse effect on both learners and teachers is not limited to South Africa but is present virtually all over the world (see Russo et al. 2015-1, 2015-2; Steyn et al. 2003).

The problem is the glaring anomaly that despite learner discipline being a major issue facing teachers all over the world, it is nowhere prominent on the education research agenda (see Deacon, Ostler & Buchler 2009; Wolhuter 2008). However, what corpus of literature does exist is by no means discardable.

These publications cover the following aspects of the issue of learner discipline in schools: the nature and incidence of learner discipline problems in schools, causes or antecedents of learner discipline problems, the effect of learner discipline problems and the handling of learner discipline problems (Wolhuter & Van der Walt 2021). The conclusion (or *cul de sac*) of this body of knowledge is that teachers are at a loss as to methods to maintain sound learner discipline in schools now that the new *Creed of Human Rights* has ruled out traditional methods which teachers used to rely on; and there is from the side of the scholarship community, no guidance, no available models to be suggested.

Drawing up a code of conduct for learners is one of the responsibilities of the school's governing body. As already mentioned, any form of physical reprimand is not permissible in schools. The formulation of the code of conduct for learners should contain clear guidelines that spell out the unacceptable behaviour of learners as well as the nature of the punishment that accompanies it. Parents, learners and teachers must be well aware of this code of conduct for learners. It is not only the responsibility of the teachers to discuss this code of conduct for learners with the learners but also the duty of the parents. Learners and parents must clearly realise that unacceptable behaviour is accompanied by certain punitive measures against learners. Parents must also further realise that they are the primary educators of their children, and this role and responsibility cannot be replaced by the teachers (*South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*) (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1996).

Herein lies the assignment for the scholarly community: to develop guidelines and models for maintaining learner discipline in diverse classroom settings. These can inform school governing bodies (SGBs) in drawing up rules of conduct for schools and can guide teachers in their practice.

## ■ Conclusion

Thus, humanity, two decades into the 21st century, finds itself with an education expansion revolution as one of the defining features of the age. Education is looked up to as a panacea for every societal ill and as an instrument to effect any societal change desired. Other salient signature trends of the contemporary era are the rise of the *Creed of Human Rights* as a moral code for a global world, the rise of the Global South, with the BRICS countries grouping being the vanguard, and the growing diversity in societies. This chapter explored the intersection between these trends. This intersection was shown to be falling out in the following six thematic areas, namely, diverse contexts, CE, international comparative perspectives, legal perspectives, bio-social perspectives, and learner discipline, corresponding to the subareas of the unit. These are the thematic groupings of the Edu-HRight Research Unit at NWU, South Africa. As in every field of scholarship, the assignment of this unit

is to yield a body of knowledge to guide practice, that is, to advance the education of human rights, education through human rights and education for human rights. As will be explained in the next section, the *Creed of Human Rights* and the implication of human rights education in the world of today display a bias towards the Global North. This bias is detrimental, first and foremost, to the people of the Global South, but as will be explained in the next chapter, humanity as a whole is affected adversely by it. The next chapter will survey the rise of the Global South in the world and why the experience of the Global South can enrich the *Creed of Human Rights* and Human Rights Education in the diverse world of today.

The fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2020–2024), places special emphasis on education and training in equality, human rights and non-discrimination, and inclusion and respect for diversity with the aim of building inclusive and peaceful societies, and aligning the fourth phase with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and specifically with target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The underlying theme in the ideas of this fourth phase, as in all the chapters in this book (conceptual and case study chapters alike), is that social justice, which dictates the global moral compass, is largely focused on the *Creed of Human Rights*, and this should serve all sections of humanity equally, rather than prioritise the perspectives of the Global North. It is here where the contextual contours of the Global South offer an opportunity and rich field to construct a body of knowledge to guide humanity towards a project of human rights education constituting a force towards the realisation of social justice and the accomplishment of the SDGs.

# The intersection between education, human rights and diversity: Legal perspective

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## ■ Abstract

Schools are a diverse cosmos requiring a purposeful, safe, secure and disciplined learning environment for optimal performance. Within this cosmos, teachers and learners with diverse backgrounds, religious beliefs, cultural traditions and language heritages meet each other and are required to form

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sound relationships and find the road to successful schooling. Misunderstandings between teachers and learners may occur because of differences of opinion and different experiences of the teaching and learning process. These misunderstandings could develop into legal disputes in education. By exploring the intersection between education, human rights and diversity within the South African public schooling system, the authors aim to offer legal-based guidelines to enhance the ability of schools to realise every learner's right to education by delivering the education they are legally mandated to provide while ensuring the professional security of teachers and the *geborgenheit* of learners.

## ■ Introduction

The right of every individual to education, as a fundamental human right, is indisputably guaranteed by various international (Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR] 1948), regional (African Charter on Human and People's Rights, African Charter 1981) and national documents (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1996a). This right, according to Article 26 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR 1948), entails a right to education that is fixed on developing the persona of humans and reinforcing respect for human rights and essential human freedoms. The African Charter (1981, art. 25) similarly provides that an understanding of and respect for rights, freedoms and corresponding duties should be attained through education. Focusing on the rights of the child in particular, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (United Nations [UN] 1989) explained in Article 29 thereof that every child has the right to education, which is aimed at developing their character, talents and abilities (both psychological and physical) and at instilling respect for diverse cultures, languages, religions, ethnic groups, environments and values that will enable them to live an accountable life in a welcomed and just society.

The role of education in teaching humans how to responsibly exercise their human rights and freedoms is, alongside, recognised by the UDHR (1948) in its Preamble. Teaching and learning focused on advancing the human personality and encouraging understanding, tolerance and friendship among all (UDHR 1948, art. 26[2]) are identified as key vehicles to promote adherence to and respect for these rights. Education for economic development, improving human lives, addressing inequality and bringing humans together is, accordingly, widely acknowledged (King 2011; Walker et al. 2019). The potential of education to equalise society is, however, challenged as the existence of diversity – a range of identities – among teachers and learners often complicates the creation of safe, secure and inclusive learning environments, an essential prerequisite for quality teaching and learning (Guilford 2021).

The way the right to education is guaranteed through legislation, as indicated, highlights an inextricable connection between education, respect for human rights and diversity (the optimal development of every individual's full potential). Schools are public institutions functioning within society with the core responsibility of educating the youth and supporting the development of democratic, socially just and multicultural communities. As a result, schools are obliged to reflect the diverse perspectives and narratives of the education population they serve to fulfil their mandate. To ensure their optimal performance and the inclusion of all, schools are furthermore required to be purposeful, safe, secure and disciplined settings.

Within school settings, being a diverse cosmos, teachers and learners come together to build strong relationships for successful teaching and learning to transpire. The interaction between teachers and learners is, however, complicated because of their diverse backgrounds and the way they understand and act towards and upon one another's diversities (Roux & Becker 2020). Because of cultural, ethnical, gender, language, religion and race (core drivers of diversity) differences among teachers and learners – if not well integrated to appreciate its full benefits (Appiah, Arko-Achemfuor & Adeyeye 2018) – misunderstanding, tension and even conflict that may develop into legal disputes often occur.

In the sphere of education, it is apparent that when human rights, specifically the right to equal treatment regardless of diverse identities and needs, are abused or infringed upon, teachers and learners start to feel excluded, disassociated and misunderstood. They may also feel stressed because of struggling to maintain, develop, express and transmit their diverse cultural identities in public (Holt 2015). Such feelings may sequentially lead to feelings of resentment, withdrawal and even a negative self-image or lack of confidence, as well as to low school attendance, participation, performance and morale. Such feelings may, in turn, lead to teachers and learners losing faith in schools and in their ability to unlock their full human potential as aspired by the UDHR (1948) globally and by the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1996c) at the national level. As education is generally associated with better life opportunities, learners may also, under such circumstances, become prone to violence and unacceptable behaviour, which leads schools to become unsafe and insecure environments (Holt 2015; Kurtenbach & Rauf 2019). To value diversity in schools, thus, entails much more than acknowledging diversity in school policies. An all-inclusive approach to recognising and accommodating diversity is essential to foster stability and peace (Bornman 2019; Soupen 2017).

Integrating diversity into an education system to appreciate the full benefit thereof pertaining to human growth and to creating all-inclusive societies, conversely, poses unique challenges. Firstly, because of the notion that human

rights do not enjoy universal legality, it merely represents Euro-Western interests, values and norms (Dionyssios 2018; Mende 2019; Shaheed & Richter 2018). Secondly, accommodating the full spectrum of cultural diversity that exists on, for example, the African continent hosting countries such as Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Togo identified as being the most diverse countries based on the prevalence of multitude ethnic or racial groups and languages existing in these countries (Morin 2013) is no easy task. In view of the aim of this chapter, namely, to explore the intersection between education, human rights and diversity within the South African schooling system, the African Charter (1981) was used as the overarching legal framework. All Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries are signatories to this charter, which particularly takes notice of the attributes and values rooted in the African continent when guaranteeing, promoting and protecting human rights. Legislation specifically relevant to South Africa is used to complete the framework.

By exploring the intersection between education, human rights and diversity within the South African public schooling system, the authors aim to offer legal-based guidelines to enhance the professional security of teachers and the *geborgenheit* of learners and to enhance education to deliver effectively on the legal mandate. The concepts security and *geborgenheit*, in this context, refer to how safe teachers and learners feel in terms of their own diversities that affect the interaction and relationship between them. To achieve this aim, an intersectional research design was opted for. According to Misra, Curington and Green (2021), as well as Tefera, Powers and Fischman (2018), an intersectional design allows for recognising the dynamic and multifaceted ways that diversity – socially constructed extents of differences – among humans shapes multiple individual human identities and broader social life. Applied to education research, it allows taking cognisance of the manifold and complex conditions that exist within and across schools instead of following a one-dimensional, fixed and additive approach.

Following an intersectional research design allowed us to take regard of how the individual characteristics of teachers and learners interconnect to impact the way they experience reality and how they teach and learn (Crenshaw 1989). It allowed us, while honouring diversity among education role players, to explore and analyse the way diversity shapes the organisational dynamics of power and inequality that may exist in schools and individual social identities based on, among others, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation and socio-economic status (Bowleg 2012; Harris & Leonardo 2018). It, moreover, allowed us to take cognisance of the different cultural backgrounds and concomitant dissimilar needs of teachers and learners in ascertaining how diversity influences teaching and learning settings and experiences.

The concepts education, human rights and diversity are discussed forthwith. Thereafter, emphasis is placed on the intersections between these concepts

and the implication thereof for South African schools. The aim is to identify strategic legal guidelines for schools to follow to enhance the professional security of teachers and the *geborgenheit* of learners.

## ■ Education

In probing for the etymology of the word *education*, two main schools of thought emerged. One side accepts the Latin term *educāre*, meaning to train or mould (Craft, in Bass & Good 2004) or to rear or nurture (Rost 1979) or to direct and guide (Veschi 2020). As such, the aim of education is to, through rote learning, shape children in the image of their elders by preserving knowledge through passing it down from one generation to the next. The other side consent to the Latin term *educere*, meaning to lead out, to reveal, to expose and to participate. The aim of education, accordingly, is to empower the youth by inculcating thinking, questioning and creative skills and abilities to create solutions for future problems they may be confronted with (Bass & Good 2004; Rost 1979; Veschi 2020).

Although highlighting the importance of education for the future, Dewey (1916) cautioned that teaching and learning should not merely be regarded as a preparation phase for future living but also regarded as a lived experience by itself. In agreement, Rajagopalan (2019) explained that teachers, as gardeners and not carpenters, should create safe and nurturing school environments in which learners can be free to live, be themselves, learn and explore. It is along these lines that we argue that education should be directed at the full and holistic (intellectual, social and cultural) development of learners in and beyond the boundaries of safe and secure classrooms.

In explaining that the philosophy of education entails a scientific investigative process aimed at understanding the uniqueness of communities, Waghid (2016) pointed to an African philosophy of education. Such a philosophy should, according to the same author, include ample opportunities for discourse, debate and involvement to address the impact this continent's exceptional difficulties, especially pertaining to widespread injustices and inequality, may have on education *per se*. As such, both Waghid (2016) and Biraimah (2016) suggested that the values of *ubuntu* should be central to an African philosophy of education. This is because of *ubuntu* highlighting inclusiveness, equity and equality while underscoring undividable wholeness (humanness) and linking reasonableness, moral adulthood and deliberative dialogue together. This stance is echoed by the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) National Policy on the South African Standard for the Principalship (DBE 2016) in providing that all principals should hold and practice *ubuntu* values when managing schools. Accentuating *ubuntu* values in this context makes sense, as African traditions are known for valuing unity above individualism. It is, conversely, one of the main reasons why human

rights, mainly guaranteed to individual human beings and not to groups of people, are perceived to be Euro-Western-dominated. If one, however, acknowledges that any unity or group is made up of individuals to whom human rights are guaranteed, the link between an African philosophy of education and universal human rights remains intact.

Within the South African context, in particular, Venter (1998) recognised that relationships between humans from diverse groups appear to either lean towards embracing differences and otherness or towards fearing otherness. It is with this in mind that she cautions that human values by themselves are important and not the value humans attach to, for example, their cultures, religious beliefs or language, and accordingly proposes that education for humanity should start at schools in order to cultivate respect for otherness. At this point, it is important to acknowledge that respect is not merely accepting differences, but rather that humans may agree to disagree, and according to Waghid (2004), that respect calls for holding others to the standards they hold themselves. As it is the responsibility of teachers to guide learners to an understanding of respect and that otherness is not necessarily a threat or bad, Venter (1998) argued that education is essential to create an understanding that humans, despite their differences, share the same qualities of being human.

## ■ Human rights

Being born as human entails having human rights and freedoms. These rights and freedoms embody key communal values such as respect, independence, fairness, dignity and equality (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2021). All human beings, without any discrepancy based upon their birth, colour, language, political or other opinion, property, race, religion, sex, social or national origin, or other status (UDHR 1948, art. 2; African Charter 1981, art. 2), are entitled to these rights. As such, human rights are regarded as being universal, inherent and indisputable.

Despite humans being 'born free and equal in dignity and rights' (UDHR 1948, art. 1), the Human Freedom Index (Vásques & McMahon 2020), based on global 2018 figures, reports that humans globally only enjoy an average of 69% of freedom. A discrepancy between Euro-Western countries having the highest levels of freedom and sub-Saharan African countries having the lowest levels of freedom is also depicted. The sixteen SADC affiliated states were, for example, found to enjoy 63% of economic freedom and 65% of human freedom, both levels being under the average of 69%. Statistics on traditional Euro-Western countries, on the contrary, indicate a level of 79% of economic freedom and 84% of human freedom, both levels being well above the global average of 69%. These figures not only indicate a divergence in the level of human freedom between predominant Euro-Western countries and so-called developing countries, as well as a correlation between economic and human

freedom but also indicate total human freedom and the full realisation of human rights that remain to be an ideal.

While not negating the rich African history before the era of dehumanising and destructive colonisation, it is taken that the history of colonisation during which this continent was under European powers (Oliver & Oliver 2017) and the immediate years after African, and especially sub-Saharan, countries gradually gained independence since 1955 (Talton 2011) has a direct bearing on human living on the African continent enjoying less economic and human freedom. The decolonisation of the African continent did, unfortunately, not end the abuse of power and the denial of the human rights of non-Europeans (Samson 2020). While great strides have been made by many African countries in establishing respect for human rights, reports on power abuse, corruption and authoritarian leadership leading to a disregard for human rights remain to taint the picture (Campbell & Quinn 2021; Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa 2021; Transparency International 2019). As a direct result, Biraimah (2016, p. 45) mentioned that African countries are still striving to be freed from their disturbing past and, in doing so, desperately cling to the potential of education to path the way to equal opportunities and quality of life for all its inhabitants.

It is, accordingly, evident that, although human rights are universal – they are guaranteed to all without any distinction as to individual differences (UDHR 1948, art. 2) – their degree of realisation differs according to the region, country and society in which humans live. This is because of societies reflecting unique moral standards and values, which, according to O'Connor (2014), depends on the cultural upbringing of humans within such a society, which in turn shapes the way society members behave. It is in line herewith that the 'universality of human rights' is questioned as it can, so is argued, not equally apply to humans living in societies that do not reflect dominant Euro-Western cultures. In this regard, Asomah (2015) argued that although human rights are set out not only to recognise and accommodate but also to promote cultural diversity, the realisation thereof ends when its adherence is to be expected to violate the human rights belonging to others. As such, the same author (2015) opined that human rights centre on a consensus regarding respect for human dignity rather than on any specific culture, although the practical realisation of human rights should include sensitivity towards differences. This is in line with the African Charter (1981) acknowledging, in its Preamble, the essentiality of human freedom, equality, justice and human dignity in attaining the valid ambitions of humans on the African continent.

## ■ Diversity

The concept 'diversity' refers to the practice of including humans with a variety of social and ethnic backgrounds or, in its Latin form *diversus*, denotes

more than one of a different kind (Mashau, Mutshaeni & De Wet 2020). Within a society, it manifests through differences regarding, among others, race, gender, sexuality, national origin, religion and language (Banks 2012), as well as ethnicity, biological sex, class, appearance, culture, socio-economic viewpoints, aptitude and even values resulting from historical development processes (Mashau et al. 2020; Roux & Bekker 2020). As differences are continuously complemented by changing worldviews and the fact that humans may choose to alter their position (Banks 2012) regarding, for example, their religion and opinions, no attempt can be made to provide a static list of differences that may exist at any given time in any given space.

In accepting that all humans are born 'equal in dignity and rights' regardless of individual differences (UDHR 1948, art. 1) and guaranteeing everyone the right to human dignity and equality (African Charter 1981, arts. 5, 19; Republic of South Africa 1996a, ss. 9, 10) while condemning any form of domination and unfair discrimination, the law recognises the importance of valuing and respecting human diversity. Diversity is fundamentally linked to human rights. According to Banks (2012) and Wood (2002), diversity should, however, not only be limited to accommodating differences but also serve as a lens through which the reasons behind human conflicts based on the denial of diversity are viewed. As such, diversity should, according to the same authors, be regarded as a political principle taking specific care of individuals being currently or previously disadvantaged and, thus, breaking the dominance of existing dominant individuals within a society. This principle could serve to be especially applicable in the case of African countries in which past and present Euro-Western dominance deprives the native inhabitants of this continent of their right to be different and to be respected regardless of their differences.

A close link between cultural diversity (a variety of ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic differences) and education also exists as the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UN 2001, Preamble) explains that culture is central to all discussions pertaining to the realisation of social cohesion, the development of a knowledge-based economy and human identity or personality, a main aim of education (UDHR 1948, art. 26; UN 1989, art. 29). The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UN 2001, Preamble), moreover, affirms an existing link between diversity on the one side and safety and security on the other side by admitting that respect for diversity, as well as sound dialogue and cooperation based upon mutual trust and an awareness of the unity of humankind irrespective of differences, warrants peace and security.

In his well-known hierarchy of basic human needs, Maslow indicated that the need for safety and security is, but for the need to survive, the most important need of every human being. This need is equally important for teachers and learners. The dire need for teachers to have a safe workplace in which they can, with confidence, teach is recognised by the South African Human Rights Commission (2019), along with the need for learners for a safe

learning environment to optimally grow and learn. However, despite safety and security being of paramount importance, the Commission also reports on many South African schools found not to have the necessary security measures in place to safeguard teachers and learners and thereby endangering their lives and well-being. With specific emphasis on dealing with the high prevalence of violence between learners and even between teachers and learners, the South African Council for Educators (2021) has released the *Teachers' Safety and Security in South African Schools: A Handbook*. The book is aimed at guiding teachers regarding their own rights and responsibilities, at assisting teachers in protecting themselves and at helping schools to combat school-based violence.

The Council (2021) acknowledged that teachers should, through education, enhance the self-image of learners so that they can feel strong and proud of themselves and others without having to avert, for instance, bullying, to make them feel superior to others. Teachers should, alongside, guide learners on how to interact empathetically with one another and how to find comfort and happiness in diversity. In connection with xenophobia (fear of something that is foreign), the Council encourages teachers to challenge stereotypes and inspire learners to accept and celebrate diversity rather than fear it. The adoption of a whole school approach that includes a caring, safe and inclusive school climate and focuses on emotional learning, sincere sensitivity towards diversity and acceptance is recommended. The Council, in addition, suggests that the socio-cultural context and the background of teachers and learners be taken into consideration when considering any disciplinary measure.

The recommendations made by the Council (2021) are in line with the findings of Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003), namely that intolerance (an unwillingness to accept beliefs, opinions, views and behaviours that differ from one's own) among teachers and learners is a major cause of school-based violence. Biyela (2018) similarly found that a direct correlation exists between the presence of different racial and ethnic groups in schools and learner safety. His research results indicate that schools with high numbers of racial and ethnic diversity among teachers and learners do not experience the same peace and order as compared to uniform schools. He also found that when learners are abused or bullied by their teachers, they automatically become aggressive. In recognising family violence, poor socio-economic conditions and peer influence or pressure because of the notion that the identity of learners is shaped by what they see or experience as causes of school-based violence, Netshitangani (2014) emphasised the need for schools to take regard of all the factors that may influence learner behaviour. It is alongside recognised that the prevalence of crime and violence or even a fear thereof in schools has a detrimental effect on schools and society as it hampers effective teaching and learning, violates teacher and learner rights, and has a negative impact on the surrounding school community (Burton & Leoschut 2013).



To set clear guidelines for schools on how to form safe, violence- and threat-free, caring school environments, the (DBE 2015) compiled a National School Safety Framework. This framework, together with the Regulations for Safety Measures in Public Schools (DBE 2006), obliges schools to compile a safety policy, a policy on non-violent discipline, as well as a code of conduct for learners. It is through these policies and codes that we argue that schools can ensure protection for human rights and respect for diversity and safe, secure and embracing learning environments. In doing so, schools can play an essential role in laying the basis for an inclusive society in which the well-being of all humans is promoted and in which teachers and learners can be themselves, establish strong relationships and succeed in achieving their full potential. Compiling and implementing such policies and codes are, however, complicated in a country such as South Africa because of having a rich multi-ethnic history.

South Africa's multicultural history has led to the establishment of a diverse country with eleven official languages, a diverse range of religions, five racial groups and no single official culture. In general, education in multicultural settings is based on the value of ensuring educational equity for all learners despite differences. To attain equity, all barriers need to be removed to ensure equal access to educational opportunities and equal chances for learners to succeed (Great Schools Partnerships 2020). In more specific terms, multicultural education entails teaching learners to recognise, accept and appreciate differences among humans (Eloff 2019), and to be answerable for and dedicated to achieving democracy, justice and equality for all (Manning, Baruth & Lee 2017), as well as to be critical of injustices and actively be involved in bringing about change (Lemmer, Meier & Van Wyk 2012). In doing so, specific attention should also be paid to valuing the cultural backgrounds of those learners that have been historically understated or who achieved poorer educational outcomes (Great Schools Partnerships 2020). Schools, accordingly, must contest any replica of inequality and present options for social change (Reygan 2019).

Preparing teachers coming from diverse cultural backgrounds themselves adequately to achieve these aims and to function optimally within diverse classrooms is equally important, as pointed out by Lemmer et al. (2012). The importance of training teachers is underscored by Madrigal et al. (2015) in alluding that the social and cultural contexts in which teachers grew up play a determining role regarding their way of thinking and acting that, in sequence, dictates their perceptions regarding teaching and learning. In this regard, De Wet (2020) pointed out that teachers must be prepared not only to be aware of but also to alert learners to how their behaviour and responses towards others may contribute to teachers and learners from diverse backgrounds having totally different experiences of teaching and learning processes. Petersen, Gravett and Ramsaroop (2020), as a result, expressed the need for

teacher training programmes to be practical, authentic and experiential to equip teachers to challenge societal issues and to critically question diversity issues in schools. Initial teacher training should encourage aspirant teachers to question their own cultural heritage (Madrigal et al. 2015) while critically considering the heritage others bring with them to create an educational environment that fosters social justice, safety and security, as well as a culture of care. Teachers should be prepared to identify and oppose issues pertaining to oppression and unfair discrimination as they arise at schools (Reygan 2019).

Cognisance must, however, alongside be taken of the fact that culture should never be used as a justification to invade the rights of others. For example, harmful traditional practices, even if embedded in long-standing cultural customs, cannot be exercised in a society in which such practices would conflict with the human rights of other society members (Republic of South Africa 1996a, s. 36). This is particularly important in African countries such as South Africa having to deal with many varied expressions of culture while also having to deal with large numbers of immigrants fleeing to this country.

One must acknowledge that the possibility of human rights infringements is much higher in more diverse countries, and even more so if a particular society has not acknowledged that humanness is what they as humans have in common, as individuals (Eurocentric view) and as a unit (Afrocentric view), despite differences. Attaining social justice – the full and equal participation of all learners – in such countries is, moreover, more challenging as including forefront issues, such as race, class and gender, may, in turn, marginalise other forms of diversity (Reygan 2019). It is in this regard that the role of education as a vehicle to enable humans to be critically aware of differences and how to respectfully deal with diversity is especially pertinent.

## ■ **The intersection between education, human rights and diversity – implication for South African schools**

Although South Africa can be perceived as being a free country, it still carries the weight of its history of apartheid on its shoulders. Roux and Becker (2020), for example, ascribed the existence of current cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, religious and sectarian violence in this country to the historical social injustices and moral problems it had to endure. Since 1994, considered to be the year in which South Africa became a free country, it was often required from courts to pave the way for all education role players to realise the need for respecting human rights and to guide all on how such respect should be achieved in a diverse country. Court verdicts are valuable as they guide society on how infringements of human rights can negatively affect unity and, for purposes of this study, the relationship between teachers and learners, as well as on how

such infringements should be avoided. Before discussing the cases and outlining the lessons that could be learnt, a short explanation is provided regarding the role of legislation and case law in guiding human behaviour.

By acknowledging that human rights are, albeit their inalienability, not absolute, the law serves as a framework within which human rights and freedoms are expressed, guaranteed and protected. A legal framework is crucial to provide remedies in cases when human rights are threatened, infringed upon or being abused. The decisive role played by the law in protecting human rights is, for example, noted by the UDHR (1948) in its Preamble. It is stated that legal intervention is vital to guard against, among others, humans resorting to rebellion activities to protect their rights. In shielding human rights, a legal framework, however, also must provide set guidelines regarding the realisation and limitation of individual rights. Humans need to be held accountable for exercising their human rights in such a manner that due respect is shown to the rights of others, the public order, the overall well-being of society and the requirements of morality (African Charter 1981, art. 29[7]; UDHR 1948, art. 29[2]).

In contrast to legislation that is written abstractly, case law deals with individual disputes resolved by the judiciary based on the tangible facts of each case. As such, case law provides valuable information that assists with a comprehensive understanding on how to interpret legislation and how it should be implemented in practice. The importance of consulting case law is underscored by Matthee (2014) in showing that relevant case law together with the values embedded in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996a) sets the framework for decision-making regarding, among others, cultural diversity. It is in line, herewith, that the recognition and accommodation of diversity among humans with equal human rights in education are forthwith scrutinised against the backdrop of relevant case law.

Section 31 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996a), in which everyone's 'right to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language of choice', was interpreted by the Constitutional Court (CC) in both the case of *Prince v President of the Law Society of the Cape of Good Hope 2002(1) SACR 431 [CC]* and the case of *Christian Education South Africa v Minister of Education 2000 (4) SA 757 [CC]*. It was found that Section 31 rights are not aimed at protecting religious interests mathematically but rather at respecting diversity among individuals. In both cases, the CC had to decide whether a legislative provision prohibiting the full realisation of the right to freedom of religion was justified. Although the CC, in the Prince case, placed emphasis on the importance of the 'right to freedom of religion and to practise religion in an open and democratic society based on the constitutional values of human dignity, equality and freedom', it had to, in the overall interests of the public, decide in favour of legislation prohibiting the use of cannabis even though it constitutes a religious practice of Rastafari.

In the Christian Education case, the CC ruled in favour of legislation prohibiting corporal punishment in schools and, thus, against an exemption based on religious convictions supporting the administering of corporal punishment. With specific reference to the use of cannabis, the CC in *Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development v Prince; National Director of Public Prosecutions v Rubin; National Director of Public Prosecutions v Acton* 2018 (6) SA 393 [CC] in taking special regard of the right to privacy implying the right to live and enjoy one's life with the least of intrusion found the use of cannabis for medical reasons by an adult in private dwellings to be legal. The prominence of these three cases for education lies in the authority of school governing bodies (SGBs) to regulate learner behaviour in codes of conduct. Although respect for cultural and religious differences should be noted and respected, the smoking, trade or possession of cannabis in public spaces (especially in schools where children and non-consenting adults are present) and the use of corporal punishment remain prohibited. As a result, schools' code of conduct should provide for disciplinary action if such behaviour does occur.

Respect for and the need to celebrate diversity in, specifically, public schools were underscored in the case of *Organisasie vir Godsdienste-onderrig en Demokrasie v Laerskool Randhart* 2017(6) SA 129 [GJ]. The High Court held that schools, in providing a public service, cannot disrespect diversity by keeping to only one religion even if upheld by most learners and thus excluding others. Regarding the right to freedom of religion, the High Court and CC, respectively, in *Antonie v Governing Body, Settlers High School* 2002(4) SA 738 (CPD) and *MEC for Education KwaZulu-Natal v Pillay* 2008(1) SA 474 [CC] reiterated that the expression of religion, culture and identity constitute fundamental rights that are worthy of protection. In the Pillay case, a learner was prohibited by the school to wear a nose stud, albeit it being a customary cultural tradition. In acknowledging that permitting learners to keep to obligatory cultural practices affirms diversity, the CC also found that allowing for such practices even if it is voluntary is equally necessary as it promotes and celebrates diversity. As future guidelines, the Antonie and Pillay cases should direct SGBs when adopting codes of conduct for learners not to view such codes as neutral documents. Such codes should not conform all learners to one uniformed norm and thus excluding sidelined practices. Codes of conduct should rather be viewed as living documents that will allow for South Africa to belong to all who live in it, united in our diversity – an overall aim of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*. In this regard, the CC in the Pillay case stressed that, when all learners are free to express their religious beliefs or cultures, a pageant of diversity-enriching schools will be created, and South Africa will be moving closer to building the society the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* envisaged.

Pertaining to the authority of SGBs to determine the language policy of public schools, the CC in *Head of Department, Mpumalanga Department of*

*Education v Hoërskool Ermelo* 2010(2) SA 415 [CC] pointed out that schools should take due regard of the diverse needs and interests of the entire school community and not only that of their learners. In 1996, the High Court, in *Matukane v Laerskool Potgietersrus* 1996(3) SA 223 (T), found that disallowing three black learners into the school amounted to, based on the first impression, unfair discrimination based on race, ethnic or social origin, culture or language and called upon the school to prove otherwise. The school's argument that the school was entitled to protect its Christian Afrikaans culture and character and, in doing so, to refuse the admission of learners who do not subscribe to its objectives and mission was found to be unsubstantiated. The High Court rejected the notion that a specific cultural group is entitled to reserve public schools exclusively for learners who subscribe to such a culture. A similar stance was taken by the CC in *The Gauteng Provincial Legislature In re: Gauteng School Education Bill of 1995* 1996(3) SA 165. In this case, it was accentuated that private schools may be established for solely one culture if potential learners are not unfairly discriminated against based on their race. The CC indicated that culture is an elevating strength worthy of constitutional protection and that equality should not be overemphasised to the detriment of cultural diversity. The CC, nevertheless, also cautioned that schools should always aim at doing what is in the best interests of children as provided for in Section 28(2) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996a). The best interests of the child also played a crucial role in the matter of *Laerskool Middelburg Departementshoof: Mpumalanga Departement van Onderwys* 2002(4) All SA 745 (T) in which the High Court decided that English-speaking learners should remain in the school despite it being a predominant Afrikaans-medium school. Practical lessons to be learnt from these three cases include that schools are extensions of the broader community and, accordingly, need to address the needs of all community members. In doing so, and in taking decisions regarding all spheres of education, the best interests of the child should be paramount and thus a yardstick against which all education endeavours should be measured.

As diversity among humans entails people coming from a variety of dissimilar social and ethnic backgrounds and, among others, belonging to different genders and having different sexual orientations, the CC in *Minister of Home Affairs v Fourie (Doctors for Life International, amici curiae); Lesbian and Gay Equality Project v Minister of Home Affairs* 2006 (1) SA 524 [CC] placed emphasis on the right to self-expression. It was acknowledged that this right includes the right to be different and not to be required to be inferior to others having a different stance in life. This is in line with Article 20 of the African Charter (1981), providing that every human being has the right to existence, as well as the right to self-determination, allowing everyone to spontaneously regulate and pursue their own economic and social growth. In practice, this implies that all teachers and learners should be accepted and respected for who they are. No unfair discrimination based on gender or sex should be tolerated.

Pertaining to the school environment, the CC in *Head of Department, Department of Education, Free State Province v Welkom High School; Head of Department, Department of Education, Free State Province v Harmony High School* 2014 (2) SA 228 [CC] explained that, Section 8(2) of the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (1996c) provides for codes of conduct to be devoted to the enhancement and up keeping of the quality of teaching and learning by aiming at producing controlled and decisive school settings. Regarding the authority of SGBs, the CC held that, in view of the responsibility of these bodies to ensure that schools are suitable to accommodate the needs of all learners, such bodies are indeed authorised to compile policies for schools. The pregnancy policies of the schools in question were, however, found to unjustly discriminate against learners being pregnant and, by suspending such learners, to infringe on their right to a basic education. It was further held that the learners' rights to human dignity, to privacy, as well as to bodily and psychological integrity were impaired by demanding them to report not only their own pregnancy but also that of other learners. As such a policy is not sensitive to the health care and unique needs of such learners, it was also found not to be in the best interests of the child.

The cases discussed had, and still have, a direct effect on education, as well as on South African society. Despite the progress made on certain levels, it is, unfortunately, true that the situation, not only in South African schools but also in South Africa overall, is still far from ideal. Examples provided emphasise a lack of understanding and compassion towards otherness in South African society and in school environments.

Statistics indicating huge school drop-out rates from South African schools, especially among primary poor and working-class black learners, can be equally attributed to past and persistent unequal education provision (DBE 2016). These rates continue to rise despite the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (RSA 1996c) endeavouring to provide for a new and unified education system that can not only amend past injustices regarding unequal educational provision but also ensure education of a gradually high quality for all learners. In this sense, authors such as Reygan and Steyn (2017) emphasised, among others, the need to decolonise school curricula and learning material at all education levels. To do so and to bring values of harmony, recognition and understanding among learners in line with constitutional imperatives, as well as to remedy inequities of violence and biases in post-apartheid South Africa, a reviewed and more planned lesson framework for wide-ranging sexuality education in life skills was introduced in 2000. The aim was to assist learners regarding their own attitudes around sexuality, sexual behaviour and, ultimately, to live safe and healthy lives (DBE 2021). This initiative was, however, despite the increased amount of gender violence occurring in schools and an upsurge in teenage pregnancies, widely critiqued for endorsing 'perverse and anti-Christian content towards sexuality and diversity in schools'. This reaction,

according to Swanepoel (2020), is indicative of how hard it is to eradicate oppressive views pertaining to South African education, to overcome public prejudice towards cultural differences and to accept new values of peace and reconciliation across diverse cultural borders. A study conducted by Francis et al. (2019), correspondingly, found that gender and sexuality diversity is not adequately responded to by schools. Invisible gender and sexual minorities are rather marginalised or totally excluded and their voices silenced.

Disregard for the human rights of teachers and learners is also still rife in South African schools and a clear indication that the education system is far from reaching the aim of the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa 1996, Preamble), specifically to endorse the rights of all teachers, learners and parents and to fight all forms of sexism and racism or any other form of unfair discrimination and intolerance, as well as to contribute to safeguard and develop South Africa's diverse languages and cultures. Zondi (2017), for instance, reported on a lack of an appreciation of and tolerance towards humans with different gender identities or sexual orientations. As a result, such humans are discriminated against by SGBs, teachers and learners. Annual reports compiled by the South African Council for Educators (Council), alongside, depict numerous incidents of unethical teacher and learner conduct. During the years 2017 and 2018, seven incidents of racism by teachers and 87 of harassment, intimidation and victimisations were reported to the Council. These numbers increased during the years 2018 and 2019 to eleven incidents of racism and to 141 incidents of harassment, intimidation and victimisation and decreased to no incidents of racism and 66 cases of harassment, intimidation, and victimisation during the years 2019 and 2020 (South African Council of Educators 2018, 2019, 2020).

## ■ Education, human rights and diversity – the way forward for South African schools

Despite the guidelines constituted by the courts in both the Antonie and Pillay cases as discussed, many schools still seem to be caught up in entrenched colonial ways. The Pretoria Girls High hair incident in 2016 serves as an example. The human dignity of black learners was infringed upon by teachers making racist comments and instructing learners to straighten their hair if not to be subjected to disciplinary action (Pather 2016). A similar incident occurred three years later at a school in the Western Cape. This school came under the spotlight in 2019 when its learners protested, what they believed racist rules, considering 'natural hair and afro styles as unruly and untidy' (Parker 2019; Petersen 2019). In 2020, a learner also reported occurrences of racism as teachers made remarks such as 'this is not a taxi rank, township school or not a shebeen' to shame them (Atsango 2020). The question is – why do schools cling to traditional rules, albeit such rules disregarding diversity, disrespecting

human dignity, being highly destructive to building sound relationships and contravening legislative provisions?

The *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa 1996c, s.8[1]) clearly calls for a discussion with learners, parents and teachers before codes of conduct for learners are adopted. The guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners (code of conduct guidelines) underpin that a school's code of conduct must mirror constitutional democracy, transparent communication and respect for human rights (DoE 1998, r. 1.3). The code of conduct guidelines also contain a set of norms, principles and values to be upheld by the entire school community (DoE 1998, r. 1.9) and guidelines on the need for, and importance of, consultation (DoE 1998, r. 1.5) while stressing the need for upholding learner rights, specifically mentioning non-discrimination and equality (DoE 1998, r. 4.2), privacy, respect for human dignity, as well as mutual respect for one another's beliefs and cultural traditions (DoE 1998, r. 4.3) and freedom of expression as entailing forms of outward expression with regard to clothing and hairstyles (DoE 1998, r. 4.5).

Reference is also made to the right of learners to the security of the person and non-violence (DoE 1998, r. 4.4). Verbal abuse directed at either teachers or learners, victimisation, harassment and acts of intimidation are moreover recognised as offences that may lead to suspension from schools (DoE 1998, r. 11). Another question that comes to fore is whether the prevalence of harassment, intimidation and victimisation in schools during the years of 2017 and 2020, as alluded to, would have occurred if there was a legal awareness among teachers regarding their rights and responsibilities and due process. We believe that such a question could be posed as a research question for further research and be directed to schools on how they deal with legal action in education.

To do justice to the inseparable link that exists between education, human rights and diversity, we suggest that schools start by critically examining their codes of conduct. Cases such as Antonie and Pillay, as well as the incidents of racism and intolerance towards diversity (Pather 2016; Parker 2019; Petersen 2019) alluded to in this chapter, are clear indications that SGBs are not paying sufficient attention to the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996a), the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (RSA 1996c) and the guidelines for the code of conduct (Republic of South Africa 1998) as legally required. When the findings of Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003), Netshitangani (2014), Biyela (2018) and the Council (2021), pointing to poor discipline and violence in schools with greater diversity among its members, intolerance towards differences and a disregard for the socio-cultural context and the background of teachers and learners, are considered, schools should take their responsibility of adopting codes of conduct that can ensure the creation of safe and secure learning environments more seriously.



Schools, as public education centres, should start living up to the expectation created by international law (African Charter 1981, art. 25; UDHR 1948, art. 26; UN 1989, art. 29) that education is central to instil respect for diversity among humans. Schools and the education they provide need to be the vehicles through which respect for the human dignity of everyone is attained, through which humans come to understand that all share humanness despite their differences and that respect means holding each other to the same high standards. Teachers themselves should assume their community, citizenship and pastoral role as envisaged by the *Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (DHET 2015, appendix A) and start not to *educāre*, but rather to *educere* the youth. Teachers and learners alike need to respect the human rights belonging to others and to treat others equally despite differences. They should withhold themselves from unfair discrimination and thus exclude others from enriching life opportunities and empowering education experiences. Showing such respect will, in turn, lead to safer school environments as diminished humans tend to revert to aggressive behaviour in order to overcome the feelings attached to being disrespected.

It is time that schools recognise diversity among humans as an asset that warrants respect, to be promoted and to be developed as per both the Language in Education Policy in terms of Section 3(4)(m) of the *National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996* and the norms and standards regarding language policy published in terms of Section 6(1) of the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (RSA 1996c). To achieve this, Beckmann (2017) proposed that teachers should be committed to act professionally under all circumstances, to act constantly in the best interests of the child and to ensure a bright future for every learner. The same author (2017) also suggested that cultural differences that may lead to conflict should be handled fairly which is embedded in the legal concepts of justice, balancing conflicting interests and reasonableness, without which conflict will not be conductively resolved and a harmonious, safe and secure school culture cannot be created. Reygan (2019), similarly, urged teachers to acquire a refined understanding of diversity and, simultaneously, the ways in which learners are socially positioned in terms of, among others, class, (dis)ability, ethnicity, gender, race and sexual orientation.

Treating human differences or diversity fairly or justly as suggested by Beckmann (2017) entails ensuring social justice to prevail. In using the vision and values of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996) as building blocks, the DBE's Revised National Curriculum Statement (DBE 2004) aimed at building a school curriculum on the principles and practices of social justice, respect for healthy environments, human rights and inclusivity. The statement (DoE 2004) explained the concept of social justice as empowering learners who were previously excluded from education and, subsequently, disempowered by a lack of knowledge and skills. In a

nutshell, social justice entails equality of opportunities. Societies in which social justice is prevalent portray individual well-being, the satisfaction of basic human needs, dignified and free human beings able to shape their own lives and the availability of sufficient policies and proposals to bring about social change (Bhatti et al. 2007).

To attain social justice in schools, a comprehensive approach towards recognising and accommodating diversity among education role players is essential. Schools need to reflect the diverse perspectives and narratives of the community they serve as ordered by the CC in the matter of Hoërskool Ermelo, to satisfy the needs of society. Schools, as extensions of the diverse South African society, must start to fulfil their legal mandate to educate, to develop human (UDHR 1948; UN 1989, art. 29):

[P]ersonality, talents, and abilities to the fullest potential, to strengthen respect for human rights and freedoms and to instil respect and tolerance for diversity to permit humans to live a responsible live in a free and just society. (art. 26)

It is time for schools to stop paying lip service to the stipulations requiring the involvement of all role players in consultation when compiling codes of conduct (DoE 1998, r. 1.5; Republic of South Africa 1996c, s.8 ss1). These codes of conduct cannot be neutral documents attempting to make all learners conform to one uniform norm, and they should be living documents uniting schools in their diversity and celebrating otherness. Codes of conduct are essential in creating a culture of mutual respect, tolerance and peace (DoE 1998, r.2.3), while providing guidelines in terms of principles, values and responsibilities to all education role players. Although we do not doubt that the road to renewal will be difficult and that it may not easily be trusted by those ignored in the past, we nevertheless believe that the result of teachers, parents and learners realising that they are valued and that their voices are heard may be priceless.

To fulfil their legal mandate, as explained previously, and to create sound relationships between teachers and learners on the one side and between education role players and society on the other hand, it is recommended that schools pay due regard to service-learning and human rights education. Human rights education is recognised by the UN as an important instrument to restrict the violation of human rights by empowering individuals to recognise human rights violations and to commit themselves to the protection of these rights by promoting and achieving stable harmonious relations (Gerber 2013).

We also recognise that teachers should acknowledge how human rights education in formal and informal contexts could be a factor in teaching-learning of the law and human rights. Asmal and James (2002) and later Du Preez, Simmonds and Roux (2012) considered human rights education as an ideal vehicle to address human rights violations as well as embrace the aims of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*.

All components of human rights education (knowledge of human rights, knowledge and skills, ethics, attitudes and behaviour, the capacity for action reasoning and social awareness) (Eloff 2019; UN 2006) should be involved in teaching and learning human rights in schools. We implore teachers to actively engage with their learners regarding their lives and their perspectives on diversity. However, from the preceding discussion, it has become clear that it may be necessary to take a step back and first encourage teachers and school management to partake in human rights education opportunities, perhaps as part of the continuous professional development programme of the Council. At the same time, schools are ideally situated to expand human rights education beyond the curriculum by inviting parents and community members to workshops and courses aimed at human rights education.

Service-learning, an experiential pedagogy placing emphasis on learning while much-needed services are rendered (Petersen et al. 2020), could be especially valuable in South Africa, a country where human inequalities remain to exist. As a tool to connect schools with the communities they need to serve, service-learning also assists schools in preparing learners for future responsible citizenship and in developing social justice and care. The aim of service-learning is to, through connected learning (Barton 2019), empower learners to build relationships with the communities they live in; to teach learners how to care for and serve others and, concomitantly, to respect the rights belonging to others; to refine their decision-making abilities – learners learn ‘about the world by being in the world and reflecting on it’ (Petersen & Petker 2017); to make learners aware of cultural differences; and to attain social justice for all (Petersen et al. 2020). As such, service-learning entails much more than community engagement activities based on volunteerism and altruism, being short-lived and only having benefits to the recipients of the services rendered (Furco 1996; Petersen & Henning 2018). Within the education context, service-learning adds specific value pertaining to enhance learners’ critical thinking skills as it requires of them to question their own assumptions, critically examine and reflect on their own experiences and to identify problems as they arise, thus linking academic content with real-life experiences (Petersen et al. 2020). Another advantage of service-learning is that it requires the identification of specific community needs in consultation, thus encouraging relationship building and respect for different opinions and otherness (Cloete & Erasmus 2012).

## ■ Conclusion

In following an intersectional research design, we emphasised the role of education to develop human identities and broader social life while acknowledging the complex ways that diversity shapes such identities and life. It became evident that to develop such identities to their fullest

potential requires education to instil teachers and learners alike with respect for human rights and independence and, specifically, to respect one another's right to be different. We propose that education, in this regard, entails *educere*, the teaching of thinking, questioning, and creative skills and abilities that enable humans to understand and tolerate differences and, concomitantly, to cooperatively and with mutual trust find solutions to ensure harmonious co-existence in recognising that the unity of humankind irrespective of differences guarantees peace and security. In this regard, the value of service-learning, being practical, authentic and experiential, aimed at equipping teachers and learners to address societal issues while fostering social justice, safety and security, as well as a culture of care and mutual respect, was highlighted.

The intersectional research design followed allowed us to notice the complex conditions that exist in schools and how the unique characteristics of teachers and learners impact how they teach and learn. It was found that the higher the numbers of ethnic and cultural diversity among the school population, the higher the chances of inequality, tension and conflict become. In indicating the negative effects of aggressive behaviour and unsafe learning environments on teaching and learning, we highlighted the need for schools to, especially when compiling school policies and codes of conduct in proper consultation with the broader community, consider the manifold of factors that may influence teachers' and learners' behaviours. The fact that schools should accommodate and celebrate diversity among education role players in such policies and codes and thus not to conform learners to one uniformed norm was alongside accentuated grounded on individual human rights being legally recognised as worthy of protection.

By exploring the intersection between education, human rights and diversity, we soon became aware of how human diversity influences teaching and learning processes and experiences. We identified the negative feelings arising when one's human rights, especially the right to equality, are not acknowledged and when one's unique needs are not met. In this regard, specific emphasis was placed on the need of humans to safe and secure settings in which they can merely be themselves and freely explore, learn and socialise. The paramountcy of schools accommodating the diverse needs of learners and the broader community through school policies being sensitive to diversity, and to constantly act in the best interests of the child, was in this regard emphasised.

It has all along become clear during our discussion that education is the doorway to a society in which human rights are respected and diversity is accepted as a norm – a society in respect of humanness. Unfortunately, it also has become clear that South African society and thus South African schools are far from reaching a holistic respect for humanness. Schools, sidelining and

isolating learners because of their differences, are not only infringing on the human rights of such learners, not fulfilling their obligation to create safe and secure school environments, but also not providing the education envisaged by law by negating such learners to mature to their complete potential and, eventually, to make valuable contributions to society.

We conclude that celebrating diversity in education does not require teachers and learners to set aside their own diverse backgrounds, religious beliefs and cultural traditions, and language heritage, but rather to acknowledge and respect the same diverse characteristics in others while respecting the human rights and the human dignity of others. The hope for South Africa to become a unified country lies in the youth accepting that we are all South Africans despite our differences, while honouring and celebrating those differences. For the youth to come to such an understanding, teachers must open their young eyes to the wonderful opportunities that diversity brings.

# The imperative and value of imbuing scholarship on education and human rights in diversity with a Southern dimension

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## ■ Abstract

In the past three decades, a voluminous corpus of scholarly literature on education and human rights has been amassing. This literature is largely located in the Global North, regarding the provenance of authorship, drawing on contexts, and employment of theories, paradigms and epistemologies. This lopsidedness reflects the hegemony of the Global North. At the same time, the Global South, or at least some parts of the Global South, are rising to become a force on the global scene. This rising force refers to the demographic weight and economic strength, and even political clout, as well as to education development.

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At the same time, the particular contextual dynamics in the Global South invite the inclusion of this part of the world in the corpus of scholarly knowledge, more so in the view that the Global South today presents the vanguard of a number of societal trends in the world. In the field of education, too, the Global South represents a rising factor in the global education expansion project and is facing serious challenges in all three dimensions, namely, quantity, quality and equality, in education. This chapter argues for imbuing scholarship on education and human rights in diversity with a Southern dimension and points out beacons for the construction of such a dimension. With the theme of the volume, the infusion of the scholarly discourse on human rights education in a world of diverse societies with Southern perspectives, this chapter focuses on the significance of that Global South in the world of the current era.

## ■ Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was explained that, despite its claims towards universality, the *Creed of Human Rights* was conceived and constructed by far mainly in the Global North. Given that societal contextual forces shape any human construct, care should be taken that the *Creed of Human Rights* does not fall victim to Northern bias. In a globalised world, social justice dictates that the global moral compass, a status the *Creed of Human Rights* is rapidly assuming, should serve all sections of humanity equally. In view of the (demographic, technological, military, economic and political) rise of the Global South, the aim of this chapter is to investigate the imperative of imbuing the *Creed of Human Rights* with perspectives from the Global South. With the theme of the volume, the infusion of the scholarly discourse on human rights education in a world of diverse societies with Southern perspectives, this chapter focuses on the significance of that Global South in the world of the current era.

The chapter commences with a survey of the evolution of the *Creed of Human Rights* in its present form, which reveals its Northern bias. Against this Northern bias, the next section plots the rise of the Global South and assesses the contribution the experience of the Global South can make towards the development of a more inclusive, balanced, complete *Creed of Human Rights*. Finally, guidelines or beacons for scholars towards imbuing the scholarly and public discourse on human rights with perspectives from the Global South, thus contributing to the development of a more satisfactory *Creed of Human Rights*, are made.

## ■ The development of the *Creed of Human Rights* as part of the rise of the Global North to hegemony

As was explained in the previous chapter, it is sometimes claimed that the Persian ruler Cyrus' Cylinder, dating from c. 539 BC, is the first Bill of Human

Rights in history. Historian Tom Holland (2019) traced the modern *Creed of Human Rights* back to the Christian religion as the fountain spring of the Western mind. The term human rights (Latin: 'derechos humanos') was for the first time in history used by a Spanish priest and Dominican Friar Batholomé de las Casas in 1550 in the Spanish city of Valladolid, in settling the controversy as to the status and rights of the Amerindians in the Spanish colonies (Holland 2019, p. 331). De las Casas made the point that all people, Christian or not, were entitled to a set of basic human rights upon the virtue of being human beings. Holland argued that the historical roots of the modern-day *Creed of Human Rights* lie with the Christian religion. However, the first explicit engagement with this doctrine is with 18th-century political philosophers such as John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It became part of constitutions and legislation with the French and American revolutions during the second half of the 18th century. The subsequent history of the French Revolution, as the Spanish colonisation of Latin America, sadly, is no fine testimony or example of a society that upholds human rights. Even in the case of America, slavery was tolerated for almost a century, and it took a civil war to ban it off American soil (and for a century, more segregation with the Jim Crow Laws lingered on, especially in the Southern States).

The atrocities in the run-up to and during the Second World War internationalised the issue of human rights, and International Jurists joined the discourse. The *Creed of Human Rights* gained a strong foothold in international politics when the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) accepted its Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948 (UN [1949] 2015). This document became the prototype for subsequent manifestos of human rights adopted by governments (either by means of acts or as part of constitutions) and by supranational groupings such as the European Union. The second reason why this is a significant document is that for the first time, education was mentioned as a human right - hitherto, education did not figure in the human rights discourse. Article 26 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states (UN [1949] 2015):

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the UN for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. (n.p.)

While it is undeniable that the *Creed of Human Rights* has become internationalised in the time since the conclusion of the Second World War. It has become the moral code for a globalised world. At the same time, it is clear



that the warp and woof of the *Creed of Human Rights*, at least in its present form, carries the imprint of the Global North and, by implication, also the hegemony of the Global North. This can be attributed to historical (the genesis and first stage in the development of the *Creed of Human Rights*) factors as well as to the asymmetry in political, military and economic power relations in the world at present. With respect to human rights education, this has recently been pointed out by Foley (2021) and by South African scholar André Keet (2014, 2015).

Tibbitts (2017) distinguished between three models of human rights education. Firstly, there is the awareness model, meaning making students acquainted with the *Creed of Human Rights* as it appears in the human rights manifestos in the world, of which the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the prototype of the base document. Secondly, there is the accountability model, educating students to be, in their actions or lives, accountable to the *Creed of Human Rights*, once again, as it appears in the ruling documents of the day. Thirdly, there is the transformation model of human rights education, aiming at, in the Freirean mold, to get students to critically interrogate the *Creed of Human Rights* (as it holds sway in the world) with the eventual objective to empower themselves (students) and to change society.

## ■ Human rights and education: Human rights intersection being shaped by contextual contours

As was explained in the first chapter of this volume, education systems, of which *national* education systems are still the most marked on the world scene, are shaped by the contours of the societal contexts in which they find themselves. These societal contexts include geographical, demographical, social, technological, economic, political, religious and life and world philosophical contexts. Despite universal features of education systems and despite global forces exerting an impact on education systems, the German education system, for example, is co-shaped by the geographical, demographical, social, technological, economic, political, religious and life and world philosophical context of Germany.

The conceptualisation, lived experience and realisation of human rights in various parts of the world, as with any cultural construct, also get co-shaped by contextual forces. As was explained earlier, the *Creed of Human Rights* was largely crafted in the Global North, and it is not surprising that progressive scholars have detected a misfit between the *Creed of Human Rights* in its current form and the contextual realities and exigencies of the – on the world scene currently rising – Global South. Lai (2021) published a case study of an incident at the University of Hong Kong when a local faculty member found it

difficult to be allowed to use a local language (a fundamental human right to use a language of choice or mother tongue) when meeting objections against those who claimed they could not understand the language, and insisted – in a context which Lai (2021) regarded as linguistic imperialism or neo-colonialism – on English being used. Nygren et al. (2020) reported a study on students' views on human rights in England, India, South Africa, Sweden and New Zealand and found that the views of students differ widely from one national context to the other. Alnufaishan and Alanezi (2021) carried out research on students in Kuwait's views on female rights. They concluded that while these students are not against female rights, their conceptualisation of female rights, in the framework of the Islam religion to which these students subscribe, differs from the dominant conceptualisation of female rights extant in the world. Alnufaishan and Alanezi presented their argument that human rights should not be seen as a finished product beyond critique but should be aligned with local context and personal realities, a process called 'decoupling', and which they connect to a call to decolonise human rights education (the issue of decolonisation of education and human rights education is furthered belaboured upon in two subsequent chapters in this volume, ch. 5 and ch. 6).

From what has been stated earlier in this chapter and also what has been explained in the previous chapter of this book, as an antipode to the Global North and its hegemony, stand the Global South as a collective. The next section will link to the previous chapter in unpacking in more detail the contextual dynamics in the rising Global South in order to, in the ensuing section, show the significance of the Global South (significance not only for the Global South but also for the Global North) in mapping, interrogating and reflecting about the intersection between education, human rights and diversity in society.

## ■ The rising Global South and its significance on the global landscape

In Chapter 2, it was stated that for the purposes of this book, the Global South would be demarcated as broadly Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the (what was long termed) developing countries of Asia, including the People's Republic of China. Turkey can also be included in the category of countries of the Global South.

Geographically, the Global South as a collective covers a large tract of land, a significant part of the total global land mass. Asia is the largest continent on earth, covering 44.5 million square kilometres of the total land surface area of 148.9 million square kilometres on earth. Africa is the second largest continent, covering 30.4 million square kilometres. Further to that, Latin America covers 19.2 million square kilometres. The ecological situation of the Global South,

within the global framework, is complex but significant. The major part of the earth's mineral resources, biodiversity and freshwater resources are located in the Global South. The Earth Overshoot Day (i.e. the day in the year when the extraction and use of natural resources begin to exceed the capacity of the earth to replenish these resources by means of natural processes) for the countries in the Global South is significant. Indeed, air pollution in China and the deforestation and fires used for deforestation in Brazil are alarming. Soil depletion is also most serious on the three continents of the Global South. The annual loss of soil (soil erosion) stands as 353 megahectares in Latin America, 3.51 megahectares in Africa and 3.47 megahectares in Asia, compared to 2.32 megahectares in North America, 0.92 megahectares in Europe and 0.91 megahectares in Oceania (European Soil Data Centre 2021). On the contrary, while Africa emits just about 5% of the total global emission of greenhouse gasses (because it has not industrialised to the extent that the countries in the Global North typically already have), yet, in terms of the global regimes (the 2015 Paris Climate Accord in particular), it is subjected to the same (economically stifling) dose of medicine that the Global North is subjected to (see Ongoma & Williams 2021).

Demographically, the Global South is also a significant part of the world and is of growing significance. Since about halfway through the 20th century, a global population explosion commenced, although it has by now been losing momentum. The global population now (October 2021) stands at 7.9 billion and is projected to reach 8 billion in 2023, 9 billion by 2037 and 10 billion by 2056 (Chamie 2020). The annual population growth rate reached a maximum of 2.1% per year in 1968, and at present, it stands at 1.0% per year. Each year 81 million people are added to the global population, dropping from the 93 million peak reached in 1988. According to the projections of the UN Population Division (2020), the global population will stabilise at 11 billion by the year 2100.

The epicentre of the global population growth is in the countries of the Global South. The current annual population growth rates for the various parts of the world are as follows: Africa: 2.49% (sub-Saharan Africa: 2.63%), Oceania: 1.31%, Asia: 0.86%, South America: 0.83%, North America: 0.62% and Europe: 0.06% (World Population Review 2020). In 2006, the number of births in various continents was as follows: Asia: 76 million, Africa: 44 million, North America: 8.5 million, South America: 7.6 million, Europe: 7.2 million, Oceania: 628 thousand (Reddit 2020). Two-thirds of the 22 billion people to be added to the global population over the next three decades will be in Africa (De Villiers 2020). The mentioned statistics make for a youthful population in the Global South and direct a strong imperative for the expansion of education in this part of the world. The median ages of the populations of the various continents are as follows: Europe: 42 years, North America: 35 years, Oceania: 33 years, Asia: 31 years, Latin America: 31 years and Africa: 18 years (Desjardins 2019).

In terms of gross economic output, the Global South is trailing the Global North by a considerable margin. According to the latest available figures, that is, for the year 2020, the annual global economic output is US\$84.7tn. Of this, the following comes from the Global North: North America: US\$22.6tn and the European Union: US\$15.1tn (World Bank 2021). By contrast, the economic output of various parts of the Global South was as follows: East Asia excluding high-income countries: US\$17.5tn, Latin America: US\$4.8tn, Middle East-North Africa: US\$3.1tn and sub-Saharan Africa: US\$1.7tn (World Bank 2021). However, differential growth rates in various parts of the world indicate a narrowing of the gap between Global North and Global South, at least as measured by aggregate economic output. In 2020, the growth rates of Gross Economic Product in various parts of the year were as follows (the coronavirus disease 2019 [COVID-19] pandemic had an adverse effect on growth rates worldwide, but the differential patterns for the year nonetheless show the narrowing): World aggregate: -3.6%, European Union: -6.2%, North America: -3.7%, East Asia excluding high-income countries: +1.0%, Latin America: -6.3%, Middle East-North Africa: -3.7% and sub-Saharan Africa: -2.4% (World Bank 2021). Looking at the country per capita income groups (bearing in mind that the nations' Global South countries have a lower per capita income than the countries of the Global North), the picture becomes clearer. In 2020, the aggregate economic growth of the high-income countries was -4.7%, of the middle-income countries was -1.9% and of the low-income countries was +0.9% (World Bank 2021). In Chapter 2, the vanguard position of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) in the Global South constellation in the world was explained. The Gross Domestic Product of China in 2020 was US\$14.7tn and that of the United States of America was US\$20.1tn. However, the economic growth rates of China over the past 40 years have consistently been impressive. For many years, it has registered double-digit growth rates. Authoritative projections predict that China will overtake the United States of America as the largest national economy in the world by 2028, while by 2030 India will be the third largest economy in the world (BBC 2020).

The socio-cultural situation in the countries of the Global South offers an instructive, enriched context complementing the socio-cultural situation of the countries of the Global North. It should be borne in mind that the countries of the Global South are typically jurisdictions rather recently formed, with borders having been arbitrarily drawn (by colonial powers), resulting in ultra-diversity. At a time when the formation of multicultural, diverse societies is recognised as a global trend, highly diverse societies already exist in the Global South. Having to deal with the challenge of building coherence, equalising highly unequal societies and crafting a democratic political culture in a diverse society, which the countries of the Global North are now beginning to experience as a result of global demographic mobility, is a road the Global South has already had some experience of walking. This argument has been explained by J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff in their book *Theory from the South:*

*How Euro-America Is Evolving Toward Africa* (2012). Even just after the middle of the 20th century, the renowned British historian Arnold Toynbee (known for his magistral publication on the rise and fall of civilisations through history) wrote the following to a South African scholar (cited in Sparks 2016):

My personal feeling [...] is that [*South Africa*] is confronted with the most difficult and at the same time most important spiritual task, which it is bound to undertake, without having any chance of refusing. It seems to me that in South Africa, you are faced already with a situation that is going very soon to be the common situation of the whole world [...]. (pp. 586–587)

Martha Montero-Sieburth (2020) argued that if nations from the Global North were to look to the Global South, much could be learned about the nuanced interpretations of intercultural education. This is because a gradient interpretation of interculturalism has led to innovative practices that have the potential to break down dichotomous and bifurcated perspectives too often present in discourses of intercultural education and interculturalism in the Global North.

It is apt to add that in the current globalised world, it is not only the national jurisdictions in the Global North that are destined to walk a path in which the countries of the Global South had been trailblazers but also the world as a whole, as it will increasingly be challenged to handle issues such as unacceptable inequality (not only unacceptable from the point of view of social justice but also dangerous from the point of view of the potential for socio-political turmoil of such a state of affairs) and identity formation and the lure of populism, global citizenship education (GCED) and others.

## ■ The rising profile of the Global South in the global education expansion project

It is not only with respect to the entire gamut of societal contextual forces shaping education (and impacting the conceptualisation and realisation of human rights) that the Global South assumes a growing presence in the world. The same applies to education.

Table 4.1, Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 present the changing patterns in enrolments in the Global South compared to the Global North at the levels of primary, secondary and higher education, respectively.

At the primary school level, the centre of gravity regarding enrolments, even in 2000, was clearly in the Global South. This was even more so by 2020, with notably the more than double increase in enrolments in sub-Saharan Africa during this period.

At the secondary school level, the Global South parts of the world dominated enrolments, even in 2000 too. This dominance became stronger by 2020, and the growth was most pronounced in sub-Saharan Africa, where an almost threefold increase in secondary school enrolments between 2000 and 2020

**TABLE 4.1:** Primary school enrolments in various world regions, 2000 and 2020.

Region	2000	2020
North America and Western Europe	52,685,371	53,441,648
South and Western Asia	157,676,093	184,629,605
Sub-Saharan Africa	87,752,607	178,968,386
Eastern Asia-Pacific	2,221,906,444	190,196,444
Middle East- North Africa	35,756,207	50,761,833
Central Asia	6,820,420	7,539,068
Latin America	70,193,050	63,632,351

Source: UNESCO (2021, 2022).

**TABLE 4.2:** Secondary school enrolments in various world regions, 2000 and 2020.

Region	2000	2020
North America and Western Europe	61,007,127	64,971,380
South and Western Asia	101,252,411	179,943,097
Sub-Saharan Africa	22,779,831	65,082,058
Eastern Asia-Pacific	136,583,832	160,587,110
Middle East-North Africa	23,275,326	34,656,933
Central Asia	9,736,254	10,529,016
Latin America	56,732,485	63,458,627

Source: UNESCO (2021, 2022).

**TABLE 4.3:** Tertiary education enrolments in various world regions, 2000 and 2020.

Region	2000	2020
North America and Western Europe	27,774,490	38,500,155
South and Western Asia	12,163,928	46,919,719
Sub-Saharan Africa	2,619,041	8,627,091
Eastern Asia-Pacific	25,588,062	78,676,322
Middle East- North Africa	50,721,072	119,152,155
Central Asia	1,501,374	2,386,931
Latin America	11,469,093	28,875,949

Source: UNESCO (2021, 2022).

was recorded. In South and Western Asia, approximately 50% growth took place, while noteworthy growth took place in the Asia-Pacific and Middle-East-North Africa regions.

An impressive expansion of higher education took place between 2000 and 2020 in all parts of the world – indeed, one of the signature features of the world since 1990 has been the global higher education revolution. However, even in 2000, the centre of gravity of global higher education enrolments was in the Global South. Since then, as is the case with primary and secondary school enrolments, the most forceful expansion drive was in the Global South. In South and Western Asia, higher education enrolments have increased almost fourfold, in sub-Saharan Africa more than threefold, as was the case in Eastern Asia-Pacific, while in Middle East-North Africa and in Latin America, higher education enrolments have more than doubled.

When assessing an education expansion or supply project, three dimensions should be taken into account, namely, the quantitative, the qualitative and the equality dimensions (see Wolhuter2014). In all three, these grave challenges face the Global South.

Regarding the quantitative, as impressive as the enrolments presented in Table 4.1, Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 are, enrolment ratios in the Global South trail those of the Global North, while on quality and equality, the Global South not only compares poorly with the Global North but also presents immense challenges (see Wolhuter 2022). On the quantitative and enrolment discrepancy, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of education exclusion in the world (UNESCO 2021-1). Over one-fifth of children between six- and eleven-years-old are not in school, followed by one-third of children between the ages of about twelve- and fourteen-years-old, while almost 60% of youth between the ages of about 15 and 17 years are not in school (UNESCO 2021-1). The problem of adult illiteracy in the world is much concentrated in the Global South (see Wolhuter & Barbieri 2017).

One indicator of education quality is the pupils-per-teacher ratio. The position of the Global South versus the Global North can be gleaned from the following figures regarding the number of pupils per teacher at the primary school level in various world regions (Data from World Bank 2021):

- World Aggregate: 23
- European Union: 13
- North America: 14
- East-Asia-Pacific: 18
- Middle East-North Africa: 21
- Latin America: 21
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 37

Extensive, comparable data on inequalities in education within countries are even more difficult to obtain than such data on education quality. However, the data that do exist indicate that inequalities in education within the nations of the Global South are much starker than inequalities within nations of the Global North. This can be illustrated with data extracted from the latest (2019) round of the International Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), as presented in Table 4.4.

**TABLE 4.4:** Scores in the 2019 international trends in Mathematics and Science studies.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Average score of learners from household well resources with resources to support learning</b>	<b>Average score of learners from a household with some resources to support learning</b>	<b>Average score of learners from a household with few resources to support learning</b>
Canada	546	511	-
Germany	572	521	-
Spain	547	500	447
Turkey	625	543	450
Saudi Arabia	466	403	383

Source: Mullis et al. (2019, p. 284).

## ■ Conclusion

The *Creed of Human Rights* was crafted mainly in the context of the Global North. Yet, the *Creed of Human Rights*, like any societal construction, is context-sensitive. Furthermore, the realisation of this creed is affected by societal contextual factors or forces. The Global South is currently rising to become a force on the global scene. This rising force refers to the demographic weight and economic strength, and even political clout, as well as to education development. At the same time, the particular contextual dynamics in the Global South invite the inclusion of this part of the world in the corpus of scholarly knowledge, more so in view of how the Global South today presents the vanguard of a number of societal trends in the world. This chapter argues for imbuing scholarship on education and human rights in diversity with a Southern dimension and points out beacons for the construction of such a dimension. In the field of education, too, the Global South represents a rising factor in the global education expansion project and is facing serious challenges in all three dimensions, namely, quantity, quality and equality, in education. All these make a compelling case for attending to the due incorporation of the Global South in the discourse on the intersection between education and human rights.





# Paradigmatic positioning of citizenship education as a possible school subject in South Africa

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## ■ Abstract

The core theoretical argument of this chapter is that South Africa as a country, education in general and citizenship education (CE) in particular will not be able to make significant contributions towards a more stable modern society unless education policymakers and citizenship educators first of all consciously and deliberately dealt with and assisted the upcoming generations – through CE as a school subject – to come to terms with the country’s colonial and apartheid past, and with their own, personal coloniality. The argument is based on the semantic difference between the terms *colonialism/colonisation* and *coloniality*. The former pair refers to the occupation of a territory by another, stronger power, and the latter refers to the residual mental state of previously

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colonised individuals and communities after colonisation (and apartheid, in the case of South Africa) has come to an end. The threat of neoliberalism experienced by formerly colonised peoples has made the situation much more complex to such an extent that some of the previously colonised individuals and communities have found it necessary to engage in a 'paradigm war' with neoliberalism and its ramifications. It is suggested that CE be instituted as a full-fledged examinable subject in the Senior Phase of schooling as part of a strategy to circumvent the need to engage in such a 'war'. The subject will arguably assist learners to proceed from a phase of developing pride in their indigenous heritage through engagement with the heritages of other individuals and communities in their personal surroundings and in their country to responsible engagement with the inescapable demands of globalisation.

## ■ Introduction

In the Foreword to the South African Department of Basic Education's (DBE's) *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)* (2011) by the South African Minister of the DBE, she states, among others:

Our national curriculum is the culmination of our efforts over a period of 17 years to transform the curriculum bequeathed to us by apartheid. From the start of democracy, we have built our curriculum on the values that inspired our Constitution. (n.p.)

Analysis of both her Foreword and the 'General aims of the South African Curriculum', as stated in the CAPS, shows that the CAPS is essentially forward-looking, and supposedly deliberately not backwards-looking, towards South Africa's colonial and apartheid past. According to its Aims Statement, the CAPS is aimed at 'establishing a society based on democratic values'; improving 'the quality of life of all citizens'; building 'a united and democratic South Africa'; giving 'expression to the knowledge, skills and values worth learning in South African schools'; 'equipping learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country'; and attending to social justice issues. It is also based on the idea that 'inclusivity should become a central part of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school'.

All of these statements seem to be forward-looking to the future, as one indeed would expect from any modern state in a 21st-century context. In her Foreword to the CAPS, the Minister only briefly mentioned the need to 'heal the divisions of the past', to contribute to building 'a united and democratic South Africa', to 'guide learners towards self-fulfilment, meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country' and to redress

‘the imbalances of the past’. A glance through the curricula for life skills and Life Orientation confirms the impression that the CAPS is intended to guide South African teachers and learners towards a future as modern-day citizens, which in itself is necessary but not sufficient preparation for their future lives, as contended.

The absence of a pertinent rearward perspective on South Africa’s colonial and apartheid past is also observable in the book on Life Orientation, written as a guide for South African teachers, edited by Nel (2019). The Foreword to the book could just as well have appeared in a book on Life Orientation produced for teachers in one of the developed countries in the Global North. The Foreword draws attention to global phenomena such as ‘migrant and diasporic migrations’ as ‘the new normal’, cosmopolitan lifestyles, absent parents, the accessibility of media, knowledge and personal electronic devices, the need for teachers to mediate social problems through information and communication technologies and the need to master particular life skills for the purpose of positive living (Balfour 2019, p. v). The Foreword then states that even learners in a post-colonised world have to be ‘prepared for participation in the modern (knowledge) economy, a context where competition for resources and survival is a critical fact of life’. Diversity can be ‘a source of immense learning and a contribution to the wealth and welfare of the state’, according to Balfour (2019, p. v). ‘(Education) bears the burden of enabling a modern democracy,’ he concludes (Balfour 2019).

Balfour (2019, p. vi) accounted as follows for not looking back to the colonial and apartheid past of the country: although children should be enabled ‘to grasp valuable insights, which can act both as guardians against the injustices of the past and as illumination along the path of learning’, they, as modern-day people, live ‘in an age in which the certainties of previous generations seem to cut loose from those assumptions and values which appeared as though immutable’. Attention in this book, therefore, is focused on the post-colonialist and post-apartheid present and on (the attainment) of a modern future, having to deal with all kinds of diversities, all the problems that schools in South Africa currently have to contend with, the need to develop talent towards social identity, the needs of ‘a modern citizenry’, the development of the ‘modern citizen’ and the development of human capacities ‘to the full’. Life Orientation as a subject bears the burden of enabling a ‘modern democracy’ (Balfour 2019, p. vi). Interestingly, the words ‘colonialism’ and ‘decolonisation’ do not appear in the index of this book, neither do they appear in the indices of Ebersöhn and Eloff (2008), Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2015), Van Eeden and Warnich (2018) and Jordaan and Naude (2021). All these authors and editors seem to be future-oriented in their approaches towards the facilitation and attainment of a modern, knowledge-driven democracy.

Statements such as that novice citizens have to be prepared to become the modern citizens of the future, as people able and competent to participate in

the modern (knowledge) economy, can arguably be seen as references to what Hershey (2019) identified as the one side of a 'paradigm war': the struggle of previously colonised people and communities against what they perceive to be the dangers and the ravages of modernisation and globalisation. As explained in the next section, previously colonised communities might be inclined to engage in this 'war' because, despite colonialism by European powers having come to an end during the 1960s, such communities tend to still be caught up in the mental state of 'coloniality', the 'persistence of certain "sedimented" colonial ways of knowing and being' (Ali 2016, p. 17). In addition, as explained in more detail in the following, they are now facing a new form of colonialism: economic globalisation.

While all the mentioned forward-looking visions and perspectives can be lauded, one would have expected, in view of the massive educational, social, economic and other backlogs prevalent in South Africa in 2011 and still now, eleven years later (2022), that the Minister, the CAPS and other documents concerned with CE would also have embraced a more pertinent backward look, a look back in time to South Africa's colonial and apartheid past, and outlined from that perspective the task of education in general and CE in particular into the future. The core theoretical proposition of this chapter is that South Africa as a country, education in general and CE in particular will not be able to make significant contributions towards a more stable modern society unless education policymakers and educators first of all consciously and deliberately dealt with, and helped the upcoming generations – through CE<sup>3</sup> in schools – to come to terms with their country's colonial and apartheid past, and with their own, personal coloniality.

This proposition ties in with the overall premise of this book that the three defining features of the world of the early 20th century – the *Creed of Human Rights*, the belief in the power of education to change society for the better, and the recognition of diversity – have been shaped in Global North contexts, and now, it needs rebalancing by also considering the perspectives and the interests of the Global South.

## ■ Many formerly colonised people still in the enduring mental state of coloniality

The thesis proffered, namely that education in general and CE in particular in South Africa and in other previously colonised countries struggling with similar socio-politico-economic conditions will not be able to make significant contributions towards a more stable modern society unless education policymakers and educators consciously and deliberately dealt with, and

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3. When written with capital letters, CE refers to a (possible, envisaged) school subject. When written in lower case, CE refers to the broad field of study, for instance at a university.

helped the upcoming generations to come to terms with their country's colonial and apartheid past, is rooted in the semantic difference between the terms 'colonisation' or 'colonialism', and 'coloniality', as distinguished by Ali (2016). Put differently, the past has to be explicated in such a way that its future relevance, for the present, can be seen (Schnelle 2020, p. 25).

Ali (2016, p. 17) explains the difference between colonisation/colonialism, and coloniality as follows. The former refers to the establishment, exploitation, maintenance, acquisition and expansion of a colony in a territory by a political power from another territory. In his opinion, since the 1500s, European colonialism brought forth a world system constituted by a European 'core' and a non-European 'periphery': the 'modern world' of global capitalism is 'marked by an ensemble of socio-cultural norms, attitudes and practices that can be traced to Renaissance and Enlightenment developments in Europe' and is culminated in a commitment to liberalism as the legitimising philosophy of dominant states within an emergent inter-state system. Terreblanche (2014) explained the process of colonialism as follows:

[7]he maritime empire-building enterprises of several Western European countries and their Western offshoots [*such as the United States of America*] entrenched, exacerbated and globalised systemic social and economic inequality after 1500. (p. 3)

Colonisation/colonialism as a project of European domination formally came to an end with the national liberation and independence movements in Africa and elsewhere in the 1960s. Yet, a mentality of 'coloniality' is still living on in the minds and hearts ('in the blood') of the formerly colonised peoples. It has not yet been overcome by these communities (Majumder 2021). According to Ali (2016, p. 17), 'the modernity that colonisation engendered persists, albeit transformed under the condition of post-modernity, which has meant the persistence of certain "sedimented" colonial ways of knowing and being'.

Traces of this mentality can be detected, for instance, in a recent address by the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters political party in South Africa, Julius Malema. He stated that he was not encouraging voters to support his party in the municipal elections on 01 November 2021 but that he aimed at 'freeing their minds' from the colonial and apartheid past. In his opinion, the colonists had committed genocide in order to gain possession of land and that land should now be returned to the people without any compensation (Du Plessis 2021, p. 2). Malema's position is in line with the view that decolonisation, 'in contrast to the broad umbrella of social justice [...] specifically requires the repatriation of indigenous land and life' (Hawkins 2016, p. 11).

Another recent incident also attests to the persistent presence of the colonial mentality. Member of the Executive Council for Education (Gauteng Province), Panyasa Lesufi, when forced to retract his accusation that he and his family were being persecuted by a non-governmental organisation, stated

that he 'would never apologise to racists' – despite the fact that racism was not an issue in this particular incident (Willemse 2021, p. 4).

Similar examples surfaced in Alarcón-Jiménez's (2016, p. 6) survey. One of the participants in her study suggested that it was necessary to: '[...] *pressupor a desigualdade de condições entre o centro e a periferia académica no mundo, dando voz a epistemologías fora do eixo dominante*' ['to presuppose the inequality of conditions available between the academic centre and the periphery in the world, giving voice to epistemologies that are outside the dominant axis'].

Another student wrote (Willemse 2021):

I know that I have colleagues and fellow students who will not fill out this survey at all because they are so convinced that the field cannot change to accommodate them, their perspective, or their work. I've said my piece but it's the voices that you won't be hearing through this survey that are the most important to hear, the voices of the students we have lost or are losing [...]. (p. 8).

Yet another wrote (Willemse 2021):

If you do decide to work outside of that sphere, make the question of 'who may speak' part of your daily reflection: at the end of every day, ask yourself what you are doing that could be considered an act of colonisation, and whether it's possible to work against that. If it's not, take seriously the question of whether you should be doing that particular project, with that particular community, and make sure that the opinions and decisions of the community itself is part of whatever decision you make. (p. 8).

Another participant complained about the domination of the Global North in academia:

[Y]ou get more 'points' publishing in an English journal [...] for your tenure, and less points publishing in the language in the country where you teach or with a local publisher; meaning that scholars teaching outside of the US and who lack the English language skills and institutional training and network that can allow them to publish on [*sic*] an English (and US based) journal or with an American publisher, suffers disadvantage over those who are native English speaker [*sic*] trained in the US tradition (p. 9).

Coloniality refers to that condition that arises and persists following the formal dismantling of colonial structures. As demonstrated, it refers to 'the persistence of the colonial legacy in various cultural forms, practices, histories and knowledge structures' (Ali 2016, p. 18). Ali (2016) continued: Coloniality is characterised by:

[A]n ongoing legacy (of colonisation/colonialism) in contemporary (formerly colonised communities, peoples, territories) in the form of social discrimination that has outlived formal colonisation and become integrated in succeeding postcolonial social orders. (p. 19)

Go (2013, pp. 208–225) concurred with this in stating that Western imperialism involved relations of power centred around logics of race and

ethnicity that continue to shape current geo-political realities. Jansen (2017, n.p.) defined coloniality in the following stark terms: The concept has been utilised more recently to ‘talk about the things that colonialism left undone – things that stayed behind even though the colonial authority left for Europe’.

Practices and legacies from the colonial past have formed a persistent sediment in the social orders and forms of knowledge of formerly colonised people and communities. Members of such communities still tend to think and behave as if they were in a state of being colonised. This is a condition that they have to overcome and leave behind them with the aid of CE in schools. This task of CE is explicated in more detail in the following section.

## ■ The threat of yet another imperialistic layer on the not yet overcome colonial mental ‘sediment’

As averred, the residual ‘mental sentiment’ of coloniality laid down in the minds and hearts of formerly colonised peoples has as yet not been eradicated. And now, according to Hershey (2019) and Majumder (2021), the situation has been compounded by the threat of neo-colonialism in the form of a geo-economic paradigm. This is in line with Singh’s (2016, p. 19) contention that ‘the future [...] holds the possibility of a creeping colonisation by the market’ (he wrote about the future of academia in formerly colonised countries). This paradigm is in the process of laying yet another imperialistic layer on the not yet overcome coloniality layer in the minds, the spirit and the mentality of formerly colonised peoples. According to Majumder (2021):

(This inspires fear in the indigenous, the marginalised, the formerly colonised) who have endured more than 500 years of colonisation; (they) are currently concerned about the arrival of yet another weapon in the arsenal of colonialism. This time, they fear that the new weapon is to know the “secret of life,” thus striving to control the definition of what it means to be human and their understanding of life itself. (p. 5)

Previously colonised communities fear that neoliberal multicultural education will use multicultural education as ‘a tool to fit marginalised groups into the mainstream agenda’ (Chang, Pak & Sleeter 2018, p. 2). They fear that they will have to adapt (be or become domesticated, socialised, ‘subjectified’ into a particular social or economic order, cf. Biesta’s [2011, pp. 142–143, 151] analysis) to neoliberal tenets of privatisation, high stakes testing and standards-based accountability, as has been the case all over the world, particularly in the Global North. Education in the formerly colonised territories is in danger of ‘being co-opted’ by neoliberalism as a dominant philosophy; of CE and formation being ‘used to support privatisation and success in the global economy under the guise of the strategic cosmopolitan as “the new, superior foot soldier of global capitalism”’ (Myers 2016, p. 3). They fear the ‘predatory



culture', as Peter McLaren (1997, p. 183) referred to neoliberalism and neocapitalism, according to which 'identity is fashioned and mainly (and often violently) around the excesses of marketing and consuming and the natural social relations of post-industrial capitalism'. In a neoliberal context:

[L]ife is lived through speed technology in anticipation of recurring accidents of identity [characterised by] a stark obsession of power fed by the voraciousness of capitalism's global voyage – a culture of universalism compressed into local time. (p. 183)

According to Hershey (2019) and Majumder (2021), many previously colonised peoples (including indigenous communities and communities disadvantaged by colonialism) have engaged in a 'paradigmatic war' with the new globalisation/geo-economic/neoliberal capitalistic paradigm that they find themselves and their (natural) resources being confronted with. Terreblanche (2014) described the dynamics of this 'paradigm war' as follows:

[W]e cannot understand the challenges of our time without understanding the ways in which 500 years of Western empire-building [...] have shaped our world into the deeply unequal and gratuitously unjust place that it is today. Growing income inequality, environmental damage and increasingly higher financial-market risks have significantly impaired our ability to transform technological progress and wealth formation into a long-term sustainable developmental model. We cannot hope to remedy the brokenness of our modern economic system without understanding the economic, social and political drivers that have brought us here, and that continue to dictate the narrative of institutionalised poverty and globalised inequality. (p. 3)

'Globalisation' has become a ubiquitous term in modern life, a term the meaning of which cannot be fixed. As intimated by Terreblanche, it, in essence, refers to social interactions, worldwide homogenisation and integration under the guidance of free (international) trade, the actions and dealings in the international corporate marketplace, and transformations in culture on the basis of Western values. The most obvious form of globalism, according to Petrovic and Kunz (2014, p. xv), is economic globalisation within a neoliberal ethos via multinational corporations that need not respect in any significant way national borders. This tends to bring about changes in ideals about what it means to be a good and productive citizen, and this, in turn, might affect how citizenship is defined and formalised. In neoliberal terms, the 'good' citizen is productive, and productivity means contributing to the local economy and participating in global capitalism (Petrovic & Kunz 2014, pp. 241-242). Economic globalisation is based on the principles of geo-economics and hence tends to promote the removal of national boundaries so that it becomes easier and more affordable to extract human and national resources, thereby contributing to the economic growth of large business corporates (Majumder 2021, p. 1). In short, Stornaiuolo and Nicholls (2019, p. 2) concluded that globalisation has brought about 'an increasingly fractious international landscape', tasking educators with fostering dialogue and understanding across a range of cultural and ideological differences. Many indigenous

communities seem to live in ‘neoliberal globalisation’s “shadow of inevitability”’ (Gaini 2018, p. 6).

In brief, Hershey (2019, p. 45) concluded that economic globalisation has become the embodiment of neo-colonialism and as such has become yet another threat to the values and the very existence of peoples and communities left on the periphery (marginalised and disadvantaged) by the first wave of colonialism. According to Hershey (2019, p. 46), economic globalisation could be seen as yet another form of ‘imperial hegemony by empires with only a change in the name’. Ben-Porath and Smith (2013, p. 4) observed that many scholars of economic and cultural globalisation have expressed their concern about many of the new forms of transnationalism or ‘cosmopolitan’ migration and membership on the grounds that they are ‘anything but democratic and egalitarian’. According to them, this is because transnational memberships are often held by:

[7]those highly placed in multinational corporations that are pursuing their economic interests in many locales, abetted by service industries staffed by cheap migrant or local labor, many forms of modern ‘plural’ and ‘postcolonial’ citizenship are seen as reinforcing patterns of economic inequality and cultural domination. (p. 4)

Economic globalisation tends to impact many aspects of the lives of formerly colonised (peripheral, marginalised, indigenous, previously disadvantaged) peoples, such as their food supply, water, language, education, energy supplies and even genetics (cf. genetic manipulation of plants to improve production). Majumder (2021) concluded:

[G]lobalisation has a specific urgency for tribal/indigenous people of this world, as most indigenous ways of collective economic endeavours do not augur well [*sic*] with the capitalistic notion of individual accumulation, thus leading to the creation of antithetical worldviews [...] opposite understandings of how human beings should live on earth. (pp. 3, 4)

Formerly, colonised and marginalised peoples face numerous challenges and threats associated with globalisation, but – as Hershey (2019, p. 83) has observed – many of these people do not passively accede to domination by market forces (also cf. Povinelli 2013, p. 10). Working from the ‘paradigm of the indigenous way of life’, they engage with the ‘paradigm of economic growth’ (Majumder 2021, p. 1) by resisting, negotiating and consulting with international corporations and economic policymakers. They see economic globalisation as posing a devastating threat to human and other biological life (Majumder 2021, p. 1; also cf. Gaini 2018, pp. 6–7).

## ■ The role of education in overcoming these two waves of coloniality

Educationists, including scholars and curriculum designers, and educators (parents, teachers and other significant persons in the lives of children and

young people) have to be aware of the persistent presence – and lingering impact – of the two waves of colonialism and the resultant mental coloniality outlined, in the lives of previously colonised individuals and communities. They have to be aware of the persistence of certain ‘sedimented’ colonial ways of being and of knowing, as manifested in systems of categorisation, classification and taxonomising in daily practices, artefacts and technologies (Ali 2016, p. 17). They should, for instance, see the current economic arrangements not as something isolated from their own existence but rather as one component of entire cultural understandings and interactions with the world (Hershey 2019, p. 48). Put differently, they should study colonialism and coloniality ‘from below’, that is, from their own perspective as previously colonised people, their own lived histories and everyday realities of negotiating multiple commitments (Stornaiuolo & Nicholls 2019, p. 2). They might, in doing so, discover that many technical-economic (neoliberal) arrangements and their own conceptions of social justice are in conflict (De Cicco 2016, p. 3). They have to account for their own interconnected realities and histories. Educators should take seriously what is happening in young people’s minds (including how they deal with the coloniality mindset) as they come to understand their place in the world and construct meaning for their existence in the world (Myers 2016, p. 17).

It is not possible to supplant the colonial mental residues in formerly colonised individuals and communities before all the inequities of the colonial past have been erased. To facilitate such erasure, young people have to be equipped with a critical orientation so that they are able to engage with their own colonial legacy and to contest the vestiges of colonial domination in their lives and in their minds, their mentality. Postcolonial education, therefore, should concentrate on the effects of culture and power in the young people’s surroundings, among others, the complexities of globalisation. However, the focus of postcolonial education should be not only on individuals and their subjectivities but also on locations and institutions and should concentrate on not minimalising economic concerns. On the contrary, the problem should not be framed primarily or exclusively in terms of economic relations (Ali 2019, p. 18). Educators and learners should, nevertheless, understand that and how economic globalisation is impacting on their (traditional) way of life (Hershey 2019, p. 49).

According to Ali (2019, p. 19), postcolonial or decolonial education involves a consideration of the body politics and geopolitics of knowledge: *who* is thinking, and *from where*, thereby engaging with the material dimensions of epistemology, by thinking from the margins, the periphery. Such thinking relates to the corporeal experience of those who have been excluded from the production of knowledge by colonial materiality. Postcolonial or decolonial education is about *who* is doing *what*, *where* they are doing it, what they are

doing *means* (epistemologically) and in relation to their *being* (ontologically). This is, Ali (2019, p. 19) narrated, the embodied turn in postcolonial or decolonial education. He continued (Ali 2019):

[7]he particularity (and) specificity of the body of the *who* should be recognised [...] also their horizontal (social) or flat relationships and their vertical (religious) relationships, and “sub-persons” should be recognised and acknowledged. (p. 20)

Hershey (2019, p. 78) agreed with this view in saying that the previously colonised and marginalised should do their utmost to sustain their self-identification in terms of both their historic and contemporary cultures.

The mentioned theoretical perspective on postcolonial or decolonial education should find practical application in teaching-learning situations. The educator (parent, teacher) should, firstly, be conscious of their own body-political and geo-political orientation when engaging with new knowledge or with a young person (learner). They then, secondly, should embrace the ‘postcolonial or decolonial option’ outlined as ethics, attempting to think through what it might mean to do something for and with those still situated at the peripheries of the world system, informed by the epistemologies and the ontologies still prevalent at such disadvantaged sites. This should be done with the aim of breaking down and removing the asymmetry of local-global power relationships (Ali 2019, p. 21). Postcolonial or decolonial education indeed confronts previously colonised peoples with an ethical decision: do they side with the values of globalisation (geo-economics, neoliberalism) or with their own (indigenous, pre-colonial) values that are in many respects still residing in a fossilised form in their current colonial mentality? In the process, they should take account of the fact that some of these indigenous ideas, such as notions of survival, structural violence and lifestyle, could help them create conditions for overcoming the two waves of colonialism (Majumder 2021, p. 5).

## ■ Citizenship education in a decolonial pedagogical context

Citizenship education is most often associated with an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on themes such as human rights, conflict resolution, environmental stewardship, cultural diversity, globalisation and ‘the dialectic of the global and the local’ (De Ciccio 2016, p. 3). It could arguably also be the most important vehicle for overcoming and even destroying the last vestiges or sedimental remains of a colonial mentality in upcoming generations in South Africa and in other countries similarly suffering from such a mentality. To enable a decolonial CE to perform this task and function, its curriculum could be structured in the format of three concentric circles, phases or dimensions.

## ■ The inner circle, phase or dimension

This part of the CE curriculum consists of intentional efforts on the part of curriculum designers and of citizenship educators to destroy, remove or erase the colonial mentality (residual 'mental sediment') of the learners as future adult citizens by instilling in them a pride in their own heritage, in the many laudable facets of their ancestors' lives and existence before the advent of colonialism (and apartheid, in the case of South Africa). This should preferably be done in the context of the learners' traditional or indigenous worldview, cultures and way of life (Magano 2018, p. 236). The teaching-learning that is offered should speak to the learners in their particular cultural and life-view context (Magano 2018, p. 237).

Citizenship education at this level should concentrate, according to E.J. Kafanabo (pers. comm., 23 July 2019), on those values that have been suppressed by colonialism. Old, traditional values have to be reinterpreted in the context of modern technological developments and of globalism (although Kafanabo fears that not many of these values might have survived to this day). Citizenship Educators could help them to be proud of their indigenous language (as it has developed through the ages), their culture (music, art, games) and morally justifiable customs, habits and practices, including family, extended family and community values, parental love and care, care for the elderly, educational principles and practices, and religious practices and life-view (Povinelli 2013, p. 10). A child's gender, family, ethnic, cultural and economic background, geography, health or disability and exposure to poverty or disorder, conflict or disaster all play a major role in whether a child will learn and succeed in school and thereafter (International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity 2016, p. 10).

The aim of this part of the CE curriculum is to assist learners in looking backwards into their colonial and apartheid past, then restore pride in their own cultural and religious heritage, and help them develop self-respect and dignity. The restoration of pride in their own could constitute an important first step in the destruction of the colonial mindset in upcoming generations.

## ■ The intermediary circle, phase or dimension

In this part of CE, learners are assisted, guided and equipped to develop respect for other individuals and groups on the basis of their pride in their own heritage (inner circle, phase or dimension). Citizenship education is employed to guide them to understand the complexities of ethnic, cultural and religious diversity as well as the structural inequalities and intercultural competencies in their own community and in other communities (Sklad et al. 2016, p. 323). In this process, as the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference indicated in a Pastoral Letter (2016, pp. 1-2), this part of CE should

include candid conversations about racism and its manifestations, the issues of social trauma that resulted from centuries of colonialism (and, in the case of South Africa, apartheid), the links between race, power and privilege, the economic inequalities in society, and the positive and negative aspects of cultural and religious diversity. In doing so, it could help learners understand the 'indigenous claim' that there are many ways of life, human and non-human and that they intertwine as shared modes of being in the world (Ben-Porath & Smith 2013, p. 10).

Most characterisations of globalism and cosmopolitanism 'revolve around the central belief that people belong to a single, shared community, regardless of their other multiple affiliations and commitments' (Stornaiuolo & Nicholls 2019, p. 3). Learners need guidance to understand what it means to be multi- and intercultural citizens and world citizens in a changing, diverse and global age (Kim & So 2018, p. 104). Learners should receive guidance to understand that South Africans originally came from various parts of the world and now are being called upon to form a new nation of widely diverse groups and individuals and that every other person and community deserve the same respect and critical empathy as one would claim for yourself and the group or community that you belong to. They learn to place themselves in the other's situation in order to understand it; they learn to 'transpose themselves into the other', according to Kim and So (2018, p. 112). As Nussbaum (1998, p. 69) remarked already more than two decades ago, 'education for world citizenship needs to begin early'.

The key mission of CE in this circle, phase or dimension is to help learners develop respect for and acknowledge all the good and positive things that all its current citizens have brought to the country, even during colonial times, such as, in the case of South Africa, the English language that has become the de facto lingua franca of the country and also the Internet of things (IoT), Google, the social media and other forms of communication, motor cars and other forms of transport, electricity and other forms of energy. They learn that, over time, the citizens of a state 'develop a history of shared endeavours that legitimately fosters special attachments to their fellow citizens and their state' (Ben-Porath & Smith 2013, p. 11). In doing so, the young future citizens develop a conception of citizenship as 'shared fate that may entail shared cultural or ethnic identity, but can also be based on other features, such as institutional and material linkages' (Alexander 2010, p. 44).

This part of the curriculum also provides an opportunity for discussions about colonialism and apartheid and their lingering effects, impact on people's mentality (coloniality) and the damage that was done by these historical epochs in the lives and existence of South Africans. It also gives an opportunity for discussions about forgiveness for perpetrations of the past, about healing, about the erasure of the colonial 'sediment' in the mental make-up of South Africans, and about guilt feelings that some learners might harbour because

of what their ancestors did or did not do with or for their fellow South Africans. This circle provides opportunities for developing appreciation and respect for the languages, cultures, religions, habits, customs, educational theories and practices of all South Africans and their communities. It also affords opportunities to learn and practice the key principles of morality, such as to live and let live, to care for the interests of others, to show obedience to the laws and regulations of the country, to understand and practise discipline, to develop an appreciation for law and order.

In the end, as Ben-Porath and Smith (2013, p. 104) indicated, 'civic ties are refreshed and extended by the interactions, shared experiences, cultural patterns, and other commonalities that constitute an overarching national identity [...] and patriotism'. This phase also provides opportunities for learners from the more privileged groups to reflect critically on their privileged social positionalities in relation to those of their marginalised fellow learners, to develop a heightened social consciousness, and commit to greater equity and justice for all fellow citizens. In doing so, they improve their cross-cultural and cross-racial understanding and work towards greater social justice for all, particularly minority groups, in a global context (Chang et al. 2018, pp. 3, 4).

## ■ The outer circle, phase or dimension

In this, the outer dimension of CE as a school subject, the teacher and her learners turn their attention to issues beyond the borders of their own country and – most importantly – beyond the confines of their (previous) colonial mentality, which should by this time have broken down or been largely eradicated. We do indeed live in a modern globalised world; it is here to stay, and learners have to be equipped to understand the advantages and possibilities of globalisation as well as the dark underside of globalisation, namely, neoliberalism, geopolitics and geo-economics. Modern societies require more than just local or national civic competencies but also global ones (Sklad et al. 2016, p. 325). Learners have to be guided to thread their way through all the pitfalls of this new environment. After all, as Veugelers (2011, p. 473) observed a decade ago: '[...] more and more frequently, citizenship is now interpreted as a way of being in the world'. The meaning of the term 'citizenship' has concomitantly broadened; it is no longer connected to a particular nationality. Learners should be equipped to live in and engage with the global world, its values and its ethics. At the same time, as Marshall (2018, p. 44) has warned, humankind in a global age must balance and reconcile two impulses: the quest for distinctive identity and the search for global coherence, to understand the forces of interconnectedness that flow from globalisation, and the increasing pluralism of today's societies. Learners also need to understand the risks accompanying globalisation, such as migrations of people displaced by conflict (International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity 2016).

Global citizenship is not a formal type of citizenship; it has become a moral category in the sense that it is strongly connected to personal identity formation and enters the very personal world of feelings, attitudes and behaviours (Veugelers 2011, p. 474). In this section of CE, the learners have to be guided towards nurturing attitudes that will help them confront inequalities and act upon global challenges. Put differently, it should help them develop a moral responsibility for a better world for all (De Cicco 2016, p. 3).

Ethical and moral choices come into play when, as future citizens of their country and of the entire world, young people have to deal with the internal dynamics of society and particularly with the complex linkages between the local and the global. Sharing, taking responsibility for each other and preventing exclusion are the essential elements of this moral global citizenship (Veugelers 2011, pp. 474–475). The aim of education remains unchanged: every child and every youngster in a CE class should be enabled to develop his or her personal identity and personhood. The subject CE should help them acquire the knowledge, skills and values needed to function effectively within their own community, their nation-state, region and in the global community (Banks 2008, p. 129; Miedema & Bertram-Troost 2015, p. 46).

## ■ A balanced approach required

It is clear that CE is not confronted with an either/or dilemma: either globalisation or localisation/indigenisation. The problems that modern-day citizens have to deal with concern every human being, humanity in its broadest global sense. They ‘do not ask for exclusive particularistic approaches or for exclusive focus on national or even regional identities’ (Miedema & Bertram-Troost 2015, p. 48). In view of this insight, it would be counterproductive to guide young people (learners) to engage in a ‘paradigm war’ in which the young person is expected to take sides between globalisation or indigenisation/the local. The subject CE should much rather operate on an inclusive ‘and-and’ schema: the work done in terms of the first two circles, phases or dimensions as well as attention to the demands of globalisation and the modern economy, the impact of which no one can escape in the modern world (Leutwyler, Petrovic & Mantel 2012, p. 111).

Singh (2016) from India offered the following perspective in this regard:

At this time, it is also useful to consider that cultures of knowledge – encompassing research, teaching, and learning, where education has its own place and utilitarian value – interact with *competitive markets* inside and outside faculties, institutions, and sectors. *Quantitative structures* such as admission, governance, and financing have their role in defining course and curriculum; discussions on *gauging and mapping quality* engage with those on *processes and impact*, raising issues of *commercialism in education*. These deliberations indicate a sort of academic *consumerism*, pointing to an *unavoidable neoliberalism* in academic systems and a subsequent narrowing of space for research less favoured by *market forces*. [...]



The question remains *how best to integrate* research cultures such as those that consider communities and individuals in dilemmas of economic, political, and social marginalisation and subjugation, past and present, with that of *the market and its criteria*. Decolonial praxis, as we understand it today, may well have to develop a new vocabulary, narrative, and *plan for the neoliberal future*. (pp. 18–19; [author's added emphasis]).

Learners have to realise that it is a matter of setting priorities. Information and communication technologies, social media, the IoT and transport have all made globalisation a fact of life, and everyone has to learn how to deal responsibly with all these phenomena of modern life. A single cellular phone in a remote corner of the country can open the entire world to a community – through the Internet and social media. Learners have to learn how to deal with this massive flow of information. The full democracy inaugurated in South Africa in 1994 has opened up opportunities for the previously colonised to engage with ‘a global input’ (Jansen 2017, n.p.). Petrovic and Kunz (2014, p. ix) correctly observed that ‘localised contexts foreground particular manifestations of the citizen that are never fully divorced from global discourses’. Petrovic and Kunz (2014) concluded in this regard:

As an assumptive frame, neoliberalism cannot reconcile all acts; daily practices of citizenship extend beyond the bounds of governing rationalities. Therefore, a conceptualisation of global citizenship cannot be global, it must emanate by taking account of local contexts, histories, etc. that inform citizenship education to develop citizens who can read through dominant discourses, neoliberal or otherwise with the aim of instigating progressive social change. (p. 250)

## ■ Conclusion

The aforementioned outline of the task envisaged for CE seems to point to two conclusions. Firstly, the situation in which we live in the 21st century has become so complex that educators cannot equip their learners for a sensible and productive future by simply familiarising them with a series of life skills or by orientating them, that is, ‘showing them the way’ through Life Orientation or a similar course in life skills towards an envisaged future. Citizenship education in South Africa ideally should become a full-blown examinable Senior Phase subject consisting of the three phases or dimensions discussed (circles or phases 1–3). This is in line with calls in 2018 that Life Orientation’s compulsory status ‘had to be dropped’ in favour of history as a subject that would help learners to develop ‘South Africans’ identity as a nation’ (Bailey 2019). The present recommendation is that Life Orientation be replaced by CE, as the latter’s focus is not only on the historical aspects of coloniality but also on the total forming and equipment of learners as novice citizens to become well-equipped adult citizens who have succeeded in putting the colonial mentality behind them.

Grade 10 learners could be assisted to master the contents of circle or phase 1, Grade 11s circle or phase 2 and Grade 12s circle or phase 3. Life Orientation should be phased out, and a brand of CE should be inaugurated, tailor-made for South African learners, that is, for learners coming from a colonial and apartheid past, and hence might still be grappling with an unresolved colonial mentality.

Secondly, as Peterson and Bentley (2017, p. 107) aptly reminded us, education for citizenship cannot be contained in a single school subject; it is more than a subject in that it incorporates a wide range of processes and activities within schools that support the goal of producing informed, responsible and active citizens of their own nation-state and of the modern world. Learners' entire schooling experience should contribute towards this goal.



# Decolonising the curriculum: A social justice pursuit of more inclusive teacher education

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## ■ Abstract

South Africa's transforming higher education landscape remains a dynamic and evolving space to trouble and disrupt dominant knowledge doctrines that prescribe phallogentrism and Eurocentrism. This qualitative study engaged ten lecturers from the three campuses of North-West University (NWU) in semi-structured interviews to collect in-depth information on how the teacher education curriculum could be decolonised in pursuit of social justice for more

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inclusive teacher education in South Africa. The participants were purposively selected from the Curriculum Studies Departments of the University. The interpretivism paradigm was systematically employed in the thematic analysis of the data, which followed all ethical procedures. This chapter unlocks the perceptions of Curriculum Studies lecturers and their (non)involvement in embracing their curricula as an intellectual space for decolonising teacher education. What these lecturers regard as influential theories, teaching approaches and possible challenges of the decolonial moment are revealed to contribute to much-needed discourses of cognitive (in)justice. This form of justice, as embodied and embedded in the moral and ethical pursuits of human rights education, is considered to create alternative pathways for re-imagining teacher education. Decolonising the teacher education curriculum is multi-layered and complicated. Hence, there is a need for professional learning communities to advance the decolonisation of teacher education. The chapter further recommends regular conferences and symposiums to create adequate awareness for academics, while adequate funding should be made available for resources in decolonising the teacher education curriculum.

## ■ Introduction

South Africa's transition from an apartheid system of government to democracy in 1994 means that different sectors of the country, including education, must transform (Ajani & Gamede 2021, pp. 121-131). South African higher education spaces need to become dynamic and evolving spaces that trouble and disrupt dominant knowledge doctrines based on phallogentrism and Eurocentrism. As Le Grange (2016) put it, higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa use Eurocentric and Western-dominated curricula inherited from the apartheid system. In this chapter, the focus falls on teacher education and the need to interrogate and revise the curriculum so that it takes account of social justice to be in line with true democracy. At present, pre-service teacher education at the HEIs in South Africa is dominated by learning experiences inherited from the apartheid era, which are not only Eurocentric but also favour Western-dominated approaches. Furthermore, Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) argued that the HEIs are complicated, diverse in contexts and challenged/limited by various inequalities that significantly influence the system.

In 2015, #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall were some of the major student movement protests that various South African HEIs experienced; the students were calling for the decolonisation of academic curricula to advance human rights in education. One of their demands was that critical African discourses be given due space in the curriculum (Murriss 2016). According to Davids (2016), the aftermath of the #RhodesMustFall protests prompted the 'Transformation summit' in mid-October 2015, which was convened by the

Ministry of Higher Education and Training. Davids (2016) argued that the purpose of this summit was to address the demands students made during the protests. However, it does not seem to have succeeded. Badat (2016, p. 13) reported that ‘the summit was unable to offer solutions to the students’ agitation for decolonised curriculum’. The failure of this summit to attend to the needs of the students provoked increasingly large-scale protests that were marked by violent clashes between the students and the police at some universities, and it also involved marches to the Parliament building. The protests resulted in the wanton destruction of the affected universities’ properties, loss of lives and the subsequent arrest of some students. Hall’s (2016) study concluded that the call for the decolonisation of the University of Cape Town (UCT) indicated the degree to which racial discrimination and colonialism permeate South African public life. It is interesting that similar protests in other parts of Africa have been interpreted very differently. Sayed, Motala and Hoffman (2017), Mama (2015) and Pillay (2015) explained that these protests were seen as intellectual struggles. These intellectual struggles pressed for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems and Africanisation. The intellectual struggles were ignited by scholars or learning institutions in Africa, which include Edward Blyden, Liberia (Blyden 1872); the University of Ibadan, Nigeria (Ake 1982); Makerere University, Uganda (Mamdani 1990); Dar es Salaam University, Tanzania (Shivji 1993); Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria (Mustapha 1995); and Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal (Bathily, Diouf & Mbodj 1995).

Calls for decolonising education emanate from a struggle to give expression to the imaginary beyond the known dominant bodies of knowledge that continue to frame learning experiences in higher education and seem unchangeable (Sayed et al. 2017). Decolonising curriculum requires intellectual discourse that focuses on transforming higher education to redress various existing imbalances in curriculum, which can foster the pursuit of social justice and more inclusive teacher education. Hence, the academics in South Africa’s HEIs need to theorise and develop learning experiences that suit their students’ lived experiences, situated within the global realities as learning experiences. Le Grange (2016, 2018), Venter (2018), Jansen (2017), Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2017) and Mbembe (2015) posited that the decolonisation of education is a complex and multi-layered process. This is based on the clarification process and understanding of Eurocentrism, Africanisation, Coloniality and Colonialism, which are complex concepts in decolonising higher education in South Africa’s context (CHE 2017; Jansen 2017; Le Grange 2016; Maldonado-Torres 2007; Venter 2018).

The chapter first problematises decolonising curriculum in the higher education landscape and looks deeply into why decolonising the curriculum is necessary within the higher education landscape. The chapter then draws on the conception of decolonisation provided by Jansen (2017) to offer some

approaches to (re)imagining curriculum as an intellectual space. Next, this theoretical insight is juxtaposed with the findings from semi-structured interviews with the participants, curriculum specialists from the three campuses of the NWU, to provide critical insights into what they regard as possible approaches to decolonising curriculum in pursuit of more inclusive teacher education. The discussion that follows considers the possibility of using these approaches to transform curriculum-making within teacher education. This discursive chapter aims to contribute to much-needed discourse on cognitive (in)justice to advance social justice as embodied and embedded in the moral and ethical pursuits of human rights education. It thus aims at creating alternative pathways for re-imagining teacher education.

## ■ Decolonising the curriculum and the higher education landscape

Le Grange (2010) agreed that a curriculum is a series of collective stories that learners are taught about past, present and future events of the people. It may also be described as what is planned and taught, bearing in mind that learning experiences can be explicit, hidden and null to the learners (Le Grange 2016; Pinar 2012). 'Learning experiences' can include readings, contents, assessments, resources and other presentations, which can be subjected to decolonisation (Lebeloane 2017). The 'hidden' aspects of the curriculum are what learners are not formally taught. In the case of colonisation, this includes the values and cultural traits of the colonisers, which can indoctrinate students and encourage actions of submissiveness (Lebeloane 2017). Smith and Smith (2018) argued that the South African higher education curriculum is predominantly Westernised and fully Eurocentric and remains pedagogically colonised, unwilling to accommodate the indigenous knowledge and language of the students. Lockett, Morreira and Baijnath (2019) took the view that 'Whiteness' is experienced by most students, more so in the implicit or hidden curriculum aspects than the expected learning contents and assessments.

Grosfoguel (2019) agreed that HEIs' curricula in South Africa are not only Western but have been dominated by European and North American concepts right from the very start. Santos (2014, p. 92) argued that the resultant Eurocentric curriculum in higher education is *epistemicide*. Badat (2007) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2015) highlighted the perpetuation of social inequalities by institutions. Decolonising the curriculum in higher education is necessary to encourage the necessary social change in education (Lebeloane 2017). Here social change refers to addressing socio-inequalities, marginalisation and social injustices that exist and dominate HEIs in South Africa (Heleta 2016; Mbembe 2015). Lebeloane (2017) argued for a curriculum that can emphasise the embodiment of dignity, equity and social justice in students' reasoning, sensing and life views in the present South African HEIs.

Mbembe (2015) asserted that the calls to decolonise curriculum involve deconstructing the Western and Eurocentric knowledge that dominates learning experiences in higher education and recognising the indigenous knowledge that has been ignored by the colonised curriculum. Heleta (2016) argued that Western knowledge is presented as superior as well as universal, and HEIs fail to recognise non-Western societies, thus perpetuating the intellectual erasure of the indigenous people. Paraskeva (2011) contended that decolonising the curriculum is to respect and recognise the diversity that exists in South Africa, while Andreotti, Ahenakew and Cooper (2011) argued that decolonising the curriculum is not an attempt to replace one knowledge system with another but to integrate necessary indigenous knowledge to strengthen the curriculum for realities. This is recontextualisation, which Bernstein (1996) believed is the appropriation of some discourses by others for the purpose of knowledge transmission and acquisition.

Furthermore, Lebeloane (2017) posited that decolonising the curriculum in HEIs will reposition and enhance equity and social justice in the HEIs. In the same way, Oelofsen (2015) posited that the inclusion of African philosophy in higher education is an attempt to decolonise the curriculum for South African higher education. Thus, the recognition of African philosophy is influenced by its contents drawn from African concepts and will be instrumental in decolonising the African mind. Janz (2004, p. 11) described African philosophy as the main core of philosophy that enables us to think critically about some concepts of life, which explain past actions' consequences and how they influence future decision-making. Thus, individuals have an in-depth understanding that influences their expression of issues that affect them.

The African philosophy can provide knowledge and concepts that can be used to 'decentre' Western knowledge, which is assumed to be the core of the curriculum. Tabensky (2008) contended that the inclusion of African philosophy in the post-apartheid higher education curriculum could do much to heal several pathologies in South Africa. According to him:

The discipline of African philosophy originates in tragedy, out of pain, confusion and rage stemming from colonial destruction; destruction that is responsible for what Fanon calls the 'negro neurosis' caused by what Biko would describe as the unbearable fusion of colonised and coloniser [...] [T]he birth of African philosophy as an academic discipline is largely responsible for its character and, crucially, for its distinctive creative possibilities. (p. 285)

Lebeloane (2017) posited that decolonising the curriculum will not only expose but also address diverse class, gender, ethnic and racial inequalities that exist in the present curriculum. In a similar vein, Pillay (2015) argued that learning experiences from the Western and colonised curriculum hegemonic do not address the realities in South African society. HEIs are preparation grounds for teachers who are to teach in diverse classroom realities. Therefore, students need to be provided with the opportunities to construct knowledge that will create opportunities to engage with these realities.



According to Andreotti et al. (2011), some scholars' perspectives on colonial and Westernised curricula show that the curriculum is dominated by Western philosophies and knowledge that cannot be challenged, questioned or queried and are considered normative. Furthermore, Mbembe (2015) argued for a decolonised curriculum that will promote radical thinking which embraces the integration of local indigenous knowledge with that of Westernised knowledge, thus placing African indigenous knowledge at the centre of the discourses in the curriculum.

However, Césaire (2000) argued that decolonising the curriculum should be to denounce colonised philosophies, traditions and theories that dominate curriculum in Africa. Smith (1999) denounced the so-called Westernised curriculum, seeing it as fundamentally derived from indigenous knowledge systems but refined and framed with Western and Eurocentric worldviews as learning content. Thus, Mamdani (2016) posited that decolonising the curriculum is a move towards making the curriculum an intellectual space of conversational social change rather than being a mere technical policy. Mudaly (2018) also saw the curriculum as needing to be a change agent in the decolonisation of higher education but takes account of the significant technological, economic, political and educational changes that have occurred in South Africa, from apartheid to the post-apartheid era, in arguing for this. The curriculum as an intellectual space calls for diverse intellectual groups from various interest groups to design an egalitarian curriculum. However, these arguments are not without their detractors. Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) opined that the process of decolonising higher education curricula is not only controversial but also has several discordant voices in the context of South Africa. Mqgqwashu (2016) and Fomunyam (2017) believed that recontextualising the present dominant knowledge and Western experiences in higher education is an approach to accommodate diverse intellectual groups that exist in HEIs.

Le Grange (2016) believed that decolonisation of the generational colonised individuals of physical spaces and colonised bodies is required in higher education. Thus, the minds of students must be decolonised through new curricula in higher education disciplines such as education, science, economics and law (Le Grange 2016). These minds have been colonised with values, skills, knowledge and ideas through Eurocentric education as colonial learning experiences. Luckett (2016) agreed that the colonisation of minds occurred through economic exploitation, violence and disfigurement of African communities in modern cultural development, called modernisation. Fanon ([1952] 2008) in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* argued for decolonising the mind of the students on the grounds that 'the juxtaposition of the black and white races' can provide education that can liberate the black students from complex Eurocentric learning experiences. Furthermore, Fanon asserted that the black person must be liberated from the existing trap of academic colonialism.

Hence, the curriculum as intellectual space must engage with past inequalities and social injustices, addressing all these through the integration of 'cross-pollination' of ideas from indigenous knowledge systems to renegotiate Westernised and Eurocentric knowledge systems with indigenous values, thus leading to a refined, accommodating and new curriculum (Andreott et al. 2011; Mahabeer 2018; Mbembe 2015). This implies that a new curriculum will not discard or shift away from Western theories or practices, but it should recognise and make Africa the centre of higher education (Smith & Smith 2018). Le Grange (2016) derived 4Rs from Chilisa's (2012) theory as components of decolonisation: *reciprocal application*, *respectful representation*, *relational accountability*, and *rights and regulations*. *Reciprocal application* of the curriculum as an intellectual space emphasises the need for knowledge to be beneficial to the immediate communities of the students; *respectful representation* refers to the ability of the curriculum to accommodate indigenous voices; *relational accountability* of the curriculum ensures that the content of the whole curriculum should link relations; and *rights and regulations* together for ethical reasons, the curriculum, acknowledges indigenous knowledge where appropriate (Le Grange 2016).

Conversely, decolonising the curriculum ensures that the curriculum is an intellectual space which engages students in critical thinking and knowledge constructs. Le Grange (2016) further proposed that a shift away from individuality to collectiveness is the focus of 'currere' as constructed and advanced by the principles of *ubuntu*. Thus, it is literally interpreted as 'I am who I am because we are a people, for the people'.

In other words, the decolonising curriculum is a process of integrating or drawing inspiration from indigenous knowledge for interculturality (De Carvalho & Flórez-Flórez 2014). Smith and Smith (2018) posited that for a curriculum to be an intellectual space, higher education must extricate indigenous knowledge from political, social and intellectual worldviews to address Western-dominated curriculum, using a self-reflective approach. Hence, Chilisa (2012) argued that decolonising higher education requires a self-reflective approach as a lens to (de)construct appropriate knowledge that speaks to diverse contexts in teacher education in South Africa. Furthermore, Gamedze and Gamedze (2015) argued that a self-reflective approach would enable students to critically challenge dominant forms of knowledge. Similarly, Sayed et al. (2017) saw a self-reflective approach as capable of making students critical of the knowledge they are exposed to. Decolonising curriculum will enable students to appraise the imperial model that has marginalised the space and to seek knowledge that accommodates their own indigenous knowledge systems (Chilisa 2012). Disemelo (2015) argued that students need to explore disparate ideological positions to ascertain what is relevant to them. In a similar vein, Smith (1999) argued that students need to be provided with opportunities in HEIs to reflect, deconstruct

and reconstruct various epistemological distortions of their lived experiences. Decolonising curriculum in the South African higher education landscape is a process that is complex (Webbstock 2017). Care should, therefore, be taken to take account of this complexity in explaining the decisions that underlie the teacher education curriculum. Jansen (2017) proposed six conceptions to decolonise university curricula. Jansen (2017) acknowledged that these conceptions have different perspectives for curriculum scholars.

## ■ (Re)imagining teacher education through Jansen's (2017) conceptions of decolonisation

Our society is characterised by many major changes, social, economic and technological, and thus requires that we train students to engage in counter-hegemonic intellectual spaces as teachers (Sathorar & Geduld 2018). '[D]ecolonisation [which] is characterised as a "process of expanding imaginations" (Sayed et al. 2017, p. 61) provides a way of enabling teacher education to prepare students for new worldviews.' This process involves rethinking and re-imagining learning contents/experiences that count as rigorous, relevant and critical scholarship for more inclusive teacher education. Diouf and Mamdani (1994), as well as Tilley (2011), contended that it is important for students in South Africa to critically engage with knowledge in developing and theorising knowledge in their own contexts/situations. Mafeje (1971) saw this as students' paying careful empirical attention to their diverse lived realities. Expanding intellectual spaces in South African HEIs for broader engagement with decolonisation enables students in HEIs to acquire intellectual horizons that accommodate diverse isolated and neglected contexts (Diagne 2016; Mama 2015; Mbembe 2015; Mamdani 1998; Ngugi 1986). Decolonising teacher education, according to Sathorar and Geduld (2018), is a phenomenon that seeks to situate teaching and learning contents, activities as well as pedagogy in the local context of HEI's to prepare pre-service teachers for the realities. Therefore, re-imagining the teacher education curriculum can be enhanced by the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, development of useful skills, reshaping of attitudes and values that reflect fundamental freedoms, human rights, equality, tolerance and peaceful cohabitation among diverse students (Fomunyam & Teferra 2017; Mqgwashu 2016; Moll 2004; Naicker 2016).

The transformative responsibilities of teacher education in South Africa include the promotion of the public good through students' moral and ethical dispositions (Leibowitz 2012). Education contents should be transformative and caring, premised on freedom, dignity and equality (Becker, De Wet & Van Vollenhoven 2015). In view of this, Le Grange (2020) averred that post-apartheid higher education in South Africa requires transformation to broaden

the curriculum and create diverse social spaces in the South African context. Decolonising curriculum can restructure the apartheid disjunctures for social justice learning. The restructuring is to align the 1996 democratic *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* for equality and access to education. Decolonising the curriculum is a complicated process. According to Le Grange (2016), a transformative curriculum should be framed within the African philosophy of *ubuntu*. It is important to note that the curriculum is critically influenced by academics' backgrounds, experiences and preferences (Heleta 2018). Arguably, many academics in South African HEIs are overly influenced by Western and Eurocentric knowledge (Heleta 2018). For the curriculum to be successful, academics must be willing to accept the process of decolonising the curriculum.

The unfolding events after 2015 students' protests prompted several academic engagements to engage in discourses to dismantle what Heleta (2016), Le Grange (2016), Fomunyam (2017), Webbstock (2017), Walker (2018) described as Eurocentrism and 'epistemic violence' in the curriculum. This chapter adopts Jansen's (2017) six different conceptions of decolonisation in higher education as a conceptual framework towards decolonising curriculum. The conceptions provide an understanding that can guide decolonising teacher education curricula and thus attain more inclusive teacher education in South Africa.

## ■ Decolonising curriculum as the additive-inclusive knowledge

Knowledge is critical in higher education programmes that train future teachers. According to Jansen (2017), decolonising the curriculum is an attempt or a systemic process of reviewing the present curriculum to accommodate new knowledge. It is argued that HEIs in South Africa continue to be relics of colonialism in their institutional structures and curricula (Odora-Hoppers & Richards 2011). This implies that despite the independence of South Africa, the colonisation of the mind through various disciplines in higher education has continued; this is described as neo-colonialism (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Triffin 2000). The new elites emerging from these institutions are trained with Eurocentric knowledge that ties them to the training they received from the colonised system of education, thus making them neoliberalist (Grange 2016). Oelofsen (2015) argued that there is a need for humanising pedagogy in higher education curricula to decolonise the African mind by incorporating African concepts in various HEIs. Hence, additive-inclusive knowledge, which is social justice driven, is what students should be exposed to in teacher education. Additive-inclusive knowledge aims at recognising and accommodating African indigenous knowledge in the curricula content by using the curricula content-driven additive approach

to decolonising teacher education. Pre-service teachers require diverse knowledge that address contexts that promote social justice for all students in South Africa to promote more inclusive teacher education. According to Jansen (2017), the call for additive-inclusive knowledge will fuse the existing Western knowledge that dominates teacher education curricula with African knowledge together as knowledge canons for the institutions. Thus, Sayed et al. (2017) averred that various existing modules/courses need to be revised to accommodate new contents that recognise appropriate African knowledge that can address the realities that exist in additive-inclusive knowledge for pre-teachers. The new additive-inclusive knowledge provides students with varied opportunities to critique and not just to receive learning experiences.

## ■ Decolonising curriculum as the decentring of European knowledge

As asserted earlier by Le Grange (2016), South Africa's higher education curricula are framed in a Eurocentric episteme. Therefore, decolonising South Africa's teacher education curriculum will require reviewing the existing curriculum content. The present curriculum reflects or revolves around European values, ideals and knowledge (Heleta 2018). The students acquire knowledge that relates to the realities of a European setting that is different from the realities of their diverse environment. Jansen (2017) asserted that the curriculum should focus on Africa as the centre of what the pre-service teachers should learn without necessarily discarding Western knowledge in HEIs. Sayed et al. (2017) argued that realigning the curriculum in African contexts with the integration of African ideals, values, knowledge and achievements alongside the European worldview would better prepare students for the realities of their own living contexts. This is viewed as a transformation of the curriculum through Africanisation. By placing African knowledge in the centre, pre-service teachers would acquire inclusive teacher education that speaks to the diversity that exists. Pre-service teaching programmes need to engage students with a decolonised curriculum to enable them to have a better understanding of their origins, societies, history, ambitions, achievements and future (Jansen 2017). Studies conclude that the content of various modules/learning activities in teacher education is centred on Western knowledge and calls for decentring the curriculum to reflect the students' environmental context (Fomunyam 2014; Heleta 2018; Le Grange 2019; McKaiser 2016). This concurs with Feris's (2017) assertion that decolonising the curriculum in higher education means challenging Eurocentric epistemologies that South Africa's higher education offers to students, which does not acknowledge social justice. In Lebeloane's (2017) view, internalisation of indigenous experiences is critical to students' engagement in universities as well as outside the context of the universities.

## ■ Decolonising curriculum as a critical engagement with settled knowledge

According to Jansen (2017), the settled knowledge (or the resident curriculum) needs to be critiqued through critical engagement, prompting the students to challenge sources of knowledge, its relevance to their diverse situations, how such knowledge can be applied and how the underlying assumptions influence learning experiences.

Asking questions such as these calls for a decolonised curriculum that provokes critical engagement of knowledge by troubling notions of what is context-appropriate. Advocating for the critical engagement of pre-service teachers with settled knowledge aims at creating an opportunity for the students to construct meanings from what they are exposed to as learning experiences (Sathorar & Geduld 2018). The teacher education curriculum should be designed to critically engage students in knowledge construction, using a variety of approaches they consider sufficiently diverse and beneficial to knowledge constructs in learning experiences and processes. The student's ability to critique knowledge through diverse processes could ascertain and eliminate things about the past that they do not like. This introduces an element of social justice into learning, creating opportunities for them to become critical thinkers and agents of change. As Le Grange (2019) pointed out, critical involvement with a curriculum of this kind is a means of transforming students. The teacher education curriculum should equip the students to relate acquired knowledge to solve the same set of problems using new theories, methods and perspectives. Hence, critical engagement in settled knowledge is popular in promoting the philosophy of the people in the students (Le Grange 2019). There seems to be no critical engagement with settled knowledge in the present teacher curriculum (Chilisa 2012; Luckett 2016), but encouragement for students to continuously regurgitate colonial ideologies (Le Grange et al. 2020), which does not foster more inclusive teacher education. Ngugi (1986) called this regurgitation epistemicide. Jansen (2017)'s concern is that a Eurocentric knowledge base does not allow students to express their own concerns and views from their own references.

## ■ Decolonising curriculum as encounters with entangled knowledge

According to Jansen (2017), the decolonising curriculum is a relative way of decolonising the curriculum in a new way to see accommodating knowledge that recognises local knowledge and therefore intertwines indigenous knowledge (social justice for all) with the knowledge from colonisers. HEIs are the citadel of learning where learning experiences should be diversely situated within entangled knowledge and should provide students with the necessary spaces and approaches to encounter entangled knowledge. It is important to

recognise that humans have varied knowledge according to their existence, which is crucial to how and what they acquire as additional knowledge. It is important in present post-apartheid South Africa for pre-service teachers to be exposed to the curriculum that will prepare them for the diverse social spaces that exist in the South African context through their engagement with the same entangled knowledge to attain more inclusive teacher education. According to Mbembe (2015), Heleta (2016) and CHE (2017), learning experiences from the Eurocentric knowledge remain entangled unless students have encounters that enable them to understand the entangled knowledge: overtly and covertly providing students with content knowledge that is rigidly constructed in the mould of colonial education is not what they need. Jansen (2017) advocated for a break with the curricula in HEIs that do not provide students with the opportunities to challenge entangled knowledge. Thus, Jansen (2017) called for a curriculum that is based on social justice to provide learning experiences that have more of an impact on the students.

## ■ Decolonising curriculum to repatriate occupied knowledge

Curriculum is presented to students as a series of potential learning experiences that can model students' thinking and actions (Fomunyam 2014). Mahabeer (2018) avowed that learning experiences in higher education are deeply Eurocentric rooted in normative and standard Western and colonial spaces and do not recognise or accommodate the indigenous local knowledge. The call to decolonise curriculum is gaining prominence because the components of the present curriculum comprise Westernised and Eurocentric knowledge, which influences the minds of the students in teacher education. Jansen (2017) argued that the curriculum could be decolonised to repatriate the colonised minds of the pre-teachers from wholly Western knowledge into more decolonised intellectual spaces where indigenous peoples' voices are recognised for social justice. According to him, this reparative approach necessitates the calls for the additive-inclusive decolonised curriculum model in pursuit of more inclusive education for diverse students. The additive-inclusive approach to decolonising curriculum is described as inclusion that is dangerously enclosed in its approach to decolonising knowledge (Jansen 2017). Chilisa (2012) posited that the present HEIs in South Africa are characterised by the implementation of colonised systems, which include the curricula. Decolonising curriculum for teacher education will enable the pre-service teachers to acquire knowledge that speaks to their diverse contexts, which is beneficial to the recognition and preservation of their indigenous knowledge in a global worldview. Mbembe (2015) described a decolonised curriculum as one that allows all students to make contributions and reference this knowledge in their own contexts. Conversely, Le Grange (2020) agreed that decolonisation is a process to repatriate the minds of the students from

colonisation, which implies colonialism that negates the principles and realities of social justice in South Africa's contexts.

Ajani and Gamede (2021) further explained that decolonisation does not only entail pushing back the physical process that decolonisation entails but also dismantling all epistemic projects, which need to put the students on the right track to knowing that what colonialism has imposed on them is epistemicide. Thus, the decolonised curriculum creates awareness of social justice based on what is significant in their own contexts, such as indigenous knowledge systems.

## ■ Africanisation of Western knowledge to decolonise the curriculum

According to Jansen (2017), rather than making Africa the centre of the curriculum in teacher education, pan-African scholars are advocating for a shift from Western knowledge, ideals and achievements to a total African context. This is seen as Africanising the teacher education curriculum. Not only is the curriculum to be decolonised as an Africanised curriculum, but also the pedagogies and textbooks are to be African authors, to reflect true social justice and for more inclusive teacher education. Mbembe (2015) interpreted decolonising curriculum as a process of making the curriculum wholly African-based. In the light of the works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, and Steve Biko, deeper insights can be drawn from using African knowledge to frame Western knowledge in the process of decolonising teacher education curriculum. In contrast, Le Grange (2016) argued that decolonising the curriculum for teacher education means reviewing Western knowledge from African perspectives, which does not translate into destroying Western knowledge but decentring it to accommodate indigenous knowledge.

Ajani and Gamede (2021), Le Grange (2016), Coetzee and Roux (2002) contended that a lot of work had been done on African philosophy, and their work can be explored in knowledge systems and disciplines to advance the decolonisation of higher education. Le Grange et al. (2020) reported that many universities are yet to recognise African philosophy in their curricula.

The call for decolonising teacher education in South Africa continues to gather momentum, as there is an urgent need for pre-teachers need to be engaged with learning experiences that relate to their own environmental context. Insights into decolonising teacher education curricula have been drawn from extant literature to strengthen the discourse on the phenomenon. Jansen's (2017) conceptions explicitly provided an argument for re-imagining a teacher education curriculum that promotes social justice. The conceptions indicate the need for the content of teacher education to engage pre-service teachers in critical engagement with learning experiences based on settled knowledge. A decolonised curriculum should help these students to address



diverse contexts in South African realities. The pre-service teachers' encounter with various entangled knowledge systems provides them with opportunities to repatriate occupied knowledge and to shift from Eurocentric-dominated knowledge. Thus, decolonising teacher education for pre-service teachers promotes the Africanisation of existing Western knowledge. Sayed et al. (2017) warned, however, that decolonisation of the teacher education curriculum is a complicated and multi-layered process, where lecturers' diverse understanding, intellectual backgrounds, different institutional contexts and lecturers' approaches to their students are key factors in the decolonising of the curriculum. Drawing attention to another aspect, Mamdani (2007) emphasised that decolonisation of higher education is necessary to explore discourses that have been kept silent in teacher education programmes.

## ■ Research methodology

The chapter adopted a qualitative research design that employed an idealist interpretive paradigm to generate data (Kumar 2019). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) saw that qualitative research infers constructive meanings from the participants' social and experiential views. Purposive sampling was used to select ten lecturers who were teaching Curriculum Studies at that time at the Faculty of Education at the three NWU campuses. These selected participants can all be described as possessing rich information about the phenomenon (Cohen et al. 2011). The research environment was the Faculty of Education across the three campuses (Potchefstroom, Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle). Bhengu (2005) submitted that information for research studies must be sourced from informants that are information-rich. Thus, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) justified the rationale for purposive sampling as suitable for extracting diverse groups, different settings and individuals with different perspectives, race and gender on decolonising teacher education.

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted with lecturers and lasted between 30 and 50 minutes. The participants were engaged via Zoom meetings and telephonic interviews (Ledford & Gast 2018) to ensure coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) health care regulations. Each interview was voice recorded electronically only for transcription purposes. Data were transcribed and analysed through inductive analysis (Ary et al. 2018; Kumar 2019), following the process of coding conceptually similar phrases or answers (open coding) and identifying relationships among the open codes. The trustworthiness of the data was enhanced through verbatim transcriptions of the interviews, ensuring that there was no drift in data codes or the definition of the used codes. This allowed thick and rich descriptions of the data (Creswell 2014; Kumar 2019). Themes generated from the coding of the participants' interviews are used for discussion on the presentation of the findings in the next section of the chapter. Ethical clearance was issued by the university's ethics committee before the commencement of the study, while informed consent forms were duly endorsed

by the participants. In addition, ethical considerations were rigorously adhered to. These include respect of privacy, voluntary participation and participants' permission to withdraw at any time in the research without consequences. Pseudonyms (L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, L8, L9, and L10) were used for excerpts from the interviews in the presentation of findings. This was to protect the identities of the participants from all three campuses of the NWU.

## ■ Presentation of the findings

Four themes emerged from the participants' responses to elicit decolonising of the teacher education curriculum. The themes are presented as follows:

1. Student protest movements in South Africa's higher education landscape
2. Curriculum-as-plan or curriculum-as-lived?
3. Rethinking teacher education for a range of possibilities
4. Decolonising teacher education as a complicated process

## ■ Student protest movements in South Africa's higher education landscape

The intellectual debates on the decolonisation of higher education's curricula have gained momentum in most universities across South Africa. Participants were asked to reflect on their own understanding of what decolonisation is all about. Diverse reflections on decolonisation as it emanates from higher education contexts were provided. Many of the participants described decolonisation based on their understanding of the 2015 (and ongoing) student protest movements that occurred in the South African higher education landscape. This was done in light of Heleta's (2016) assertion that the process of decolonisation starts with academics' understanding of what decolonisation entails. Some participants supported the demand to decolonise the curriculum by the students during the protests. Participant L8 expressed the view that students protested to dismantle colonial curricula:

'Well, my understanding would be that, students were fighting for the dismantling of the colonial system, in South Africa, the issue about colonising our country, our ideas. So basically, my understanding is that the students' movement of that period represents the dismantling of the Western culture in our institution.' (Lecturer 8, 01 December 2020)

A few of the participants agreed that the call for decolonisation of higher education was students' agitation for access to education, equality and political or simple inclusion for all. Participants L3 and L4 took the view that access to education and inclusion was the main focus of students' protest movements for decolonisation:

'I had first thought about 2015–2016 FeeMustFall protest that it was all about access to education, poverty, equal opportunity to higher education, people struggling

about poverty, lots of death and fighting for the middle-class. People who cannot afford basic things and were excluded from education.’ (Lecturer 3, 02 March 2021)

‘I think decolonisation should focus on inclusion of all people’s views, and not focusing only on one part, not the focus on absolutism. This is the right way to think about something. We are different people, diverse people groups and have many viewpoints. We have a specific matter.’ (Lecturer 4, 02 December 2020)

Participants L5 and L7 viewed the process of Africanising the curriculum of HEIs as decolonisation of higher education in South Africa:

‘Well, the concept of decolonisation is a desire to relate it to Africanisation. Even that concept of Africanisation has not been sufficiently explored. If you are Africanising education, what does it mean? People only think of removing certain contents and adding certain contents. Changing certain contents and replacing them with certain contents. That’s a currently superficial definition of decolonisation.’ (Lecturer 5, 17 December 2020)

‘I understand that teachers all over actually need to start thinking about incorporating different ideas and indigenous ideas as well. But I think it’s a very sensitive topic. I think, in some parts we need to look at what we are teaching in our education. Some of the information is totally colonised, comes from a colonised background. I think in some cases, we need to actually redesign all modules content.’ (Lecturer 7, 26 November 2020)

Diverse reflections of the participants on decolonisation concur with Jansen’s (2017) concept of recognising decolonisation as additive-inclusive knowledge. According to Jansen, the need to decolonise curriculum signifies recognition of the current curriculum as valuable but needs to recognise new knowledge as a way of expanding the existing canons of knowledge.

## ■ Curriculum-as-plan or curriculum-as-lived?

Grumet (1981) argued that a curriculum is a book of stories that explains to students their past, present and future. Jansen’s (2017) conceptions of decolonisation suggest that diverse local contexts of students play a prominent role in the decolonisation of higher education. In other words, it is aimed at making the students explore knowledge that situates them within the context of societal realities. This was described by Aoki (1999) as curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived. The participants expressed their views on the existing module contents and pedagogy’s adequate appropriateness to their local contexts, with a call for modification to enhance decolonising teacher education curriculum. Participant L1 had this to say:

‘I teach teaching methods to third-year students, and another module to fourth-year students; which is Assessment. Unfortunately, the modules I am teaching were conceived by colleagues. The way I’m teaching now, I’m trying to use practical examples from the life realities for them to understand. This is the way I’m trying to decolonise. All the examples that I am giving in class, reflect the activities they are living with at home, from their cultural backgrounds and history. I integrate these with examples from the USA, Japan, Canada, Europe or France. So, I use the very

examples from their communities to decolonise the modules that I have received from my colleagues to teach. But I am expecting that when I start by next year, I will decolonise this idea further by using proper examples. My method of teaching also reflects African culture, I give students a chance to express themselves based on their backgrounds. That's how I'm trying to decolonise the module I'm teaching.' (Lecturer 1, 02 June 2021)

Similar views were expressed by Participant L9 that he used various approaches to decolonise the methods as well as the contents of the modules he facilitated at the university:

'I teach two modules that lean towards decolonisation. So, one of them I teach at the honour level is Curriculum Studies. The Curriculum Studies, 100% focuses on what are the trends, from an international to the national level in curriculum theorising. So decoloniality is one of the things we address. And this for example, since decoloniality approached humanism; all of these are trends eliciting for us. We also try to do it through teaching and learning to see how we could decolonise and rethink the way we think about these dominant knowledge systems. One of the things that I've tried to do in my class is to see what would happen if we only reference South African scholars when we speak about Curriculum Studies. What if we disrupt the hegemony of the West, by giving preference to, for example, or self, write voices for yourself? There are different ways in which one can think about it. I mean if you think of research methodology, one might easily think well it's a Western thing. But there are not many books that have been written about decolonising methodologies emanating from. Except from countries such as Australia, New Zealand, lots of them from Latin America, and they give physical examples of what it means to decolonise methodology, research methodology.' (Lecturer 9, 01 December 2020)

Similarly, Participant L2 affirmed that she integrated African philosophy into teaching her pre-service teachers, and this has provided the students with diverse worldviews:

'I teach two modules. One is a research methodology, an introduction to research methodology. And it's for four years. And then I teach a module, generally referred to as the Understanding of the World in education. So, let's first talk about the research; in this module, I see there is great potential for improvement. It only addresses ways of thinking about research and no method is linked to indigenous knowledge in this module. It's only the traditional qualitative methods, phenomenology, Case Studies and so on the general quantitative methods like the survey, and so on. I think in this module, there is room for improvement. And then the other module, Understanding the World. This module looks at different views or philosophical worldviews that we have and how it relates to education and then specifically the class. So, we make it very specific for the students to think in their classes, to see that there are different views. One of the views that we explicitly address is African philosophy. So, I think in that module, we provide different views and that is something good and then also explicitly African philosophy. Maybe, we would scrutinise the present contents to improve the contents for more focus on African philosophy to enhance decolonisation.' (Lecturer 2, 03 December 2020)

Curriculum in South African higher education should shift away from totally curriculum-as-plan so that it also accommodates curriculum-as-lived. Participant L10 asserted that although the contents of his present modules

reflected decolonisation, a lot still needs to be done to promote decolonisation in teacher education:

'I am teaching two honours modules. One is Classroom Teaching, and the other is curriculum development. In both modules, there is this concept of *Ubuntu* currere that is an African concept. Africanisation of the curriculum may not be enough now, but we are in the right direction.' (Lecturer 10, 03 December 2020)

Findings revealed that the participants agreed that decolonisation of higher education is necessary to create the link between the theories that students learn or acquire to the local realities. Jansen's (2017) conception of the decentring curriculum of European knowledge is *recentering* knowledge from European-based to African-based, without deleting European knowledge. Jansen (2017) posited that new knowledge that places Africa at the centre of knowledge is critical to the decolonisation of higher education.

## ■ Rethinking teacher education for a range of possibilities

As noted earlier, Jansen (2017) called for a curriculum that provides opportunities and possibilities for engaging with settled knowledge as an attempt to repatriate their minds from occupied knowledge. Teacher education is critical to higher education in South Africa, and pre-service teachers need to encounter entangled knowledge (Jansen 2017) to make them responsive and fit diverse South African contexts. The participants agreed that decolonising teacher education is to rethink the learning contents students are exposed to and that it is an exacting process. Participants L1 and L2 had these to say:

'We must see how people can focus on African. Yeah, Afrocentric. See how we can focus on what we have in Africa. African philosophy, indigenous knowledge.' (Lecturer 1, 02 June 2021)

'I think a problem-based learning where students must work together or so. This will foster that sense of community and when we think about community. Communities must face and solve problems together instead of having an individualistic approach of writing an exam or so on, students will work together in groups, writing group reports, and so on.' (Lecturer 2, 03 December 2020)

Participant L6 argued that students' diverse backgrounds should be recognised in learning activities:

'I think first of all the cultural mix of classes. In a cultural mix of classes, they come in a group of white students or a group of black students; so, they must sit together. The teacher should think of a way to break up these comfort groups. You should have a strategy. For instance, you can have a number to form groups so that you know it's at random the selection of groups.' (Lecturer 6, 26 February 2021)

Participant L9 expressed the view that South Africa's multicultural contexts should be accommodated to broaden possibilities:

'I think the most important thing for me is you cannot decolonise, anything. If you cannot decolonise being. So, if you can't think of the human being and the more than a human being in a different way, then you cannot be decolonised. Why do I say so? Whoever engages a being, also engages with an episteme. And you'll choose episteme, how you prioritise episteme. At the end of the day, the dome is on your being and the extent to which you can decolonise your being in unison with the knowledge to construct, and I believe if you are in a position where you can start rethinking being and knowledge from out of the decolonial perspectives, then it makes it easier to decolonise practices around us in society. So, for me, those are the constituencies in the ontology. The epistemology and the methodology.' (Lecturer 9, 01 December 2020)

Jansen (2017) admitted that the repatriation approach in decolonisation is significant to empower the students with possibilities for additive-inclusive opportunities to challenge 'settled' knowledge and advance the recognition and integration of Africanisation.

## ■ Decolonising teacher education as a complicated process

As much as decolonisation is desired in higher education, it is a complex and complicated process that requires careful approaches (Heleta 2016; Le Grange 2016; Le Grange et al. 2020). The participants admitted to the complexity of decolonising curriculum based on several mitigating factors. The dynamics of these mitigating factors are relational to the cyclical process of making learning experiences appropriate to pre-teachers in real contexts of African society. Participant L9 had this to say:

'Well, for people who underestimate the importance of decolonising the mind, that's the first point you need to start with. I would say that is one of the biggest limitations. So, it also has to do with this attitude of people. Are they willing to do this all day? Are they willing to keep playing, irrespective of the causes that go along with decolonisation debates? So, there's perseverance that's needed amongst people to make things work, but so it is easily bringing the next big thing that happens when we forsake the force that we've started fighting for. Those are the limitations and possible problems the process of decolonisation might encounter.' (Lecturer 9, 01/12/2020)

Similarly, Participant L3 concurred that the success of decolonising higher education in South Africa through the curriculum will be influenced significantly by academics, of which some academics are yet to understand the concept:

'It is the people's understanding. The limitation is how? What should I do to change? People do not know how to change. I have some colleagues who don't still understand the need for decolonisation. Their thought is still about the race, the students want to get everything free. Their negativity shuts down decolonisation. Not knowing how, why we need to change.' (Lecturer 3, 02 March 2021)

Academics play a significant role in the way the curriculum is to be decolonised in teacher education. Jansen (2017) argued that facilitation of learning in a manner that allows the students to critique what is given to them as knowledge and to (de)construct knowledge from the contents of the modules they are exposed to is critical to decolonisation. Academics need appropriate methods to present episteme that transforms 'beings' (Sathorar & Geduld 2018). Sayed et al. (2017) posited that it is important for pre-service teachers to be capacitated to theorise their own diverse contexts. The 'beings' in pre-service teachers connote their lived realities as well as their histories. Participant L1 confirmed this when he explained that nothing had changed despite the awareness of decolonising teacher education curriculum because the academics have yet to change methods:

'The challenges I think, our scholars including me, we don't go further in discovering ourselves, in producing our own knowledge. That's the major problem first of all. We are not able to produce our own knowledge. As a result, we have to go back to the European thinkers. That's one. Secondly, we are financially limited. We can try to invent our own curriculum but the poor finance among the schools or universities does not allow training their scholars. Thirdly, I think the other thing, if we base ourselves on knowledge from Africa, we find out that we are left behind again, that's the problem. We are in a dilemma.

'We have the same discussion last year. Okay, let's learn what is in Africa. Those who are in Europe, in Canada and elsewhere are developing theirs. Otherwise, we will no longer become universities of the people. We also have to use what is produced around the world. If we base ourselves in African, we will not fit in the discussion with others from Japan. That's the problem. And again, we are limited on technology. That's the major problem again. We don't innovate, all the appliances, computers, technologies, are coming from Europe. How are we going to say that we must forge our own curriculum, yet we don't have our own innovation? Everything that we are using now is coming from Europe.' (Lecturer 1, 02 June 2021)

Participant L10 also expressed the view that decolonisation is a difficult task in Africa and that furthermore Western scholars still continue to dominate intellectual spaces because they do not believe in Africa nor recognise the knowledge from Africa as episteme:

'I think the world and the powers that be, still look down on Africa. World scholars still look down on academics from Africa. Critical emancipatory research should be encouraged to integrate researchers into African research and knowledge to help towards decolonising the curriculum.' (Lecturer 10, 03 December 2020)

Participant L6 highlighted the need to adopt interactive teaching methods as an approach to decolonisation in South Africa. She agreed that academics need to change their attitude to encourage students in tasks that will promote the construction of knowledge:

'I think academics are very afraid of including things they don't know and because they want to be in control of what students know. And I think knowledge shouldn't be contained. Yeah, it shouldn't be controlled. The burden of knowledge should be thrown open. This incorporates the strategies which include interactive teaching,

self-directed learning and others I have mentioned. You'll never know all the knowledge students actually have when they communicate with each other. That's where the value lies.' (Lecturer 6, 26 February 2021)

Decentring European knowledge is a complicated process in the decolonisation of higher education (Jansen 2017). The participants affirmed that decolonisation is possible but that it requires consistency and willingness to create opportunities for students to engage with additive-inclusive knowledge, which makes them encounter entangled knowledge and repatriate occupied knowledge, thus meaningfully constructing knowledge (Jansen 2017).

## ■ Discussion of the findings

It is vital to decolonise the teacher education curriculum to prepare pre-service teachers for more inclusive teacher education. This means acknowledging the diversity that exists in the interests of social justice in long apartheid-ridden South Africa. The findings of this study emphasise the significance of the decolonisation of teacher education curricula in South African HEIs. In line with the findings of other studies, decolonisation of higher education is seen as a critical element in presenting diverse intellectual experiences to students (Badat 2016; CHE 2017; Jansen 2017; Le Grange 2016; Mama 2015; Pillay 2015; Sayed et al. 2017). Decolonising the various epistemic knowledge systems in higher education requires an infusion of true social justice. The existence of epistemic knowledge, revealed by the participants, highlights the need to decolonise pre-service teachers' minds. The first step in decolonisation is the decolonisation of the mind (Ngugi 1986). According to Ngugi (1986), the mind is crucial in the construction of knowledge, and hence, minds need to be aligned with the social realities of a particular context. Decolonising, in this case, requires that students engage with knowledge that can make them critical thinkers and agents of change to instil social justice into the learning process (Jansen 2017). It is evident from the participants that they have some familiarity with the concept of decolonisation. However, their descriptions varied depending on their understanding of the relevant literature, their experience or what they learnt from the 2015–2016 student movement protests in South African HEIs (Motsaathebe 2020). As Le Grange (2016) showed, however, decolonisation is a complicated process. Its challenge is to decolonise colonised pre-service teachers' minds in various physical spaces. This entails using decolonised methods to free colonised beings in higher education. It also entails making HEIs recognise the need for social justice in their curricula, pedagogies and other structures to promote more inclusive teacher education. Decolonising minds can be invigorated through curricula in diverse educational disciplines such as education, economics, science and laws as intellectual spaces to decolonise higher education (Le Grange 2016).

Heleta (2016) argued that HEIs in South Africa provide students with Eurocentric forms of knowledge and do not recognise the need to include



critical engagement with indigenous knowledge. Similarly, Fanon (1967) took the view that students' minds are continually being colonised with Western and Eurocentric knowledge, values, ideas and skills that are an inherent part of colonised education. This knowledge is described as complicated colonial learning experiences embedded in economic exploitation, social violence and disfigurement of African communities/culture to attain development and modernisation (Luckett 2016). Furthermore, Fanon ([1952] 2008), in his *Black Skin, White Masks*, described colonised knowledge as not only inappropriate for African contexts but also does not recognise African knowledge to be essential to frame how and what students learn and become. Hence, Fanon ([1952] 2008) argued that it is critical to decolonise the minds of the students in African education systems, which have long been based on 'the juxtaposition of the black and white races' and provide instead education that can recognise and liberate black students from complex Eurocentric learning experiences. In other words, Fanon's position is that black students must shift away from existing academic colonialism. This resonates with Jansen's (2017) six conceptions of decolonisation in higher education for recognition of social justice in learning.

According to Jansen (2017), decentring the existing HEIs' curricula that are based on European knowledge is to accommodate and integrate other knowledge to provide additive-inclusive knowledge to the students. This corresponds to decolonising the minds of the pre-service teacher by engaging them in appropriate learning experiences that make them critique and engage in critical thinking relevant to their everyday lives (Adefila et al. 2021; Woldegiorgis, Turner & Brahim 2020).

Several approaches were identified by the participants as fostering more inclusive teacher education. These approaches are in line with Jansen's (2017) view of social justice in decolonised higher education. The paradoxes in colonised education reveal that the discourses on decolonisation of higher education in South Africa assert redefining episteme. These imply that attempts to decolonise curriculum focus on decoloniality, neo-colonialism and philosophical theories in (de)construction of knowledge in higher education (Woldegiorgis et al. 2020). It is believed that the integration of indigenous knowledge does not mean discarding Western knowledge but placing Africa at the centre of learning in the interest of social justice (Mheta, Lungu, & Govender 2018; Mudaly 2018). Knowing about their history, origin and useful African philosophies is necessary for South African students in higher education, as this knowledge enables them to relate and adapt to real situations alongside a Western worldview for more inclusive education (Motsaathebe 2020).

Thus, Africanising teacher education curriculum enables indigenous knowledge systems to be recognised and fused into colonised education to decolonise the dominant Western knowledge in our education system.

Waghid (2021) concurred with Makombe (2021) that there is a need to reform the content of the present curriculum to redefine what is made available to students and how. Heleta (2016) and Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) asserted that indigenous knowledge cannot be disregarded but should be included in teacher education to make learning content for African students more inclusive and relevant to their communities. This is not a simple matter. Le Grange (2016) emphasised that the decolonisation of higher education is a complicated process that has many hurdles to face. Yende (2020) saw the institutional structure, which is one of these, as something that can make or mar the process of the decolonising curriculum in South Africa. Waghid (2021), on the contrary, saw the background and experiences of academics in South Africa's higher institutions as a hindrance to the process of decolonising higher education but considered that through interrogating critique, new curricula for teacher education can be imagined.

Overcoming these hurdles or obstacles requires thorough, comprehensive investigations to determine what, how and why certain structures need to be reformed or refined to produce HEIs that cater for appropriate epistemes. According to Khoo et al. (2020), the South African higher education curriculum is dominated by epistemic injustice and requires intellectual spaces that will promote equality and social justice. Sayed et al. (2017) submitted that teacher education curriculum requires decolonising, so rethinking and (re)imagining teacher education is necessary for teacher education to connect universities and schools. This rethinking is what DHET (2016) described as creating spaces for learning experiences that recognise diversity in students, institutional histories and academic traditions. Teacher education must be more inclusive through a focus on social justice in learning for pre-service teachers.

## ■ Conclusion

Current literature confirms that higher education is complex. However, it is clear that students in higher education have limited exposure to multiple knowledge systems that do not enhance broader students' critical engagements with the knowledge in HEIs. Decolonising the teacher curriculum is critical despite some of the issues revealed by the findings. Firstly, although South African universities appear to support decolonising the teacher education curriculum, they are not doing as much as they could. Several practical steps need to be taken to create awareness of the need for social justice and to implement changes that will ensure more inclusive teacher education. This means that teacher education curricula must accommodate African philosophy, indigenous knowledge systems and other concepts that can promote a decolonised curriculum in South Africa. However, it is important to recognise that decolonising teacher education is a multi-layered process. On the positive side, the decolonisation of higher education is not a new concept among academics and the initial steps towards recreating a new

scholarship for teacher education. This will ensure a teacher education curriculum with appropriately diverse epistemic perspectives.

The findings also highlighted readiness for decolonial changes in teacher education, using curriculum as intellectual space. The process of ensuring recognition of and respect for different groups' indigenous knowledge acknowledges the need for social justice in South Africa's diverse society, which could ensure more inclusive teacher education and the transformation of teacher education (Mudaly 2018). Findings from the participants indicated that few of the present modules have been decolonised, both in content and pedagogies used to engage pre-service teachers in critical thinking. The attempts at decolonising these few modules by the participants are a good reflection of Jansen's (2017) framework of decolonisation as an additive-inclusive knowledge concept, which focuses on social justice. The university concerned will have to make more effort to transform the teacher education curriculum into a deep critical engaging curriculum for a true genuine epistemic openness.

To conclude, this study provides some recommendations for transformative curriculum-making within teacher education. There is a need to establish appropriate professional learning communities among academics to explore avenues to transform episteme and methods of facilitating knowledge among pre-service teachers. Conferences on the decolonisation of higher education must be organised to engage academics in discourses on the process. The necessary funding must also be provided to resource the decolonising process and to ensure that there is an effective mechanism to monitor the progress being made.

# Visualising human rights and diversity through critical art education

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## ■ Abstract

Visual narratives created and used in critical art pedagogies are ‘socio-political artefacts’ capable of illuminating hegemonic influences and prejudices affecting human rights and diversity. Human practices often reflect and enact stereotypes and stigmas. Social prejudices such as gender inequality and human rights violations are often presented without contestations or reflective thinking. Visual narratives are powerful tools in art pedagogy, particularly the impact of their reception to conscientise resistance and subversion of violating human rights. Visual narratives are important sources of information for (re)imagination and

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interpretation of meanings that reinforce or subvert certain identities, influencing empathetic reflection. Human rights and diversity issues depicted in visual narratives are crucial to pay attention not only to what kind of prejudices are available but also to how they are interpreted and reviewed. The central questions guiding our analysis are as follows: How are human rights and diversity issues in visual gender representations revealed, and what has been said about hegemonic representations of human rights and diversity in academic and scholarship reception? We raise questions intended to form a transformative art pedagogy that acknowledges diversity and provokes the ability to conceptualise issues to alter schemes of gender oppression. Guided by interpretivist philosophy, this chapter considers how visual interpretation provides a spontaneous exploration of how teaching and learning through visual narratives can reveal human rights and diversity contestations and foster respective mitigations. We do this by mapping the context of human rights activism using visual narratives and activism in pedagogy. Our discussion pursues to advance academic understanding and use of visual narratives in pedagogy, demonstrating how human rights and diversity prejudices are reconstructed.

## ■ Introduction

Critical art pedagogy is a powerful transformative instructional methodology that helps to shape our understanding of contemporary prejudices and injustices, providing possibilities for social contestations, identities and subversion practices. Furthermore, visual narratives created and used in critical art pedagogies are 'socio-political artefacts' that illuminate hegemonic influences (Borgerson & Schroeder 2002, p. 571). Visual narratives are potent tools in art pedagogy, particularly the impact of their reception. Thus, when considering how human rights and diversity issues are represented in visual narratives, it is crucial to pay attention not only to what kind of prejudices are available but also to how they are interpreted and reviewed. Visual narratives are important sources of information, (re)imagination and interpretation of meanings that reinforce or subvert some identities, influencing present and future empathetic reflections (Borgerson & Schroeder 2002). Social prejudices, such as those manifested in gender inequality and human rights violations, are often presented without contestations or reflective thinking. Nevertheless, these representations are filled with value (Barnet 2010). Human practices, collectives and spaces often reflect and enact stereotypes and stigmas. The central question guiding our analysis is: How are human rights and diversity issues in visual gender representations revealed, and what has been said about hegemonic representations of human rights and diversity in academic and scholarship reception? We raise questions intended to form a transformative art pedagogy that acknowledges diversity in training art teacher education students' ability to conceptualise issues of human rights for political mobilisation to alter schemes of gender oppression.

In response to the aforementioned question, this chapter also critically reviews how critical art pedagogy scholars consider the use and interpretation of visual narratives in contesting masculine hegemonic prejudices as contravening human rights and diversity. Interpretivist philosophy, which guides this chapter, considers how the reception of visual narratives provides a spontaneous exploration of human rights and diversity contestations, particularly of gender-based injustices and prejudices.

The main theoretical concepts from relevant literature on human rights education and critical art pedagogy are engaged first. We do this by mapping the context of human rights activism using visual narratives and activism in pedagogy. Our discussion advances an academic understanding and use of visual narratives in pedagogy, demonstrating how human rights discrepancies are reconstructed. In particular, we consider the unjustifiable role of hegemony in violating human rights and diversity displayed in the visual narratives. We provide a broad reading of human rights and gender hegemonic practices in literature, underscoring what appears to have been ignored.

## ■ Human rights in diversity

Debates on liberalism and multiculturalism are often predicated on engagement between human rights and the cultural claims of diversity (Bentley 2003). In the formulation of liberal legislations or equitable norms and values, people have to oscillate between these two frequently incompatible claims and formulate values and legislation that are sensitive to the rights of diversity while still protecting the rights of vulnerable people. Modern society's individualism and freedom quest provide numerous contexts for reflection on questions about human rights and diversity or multiculturalism. Claims grounded in liberalism and multiculturalism are frequent, loud and often quite stubborn to reconcile with human rights protection and accommodating diversity. Thus, it is difficult to strike a balance between the claims of gender equity and economic activities. Patriarchal hegemony in families contradicts economic activities or roles, in accordance with established norms and traditions, and is not compatible with the quest for individual human rights. According to Bentley (2003), 'liberalism opposes the idea of group rights, as liberalism takes individuals as its primary subjects of rights', and so, the good of an individual must always count against the claims of a group or a culture.

Kambarami (2006) asserted that traditional African culture and law are largely informed by the norms of patriarchy. Heteronormative prejudices imply that female rights and autonomy are infringed upon in numerous ways. For the purpose of this chapter, the infringement of female rights is particularly linked to power, authority and autonomy in marriage and society. Decision-making, control of resources and independence of females are undermined in a patriarchal society. This unequal capacity of females in African customs has

come into conflict with calls for human rights and diversity acceptance. The problem has permeated into various aspects of society and the economy. There is low female representation in industry and commerce, education and politics being driven by the capacity defined in the features of African customary law. Furthermore, Bennett (1991, p. 325) indicated that the most sensitive indicators of hegemonic power relations and the inferior position of females are especially evident in property ownership. Females lack proprietary capacity, have limited access to the means of production and also lack the opportunity to acquire property. Such a conflict of gender values can be a limitation to individual human rights. It is, however, a collective right in a patriarchal culture exercised without coercion (Bentley 2003).

This chapter examines the imagined fantasies of gaining gender equity and recognition of diversity, which are sometimes irreconcilable and conflicting as a result of a conflict between the parties that engender them. The retention of some gender-classified 'norms and practices, at the expense of more vulnerable members of a group' (Bentley 2003) is in some sense justified on the basis of patriarchy. Gender equity and diversity are embodied in the critical analysis of visual images created in our society, which contest these hegemonic practices against individual human rights. We argue that a teleological assessment of artefacts produced in society, particularly by art teacher education students, reflects the human rights in diversity dilemma.

## ■ Gender and critical art

A visual analysis by Erving Goffman (1976) of gender in advertisements is still very relevant for its contributions though now seemingly outdated. Goffman's analysis of gender displays was a breakthrough in showing that there is a gendered hierarchy among characters in advertising. Prevalent hegemonic masculinity and heteronormative practices between males and females were demonstrated through the mitigation of distance, coercion and hostility. In all the displays, female subordination was detailed through various commissioned means.

In a postcolonial context, critical gender displays, according to Keifer-Boyd (2010), reflect that gender constructions are political. The displays expose the changed politics of gender as a means to contest internalised hegemony. That is, in order for identity change politics to occur, all those involved in the transformation need to acknowledge gender diversity. The politics of gender constructions can be exposed by examining visual narratives and identifying power relations (Hellman & Ulla 2019).

The main goal of engaging gender issues in art pedagogy and visual narratives is to reach out and join global research and scholarship efforts to end gender-related stereotypes, exploitation and oppression. When inequality and cultural ignorance are socially accepted, there is little motivation for students and teachers to be bridge builders.

Critical art pedagogy seeks alternative visions, not limited to stereotypes of gender, but also includes all prejudices affecting the human race (Geber 2009). It enables humankind to exercise change and gain freedom. Visual narratives reflecting human rights issues affect everybody. Francisco de Goya in his painting *The Third of May* (see Figure 7.1) portrayed the agony of facing merciless death at the hands of armed officers with no defence. The innocent, defenceless population reaches a point of surrender to accept their fate of being the subject in this dominant visual narrative that exploits human rights. It is everyone's responsibility to make human rights visible and to seek alternative pathways.

The critical art interrogated in this chapter promotes and encourages a thoughtful awareness of how visual narratives (re)imagine the aspect of gender in human rights. We present critical art pedagogy where students can explore their own lives within a diverse population in terms of gender inclinations and human rights. These strategies emphasise issues of gender equity, which is intertwined with social, economic and environmental human



Source: Francisco Goya, *The Third of May, 1808* in Madrid, 1808, 1814–15, oil on canvas, 8' 9" × 13' 4" (Museo del Prado, Madrid, photo: Botaurus, public domain). Retrieved from <https://smarthistory.org/goya-third-of-may-1808> and [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El\\_tres\\_de\\_mayo\\_de\\_1808\\_en\\_Madrid.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El_tres_de_mayo_de_1808_en_Madrid.jpg), available in the public domain.

**FIGURE 7.1:** *The Third of May* by Francisco de Goya.



rights, and the premise that gender equity in diversity is a cultural variable conditioned by social and political demands. Learning activities in critical art pedagogy involve exposing culturally learned meanings and power relations that engage and surround the creation, consumption, valuing and dissemination of postcolonial images concerning gendered constructions of human rights. Gender studies have evolved significantly in the last century, while West and Zimmermann (1987) and Butler (1990) have influenced critical gender studies profoundly.

## ■ Art and feminism

Gender equality and transformation are critical imperatives in patriarchal societies, particularly considering the prevailing gendered social, political and economic imbalances. The goal of feminist art educators is to teach with the lens of gender equity in critical art pedagogy. Critical art pedagogy guided by postcolonial theory exploits transformative and resistance ideologies exhibited in activist art to foster critical consciousness and emancipation in teacher education (Shor 1992).

Feminist art contests human rights equity and multiple gender recognition. Artworks include *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima* (1972) – Betye Saar; *The Dinner Party* (1979) – Judy Chicago; *The Blue Bra Girls* (2012) and *Amer Ghada, Sophie* (2009) – Mary Sibande; and *Black female body series Untitled, Women’s Day* (2014) and *Love in the Time of Afrophobia* (2015) – Sthembile Msezane.

Feminists have used art to raise critical consciousness and promoting critical thinking to subvert inequality, social injustices, oppression and exclusion (Zimmerman 1991). Emancipatory and anti-oppressive mechanisms inherent in visual interpretation, imaginative and creative practices can be exploited against socio-cultural, political and economic gender disparities (Dziwa 2016). Feelings of resentment, discontentment and displeasure brewed from gender inequality, oppression and exclusion of females according to patriarchal values have generated resistance and activist reactions or purging through violence, demonstrations, uprising and activist art.

Female exclusion in patriarchy fails to recognise and promote positive female attributes. It is envisaged that critical art pedagogy, which promotes contemporary feminist art, provides a democratic learning space at the tertiary level to develop a critical consciousness of human rights and diversity.

Critical art pedagogy in teacher education offers a critical space to examine limiting perceptions of gender beliefs and attitudes and the role that images from visual art and culture play in reinforcing and challenging feminism and gender stereotypes (Garber 2003; Keifer-Boyd 2003; Klein 1991; Pariser & Zimmerman 1990). The social constructions of gendered roles and

representation (Keifer-Boyd 2010), the exposure of inequalities (Etherington 2013; Klein 1991) and the impact of hidden curricula (Garber 2003; Güngör 2020; Klein 1991) can also be examined through critical art pedagogy where gender issues are central to the curricula. Attention to gender within the art teacher education curriculum and pedagogy is vital for raising awareness and developing critically reflexive art educators who will be in a better position to reconcile limiting beliefs and be committed to gender and feminist justice in theory and practice.

In the following section, an empirical study with art teacher education students will be explored to shed more light on the intricacies and possibilities of this debate. We will conclude by providing recommendations and possible ways to integrate critical art pedagogy in promoting critical consciousness and human rights and diversity.

## ■ Methodology

### ■ Participants

Sixteen participants (eight males and eight females), who were second-year in-service art student teachers at the Great Zimbabwe University, were identified considering an equal balance of male and female participants and using recommendations for purposes of gender equality (Pariser & Zimmerman 1990). The participants were selected on the basis that they were senior students who had studied visual aesthetics, which would likely enable them to make informed visual interpretations. The *Zimbabwean Legal Age of Majority Act of 1982* stipulates that any person above eighteen-years-old is an adult. The maturity/age criterion is based on the assumption that teacher education students older than eighteen-years-old are aware of and are likely to have informed beliefs about gender and have experienced discriminatory and gender-based ideological prejudices. Thus, the selected participants were also experienced in methods of art interpretation and were familiar with socio-cultural gender issues.

### ■ Ethical clearance

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education Sciences at the North-West University (NWU) under ethics number: NWU-HS-2014-0197.

### ■ Prompts

The data-collection was first initiated through the administration of researcher-developed prompts. The following two prompts were communicated in writing to all participants: (1) create a visual artwork through painting expressing a

*gendered theme*; and (2) select images or photographs from local museums, galleries, magazines, books or the Internet, which you believe reflects gender asymmetry (imbalance or bias) experienced in Zimbabwe.

In the first prompt, participants were guided by a definition of a gendered theme as a theme expressing any connotative meaning(s) that the participants attribute to a wide range of behaviours, attitudes and social roles that describe how males and females interrelate socially, culturally, economically and professionally. The participants were asked to describe whether the relationship and perceptions between males and females at various levels were acceptable, appropriate or desirable, that is, they were asked to articulate their attitudes towards gender, human rights and prejudices. In the second prompt, participants were again guided by a definition of *gender asymmetry*, that is, any connotative meaning(s) that the participants attribute to contentious relations, disparities, conflicts and pervasive inequalities expressed between the two genders.

A participatory interpretive visual research methodology was used in the data-collection process based on the assumption that the engagement in the creation and viewing of artworks utilises the emotions. The researchers were particularly interested in participants' responses that included: (1) the identification of feelings that are associated with their resistance to gender dichotomy and (2) the challenging of gender stereotyping. Both these responses would reflect an awareness of a critical consciousness that is necessary for initiating change and addressing gender inequity.

## ■ Images

A total of 32 unsigned visual images created by participants were gathered, thus protecting the participants' anonymity. Sixteen images were created during the first prompt, and sixteen additional images were collected by the participants during the second prompt.

## ■ Focus groups

In the subsequent stages of data-collection, two focus group interviews were conducted (one for each prompt) to elicit details from the participants' responses. The focus group discussions (two hours long) occurred with all sixteen participants and were held in a designated space on the university campus. Proceedings were audio recorded with permission from the participants and for later transcriptions by researchers. Each participant was allowed to talk about their own image for five minutes; other participants could randomly add their views and feedback to their peers. The researchers took notes during these discussions.

## ■ Discourse analysis

The ensuing transcription was analysed by process of coding and categorisation. Data were analysed by the researchers using critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 2001) for the transcribed textual data; critical visual discourse analysis (CVDA) was used for the visual data. These methods of data analyses were deemed relevant because they revealed deep layers of plural meanings and hidden implications of contesting gender inequalities as well as other socio-cultural and political power ideologies represented in the visual images. CDA focuses on how societal power relations are established through language use. CDA was therefore used to analyse dialogue relating to gender conflicts and disparities emerging from the transcriptions (Fairclough 2001). Three coding processes were used, namely, (1) descriptive (2) *in vivo* and (3) emotion coding (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña 2014). Descriptive codes such as 'doing feminine/masculine domestic chores' were assigned to text that described the so-called gender normative behaviours. *In vivo* coding was most commonly used to label participants' personal behaviours and attributes such as 'a natural leader'. Emotion coding was used to label participants' gender-based attitudes and emotions and to explore their intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences and actions towards heteronormative and often patriarchal roles such as 'dislike manual labour'. The codes were then synthesised to form categories, links and interconnections between the data (Richards & Morse 2013). Other considerations in coding discourse data included: (1) discourse as a discursive practice that focused on the analysis of the production, the context of production and who produced the text; (2) the gender of participants, relative to gender resistance, and who challenged and contested heteronormative practices and (3) the analysis of themes, drawing typologies, testing emergent understandings and searching for alternative explanations and understanding of the phenomena followed.

A CVDA method based on various visual interpretation methods was used as informed by Fairclough (2001) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). Three levels (i.e. macro, meso and micro) of discourse context were used to interpret visual content (Fairclough 2001).

## ■ Visual analysis

How images affect us as viewers hinges on the larger social, political and cultural contexts in which they are viewed. Employing the following criteria, the researchers were able to interrogate the representations of visual data as well as how the visual data enabled participants to consider issues of gender inequities and to reconcile their beliefs and assumptions about gender. Considerations for the analysis of visual data included the composition of the image, content and design. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), the compositional meaning(s) of images are realised through four interrelated

systems: (1) *information value* that addressed issues of *salience* achieved through size, colour, tone, focus, perspective, overlap and repetition of visual elements that include their overall visual weight (symmetrical or asymmetrical); (2) *contextual framing* of a setting, scene or narrative; (3) *context of production and exhibition*, where the visual text was created, the artist who created it; and (4) *mode of reception* that considers the connotative processes of the viewers. Gleaning from Hellman and Lind (2019), a meta-interpretive strategy allows for a more critical reading to transform stereotypical and binary thinking.

The meaning that participants attached to the visual representations indicates how they have interpreted their gender culture and the changes they hope for. This critical-phenomenological study also aimed to establish how gender constructions are reflected in the visual displays. Thus, visual displays reflect the participants' perceptions, feelings and fantasies about gender. The gender display categories that emerged are based on the frames of reference which influenced the meaning participants attached to gender ideologies in visual images. Framing in visual terms refers to the physical and metaphysical parameters that the visual image delineates and which directs the focus of the viewer (Goffman 1987; Christmann 2008). Framing is also defined as the psychological effect of cognitive bias that directs people's reaction to particular visual stimuli and therefore defines an idea or concept (Gibson 2006). Although the study reflected other ideologies of doing gender, this chapter focuses on the ideologies of undoing gender in expressions such as gender identity reversals and breaking stereotypes that reflected a quest for addressing human rights.

## ■ Human rights representations in visual narratives

Achieving gender equality, human rights and diversity in a patriarchal culture that is heteronormative in nature is seemingly irreconcilable. Visual presentations in critical art and feminists' activist art generate debate that visualise possibilities for equity. This has so far been developed as a theoretical debate in the chapter and will be illustrated with examples of visual narratives produced by art teacher education students in the empirical study. The visual narratives demonstrate postcolonial desires to overturn gender oppressions in patriarchal, heteronormative practices to equal rights. In the following section, we begin discussing displays portraying quests for equal human rights along gender issues.

## ■ Gender-role stereotype reversal

This gender identity reversal category also emerged from the data and shows a paradigm reversal in the gender-role dichotomy, division of labour and

gender attitudes of doing gender. The category shows that participants' gender constructions subvert and undermine traditional gender-role stereotype identities. It emerged from the visual narratives that there are critical views about gender polarity, which critique, question and oppose the stigmatised views of gender and propagate equality and neutrality. These perceptions were expressed in visual form and visual displays. The undoing and redoing of gender roles are evident in the visual narratives produced for the study where desires for gender-role reversal are expressed, for instance, by females fighting for dominance and the reversal of gender roles (see Figure 7.2). The displays entail that there is no hegemonic hierarchical relationship between and among elements. The contestations for gender shifts and the struggle for gender equality are not normally associated with males but rather with females. Females are disgruntled with the stereotypes that appear to be against them. Thus, they aspire towards gaining symbolic power, strength and leadership that are often associated with males.

Contesting for human rights through reversing stereotypes was evident in the visual narratives produced by the art teacher education students for the study. The visual narrative entitled *Tree family* shows a female fruit-bearing tree with its young ones, ironically without a male tree in the *Tree family* composition. The female participant argued that only one female fruit-bearing tree dominated the entire visual frame showing it as reproducing fruit and procreating other young trees independent of males who are excluded from the picture frame. The exclusion of masculine subjects reverses the stereotypical importance often attached to males in families, especially with female single parenting on the rise. The single mother tree can constitute a family and still be able to procreate and protect the young ones up to maturity without the overarching presence of the male figure.

The shifts in terms of the stereotypes associated with the division of labour, identity and attitudes subvert and undermine gender-role stereotyping and responsibilities, thus expanding and altering the conventional oppressive norms associated with patriarchal gender roles. The visual narratives demonstrate that both males and females have a critical consciousness about gender equity and diversity. Bourdieu (2001) acknowledged that significant changes have occurred in the wake of third-wave feminism, where males are now also involved in the fight for gender equality. With changes in the family structure and education system, more females are becoming educated and gainfully employed and are emancipated from the traditional masculine dominance by becoming leaders, decision-makers and providers of income.

## ■ Gender equality

A desire for equal gender responsibility was prominently reflected in visual narratives in many ways. The reversal of the traditional hierarchical, asymmetrical relationship was evident in some of the visual images produced

and collected for the study. An image entitled *Bible study*, which was produced by a female participant, shows the gender equality fantasies as expressed in presenting an image with equal numbers of males and females doing the same task. She had this to say about the picture:

There are two males and two females who seem to be discussing something from the Bible because they are all holding Bibles. It means that what men can do, woman can also do that. Bible study brings happiness to both sexes as expressed by the faces of participants in the picture. (Dziwa 2016, p. 216)

Subjects in the image are sitting on the same level with a relatively equal weighting, thereby showing equality. Similar sentiments were expressed by another female participant when she elucidated on the image of a band with males and females as showing gender equality. She elaborated that:

The image treats men and women equally since they are all actively involved, although the band is being led by a female. But it's a career done by both sexes. (Dziwa 2016, p. 217)

Gender equity displays were also expressed by showing males and females sharing domestic responsibilities by working in the kitchen, caring for children and assuming protective roles. For instance, an image of the chicken family also evokes sentiments of equal gender responsibility for the protection of the small chicken, which is placed between the parents. The cock and hen have their baby chicken between them which shows that protecting the young ones is an equal collaborative effort between the parents.

Another image entitled *Work mates* shows males and females of the same profession, all looking confidently straight into the viewer's eyes. The assertive gaze shows power and dominance, which are shared by both males and females because they are part of the same team. Thus, the image subverts gender dichotomy both in terms of professionalism and assertiveness.

Displaying subjects with equal visual weight, shape, form and colour is a typical expression of an egalitarian perspective in displaying sentiments about gender equality. The image *Fish family* shows a male and female fish but the two are difficult to distinguish because of their identical shape, colour, form and size. This can figuratively resemble a family with identical roles or gender equality. Both males and females have equal opportunities in terms of learning and sporting activities, and hence, there is equal room to do equal opportunities. The images demonstrate displays of contesting heterosexual inequality. An egalitarian perspective was one of the prominent gender displays in the visual narratives produced and collected by the participants which expressed redoing and undoing of gender as a human rights issue.

## ■ Contesting for feminine recognition

Feminine desire for identity recognition which entails altering stereotypes and unfair segregatory roles was also expressed in the visual narratives presented

in the study. The female gender has traditionally unfairly occupied a second-citizen status in many spheres of life including family decisions, education and politics. Berger (2009) argued that females have for long looked up to males as heroes and emulated the masculine authority and dominance and social recognition they enjoyed. However, females are also struggling to find their own identities and gender reversal may entail a desire to imitate males. This process is called mimetic desire (Berger 2009). The image produced by female participant entitled *Life in the rural areas* shows that there is attention directed at the female who is placed intentionally by a female artist at the centre of the image in the foreground. She is wearing a brightly coloured dress and becomes the focal point, apparently establishing an identity for herself ahead of the male, who is pushed to the far right and wearing dull clothes.

*Melancholy and mystery of the street* by De Chirico Giorgio (1914) shows a young female fighting traditional feminine fear and sense of insecurity by appearing to be at ease playing in a lonely street. The image looks like a nightmare with empty deserted buildings and a shadow of a mysterious figure approaching – but the girl is at play. A female participant suggested that the artwork is of significant gender value to her because it reflects a breakthrough by females to challenge the stigma of fear labelling them by society. The female in the image wears a masculine dark colour which also breaks the tradition of associating females with bright colours.

The female subjects in some of the visual images are struggling for their own identities within marriage. In a presentation of a wedding scene, the female subjects in the image have an assertive look that demonstrates authority and attention-seeking, while the male subject has a withdrawn gaze of inferiority, shying away from us, the viewers. The bride's portrait is placed high above that of the groom in an atypical display of subverting gender hierarchy. Furthermore, female subjects are presented deliberately as outnumbering the male subjects in the frame to pronounce the fought-for value and identity of females in the marriage.

*Your body is a battlefield* (1989), by Barbra Kruger, a contemporary feminist artist, was selected by a male participant for creating gendered imagery displaying a fight for identity. The image shows how the female body has become a battleground for identity. Female identity is a hot debate: males seem to be fighting for their agenda to keep females oppressed, while females are desperately fighting for their rights to be equal to males.

*Your body is a battlefield* shows a female face cut into halves with two different identities portrayed; it also shows a caption, viz. Your body is a battleground. The inclusion of a text is a crucial way to communicate through images in multimodal presentations. Traditionally, males dominated females and shadowed their desires and interests to such an extent that females felt entirely subjugated. They lived partly for themselves and partly for males; the



image suggests that females now want their own identity as a human rights concern. Females are fighting for a true representation of themselves with their real identity, not the semi-processed negative film image shown in the right hemisphere of the image.

## ■ Gender-role reversal

Gender-role reversal or gender-role switch displays also demonstrate the subversion and contestation for human rights. Males have traditionally been acting as being aggressive and dominating. In Figure 7.2, the image titled *Domestic violence*, which was created by a female participant, showed a female's bravery to challenge and beat her husband in an emancipatory action and a display of gender-role reversal. The artwork shows a critical view of females who were traditionally viewed as being passive, obedient, docile and humble.

The visual display brings awareness to males that there are some females who are more powerful than them and can take up roles and responsibilities with equal competencies that have traditionally been meant for males. These



Source: Female participant 6 (prompt 1) *Domestic violence*, April 2015, poster on board 58 cm × 42 cm (in possession of researcher). First published in Dziwa 2016. Republished with suitable permission from the participant and researcher.

**FIGURE 7.2:** *Domestic violence*, by female participant 6 (prompt 1).

roles include being aggressive, taking the lead and providing security and protection. A violent gender reversal of aggressive roles is also seen in Figure 7.3, image entitled *Judith Slaying Holofernes*.

Artemisia Gentileschi (1621), in *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (Figure 7.3), portrays an act of gender reversal with females fighting aggressively to protect their nation. This image subverts the norm of feminine passivity and submissiveness from a female artist. Judith was moved by the critical need to save her people from the Assyrian army, which was led by Holofernes, the general. The act could have required a strong army of armed males to fight and protect their nation, but she took it upon herself as a female. She pretended to bring good news to Holofernes and found an opportunity to slay him. This act saved her people, changing the status quo and liberating them from captivity. Thus, gender-role reversal displays of females performing roles traditionally labelled masculine demonstrated gender shifts in biblical narratives. In another similar painting, a



Source: Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Slaying Holofernes*, 1620/21, oil on canvas, 162.5 cm x 199 cm (Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy). Retrieved from <https://smarthistory.org/gentileschi-judith-slaying-holofernes/>, available in the public domain.

**FIGURE 7.3:** *Judith and Holofernes* by Gentileschi, Artemisia (1620–1621).

male artist Lucas Cranach the Elder (1530) expressed the same sentiments and feelings of female aggression showing a heroine in Judith with the head of Holofernes. The model, Judith is seen as unmoved and separated from real feminine expressions of fear, especially with regard to murder. Therefore, derived from these gender displays, it is clear that both male and female artists can express the fight for human rights explicitly through visual images.

Again, one could refer to the analysis of *Olympia* by Édouard Manet (1863). The traditional associations of sexual objectification of females as prostitutes seeking attention and depending on males are reversed. The female looks coldly indifferent, not like a prostitute waiting for and welcoming approaching clients. Olympia stares down at the viewer, indicating that she is in position of power and that we (as observers) are subordinate to her. She refuses to be a commodity as she blocks her pubic area from an unwelcome intruder. This gesture subverts the patriarchal tradition of female submissiveness and sexual objectification. The female has power in her assertive gaze at the viewer, unlike the sensuous, inviting and seductive look in Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538). This further highlights how visual displays can show the reversal of socially constructed gender prejudices and meanings.

Another display of gender-role reversal by a male participant entitled *The widowed man* shows a male holding a baby boy. He is hiding his face from public view for fear of public condemnation for fulfilling an unexpected child-caring role, namely, comforting and nurturing a baby. The artist reiterated that the artwork shows gender reversal because carrying a baby is not the responsibility of males; that is why the male shown is hiding his face and is sad. The fact that he is holding the baby shows that it is possible and can be done effectively and responsibly. Bourdieu (2001) suggested that through relations of reciprocity and mutual recognition, the symbolic violence of masculine domination can be evaded. This will naturally usher in gender-role reversals, equality, female identity recognition and gender-role shifts.

## ■ Conclusion

The art student teachers who had an opportunity during the data-gathering process to interpret visual images at the levels of production and reader-viewer heightened their awareness of symbolic meanings of gender injustices when they encoded and decoded meaning from visual images. As the artists, they had a chance to explore and search from within themselves the personal gender meanings important to them as they created and encoded visual narratives. Also, when they collected images that they interpreted to have meanings of gender injustices, they again had the privilege to deconstruct the images and decode meaning important to them by exploring their engraved gender precepts that they brought to viewing and visual interpretation.

Being guided by a critical interpretivist philosophy, the study explored the gender meanings which the student teachers constructed – those interpretations they have developed and experienced over time and which are important to them (Roth & Metha 2002). Visualising human rights in critical art education is a process that entails critical awareness of the prejudices surrounding gender dichotomy. Visual pedagogy in teacher education is an enabling space for social transformation.

The study has heightened our critical awareness of the existence of oppressive and unfair gender-polarised practices in a patriarchal society by using visual images as a tool for creating critical consciousness. Through interdisciplinary engagement with theories of interpretation, gender theory and visual semiotic theories, the study revealed a deeper understanding of the polarised gender constructions in society which are dichotomous and asymmetrical. Human rights injustices prevalent in a patriarchal society are hierarchical and oppressive to the feminine gender category. By creating a platform through visual narratives, individual and focus group interviews, the study developed a deepened awareness in students of gender inequality, injustices and the critical need for human rights intervention.

Reflecting from the data and the visual narratives in particular, gender inequality and power asymmetry became vividly evident among teacher education students. The study contributes to an understanding of the consequences of gender inequality, injustice and dichotomy in our society as evidenced from images showing an asymmetrical balance of the gender poles and females fighting for equality. Parsa (2013) alluded to the reality that the critical interpretivist paradigm allows critical reflection on and analysis of experiences that require a change and broadening of gender discourse. This study's relevance is lodged in its future potential to increase awareness at teacher education level and of learners at primary and secondary school levels whom the student teachers will teach, hence broadening the critical consciousness of the social injustices that exist at all these levels. Teachers should therefore be made critically aware and address global and local concerns in the classroom because their sphere of influence as agents of transformation is broad (Ruturo et al. 2013).

Engagement with imagery helps to combat learners' stereotypical attitudes towards gender, and they are made to be critically conscious of the gender discrepancy at an early age and strive for means to eradicate the dichotomy and to emancipate themselves. Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead (eds. 2007) also suggested that:

Societal and educational practices should seek to produce transformative processes and practices that will concern, engage and benefit women and men equally by systematically integrating explicit attention to issues of gender into all aspects of an organisation's work. (p. 124)

The art class can therefore be a place for mainstreaming and critical conscientising and the development of gender identity and gender-role equity (Shor 1992). Gender inequality or other forms of oppression and injustices are such a big part of our daily lives in Zimbabwean culture that it is no surprise that it shows up in the art classroom. We now turn in the next section to the methodological contributions that we recommend based on the findings from the study discussed.

From the findings of this study and the conclusions drawn, this study makes recommendations for the adoption of critical visual pedagogy in teacher education as an enabling space for social transformation and human rights.

Gender-role stereotyping, hierarchy and asymmetry may never be completely eradicated from our society but students with more knowledge about the historical and cultural information of the artwork may be able to develop a sensitivity towards gender human rights when interpreting visual images. One of the ways in which participants interpreted their artwork was by expressing their personal gender beliefs and values. Artworks also reflect the values of society and culture, sometimes reinforcing and sometimes contesting gender stereotypes. Art educators can evaluate how students' values and beliefs determine how they interpret an image and sensitise them to possible prejudices. It is advisable in critical visual pedagogy that one should understand and comment on art in relation to the cultural and gender-related context in which it is produced and received.

Critical visual pedagogy at teacher education level requires a triadic strategy that includes the identification of hidden frames or social prejudices, the critique and the creation of critical consciousness to initiate problem-solving. The attempt to identify hidden frames or social prejudices is a crucial initial step towards critical consciousness. The idea that visual images and art-making are forms of knowledge in themselves underpins the theorisation of critical visual pedagogy in the classroom (O'Donoghue 2011). When using visual images, teachers should grapple with questions like: What is represented in the visual image? How do the images provide a new understanding about the actors in society? How does the image stress the need for change in society? Such questions probe the examination and critique of the social context that produce problematic social structures and confrontations with injustices. Visual images engage complex forms of knowledge which require attention to what is presented, suggested, imagined and remembered by and through the visual stimuli and how these are interpreted.

By following the exploration of the socio-cultural context, the educational context of critical visual pedagogy may be seen to respond to the goals of a lesson concerning critical consciousness. Such goals draw attention towards creating solutions to contemporary topics in the learning situation at the teacher education level. Teachers should relate to contemporary social issues, diversity and social prejudices. Gleaning from these findings, critical visual pedagogy draws themes for visual analysis, criticism and production that

emanate from contemporary topical issues such as gender, natural disasters (floods or draughts) and epidemics like Ebola and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Using visual images from contemporary visual culture or art history, educators should engage teacher education students in creating awareness, analysing and commenting on the visual images so that these students will in turn inculcate similar sensitivities in their learners. The analysis and interpretation of the visual media can develop art teacher education students' inquiry skills to explore embedded social and cultural constructs.

Art as a discipline can be used as an agent of critical consciousness at teacher education level to equip student teachers who are agents of change. This is in line with the goals of the Seoul agenda (2010), which state that arts education has an important role to play in the constructive transformation of educational systems that are struggling to meet the needs of learners in a rapidly changing world characterised by intractable social and cultural injustices. The study has revealed that art education can also make direct contributions to addressing social and cultural challenges other than gender injustices. The importance of visual images and visual literacy in this contemporary visual culture is changing, yet it does not correlate with the experiences at the teacher education level in Zimbabwe. Enhancing the sensitive use of contemporary visual images in critical visual pedagogy develops critical awareness, which might have never occurred.

Art provides an opportunity in critical visual pedagogy to pose previously unasked questions and to visualise possibilities in terms of visuals and in terms of education in general that might never have arisen otherwise. Therefore, art instruction can be used to support and achieve liberating ends and the promotion of critical consciousness. This can be achieved by reuniting the art world of high culture and the student art world. Art of the dominant culture and other art forms can be integrated into classroom discourse as a non-hierarchical category of human achievement. Gender constructions or other social prejudices can be effectively analysed through visual displays produced in the art world or in the student art world. In contemporary perspectives on art, artworks are viewed as inviting multiple socio-cultural interpretations valuable for social transformation. That is, an art object has to be understood in the relevance of its socio-cultural context and not as an independent art object.

Art student teachers, in preparation for their practice as art teachers, should be able to establish visual criteria and arrange images in a visual database or archive relating to the social concepts which they want to teach. For instance, in an art history class, one may complement one's teaching by using art forms from around the world. For example, one may use canonical Western art such as Artemisia Gentileschi's *Judith and Holofernes* (1620) (Figure 7.3) and Édouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863) as a database or archive of images, which shows critical gender awareness or critical consciousness. Judith's actions in Gentileschi's painting subvert the tradition of feminine

passivity fighting for human rights. She takes it upon herself to fight aggressively for her nation, which is a more common attribute of masculine behaviour. Thus, the image reverses gender tradition. The feminist reading of paintings can be a base for critical pedagogy. The teachers in the art discipline can present to students such canonised archived images as working examples for specific conscientising topics under discussion. Art teachers should then also be able to substitute words with images and establish a visual language to communicate more effectively about such issues. The combination of images and texts contributes to a more effective sharing of ideas.

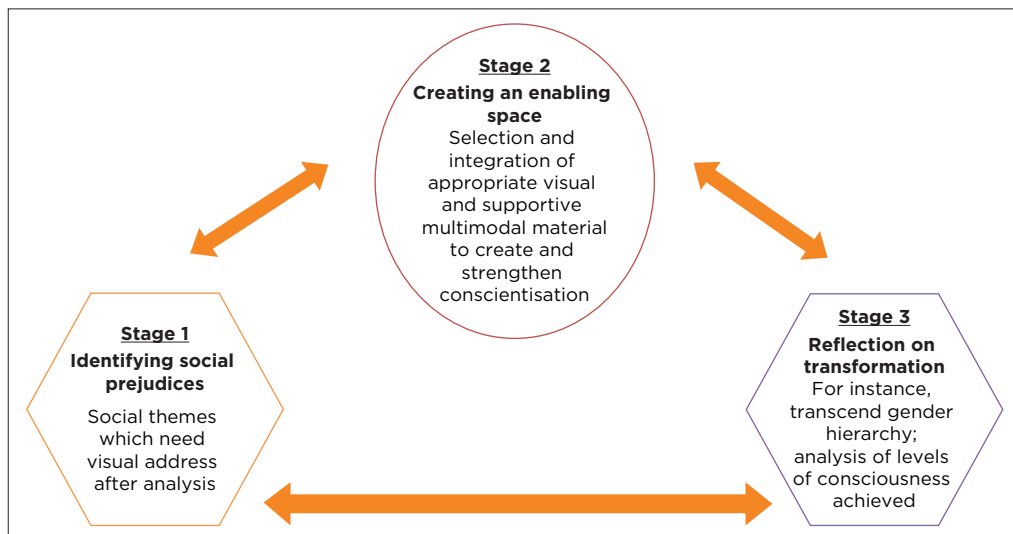
The salient questions that guide the relevance of art in critical consciousness are:

- How can art education create critical consciousness and promote emancipation?
- How do aesthetic preferences, art knowledge and artistic abilities affect how visual images can be used as pedagogy?

According to Elizabeth Bloomfield (2017), art educators:

[N]eed to be ready to address the values and beliefs of their students and of society to generate discussions about how each student can view the same piece of artwork and interpret the message differently. (p. 15)

Students should be exposed to the values and beliefs of human rights and diversity within a historical context and a cultural perspective. When students have a critical way to view artworks and images, such as the one suggested in Figure 7.4, they are more likely to understand when subliminal messages are



Source: Model for critical visual art pedagogy by Dziwa (2016, p. 246).

**FIGURE 7.4:** Model for critical visual art pedagogy.

being sent to them through the images in popular culture (Shor 1996). Teaching students to critically evaluate images is an essential role of the art educator. Scholarly work with images requires research, interpretation, analysis and evaluation skills specific to visual materials. This study, therefore, suggests that these abilities cannot be taken for granted and need to be taught, supported, and integrated into the discipline of art. The teaching and learning in and through visual arts in Zimbabwe become a space for the articulation and challenging of the binaries and stereotypes that have emerged from this study.





# The Herculean task of turning around the socio-politico-moral situation in South Africa through citizenship education

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## ■ Abstract

As part of an ongoing research project that attempts to engage with, explore, understand and explain the possible intersections between citizenship education (CE), human rights and diversity from a mainly conceptual and theoretical perspective, this chapter investigates how CE could be educationally supported and pedagogically braced to help turn around the fast-deteriorating socio-politico-moral situation in South Africa. For this reason, it was decided to set this chapter within the methodological domain of temporality pedagogics. Using an innovative combination of descriptive, naturalistic constitutive, existential, generative historicist, hermeneutic and realistic phenomenology, it explores how the three universal, transcendental

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(sometimes also referred to as 'Platonic') principles of (1) goodness and integrity, (2) truth, proportionality and harmony and (3) beauty and clarity could be employed and developed in Citizen Education programmes to prepare a future citizenry that is determined to pursue excellence wilfully and voluntarily. It is argued that such excellence will be observable in the self-motivated efforts of the next generation to systematically search for, actively promote and realise only the best, the highest, the finest and the aesthetically most beautiful under all circumstances and in all space-time contexts in the intellectual and spiritual life of their people. This chapter suggests that the continuous pursuit of excellence (through CE) will undoubtedly break open new horizons. It will make it possible for a new category of intellectual and spiritual heroes, leaders and role models (other than, e.g. the usual parade of football stars and Olympic athletes) to be also duly recognised and officially acknowledged by the citizenry.

## ■ Introduction

This book chapter was born from the author's personal growing concern about the socio-societal-political and moral decay that seems to be either the product of a collapse of the democratic project in South Africa (and other countries similarly afflicted) or that could be the symptom of an impending large-scale collapse of democracy. An examination of the situation brought me to the conviction that two strategies could be followed to address, and hopefully turn around, the situation regarding the state of our democracy. One possible strategy could entail the reconceptualisation of the entire situation so as to enable a clearer understanding of its motivating dynamics. The second is to suggest practical, hands-on measures that could be employed to turn the situation around, particularly in terms of the CE that is offered in schools. The implementation of these strategies in tandem will require a Herculean effort. This chapter attends to only one of the many Herculean challenges or 'labours' in question, namely, how to revise and reform CE in schools so that its contribution to the envisaged socio-political and moral turn-around in South Africa could be improved.

## ■ Background and problem statement

Like many other countries around the globe, South Africa currently finds itself in a state of widespread societal and social collapse because of a number of socio-politico-moral conditions and also very likely as a result of incompetent government. A perusal of recent press reports reveals that the decay is rife and that it will be very difficult to turn around. The turn-around situation is reminiscent of the challenge faced by the mythical Hercules (Greek: *Herakles*), who had to perform twelve practically impossible 'labours'.

An investigation by the Public Protector late in 2020 revealed that the medical and hospital services in five of the country's provinces had collapsed or were on the verge of collapse (Prince 2021, p. 2). The following is a list of some of the other social, societal, political, economic and moral problems that South Africa has been struggling with for the past two decades. The country placed in 19th position in terms of the prevalence of organised crime (out of the 193 countries renowned worldwide for this phenomenon, position 1 being the worst) (Cilliers 2021, p. 6). In the run-up to the municipal elections in November 2021, a number of prominent politicians and candidates were murdered in by-pass shootings and assassinations (Beukman 2021, p. 20). South Africans constantly find themselves exposed to fake news (Rabe 2021, p. 8). More than 40 schools in Gauteng have no principal because of petty disputes, and another 166 have been managed for years by acting principals (Gregan 2021, p. 7). Many (young) people in South Africa experience environmental problems such as coal burning for electricity generation as 'traumatic' (Tempelhoff 2021, p. 9). Many of these young people are leaving South Africa for other shores because of the current high levels of unemployment (around 43% of all employable people, a growing percentage despite moderate economic growth, and special projects such as the recently announced Presidential Employment Stimulus Plan envisaging the creation of 43 000 job opportunities). The situation has recently been exacerbated by widespread violence, such as the rioting in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng and the gangsterism in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape (Brand-Jonker 2021, p. 14).

Jordaan (2021, p. 13) listed the following as shortcomings in South Africa that seem to indicate that law and order, and hence the democracy in South Africa, might be at the point of no return. Only 27 of the 278 municipalities received a clean audit for the 2019/20 book year, implying that more than 90% of them were dysfunctional. The entire country has practically become a garbage dump: more than 77% of households in rural areas and more than 34% in urban areas regard their surroundings as 'dirty and unhealthy'. According to the Fund for Peace, South Africa has since 2007 fallen 43 places on the index of vulnerable states (currently 89th out of 179 countries, compared to 132nd in 2007). The same index indicates that South Africa has since 2007 fallen 131 places in terms of economic progress as indicated by per capita income, gross national product, employment rate, inflation and failed enterprises.

South Africa is not the only country in the world that suffers from social, societal and moral problems such as those listed. Stornaiuolo and Nicholls (2019, p. 2) list the following as significant global challenges, some of which South Africa shares with other countries: poverty and expanding economic disparities because of neoliberal tendencies, xenophobia, terrorism, new forms of war and international conflict, modern slavery, gender violence, climate change, refugee crises, unequal access to schooling and to digital

technologies (the so-called digital divide), colonialism, racism, white supremacy and many more.

Most (if not all) of the aforementioned seems to point to democratic deconsolidation. When observed against the catalytic backdrop of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic that already had – and continues to have – a devastating and disrupting impact on all social institutions as well as on civil society worldwide it could be argued that in South Africa's case, the initial steady erosion of its fledgling democratic project has over the past decade or so and, especially since the first hard COVID-19-related lockdown of the country in March 2020, deteriorated into a state of such democratic decay, that we can no longer talk about a state of democratic deconsolidation, *per se*. Instead, we might be obligated to start debating a possible state of democratic 'disconsolidation'. The independent political commentator and historian, Leopold Scholtz (2021), summarises this lamentable state of affairs as follows: 'To claim that things are not going well in South Africa, is just as obvious as to claim that when it rains, you will get wet [...]'.<sup>4</sup>

It is clear from the discussion that we have now arrived at a point where it has become crucially important to rethink socially, politically and morally just, and pedagogically justifiable ways of bringing into the world a confident new generation of young adults who have been enabled and capacitated to understand their civic responsibilities and obligations as novice citizens, and who might be able to contribute to the socio-politico-moral turn-around of the country. In doing so, we will have to rethink the educative and pedagogic implications and consequences of any CE programme that might, eventually, be able to help us bring into the world a new generation of novice adults who would also be willing to accept the challenge of planning, designing, implementing and maintaining a just, fair and equitable new social order that will be to the social and civic advantage of all – and not only to the advantage of the elite, the powerful and the wealthy. Based on what can be observed around us in South Africa, and from what the author can infer from the literature on the subject, it is the author's contention that CE in South Africa has so far not produced the desired results, hence the deplorable moral condition of South African society, 27 years after full democracy was achieved in 1994.

It is against this backdrop that educators and educationists are obliged to ask: *What could be done in terms of CE in schools to turn around this unfortunate state of affairs?*

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to discovering an answer to this question. Such a Herculean task will require a credible methodological approach to start with. In the following section, the author therefore shares

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4. cf. <https://maroelamedia.co.za/debat/meningsvormers/heem-beheer-oor-jou-eie>

the main methodological considerations that undergird this chapter, after which he attempts to contextualise, although briefly, the socio-politico-moral deterioration in South Africa during the last two decades. This is followed by outlining some of the more noticeable implications that the socio-politico-moral deterioration in South Africa may hold for CE in South Africa. On the basis of the author's conceptual and theoretical study, the author also explores the thesis that was developed for this chapter that in his opinion could help to explain what has occurred in South Africa over the last two decades. This thesis is that the country has regressed from being a consolidated state to a state of deconsolidation that is now fast approaching the observable perimeters of a 'disconsolidated' state. The author then proceeds to argue that this process should be reversed in the short to medium term if we want to stand any chance at all of stemming the flow of entropy towards disconsolidation. The author does so by proposing that CE in schools could be considered as a meaningful instrument in this socio-politico-moral turn-around process. He agrees with Stornaiuolo and Nicholls (2019, p. 10) when they state that: 'Figuring out what world we are building and our positions in those worlds in relation to others is the very work of education'. This, as the author will contend, will require a profound change in the current curriculum for CE in South Africa.

## ■ Methodological considerations

This chapter seeks to employ a multi-method approach in an attempt to arrive at reasonable options as meticulously as possible with respect to the intellectual conundrum outlined. Towards this end, it was decided to embed this study within the methodological domain of Temporality Pedagogics. For purposes of this chapter, the author therefore assumes that the reader is conversant in and familiar with his subsequent use of the metabletic and exemplary methods.

The three exemplary works of (1) Plato and Kitto, (2) Pirsig and (3) Aquinas have purposefully been selected because they happen to illustrate and clarify the concept of excellence as a functional outcome of the three universal, transcendental (sometimes also referred to as 'Platonic') principles of (1) goodness and integrity, (2) truth, proportionality and harmony and (3) beauty and clarity in unassuming language. In order to arrive at a plausible metabletic coherence of and between these three example-groups, a combination of descriptive, naturalistic constitutive, existential, generative historicist, hermeneutic and realistic phenomenology was used. This particular interrogative approach in the present, with the aim of engaging with, exploring and understanding the intellectual conundrum by referring to examples from the ancient (and much more recent) past and also with a view towards a corrective and relativising account of the future, eminently embodies the contribution that Temporality Pedagogics seeks to make. This has made it possible for the author to argue how a possible future post-COVID CE turn-

about programme could be conceptualised and designed by applying the three universal, transcendental (sometimes also referred to as 'Platonic') principles of (1) goodness and integrity, (2) truth, proportionality and harmony and (3) beauty and clarity.

## ■ How can the socio-politico-moral deterioration in South Africa in the last two decades be explained?

It was mainly because of the work of Linz and Stepan (1996), Diamond (1997), Schedler (1998) and, especially the recent research conducted by Foa and Mounk (2019) that the concept of 'democratic consolidation' has become entrenched in the scholarly literature. It had scholars debating the premise that once a widely-agreed upon list of threshold conditions were met in a particular society to the satisfaction of the majority of informed observers, democracy might be assumed to have stabilised and to have reached a durable (i.e. a 'consolidated') state in such a society. The four threshold conditions that most informed observers tend to agree on in this regard, are (1) the honourable entrenchment of democratic legitimacy, (2) the technical, practical and bureaucratic acceptance of democratic rules, (3) the developing and multiplying role of civil society organisations in the political process and (4) the equitable dissemination and distribution of liberal values throughout all layers of society (Foa & Mounk 2019, p. 2).

The literature shows, however, that no state of democratic consolidation can be expected to last indefinitely. Over the past few years, countries such as Bulgaria, France, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, Poland, South Korea, Turkey and the United States of America have all started to experience some or other form of erosion of their respective democratic projects (Foa & Mounk 2019, p. 2, 3). In these cases, the legitimacy of their systems of democratic governance has been observed to erode gradually over the past decade or so. Such democratic deconsolidation can not only be attributed to instances in these countries where poor governance might have '[...] failed to deliver the economic and political goods expected by citizens in a democratic regime' (Fredericks 2019, p. ii). Recent research suggests that the gradual desecration of ethical standards, reduced governmental transparency, abuses and breaches of civil rights, increased corruption, racketeering, grand-scale weakening and collapse of governmental and municipal service delivery structures, violations of the rule of law, increasing efforts to control the judiciary, the media and national broadcasting services(s), as well as the increasing frequency with which instances of disruptive, vigilante behaviour, looting, destruction of property, anarchy and general civic unruliness are somehow allowed to occur, all count among the most persuasive indicators of democratic deconsolidation (Foa & Mounk 2019, p. 2, 3; Fredericks 2019, pp. ii-v).

What we are experiencing at present, as outlined in the problem statement, is a badly interrupted CE project, and the core of the blame seems to consist of two parts: on the one hand, it seems fair to assume that poor governance at national, provincial and municipal (local) level might arguably have been instrumental in 'disconsolidating' our democratic project not only structurally, but also attitudinally and behaviourally. On the other hand, the available evidence now suggests that while 'democratic deconsolidation' generally refers to a reversible process, the current 'disconsolidated', entropic state of South Africa's democratic project since 1994 might already have become irreversible. It will require a Herculean effort to address and reverse this demoralising state of affairs. In this regard, scholars point out that many South African citizens have started to lose their faith in democracy. According to Foa and Mounk (2019, pp. 2-4), the evidence can be found, *inter alia*, in the alarming increase in populist, radicalist and non-democratic groupings (cf. also Fredericks 2019, p. ii, iii), the disturbingly high rate of unemployment, poverty and inequality as well as in the colossal failure of parastatals such as Eskom to meet even the most basic infrastructural needs of its growing citizenry.

The situation described has been exacerbated by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. It seems fair for us to want to blame the COVID-19 pandemic in this regard. After all, it has been brutal so far in demonstrating to the entire world that the pre-COVID noble ideal of educating the next generation to accept their rightful places and roles in a new, global order where the highest possible ethics of human well-being, freedom, equality and sense of community and belonging can be exalted and pursued without obstruction, is – at best – a fragile and deceptively elusive one. People are sensitive to changes in context; even the smallest and subtlest and most unexpected of factors can affect the way people act (Gladwell 2010, p. 27).

Instead of contemplating new, innovative ways of educating the next generation to take their rightful places as citizens of the world, COVID-19 has taught us the harsh lesson that we might have to put this educative ideal on the back burner for the time being. COVID-19 forced all people worldwide to re-interrogate and rethink their civic privileges and responsibilities from within the context of their own immediate geographical environments and social space-time contexts. If anything, the COVID-19 pandemic has also made people worldwide realise the social and societal importance of their immediate surroundings: their local faith-based, cultural, leisure, school and business communities as well as their families, friends and their closest colleagues. In short: the COVID-19 pandemic taught people how precious life itself is – all life: human, animal and plant life. It also brought sharply into focus the educative urgency of re-imagining and reconceptualising the notion of what we mean when we talk about the socialisation function of education and how it can best fit in pedagogically in a possible future CE programme. COVID-19



had educationists asking new questions about associated issues such as social maturity and civic resilience, how social maturity relates to social adjustment and adaptation, the pedagogic mission of CE, the place and role of values, norms and decent, acceptable citizen behaviour, the relationship between education and citizenship, as well as the notion of active citizenship and social integration (Bronneman-Helmers & Zeijl 2019, pp. 173–205).

## ■ Implications of the regression for CE in South Africa

The picture painted has serious implications for education in general and for CE in particular. The educative obligation to assist and accompany children and young people broadly and critically into becoming reflective, socially well-integrated and emancipated citizens who will be able to decide (on the basis of their own education, culture and life- and worldview) how they wish to assign meaning and structure to their own lives, has always been an emphasised, integral and justifiable part of all well-meant education projects worldwide. A recent noteworthy example in this regard comes from Belgium. Loobuyck (2014, p. 1) points out how, in any speech of any importance, made in almost any country by any education-responsible functionary, from the school principal to the school director to the Minister of Education, the average citizen has been constantly bombarded since the turn of the century with passionate pleas to the effect that education – besides being responsible for teaching upcoming generations particular knowledge and skills – is also obliged to invest in the personal development of children and young people (especially in terms of teaching and accompanying them in terms of how to live together harmoniously). The message was clear: all children and young people should, irrespective of their domestic contexts or their different life and worldview backgrounds, be optimally prepared by the school so that each and every one of them would be able to participate meaningfully as accepted (and acceptable and integrateable) citizens in the democratic and multicultural society in which all of us live, by the time they finally finish school.

Pedagogically speaking, this seems like a noble and justifiable pursuit that is not only civically necessary. In fact, it also shows (in light of the picture painted) clear developmental, emotional, ethical, intellectual and spiritual urgency. This issue is conceptualised in more detail further in the text. The author refers, firstly, to Kitto (1951, pp. 85–114 *et seq.*) and to Pirsig's (1974) classic reinterpretation of the Greek philosopher, Plato's understanding and use of the concept of *aretê* (Greek ἀρετή). Secondly, the author attempts to re-imagine Thomas of Aquinas' notion of the transcendental *aesthetics-as-excellence* as the functional outcome of goodness-as-integrity, truth as harmony (proportion) and beauty as clarity against the backdrop of Kitto and Pirsig's explanation of Plato's use of the qualitative and ethical concept, *aretê*.

## ■ ***Integritas, consonantia and claritas* as possible keys to a revised approach to pursuing excellence through CE in South Africa and, possibly, elsewhere**

### ■ **An established concept in many sectors of society, yet a neglected concept in education**

The notion that excellence as the functional outcome of goodness-as-integrity, truth as harmony (proportion) and beauty as clarity should constitute an essential and integrated principle of authentic and credible human endeavours (as proposed in this chapter) has become convincingly argued and (since the turn of the century) also firmly established in, for example, the economic sciences, engineering and technology sciences, health sciences and natural sciences. In this regard, the work of scholars like Cobb (2003), Dahlgaard-Park and Dahlgaard (2003), Dahlgaard-Park (2009), Pavliha (2010) and, especially, Kiauta (2012) is especially thought-provoking.

When viewed against the décor of democratic de- and even disconsolidation, as portrayed, it might not be unjustified at all to claim that education is in dire need of examples of excellence that may shine as guiding lights for all present and future learners, educators and educationists. In the field of CE, there remains, however, a dearth of scholarly information on this particular topic. A plethora of mainly anecdotal information in the education sciences furthermore seems to suggest that at least some educators and educationists might either not be familiar with this discourse, or they might choose to dismiss this notion based upon, *inter alia*, their own academic and scientific-epistemic experiences and training. It is for this reason that the author turns to the three classic examples of (1) Plato and Kitto, (1) Pirsig and (3) Aquinas – also to illustrate briefly, among others, where the aforementioned notion seems to have originated from.

### ■ **Plato, Kitto and Pirsig’s understanding and use of *aretê* (Greek ἀρετή)**

As a professor at the University of Bristol, H.D.F. Kitto was a respected scholar who specialised in classical Greek literature. To this day, scholars and students across the globe continue to recognise the 1951 publication of his non-fiction work, *The Greeks*, as their academic gold standard. One of the main academic contributions of Kitto’s work is the linguistic evidence that he provides in support of the argument that students of Plato’s works might not have been entirely correct in their translation of the latter’s use of the concept of *aretê* (Greek ἀρετή). He points out that most Platonian scholars have been translating Plato’s use of this Greek word as ‘moral virtue’. Some scholars and students

might consequently fail to recognise the archetypal semantic value of the concept of *aretê* (Gk. ἀρετή), as intended by Plato (Kitto 1951, p. 97). He then goes on to explain that the use of the original Greek concept of *aretê* was never categorically restricted to semantic and discursive environments where the notion of morals, virtues or even moral virtues usually gets debated. In this respect, modern English (to name but one language) also seems to fail in its attempt to capture the full transactional range of this particular concept's discursive possibilities. Instead, it seems that Plato might have understood the Greek noun *aretê* to be applicable to all semantic categories, and because Plato intended it primarily to denote worth and goodness, truth and beauty as operationalised excellence,<sup>5</sup> it seems to transcend all linguistic and intellectual attempts at reducing it to the restrictive semantic value of 'moral virtue' only (Kitto 1951, p. 85, 94, 102, 114).

Kitto's work is expanded upon in another book that has arguably achieved classical status – albeit in much more recent times. The main thesis of the 1974 publication of Robert Pirsig's comprehensive inquiry into values and, especially, his philosophical meditation on the concept of 'quality', entitled *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, is that worth and goodness, truth and beauty is not only intimately linked to the concept of 'quality',<sup>6</sup> but that the fundamental observable indicator of quality is, indeed, excellence. Pirsig (1974) explains that while excellence should be recognised as representing the onto-epistemic essence of what we usually understand and experience when we refer to 'quality', excellence can nevertheless not be understood as a physical, measurable property of that which we might deem to be true 'quality' (p. 208), even though it is detectable and recognisable. Instead, he argues (pp. 340–341) that it may perhaps best be understood in terms of the ancient Indian religious concept of *dharma*<sup>7</sup> which refers to excellence as a fundamental essence of truth and reality and therefore as an integral and inherent part of all authentic, virtuous behaviour and social order.

When reading both Kitto and Pirsig, it becomes clear that Plato, by extending its initial rather restrictive communicative range, namely 'moral virtue', might somehow have expanded the conceptual range of *aretê* so that it may now also include references to immortal truth and universal beauty. This is how Pirsig (1974) was making sense of what Plato was actually trying

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5. It needs to be acknowledged that there are scholars and ex-students of Greek and ancient Greek literature (including many theologians) who disagree with Kitto's interpretation, claiming that Plato always used ἀρετή to refer to 'moral virtue' and nothing else. Based on the author's own, personal reading and understanding of both Plato and Kitto, as well as for purposes of this chapter, the author chooses to side with Kitto's reading of Plato as explained.

6. For an explanation of the theoretical and conceptual reasoning behind this conclusion, refer also to Kiauta (2012, p. 212, 213).

7. This concept of *dharma* is expanded upon later.

to communicate here (p. 342): 'He made *areté* the Good, the highest form, the highest idea of all [...] a synthesis of all that had gone before'. Borrowing from Kitto's work, Pirsig argues that Plato was trying to tell us that every single phenomenon that radiates and transmits excellence (in the form of integrated oneness as balanced and proportional wholeness of being) is a worthy paragon of goodness and that all that can be fairly and independently judged to be good, is universally beautiful and therefore also enduringly as well as constantly true. So, when Plato (according to Pirsig 1974, p. 343) afforded *areté*-as-excellence '[...] the position of highest honor [...]' he essentially suggested that everything that may commonly and mutually be agreed upon to be good, true and beautiful, can confidently be engaged with, explored, understood and appreciated in terms of its observable state of operationalised excellence (cf. also Kiauta 2012, p. 112). In this sense, it would seem that excellence might be an educatively worthy and pedagogically sustainable goal and consequently worthy of being pursued as (at least) one of the essential outcomes of CE in the school environment.

Now, when we assess Plato's understanding and use of *areté*-as-excellence against the backdrop of the ancient Indian religious concept of *dharma* as used by Pirsig (1974), it reveals yet another unique universal educative and pedagogical quality that seems to transcend all linguistic and cultural boundaries. It seems to convey the densely coded maxim that every human being is always a human being-in-becoming. At no stage of our lives is any of us a mint-in-box, finished product. Being human is only possible as becoming human and besides the fact that human becoming is a lifelong undertaking, it is and remains essentially an individual venture. This means that if we (as individuals) really aspire to becoming authentic, noble, whole, fully integrated, balanced human beings who are able to feel, think, speak and act with intelligible clarity (Krüger 2018, pp. 238–242), we need to shed – while we are on this lifelong pilgrimage of becoming human – our almost total lack of (exclusively individual) insight into life itself. The only way in which this can reasonably be pursued, seems to be if each one of us, firstly as individuals and only then as members of our respective communities and social collectives, consciously make a committed decision to live our lives in accordance with honourable and morally upright behavioural indicators.

According to Krüger (2018, pp. 244–245, 256–258, 260), such behavioural indicators can essentially be reduced to just three, namely integrity (that can, among others, be demonstrated in terms of truthful thinking, intelligible speaking and transparent acting); proportionality and harmony (that can be demonstrated in terms of continuously adopting a balanced, honourable mindfulness and by always searching for fair and equitable opportunities to effect morally upright diligence) and lastly, by clarity-of-action (that is debatably best demonstrated in terms of thoughtful, aesthetically pleasing conduct and comportment). This opinion is shared by Comas (2020, p. 107),

who sums up Plato's *areté*-as-excellence in terms of veneration and respect for the wholeness and oneness of life and, specifically, as '[...] [that] element that allows us to connect intellectual contemplation, which has "truth" as its object, with moral life, which has "good" as its object, is the aesthetic experience [...]'

The author returns to the views of Thomas Aquinas.<sup>8</sup> Central to his philosophy, was the Aristotelian-scholastic notion of essential transcendentals (cf. Aquinas 1991a, 1991b, 1922, 1929, 1994). Following Aristotle, he understood a transcendental to be an attribute that not only belongs to, but also represents any phenomenon in so far as that phenomenon has observable existence, provided that such a phenomenon's existence can be considered from a particular (i.e. ontoepistemological) perspective (Stella Maris Architecture 2021, s.p.). On the basis of this notion, Thomistic philosophy maintains that the internal development of a person's life-purpose, the ethic content with which he or she is to pursue and realise that purpose, as well as the aesthetic form or structure in which all of this should be cast in and through lifelong education, is ontoepistemologically dependent upon three essential and observable elements, namely (1) *integritas*, (2) *consonantia* and (3) *claritas*. When these three essentials are in qualitative agreement, they produce, according to Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 24, a. 3, ad. 2; also cf. Kitto [1951] and Pirsig [1974]), the transcendental *beauty* that reveals itself in recognisable form as functional *excellence*.

According to Kitto (1951) and Pirsig (1974), it is this Thomistic view of aesthetics as functional excellence that makes it possible for all human beings to understand, recognise and realise the three (idealistic, universal, transcendental) principles that Plato drew attention to, namely truth, goodness and beauty. According to Kitto and Pirsig, these three principles should ideally be synchronised in the oneness of (1) goodness of and for purpose, (2) truth (in terms of proportional, harmonised and contextualised content) and (3) beauty (which is best contextualised in terms of intelligible aesthetics). This synchronised and coordinated oneness is ideally achieved in and through the embodied conduct and ethical comportment (as alluded to earlier) of integrity [*integritas*], harmony [*consonantia*] and clarity [*claritas*], as propounded by Aquinas. This connection between Plato, Kitto and Pirsig's thoughts and that of Aquinas, is briefly elaborated upon further in the text.

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8. Based upon his view of the Bible as a holy book, it seems fair to assume that Aquinas himself would probably not have ventured into an eclectic excursion (as the argumentative narrative in this paragraph might perhaps suggest to readers who had been educated and trained in different academic and scientific-epistemic environments): 'The nature of the Word (he referred almost exclusively to the Bible - FJP) is a sovereignly perfect whole from all eternity, incapable of alteration or change: nothing foreign to the divine nature - no human nature, nor any element of human nature - can possibly come to thrust itself into that unity' (Aquinas, [1259-1265] 2005, p. 635).

## ■ Thomistic excellence as a functional outcome of *integritas*, *consonantia* and *claritas*

According to Thomas Aquinas, the medieval theologian-philosopher, who lived from 1225 until 1274, the three fundamental features of excellence (which he initially described in terms of the concept of aesthetics) are *integritas* (the integrity of any phenomenon in terms of retaining and exhibiting all qualities necessary with which to articulate, communicate and make clear its ontic essence; in this context, the author also attends to the issue of morality under the heading: 'ethics of integrity'), *consonantia* (correspondence, proportion and harmony as a truthful, authoritative and vibrant manifestation of and correlation between its essence and intended reason-for-being) and *claritas* (communication of transparent, lucid and decisive intelligibility) (cf. Eco 1988, pp. 20–48, 64–121, 122–162). Aquinas also created a virtual bridge between the aforementioned three transcendental (i.e. 'Platonic') qualities of goodness, truth and beauty and how all three of these coordinate with the essential transcendental elements of integrity, harmony and clarity on the one hand, and education as a lifelong obligation, on the other. According to him, 'The very act of understanding (these qualities) needs certain powers that work through bodily organs, namely phantasy and sense' (Aquinas [1259–1265] 2005, p. 259). People succeed 'for the most part' in arriving 'at the end and perfection' (read: 'excellence as functional outcome of quality') of the (human) species, and natural developments have place always or for the most part (Aquinas [1259–1265] 2005, p. 259, *et seq*). Happiness is the end and perfection of the human species since all people naturally desire it. 'Happiness then is a common good, possible to accrue to all males, except where an obstacle arises to deprive some of it.' This knowledge, Aquinas claimed, does not come to a person via scientific study, by way of demonstration, but through 'the training of the soul' (Aquinas [1259–1265] 2005, p. 384). He continues as follows concerning the role of education:

Other animals have their natural instincts (*suas prudentias*) to provide for themselves: but man lives by reason, which takes the experience of a long time to arrive at discretion. Hence children need instruction by the confirmed experience of their parents: nor are they capable of such instruction as soon as they are born, but after a long time, the time in fact taken to arrive at the years of discretion. For this instruction again a long time is needed; and then moreover, because of the assaults of passion, whereby the judgement of prudence is thwarted, there is need not of instruction only, but also of repression. [...] Therefore in the human race the advancement of the young in good must last, not for a short time, as in birds, but for a long period of life. (p.504)

It follows from this that the mature, noble citizen is one who has achieved wholeness of being in that he or she has attained the harmonious confluence of integrity, harmony and clarity. Expressed as a person's 'most authentic self in work and life' (Liautaud 2021, p. 163), such wholeness of being can arguably

be understood best in terms of an integrated wholeness or oneness-of-being (Aquinas 1922). The spirituality of a person with integrity, according to Nolan (2009, p. 13), can be understood as offering assistance to that person as an organic, fully integrated and accomplished human being, so that they may rise above their preoccupation with the self and by doing so aspire, instead, to attaining magnanimous altruism. This intimate dimension of character speaks to the core of who one is. It refers to one's values and beliefs developed in interaction with others and lived out in the private as well as the public realms (Kubow 2011, p. 157). Aspects of integrity or authenticity such as genuineness, trustworthiness, dependability and being true to oneself all hinge on a person's connection to an assessment of self and reality. One way of doing this, is to step outside of oneself and to seek different viewpoints from a variety of people and from a range of problems (Liautaud 2021, p. 167). This last sentence embodies a clear pedagogic purpose that can be readily translated into a series of CE-related pedagogic and educative tasks and normative obligations in schools. In the section that follows, the author expands on this.

'Integrity' appears in that approach to ethics that does not search for the difference between good and bad, right and wrong in deeds and in theories that are supposedly objectively right or wrong, good or bad in themselves, irrespective of who the agents of those deeds might be. Integrity should rather be sought in an ethics where right and wrong, good and bad are mainly determined by the characteristics (virtues) of the person who performs the deed. According to an *ethics of integrity*, one can only understand the difference between good and bad, right and wrong by observing how 'good people' live and conduct their business. In this way, an ethics of integrity is consistent with Kant's categorical imperative – the so-called 'golden rule' – which calls on all citizens to act in such a manner that their actions will persuade their fellow citizens to act towards them in a similar manner (Van Niekerk 2021, p. 12). An ethics of integrity is therefore embodied goodness; a goodness that also appeals to all citizens to act towards their fellow citizens in such a way that they may all benefit from such actions. It is easy to see why it will be educatively justifiable, for any CE programme, to translate such actions-of-goodness into pedagogical outcomes that might typically include, for example, personal happiness, freedom and openness of society and flourishing local and global communities.

The key driver behind all of this for CE in South Africa and possibly elsewhere is that those who design the CE curriculum as well as those educators who actually teach CE in schools, should keep reminding themselves that education is essentially a caring profession, a *professio curae*. The Dutch refer to education as '*een zorgzaam beroep*'. In English, this Dutch phrase literally means that caring is essentially an educative enterprise that can only be successfully pursued if there exists a social contract of voluntary belonging and togetherness, as well as an intentional interdependence between the educator and the

educand: 'I will be there for you, and you will be there for me'. This calls for a continued display of an ethics of integrity, that should remain focused at guiding the young educand towards a similar (voluntary) display of such ethical behaviour. In fact, an ethics of integrity embraces everything that has been said about integrity, goodness, truthful and intelligible clarity of conduct, harmonious consonance and beauty as aesthetic integration. This implies that *integritas*, *consonantia* and *claritas* as key parameters of excellence can (at least when viewed from an educative and, more specifically, a pedagogic perspective) perhaps best be operationalised by employing the key elements of the following types of ethics:

### □ Command ethics

This form of ethics is also referred to as ethics based on a deontological (Greek *Deon*: duty or obligation) or a heteronomous principle and refers to the willingness of a person to obey the rules and regulations from beyond the self, in this case, imposed by the South African, or a similar, society. It embodies the rules and guidelines that facilitate the establishment and the maintenance of a *modus vivendi*, of peaceful co-existence, and obedience to the stipulations of the social contract among the citizens of a state or a nation. It refers to obedience to the civic obligations and duties of a citizen, *also of a learner as a novice citizen* (Revision World Networks 2018).

### □ Virtue or character ethics

The imposition of rules from beyond the self alone is not sufficient for ensuring a harmonious life and society. Citizens are therefore obliged to develop a moral sensibility of their own as well, from inside of the self, as it were (Baggini 2020, p. 167). An ethics of integrity, therefore, also embraces elements of virtue or character ethics. This type of ethics comprises a willingness to display the virtues required for co-existing peacefully to the advantage of all other citizens. This is pedagogically significant, especially considering what was discussed about the link between integrity and goodness. The original Greek noun ἀγαθωσύνη that we usually translate into English as 'goodness', is *agathōsynē*. In Greek, this noun almost always refers to 'uprightness of heart and life'. Such respected human behaviour is embodied goodness. It reflects human behaviour that is a paragon of integrity, precisely because it essentially reflects selfless behaviour that is always directed towards pure goodness for the benefit of others and never towards goodness simply for the sake of being virtuous.

### □ Teleological ethics

This type of ethics refers to the willingness and preparedness of a person to live as a morally good individual that seeks to promote the well-being and



interests of all other citizens (Stoker 1967, p. 251). In most cases, it also encapsulates elements of social ethics, that is, the desire to contribute to the renewal and discipline of good moral life in society (Holika 2017, p. 89). Social ethics is driven by the principle of moral motivation, where people act in accordance with a fair and reasoned principle. This still allows those who do not identify with others to show empathy, overriding their natural bias and promoting altruistic behaviour towards individuals and groups with whom they might not necessarily have much in common (Bazalgette 2017, p. 24). Morality in the context of social ethics 'glues us together; it affects how we act towards other people. [...] Without trust that others will behave in a certain way – that they will behave morally – society isn't possible' (Paley 2021, p. 17).

## □ Consequentialist ethics

A person with a well-developed ethics of integrity will be keenly aware of the consequences of his or her actions (Frame 2008, pp. 14–31, 92). Powerful though all these aspects of an ethics of integrity are, the question that still remains: What holds all these perspectives together? This brings teleology into the picture: the explicit or implicit notion of the *summum bonum*, the greatest good towards which right action leads people (Baggini 2020, p. 175). If suitably achieved, the *summum bonum* that a community strives for can increase the moral character of the community and contribute to group viscosity and stability. According to Lahti and Weinstein (2005, p. 58), '[t]he system buffers the impact of threats to group stability at the level of individual adherence to norms'.

A pedagogy of excellence that is based on an ethics of integrity, consonance and clarity could prove to be of profound importance for the development of a person's *conscience*, the inborn faculty that all of us possess for distinguishing between good and bad, right and wrong (Frame 2008, p. 122). The good, at root, according to Baggini (2020, pp. 161–162), is known by a kind of intuition: when it comes to what is a 'good society', it is assumed that people recognise that harmony is better than disharmony, that prosperity is better than poverty and that peace is better than war. Olthuis (2012, p. 4) concurs by asserting that people create their worldviews on the basis of an intuitive sensorium, a panoply of senses that helps them find their way through the world.

People tend to act inconsiderately towards others because of their consciences being immature, as yet un(der)developed or 'seared' (from the line of argument thus far, it seems fair to assume that CE could play a key role in conscience development). The attitude of a person with a well-developed ethics of integrity cannot be formalised in a rigid set of rules that can be applied in a casuistic manner (i.e. a rule for every situation). A person is guided through life by the compass of the conscience, that is, the ability to know within one's inner self that something or some action is good or bad, right or wrong. The conscience is a spiritual function of the human being by

means of which they know that something should be (done) in a particular, acceptable manner and that there is no alternative. Citizen Education could assist young people in developing their consciences so that they will be able to draw the most adequate ethical decisions when confronted with moral dilemmas (Vorster 2017, pp. 162-163). To be able to display this ability is important in view of the fact that young people, as novice citizens, will be confronted with all sorts of dilemmas in the world around them. If they do not understand the forces driving ethics failures, they will have little chance of preventing and remedying them, and limited ability to create ethics successes for themselves (Liataud 2021, p. 4). Conscience, also defined as 'moral consciousness', creates lofty expectations in that it consists of an alert wakefulness to the viewpoints of the other. It also speaks of a particular and distinct humanity as being the most important status of any community and an intention to function in such a manner that the best possible interests of our entire planet may be served at all times (Dill 2012, p. 542). According to Dill (2012, p. 542), CE teachers can promote 'a consciousness with a conscience' so as to empower themselves and their learners to function in such a manner that the best possible interests of our entire planet may be served at all times.

## ■ Implications for a revised form of CE in South Africa, and possibly elsewhere

The South African curriculum known as the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (CAPS) (DBE 2011) shows that Life Orientation and Life Skills cover a wide range of topics that are indeed important for future adult citizens to master, including citizenship, human rights, democracy and inclusivity (cf. Nel 2018). A mere five years after the CAPS was employed in schools for the first time, Smith and Arendse (2016, p. 69) concluded that it was 'not explicit enough in terms of content and information.' It was not clear at the time on what evidence they based their contention, but in view of the 'disconsolidation' described, it seems that their surmise was fairly accurate. Spamer (2018, p. 17) later also called for a revision of the CAPS. The CAPS should be politically and ideologically relevant and pedagogically justifiable and should be to the advantage of the children of South Africa.

As alluded to in the preceding discussion in this chapter, the following seem to be necessary changes in CE if we are serious in our efforts to effect a Herculean turn-around.

Firstly, it should be understood by CE curriculum designers and by CE educators (teachers) that they themselves should strive for, as well as towards, excellence in all their professional duties and pedagogic obligations. This implies that they should strive towards displaying an ethics of integrity at all times and that they should aim, on the basis of that insight, at guiding the

young people to display a similar dedicated and passionate pursuance of excellence and ethical conduct, demeanour and attitude.

Secondly, they should understand that aspects of integrity or authenticity such as genuineness, trustworthiness, dependability and being true to oneself all hinge on a person's connection to an assessment of self and reality. One way of doing this assessment, is to step outside of oneself and to seek different viewpoints from a variety of people and from a range of problems.

Thirdly, in view of the disconcordance, disconsolidation and decay of democracy that can be observed all around us, it seems necessary that CE should concentrate on command ethics, namely insight into the need to show obedience to the civic obligations and duties of a citizen, also of a learner as a novice citizen.

Fourthly, curriculum designers, educators or teachers and learners should be immersed in virtue or character ethics. As stated, the imposition of rules from beyond the self alone is not sufficient for ensuring a harmonious life and society; citizens are compelled to develop a moral sensibility of their own as well, from inside of the self, as it were. This type of ethics comprises a willingness to display the virtues required for co-existing peacefully, to the advantage of all other citizens.

Fifthly, CE should guide learners to be willing and prepared to live as morally good individuals who seek to promote the well-being and interests of all other citizens. As discussed, social ethics is driven by the principle of moral motivation, where people act in accordance with a fair and reasoned principle. This still allows those who do not identify with others to show empathy, overriding their natural bias and promoting altruistic behaviour towards individuals and groups with whom they might not necessarily have much in common.

Sixthly, CE should assist and equip learners to understand that a person with a well-developed ethics of integrity will be aware of the consequences of his or her actions. They will have attained a feeling for teleology, insight into what would count as contributing to the greatest good and well-being of all (other) people, thereby contributing to the stability and the wellness of society.

Seventhly, CE should help learners to focus on how to integrate goodness, truth and beauty, integrity, consonance and clarity consciously into all their daily activities. One obvious way of accomplishing this, is for CE to guide and actively assist learners to harmonise and coordinate their own understanding of goodness, truth and beauty, integrity, consonance and clarity with their understanding of their personal talents and attributes. Another way is for CE to conscientise learners continuously about the future advantages of always applying their cognitive, emotional and social faculties whenever and wherever they might be practicing how best to pursue and operationalise excellence in

their own lives. In this way, their personal well-being will be ensured. This, in turn, is bound to kindle personal satisfaction with how they are able to interact with their fellow citizens.

Finally – and engaging with what has been said in the previous paragraph – CE should be aimed as a matter of pedagogic urgency at contributing to the development of the learners’ conscience, the inborn faculty that people possess for distinguishing between good and bad, right and wrong but which has to be developed further through CE. As explained, the attitude of a person with a well-developed ethics of integrity cannot be formalised in a rigid set of rules that can be applied in a casuistic manner (i.e. a rule for every situation); citizens are guided through life by the compass of their conscience, that is, the ability to know within one’s inner self that something or some action is good or bad, right or wrong. Citizen Education could assist young people in developing their consciences so that they will be able to draw the most adequate ethical decisions when confronted with moral dilemmas. Citizen Education teachers can promote ‘a consciousness with a conscience’ so as to empower themselves and their learners to function in such a manner that the best possible interests of our entire planet may be served at all times.

## ■ Conclusion

Three conclusions can be drawn from the earlier outline and discussion. (1) The socio-societal-political-moral decay in South Africa, to the point of disconsolidation, will be very difficult to turn around, and indeed confronts all South Africans with a Herculean ‘labour’ that will be very difficult to discharge in the short to medium term. (2) One of the ways in which to address the social and societal malaise in South Africa could be to revise our approach to CE. Citizen Education should not be confined to aspects of Life Orientation and Life Skills only, but should be amplified to become an independent examinable school subject. Its contents should be revisited so as to ensure that schools deliver young law-abiding citizens enabled to contribute to a more acceptable *modus vivendi*, and to the end of the decaying democratic deconsolidation and disconsonance. The CE that is envisaged should be able to deliver citizens with moral integrity, citizens who are virtuous people, people of good character, intent on, and able to live and work to the advantage of the ‘polis’, of all others. Put differently, they should possess the *claritas* (insight) and the *integritas* (integrity of personality) to contribute to the renewal and the restoration of the democratic *consonantia* (harmonious, balanced belonging and togetherness) of South Africa and all who live in it. (3) By guiding and accompanying learners to focus their own, personal talents and attributes on the daily operationalisation of goodness, truth and beauty, integrity, consonance and intelligible clarity in and through their behaviour and conduct, any future CE programme will assist in preparing a future

citizenry who will wilfully and voluntarily pursue excellence. Such excellence will be observable in the self-motivated efforts of the next generation to systematically search for, actively promote and realise only the best, the highest, the finest and the aesthetically most beautiful under all circumstances and in all space-time contexts in the intellectual and spiritual life of their people.

This chapter suggests that the continuous pursuit of excellence will undoubtedly break open new horizons. It will make it possible for a new category of heroes, leaders and role models (other than, e.g. the usual parade of football stars and Olympic athletes) also to be duly recognised and officially acknowledged by the people. These will be heroes, leaders and role models of the intellect and of the spirit.

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# Comparative and international education as a toolkit for building a Southern dimension onto the discourse on education and human rights in diversity

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## ■ Abstract

In Chapter 2, it was explained that its claim to universal validity notwithstanding, the *Creed of Human Rights* in its conceptualisation, understanding and lived experience, as well as in its rolling out in practice, is majorly shaped by societal

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contextual forces. This also applies to every part of the intersection between human rights, education and diversity in society. In Chapter 4, it was argued that the entire human rights project in the world, also in both conceptualisation and manifestation, is lopsided in that it carries its birthmark of Northern hegemony. Therefore, imbuing the *Creed of Human Rights* with perspectives from the Global South is an urgent task. This chapter now turns to the question of how the *Creed of Human Rights*, when it comes to education, should be infused with Southern perspectives. It is argued that the scholarly field of comparative and international education has the conceptual and epistemological toolkit suitable for this assignment. The concept of comparative and international education is clarified, especially its dual nature of denoting both a subject of study and a method of study. Then the value of both these in imbuing human rights, in the field of education, with Southern perspectives is explained.

## ■ Introduction

In the second chapter, which offered a panoptic mapping of the intersection between the *Creed of Human Rights*, diversity in society, and education, it has been pointed out that the Global South is a growing force in the world – geographically, demographically and economically, also as part of the global education expansion project. It was explained that despite its claim to universal validity, human rights and, in particular, the intersection between human rights, education and diversity in society is shaped by contextual dynamics. In Chapter 3, the significance of the societal dynamics currently unfolding in the Global South for the comprehension of the intersection between education, human rights and diversity in the contemporary and unfolding world was explained. While Chapter 4 answers the question as to *where* the scholarly community should look for the development of human rights and, in particular, for the development in the intersection between human rights, education and diversity in society, the question that arises is how this investigation should be conducted. That is what constitutes the focus of this chapter. The aim of this chapter is to defend the thesis that the scholarly field of comparative and international education has the conceptual and methodological instrumentarium to imbue the public and scholarly discourse on education, human rights and diversity with much-needed and potentially enriching perspectives from the Global South; albeit some improvements will have to be effected in the field before it could optimally fulfil this promise. The chapter commences with a discussion of the predicament of Northern hegemony in the education and human rights in diversity discourse in the present world. The term ‘comparative and international education’ is then clarified and its scope and aims explicated. The focus then turns to how comparative and international education can imbue and enrich the field of the scholarship of education and human rights in diversity with perspectives from the Global South.

## ■ The current predicament of Northern hegemony in the education and human rights in diversity public and scholarly discourse

There have been attempts by historians to place the beginning or the first instance of the appearance of the *Creed of Human Rights* (i.e. that all people are entitled to a set of inalienable rights beyond the reach of a ruler or even democratically elected majority) to extra-Western locations. Perhaps the most well-known and strongest argument is the claim that Cyrus' *Cylinder* is the first Bill of Rights that can be detected in history (Llewellyn-Jones 2009, p. 91). Cyrus the Great ruled over the first Persian empire, c. 560–530 BC, and his *Cylinder* dates from c. 539 BC. This *Cylinder*, or legal code for the empire, declared, for example, freedom of religion: every person in the empire was free to choose his or her own religion. The first four articles of the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (proclaimed in 1948 by the UN, a document which became the prototype of manifesto of human rights all over the world) is the same as the rights stipulated in Cyrus' *Cylinder*.

On the other hand, historian Tom Holland (2019, pp. 385–386) traces the *Creed of Human Rights* back to the Christian religion, specifically Medieval Canon Law, and the lasting effect that has had on the Western frame of mind.

Yet it is not difficult to trace the line of the contemporary *Creed of Human Rights*, as it is manifested in the globalised world of today, to the philosophical and political intelligentsia of 18th century Europe and North America as the fountain head: John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Thomas Jefferson. The creed is, for the first time, embodied in constitutional arrangements in the United States of America (USA) and France. It is also in the societal contexts of these countries, and with their base documents as points of departure, that jurisprudence and scholarship on human rights have taken place. It is also in the part of the world where the *Creed of Human Rights* has been further developed, fine-tuned, re-calibrated and thrashed out.

Yet this Northern Hemispheric anchored *Creed of Human Rights* has met a number of obstacles in the modern world. These obstacles, which will now be discussed, tend to be more salient in the extra-Western world, the Global South in particular. Moreover, if current trends are anything to go by, these very obstacles will soon make themselves present in the Global North as well, and also as a global challenge, making the Global South's grapple with the *Creed of Human Rights* all the more instructive.

The first obstacle is the ecological crisis. An ecological crisis is looming, so serious as to put the future of humanity and even that of the planet at risk. The title of the book *Hot Flat and Crowded* by Thomas Friedman (2009) summarises his thesis about the three greatest challenges facing humanity at



this time in history, namely an ecological crisis (particularly global warming, an information and communications technology [ICT] revolution and a population explosion).

So far, in its present form, the *Creed of Human Rights* has proven itself to be impotent in contributing towards a meaningful response to this challenge. The Earth Overshoot Day (that is the day of the year by which humanity has used the amount of natural resources that the earth can naturally replenish in one year) for 2021 is 29 July, and this date is moving forward each year (see Earth Overshoot Day 2021).

Inequality in the world is rising, reaching obscene levels (see Piketty 2020). The incidence of poverty has been reduced in recent years and decades but persists at a serious scale. The percentage of the world population surviving on less than US\$1.90 per day (International Poverty Line) has declined from 36.2% in 1990 to 16.0% in 2010 and further to 10.1% in 2015 (World Bank 2021). This means 1.9 billion people in 1990, 1.6 billion in 2010 and still 744 million in 2015 (World Bank 2021). Thus far, the *Creed of Human Rights* could not succeed in eradicating the problems of poverty and obscene levels of inequality.

There is also the problem of enforcing the *Creed of Human Rights*. Even in countries (officially) subscribing to these rights, human rights are often not materialised. High levels of violence are prevalent in large parts of the world. In 2016, at least 560,000 people were killed as a result of violence, which corresponds to about 7.50 violent deaths per 100,000 population (McEvoy & Hideg 2017, p. 11). The rate is slightly lower than it was in 2015 (7.73) and 2014 (8.12) (McEvoy & Hideg 2017). It is not difficult to make a case that populism is on the rise in the world (see Levitzky & Ziblatt 2018). Then there is a widespread feeling or accusation that the world and large parts of its population are still in the grip of neo-colonialism and that there is a need for decolonisation. Chapters 5 and 6 in this book emphasise this point further with case studies. Securing human rights in an even-handed way and doing social justice for all in a diverse society remains a challenge, and this is more than just decolonisation. Thus, the current *Creed of Human Rights* seems to get stranded on the realities of the Ecological Crisis, poverty, inequality, populism, an incapacity to get the *Creed of Human Rights* secured or enforced for everyone and the persistence of much violence in the world. The *Creed of Human Rights*, at least in its present form and institutional embodiment, seems incapable of taking on, let alone overcoming, these critical challenges facing humanity.

In Chapter 5, it has been argued that the social dynamics playing itself out in the Global South have a particular contribution to make towards the evolution of a more nuanced, better calibrated (for the contemporary world and its diverse peoples) *Creed of Human Rights*. If that answers the question as to where to look for a fertile ground for scholarship in developing such a

more updated *Creed of Human Rights*, then this chapter suggests that the scholarly field of comparative and international education has the conceptual and methodological toolkit for such an exercise of enriching the current *Creed of Human Rights*.

In the next section, the field of comparative and international education will be explained along with its potential to supply the instrumentarium to mine the Global South for material to build a *Creed of Human Rights* adapted for the contemporary world.

## ■ What is comparative and international education?

In this section, the concept of comparative and international education, and especially its dual nature of being at the same time a field of scholarship as a method of scholarship, will be explained.

Comparative and international education has a prehistory stretching back to times immemorial, when the most primitive of human progenitors came into contact with neighbouring societies, communities and cultures, be it in the course of war, trade or migration, or just travelling out of curiosity. Based on the human being's natural propensity towards comparison, it can safely be hypothesised that such primitive people compared their own ways of living with that of those they came into contact with, including their ways of raising or educating their children. Therefore, a pre-scientific kind of 'comparative education' should have been part of humanity stretching back to times immemorial. This kind of amateurish comparison moved to a higher level in the 19th century when the formation of nation-states (the establishment of public systems of primary schools, state-provided, the attendance of which was compulsory) created the need for nation-states to learn from each other's education systems. The technology of the age (the age of the invention of railways, telegraphs, telephones, postal services and the like) facilitated such a learning exercise. Now government emissaries were sent on foreign missions to conduct systematic, comprehensive studies of what were regarded as exemplary foreign education systems. The aim of such studies was to identify best ideas, policies and practices, in order to borrow from these to improve the domestic education project. Such studies, and suggestions for borrowing, however, were still pre-scientific. Their pre-scientific level is clear not only in the frequent eulogies and political or personal prejudices evident in their reports but also in the fact that when recommending policy or practicing borrowing, such studies did not factor in contextual differences between the exporting and the importing education systems.

In a publication in 1816/17 French scholar Marc-Antoine Jullien (1775–1848) called for a more scientific collection and presentation of information of all education systems of the world. The purpose of such an exercise would be to

identify the best ideas, policies and practices with regard to education, so that education could be improved all over the world, and be to better service to humanity. Jullien first used the term 'comparative education' and because of that he is called the 'father of comparative education'. Although he had no significant influence during his lifetime, his ideas came to fruition in the contemporary world in a variety of ways. These include the activities of international organisations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), international research projects and test series (such as that of the IEA, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement and PISA, that is the International Programme of Student Assessment) and Comparative Education Societies, Conferences and Journals.

In the century between Jullien's formulation of his ideal for the prospective field of scholarship, which he gave its name, and the coming to fruition of his ideas, the field took a detour as it entered the 'factors and forces' stage. In this phase, (national) education systems were seen and were explained from the unique set of societal contextual forces which gave rise to each system. These forces included geography, demography, social system, economy, political system, religion and life and world philosophy. This was the phase that had its heyday in the interwar decades when nationalism was a (if not the) dominant force in the world. This was the time when the triumvirate or three greats of the field, Isaac Kandel (1881-1965), Nicholas Hans (1888-1969) and Friedrich Schneider (1881-1969) laboured. For the nationalistic and Western vantage point from which these comparativists operated, they do get their share of flak from modern-day progressive scholars in the field (see Takayama, Sriprakash & Connell 2017). The field gained a foothold at universities, especially in North America but also in Europe (see Wolhuter et al. 2009).

After the Second World War, the field of comparative and international education entered a Social Sciences phase, as leading scholars in the field, attempted to turn comparative and international education into a full-blown social science. These scholars included Brian Holmes, C. Arnold Anderson, Harold Noah, Max Eckstein and others who wholly appropriated the theoretical frameworks and methods of the social sciences. These scholars saw the wharf and womb of the field as calculating statistical correlations between education and societal variables, for example, the effect of investment in education on economic growth. Theoretical frameworks and paradigms in vogue in the social sciences, such as modernisation theory and human capital theory, were embraced.

In the 1970s, a reaction set in, as rival paradigms developed in the field. These included, for example, theories of socio-economic reproduction, theories of cultural reproduction, world systems analysis and dependency theory (see Wolhuter 2021). Chiming in with the time spirit of postmodernism, after the 1970s, the number and variety of paradigms extant in the field multiplied (see Paulston 1994).

Present features of the field can be summarised as the historically treaded furrows have resulted in the field becoming trapped by historical forces, resulting in a justified feeling of some stagnation in the field. It is argued that impediments to progress in the field of comparative and international education are the severance from practice, the ‘black box’ syndrome of paying more attention to societal context than to education, the tenacious attachment to the nation-state as the sole geographic level of analysis, the lack of autochthonous theory persistent Northern hegemony and the regression of space and infrastructure at universities (see Wolhuter & Jacobs 2021). While geographically much comparative and international education scholarship focus on the Global South, a substantial part of the authorship of this very same scholarship lies in the Global North (see Wolhuter 2008). These are objectionable features, or features limiting the field from living up to its full potential – also with respect to the thesis defended in this chapter, and later in the book, these problematic aspects of the field will be returned to.

Comparative and international education as a field of scholarship has defied attempts to encapsulate it in a simple definition (see Wolhuter & Jacobs 2021). The historical survey of the field was given up-front so as to get an idea of what scholars in the field are occupying themselves with. One of the eminent theoreticians of the field, David Turner (2019), is of the view that there is no definition of comparative and international education; the best way to get an idea of what the field is all about is to look at what comparativists are studying.

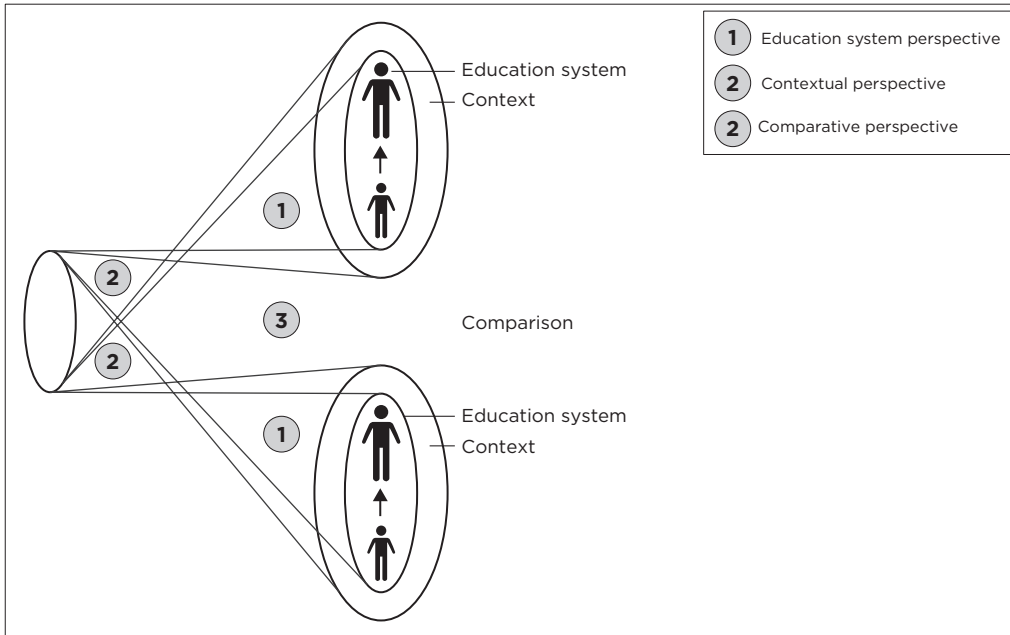
What is, therefore, tabled here now as a working definition carries no claim of universal subscription by comparativists. Comparative education can be defined as having a – three-in-one perspective on education (Wolhuter 2021):

- an education *system* perspective
- a contextual perspective
- a comparative perspective

This can diagrammatically be portrayed as in Figure 9.1 (Wolhuter 2018, p. 259).

Comparative education studies the education *system* in the first place. While *national* education systems are the most common unit of analysis in comparative education scholarship, both higher and lower levels of analyses, qualifying as comparative education scholarship, are also possible.

The focus of comparative education (Wolhuter 2021, pp. 1–20) is, however, broader than just the education system *per se*. The education system is studied within its societal context and is regarded as being shaped by – or as being the outcome of – societal forces (geographic, demographic, social, economic, cultural, political and religious). Not only the societal context as a shaping feature of education (systems) is the object of study, but also, conversely, the effect or outcome of education on each of these contextual spheres. Finally,



Source: Wolhuter et al. (2018, p. 259). Republished with appropriate permission from the author and publisher.

**FIGURE 9.1:** The three-in-one perspective of comparative education.

comparative education does not contend with studying one education system in its societal context in isolation. Various education systems, shaped by their societal contexts, are compared; hence the comparative perspective. For the purposes of this chapter, 'international education' is used in the meaning ascribed to the term in more recent times by Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014), namely that international education refers to scholarship studying education through a lens bringing a global or an international perspective. The scholarly field of comparative education is then evolving into comparative and international education. The idea is that single or limited area studies and comparisons then eventually feed into the all-encompassing, global study of the International Education Project (Wolhuter 2021).

While definitions of comparative and international education are divergent, and many comparativists will object to this description of the field, the authors will venture that this description covers much or all of what is published and accepted under the banner of comparative and international education.

## ■ The dual nature of comparative and international education: Field of scholarship and method

Physicists explain that light has a dual nature, that of matter (particles) as well as that of waves. Similarly, comparative and international education has a

dual nature. It denotes at the same time an object of study (as was explicated earlier), but it is also a method. In the world of today, the value of the comparative method, in the sense of investigating the comparative experiences or track record of education systems, is becoming more and more valuable. As Charles Tilly (1984) writes on comparing complicated structures, the aim is reconstructing the different configurations of both societal contexts and education systems, which will make possible the analysis and identification of how the different components are shaped and are interrelated. Marks (1997, p. 3) suggests, ‘the goal of comparison is to find intelligible patterns of commonality beneath apparent diversity’, that would be, in the case of comparative and international education, to find commonalities in the education system – societal interrelations.

An interesting extension of the explained direction of thought can be seen in Kuan-Hsing Chen’s (2010) book *Asia as Method*, in which the author puts forth the idea of Asia as a discursive strategy, using the context of Asia as a referential framework in Asian studies, countering Western hegemony in such scholarship, where the Western world is taken as a referential framework. But the next logical question is, what is the value, or to what purpose does this method and this entire project of study education form the three-in-one perspective of comparative and international education? It is to this question that the chapter will turn.

For long the ‘method’ part of comparative and international education was rather neglected and not explicated to its full meaning by scholars in the field. Among the (very divergent plethora of) ways in which scholars defined the field, a dichotomy can be discerned. On the one hand, there have been those who wished to define comparative and international education by means of a unique object of study and who vehemently rejected the idea that any field of scholarship can be defined by its method. An example is the South African comparativist Henry Stone (1983), who argued that to be logically consistent, a field of scholarship should then be constructed or acknowledged around every method. To lead this to its logical conclusion, space should be allowed, for example, phenomenological education, interview education, questionnaire education, et cetera, an absurd proposition. At the other end, there are scholars such as eminent comparativist Erwin Epstein (2008) of the Loyola University, Chicago, USA, who argue that comparative education is an interdisciplinary field, applying methods and theoretical structures of social sciences (such as Sociology, Economics or Political Science) to problems in education. It should be mentioned that such a definition of the field is also not without its problems (see Wolhuter 2015). The discussion of these problematic aspects is beyond the scope of this chapter, but what is appropriate to mention here, is that those scholars who have been conceptualising the field in terms of the comparative method, until very recently, have never extended their view on the use of the method to

cognate fields of education scholarship beyond the narrow confines of comparative and international education. In the classic essays on the uses or significance of comparative and international education, such as those by Jones (1981), Noah and Eckstein (1969), Tretheway (1976) and finally, Harold Noah's often cited – as a central reference point discussing the functions of comparative education – inaugural lecture as comparative education professor at Columbia University, entitled 'The Use and Abuse of Comparative Education' (Noah 1984, 1986), no reference is made to the use of the comparative method in cognate fields of education scholarship, such as Philosophy of Education, Education Management, Educational Psychology, Sociology of Education, Education Leadership or others.

It is – heartening – to see in a recent volume on the teaching of comparative education (also being a first volume on the teaching of the field, also a commendable development) that the University of Bristol's comparativist Michael Crossley (2016, p. 44) points out the value of comparative education in teacher education programmes, in teaching students the comparative method of research (to fully appreciate this statement the global rise of research training, and the inclusion of a research project in initial teacher education should be kept in mind, cf. Karras & Wolhuter 2019). A real breakthrough was achieved with the publication of *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Studies in Education* (Suter, Smith & Denman 2019b). While this is the first volume proclaiming to deal with the employment of the comparative method by scholarly fields beyond comparative and international education in approaching issues in education, the volume can be criticised for still having an overly percentage of chapter contributors from *within* the field of comparative and international education. As Larry Suter (2019b, p. 9) remarks in the opening chapter to this volume, research studies undertaken in the field of comparative and international education are employing a very wide variety of educational research methods encompassing all strands of epistemologies. This leaves the reader with the question as to what use then is the comparative method, if even scholars within the field avail of seemingly every other method of research? On explicating where the comparative method of research in education fits in and complements the entire gamut of methods extant in education research, Wolhuter (2020, pp. 105-108) uses the framework of Robson (2011). Robson (2011) groups research methods into the following three planes:

- Methods of data-collection
- Methods of data analysis
- Methods of data interpretation

Methods of data-collection include observation, participant observation, measurement, testing, questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, document surveys, literature surveys, ethnomethodology and autobiography. Methods of data analysis include descriptive statistics, inferential statistics,

correlation and regression analysis, cluster analysis, factor analysis, CAQDAS (Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software, e.g. ATLAS), ethnography, phenomenology, phenomenography, content analysis, discourse analysis, social cartography and description. Methods of data interpretation include critical ethnography, historical narrative, hermeneutics, contextual analysis, evaluative research (as explicated by Michael Patton) and critical or emancipatory research methodologies (as explained by e.g. Habermas, Brian Fay and exponents of Critical Feminism).

In a typical, fully-fledged research project, methods at all three planes of data-collection, data analysis and data interpretation will be evident. The comparison lies at the level of interpretation of data. Thus, a comparative and international education project, the distinguishing feature of which will be the employment of comparison as a method of interpretation of data, will have itself be served by any one (or more) of the assortment of methods of data-collection, as well as by any one or more of the range of methods of data analysis. Suter (2019a, p. 11) states that ‘comparison of ourselves to others is a natural form of human understanding, and it is a key element in conducting analysis of social behavior’. It is also not impossible for more than one method of data interpretation to be employed in a particular research project; that is, besides comparison, one or more additional methods of data interpretation can be used. What immediately comes to mind here are two classic publications in the field: Harvard comparativist Robert Ulich’s (1961) argument for a historical approach to comparative education and Vandra Masemann’s (1982) Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Presidential Address suggesting greater use of critical ethnography in comparative and international education research.

As the last part of the exposition of the method part of the duality of comparative and international, an argument will be put up regarding the unique and indispensable part of this method – especially as it figures as part of comparative and international education – in education research. In a thought-provoking article, Smith (1995) alleges that education is one of the most frequently occurring variables in social science publications and then criticises the way this variable is measured, arguing that this gives rise to findings of low credibility and validity. Smith substantiates this allegation with the argument that education is a complex inter-human activity and that to take one simple measure of education, such as years of completed schooling as a proxy for the level of education received – as is commonly done, especially in research on societies of the Global South – is severely reductionistic at best, and fraudulent or erroneous at worst. The search for laws in the social sciences, in the natural science sense of the word, and which leading comparativists believed in too and put up as an ideal for scholars in the field to find (the strongest and well-known advocates for this line of thought in the field being Harold Noah and Max Eckstein in their 1969 publication), is an exercise bound



to end up in frustration, because of the complexity of the social world. Writing about the history of a litany of failures in social intervention programmes, Rossi (1987) ironically writes about 'iron laws' and 'metallic laws', complexity frustrating social intervention programmes based on simplistic reasoning on one of two indicators. In the set of fields of scholarship in education, the only field, by means of its scope of investigation and theoretical and methodological instrumentarium equipped to deal with the diversity or multitude of factors involved in any education project, is comparative and international education. That gives this field and the comparative method a unique and special place, in complementing any study in any of the other cognate fields of education scholarship.

## ■ The significance of comparative and international education

Comparative and international education serves an array of functions, and the value of this field of scholarship and its method has been documented (see Wolhuter 2021) and new uses of the field keep on transpiring (see Wolhuter 2012). In this section, attention will be paid only to three objectives of comparative and international education relevant to the topic of the chapter and of the volume, namely to assess education systems, to abstract regularities in contextual-education system interrelations and to assist or to guide education system planning or reform.

Comparative education serves to evaluate education systems; the domestic education system as well as universal evaluation of education systems, or the evaluation of the International Education Project. When dealing with education and human rights, assessment of the own or of the global education system, will therefore entail assessing not only education as human right, that is how well education about human rights is materialised in the world or in the country at stake, but also (in terms of components of human right education, see Wolhuter 2019):

- **Education about human rights:** How well students are being taught and learn about human rights.
- **Education through human rights:** How well (the pedagogy, curriculum and organisation and management of) education in the world or in the country under study is in keeping with the *Creed of Human Rights*.
- **Education for human rights:** How well does education in the world or in the country in focus prepare learners for living according to the *Creed of Human Rights*.

As was explained earlier, comparative and international education has as its object of study education – societal contextual interrelationships, that is, societal context as shaping education systems, as well as the societal outcomes of education. In research on human rights and education, this will then mean

how context shapes the manifestation of education about human rights, of education through human rights and of education for human rights. However, as was explained too, given the infinite variety of configurations of permutations the myriad of contextual elements and education system elements can take on, the formulation of universal, iron rigid, natural science types of laws of interrelationships, either way, is impossible. The best that can be aimed at is to find regular patterns, that is, the presence of contextual element  $x$  tends to result in education system element  $y$ , or education system  $a$  tends to have contextual element  $B$  as the outcome. But given the higher degree of contextual similarities between Global South countries than between Global South and Global North jurisdictions, a case can be made for making sure the scholarly discourse about education and human rights is well-imbued with perspectives from the Global South, rather than formulation a corpus of theory based exclusively on the experience of the Global North.

Throughout the history of *Comparative and International Education*, a rationale for this field of scholarship has been to extract the best policies, ideas and practices from the foreign education system to improve the domestic education system (e.g. see Heng & Song 2021; Suter, Smith & Denman 2019, p. xxxv). However, keeping in mind the fact that education systems are shaped by societal contextual forces, any exercise of exporting any education policy, idea or practice from one society to another should take into account contextual similarities as well as contextual differences between the importing and the exporting country (see Suter 2019b, p. xxix). Once again, given the greater degree of contextual similarities between countries within the Global South (where the bulk of the global population and a growing percentage of the global population resides), this qualification of comparative exercises to borrowing or learning asks for infusing the human rights education scholarly bibliography with Southern perspectives.

## ■ Caveats: The present state of comparative and international education

Having explained how the field of comparative and international education is, by nature of its object of study and methodological instrumentarium, ideally placed to lead the charge of infusing the scholarly and public discourse on human rights with Southern perspectives, it should be added that a number of features of the field, in its present state, hampers it in living up to this promise. These caveats will not be unpacked.

The volume of publications emanating in the scholarly field of comparative and international education has shown an exponential increase in recent years (Suter 2019a, pp. 4, 8–10). In the corpus of literature of comparative and international education, the nations of the Global South abound as geographic foci of studies. Even more encouraging, a content analysis of articles published

in the journal *Comparative Education Review* for the entire first 50 years of its existence shows that the percentage of articles published focusing on the Global South, has increased over time (see Wolhuter 2008, p. 327). However, an anomaly is that Northern authors dominate, also in articles covering the Global South. This calls into mind objections related to Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) of Westerners, very inaccurately viewing and portraying Asia as something eccentric; or of what in anthropology has become a very problematic part of that field of scholarship, as it is called there, 'the field' (see Gupta & Ferguson 1997). There is also always the objection made by Afro-American scholar, Kingsley Bhanya (1998) at the 1998 Comparative and International Education World Conference, hosted in Cape Town, namely that 'he who wears the shoe can tell best where it pinches', meaning in studying, commenting on and suggesting policies or practices for education in the Global South, scholars from those parts of the world are best suited. Finally, at times of growing ethical sensitivity and considerations when conducting research, in an article published recently in the top journal in the field of comparative and international education, McMahon and Milligan (2021) highlighted a host of ethical problems surfacing when Northern scholars conduct research in the Global South.

Related to, or a consequence of the caveat outlined in the previous paragraph, there is the problem of the dominance of Northern paradigms, epistemologies and theoretical frameworks in the field. Referring back to comparative and international education's theorem of the salience of context, such frameworks developed in the context of the Global North, at prima facie, would seem to be ill-suited for analysing education in the Global South. This point has been illustrated and belaboured recently by leading scholars in the field, such as Keita Takayama et al. (2017), Assié-Lumumba (2017) and Sharon Stein (2017). The *Incheon Declaration 'Education 2030' of 2015* is currently paraded as the global community's vision for education in the world in 2030, in the framework of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Hardly had this declaration been proclaimed when the comparative and international education scholar Leon Tikly (2017) argued that this document is seriously slanted or biased towards the Global North and its interests.

A case can be made out that what is needed in the field of comparative and international education is what Danermark (2002) has termed 'abductive reasoning', that is a process of interpreting and recontextualising individual phenomena within a new or another conceptual framework or a set of ideas, in this case, a conceptual framework recentring the Global South, and fully incorporating existing power relations in the world and its effect on education.

Another related problem is that of the dominance of English or the strong position of English as the international lingua franca of the academic world (cf. Bowles & Murphy 2020), and in comparative and international education in particular. The four top journals in the field by impact factor, that is *Compare*:

*A Journal of Comparative and International Education, Comparative Education Review, Comparative Education and International Journal of Educational Development* are all unilingual English. The proceedings of the executive of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies are conducted in English only. Fifty-two percent of Internet content is in English. Less than 10% of the world population speak English as a first language, and less than 25% have a command of the language sufficient to understand a conversation conducted in the language. The march of English to become the international *lingua franca* has been documented (e.g. see Spichtinger 2000; Wolhuter & Van der Walt 2022). Much can be said for and against it – in scholarship, there are two views. The alarmists claim English is a tool of international linguistic imperialism. At the opposite end, the triumphalists portray English as a tool for facilitating international understanding, as epitomised by respective scholars Robert Phillipson and David Crystal. Both arguments surely have merit. However, the fact remains that the overwhelming percentage of scholars from the Global South are forced to build an academic edifice in a language that is not their first language. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that in the field of comparative and international education the very problematic, narrow meaning of the word ‘education’ in English and its implications, even for the name of the field, have been demonstrated (Wolhuter 2022).

Another point of criticism that has recently begun to be levelled against the present state of comparative and international education, chimes in with a general *avant garde* critique in both the scholarly and public discussion on education, namely the call for the decolonisation of education (two chapters in this volume, Chapters 5 and 6, deal with this call too). This call has also reached South African shores, and attained a crescendo around the 2015–2016 ‘#FeesMustFall’ and ‘#RhodesMustFall’ campaigns (see Habib 2019).

Decolonisation of education is a nebulous concept, and furthermore means a number of things to different people. Jansen (2017, pp. 156–173) distinguishes between the following eight meanings attached to the term:

- Decolonisation of education means the decentring of European knowledge. Knowledge of Europe can no longer be the central or the main component of knowledge appearing in the curriculum.
- Decolonisation means the Africanisation of knowledge: this point of view goes further than the first and argues that knowledge of Africa should stand central, and the achievements and ideals of Africa should be the standard of progress.
- Decolonisation means incremental or additive, inclusive knowledge. The existing canon of knowledge is acknowledged, but what is being asked is that new knowledge be added to this canon.
- Decolonisation as the critical engagement with existing knowledge. Decolonisation refers not so much to new knowledge as to the critical interrogation of existing knowledge, asking questions such as: where does

this knowledge come from, and whose interests are being served by this knowledge?

- Decolonisation as engagement with interwoven knowledge: the categorisation of knowledge in neat or watertight compartments of, for example, Western or African or Oriental knowledge should be broken down, and knowledge should be ordered in relation to everyday life or the world.
- Decolonisation as the repatriation of occupied knowledge (and society). The idea is that colonial knowledge in the curriculum exercises enormous power, paralysing a country and its people, and should therefore be removed (and sent back from where it came).

Over decolonisation *per se* and on each of the mentioned meanings, much can be argued for and against, but few would say that none of the aforementioned has any merits whatsoever. The intersection between the call for decolonisation (in society in general and in education in particular) needs to be teased out too. But the call for decolonisation has reached the field of comparative and international education too, amidst growing claims of an unacceptable colonial, neo-colonial or at least Northern Hemispheric historical slant in the field still present (see Takayama et al. 2017). This call has been the theme of a special issue of a top journal *Comparative Education Review* in 2017. While the call for decolonial education and for the decolonisation of education is passionately waged in both academe and in the public discourse, from the vantage point of comparative and international education, in a recent publication Vickers (2020) has identified many caveats in this call for decolonisation.

## ■ Comparative and international education on human rights education

When narrowing the focus more, down to how scholars in the field of comparative and international education deal with human rights education, three main observations can be made. Wolhuter, Espinoza and McGinn (2022) argue that the large assortment of paradigms or theoretical positions in the field can be reduced to four narratives, that is, social narratives as the term is used by Paul Ricoeur (1984) as being holistic configurations, bringing actions, events and results together. The four narratives extant in the field are the human capabilities narrative, the neoliberal narrative, the human rights narrative and the social justice narrative (Wolhuter et al. 2022).

The human rights narrative is built on the belief in education about human rights, education through human rights and education for human rights (Wolhuter et al. 2022; see also the explanation of human rights education). The human rights narrative is salient in comparative and international education bibliography and discourse. The publications of UNESCO – one of

the principal producers of comparative and international education literature in the world – are typically part of this narrative (Wolhuter et al. 2022). The following are examples of publications falling within this narrative: Bellino's (2016) publication on history textbooks and citizenship education (CE) in post-conflict Guatemala and Van Wessel and Van Hirtum's (2013) publication about participation in schooling in conflict-ridden Nepal.

While, in the examples such as those cited, human rights are used as a scaffold on the planes of life and world philosophy, of beliefs regarding the objectives of education, and the rationale for education, human rights education is much more rarely the explicit subject of investigation of comparative and international education scholarship. In a recently published article in a top comparative and international education journal (as measured by the impact factor) *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* Jing et al. (2021) surveying all articles published during the past decade, 2010–2019, in the journal *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, found that the most common foci of articles are as follows (in order of frequency): The authors usually addressed the following research topics: gender; the disciplinary development of comparative education and international education, internationalisation, CE, globalisation, education policy, teacher education, culture, globalisation, policy, citizenship, education for all, international students and decentralisation.

As a result of an extensive survey of contemporary comparative and international education, Suter (2019a) enumerated the following as prominent themes in the research agenda of the field:

Economic development; International agencies; Indigenous cultures; Metrics to inform national and international policy; Curriculum that is intended, implemented and attained; Equity of access to quality education; Levels of cognitive achievement; Varieties of non-cognitive traits; Pedagogy; Philosophy of science, especially epistemology; Quality of instruction in subject areas (mathematics, science, reading); Uses of time inside and outside formal classes; Reflections on the field of Comparative Education itself; [and] Extensive descriptions of education institutions in world regions. (p. 14)

However, noteworthy instances of such comparative and international education scholarship where the explicit focus is human rights education, do exist. What comes to mind here are the volumes by the University of London, Institute of Education comparativist Tristan McCowan's (2013) and, more recently, by Mary Drinkwater, Rizvi and Edge (2019). In a highly acclaimed volume on curricula in primary and secondary school curricula worldwide, edited by the State University of New York (SUNY) comparativist Aaron Benavot, FO Ramirez, Suarez and Meyer (2006) have published a chapter on the inclusion of human rights education in school education worldwide, 1950–2005. Furthermore, several articles focusing on human rights education from the angle of comparative and international education have been published in

scholarly journals. Nakagawa and Wotipka (2016) have studied the development of the female rights discourse during the time period 1970–2008 in Social Sciences textbooks in schools in 74 countries. Two publications by Wahl (2016) and Sen (2021), on human rights education in respectively India and Turkey, demonstrate how what has ostensibly been displayed as human rights education is subverted – this in itself shows the line of pivotally important research that needs to be constantly conducted.

## ■ Conclusion

For its full and optimal unfolding in the world, human rights education (i.e. education about human rights, education through human rights and education for human rights) and the materialisation of education as a human right needs a corpus of knowledge, constantly being constructed by a community of scholars. While a virile scholarly community exists, actively building such an edifice, this edifice is lopsided in that it is built too much from knowledge constructed in Global North contexts. In view of the fact that human rights education in its conceptualisation, interrogation and manifestation, is context-sensitive, and in view of the growing weight of the Global South in the contemporary world, there exists a need to infuse the scholarly and public discourse on human rights education, as well as the corpus of knowledge regarding human rights education, with input from the Global South, as was argued in Chapter 2 of this volume. By nature of its epistemological and conceptual instrumentarium and its edifice of knowledge, the field of scholarship ideally placed for this assignment is comparative and international education. However, to live up to its potential substantial changes and improvements should be effected to the activities of the scholarly community of comparative and international education. These include an increase in scholarship focusing on the Global South by scholars steeped in the Global South, and moving the theme of human rights and human rights education higher up in the comparative and international education Research Agenda.

# Understanding trafficking in persons as a human rights education problem

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## ■ Abstract

Human trafficking is a gross human rights violation and a global concern. It is a grim reality in South Africa; furthermore, the South African government does not fully comply with the minimum standards of the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000*. Urgently addressing human trafficking is on the international agenda to transform our world, where Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8.7 highlights the importance of eradicating human trafficking globally by the year 2030. Education plays a crucial role in addressing SDG 8.7. In this chapter, we conceptualise trafficking in persons in liberal-capitalist

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societies and how the most basic human rights in these societies play out in the context of trafficking. We then focus on the lived experiences of trafficking victims and survivors from a Ricoeurian perspective. With the conceptualisation of trafficking in liberal-capitalist societies and victims' and survivors' lived experiences in mind, we trouble human rights in human rights education. Human rights education as a curriculum space of tension is discussed to show how it unlocks generative and hopeful possibilities to advance epistemic justice.

## ■ Introduction

Trafficking in persons<sup>9</sup> is widespread and is affecting most countries around the globe. Because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, trafficking cases have been increasing (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2021). Traffickers have adapted to the conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and are capitalising on the vulnerabilities that continue to manifest. The COVID-19 pandemic has created conditions that are increasing the number of persons experiencing vulnerabilities to trafficking and this is greatly interrupting anti-trafficking interventions (United States of America Department of State 2021).

Abolishing trafficking is part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations General Assembly 2015). This is evident as SDGs 5.2, 5.3, 8.7 and 16.2 all focus on ending trafficking (United Nations General Assembly 2015). Another relevant goal for this chapter is quality education. SDG 4.7 specifically focuses on learners acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through, among others, addressing human rights.

Trafficking in South Africa flourishes because of a lack of adequate information and understanding of the nature of trafficking (Bello & Olutola 2019, p. 205). In South Africa, the school curriculum does little to address trafficking topics. The explicit South African Grades R-12 curricula does not address trafficking adequately (Du Preez & Simmonds 2013). The South African school curriculum for Grades 1-9 does not address hazardous forms of child labour or trafficking for child labour (Visser 2021).

Educating learners about trafficking can lay a foundation for a sound understanding of this phenomenon (Bello & Olutola 2019, p. 214). Furthermore, education can enable learners to realise their human agency so that they can become influencers and agents of change against social injustices (Ellerly 2019). By reaching learners through education and equipping them with

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9. Trafficking in persons is used as an umbrella term to refer to both human trafficking and child trafficking. The definitions of child trafficking and human trafficking relevant for this article are defined in the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (United Nations General Assembly 2000).

knowledge and skills about trafficking, the number of persons having to be rehabilitated after they have been trafficked can be limited (Ellerly 2019). Furthermore, ‘human rights education contributes to the prevention of violence and conflicts, the promotion of equality and sustainable development and participation in decision-making processes within democratic systems’ (United Nations [UN] 2019, p. 3).

Without a doubt, trafficking in persons is a gross human rights violation and yet has not been sufficiently conceptualised as a human rights education problem. This chapter is guided by the question: How can trafficking in persons be understood as a human rights education problem? To unravel what this question is asking, we start the chapter by outlining some of the push and pull factors fuelling trafficking in persons within liberal-capitalist societies, as this depicts the socio-economic context that many countries face. To further implicate the working of liberal-capitalist societies, we provide a human rights lens. We draw on the insights of Žižek (2005, 2012) and his musings of what he regards as the two most basic human rights, namely the right to the pursuit of pleasure and the right to freedom of choice. Žižek helps us to lay the foundation for a much-needed discussion on freedom. The chapter invokes a Ricoeurian (1966) perspective to invigorate different lines of freedom to make an argument for the importance of the embodied lived experiences of trafficking victims and survivors. The possibilities this creates for human rights education are advantageous but are not without critique. As such, the chapter then troubles human rights and how conceptions of human rights have informed the development and dissemination of human rights education. We deem these critiques as pressing because they remind us that human rights education is a contentious space. However, we argue that it is necessary to stand in the cracks of this contentious space so we can work with and through human rights education to unlock its possibilities and think anew. To do so, we contemplate the potential vested in Braidotti’s (2019) pedagogical tool of defamiliarisation.

## ■ Trafficking in persons in liberal-capitalist societies

South Africa joined global liberal-capitalist societies by adopting the neoliberal Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy (Zembe et al. 2013, p. 2). Liberal-capitalist societies are extremely effective in generating wealth. This wealth comes at the cost of various evils. These evils include ‘trafficking, human rights violations, exploitation, injustice, the destruction of natural resources, and mass suffering’ (Visser 2018, p. 38). Trafficking is a criminal business and is rapidly growing on a global level to be one of the largest of its kind in liberal-capitalist societies (Simmonds & Du Preez 2015, p. 87).

Four important features are connected to liberal-capitalist societies. These are products, labour, unemployment and the rise of a new social class (Žižek 2012, pp. 8–9). All these features and how they influence the expansion of trafficking are discussed in this chapter. The concepts of products and labour are interpreted and understood differently in liberal-capitalist societies than in industrial capitalism. The products in liberal-capitalist societies are not necessarily material but rather the production of social life and this is directly bio-political (Žižek 2012, p. 9). Labour is not material but rather symbolic production (Žižek 2012, p. 9). In the context of trafficking, products are produced through the forced labour of trafficking victims. Sexual services provided by trafficking victims could also be seen as both labour (providing the service) and a product (pleasure) in liberal-capitalist societies.

Unemployment is the third feature connected to liberal-capitalist societies. There is an ever-widening gap between the skilled or qualified and unskilled or unqualified (Žižek 2012, p. 10). A person is no longer employed for their knowledge and experience alone but rather for their expertise (Žižek 2012, p. 10). The nature of unemployment is changing, common knowledge is privatised and as a result, the workers have superfluous knowledge or, in other words, are structurally unemployable (Žižek 2012, p. 10). Unemployment is also one of the central push factors that fuels trafficking. More and more people become unemployable in liberal-capitalist societies, so the opportunities to exploit them increase. Because of push factors, persons become vulnerable to being recruited for trafficking purposes (Bermudez 2008, p. 12). Visser (2018, p. 23) made a list of push factors relating to unemployment (by synthesising various sources), including poverty, education, traditional beliefs, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Poverty as a push factor is a contested issue; however, in South Africa, it remains significant to trafficking (Human Science Research Council [HSRC] 2010, p. 93). Lumadi (2012, p. 48) states that '[p]overty is a major factor that oils the wheel of trafficking on the African continent'. There are other factors related to poverty and these are economic inequality (Pearce 2009, p. 1), food shortages, famines (Swart 2012, pp. 62–63), a country's food production index (Bales 2007) and poor development (Hamman 2011, p. 20).

South Africans face poverty and socio-economic challenges that make them vulnerable to trafficking (Bermudez 2008, p. 12). These challenges are often the entry point into trafficking (Fowler, Che & Fowler 2010, p. 1348). Unemployment levels are high and those who are skilled do not receive adequate wages (Bermudez 2008, p. 13). When searching for a job, potential hazards are overlooked by people in poverty accepting offers for jobs (Bermudez 2008, p. 12). Job offers, as a means to bring relief from unemployment, are used to trick people into trafficking (Lutya 2009, p. 73). Some of the people who accept these offers know that the job involves crime,

but they would rather be employed than face the crisis of unemployment and not receiving a financial income (Lutya 2009, p. 73). COVID-19 further enabled traffickers to prey on the vulnerabilities because of socio-economic challenges. According to the United States of America Department of State (2021):

Traffickers targeted families experiencing financial difficulties and offered false promises and fraudulent job offers to recruit their children, while other families exploited or sold their children to traffickers to financially support themselves. [...] Additionally, traffickers sought to re-exploit survivors who became financially unstable and vulnerable to revictimisation. (p. 6)

Education is the second push factor related to unemployment. It is believed that people who complete school and perhaps education at a tertiary institution would be able to compete in the labour market (Lutya 2009, p. 67). Although when children leave school too early, they have limited chances of being employed (Lutya 2009, p. 67). Those who do not have adequate access to education face further limited opportunities to increase their earnings through more skilled occupations (UNESCO 2007, p. 32). Lack of education and a lack of knowledge about trafficking increases the vulnerability to falling prey to trafficking (UNESCO 2007, p. 38).

Traditional beliefs are the third push factor related to unemployment. According to Bermudez (2008, p. 16), there are three traditional beliefs in South Africa that have been linked to trafficking; they are muti (traditional medicine), lobola (bride price) and child placements (a practice to ensure a better life for a child). In some cases, muti is made from trafficked human body organs (Bermudez 2008, p. 16). Traffickers misuse lobola as a traditional practice and buy and sell child brides (Bermudez 2008, p. 16). Economic circumstances and poverty might lead to the perception of a young girl to be seen as an economic burden and marrying her off to an older male brings relief to the family's financial situation and becomes a part of the family's survival strategy (Bermudez 2008, p. 16; UNESCO 2007, p. 37). Because of poverty, the death of a parent or the inability to financially provide for a child, they are placed with other family members who can provide better opportunities for the child (Bermudez 2008, p. 16). Traffickers misuse child placement by promising better opportunities (Bermudez 2008, p. 16).

HIV and AIDS make up the fourth push factor related to unemployment. In South Africa, HIV and AIDS infection rates are rife (Bermudez 2008, p. 14). The demand for children as victims of trafficking is increased by the belief that having sex with a virgin can cure HIV infection (Swart 2012, p. 63). The number of orphans and child-headed households increases when parents or guardians lose their lives to HIV and AIDS (Bermudez 2008, p. 15; Hamman 2011, p. 20). These children then become vulnerable to being trafficked. Also, when households are affected by HIV and AIDS, their budgets are affected and less money is available for school-related expenses (Bermudez 2008, p. 15). Traffickers disguised as strangers, family or friends promise better

opportunities for children in HIV and AIDS households that cannot financially provide for their children (Bermudez 2008, p. 15).

The fourth feature connected to liberal-capitalist societies is the rise of a new social class. In liberal-capitalist societies, the ownership-based bourgeoisie class is becoming non-functional and the need for managerial roles is on the rise (Žižek 2012, p. 10). Historically a millionaire would invest money in gold mines; today, however, such a person would manage a bank. Others would then trust the bank manager to invest their money. This means that the 'bourgeoisie' re-enters as a class of salaried managers who receives salaries for immaterial labour or management and, in some cases, earn some of the company's stock as part of their remuneration (Žižek 2012, p. 10). According to Žižek (2012, p. 10), managers receive irrationally high salaries and have the privilege of a 'surplus-wage' that is a surplus over a minimal wage. This surplus comes in two forms, more money and more free time (Žižek 2012, p. 10). In liberal-capitalist societies, they have access to all kinds of excesses on which they can spend their surplus-wage, including cars, sex and alcohol (Žižek 2005, p. 117). According to Visser (2018, p. 25), the surplus-wage is capitalised on by traffickers to earn more money. Those with a surplus-wage (or, in other words, upper-middle-class) often knowingly or unknowingly exploit trafficking victims (Batchelor & Lane 2013, p. 110). In some cases, a surplus-wage influences the demand for products, services, labour and organs provided by trafficking victims. Unfortunately, it is the 'demand [that] fuels the growth of trafficking' (Shelley 2010, p. 39). This demand is also known as pull factors. Super-wage earners are persuaded that they want or need certain products or services (Anderson & Davidson 2003, p. 41).

When there is a supply of victims, it also leads to an increase in demand for products, services, labour and organs provided by trafficking victims. Anderson and Davidson (2003, p. 41) argue that in a community there might initially not be a demand for a lap dance club until these services are provided and advertised. In other words, a supply of services generates a demand for the said service (Anderson & Davidson 2003, p. 41). Human bodies are perceived as commodities that provide sexual pleasure in the sex industry (Coy, Wakeling & Garner 2011, p. 442). As part of the sex industry, sex tourism is growing so that travellers can seek commercial sex as part of their travelling experience (Bermudez 2008, p. 17). Children are in high demand for sexual exploitation and their sexual services are often sold for higher prices than older victims (Batchelor & Lane 2013, p. 110, 106).

According to Visser (2015, p. 26), 'traffickers take on the role of the link between supply and demand'. Traffickers generate large amounts of profit for themselves by taking advantage of the supply and demand of trafficking (Bales 2007, p. 279). Victims are supplied and easy access is provided to them by traffickers (UNESCO 2007, p. 26). Except for organ trafficking, traffickers can supply and resupply victims multiple times, making more profit with

human bodies than possible through the illegal trade of drugs or other commodities. Traffickers capitalise on unemployment and a surplus-wage. Traffickers themselves could have been victims of unemployment who turned to innovative, illegal ways of increasing their own income through exploiting trafficking victims and exploiting the surplus-wage of the new social class.

Up to now, we discussed the multiple facets that contribute to the trafficking of persons in liberal-capitalist societies that directly and indirectly relates to notions of capitalism. In the process of trafficking in persons, numerous human rights are violated. Next, we focus on the two most basic human rights in liberal-capitalist societies and their role in trafficking.

## ■ Human rights in liberal-capitalist societies: A Žižekian perspective

Žižek (2005, p. 115) argues that the most basic human rights in liberal-capitalist societies are the right to the pursuit of pleasure and the right to freedom of choice. When considered in terms of trafficking, these two rights are perceived to be in conflict. Traffickers and consumers of the products, services, labour and organs of trafficking victims pursue their right to the pursuit of pleasure. However, these trafficking victims have limited freedom of choice. Visser (2018, p. 38) argues that ‘someone’s right to a life of pleasure could result in slavery and the violation of the right to freedom’.

### ■ Right to the pursuit of pleasure

The right to dedicate one’s life to the pursuit of pleasure can be perceived as a redoubled right (Visser 2018, p. 38). Žižek (2005, p. 120) argues that ‘this elementary choice is always redoubled by a further one, between elevating one’s striving for pleasure and one’s supreme duty, and doing one’s duty not for duty’s sake but for the gratification it brings’. Each one of these aspects is significant in the context of liberal-capitalist societies (Visser 2018, p. 38).

One side of the redoubled right is the right to the pursuit of pleasure as one’s duty (Žižek 2005, p. 120). In the process of seeking pleasure, people often exploit and violate the human rights of others (Žižek 2005, p. 120). Visser (2018) argues that:

[M]any of those with a surplus-wage (potential clients) seek to fulfil their right to dedicate their life to pursuing pleasure (the surplus-wage making it relatively effortless). Some of them do so by spending their surplus-wage on services or labour provided by trafficking victims. (p. 38)

As an example, those who travel to make use of sex tourism of minors could do so in their pursuit of pleasure. They would then use their surplus-wage to pay for these services. Traffickers are the ones who provide these services by

exploiting trafficking victims and, in the process, they live out their right to the pursuit of pleasure and gain financial wealth.

The other side of the redoubled right is to do one's duty for the gratification it brings (Žižek 2005, p. 120). Numerous legal instruments are in place to describe the prevention of trafficking, stipulate the prosecution of traffickers and the procedures for the rehabilitation of trafficking victims. Those who implement these instruments (e.g. activists and law enforcers) often find pleasure and gratification in fulfilling their moral duty to 'fight for the human rights of trafficking victims' (Visser 2018, p. 39).

Through this redoubled right, both the surplus-wage earner and trafficker satisfy their pursuit of pleasure by exploiting victims of trafficking. Also, activists and law enforcers are not only fulfilling their duty for duty's sake but for the gratification they gain from doing their duty. One could argue that the exploiters and those who fight against trafficking can both pursue their right to the pursuit of pleasure and, in the process, the victim of trafficking might be stuck in the middle without freedom. This is where the second most basic human right in liberal-capitalist societies comes into play.

## ■ Right to the freedom of choice

A free choice is often made in conditions that render this choice as 'unfree'. To illustrate the unfree choice, we look at a study by Visser (2018). Visser (2018, p. 71) employed a life design narrative inquiry and had interviews with three participants. The participant we consider for this illustration is Maya. Her sexual exploitation started when she was six years old and continued until her late 20s (Visser 2018, pp. 143-147). She was a female born in sub-Saharan Africa and her home language was Afrikaans (Visser 2018, p. 143). Her parents prepared a special punishment room with a cupboard full of equipment, especially to physically abuse her (Visser 2018, p. 144). At times her mother would make her lie down in the middle of the night in a bath filled with ice and then she had to stand naked outside the house in coldness and darkness (Visser 2018, p. 144). She was exploited by a close family member with the knowledge of her mother and sometimes her mother would sell her daughter to pay for her own drug addiction (Visser 2018, p. 143). Maya reached out to her religious leaders for help; however, their advice was if she would open a case then she might be killed and she felt like she had no choice but to keep quiet (Visser 2018, p. 145). Her exploiter furthermore gave her a choice to be exploited or if she says no, then her siblings will be sexually exploited (Visser 2018, p. 143). Maya did not know how to explain what freedom meant to her; she said she first had to experience it to know what it is (Visser 2018, p. 147).

When looking at Maya's story we can see that she grew up in a physically abusive environment where she had to comply with her parents demands. They did not provide her with healthy opportunities to exercise free choice.

Rather, she was exploited with the knowledge of her mother and sometimes by her mother from a very young age. Maya did not know freedom or what it means to have a choice. Also, she believed that she chose to protect her siblings from being sexually exploited by choosing to be exploited herself. For this reason, she made an unfree choice to participate in her sexual exploitation.

Other studies also show victims of trafficking making unfree choices, one such study is Montgomery's (2014) ethnographic study where children grew up in poverty and had to provide financially for their family's needs to fulfil their filial duties. These children made unfree choices by turning to child prostitution to financially support their parents (Montgomery 2014, p. 174). In both the Visser (2018) and Montgomery (2014) studies the traffickers capitalised on the unfree choices of the victims of trafficking.

In this section, we discussed the two most basic human rights in liberal-capitalist societies. We argued that the right to the pursuit of pleasure perpetuates trafficking and that trafficking victims are often faced with unfree choices. Each victim's circumstances in which they exercise unfree choices are different. Survivors of trafficking can provide valuable information on their lived experiences of unfree choices. We deem it necessary to draw on Ricoeur's (1966) philosophy, *freedom and nature*, to provide alternative perspectives to understanding freedom and to make the argument for the importance of recognising embodied lived experiences of trafficking victims and survivors.

## ■ Embodied lived experiences of trafficking victims and survivors: A Ricoeurian perspective

Victims and survivors of trafficking need to voice their stories. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, their stories can provide valuable lessons. Meyers (2016, p. 2) argues that trafficking victims' stories can help us to learn more about trafficking and to 'grasp the moral significance of what they have to tell us'. When trafficking victims' stories are suppressed it is a form of revictimisation (Meyers 2016, p. 16). Suppressing their stories entails the refusal of entering a dialogue with them (Meyers 2016, p. 16). Furthermore, silencing victims 'deprives moral agents of knowledge they need', if people do not know about these forms of human rights abuse, they cannot protest against it, therefore 'silencing victims authorises practices of abuse' (Meyers 2016, p. 16).

Secondly, their stories can enable a deeper understanding of human rights and a stronger commitment to human rights education. When one has empathy with victims' stories it can provide a pathway to 'moral understanding and human rights commitment' (Meyers 2016, p. 4). Meyers (2016, p. 16) argues



that 'breaking the silence of victims and attending to their stories are necessary steps towards realising human rights'. Furthermore, Meyers (2016) states that:

[H]uman rights are drained of their human meaning. In contrast, victims' stories bring human rights down from the empyrean of mathematical and moral abstraction, and by sparking empathetic engagement with individuals targeted for human rights abuse, promote awareness of the paramount urgency of securing human rights. (p. 179)

Meyers (2016) lists various contexts and media where victims and survivors tell their stories, this list includes:

[I]n courts, truth commissions, support groups; to journalists, talk show hosts, social scientists, clinicians, human rights practitioners; in books, newspapers, magazines, videos, films; on Internet websites, radio programs, television. (p. 5)

Researchers also record stories of victims and survivors (Meyers 2016; Twis & Shelton 2018; Visser 2018; Visser, Du Preez & Simmonds 2019). In a systematic review, specifically on domestic child sex trafficking research, Twis and Shelton (2018) found that there is a lack of empirical studies involving survivors as participants telling their stories and that there is a shortage of studies on trafficking domestic child sex trafficking research embedded in theory. Ricoeur's freedom and nature might provide researchers with a theoretical lens to interpret trafficking victims' and survivors' stories 'in a more nuanced and comprehensive way' (Verhoef & Visser 2020, p. 23). Ricoeur's notion of freedom 'provides an alternative to philosophical concepts of freedom which is often static, abstract, disembodied and binary' (Verhoef & Visser 2020, p. 32).

In freedom and nature, Ricoeur (1966) analyses the reciprocal relationship between the voluntary and the involuntary. The mind or free will or volition represents the voluntary and the involuntary is represented by the body or nature of a person (Ricoeur 1966). A person exercises free will through a negotiation between the voluntary and the involuntary (Ricoeur 1966). Through this negotiation or reciprocal relationship, the involuntary constraints the voluntary and, ultimately, freedom is situated within the limits of the body (Ricoeur 1966; Verhoef & Visser 2020). The voluntary and involuntary are not opposites of each other and cannot be separated (Verhoef & Visser 2020).

Ricoeur (1966) describes the complexity of a free act by referring to a triadic paradigm consisting of three modes of willing, namely: decision, movement and consent. In each one of these modes, a reciprocal relationship exists between the voluntary and the involuntary. Ricoeur (1966, p. 122) states that '[t]he decision is tempered by motivation, the movement of the body is tempered by involuntary motion, and consent is tempered by necessity'. Here we briefly discuss the three modes of willing, a more detailed account is provided by Verhoef and Visser (2020).

Decision, the first mode of willing, represents the voluntary. A decision focuses on the future through intentionality and outlines a future action

(Ricoeur 1978). Motives represent the involuntary and constraints the decision being made. According to Kohak (1966, p. xvii) 'motives make a decision actual, and the decision makes motives meaningful'. Examples of motives are desire, fear, needs and pain (Ricoeur 1966). Motives are not automatic reflexes (Ricoeur 1966). Decisions cannot exist without a motive, when a motive is not involved it is known as a happening (Kohak 1966, p. xviii). Kohak (1966, p. xvii) states 'a motive is not a cause: it is not effective and cannot be understood apart from the decision of which is the motive'.

Movement, the second mode of willing, represents the voluntary. The intended action made in the first mode of willing is translated into movement in the second mode of willing through effort (Ricoeur 1966). The voluntary apply effort to the involuntary. Kohak (1966, p. xxii) states that '[t]he ideal limit of voluntary movement is effortless movement, the gracious ease of freedom in full harmony of its organs'. Verhoef and Visser (2020, p. 26) state that '[o]ne applies effort to move the body, which is already agitated by preformed skills, emotion and habits'. Verhoef and Visser (2020) argue that:

[A] fine balance needs to be struck here in order not to experience too much resistance to one's effort (then movement is possible), and also not to become a type of automata with no resistance (only movement but no control/choice over it). (p. 27)

Preformed skills, emotions, and habits represent the involuntary and each one of these imposes constraints on movement (Ricoeur 1966). The significance of these three 'depends on the effort which determines whether the will uses them or yields to them' (Kohak 1966, p. xxii).

Consent, the third mode of willing, represents the voluntary. Consent is an 'active adoption to accept it as mine and in the strange effort of patience which realises this decision' (Kohak 1966, p. xxiii). Consent is the 'ultimate reconciliation of freedom and nature' (Ricoeur 1966, p. 346). Necessities represent the involuntary. Ricoeur (1966) identified three different types of necessities, namely character, the unconscious and life. These necessities are involved in every mode of willing (Ricoeur 1966). Giving consent implies agreeing to what was already determined (Ricoeur 1966). The body restricts a person's freedom, but the voluntary 'reconciles and regains it through consent' (Verhoef & Visser 2020, p. 28).

By looking at the experiences of trafficking victims through the lens of freedom and nature one could come to a better understanding of the unfree choices and decisions victims of trafficking make and how these decisions lead them into movement and consent. Verhoef and Visser (2020) argue that:

[A] trafficker can make use of several recruitment techniques by focusing on the needs, desires, fears, and even pain of their victims to threaten, use force, coerce, abuse vulnerability, use fraud or deceive victims into a sexually exploiting environment. (p. 29)

According to Verhoef and Visser (2020, p. 24), the voluntary and the involuntary 'cannot be thought of in binary terms as either volition or nature'. Freedom can therefore not only refer to the liberation of a person's body. Ricoeur's (1966) freedom and nature might enable survivors to be aware of their own limited experience and lack of freedom. In becoming aware, they might be able to develop a new vocabulary to explain their experiences. Being able to do this could aid them in them regaining freedom after trafficking (Visser 2018). When victims are rescued or when they walk away from a trafficking situation it does not mean that they are completely free. In freedom and nature, Ricoeur (1966) shows that freedom is much more complex than only removing a person from an abusive environment and naming it freedom.

In this section, we provided a Ricoeurian perspective on freedom to gain a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of trafficking as an embodied and lived experience. This understanding can enable curriculum developers to use the stories of trafficking victims and survivors as guiding content in a curriculum. In the next section, we trouble human rights in human rights education to contemplate how human rights violations (like trafficking) and its conceptions of freedom (in its most nuanced sense) remain very complicated curriculum conversations.

## ■ Troubling 'human rights' in human rights education

Human rights education provides an avenue for addressing human rights violations like trafficking. Tibbitts (2017, p. 71) states that '[t]he goal of preventing human rights violations is central to human rights education'. According to the UN (2019, p. 3) there is consensus that the 'fundamental contribution' of human rights education is to realise human rights and to develop a common understanding of exercising responsibilities in relation to human rights. Human rights education is '*about* basic rights and *for* the broadening of respect for the dignity and freedom of all people(s)' (Bajaj 2017, p. 1). The value of human rights education lies in its ability to make visible the complexities of human rights as a discourse (Keet 2012, p. 9). Human rights violations and what leads to these are part of these complexities. Furthermore, human rights can provide learners with a language to interrogate oppressive contexts that have been normalised (Gibson & Grant 2017, p. 226). Fundamentally, human rights education is important for 'contributing to the promotion, protection and effective realisation of all human rights' (UN 2011, p. 2).

As human rights lie at the centre of human rights education, it is necessary to unlock some of its critical insights. One of these is that human rights are underpinned by universality, 'the epistemic locus of enunciation that created [human rights] as if they were uni-versal and good for all' (Mignolo 2009, p. 19).

Mignolo (2009, p. 7) posits that human rights, as proffered by the *Universal Declaration of Human Right of 1948* (United Nations [UN]), ‘presupposes that “human” is a universal category accepted by all and that as such the concept of human does justice to everyone’. Braidotti (2013, p. 26) warns that sameness of this kind is a regulatory mechanism that transposes a specific mode of being human into a generalised standard. For Gearon (2019, p. 271), in this image of universality, human rights feed hegemonic global governance to set ethical-legal standards and dictate a global moral compass. Mignolo (2009, p. 22) stresses that the problem rests in the vision of universal declarations to claim equal status of humans because he says that this equality status is short-lived in a world that has largely been dictated by a history informed by European Renaissance, Western Christianity and the enlightenment concept of ‘reason’.

Described as the invention of European humanists of the 15th and 16th centuries, humanists distinguished themselves from co-existing communities that they regarded were a threat and to counter this insecurity, classifications and rankings emerged. This occurred through processes such as colonialism and led to Western Christian dominance over class, race and religious groups, particularly in terms of ‘absolute possession and control of knowledge and the denial of it to all the people classified outside and below’ (Mignolo 2009, p. 9). This also led to the reduction of non-Western others to sub-human statuses, such as the sexualised other (female), the racialised other (the native) and the naturalised other (animals, the environment or earth) to be devalued as different from and less than ‘disposable others’ (Braidotti 2013, p. 28). Although feminists, post-colonialists, posthumanists and other radical thinkers advocate for de-linking the human agent from liberal individualist views of the subject, society is still haunted with the complexity of ‘who speaks for the human’ (Mignolo 2009, p. 13) and the ongoing difficulties inherent in overcoming how humanism has condoned intellectual traditions, normative frames and institutionalised practices (Braidotti 2013, p. 30). This is closely linked to human rights as a colonial, Euro-Western and Enlightenment construct.

Coloniality lives on through human rights because ‘the concept of the human is loaded with ideas about secularism, individualism, and racism’ (Maldonado-Torres 2017, p. 131). Coloniality, like human rights systems, ‘refers to the logic, culture and structure of modern world systems’ (Maldonado-Torres 2017, p. 117). The organisation of colonial discourses and practices has normalised the human as a single homogenised being engrained in the ‘white European “Man” as a rational, masterful and civilised being’ (Zembylas 2020, p. 16). In some respects, human rights are caught up in cultural imperialism and fuelled by polycentric capitalist economies with ‘experts in human rights addressing the denial of various sorts of rights’ (Maldonado-Torres 2017, p. 130). In some instances, this often universalistic, humanistic and colonialist perspective of human rights has created an ‘un-critical, monolithic, depoliticised and largely de-contextualised’

application of human rights in sectors such as education (Zembylas 2020, p. 2). We contemplate whether human rights critiques such as these raised here might not be some of the reasons why human rights violations (like trafficking) and its conceptions of freedom are often misconstrued, ignored or even perpetuated. From these critiques of human rights, we also deem it significant to recognise that human rights education remains a space of tension. In the next section, we stand in the cracks of this tension and try to think with and through these tensions as another way to understand trafficking in persons as a human rights education problem.

## ■ Working with and through the human rights education curriculum as a space of tension to unlock generative and hopeful possibilities

Ted Aoki (1999), a Japanese-Canadian curriculum scholar, pertinently emphasised the need to legitimate a lived curriculum because of the tendency for the curriculum to evoke an image of merely being a carrier of knowledge that dictates what curriculum content should be taught. For him a curriculum-as-planned and a curriculum-as-lived 'co-dwell in dynamically tensioned interplay of doubling' (Aoki 1999, p. 180). It is the interplay of a curriculum-as-planned and a curriculum-as-lived that a 'metonymic space of doubling' is created (Aoki 1999, p. 181). This space is a lived tension and described by Aoki (1999, p. 181) as 'ambiguous, uncertain and difficult' but nevertheless as a site of pedagogic struggle, this space 'promises generative possibilities and hope'. He eloquently goes on to explain that when we invigorate the potential of this space it can be 'a site of becoming, where newness can come into being. The space moves and is alive' (Aoki 1999, p. 181). Aoki's (1999) conception of curriculum as generative, hopeful, in becoming and a site of struggle deems very attractive to how we think a human rights education curriculum could stand in the cracks and work both with and through the resulting contentions space where human rights remain a double-edged sword because of its universalistic tendencies (De Wet, Rothmann & Simmonds 2016).

Aoki's (1999) conception of the curriculum enables us to recognise the importance of troubling the metonymic space of doubling as a space of tension that is generative and hopeful. Braidotti's (2019) pedagogical tool of defamiliarisation proves insightful. Braidotti (2019, p. 139) avers that as a knowing subject, humans should disengage themselves from accustomed dominant normative visions of what it means to be human. Though this form of decoding makes it possible to de-link and trouble power relations so that one can unlearn the deeply vested Eurocentric humanist and anthropocentric habits of thought that still invest today. Braidotti (2019, p. 140) believes that it is through defamiliarisation that one can unlearn and decolonise their imaginary

so that they can make room for new ways of being through ‘dis-identification from century-old habits of anthropocentric thought and humanistic arrogance’. Although defamiliarisation can involve a sense of loss and pain because it involves dis-identification of cherished habits of thought and representation, it can also be liberatory through ‘active processes of becoming that enact in-depth breaks with established patterns of thought and identity formation’ (Braidotti 2019, p. 140). For Braidotti (2019, p. 140) ‘productive forms of conceptual disobedience’ are invigorated so that radical repositioning is possible and necessary. Braidotti (2019, p. 140) elaborates, ‘being disloyal to one’s civilisation is at times the best way to honour it, out of love for its underdeveloped potential as well as its actual norms’. For her, this can be sustained when proffered as a process of consciousness-raising toward unlocking the complexity of dis-identification as well as recognising that it can be sustained only through collaborative relations. Through acknowledging and embracing defamiliarisation as a complex and risky pedagogical tool, socially embedded and historically grounded communities can potentiate a much-needed abandonment of ‘undifferentiated unity, totality and One-ness’ (Braidotti 2019, p. 141). Akin to this conception that Braidotti (2019) embeds in subjectivity and posthuman knowledge, we entrust the same ethos and ethic in human rights education as a pedagogical tool. In other words, through Braidotti’s (2019) conception of defamiliarisation, we can begin to think anew about human rights education where the human, humanity and rights all remained contested areas of tension in the curriculum. For Mignolo (2009, p. 20) human and rights should not only be entrusted to Western initiatives and a rhetoric of salvation but also to a process of decolonisation. In this regard, Mignolo (2009, p. 20) asks ‘how is it that human relations become “enclosed” in relation to rights and not in other terms?’ For us, this signals the need to think more critically about how our human rights education often takes for granted a universal conception of rights admits the multi-layered and complex make-up of what such rights infer. One avenue to (re)think this predicament could lie at the heart of Mignolo’s (2009, p. 20) outcry that our challenge rests in ‘the premise is to change the terms and not just the content of the conversation’. What we take from this reverts again to Aoki’s (1999) who emphasises that the curriculum-as-plan (which often envelopes and even dictates the contents of our curriculum) should not negate a curriculum-as-lived. The curriculum-as-lived would for example take heed of trafficking in persons not only as a legal construct but also as an embodied and lived experience that problematises democratic virtues like freedom beyond ‘static, abstract, disembodied and binary’ conceptions (Verhoef & Visser 2020, p. 32). This yearns for ‘productive forms of conceptual disobedience’ (Braidotti 2019, p. 140) so that the tensioned space created by the interplay of curriculum-as-planned and curriculum-as-lived is ‘ambiguous, uncertain and difficult’ but an enriching ‘site of becoming, where newness can come into being’ (Aoki 1999, p. 181). The work of Zembylas (2020) provides insight in this regard.

Zembylas (2020) opines that human rights education needs to move beyond familiar theories vested in liberal, multicultural and cosmopolitan orientations and invoke ethical and incessant possibilities. We believe that his scholarly insights can point us in some new directions on strategies to embrace defamiliarisation as a pedagogical tool (Braidotti 2019) to change the terms and not just the content of human rights education conversations in and through the human rights education curriculum (Mignolo 2009). In line with earlier critiques of human rights as universalistic, humanistic and colonialist (Gearon 2019; Maldonado-Torres 2017; Mignolo 2009), Zembylas (2020) advocates for the importance of developing human rights education that is decolonised through invoking border thinking, pluriversality and being human as praxis. These ideas are decolonial outcries that deem it necessary to move beyond Western conceptions of human rights and how it is taught through human rights education. For border thinking, this requires including the histories and experiences of colonised peoples as well as an active engagement with subjugated knowledges so that the human rights education curriculum enables thinking from the borders (acknowledge the experience of colonial wounds and lived experience) and to think with these experiences from the borders (Zembylas 2020, p. 20). While pluriversality is a process of advancing epistemic justice through the delinking of Eurocentrism and promoting 'counter-histories of erasures and dehumanisations' through making evident both 'material and symbolic negations and losses as a result of colonialism and contemporary forms of dispossession, domination and epistemicide grounded in daily life' (Zembylas 2020, p. 23). Lastly, being human as praxis yearns for a multiplicity of humanity that manifests in various contexts. This is envisaged through dissolving traditional disciplinary boundaries and starting to 'employ practices of knowledge and language that seek to develop radical and transgressive praxis, which sees the world as relation rather than in individualistic terms' (Zembylas 2020, p. 21). This notion of relation strives towards a continuous renewal of human rights education as a contentious site of struggle for decolonisation through 'knowledge-production and cultivation as participation in practices that aim to make possible and viable the existence of new ethical relations with others (human and non-human)' (Zembylas 2020, p. 21). What we regard poignant is the potential vested in these three decolonial efforts, attuned to Braidotti's (2019) pedagogical tool of defamiliarisation, so that alternative pathways for thinking anew about human rights education can invigorate understanding complex societal conundrums like trafficking in persons in ways that de-link and trouble power relations and strive to be consciousness-raising.

## ■ Conclusion

Zembylas (2020, p. 2) proffers that human rights education remains 'un-critical, monolithic, depoliticised and largely de-contextualised'. We have

argued that one reason for this is because of the tendency for human rights to be conceptualised and framed in universalistic, humanistic and colonialist terms. From this vantage point, understanding trafficking in persons as a human rights education problem remains sombre. By embracing human rights education as a space of tension, its generative and hopeful possibilities can be unlocked. We put forward Braidotti's (2019) pedagogical tool of defamiliarisation as one avenue for human rights education to embody the type of conceptual disobedience needed to break dominant patterns of thought and identify formation. When human rights education breaks its long-standing bonds of familiarisation and contests its very make-up, then it can make room for much-needed discourses such as the theoretical lens provided by philosophers like Ricoeur (1966), which delve beyond the surface and provide more nuanced understandings of trafficking in persons through notions of freedom. Although this chapter has focused on freedom, understanding trafficking in persons as a human rights education problem involves unlocking the complexity of other democratic virtues including equality and human dignity. Our hope is that this chapter will ignite much-needed discourse and debate of varying degrees, through pedagogical tools like defamiliarisation, so that human rights education curriculum spaces undergo the type of decolonisation that Zembylas (2020) argues is necessary for human rights education to invoke ethical and incessant possibilities need to advance epistemic justice.

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Sections in this chapter represent a substantial reworking (more than 50%) of Visser (2018).





# Psycho-social perspectives on racial inclusiveness in the classroom context

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## ■ Abstract

Since the emergence of the democratic order in South Africa, the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1996) has helped bring about numerous structural and systemic changes that provided a rationale for racial inclusion in the educational

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context. This meant that provision for fundamental human rights as catalysed by the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*: 'Bill of Rights' in Chapter 2 Sections 7–39 was the focus. Instead, this gave rise to larger systemic and structural problems; namely, policies were not consistent with the South African Constitution, which advocated that racial equality, inclusion and social justice were not effectively integrated at the school level; the curriculum was not adapted to the diverse needs of students from different racial backgrounds; the dynamic of contradictory interrelationships among both the learners themselves and their educators manifested daily in insults, name-calling, labelling and stereotyped behaviour.

## ■ Introduction

The South African apartheid system has severely affected the nature of education. Apartheid education reflected segregation and enforced social inequities; schooling was used as a tool to distort the values and identities of learners (Christie 1994). Every aspect of schooling was regulated by race: educational budget provisions; the structure of education bureaucracies; staff and learner composition in schools; the type of curriculum followed and the prevailing ethos in the schools (Carrim 1998; Sayed 2001; Seekings 2008). The basis of apartheid was a system of racial segregation enshrined in the *Population Registration Act 30 of 1950* (Seekings 2008). The law required all South Africans to be classified into one of four basic racial categories: white, African (black), coloured and Indians. The *Bantu Education Act 47 of 1953* created a separate educational system for African students under the management of the Department of Bantu Education which compiled a curriculum that suited the nature and requirements of black people.

The need to eradicate all disparities of the apartheid years was thus a necessary imperative in a new democratic education system (Sayed 2001). Having evolved from the legacy of apartheid, it is evident that since 1994, the government has made provisions for the integration of schools and the inclusiveness of learners, the rewriting of curricula and textbooks and the renewal of support structures in the management of the South African education system. The United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (hereafter the Universal Declaration) – a fundamental document on human rights that dates from 1948 – establishes that everyone has the right to education. Education will be free, at least at the elementary and fundamental levels. On 14 December 1960, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) accepted its Convention against Discrimination in Education after having been accepted by the General Assembly of UNESCO (Rossouw & De Waal 2019, p. 49). This Convention proclaimed the principle that discrimination in education based on race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other beliefs, or social or economic position or descent constitutes a violation of human rights (Suid-Afrikaanse Regkommissie 1989, p. 64).

The South African *Schools Act 84 of 1996* catalysed the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*: 'Bill of Rights' in Chapter 2 Sections 7-39, formalising the desegregation of schools in South Africa. This created opportunities for students from diverse cultural backgrounds to attend the schools of their choice (Vandeyar 2008). In view of the dearth of information on the life of desegregated schools, research was undertaken to explore the experiences of the inclusiveness of human rights in the education system.

## ■ Background

The South African *Schools Act 84 of 1996* formalised the desegregation of schools. This redressed the legacy of apartheid policies. As a direct response, racial inclusiveness was driven as part of the education reform to accommodate the diverse nature of society. This gave rise to the following problems. Firstly, learners experienced great difficulty coping with the academic, social and emotional challenges given that they came from historically disadvantaged backgrounds (Meier 2005). Secondly, efforts were made to capacitate school leadership and management (Aveling 2007); however, there remains a significant problem in school governance structures to cope with the challenges and the overwhelming tasks to successfully integrate racially diverse learners and educators. Lastly, a plethora of policies and laws were developed to urge a major reform of the education system (Jansen 2004, p. 126). However, the implementation problem remains, undermining the realisation of the impressive political architecture needed to make a profound difference to teaching and learning in public secondary schools.

Given the complexities of the systemic and structural problems, racial inclusiveness reflects the larger political and social problems in South African society to a significant degree. Inclusiveness and diversity can be interchangeable; however, inclusiveness is a broader, richer concept that refers to the outcome that 'results from methods of inclusion that utilise diversity as a resource' (Talmage & Knopf 2017, p. 10). Racial inclusiveness can be understood as the inclusion of all individuals and groups who were previously excluded because of race (Talmage & Knopf 2017). The literature reinforces and expands on the issues in this regard – that is, that both the macro (national) and micro (school) elements of transforming schools from assimilation to multiculturalism have not completely and holistically led to successful racial inclusiveness. Consequently, this has led to continued marginalisation and retention of exclusionary approaches to maintain 'standards' (Carrim 1998). The failure to translate the macro initiatives to impact and address racism and other forms of discrimination will continuously undermine the intention to totally transform the schooling system and design if it does not relate to actual realities on the ground as to how racism is 'perceived, understood, experienced and reconstructed' (Carrim 1998, p. 11).

Dominant approaches of assimilation, colour-blindness, the contributionist and multicultural education involve having discussions about how to deal with racial inclusion in public high schools. The aforementioned approaches explain and illustrate how the complex interplay of socio-economic, historical and cultural values affects the school life of students and educators. Carrim (1998) and other authors such as Jansen (2004, pp. 127–128), Meier and Hartell (2005, 2009) and Spencer (1998) have stipulated that these approaches are limited and insufficient to deal with ‘mixed race’ groups. Furthermore, anti-racist theorists explore the notion of critical anti-racism, which has evolved out of a collective intellectual critique of scholars in multicultural education. Anti-racist theorists argue that a multicultural curriculum neither addresses the elimination of racism directly nor provides strategies for empowering racially diverse groups to counteract racism (Mattai 1992). The current thinking is around the anti-bias approach. However, racial inclusiveness has not been adequately managed in the classroom context.

Critical race theory (CRT) examines the ‘complex relationships between and among race, racism and jurisprudence’ (Delgado 1995; Vandeyar 2008). Critical race theory seeks to understand how monoracial schools create and maintain the dominant culture as supreme over diverse learners. Their focus is on changing the bonds between law and racial power (Crenshaw et al. 1995).

In this study, focus group discussions and individual interviews were conducted, and by using multiple interpretative methodologies to analyse the narratives of those who had been victimised by the legal system, ‘socially ingrained’ and ‘systemic’ forces at work in their oppression could be understood (Pizarro 1999). For this to happen, CRT was used as a lens through which the study could be interpreted, the power imbalances between learners and educators could be revealed and the possible ideologies that are culturally and historically prescribing racial inequity could be further investigated (Maree 2007). Critical race theory does not merely aim to interpret and describe the social world but is active-oriented, aimed at transforming society (Kincheloe & McLaren 2005). Hence, a theoretical understanding of power differentials (Eaton & Visser 2007) that still exist in the South African classroom is deemed crucial in its pursuit of optimal racial inclusiveness of diverse learners and educators. For the purposes of this chapter, the intersection between CRT and global citizenship education (GCED) is a valuable approach to thinking through psycho-social perspectives on racial inclusiveness in the classroom context.

## ■ Problem statement

Within the educational context of South Africa, in a broad discourse on psycho-social perspectives, racial inclusiveness and human rights are aimed at the well-being of each individual (Holden, Toscos & Daley 2019). In terms of

Section 29 of the South African *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*, everyone has the right to basic education. This implies that no one can be excluded from the educational system based on age, race, disabilities and gender, among others. It has been 27 years into democracy, and racism still prevails in schools.

Recent literature reveals different ways in which racism manifests within the educational context, which, in turn, hinders racial inclusiveness. Jansen (2021) lists the following ways: learners from privileged groups racially insult their fellow learners verbally or in writing; learners from privileged groups separate themselves by race in the classrooms or on the playground or when socialising; learners in privileged groups have low expectations of their fellow learners from disadvantaged groups. Consequently, learners from disadvantaged groups are left feeling alienated within the dominant school culture; they experience abuse and ridicule; they feel subjected to the dominant culture; they are left segregated within the classroom context, which is sometimes designated by the teacher; and they feel ignored by teacher practices.

Against the backdrop of the aforementioned, it was important to explore and identify suggestions to be considered to promote racial inclusiveness within educational contexts as well as to establish the effectiveness of facilitating racial inclusiveness in the classroom context.

## ■ Conceptual and theoretical framework

### ■ Psycho-social

According to Berger and Archer (2020), *psycho-social* refers to ‘the connections between psychological and social aspects of human experience’. When looking at a phenomenon from a psycho-social perspective, one would consider the influence of not only psychological factors but also the surrounding social environment on an individual’s physical and mental well-being and their ability to function. Furthermore, *psycho-social* can be understood as a person’s cognition, affect and behaviour which are the product of the society or culture in which they were raised. Educational contexts are sites of intense psycho-social activity in which learners freely express their thoughts and emotions through collaboration and interrelationships between educators and learners. Ultimately, learners are enabled to live fulfilling and productive lives within their cultural and social context (Berger & Archer 2020).

### □ Race

The scientific meaning of ‘race’ is drawn from the visual and genetic cues of human difference (Yudell 2011). Race can be determined as a socially constructed ideological category by economic and political processes and

must be understood historically. It is a political matter, a key educational issue and perhaps one of the most controversial aspects of current educational debates (Gillborn 1995). The concept of apartheid in South Africa classified people into groups according to the colour of their skin and was sometimes confused with 'ethnicity' (meaning 'culture') (Pather 2005). Banks and Banks (1997) highlight the fact that race is reinforced by the concept of ethnicity and cultural diversity, together with historical heritage. The position of power is closely related to race (Pather 2005).

## ■ Inclusive education

One of the key guidelines on which the South African education system is based is *Education White Paper 6 of 2001: Special Needs Education Building an inclusive education and training system*. The definition of inclusive education in this policy is used as a guiding principle for pedagogical practice and other policies, having a significant impact on how students should be supported and involved (see Mitchell 2021, p. 37). This definition includes (RSA 2001, p. 6):

- acknowledging the fact that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support
- accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience
- enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners
- acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether because of age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) status
- changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners
- maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning
- empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning
- acknowledging that learning also occurs at home and in the community and within formal and informal modes and structures.

Fundamentally, this definition asserts that inclusive education can be viewed as giving all children the opportunity to learn and reach their full potential, regardless of their abilities, barriers or race. The term 'inclusion' is used to broaden the number of ideas and has multiple meanings (Florian 2015). According to Booth (2011), inclusion necessitates the increasing participation of all as well as challenging and reducing exclusion in all its forms - in this

instance, it would also include, but not be limited to, race. This resembles what was outlined in the guide for inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools in which inclusion is defined as involving the valuing of everyone equally, increasing participation and decreasing exclusion from the culture, community and curricula of schools, responding to diversity and reducing barriers (Booth & Ainscow 2016).

## ■ Inclusion

Inclusion can also be defined as the development of an inclusive community and education system and is based on a value system that invites and celebrates difference and diversity (Swart & Pettipher 2019). UNESCO (1994) defines inclusion as follows:

*[The accommodation of] all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups. (p. 6)*

According to Nel (2013, p. 19), there was unequal provision of specialised education for black learners, and children with special needs in general were also marginalised, stereotyped through the use of the medical deficit model.

Recommendations from the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) and the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) in 1996 were pivotal in inclusive education in the South African context. The NCESS and the NCSNET have been commissioned to review all aspects of special needs and support services (RSA 1997). The results of this investigation revealed that past discriminatory and segregatory practices, particularly against black African children and children with disabilities, must be addressed by making education accessible to all children and ensuring equal opportunities through a comprehensive curriculum (DoE 2001; Nel et al. 2016). The findings of the NCESS and the NCSNET investigations played an immense role in the advancement of inclusive education in South Africa and more so the outcome it has in the classroom context.

## ■ Inclusiveness

*Inclusiveness* and *diversity* are sometimes used interchangeably; however, inclusiveness is a broader, richer concept that refers to the outcome that 'results from methods of inclusion that utilise diversity as a resource' (Talmage & Knopf 2017, p. 10). Inclusiveness can be defined as 'the inclusion of all individuals and groups, specifically individuals or groups who were previously not included or excluded' (Talmage & Knopf 2017, p. 10). To understand what brings about racial inclusiveness in education, concepts such as GCED, human rights education and cooperative threat reduction



must be investigated separately for commonalities to be extracted, which, in turn, will provide a clear guide as to what governs these terms, allowing for understanding of how these concepts promote racial inclusiveness in the classroom context.

## ■ Critical race theory

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) introduced CRT to education almost 20 years ago. In *Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education* (2016), Ladson-Billings and Tate argued that race was a significant factor in society in general and in education. However, the authors deemed race an under-theorised scholarly topic of inquiry in education. In order to bridge the theoretical void, it was proposed that CRT be enforced to examine the role of race and racism in education (Dixson & Anderson 2018). This theory explores the interaction of race and how the construct of 'whiteness' could be used to understand inequality in schools (Harris 1993).

Carbado (2011) lists some of the characteristics of CRT:

- Critical race theory is both idealistic and pragmatic.
- Critical race theory rejects the standard racial development interpretation that alludes that race relations are linear in advancement and enhancement.
- 'Critical race theory refuses to accept the view that the status quo arrangements are the natural result of individual agency and merit [...] CRT exposes these inter-generational transfers of racial compensation' (p. 1608).
- Critical race theory highlights 'the discursive frames legal and political actors have employed to disadvantage people of colour' (p. 1615).
- Critical race theory expresses racism as a structural phenomenon as opposed to a 'problem that derives from the failure on the part of individuals and institutions to treat people formally the same' (p. 1613).
- Critical race theory views racism as widespread.
- Critical race theory argues that race is socially constructed, and CRT examines the rule of law in the construction of race.
- Critical race theory recognises that racism interacts with other social forces (e.g. patriarchy, classism, homophobia, xenophobia, etc.).

## ■ Global citizenship education

Global citizenship education (CE) is defined as a lifelong pursuit of transformative involvement of formal learning combined with practical experience. It is geared to aiding learners of all ages to respect cultural, gender, faith and other differences with the aim of making them more aware of the world around them (UNESCO 2021).

UNESCO (2021) highlights three domains on which GCED is based, namely:

- **Cognitive:** Knowledge and thinking skills essential to better understand the world and its complexities.
- **Socio-emotional:** Values, attitudes and social skills that enable learners to develop effectively, psychosocially and physically and to enable them to live together with others respectfully and peacefully.
- **Behavioural:** Conduct, performance, practical application and engagement.

## ■ Human rights education

A good conceptual clarification of the term of human rights education can be found in the *United Nation's Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training*, dated 19 December 2011. Article 4 of this declaration states that human rights education and training should be based on principles that are concerned with the Universal Declaration and relevant treaties and instruments, with a view to (UN 2011):

- Bringing about awareness that enhances understanding and acceptance of universal human rights standards and principles.
- Developing a universal culture of human rights in which everyone is aware of their own rights and responsibilities in respect of the rights of others and promoting the development of the individual as a responsible member of a free, peaceful, pluralist and inclusive society.
- Pursuing the effective realisation of all human rights and promoting tolerance, non-discrimination and equality.
- Ensuring equal opportunities for all through access to quality human rights education and discrimination-free training.
- Contributing to and ensuring the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by combating and eliminating all forms of discrimination, racism, stereotypes and hate speech and the harmful attitudes and prejudices that underlie them.

After careful consideration of the characteristics, domains and views of GCED, human rights education and CRT, it is evident that all three of these terms seek to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for eradicating racism by means of living together peacefully.

## ■ Empirical investigation

In this investigation, a generic qualitative approach that is descriptive, exploratory and contextual in nature was used. The phenomenon explored in this empirical investigation was the South African education system and the existence of racial problems that challenge accepted assumptions prevalent in educational contexts.

Descriptive research broadens one's understanding of study participants' attitudes, opinions, beliefs, behaviours and demographics; this eventually assisted in the psycho-social perspective of GCED (Leiviskä & Pyy 2020). The exploration highlighted a more relatively unknown area (Sliep 1994) - namely, to gain insight into the problems facilitating racial inclusiveness in educational contexts, specifically in the classroom.

Contextual research focuses on subjects' lived experiences within a specific context so as to gain an understanding of the subjects within the context (Mouton 1996). In contextual research, the phenomenon (in this study, Grade 10 racially diverse learners and educators) within a certain context (racially diverse schools) was selected as a representative example of a larger population or similar events or phenomena (Mouton). The study was contextual in nature because it dealt with the experiences of Grade 10 learners and educators in facilitating racial inclusiveness in an educational context.

## ■ Aim of the investigation

The aim of this empirical investigation entailed, firstly, to explore the effective management of racial inclusiveness in an educational context; and secondly, to determine whether there was a need for a racial inclusiveness programme that would guide educators on how to manage racial inclusiveness at the classroom level and what should be included in such a programme.

## ■ Research design

A qualitative investigation was conducted to capture learners' and educators' experiences and perceptions of the effective management of racial inclusiveness in an educational context.

## ■ Research method

Data were collected by means of individual interviews to gain a better understanding of the effective management of racial inclusiveness in the education context. Four schools were purposefully selected. Semi-structured interviews were individually conducted with 336 Grade 10 learners and 40 educators (not specifically *only* Grade 10 educators) from the purposefully sampled racially diverse schools.

## ■ Instrument

An interview schedule with pre-constructed, pre-planned questions was used to assist the researcher during the data-generation process (individual interviews). Open-ended questions were posed to allow the participants to express their ideas and experiences and not give static responses.

## ■ Sampling

Participants for the individual interviews and focus group discussions were sampled purposefully. The selection of participants in this study was purposive because they had particular features or characteristics which enabled a detailed understanding of the central themes under study (Ritchie & Lewis 2003). The sample comprised Grade 10 learners and educators from racially diverse schools. The selected schools were visited to make interview appointments. The researcher, with the help of the Grade 10 educators, selected a group of participants for the individual interviews, resulting in the participation of 336 Grade 10 learners from racially diverse backgrounds. This sample composition was more informative and would provide the required data. The selected participants represented the specific characteristics that would impact the study. The criterion for selecting the participants for individual interviews was being a Grade 10 learner and educators from racially diverse backgrounds who were willing to participate in the interviews. In both cases, both males and females were included and diverse race groups were involved so as to avoid racial and gender discrimination. Doing so helped to achieve the objectives of the study.

## ■ Ethical aspects

Concerning ethical research conducted with children, moral issues pertaining to the participants were borne in mind. According to Pillay (2004, p. 4), all educational research conducted with children should 'actively promote social justice' in their lives. Approval for the study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education. Permission to conduct the research was further sought from South African the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and principals of the selected schools. Strydom (2013) underscores the fact that throughout the research process, ethical guidelines need to be abided by. When working with individuals, it is essential to understand the codes of ethics that serve as important guidelines to alert researchers of the ethical dimensions of their research. Written consent was obtained from the selected participants, as they had a right to be informed that an aspect of their lives would be researched. Participants were reminded that they can withdraw at any time during the research process if they wish. They were also assured that they would not be subjected to undue physical or psychological harm (Leedy & Ormrod 2001). During the process, a level of honesty, respect and empathy towards all participants was ensured. Their involvement was voluntary.

Ethical dilemmas are likely to emerge in the data-collection process and in the dissemination of findings; however, the researcher should be neutral in the research process. According to Ary et al. (2014), the researcher must obtain voluntary, informed and written consent from someone proficient. In this study, learners, educators and parents were asked to sign a consent form approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education. All Grade 10

learners were given consent forms to take home to their parents or guardians to sign on their behalf, allowing their children to participate in the study.

Furthermore, participants have a right to confidentiality and anonymity. Ary et al. (2014) suggest that anonymity cannot always be guaranteed because the researcher knows the participants; however, confidentiality should be promised and maintained. In this study, the identities of the participants were protected by not requesting their names on the questionnaires. Moreover, numbers and codes were allocated to each respondent's questionnaire as well as the schools so as to keep track of the source of information without exposing the identities of the data sources. In line with psycho-social perspectives, participants were not subjected to racial discrimination. The researcher welcomed criticism and always guided the process. All sources of information and contributions were acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

## ■ Trustworthiness

Guba's (1981) trustworthiness model was applied to enhance trustworthiness. The four criteria to ensure trustworthiness are truth value (credibility), applicability (transferability), consistency (dependability) and neutrality (confirmability) (Shenton 2004, p. 64).

### □ Truth value (credibility)

This was achieved by becoming familiar with the context and culture of the participants (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Shenton 2004). Credibility was also enhanced by being honest as researchers pertaining to the information provided by the participants. Furthermore, subjectivity played a role in order to achieve credibility, which was done by means of bracketing as a subjectivity approach within the interpretivist paradigm.

### □ Applicability (transferability)

According to Bassegy (2000, p. 1), 'it is possible to formulate the outcomes of empirical research as fuzzy generalisations' to be useful to practitioners and policymakers. However, it was not the researcher's aim to generalise the findings. Nevertheless, enough contextual information was provided for the reader and scholars in the field to determine the trustworthiness of the study and to compare and judge any similarities (Ary et al. 2014). A thorough description of the research design and method in the context was also provided.

### □ Consistency (dependability)

To show that the data and findings presented in this chapter are consistent, a detailed plan of the data-collection (individual interviews) and data analysis

process is provided. Member checking was also used to enhance and contribute to the dependability of the data.

### □ **Neutrality (confirmability)**

An independent coder was used to confirm and verify the findings during a consensus meeting. Neutrality also means that the interpretation of the data should not be based on the author's own preconceived ideas or assumptions. Therefore, confirmability was achieved through an audit trail and reflexivity.

## ■ **Data-collection procedures**

Data were collected by means of individual interviews to capture the participants' feelings, views, thoughts, perceptions and experiences on racism and racial inclusiveness in their school. Data-collection in qualitative research is characterised by the principle of openness (Flick, Von Kardorff & Steinke 2004). In-depth interviews comprising unstructured open-ended questions were conducted. An interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a specific topic of interest (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). The individual interviews with learners and educators comprised nine main open-ended questions that were used to probe the selected participants. The questions focused on the following: policies on racism and racial inclusiveness; educators promoting human rights and racial inclusiveness; educators' ability to teach racially diverse learners; interaction of learners from racially diverse groups; racial inclusiveness in schools and the effect of racial inclusiveness on school performance.

All participants participated in a discussion on how effective their schools were in promoting racial inclusiveness – an approach that helped in analysing and comparing the responses more easily. Additionally, this approach gave greater control over the type of information received, as specific questions were asked to elicit that information (Sikhwari 2010). Fundamentally, this allowed individuals to ascribe meaning to their experiences and perceptions based on the content of the conversation.

## ■ **Individual interviews**

The aim of the individual interviews was to deepen the inquiry about the practices of racism and racial inclusiveness in schools. The investigation aimed to get a clearer picture and understanding of educators' and learners' perceptions and experiences of racism and racial inclusiveness. Rapport, trust and participation were established as measures of validity in the study (Babbie & Mouton 2008). Interviews with open-ended questions were conducted so that the participants could elaborate freely. The questions were based on policy and practice in schools; whether racial inclusiveness was

effectively managed in diverse classrooms; whether there were any racial incidents at school and, if so, how they were managed.

Individual interviews were conducted to assist in gaining additional information on the lives of racially diverse learners in racially diverse schools (social world) by asking them to speak about their lives (Gubrium & Holstein 2003). The individual interviews were held one at a time, privately in rooms provided by each of the schools with which the learners and educators were already familiar. These individual interviews provided qualitative depth by allowing interviewees to talk about racism and racial inclusiveness from their own frame of reference (Henn, Weinstein & Foard 2006).

## ■ Data processing/analysis procedures

The qualitative data were collected through individual interviews with 336 Grade 10 learners and 40 educators. The data were transcribed and analysed by the researcher. Critical race theory and human rights education as conceptual frameworks aided in the analysis of each data set. The key findings are discussed next.

## ■ Findings

The findings (themes and sub-themes) that emerged from the data are presented and discussed in this section to address the question of how racial inclusiveness is managed in educational contexts, specifically in the classroom (Mitchell 2021).

### ■ Finding 1: Policies on racism and racial inclusiveness

Schools have programmes that deal with discipline issues such as bullying and incidents of fighting, but there is no effective programme or support intervention for combating racism in schools. Many educators insisted that all stakeholders need to be more involved to help eradicate racism in schools. The participating educators were frustrated with the way schools deal with racism without being able to address the root cause of the problem, which is to understand what 'racial diversity' means. They mentioned that the staff did not collaborate on principles of racial inclusiveness. Many of the educators agreed that racial inclusiveness is an important factor in the South African education context but that the ignorance of educators still segregates everyone from living in an interrelated society. The individual interviews with learners revealed that their school did not see racism as a problem. One learner said:

'[W]e can't even wear our *'isiphandla'* [*African goat skin band*] to school because the teachers say that we are carrying muti. They need to respect my culture and not

judge us, and they need to be taught about the Zulu tradition.’ (Participant, lecturer, exact date unspecified)

Educators stressed about what they had to face daily. The belief that there is a need for recognition and acceptance as a common humanity may combat racism in schools. People should be judged and valued according to their character, values and integrity. When people are categorised according to race, religion or political affiliation, it becomes antagonistic and destructive, and many schools do not have a policy to direct educators on how to go about achieving this. Many educators supported the statement that the policy says little and does little to promote racial inclusion. Other educators shared the following sentiments: ‘Our school caters strictly for one racial group, i.e., Blacks’. Some educators may be oblivious to the prevalence of racism in schools, as illustrated by the following quote:

‘Our school is racially integrated. When racial incidences do occur, we as a staff try to diffuse the problem. I do not see race and colour; I see the child. I treat all learners equally and interact with all of them with respect and love.’ (Participant, educator, exact date unspecified)

## ■ Finding 2: Educators promoting human rights and racial inclusiveness

Some of the findings from the interviews with educators showed that people of different races become full members of a group/society/community and gain a sense of being completely involved to the extent where race is no longer an issue because we are all members of the human race. Some comments anticipated true belief of what these educators would like to see happen in their schools: ‘The bringing of different races together in a way that they can function together and work towards the same goals in society’. Another participant stated: ‘It is an attempt to bring about coherence between and among racially diverse groups of learners and educators in a school environment’.

Data from the open-ended questionnaire revealed that educators believed they were not expected to encourage racial awareness practices among learners during class and extra-curricular activities because learners were expected to take care of themselves. This was evident in the following quote: ‘Helping learners to get involved with a vast range of cultural activities and specifically on Culture Day learners are able to express their heritage’. Learners noted that sometimes assessments were based on the educator’s preference of race, meaning if white educators taught English, white learners were favoured and assessed accordingly. Learners from other race groups found that this created a challenge and led to unfair treatment because of ‘colour’. The struggle is reported in the following statement: ‘Teachers embarrass you because you can’t think and work in school like the white and Indian children’.



Issues around racism and assessment were interrelated and affected the scholastic performance of learners. The participants were favoured according to the colour of their skin: 'White teachers favour white learners, and Indian teachers favour Indian children; we are the junk that's left behind'. Respondents upheld this perception that racial preference had an implausible influence on their grades: 'If I failed a test, then my teacher writes in big, bold red letters "FAILED", and then she wants my mother to sign my test paper'.

### ■ **Finding 3: Interaction of learners from racially diverse groups**

Data from the open-ended learner and educator questionnaires revealed that the relationships between learners of different racial groups were strained. Learners' comments revealed that they saw this study as an opportunity to vent their feelings: 'The Indian learners don't like us. They talk about the black children all the time that we are stupid, and we must go back to our township schools', and '[t]he teachers and students are racist and treat us unfairly. Whenever there is a problem, black people are blamed. We scoff and abuse in their language and in Afrikaans'. Accordingly, educators were given the opportunity, through dialogue, to discuss ways to correct this situation in their schools. The data show that there are many obstacles to promoting an equitable schooling environment for learners from racially diverse backgrounds. Educators are making little or no effort to endorse hope for these learners or make them feel accepted. Some educators said that they did not see learners' 'colour' and believed that all learners were the same.

### ■ **Finding 4: Racial conflict**

Participants explained their perceptions and experiences of racial diversity, racial discrimination, racism and the struggle for racial inclusiveness in their schools. Learners and educators from the suburbs used to humiliate and mock students from the townships and informal settlements, as evidenced in the following statement:

'We were on a school trip and we were four racial groups studying together, suddenly a teacher separated us from the whites because he hated blacks and told us we looked like baboons.' (Participant, learner, exact date unspecified)

Some learners disclosed their discomfort when other learners goaded them. Learners reported: 'We [are] teased about the way we look and smell. If we walk into a class after playing soccer, the teacher and students complain that the blacks' sweat stinks'. Learners indicated that racial discrimination was evident, especially where Indian and coloured learners were respected by their educators and the black learners were unfairly treated.

Educators noticed that rivalry also began when learners spoke in their mother tongue, resulting in major conflicts among different racial groups. This point was confirmed by one learner:

‘[W]e can’t speak English properly because of our accents. Therefore, superior races can only [*sic*] be part of the RCL, but there are some black children that are sell-outs [...] they speak English like a *larnie* [...]’ (Participant, learner, exact date unspecified)

Learners have become victims of racial discrimination because racial inclusiveness is not effectively managed in educational contexts. Educators are aware of the dynamics among the different race groups and the conflicts that arise from them. There is general ignorance about how educators deal with it, and black African and coloured learners are frustrated by being treated differently from one another.

Discipline is a challenge and, despite being illegal, corporal punishment is still used, as reported by one learner: ‘Teachers speak to us (Indians) privately and we are threatened or suspended from school, other times we are beaten up with a cane’. Learners are humiliated as stated in the following quote: ‘Our parents are called in and sometimes we are called up at assembly and humiliated in front of the entire school’. The failure to translate the macro initiatives to impact and address issues such as name-calling, labelling and other forms of discrimination will continuously undermine the intention to totally transform the education system into a racially inclusive one.

## ■ Discussion of findings<sup>10</sup>

The aim of this investigation was to evaluate the effectiveness of managing racial inclusiveness in educational contexts. The findings are discussed based on the responses of racially diverse learners and educators.

## ■ Policies on racism and racial inclusiveness

Educators ignored the issues around race, whether these were racial discrimination, stereotyping or racial prejudice. Instead, they expected that these issues would eventually ‘go away’. The absence of a racial inclusiveness programme left educators experiencing difficulty in interpreting and understanding policies on racial integration.

Critical race theory distinguishes racism as an ingrained facet of schools and asserts that policies that insist on treating racially diverse students as equal can do little to solve the problems of students dealing with abuse,

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10. This section of the chapter represents a reworking of an amalgamation of two sources: (1) Mitchell (2021); (2) Naidoo, Pillay and Conley (2018).

'Misery, Alienation and Despair' every day. This can be ascribed to educators who are not committed to or accountable for transformation (Delgado & Stefancic 2001, p. xvi). According to CRT, 'institutional racism' entails failure by school management and governance structures to provide appropriate policy implementation on racial inclusiveness.

Educators believed the low academic performance of schools could be blamed on the admission of black learners and the problems of a poor socio-economic and educational background of their family, including their home language being Nguni and Sotho rather than English. Asked whether the curriculum had been changed to accommodate black learners, participants expressed conflicting views, some saying that changes were superficial and that many educators were unable to support the learners in relation to the curriculum. Educators claimed they had an 'open-door policy' but expected learners to conform to the ethos of the school as well as the curriculum, which focused on *ubuntu* (human dignity). These superficial and pretentious changes made to suit the needs of their learners are insufficient to bridge the chasm between racially divided societies.

## ■ Educators promoting human rights and racial inclusiveness

The qualitative results showed that many educators viewed language as a problem and were frustrated that learners communicated in their 'native language' (mother tongue) in English classes. Others reported 'code switching' (when a learner could not grasp a concept, the concept was explained in a home language they could understand). Educators insisted on learners using English as the language of instruction in a racially diverse classroom; however, if they spoke in their vernacular, they had to speak more quietly. Educators noted that teaching English and Afrikaans simultaneously was like teaching two classes at the same time, and they found the exercise exhausting.

Educators expressed concern that although the curriculum catered for the diverse needs of learners, it did not allow a diverse population of learners to explore their own racial values while simultaneously being exposed to those of other learners. The results from the individual interviews and open-ended questionnaires showed that many learners envisioned a new democratic schooling system in the future - an aim that, in practice, is complicated and difficult to achieve. Educators boldly reported that racially diverse learners are expected to adapt to the existing ethos of the school and to a curriculum that caters to a different racial population, while the educators themselves were not willing to change the curriculum. Based on the principles of social justice, human rights and inclusivity, the curriculum is regarded as one of the most important aspects of racial inclusiveness in educational contexts and encourages learners to develop a tolerance for racial difference (DoE 2001).

Critical race theory is a valuable approach for thinking through different ways of conceptualising interracial education, focusing on the possibility of transforming a curriculum that is underpinned by certain 'ideological, theoretical, moral and political assumptions', some of which are hidden (Seddon 1983, p. 6). Educators can implement the tenets of CRT build active, dialogic and dialectic teaching based on the contents of the curriculum – for example, values in education and human rights education should be holistically integrated into the school curriculum (Pillay & Ragpot 2011).

## ■ Interaction of learners from racially diverse groups

Most of the learners interviewed had experienced or perceived racist remarks from learners and educators at their schools. Communication is tense and usually involves some aspect of race, with students being humiliated for their skin colour, hair, and dialect. Additionally, they claimed that white and Indian learners were racist, but when asked to elaborate, they were unable to provide evidence. Learners responded to the open-ended questionnaires with claims that they had good relationships with all racial groups. Educators stated that learners communicated freely in their classrooms without any segregation. Conversely, a few learners raised concern about racial altercations between white and black African learners as being unfair. Black African learners explained that, at first, white and Indian learners were fascinated by their appearance and accents and were friendly, but other learners saw this as a way to embarrass learners so that they were not able to mingle with other racial groups unless first spoken to.

Educators expressed the challenges they faced daily, the greatest inequality being in education, with learners encouraged to join racially diverse groups during class activities and discussions so they would be able to grasp the English language. At the same time, learners were communicating and developing interrelationships that were beneficial for their self-esteem, and learning was taking place. Educators commented that they favoured the use of the 'colour-blind approach' in an attempt to treat their learners with respect and ignore their race; however, this resulted in many learners perceiving educators as unfair and insensitive. According to learners, educators said that they did everything to help them, but they perceived the use of the colour-blind approach as educators being ignorant and unfair. However, this statement is contrary to what actually transpires at schools. Educators are struggling to communicate with learners from racially diverse backgrounds, but in reality, many black learners identify favouritism in educators' interactions with other learners, different from the treatment they receive.

Critical race theory serves as an emancipatory paradigm to counteract the legacy of an oppressive education system and serves multiracial learners. Critical race theory highlights the pertinent racial issues that have regressed

the process of racial inclusiveness. As a result, most racially diverse learners will have greater benefits (symbolic interaction, respect, values) if educational contexts are racially inclusive.

## ■ Racial conflict

Learners experienced marginalisation through some form of racial discrimination or victimisation at school. During the individual interviews, learners who were victims of racial abuse expressed feelings of hurt, humiliation and anger. These learners used the individual interviews as an opportunity to voice their deep-seated painful experiences that no educator wished to hear. Learners mentioned that schools displayed incidences of racism in the form of belittlement and name-calling, either through physical or verbal abuse. However, educators in collaboration with the members of the school management team aimed to develop a school in which racial inclusiveness was seen as a priority, not only in the classroom but also in extra-curricular activities in order to promote racial awareness and understanding among learners.

The aforementioned responses from educators corroborate the results from the learners' questionnaires which confirmed that racial inclusiveness was not implemented in facets of the school. This suggests that responses to the questionnaire were guesswork. Evidence in the study confirmed that racial conflict among diverse learners in mixed-race schools was common; however, black African learners were discriminated against because of their colour and race.

Critical race theory focuses on the racist and barbaric experiences of racially disadvantaged learners, such as black African and Indian learners. Crucial to CRT is the notion that dominant educator mindsets, shared stereotypes, beliefs and understatement can only be challenged through stories (Vandeyar 2010). Furthermore, CRT argues that social reality is created, and only through the stories told by learners who are victims of the education system can we understand the 'systemic' and 'socially embedded' forces at work on racially diverse learners in particular to black and coloured learners in this study (Pizarro as cited in Vandeyar 2010, p. 346).

## ■ Conclusion

There are multiple reasons behind the failure of effective racial inclusiveness in the educational context. As a way forward, the authors highlight the importance of having an open mindset, learning about other racial and cultural groups and addressing the contextual challenges that prohibit effective racial inclusiveness from taking place. Doing so would foster a sense of belonging within the classroom context, contribute to the overall well-being of learners and benefit academic performance.

In brief, cultural agility can be viewed as the mindset and ability an individual has to 'accurately perceive and respond effectively across a range of nuanced cultural experiences and situations' (McCormick Benhalim & Malcolm 2014, p. 2). The mindset of culture agility is a new construct introduced to the educational context, seeing that cultural agility has mostly been implemented and applied in the business management context (McCormick Benhalim & Malcolm 2014). Apart from the mindset as mentioned, cultural agility is also regarded as a skill that needs to be practised by individuals to become culturally agile (Caligiuri 2012). However, culture agility should also be enhanced, applied and integrated in other multicultural contexts and should be viewed as a crucial and core competency for human beings, as it is regarded to be the next step for diversity and inclusiveness (Caligiuri 2012). Furthermore, cultural agility includes 'the ability to communicate and build relationships by responding to cultural ambiguity and making adjustments rapidly and under control' (Randall 2011, p. 3) and enables an individual to 'quickly, comfortably and effectively work in different cultures and with people from different cultures' (Caligiuri 2012, p. 27). When a teacher or a learner within the educational context is culturally agile, they would be able to read the cross-cultural or multicultural context correctly. They would know how to adapt to cultural differences and respond with the appropriate behaviour in the classroom context or in broader society (i.e. a human rights perspective). Cultural agility is gained and enhanced when the necessary skills, abilities, motivation and experience are combined (Caligiuri 2012). A teacher or a learner who is culturally agile would succeed in contexts where they are able to assess different behaviours, attitudes and values, deal with unfamiliar sets of cultural norms and respond successfully in these cross-cultural contexts (Caligiuri) – something that is crucial in the diverse classrooms in the South African context. Therefore, it is proposed that cultural agility as a construct be incorporated in programme development for teachers and principals and that a cultural agile mindset be incorporated in daily teaching and learning in the classroom.

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# Bullying and aggression: In pursuit of well-being for individuals, human rights and diversity in South African universities

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## ■ Abstract

Bullying, a form of aggression, is one of the ways the human rights of individuals and diversity are undermined in education and society. While bullying is widely recognised in schools for affecting learners, it is common but often ignored in universities. Bullying negatively affects students' motivation to work and their academic performance and presents serious physical, socio-

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psychological and emotional challenges. Universities have unique spaces where bullying tends to thrive because of, for example the absence of people directly responsible for the students who are beginning to take care of themselves and the belief that bullying is confined to schools. Despite its pervasiveness and devastating consequences on individuals in universities, bullying remains under-researched in South African universities. This chapter investigates the nature and occurrence of, associated factors and the management of bullying in South African universities. We seek to generate knowledge that can be utilised in fostering physical and socio-psychological well-being of students, improving educational outcomes and promoting human rights and diversity in South African universities and beyond.

## ■ Introduction

Unlike university students, the issue of challenges related to bullying among students in schools has received widespread attention. So far, little research has focused on bullying in universities worldwide, including South Africa. Bullying is a matter of considerable concern as some students who are victimised in universities experience serious physical, socio-psychological and emotional consequences. This chapter investigates bullying among students in South African universities. The chapter is organised as follows: It presents a background to the study, the conceptual approach and methodology used in the study before presenting the findings. The findings show a high incidence of bullying in universities and limited policies and interventions to address the problem.

## ■ Background of the study

Bullying, aggression and violence are well-known phenomena across the world and affect people at different stages of their lives. Olweus (1993, p. 9) explains that a student who experiences negative actions from another person or other people on a regular basis and over time is being bullied or victimised. Olweus (2017, p. 226) describes aggressive behaviour as knowingly causing or seeking to cause another person's pain or discomfort. Bullying is also characterised by power disparities between the bully and the victim, who cannot protect or defend himself or herself (Botha & Twine 2014, p. 422; Olweus 1999, pp. 9-19). Hanish et al. (2013, p. 186) explain that the power could be physical or psychological and in some cases the perpetrator has more friends and higher social and economic status. Aggression is behaviour intended to harm, hurt or injure others and this could be in the form of verbal, psychological, relational or physical actions. Huesmann (2017) defines aggressive behaviour as:

[A]ny behavior that is directed at the goal of obtaining a tangible reward for the aggressor (*instrumental or proactive aggression*) and the kind of aggressive behaviour that is simply intended to hurt someone else (at different times denoted *hostile, angry, emotional, or reactive aggression*). (p. 3)

Bullying, which is the focus of this study, is however a form of aggression which is intentional and involves repetitive acts of aggression while the victims are powerless to avoid it.

Smith (2013, pp. 81-82) states that the understanding of bullying has evolved from being only physical, verbal acts and destruction or confiscation of someone's property; to include indirect and relational bullying for example isolation and gossiping. The role of spectators through them watching or laughing when bullying takes place is also recognised in the understanding of bullying. Cyber bullying emerged as another type of bullying with the increasing use of technology and social networking (Smith 2013, pp. 81-82). Thus, bullying is more concerning because of the repetitive acts aimed at harming others and the power dynamics, which has detrimental physical and psychological effects on the lives of the victims in universities. Olweus (2017) emphasises that although cyber bullying is viewed as:

[A] relatively new phenomenon that has received a lot of concerned attention from both researchers and media [...] a good deal of research has been conducted on cyber bullying, this emerging field has somewhat unclear boundaries and has to address some challenges and unsolved problems. (p. 225)

Cyber bullying has gained prominence because of the extensive use of the Internet and social media, but it has not replaced traditional bullying (Smith 2013, p. 82). Hanish et al. (2013, p. 186) describe cyber bullying as including repetitive acts of sending messages and intentions while the power imbalance is sometimes unclear. Olweus (2017, p. 225) views cyber bullying as 'bullying, that is, bullying with electronic forms of contact or communication such as mobile/cellular phones and the Internet'. What makes bullying more detrimental to the victims and hence the urgent need to address it is the recurrence of aggression in the form of physical damage, socio-psychological effects and the unequal relationship of power.

Although bullying in higher education is a pervasive challenge that needs to be managed, there are relatively few studies focusing on universities across the globe. In their cross-cultural study of 47 universities, Pörhölä et al. (2020, p. 154) show that the prevalence of bullying is 25.2% in Argentina, 5.3% in Finland, 11.9% USA and 1.7% in Estonia. Exposure to bullying in both the short- and the long-term could result in psychological consequences for the victims, poor performance in their studies and their ejection from the education system. Sinkkonen, Puhakka and Meriläinen (2014, p. 160) reveal that university students who were victims of traditional bullying experienced the following: stress, feeling of being low, fear, frequent absenteeism, low motivation, low self-esteem, social withdrawal and poor performance. Similar effects were reported among students who were victims of cyber bullying and are feeling sad, stressed, depressed, facing substance abuse, angry and fatigued (Zalaquett & Chatters 2014, p. 2). Other students who are victimised in universities struggle to establish

and maintain social networks (Pörhölä 2016, p. 38). Bullying, therefore, has far-reaching effects on students in universities as other victims harm themselves or even commit suicide.

Because of its significant effects on the well-being of university students and its violation of their human rights as individuals, it is important to investigate the nature and occurrence of bullying as well as measures employed in universities to control it. Unlike in schools and the university workplace, most universities across the world do not have specific policies to address bullying among their students (Harrison, Fox & Hulme 2020, pp. 549–552). This is because of the dilemma universities are in: whether to regard students as independent adults who are responsible for their actions as individuals or to provide safe campus environments that maintain the well-being and human rights of the students (Myers & Cowie 2017, p. 1179). This is worrisome considering the high incidence of bullying in South African schools (Botha & Gore 2020; Hlophe, Morojele & Motsa 2017; Reddy et al. 2015; Winnaar, Arends & Beku 2019). Botha and Gore (2020, p. 249) show that bullying in schools is widespread among the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries with Brazil having 31.6%, Russia 33%, India 40.3%, China 29% and South Africa 37.4% of their children bullied in 2015. South Africa is third highest in bullying of Grade 9 learners among 38 countries after Thailand and Botswana (Reddy et al. 2015, p. 2), with bullying affecting half of all learners in South Africa (Winnaar et al. 2019, n.p.). Acts such as beating, teasing and touching the girls without their consent are some of the forms of bullying in South African schools (Hlophe et al. 2017, p. 6). These statistics point to the pervasiveness of bullying in South African society as some of the learners involved also enrol at universities where bullying continues. The statistics are especially troubling if one considers the lack of monitoring in universities – most of these students are young people who have just graduated from schools but are seen as autonomous and responsible for their lives (Davids 2019, p. 7; Myburgh, Poggenpoel & Fourie 2020a, p. 7; Sinkkonen et al. 2014, p. 153). Equally important, universities bear the responsibility of creating conducive and safe environments for students to learn. The strategies designed for curtailing bullying in schools are not necessarily effective in universities as these institutions differ considerably. This implies the need to explore the nature and occurrence of bullying and to develop strategies for addressing bullying in South African universities.

This study investigated the occurrence of bullying between students and the measures used in universities to address bullying. It responded to the following questions: *How does bullying occur among university students? Which ways can a human rights-based approach be helpful in addressing bullying in universities?* Exploring, understanding and curtailing bullying is essential for universities to promote the well-being of students, preserve their human rights and improve their performance.

## ■ Conceptual approaches to bullying

According to the literature, one of the theoretical approaches that is widely used in investigating bullying in schools and universities is the social ecological theory (Banyard, Cross & Modecki 2006, p. 1315). The social ecological theory foregrounds the role and relationships of the individual, family, peers, community and the wider society in influencing behaviour. Concomitantly, it places individuals as playing a role in the prevention of bullying while other institutions such as family, school, university and community could also do likewise. Besides that, bullying is understood using the mental health approach, which argues that individuals who have positive relationships with others and their environment are likely not to be involved in bullying (Myburgh & Poggenpoel 2009, p. 446). Through their ability to communicate openly with others, compromise, make rational decisions, respect others and stopping relationships that are harmful, the mental health approach regards individuals as being able to prevent bullying. Through the mental health approach, interventions should focus on enhancing the mental well-being of students for them to manage their aggression. Regardless of the use of the aforementioned approaches, bullying has persisted in schools and universities, which points to the limitations of these approaches. For example, they do not adequately address human rights and associated policies to curtail bullying; hence the need for alternative approaches (Botha 2019, p. 185).

This chapter is informed by the human rights-based approach (HRBA) (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2003, n.p.). Underpinning the HRBA is the protection of international human rights in the process of human development (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2003, n.p.). Consequently, the South African Human Rights Commission (RSA 2010, p. 13) views HRBA as a conceptual framework that brings to the fore human development and ‘international human rights standards’ to protect individuals in the country. Being able to cater to those marginalised and discriminated against, and foregrounding legal structures in the development of policies are some of the benefits of the HRBA in this study (Broberg & Sano 2018, pp. 672–673). Put differently, the HRBA requires us to interrogate whether there are gaps in the structures supposedly in place to protect the human rights of the students.

South Africa has a Constitution that guarantees the human rights and freedoms of individuals (South Africa 1996). One of the legislations that relates to harassment and discrimination is the ‘*Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000* (PEPUDA) or known as the *Equality Act*’ (RSA 2000). The country was also in the process of putting in place legislation on cyber bullying during the time of the study, namely the ‘*Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill*’ (South Africa 2018). Subsequently, these legal provisions could form the basis for universities

to develop policies against traditional bullying and cyber bullying. In this chapter, we thus explore the presence of policies and interventions to control both bullying and the extent to which they are implemented.

## ■ Methodology

The study employed a qualitative research methodology using a document review method to gather data from Internet sources. A document review method involves gathering, assessing, critically examining, and analysing the different types of texts from the secondary source of data for the research (O'Leary 2014, p. 177). The reasons for using the document review method are as follows: easy access of sources online, low cost, and saving time (Bowen 2009, p. 31). Additionally, the use of face-to-face interviews could have been difficult because of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic restrictions, while the lack of resources by some students could have made them inaccessible for online interviews. We drew data from published peer-reviewed articles, books, PhD and MA theses as well as universities' websites, as we deemed these 'authoritative sources' because of their being less biased as their intention is to be objective (O'Leary 2014, p. 178). Specifically, we used the key words 'Bullying or aggression' [AND], 'universities or higher education institutions' [AND], 'South Africa' on Google Scholar to search for the sources. As comparatively little research has been conducted on bullying in universities, we did not delimitate the dates. The choosing of documents involved us reading the titles and abstracts of the sources on Google Scholar before downloading those related to bullying and aggression. We then skimmed through each of the downloaded documents and selected the ones with information more relevant to the research questions. We analysed the data thematically, that is through identifying text with similar or related meaning before integrating it into sub-themes and subsequent themes. As document review is a reiterative process, we reflected on the data after the analysis, reviewed it and searched for more documents whose insights were also included in the analysis and reporting (O'Leary 2014, p. 178). We attempted to be objective in our analysis by incorporating all the views, including the divergent ones in our analysis and presentation so that the process produces empirical knowledge (Bowen 2009, pp. 32–33). The following themes emerged: diversity in South African universities, forms of bullying, occurrence of bullying, associated factors to bullying and management of bullying in universities.

## ■ Findings

### ■ The diversity in South African universities

South Africa has a history of violence and this is also reflected in the persistence of bullying in universities. Universities could be regarded as a microcosm of

the society where bullying and aggression are rampant (Botha & Twine 2014, p. 422). With the introduction of democracy in 1994, South Africa adopted policies to increase enrolment of students in universities that previously enrolled white and middle-class students (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1997). Through that, the country saw overall enrolments into higher education rising from 500,000 students in 1994 to 1,074,912 in 2019 with universities accepting more students from the previously excluded black and low-income population (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET] 2021, p. 54). The increased diversity in university campuses created complexities such as ethnic, racial and class-based tensions, and xenophobic tendencies given the country's history of segregation and violence (Myburgh, Poggenpoel & Fourie 2020b, p. 2). Huesmann (2017) points out that:

[V]iolent behavior is defined simply as an extreme form of aggressive behavior in which the target of the behavior is actually physically harmed, for example, hit, punched, choked, beaten, bludgeoned, stabbed, shot. (p. 3)

For Foucault (1997, pp. 291–292) relationships of people are characterised by power and those individuals constructed as weaker are subjected to violence and are often physically harmed. Universities are thus sites of violence and bullying particularly in the context of South Africa.

However, South Africa aims to promote diversity, good citizenship and social responsibility in universities through the *Education White Paper 3 of 2007: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education* (RSA 2007). Universities seek to contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible, mature and constructively critical citizens (RSA 1997). Some of the values that students are expected to acquire through higher education is to recognise and appreciate diversity and being socially responsible citizens who have empathy and care for others (Gore 2021, p. 165). This infers to the fact that when students have such ethos, they can respect others and resolve their differences in a non-aggressive manner. Despite this, it seems that bullying persists in South African universities.

## ■ Nature and occurrence of bullying

It appears that traditional bullying between students in universities involves physical and verbal actions on the victims. In her study that investigated the occurrence of traditional bullying of 148 students at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Salooje (2019, p. 41) found out that 32 (21.6%) of the students are verbally bullied through name-calling, teasing or ridiculing in a manner that hurts the victims. Some students are humiliated and belittled by others in university residences which frustrates them (Botha & Twine 2014, pp. 434–435). Other common forms of bullying reported in Salooje's (2019, p. 43) study are exclusion (left out by their group of friends) [32.5%], physical (hit, pushed or shoved) [4.8%], social (when lies or rumours were spread about the

victims while convincing others not to like them (19.8%) and damage of the victim's property (5.6%). These findings confirm the assertion that verbal and physical aggression are widespread between students in South African universities (Myburgh, Poggenpoel & Fourie 2020b, pp. 8-9). Students experience bullying and aggression because of academic stress and excessive alcohol use, with male perpetrators likely to engage in physical rather than verbal bullying (Van Wyk 2017, pp. 76-77).

While common across the universities' faculties, it seems that bullying is more prevalent among students in the medical field. A study by Fakroodeen's (2020, p. 22) uncovered that 86.8% of the 236 medical students in their final year of study at the University of Cape Town (UCT) were bullied during their internship. Being humiliated in the form of demeaning and verbal utterances, belittling and insulting in the presence of patients are some of the ways the medical students were bullied (Fakroodeen 2020, p. 22). The preceding statistics suggest that bullying incidents in South African universities are higher than those from the international average of between 10%-15% (Lund & Ross 2017, p. 348). Students blamed the hierarchical structure of the university for the bullying, as it enabled the university's academic staff to abuse their power over them intentionally and repeatedly. Additionally, Heather, Leisy and Ahmad (2016, pp. 3-4) explain that the victims' fear of reporting incidences of bullying is attributed to their lack of trust in the universities, a culture of silence that does not allow open communication between students and academic staff, a culture that teaches and sustains bullying and inadequate knowledge of what bullying is.

The data from the documents reviewed show that cyber bullying is perpetrated through text messages on platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter, emails and blogs. A study by Porter et al. (2016, p. 31) reveals that 55% of 1 500 young people between 9-25-years-old enrolled in South African schools and universities experienced cyber bullying, which is higher than those from Malawi 27.6% and Ghana 16.3%. Likewise, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2011, p. 11) found that 26% of the 25 876 adolescents aged 13-25-years-old enrolled in high school and universities were insulted through Mxit, a form of cyber bullying. These results highlight that cyber bullying is a huge problem among students in South African education institutions.

It also emerged that gender is among the factors that affect cyber bullying as more female students than males are victimised (Chukwuere, Chukwuere & Khumalo 2017, p. 9944). Concurrently, Raselekoane, Mudau and Tsorai (2019, p. 13856) illustrate that female students are more likely to be victimised through cyber bullying at the University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa, than male students. Female students are particularly vulnerable to some forms of discrimination, for example, through being ignored by their peers for appearing darker than them (Raselekoane et al. 2019, p. 13854). Stalking

online and having their bodies displayed on social media by their ex-boyfriends or repeatedly receiving unwanted love messages are some of the ways female students were bullied (Raselekoane et al. 2019, p. 13855). Sometimes, female students confide in their peers, who then spread information against them online. The results confirm Popovac and Leoschut's (2012, p. 3) findings that females constitute most of the victims of traditional and cyber bullying while males are more likely to be perpetrators of traditional and cyber bullying than females. However, Boyes et al. (2014, p. 5) maintain that males tend to be victims of direct bullying, unlike females, who tend to be the victims of indirect bullying. These differences influence whom interventions should target when addressing the different forms of bullying.

Apart from gender, it looks as if age is related to bullying as the incidence of bullying increases when students grow older in universities. Salooje (2019, pp. 55-56) observes that 15 (51%) of the 18-year-old students are victims of traditional bullying against 19-22-year-olds (69.2%). The same study reveals a similar pattern for cyber bullying as 17 (56.7%) of the 18-year-old students are victimised compared to 11 (84.6%) of those aged 23-year-old (Salooje 2019, pp. 55-56). Another factor influencing bullying is race as more black students are likely to be involved as perpetrators or victims than students from other races (Burton & Mutongwizo 2009, p. 6). More so, unlike white students, 66% of black African students believed that UCT was unwelcoming, suggesting that race and socio-economic background contributed to their vulnerability to bullying (London, Kalula & Fakroodeen 2009, p. 8). In their study of medical student trainees, Thackwell et al. (2016, pp. 2-6) indicate that some black African students face subtle verbal acts of everyday racism from their white counterparts as they were seen as not sufficiently competent. In the same way, a proportion of 28% of students enrolled in high school and universities are victims of race-based insults through cyberspace (UNICEF 2011, p. 11). These results corroborate the observations made by Young and Campbell (2014, p. 367) that more black African students have poor well-being compared to white students in South Africa and those in the UK and this was attributed to greater diversification in South African universities. The statistics have some implications on the extent to which universities should foster social cohesion among their students.

It also emerged that bullying can result in minor and sometimes severe effects on the victims. Alabi, Oladimeji and Adeniyi (2021, p. 6) identified that bullying contributed to suicide among youth in Nelson Mandela Bay in the Eastern Cape province in South Africa, with female victims being at a higher risk than males to commit suicide because of depression, anxiety and lack of sense of belonging. This is disturbing as students who were bullied, emotionally abused or neglected in childhood children are three to four times more likely to experience bullying at universities (Mall et al. 2018, p. 7). Consequently, chronic victims of bullying experience the worst in their well-being because of



bullying and are at high risk of suffering from depression and committing suicide (Yubero et al. 2021, p. 7). Central to these results is the fact that the consequences of bullying could be experienced more severely in universities for those who have been victimised during schooling. This suggests that universities are also spaces where bullying thrives, which highlights the need for its management for the promotion of the well-being and human rights of the students and their success.

## ■ How universities are addressing bullying

A review of universities' documents reflects the fact that most institutions in South Africa have policies in place to address discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, hate speech, violence and intimidation among the students (North-West University [NWU] 2019a; Rhodes University 2019; Stellenbosch University 2021; UCT n.d.; University of the Free State [UFS] 2021a). However, these policies do not specifically mention 'bullying'. For example, the UCT has a 'Policy on Racism and Racial harassment' (UCT n.d.) aimed at addressing discrimination and harassment based on race among its students but the document is silent on bullying. Its broad definition and subjective nature could mean that these universities fail to detect it. Having anti-bullying policies helps universities to define it more clearly, spell out actions to be taken and put in place reporting structures and places where support can be obtained (Vaill, Campbell & Whiteford 2020, p. 4). It also makes students aware of bullying and the need to report it and bystanders aware of the need to discourage it. Bullying and sexual bullying are, nevertheless, explicitly referred to and articulated in the context of the workplace by the UCT (2019) and the university adopted an implementation plan in 2021 (UCT 2021a).

In the same vein, the UFS has a 'Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual violence policy' (UFS 2021b) aimed at protecting the sexual rights and freedoms of students. However, cyber bullying is listed and defined only under sexual harassment on the UFS website, where information about how and where to report is also outlined (UFS 2021c). One serious criticism is that limiting it to the context of sexual harassment means that other forms of cyber bullying are ignored. Another is that no account is taken of traditional bullying in the university's policies. An unavoidable conclusion is that the university has not adequately put in place policies, structures and awareness-raising programmes to address bullying.

Although bullying is not spelt out in Stellenbosch University's policies and its interventions, the institution has a help desk on its website where students can report acts of 'Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying' (Stellenbosch University 2021). Mere mention is made of bullying; it is not defined and the information on how to report it is not stated. Likewise, the UCT has an office of inclusivity and change for students where discrimination and harassment

incidents can be reported, emergency contact details shared and awareness-raising and peer support programmes implemented (UCT 2021b), but bullying is not articulated in those interventions. The NWU had a peer anti-bullying campaign meant to raise awareness of bullying in 2019 (NWU 2019b). While helpful, the drawback of a once-off campaign is that it makes no provision for the awareness to continue.

Whereas bullying in the workplace is explicitly listed, universities in South Africa still fall short in their management of it among their students. Bullying is not mentioned by most universities in their policy documents and there is no definition of what it encompasses in the few instances where it is mentioned. The awareness-raising interventions against bullying seem limited and the reporting structures are not always clear.

## ■ Discussion and recommendations

While existing studies have shown the occurrence of bullying in universities, the findings in this chapter have revealed that there is an absence of specific anti-bullying policies that can adequately manage traditional and cyber bullying in South Africa. Myers and Cowie (2017, p. 1179) show that both traditional bullying and cyber bullying persist within contexts where there is an absence of policies to curb it. As such, the use of terms such as 'discrimination' and 'harassment' to control bullying without confronting it directly seems to be doing little to achieve the intended results: bullying remains unnoticed at the medical school where the research was conducted (Fakroodeen 2020, p. 8). Putting in place anti-bullying policies that refer to bullying explicitly will enable the universities to outline the procedures, actions to take, awareness-raising and where to report it.

The findings in this study show that a lack of awareness of what bullying entails and the absence of reporting structures could mean that bullying is underreported. This would make it difficult for universities to address bullying (Davids 2019, p. 9). Universities should therefore consider addressing this gap by implementing awareness-raising programmes and putting in place reporting structures. Online platforms that students could use to make anonymous reports could be helpful. Ironically, universities could be expecting the victims of bullying to report on a phenomenon they might be unaware of. The moral responsibility of spectators to intervene and stop bullying, as opposed to encouraging it or blaming the victims, could also be stressed in interventions (Myers & Cowie 2017, p. 1179). The Student Representative Councils could also play a role in providing information about bullying in universities.

The results of this study have illustrated the fact that the term bullying does not appear on most of the universities' websites in South Africa. Universities could consider creating an anti-bullying culture on campuses

among both students and lecturers by discouraging bullying on their websites (Marraccini, Brick & Weyandt 2018, p. 806). It should be stressed, however, that the presence of policies and structures alone is not the solution to the problem of bullying. Encouraging students to manage their aggression could help to counter the perpetration of bullying, for instance, by encouraging them to redirect their energy to other activities such as debates, reflection on the importance of respecting themselves as well as others and taking part in sporting activities.

## ■ Conclusion

This chapter has shown that despite bullying being rife among students, universities do not seem to be adequately addressing the problem. It has also demonstrated that the HRBA is a useful approach to exploring and understanding bullying in universities. Its emphasis on the protection of the human rights of students enabled us to identify the need for anti-bullying policies in universities and the need to strengthen the implementation of interventions meant to address bullying. This chapter has shown that creating safer environments through anti-bullying policies on campuses is crucial in promoting the well-being of diverse students and the preservation of their human rights.

# A restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct in public schools

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## ■ Abstract

School principals, educators and other stakeholders face extreme challenges when dealing with serious learner misconduct in public schools. More recently, it has appeared that a restorative approach has been accepted by various scholars as a commendable method in dealing with serious learner misconduct. The removal of learners who have been involved in serious learner misconduct

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(as prescribed by the code of conduct for learners) from the classroom or school on a permanent or temporary basis (expulsion or suspension) has failed to ensure a safe and disciplined school environment. Literature provides that positive discipline should be the norm in dealing with serious learner misconduct. However, the use of a restorative approach as one of the strategies of positive discipline remains underexplored. The question is: How can the process of dealing with serious learner misconduct be effectively managed in order to reduce the punitive and increase the restorative approach in South African public schools? As the research paradigm of this chapter is pragmatic, we applied an interdisciplinary mixed-method approach. In an interdisciplinary application of mixed methods, we applied the hermeneutical theory in an interpretivist-constructional approach as an instrument for understanding and explaining the phenomenon. On the other hand, we followed the legal approach of interpretation of statutes detecting the constitutional tenets and nuances of the phenomenon. The main recommendation is that educators, school management teams, school governing bodies (SGBs) and other stakeholders be trained in following the restorative approach and that the restorative strategies be integrated with existing school activities and programmes.

## ■ Introduction

Edmund Burke once said that good order is the foundation of all good things (Castle 1985, p. 175). Somebody else remarked that where disorder prevails, chaos rules. This also holds true to the sine qua non of sound teaching and learning practices. The importance of ensuring that serious learner misconduct is dealt with in public schools is clearly emphasised in the post-constitutional statutory provisions of the *National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1996a), the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (RSA 1996b) and the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996: 'Guidelines for a Code of Conduct for Learners' Section 8* (RSA 1998). Sections 8 and 9 of the *Schools Act 84 of 1996* provide that after following correct procedures, a learner who has been involved in serious misconduct can be suspended and expelled from school. Item 11 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996: 'Guidelines for a Code of Conduct for Learners' Section 8* provides that serious learner misconduct may include offences such as bullying; violence; vandalism; threatening; possession or use of weapons, drugs, alcohol or intoxicants; fighting; immoral behaviour; false identification; harmful graffiti; hate speech; sexism; racism; stealing; cheating during assessment; disrespectful behaviours; criminal offences; harassment; to mention but a few (RSA 1998). It should be noted that the serious learner misconducts that are provided in item 11 of *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996: 'Guidelines for a Code of Conduct for Learners' Section 8* (RSA 1998) also differ in terms of their seriousness. For the purpose of this chapter, the authors are convinced that item 11 of the Guidelines for a

Code of Conduct for Learners consists of low-level and high-level serious learner misconduct. In practice, learners who have committed low-level serious misconduct, such as showing disrespect to educators and other learners, are not suspended or expelled from school. Another practical example is when a learner (bully) forcefully asks another learner (victim) to give them sweets and the victim successfully refuses to comply. These two examples of serious learner misconduct (disrespectful behaviour and bullying) may be classified as low-level harmful behaviour. An example of high-level (most) serious learner misconduct may include the use of a weapon to stab another learner at school.

All the aforementioned legislative directives emphasise the importance of a positive approach instead of a punitive inclination in the application of disciplinary measures that deal with serious learner misconduct. This positive inclination needs to be seen as a pendulum swing away from the traditional Westernised approaches in dealing with serious learner misconduct. On the other hand, the pre-constitutional era dealing with serious learner misconduct was characterised by a punitive inclination. To a large extent, the emphasis on the punitive might have been modelled by the punitive nature of the American Zero-Tolerance approaches. In South Africa, prior to the constitutional dispensation, the punitive inclination was the accepted tendency. For example:

- in terms of Regulation 4 of the *Regulations Relating to the Control of Pupils* (RSA 1990), the application of corporal punishment in the event of more serious transgressions was permissible – if inflicted, it was inflicted under the auspices of the school principal;
- in terms of Regulation 5 of the aforementioned regulations, a principal was permitted to suspend a learner after mere consultations with the superintendent of education.

A broad transformation to the punitive inclinations of the past came about after the promulgation of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996c). Not only was the infliction of corporal punishment in schools abolished by the *Schools Act 84 of 1996*, but immense emphasis was then placed on the application of proper due processes in the event of learner suspensions and expulsions. Overall, in the years to follow, a much more humane approach began to flow into the realm of disciplinary measures. Many of these approaches are characterised by restorative inclinations.

To define the restorative approach, it is important to define restorative justice. This is because the concept of a restorative approach is borrowed from 'restorative justice', the origin of which can be traced to traditional reactions to crime. Basically, the word restore is derived from the original Latin word, *restaurare* (literally meaning to rebuild) (Soanes & Stevenson 2006, p. 1502). In modern English, it signifies to restore something or to return it to its former condition, place or standing; to bring back, establish or to repair it

in the sense of the re-establishment of a former condition, right or position (Soanes, Spooner & Hawker 2001, p. 766). Zehr (2014, pp. 13–14) and Zehr and Gohar (2003, p. 11) define the term restorative justice as a set of principles that help to rehabilitate those who offend others by ensuring that they reconcile with their victims and those that live with them. For the purpose of maintaining discipline in schools, the authors adopt another definition by Zehr (2002, p. 37), stating that restorative justice is a process of involving offenders in solving the damages that they caused for the sake of ensuring that there is healing and peace between the offender, the victim and those who relate to them. In schools, the restorative approach focuses on creating relationships and mending the harm caused by serious learner misconduct (Hendry 2009, p. 13; Payne & Welch 2013, p. 2; Riestenberg 2012, p. 68). Within the restorative approach, committing serious learner misconduct is viewed as a process whereby the relationship that exists between the one who caused damage, the one who suffered damage and the school community is affected. In the application of a restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct, it could, for example, entail:

- the restoration of order in an environment (classroom and school) in which teaching and learning is taking place
- the re-establishment of the offender's constitutional right to education
- the reparation of a victim's former position of human dignity.

The following paragraph discusses the problem that led to a need for schools to change from a punitive disciplinary approach to a restorative approach in public schools.

## ■ Problem statement

Commitment of serious learner misconduct in schools has become a major concern worldwide as it disrupts the process of teaching and learning. To deal with serious learner misconduct, some of the schools resorted to the use of punitive punishment, such as corporal punishment, to instil discipline through fear. The use of punitive punishment became a norm and educators, parents and learners considered it to be the only way of dealing with serious learner misconduct in schools. After the ban of corporal punishment (s. 10 of the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*), as it was violating the human rights of learners such as human dignity (s. 12 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*), to mention but one, an increment in the number of cases that involve the committing of serious learner misconduct in classrooms and schools has been a matter of concern as it affects the safety and security of learners and staff members (Maphosa & Shumba 2010, p. 390; Thebenyane & Zulu 2019, p. 68). School principals, educators and other stakeholders face extreme challenges in dealing with serious learner misconduct. Suvall (2009, p. 547) notes that dealing with serious learner misconduct in a punitive way

often results in a problem instead of serving as a solution. Under 'zero-tolerance' policies, learners are suspended or expelled from schools even though they have not been involved in many (i.e. they have been involved in one) instances of misconduct (Hopkins 2004, p. 17). In a court case of *Antonie v SGB, the Settlers High School and Head, Western Cape Education Department*, a learner was suspended for the offence of wearing dreadlocks. This type of offence was set aside by a court because it does not form part of serious learner misconduct (*Antonie v SGB, the Settlers High School and Head, Western Cape Education Department*). Nevertheless, the implementation of punitive discipline by removing learners who have been involved in serious learner misconduct from the classroom or school on a permanent or temporary basis (expulsion or suspension) deprives such learners of educational opportunities. Punitive discipline is not very effective in ensuring that schools are safer environments for other learners. In addition, Gal and Mayal (2011, p. 57) argue that punitive disciplinary measures such as suspension and expulsion can affect the behaviour of learners negatively because they create problems for learners and cause them to be antisocial in schools and communities. Another drawback of the punitive approach to disciplining learners in a school is that it fails to solve the needs and problems of the offending learners in an effective manner (Braitthwaite 2002, p. 10; Gal & Mayal 2011, p. 56). The needs of the offending learners may include coming up with strategies that will restore good behaviour to learners. The question is: How can the process of dealing with serious learner misconduct be effectively managed to reduce a punitive and increase a restorative approach in South African public schools?

In this paradigm shift, a restorative approach encourages learners to participate in dialogue that leads to an understanding and accountability of their behaviour and the effects thereof. A restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct seeks to replace punitive measures with those that emphasise the building and repairing of relationships in an effort to build safe school communities (Suvall 2009, p. 69). The restorative approach encourages various stakeholders to be allowed to discuss what should be done to help the offender and the victim (Bosworth 2005, p. 846; Braitthwaite 2002, p. 14). Bosworth (2005) states that:

These principles include a victim-centred approach, offender accountability, community involvement, reconciliation, the restoration of relationships, restitution, the making amends, repairing harm, problem-solving, dialogue, negotiation, reintegration as opposed to stigmatisation, repentance, and forgiveness. (p. 849)

The section that follows provides the aim of this chapter.

## ■ Aim of chapter

The aim of this chapter is to analyse, describe and portray the application of various restorative approaches in dealing with serious learner misconduct in the



contemporary constitutional dispensation of South Africa. The clear understanding and application of various restorative approaches in dealing with serious learner misconduct will ensure that schools refrain from using punitive methods for controlling behaviour and rather resorting to positive discipline.

## ■ Methodology

As the research paradigm of this chapter is pragmatic, we will be applying an interdisciplinary mixed-method approach (Greene 2007, p. 20; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016, p. 305) to obtain a broadened, in-depth holistic assessment of the phenomenon (the application of restorative approaches in dealing with serious learner misconduct). In an interdisciplinary application of mixed methods, we will be applying hermeneutical theory (literally 'the science or theory of interpretation' [Soanes et al. 2001, p. 812]) in an interpretivist-constructional approach as 'an instrument for understanding and explanation' (Van der Walt 2020, p. 60) of the phenomenon. On the other hand, we will be using the legal approach of interpretation of statutes (Botha 1996, p. 122), detecting the constitutional tenets and nuances of the phenomenon.

## ■ The importance of using a restorative approach

The process of using a restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct in public schools should result in positive social and moral behaviours. Durrant (2010, p. 9) and Joubert (2008, p. 4) point out that the process of dealing with serious learner misconduct refers to the practice of teaching or training a learner to obey the rules of behaviour in the short- and long-term. In other words, this process encompasses the strategies that are applied by teachers and other relevant stakeholders to restore the acceptable behaviour of learners in a positive manner so that they (learners) practise self-discipline and self-control. In this connection, a restorative approach in dealing with serious misconduct is one of the positive discipline methods. Durrant (2010, p. 9) maintains that a positive discipline approach allows learners to be taught about how to be successful in life and it also supports their personal growth. A positive discipline takes into account learners' right to healthy development and protection from any type of harm.

Similar to positive discipline, a restorative approach to dealing with serious learner misconduct provides the learner with positive alternatives to antisocial behaviour, self-control and confidence by respecting the rights of others. Mostly, antisocial behaviour includes disobedience, dishonesty, secretly destroying another's property, possession of or using illegal drugs, alcohol abuse and being involved in high-risk activities with other learners, such as bullying behaviour (in groups), theft, harassment and vandalism, possession

and use of firearms and dangerous weapons and sexual offences (Rossouw 2003, p. 423; Tompsett & Toro 2010, p. 470). All these behaviours cause harm and break positive relationships among learners and other members of the school community, which result in the dysfunctionality of the school in the long run.

As a process, a restorative approach is a method of dealing with serious misconduct that can help to correct the wrong behaviour and ensure that learners, educators and community members who have been offended find themselves in an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning while decreasing the frequency of violation of a code of conduct for learners. Joubert (2008, p. 4) notes that the effectiveness of a restorative approach lies in the fact that learners are offered an opportunity to reflect on and understand their own antisocial behaviour and its effects on others or the school, to take initiative and be responsible for their choices. In order to ensure that there is restoration after the harm has been caused to the learner, the offending learner and those individuals who had been harmed and whose trust had been breached should reconcile, thereby repairing this relationship. However, to enforce positive behaviour in learners, a restorative approach needs to be planned and goal-oriented (Gregory et al. 2015, pp. 6–7; Suvall 2009, p. 558). If well-planned and conducted appropriately, a restorative approach allows schools to create individual and collective solutions that are achievable for the offending learner and to repair the harm caused by the misbehaviour.

## ■ The change-over

In this section, we will scrutinise the dynamics behind the pendulum swing towards a more humane approach with regard to dealing with serious learner misconduct, and at the same time, we attempt to answer the question: What started the ball rolling? In the introduction to his book, Maree (1995, p. i) wrote that, ‘the Bill of Rights contained in the South African Constitution will create a paradigm shift of a magnitude that is still difficult to grasp’. This came true for all facets of life in our country. The transformation that ultimately emerged from the provisions of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* virtually revolutionised all walks of life in South Africa – of which the domain of education is not the least. In the following sections, the authors endeavour to reveal how various segments of education were affected during the change-over and we will endeavour to explain how it came about. In addition to this, we would like to demonstrate how all of this links up with the restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct.

The legal instruments of transformation in dealing with serious learner misconduct include a wide range of constitutional and other statutory provisions, as well as judiciary precedents paving the way towards a more humane approach. Some of the latter will be dealt with in the next sections.

## ■ From separation to unity in diversity

It is well-known that the pre-constitutional era of South Africa rotated around a political dispensation of separate development, which was based on the colour of one's skin and racial classifications. During the 1990s, the latter inclinations were transformed to an integrated approach in a society based on equality and human dignity. Whereas the stimulus behind all of this finds its origin vested in various international instruments and documents ratified by South Africa, such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (United Nations [UN] 1948) and the *African Charter on Human and People's Rights* (OAU 1981), the ultimate breakthrough in South Africa came with the promulgation of the *South African Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* (RSA 1996c).

The preamble to the Constitution stipulates that one of the objectives (Venter 1998, p. 35) is to promote the value of unity in diversity among all the peoples of the country.<sup>11</sup> The Constitution requires that the process of dealing with serious learner misconduct should not lead to the separation of learners. This process should promote unity for diversified groups.

It is of interest to note how the directive principles of the national education policy (RSA 1996a) integrated these constitutional values by unifying diverse individual inclinations, such as faith, culture, politics, language, race and gender under one human rights umbrella, steering the South African educational sector to a democratic destination.<sup>12</sup>

## ■ The best interest of the child

Viewed from a holistic point of view, the best interests of the child, as depicted in Section 28(2) of the South African Constitution, are vital in dealing with a child.<sup>13</sup>

One of the predominant modern-day approaches in dealing with children is certainly the 'best interest of the child-principle'. The first time it appeared in any international document was when it appeared in the *UN Declaration of*

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11. An excerpt from the preamble: We, the people of South Africa believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

12. For example, Section 4 of the *National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996* stipulates that the education policy is to be directed to (1) 'advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of every person guaranteed in Chapter 3 of the *South African Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*, and in terms of international conventions ratified by Parliament, in particular the rights (vi) of every person to the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression and association within education institutions. (2) Enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of each learner, and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of disputes'.

13. Section 28(2) of the *South African Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*: 'A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child'.

*the Rights of the Child of 1959* (UN 1959). The dawn of a new, more humane and caring approach in dealing with children distinctly came to the fore on the very first page of this document, appearing in the preamble, pronouncing that ‘mankind owes to the children the best it has to give’. In Principle 7 the best interest of the child was elevated as a ‘guiding principle’ in dealing with children.<sup>14</sup>

The all-important *Convention on the Rights of the Child* was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 (UN 1989). The ground-breaking Article 3(1) of the Convention elaborated extensively on the best interest of the child, regarding the best interest of the child to be of ‘primary consideration’ when dealing with the child.<sup>15</sup> Based on the fact that Article 3(1) has become such a popular tool in instances of litigation and advocacy in, for example, the European Court, it was labelled by some as ‘one of the stars’ of the Convention (Couzens 2019, p. 366).

Clearly inspired by the provisions of Article 3(1) of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UN 1989), Article 28(2) of the South African Constitution determined that ‘[a] child’s best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child’, (Couzens 2019, p. 369). However, it needs to be said that, in actual fact, for a long period of time during the pre-Constitution era, the best interest of the child-principle has been in operation in South Africa in many instances such as child custody, adoption and child protection (Couzens 2019, p. 369).

Litigation-wise, the best interest of the child-principle related to educational issues has been resounding in our courts over the last 25 years. A few of the examples are as follows:

*Harris v Minister of Education of 2000*, which dealt with the Education Department’s policy restrictions regarding access to school; *The Governing Body of the Point High School v The Head of the Western Cape Education Department and others of 2006* dealing with the appointment of the best candidate as principal of the school to be in the best interest of the learners; *MEC for Education in Gauteng Province and Others v Governing Body of Rivonia Primary School and Others of 2013* where the power play between the Department and the particular school governing body was argued that it was conflicting with the best interest of the school’s learners.

All of this implies that whatever method of dealing with serious learner misconduct is applied for whatever kind of serious transgression, the best interest of the learner will have to be the yardstick to bear in mind. For example,

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14. The best interest of the child shall be a guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents.

15. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, court of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests shall be a primary consideration.

would it be in the best interest of learner A if they are permanently expelled from school with them forfeiting their right to basic education?

## ■ The right to a basic education

It is to be noted that, generally speaking, the rights of the child were only truly and soundly affirmed in the 20th century in the 1989 United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989* (Osler 1994, p. 141). Section 26 of this convention determines that 'the child has the right to education, and the state's duty is to ensure the primary education is free and compulsory' (UN 1989).<sup>16</sup> In terms of Section 29 of the *South African Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*, everyone is now afforded the right to basic education (RSA 1996c).<sup>17</sup> In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Constitution, international conventions ratified by Parliament, as well as the directive principles set in Section 4 (ii) of the *National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 Act* (RSA 1996a), the 'right of every person to basic education and equal access to education institutions' is confirmed.

For the purpose of our discussion on dealing with serious learner misconduct in this chapter, it is significant to take note of the stipulations of this section, signifying that dealing with serious learner misconduct in schools should consider the child's rights and dignity (UN 1989). In particular, the two keywords in this regard are the 'child's rights', which entails his or her access to education as well the word 'dignity' of the child, which entails that the learner's right to receive quality education should be dealt with circumspectly when dealing with his or her serious misconduct.

Section 29 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996* resonated with this international tendency by availing every individual of the right to basic education. Moreover, the provisions of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989* (UN 1989) are likely to have had a direct or indirect impetus on the ratio decidendi of the Williams case of 1995 and the ultimate abolishment of corporal punishment in our schools in 1996.

## ■ Corporal punishment as a punitive measure

Section 12 of the Constitution (RSA 1996c) determines that 'everyone has the right to freedom and security' and is entitled 'not to be punished in a cruel, inhuman and degrading manner'. These provisions were tried in the 1995

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16. The child has the right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure the primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child and to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity. School discipline shall be consistent with the child's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international cooperation to implement this right.

17. Section 29(1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*: Everyone has the right to (1) basic education, including adult basic education and, (2) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures must progressively make available and accessible.

Constitutional Court (CC) case of *State v Williams*, where the constitutionality of corporal punishment of juveniles for criminal offences was challenged. The CC ruled that punitive actions such as the infliction of corporal punishment, which entails ‘brutality’ and ‘dehumanising treatment’ are to be regarded as unconstitutional (De Waal, Currie & Erasmus 2001, p. 234). Not long after the Williams ruling, the South African *Schools Act 84 of 1996* (RSA 1996b) was promulgated by which, in terms of Section 10, all forms of corporal punishment in public schools were abolished.<sup>18</sup>

## ■ Fundamental principles of a restorative approach

The fundamental principles of a restorative approach encourage that the process of dealing with serious learner misconduct should ensure that everyone who has been involved in the damage becomes a responsible, repaired and healed person. Zehr (2002, p. 32), Zehr and Gohar (2003, p. 33) note five key principles of a restorative approach, which are:

- Focusing on harms and consequent needs of victims, but also of communities and offenders.
- Addressing obligations resulting from those harms of offenders, but also of communities and society.
- Using inclusive, collaborative processes.
- Involving those with a legitimate stake in the situation, including victims, offenders, community members and society.

The aforementioned principles should always be taken into consideration when applying a restorative approach in schools. The stakeholders can apply these principles when addressing the harm caused by antisocial behaviour.

## ■ Restorative methods of dealing with serious learner misconduct

It is essential that educators, school management team members, parents and other stakeholders in education have a clear understanding of the restorative methods of dealing with serious learner misconduct. The application of the restorative methods of dealing with serious learner misconduct should be guided by the aforementioned principles of a restorative approach. They should focus on all parties that have been involved in serious misconduct. Reyneke and Pretorius (2017, p. 124) state that the restorative approach focuses on the transgressor, victim, third parties and educator. Various

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18. Section 10 of the *Schools Act 84 of 1996*: ‘(1) No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner. (2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed.’

methods can be followed to apply the restorative methods of dealing with serious learner misconduct in a school. The following are some of the restorative practices that can be applied in schools and in classrooms.

## ■ Restorative chat or dialogue

One of the fundamental activities of applying the restorative approach to serious learner misconduct is to ensure that a chat or dialogue takes place between the transgressor and the victim. Weber and Vereenooghe (2020, p. 2) explain a restorative chat as a discussion between two people who are dealing with low-level serious learner misconduct (as discussed in the introduction). Weber and Vereenooghe (2020, p. 2) further explain that the chat or dialogue lasts between two minutes and five minutes. A dialogue is a conversation between people who may hold conflicting viewpoints (Blair 2017, p. 9). A chat or dialogue should take place between people who have been affected by serious learner misconduct so that harm can be repaired wherever it occurs (Bazemore 2001, p. 206). Furthermore, Bazemore (2001, p. 206) states that repair cannot take place if those who have been most affected are not involved in a chat or dialogue. Schools can use the four broad principles when they implement a restorative chat or dialogue. These principles are non-violence and mutual respect in learner interaction, diversity, discussions about conflict and talking in a non-offensive manner (Parker & Bickmore 2020, pp. 4-8).

For restorative dialogues to take place in a successful manner, educators should establish an environment that is non-violent and respectful for all people who will form part of the dialogue. In this case, the right to human dignity (s. 10) and the right to safety (s. 12), as provided by the South African Constitution of 1996, should be promoted in schools (RSA 1996). Facilitation of a restorative dialogue is not easy because some of the people who have been affected by serious misconduct might be in pain; therefore, educators should know how to prepare learners and how to deal with this type of dialogue. For restorative dialogues to yield good results, all participants should feel free to indicate their views and how they feel.

Restorative dialogue should be inclusive and consider diverse learners. Kline (2016, p. 99) states that schools should respectfully respond to learner behaviour and focus on restorative practices that are inclusive, educational and non-punitive. In a study conducted by Parker and Bickmore (2020, p. 6), emphasis was placed on the inclusion of diverse learners in peer talk so that they can participate freely in restorative chats or dialogues.

Educators should elicit talk about social conflicts. In a study conducted by Parker and Bickmore (2020, p. 8), it was found that the more educators engage learners in conflictual topics, the more learners engage in meaningful dialogues. Parker and Bickmore (2020, p. 9) encourage educators to use the conflictual activities that are in the curriculum to teach learners about

strategies for resolving conflict in a correct way. Eliciting talks about social conflict will teach learners how to prevent conflict from occurring and to deal with conflict when it occurs. When learners are accustomed to this method, they can even resolve their conflict without being told by an educator to do so. Some may even inform their educators that they had a conflict with each other and that they managed to resolve it.

Restorative chats or dialogues should not be held for the sake of complying with school rules. They should be of quality so that they yield the best results. Learners should be adequately prepared by their educators to be involved in these types of chat or dialogue. To ensure quality dialogue, Parker and Bickmore (2020, p. 8) mentioned that learners were taught to listen properly and speak in a respectful way. This means that quality dialogue is learned (Parker & Bickmore 2020, p. 9).

## ■ Restorative mediation

Restorative mediation is a process by means of which two trained learners (learner mediators) assist learners who have been involved in a conflict to resolve their issues (Weber & Vereenoghe 2020, p. 2). Restorative mediation should be facilitated by trained mediators (Bazemore 2001, p. 211). Depending on the school, learner mediators can be members of the Representative Council for Learners or class representatives. It should be clear that these learners are not taking over the disciplinary responsibility of educators and that of SGBs whom they are assisting in maintaining order in a school and classroom to prevent their education from being disturbed. This method of restorative approach is applied to deal with low-level serious learner misconduct (as discussed in the introduction) that has been identified by the school and approved by the school governing body.

The code of conduct for learners and school discipline policy (that has been approved by the school governing body) should clearly indicate the types of conflict or serious learner misconduct (low-level serious misconduct) that should be dealt with by learner mediators. Weber and Vereenoghe (2020, p. 2) point out that learner mediators should work in pairs, the mediation should not take place in a public space and an adult should be present. To promote the right to privacy, we recommend that such mediations should be dealt with by the learner mediators of the same gender and that an adult should also be of the same gender. This means that if a male learner and a female learner are involved in a conflict, male and female learner mediators and adults should be involved.

## ■ Restorative meeting

Schools should also convene restorative meetings to deal with low-level serious misconduct. A restorative meeting is an interactive conversation that



involves an educator, the person who caused damage and a person whose rights have been violated or two learners who offended each other (Weber & Vereenoghe 2020, p. 2). It is also advisable that an adult who is an educator control this process so that it does not lead to further conflict or worsen the conflict.

## ■ Restorative circle

As the name explains itself, the restorative circle refers to three or more learners, who have been involved in an act of causing harm or who have experienced harm, sitting in a circular form (in a circle) trying to address a learner who has been harmed and what should be done (Weber & Vereenoghe 2020, p. 2). The restorative circle is facilitated by a person called a keeper (Bazemore 2001, p. 212). Bazemore (2001, p. 212) further indicates that other stakeholders who want to ensure that there is peace between a learner who caused harm and the learner(s) who has been harmed can be invited to form part of the restorative circle.

## ■ Restorative conferencing

Restorative conferencing occurs when a most (high-level) serious learner misconduct (as discussed in the introduction) has taken place. Weber and Vereenoghe (2020) indicate that restorative conferencing deals with:

[M]ost serious and complex incident using scripted approach to facilitate accountability and repair harm. All people involved and affected by the incident participate. Formal agreements are made. (p. 2)

Schools can decide to hold a family conference to deal with serious misconduct that has been committed by a learner or learners. Depending on the type of serious misconduct, participants in a family conference may consist of 'school management team members; school governing body members; a social worker; the parents of the wrongdoer and the affected learner or the teacher' (Oosthuizen 2019, p. 156). Restorative conferencing is facilitated by a convenor or coordinator (Bazemore 2001, p. 212).

## ■ Integration of the restorative approach with the school programme

The restoration approach works effectively when it is integrated with the school programme. The integration of a restorative approach with the school programme is based on the understanding and application of the principles and methods of a restorative approach. In dealing with serious learner misconduct in the contemporary constitutional dispensation of South Africa,

we suggest that the following steps of implementing a restorative approach in schools should be considered:

- **Step 1:** Obtaining buy-in of all stakeholders for dialogue: Stakeholders include victims, offenders, SGB members and communities of care. In this step, a learner who offended a victim, a victim that has been offended, their parents and the school community participate in the restorative dialogue' (Reyneke 2011, p. 142). The school community will facilitate the restorative approach whereby those affected by serious learner misconduct are taken into consideration.
- **Step 2:** Dialogue and negotiation: The meeting is held and led by a trained facilitator who guides the restorative process in a balanced manner. Victims and offenders are given an opportunity to discuss (Zehr & Gohar 2003, p. 33). Victims and offenders are worked with separately. When they agree to proceed with the matter, they can be brought together in a meeting or conference.
- **Step 3:** Addressing the harm: The participants should define the serious learner misconduct. This serious learner misconduct entails an infringement of the other's rights and relationships. These people are learners and staff members. The offending learners are granted an opportunity to reflect and understand their own harm and its effects on others or the school (Suvall 2009, p. 549; Gregory et al. 2015, pp. 19–20). In this step, the focus is on the relationship that has been affected by the conflict and on coming up with ways of achieving a goal of restoring the mutually desired behaviour.
- **Step 4:** Addressing causes: It is important that the causes of harm are also identified and solved (Zehr 2002, p. 29). The offenders have a duty to deal with the causes of their behaviour, but they also need to be assisted as they cannot deal with their behaviour alone. This is where the expertise of various people who deal with behavioural problems is needed. Added to this, there is a need for all stakeholders to reflect on the causes.
- **Step 5:** Offender accountability: In this step, the offender should explain why he or she harmed a victim and should come up with ways of repairing the existing harm, with an intention to correct what has been done (Reyneke 2011, p. 142). The focus is on the offender's responsibility for repairing injury or damage and its effects on the individual and the school community.
- **Step 6:** Victims' needs addressed: Restorative approach involves victims, offenders, community members or third parties to serious learner misconduct, with an intention to correct the wrong that has been done by the offender. The focus should be on solving the problem by stating the needs and expressing the feelings that will assist the victim(s) in reconciling with the offender(s) in order to have a peaceful life at school and in the community in future (Gregory et al. 2015, pp. 19–20; Suvall 2009, p. 548). If the victim's needs are not addressed, there will be no restoration.
- **Step 7:** Restitution, reparation of relationships and reconciliation: Fields (2003, p. 46) states that restitution enables a person to do self-introspection

about what they can do to repair the damage. While the restorative approach does not opt for punitive exclusion through suspension and expulsion, restitution aims at ensuring that the offenders become more aware of the results of what they have done, that they are responsible for their actions also in paying compensation for the harm and injustices that they have caused to the victim(s) (Reyneke 2011, p. 142). Restitution, reparation of relationships and reconciliation are ways of restoring the offender(s), the victim(s) and other parties that have been affected by the harm, allowing parties to take responsibility for the choices they made when they were resolving the conflict.

The aim of the integrated approach to a restorative method of dealing with serious learner misconduct is to disapprove the antisocial behaviour of the offender, but to reintegrate and support both the offender and the victim in the education system. Contrary to the punitive discipline whereby the needs of the victim are forgotten, the restorative approach takes into account the holistic needs of the victim and offender by involving the school community affected by the behaviour (Gregory et al. 2015, p. 20; Suvall 2009, p. 549). It is worth noting that the six steps set out provide a conducive environment for the offender and the victim in which to meet, while involving the families and friends of both the offender and the victim, as well as any relevant stakeholders, to participate in the decision-making process (Gregory et al. 2015, pp. 19–20; Reyneke 2011, p. 142).

## ■ Recommendations

The following are recommendations that can be considered by the SGBs, school management teams, educators and other stakeholders in education to improve the understanding and application of a restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct in schools:

### ■ Capacity-building

The Open Society Institute (OSI) (2020, p. 17) provides that schools should operate under a certain timeline in which training in restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct must be inserted in a school-based and district-wide professional development programme. The implementation of a restorative approach requires the buy-in of school and district leaders to be appropriately trained and to communicate to all a strong and consistent restorative vision (OSI 2020, p. 17). The Department of Basic Education (DBE) should provide capacity-building on understanding and implementation of a restorative approach to school-based stakeholders such as educators, School Management Teams, SGBs and members of the Representative Council for Learners. School governing bodies should also capacitate parents and the community about the application restorative approach in dealing with serious

learner misconducts in schools. The OSI (2020, p. 17) indicates that the school personnel and SGBs should inform the parents and other important community leaders about the restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct through meetings, materials and, when possible, training programmes.

Schools should have well-trained facilitators who will effectively facilitate various methods of restorative practice that deal with serious learner misconduct. Capacity-building should include aspects such as the fundamental principles of a restorative approach, the benefits of using a restorative approach, methods of a restorative approach and an integrated approach.

## ■ Focus on the restorative approach

Schools should avoid using both punitive and restorative approaches in dealing with serious learner misconduct. They need to adjust and learn how to use the restorative approach as the key approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct. As indicated, capacity-building will empower them to understand and focus on the implementation of a restorative approach rather than using punitive behaviour management of learners. In other words, the primary focus of a restorative approach should be on reconciling the offender and the victim through the mediation process (Gregory et al. 2015, p. 20). The requirement is that the process of a restorative approach should lead the offender and victim to first acknowledge their respective roles in the harm caused and willingly agree to participate in finding a solution and a way to prevent the same problem from occurring in future.

## ■ Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement is essential in the application of a restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct. A restorative approach requires teamwork and collaboration with stakeholders who have relevant expertise. One of the benefits of a restorative approach is the increase in involvement of all community members (learners, parents, school staff) in the collective effort to find a sustainable solution to the harm by dissuading misbehaviour. A restorative approach should also be introduced to all learners before applying it in the school. This will allow learners to be trained and fully involved in implementing the restorative approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct (OSI 2020, p. 17).

As discussed, the restorative approach is the process whereby all the stakeholders (educators, principals, governing bodies, parents), the learner offender and the victim are afforded the opportunity of discussing the infraction that caused harm and also of deciding how to repair the harm, including reconciliation (Braitthwaite 2004, p. 28). As the harm caused by the

learner offender affects all community members, the resolution process is an entire school restorative approach. In other words, the harm has destroyed social values, such as trust, dignity, compassion, respect and self-esteem. The restorative approach involves the entire school community, including those that have been affected, in determining how harm will be remedied, relationships repaired and the school community made whole again (Gregory et al. 2015, pp. 19–20; Suvall 2009, p. 548). The ultimate goals are to restore and reinforce relationships, promote offender accountability, bring healing and enhance capacity-building for all relevant stakeholders. As a result, the restorative approach reduces the likelihood of future antisocial behaviours and can improve school climate and reinforce relationships among and between educators and learners in schools.

## ■ Restorative practice as a reduction of punitive approaches

Even though some of the punitive measures, such as suspension and expulsion, form part of the legislation (s. 9 of the *Schools Act 84 of 1996*), they should be reduced bit by bit and, in the end, be replaced by a restorative approach. Restorative practices reduce the loss of learning time for learners (Joseph, Hnilica & Hanson 2021, p. 111). A barrier to a successful restorative practice is that some schools use both restorative practices and a punitive approach in dealing with serious learner misconduct (Joseph et al. 2021, p. 113). Punitive practices should be worked out while restorative practices are worked in (Joseph et al. 2021, p. 113).

The benefits of the implementation of a restorative approach differ from socio-economic to geographic contexts. However, the main benefit is that it helps reduce punitive exclusion through suspension and expulsion and provides offending learners with educational opportunities while addressing the needs of the victims. The restorative approach to dealing with serious learner misconduct in schools encourages teamwork and collaborative solution (Gregory et al. 2015, p. 6). The restorative approach allows the offending learner *to become more conscious and remorseful of the consequences of their actions and take responsibility for repairing the damage caused by them.*

## ■ Integrating the restorative approach with every school activity

It is important for the restorative approach to be integrated with every school activity. The OSI (2020, p. 17) states that the restorative approach should be integrated with every activity that takes place in a school. It should not be used exclusively as a conflict resolution tool; 80% of restorative practices

should be used as a proactive measure to build and strengthen the school community. It should be integrated with the curriculum and disciplinary, sporting, cultural and many more school activities.

## ■ Conclusion

The application of the restorative approach in dealing with serious misconduct in schools will promote positive discipline. The implementation of the restorative approach in schools will teach learners to resolve their problems peacefully without imparting punishment. Learners that have committed serious learner misconduct should not be rejected. Rather, their behaviour should be changed so that they become better citizens who believe in resolving problems peacefully. The restorative approach requires stakeholders to work together in changing the behaviour of learners.

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of a restorative approach as a paradigm shift to creating a conducive environment for human rights to prevail in schools. Public schools that adopt a restorative approach for dealing with serious learner misconduct will experience a radical decline in behavioural cases from learners and disciplinary suspensions or expulsions. As a result, learners and educators will feel that the school environment is safe and that a good relationship exists between the learner and peers and learners and educators. Furthermore, a restorative approach provides holistic measures of prevention, support and problem-solving. The holistic measures enhance a positive school climate, including the community at large.



# The Global South: Palimpsests and prospects of an enriched narrative on education and human rights in diversity

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## ■ Abstract

Despite claims to universality, the current *Creed of Human Rights* has very much been crafted within the context of the Global North, including reflecting the interests of the Global North. The same criticism can be levelled against the global education expansion project and the current trend in the world of valuing diversity. This chapter presents a synthesis of the chapters in this volume, which have unpacked this basic thesis of the volume from a variety of angles by scholars engaged in research on the intersection between human rights, education and diversity. The chapter concludes the volume with the remark that the assignment is now for scholars at the Research Unit of Education for Human Rights in Diversity (Edu-HRight), at the Faculty of

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Education, North-West University (NWU), South Africa, as well as scholars beyond, to proceed on the trajectory started in this book, of enriching the scholarly as well as the public discourse on human rights and education in diversity with Southern perspectives. Embarking on such an assignment is also a prerequisite for the United Nation's (UN's) Fourth Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2020–2024) to come to fruition.

## ■ Introduction

With three hallmarks of the current age being the rise of the *Creed of Human Rights* as the moral code of a globalised world; looking up to education as the 'panacea of every societal ill'; and celebrating diversity, a prolific scholarly community has been exploring the intersection between these three. The global community too, in its organised form in the United Nations (UN) and its educational arm, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has embraced education, specifically human rights education, as a means of entrenching the *Creed of Human Rights* as a moral code of the new world. The UN proclaimed the ten-year span of 1995–2004 as the UN decade for human rights education, and by the end of the decade, in December 2004, the General Assembly of the UN 'launched the World Programme for Human Rights Education'. This World Programme for Human Rights Education has been developing in a sequence of stages.

The problem is that all three of these are features of the contemporary world, and therefore also scholarship investigating these, have been crafted within the contextual parameters of the Global North.

In the first chapter it was explained how, after for millennia having existed at the fringes of society, and for many people not a part of their lives, formal education moved to the centre stage of society since the middle of the 20th century. Education came to be seen as the solution for every problem and challenge faced by society, and this limitless belief in the power of education was one of the reasons behind a global education expansion drive that took off after the Second World War, and which is still continuing unabated. It was explained in the first chapter how this expansion project is explained by world culture theory as being part of a world culture, also how theoretical frameworks argue that the world culture so constructed is in the Global North by the captains of the economy and political elite in the Global North, taking the context of the Global North and the interests of the Global North as parameters. A balancing act, complementing these frameworks with perspectives from the Global South, is obviously an urgent desideratum.

In Chapter 2 of the volume, it was explained that the *Creed of Human Rights*, despite claims by advocates of this creed as to natural, universal human rights, finds its origin in the Western world. Scholar Tom Holland traces the creed back to the Christian religion, and in Chapter 2, the authors explained

how the creed was explicitly formulated and defended by leading Western political philosophers, whose ideas were shaped by political and other developments in their hinterlands of Western Europe and North America, as from the 18th century. The chapter culminates with the conclusion that the intersection between education, human rights and diversity, falls into the following six thematic areas, corresponding to the subareas of the unit, that is diverse contexts, citizenship education (CE), international comparative perspectives, legal perspectives, bio-social perspectives and learner discipline.

After the norm and even legal framework that societies have for centuries, even millennia, frowned upon any deviation from the officially prescribed culture, and after the formation and rise of the nation-state since the early 19th century, the apparatus of the state too was used to foist down an officially, narrowly delineated homogeneity, a turn-around came during the second half the 20th century when societies commenced valuing diversity. This about-turn commenced in Western Europe and North America in the late 1960s to early 1970s. From there it spread after 1990 to the countries of the erstwhile East Bloc and to the countries of the Global South. The following two examples will suffice to illustrate the feature of the pre-contemporary world. In Romania lives a minority group of people called the Szeklers, who speak what is often stated to be the purest form of the Hungarian language. For 30 years, right up to the end of its rule, the post-Second World War government of Nicolae Ceaucescu systematically eradicated their culture. This included bulldozing entire villages, and closing down their schools, forcing them to turn to Romanian as the language of teaching and learning, even forcing the renowned Bolyai University to merge with a lesser-known Romanian university (Bryson 1990, p. 33). National education systems served as one of the most potent instruments for enforcing a homogenised, grey uniform hegemony. This thesis has perhaps been best and most prolifically argued and illustrated by the 20th-century philosopher Michel Foucault (1926–1984). Many scholars followed, connecting to his ideas, teasing out the relationship between knowledge and power, using Foucauldian concepts to depict schools as sites where children's bodies are disciplined and alienated through disciplinary technologies (see Liu & Tobin 2018, p. 17). Even physical activities, such as drill and gymnastics, are taken as examples of Foucault's notion of 'little practices' aimed at precise and subtle control of the body.

The new appreciation of diversity has given rise to the Creed of Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education, later to be superseded by Interculturalism and Intercultural Education. Yet progressive scholars have argued that Multicultural Education and Intercultural Education, at least in the forms that these have been crafted, are rooted in liberal Western ideals and, therefore, cannot summarily be exported to non-Western countries with substantially different sociohistorical contexts (e.g. see Moland 2015; Pica-Smith, Veloria & Contini 2020).

The global pattern of scholarship too displays the hegemony of the Global North. Not only is the Global North privileged in terms of infrastructure to conduct research (well-endowed universities, libraries, publishing houses, etc.), but even a facility such as the protocol currently taking form regarding the sharing of databases is disproportionately favouring the Global North (see Nordtveit 2018). The situation regarding the language of scholarly publications is also heavily tilted to favour the Global North. Even 30 years ago, two-thirds of all scholarly papers were published in English (Bryson 1990, p. 176), today the percentage is probably even higher; furthermore, a perfunctory glance through the databases of prestigious, coveted journals, databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, Scielo and ERIC, will reveal the dominance or hegemony of the English language in the scholarly world. Yet English is spoken by but 1.35 billion people, or 20% of the global language, either as a first or as an additional language (followed by Mandarin Chinese 1.2 billion, Hindi 600 million and Spanish 543 million) (Szmigiera 2021). As a first language or home language, the discrepancy between demographics and the scholarly status of English is even bigger: English, with 543 first-language speakers lies in the third position after Mandarin Chinese (1.1 billion) and Spanish (600 million) (Lane 2021). Even an aspect such as research ethics has been pointed out and argued to be very Western-centric and Western-biased (see McMahan & Milligan 2021).

Chapter 3 showcased an example of how the scholarly discourse of the intersection between human rights, education and diversity within the Global South can take shape. The authors zoom in on the very important legal aspect of the intersection between human rights, education and diversity in a case study located in the Global South, namely South Africa. The chapter culminates in a set of legally based guidelines to enhance the ability of schools to realise every learner's right to education in this diverse country in the Global South.

Against the historically developed hegemony of the Global North stands the rising stature of the Global South in the world. The rising trajectory of the Global South was outlined in Chapter 4. The growing weight of the Global South in the world lies, in the first place, in the geographic factor. The Global South covers the largest part of the land surface area of the globe. Ecologically, for sustained development, the Global South is pivotal, in view of the amount of freshwater resources found in this part of the world, in view of the richness of mineral deposits and biodiversity found in the Global South, in view of its potential in harnessing solar energy in the coming years, and in view of the importance of the tropical forests in the global warming formula, and the supply of global oxygen. Secondly, demographically the Global South is a significant factor in the world: the Global South is the habitat of the majority of the population of the earth, and, judging by current trends and projections, this proportion is bound to rise in the coming years. Moreover, the Global South has a younger demographic profile than the nations of the Global North.

A growing percentage of young people in the world will be found in the Global South. While at least measured by conventional economic indicators, the Global South is trailing the Global North, by many indicators, the Global South is catching up, and in any case, the Global South is becoming a stronger economic force in the world to reckon with.

The world of the early 21st century is still struggling to come to terms with the legacy of colonialism, something of an anathema to human rights and valuing diversity. The nations of the Global South are still struggling to free themselves from the shackles of colonialism, as is evident in, for example, their quest for economic independence. South Africa is an interesting case with a demographic composition of significant numbers of people who have found themselves or have descended from different quadrants of colonial history. Using this case, the author of Chapter 5 has argued for CE as part of the answer.

Still on the topic of the decolonisation, the authors of Chapter 6 took the theme of the historically developed academe in South Africa. There is a need to transform academe to be aligned with the contextual imperatives of the Global South and South Africa in particular. The authors of the chapter illustrate this point as they zoomed into teacher education curricula in South Africa and the need to imbue such teacher education programmes and curricula with social justice. The authors argue that a decolonialised curriculum at South African universities in particular, will reveal inequities in higher education, and will also serve as a means to effect more social justice in higher education. Decolonising education is a term fraught with difficulties (see Van der Walt & Wolhuter 2022) and open to many meanings – Jansen (2017, pp. 156–173) identifies eight different meanings attached to the term. The authors of the chapter upfront take the fairly moderate and accommodating view that the decolonisation does not imply the wholesale discard of all knowledge that was originally generated and verified either in a Western societal context and system of knowledge generation, or in a system of Western hegemony; but it implies the recentring of knowledge, putting the local centre and imbuing the corpus of existing knowledge with indigenous knowledge in particular. The authors then outline the various meanings attached to the term, as distinguished by Jansen, before they present the results of their interesting research in view they viewed the particularly information-rich pool of ten lecturers of Curriculum Studies at all three campuses of NWU as to their views on the decolonisation of teacher education curricula. The authors of the chapter conclude that teacher education programmes in South Africa should be decolonised, and this desired decolonisation should be such that it brings about greater social justice. It should be borne in mind that in a recent publication the social justice narrative itself has been described as being based upon a Northern Hemispheric conceptualisation of social justice (see Wolhuter, Espinoza & McGinn 2022), a decolonised teacher education curriculum-making

for greater social justice should be part of a human rights dispensation well-anchored in the contextual realities of the Global South.

In Chapter 7, the authors examined gender equity and diversity by means of a critical analysis of visual images created in society, based on the belief that a teleological assessment of artefacts produced in society particularly by art teacher education students reflects the human rights in diversity dilemma. In Chapter 8, the author argues for a vigorous programme of CE in South African schools to counter the concern-raising major problem of moral decay in South Africa.

The authors of Chapter 9 have presented the scholarly field of comparative and international education as having the conceptual and methodological instrumentarium needed to enrich the scholarly discourse on the intersection between human rights, diversity and education, with perspectives from the Global South. One of the most serious violations of human rights, especially in the contexts of the Global South, where the supremacy or sovereignty of law is in places absent, is that of human trafficking. In Chapter 10, the authors focused on the intersection between education, human rights and diversity. The authors argued that the neoliberal order (of which the Global South can be regarded as having been at the receiving end, having had little choice in the matter of taking part in the neoliberal global order) could be constructed as working against a global moral dispensation predicated on human rights. The authors also suggest human rights education as a means of countering the despicable practice of human trafficking in the world.

In Chapter 11, the authors offered a psycho-social perspective on the issue of racial inclusiveness in schools.

In Chapter 12, the authors investigated the problem of bullying in South African schools.

Bullying represents one of the most distasteful forms of human rights violations in education. Not only does it constitute a direct violation of human rights, it also has long-term effects on the academic achievement and personality development of victims. Bullying at primary and secondary schools has received a fair share of attention in scholarly publications. However, there is a dearth of literature on bullying at the university level. The authors of Chapter 12 placed the focus of bullying at this level. The chapter has shown bullying to be present very acutely in South African schools. Closely related to the problem of bullying is that of learner discipline. The authors of Chapter 13 have argued for restorative discipline as an approach to the maintenance of learner discipline in South African schools.

In the chapters of this volume the authors, all from the Research Unit of Education for Human Rights in Diversity, at the Faculty of Education, NWU, South Africa, have argued for enriching the scholarly and public discourse on

education, human rights and diversity with such balanced perspectives from the Global South or demonstrate the value of such perspectives, by reporting their research.

From this vantage point two final points should be made. This entire volume revolves around the theme of a lopsided scholarly discourse on education, human rights and diversity. While the central theme has been the Global North-Global South asymmetry, an intra-Global South consideration should also be added so as to prevent the emergence of another, second-order asymmetry. It is so that in the world of scholarly activity (at least as measured by conventional metrics), even within the Global South, South Africa is trailing (e.g. see Wolhuter 2018). In Asia, the Taiwanese scholar Kuan-Hsing Chen published his volume *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization* in 2010 (Chen 2010). From this book considered as his opus magnum, for more than a decade now he has argued for a paradigm shift, to align the scholarly discourse on Asia with a de-imperialised, de-colonised and de-Cold War mentality. Chen tables a critical proposal to transform the knowledge structure as well as the knowledge production so as to make Asia an imaginary anchoring point that enables its societies to become each other's reference points (Chen calls this inter-referencing, that is, referencing between the nations of Asia), so that 'the understanding of the self (Asia) may be transformed, and subjectivity rebuilt' (Chen 2010, p. 212). Park (2017) has identified 250 academic publications that have been influenced by the publication of Chen. Not only in view of the continuing marginalisation of Africa in scholarly matters, but also in view of the trend in especially South Africa to align the decolonisation discourse with critical race theory (CRT) in the United States of America, rather than to predicate it on the real affirmation of any subaltern status of the continent vis a vis Europe or the West; *Asia as Method* sets model from which much can be learned.

Secondly, in Chapter 1, it was stated the theoretical framework set up to examine and to reflect on imbuing the discourse on human rights education with Southern perspectives is one where the salience of context will be central (while at the same time also drawing from world cultural theory, the rational actor or technocratic model and the analysis of power relations in society). Now with a mass of evidence and information on the context(s) in the Global South as the shaping force of human rights education, the question is how to enrich the body of knowledge and practice that exist worldwide. On the movement of education policies and practice over space and over time a number of modes points of view or paradigms exist. On the movement of education policies or practices over space (from one place to another) four broad modes or points can be distinguished: externalisation, once again world cultural theory, borrowing and learning (see De Wet & Wolhuter 2007; Kauko & Wermke 2018). As the next assignment now is to gather knowledge generated in the varied contexts of the Global South to benefit each other

(that is other parts of the Global South beyond the local or the national context where the knowledge had been generated) and to benefit the Global North and the entire global edifice of human rights education, the epistemological position of learning seems to be most defensible and meaningful.

The assignment is now for scholars at the Research Unit of Education for Human Rights in Diversity, at the Faculty of Education, NWU, South Africa; as well as scholars beyond; to proceed on the trajectory started in this book, of enriching the scholarly as well as the public discourse on human rights and education in diversity with Southern perspectives, and also to ensure such discourse registers a visible impact on practice. A scholarly and public discourse on human rights education will facilitate the realisation of the Fourth Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2020–2024), with its – rightfully so – special emphasis on education and training in equality, human rights and non-discrimination and inclusion and respect for diversity with the aim of building inclusive and peaceful societies, and to alignment with the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

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## Chapter 12

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The overall premise of this book is to draw attention to the fact that the three defining features of the world of the early 20th century – the Creed of Human Rights, the belief that education could change society for the better, and the philosophy of celebrating diversity – were shaped in the context of the Global North, and this biased conceptualisation needs to be rebalanced. This book attempts to redress this imbalance by presenting convincing evidence for considering the Global South’s perspective. The book explores the intersection between education, human rights, and diversity. As the authors outline the scholarly discourse surrounding this, they draw attention to the fact that the perspectives of the Global North dominate. At the same time, the Global South is a growing percentage of the world’s population. The change and advances in politics, economics, and education within the Global South are gaining increasingly significant influence. As a result of bringing these novel viewpoints to the fore, the book makes for an interesting read and challenges existing beliefs.

**Prof. Carol Robinson, Faculty of Education, Edge Hill University, Lancashire, United Kingdom**

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This book illustrates how scholarship discourse rapidly shifts as we meet 21st-century demands and challenges. Such paradigm shifts are demonstrated in two significant ways in this book. First, one shift manifests in how our ‘settled knowledge’ changes – in how concepts evolve, are re-defined and interpreted contextually to acquire new meanings.

It also demonstrates how emerging theories and their underlying assumptions are first critiqued. This is before they are used to underpin studies that collectively focus on the integrated subject matter of education, human rights, and diversity. This integration resonates with the view expressed in contemporary academic discourse on the importance of integrating concepts and theories that complement each other.

Additionally, it highlights the danger of any attempt to push the context into the background in any debate about global issues. The second phenomenon is a paradigm shift, where established norms and values originating in the Global West are passively accepted.

In contrast, ideas, views, and ‘voices’ emerging from historically, culturally, and colonially oppressed academics from the Global South are promoted and embraced. These ‘voices’ vigorously challenge the forces emanating from the Northern Hemisphere (Global North) and vying for hegemony in debates around critical issues, including contextualisation of the Creed of Human Rights, internationalisation, and globalisation.

The book follows a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of integrated subject matter to raise critical awareness among scholars of the Global South’s rising importance and generate a constructive engagement with global challenges of diversity, human rights, education, and social justice. Through contextualisation and, specifically, Africanisation of knowledge, this book encourages us to understand the intersection between human rights, education, and diversity in a completely different light.

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